

FULL OF STRANGERS.

Twelve Thousand Klondikers Already Gathered at Skaguay.

Aerial Tramway Across White Pass Now Running—Toll Road Shows Exact Heavy Tribute from the Gold Seekers.

[Special Skaguay Letter.]

The great exodus from the United States and Canada to the Yukon gold fields has begun. It is believed that by the middle of June fully 50,000 gold seekers will be on their way to the Klondike country. Already people are arriving at Skaguay and Dyea at the rate of 500 a day; and the St. Michael's and Yukon river transportation lines announce that their facilities will be taxed to the utmost as soon as navigation opens. Conservative reports from the Klondike districts are to the effect that there are too many people there now, and that those physically and intellectually unfitted to cope with the hardships of pioneer life should not venture their chances in the wild scramble. But such words of caution, although based on official investigations, cannot stem the tide. Each individual expects to make a fortune, although he has grave doubts about the successful outcome of his partner's plans. Selfishness reigns supreme. The weak are pushed to the wall by the strong, browbeaten and abused. There is no community of interest, no cohesiveness among the thousands thronging the busy thoroughfares of Skaguay and its energetic rival Dyea. The dominant idea is to get over the passes to the promised land.

Skaguay, which had no existence a year ago, now is a booming town with wide streets, large buildings and an elec-

\$9,000 nugget, rumor adds, has been found on Eldorado creek, and Rosebud creek has yielded up precious dirt. What the effect of these stories will be cannot yet be foretold with certainty, although hundreds who had intended to try their luck in British territory have announced an intention of seeking their fortunes on American soil. Sensations follow each other thick and fast. One day it is said that \$40,000,000 will come out of Dawson as soon as the Yukon river opens, and on the next that sum is reduced to \$4,000,000. One thing which the new arrivals do not like is that the returning argonauts bring nothing but big stories. Their gold, in almost every instance, has been left at Dawson or some other safe place. Speculators are busy trying to negotiate sales of "precious" claims at ridiculously low prices. They do not find many victims, however. Not because the newcomers are not easy to work, but because they expect to make discoveries of their own far more valuable than any yet recorded. What a mighty host of kindred spirits Col. Sellers could have found had he ventured the trip to Skaguay and Dyea!

Last season there was very little dredging done on the Yukon and its tributaries. This year, however, scores of companies will engage in this method of mining. It is estimated here that fully 100 dredging outfits will go up the Yukon from St. Michael's, and another 50 will be employed on the large creeks running through the gold district. Most of the dredging machines are owned by stock companies, whose promoters manage to sell their shares in the eastern states. Each machine—most are propelled by steam—has a crew of six men, and if but a tithe of the expectations of these hardy mariners is realized, the owners of dredging stock will roll in wealth before the first of January next. But, you know, there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.



LOOKING OVER THE DIVIDE FROM THE SUMMIT OF WHITE PASS.

tric light plant and a water works system already in process of construction. It is a compact place, managed on business principles. Dyea, the younger rival, has about 250 buildings, 30 of which are hotels, 15 saloons and 10 gambling houses. Its resident population is estimated at 3,000, and there are usually 2,000 strangers bound for the gold fields within its gates.

At Canyon City, another boom town, an electric plant has been installed to furnish power for an aerial tramway across the summit of the pass. The people of Skaguay are building a toll road leading from their town to Lake Bennett and navigation. It will cost at least \$100,000, but as a two-cent-a-pound toll is to be charged the promoters of the enterprise expect to have their money back before the 1st of August. Everything is done on a gigantic scale, and persons intending to avail themselves of public improvements must be prepared to pay gigantic prices for the privilege. As a promoter of one of the many transportation companies said: "We don't know how long this thing will last. It may peter out after this season, and we must have our money back, with big profits, before September. Next year we can make better terms, but this year—Well, God helps those who help themselves."

Nobody is taking chances. The impression seems to prevail at all the gateway towns that if A doesn't rob the greenhorns, B will; and so, of course, A does the robbing. The business men and promoters are making that. The embryo prospectors live on hope, and many of them drop the bulk of their possessions before they cross the pass. There is no use to moralize about this state of affairs. It is but a repetition of former mining epidemics, and will be repeated whenever new fields are discovered.

A great sensation has been started all along the Alaskan coast by the discovery of rich finds on the American side of the Klondike district, below American creek. Pay dirt, the latest reports say, is more easily divided and shallower than across the line. A

Most of the gold seekers will have to secure the yellow stuff by cradling. Mr. Josiah Edward Spurr, in his notable work on "The Geology of the Yukon Gold District," issued by the United States geological survey, describes this laborious process in detail. The cradle, he says, consists essentially of a long, narrow box, an upper and a lower compartment. The floor of the upper compartment is preferably made of metal, and is riddled with holes of convenient size. Into this upper compartment the gravels are shoveled, and the whole contrivance is moved back and forth upon the rockers on which it stands, and from which it derives its name. By this shaking the gravel is sifted, the finer material passes through the holes in the lower compartment, while the coarser stuff, which contains little or no gold, passes out of the box as useless rubbish, or "tailing," as it is technically called. The floor of the lower compartment is, in its simplest form, an inclined plane, the surface of which is roughened and corrugated in various ways, such as by the use of cleats or wooden "rifles," corrugated metal sheeting or other devices. A favorite method of obtaining this result among the miners of Alaska is by the use of carpeting, of coarse, spongy weave, such as cheap tapestry. Upon this roughened surface the fine gold lodges, while the lighter material is carried out of the box by the stream of water. In the collection of the fine gold which is thus caught amalgamation with quicksilver is usually resorted to.

In some bars there is considerable concentration of gold, and when a creek or river is sufficiently low these accumulations are worked by the miners; but the comparatively small size of the deposits, and the fact that they are exposed only an uncertain length of time during low water, lead to the necessity of using the simplest apparatus, and so the cradle is generally utilized. In some cases bar gravels are sluiced in the same way as gulch gravels, the water being raised to the head of the sluice in the buckets of an undershot water wheel.

WILLIAM WALTER WELLS.

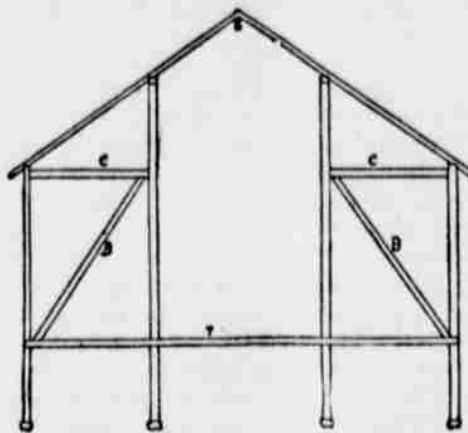
FARM AND GARDEN.

ABOUT BARN FRAMES.

Description of One That Is Said to Possess Absolute Simplicity and Very Great Strength.

Inventions change conditions. Once any high barn was a white elephant. Next the harpoon fork running up to a track under the roof-peak made height an essential of the model barn. Then came the invention of the hay-sling, that final perfection in unloading of hay. With the sling came the problem of waste of power, of time, in hoisting the draughts over the great beam or "tie" that in all old barns connects the tops of the posts at the upper ends. Not only was there prodigious waste of energy and time in hoisting these great draughts of hay to the peak before running in, but when it was dropped from the height, if at all green, it might pack so solidly as to "mow-burn" at that place.

Next followed the "open center" barn, and to-day there is no barn built by up-to-date builders with a tie across



the center of it. The Shawver frame has the open center; the joint frame that I have invented has no tie and there is no tie in the modern solid-timber, pin-and-mortise frame.

The cut illustrates perhaps the most common and generally applicable sort of frame possessing the advantages of open center, simplicity and great strength. I supposed that I had invented this frame, did, in fact, invent it, yet this winter I have seen more than one barn built on exactly the same model and built before our barn was planned.

I have said that the modern barn has no tie across it. This is true, yet not just an accurate way of stating the facts. The barn must of course have a tie to hold the thrust of the rafters, else it would spread and the roof sag. Really, the tie is at the level of the mow floor, at T, Fig. 1. From here the strain is taken by the standing-brace, R, to the short ties, C, C. With this arrangement the building is quite as solid as though the ties, C, C, were continuous.

Perhaps I should have stated that the modern hay carrier has the faculty of gripping the rope at any desired height and taking the load in whenever it is high enough to clear the mow floor or height of hay in the mow. Thus it is readily seen how convenient it is not to have the tie, C, cross the path of the traveling draught of hay that may perhaps be quite below its level.

When we built our barn our carpenter was quite anxious for fear something would give way and the thing wreck itself. I had no fears, yet I watched it curiously when first we began to lift the hay. Our barn takes in hay at the end, from outside, so that it is not tied together above at this end. We often hauled up as much as 1,000 pounds of hay at a draught and not the least fraction of an inch of giving was anywhere noted, although I watched it very closely. It amuses me, however, to see how anxiously some old gentlemen even yet advise that I spike on some plank for collar-beams, for fear that it may "spread."—Joseph E. Wing, in Ohio Farmer.

The Life of Peach Trees.

It is an almost universal complaint that peach trees do not last as long as they used to do. We do not believe that this is on account of the weather, because late winters certainly have not been so destructive as many that occurred 30 to 40 years ago. The increase of borers and of fungous diseases, in which we include the yellows, are, we think, mainly responsible for the change. By keeping borers out and dressing heavily with potash manures peach trees may be made much longer lived than they used to be. One of the secrets of the longevity of the old-time peach tree was that they were never severely pruned, and never produced heavy crops. The old-time 30-year-old peach trees had a tall trunk, with very little top.—American Cultivator.

Hornless Cows Are Best.

My experience in the past 16 years, in herds of both horned and dehorned cattle, both milk cows and fattening cattle, leads me to the opinion that horns are a great source of trouble and expense to the herdsman, says a writer in the Jersey Bulletin. I have found that cattle that were of a quarrelsome disposition before the operation were rendered as docile as lambs by being dehorned; and in cases of milk cows, their product was materially increased from the fact that they attend strictly to business instead of chasing their mates around the yard or pasture.

FACTS FROM INDIANA.

They Furnish a Solution of the Road Improvement Question from a Money Standpoint.

In a recent paper Prof. W. C. Latta sets forth the results of investigations which he has made in Indiana. He sent out a large number of letters to farmers in different counties, and from the replies received he gathers the following facts:

First. The average estimated increase in the selling price of land due to existing improved highways is \$6.43 per acre. The estimates from which the average is made refer in most cases to lands near the improved roads; but in a few instances they apply to all lands of the county. The average increase, therefore, of \$6.43 per acre is lower than was intended for lands in the vicinity of the improved roads.

Second. The estimated average increase per acre that would result from improving all the public roads is nine dollars.

Third. The estimated average cost of converting the common public roads into improved highways is \$1,146 per mile.

Fourth. The estimated average annual loss, per 100 acres, from poor roads is \$76.28.

He says that if these statements are even approximately correct that they furnish a key to the satisfactory solution of the question of highway improvement from the money standpoint. On the basis of the last mentioned estimate the average annual loss per acre from poor roads is over 76 cents. In five years the losses would aggregate \$2,432 for every section of land, and this sum would construct two miles at a cost of \$1,216 per mile, which is \$70 per mile above the estimated cost given by the farmers themselves. The present road tax which, under existing laws, is largely thrown away, would, under a proper system of road maintenance, doubtless keep improved highways in perfect repair.

The advantages to be gained he concisely says are that good roads (1) economize time and force in transportation between farm and market; (2) enable the farmer to take advantage of market fluctuations in buying and selling; (3) permit transportation of farm products and purchased commodities during times of comparative leisure; (4) reduce the wear and tear on horses, harness and vehicles; (5) enhance the market value of real estate.

NEW JERSEY ESTIMATE.

Cost of Haulage Demonstrates the Advantages of Good Road Surface and Light Grades.

The annual report of the state road commissioner of New Jersey makes the following statement of the cost of haulage on various roads, and shows very concisely where the advantages of good surface and light grades come in. He says:

"It costs 9½ cents a bushel to ship wheat from Chicago to New York, a distance of 900 miles; it costs three cents a bushel to haul wheat on a level road a distance of five miles, and on sandy road it would cost nine cents per mile to haul it. The saving on a bushel of wheat with good roads for a distance of five miles would be equivalent to that of 600 miles of transportation by steamer or canal boat, or 375 miles by railroad. One mile of good roads would make a saving equal to 75 miles of railroad transportation. Thus every mile of good roads places the producer 75 miles by rail nearer to the markets. It is estimated that the cost of hauling 500,000,000 tons of farm produce to market is \$2 per ton, or just about \$1,000,000,000; it is also estimated that about 60 per cent. of this last amount, or \$600,000,000, would be saved each year if farmers were able to do this hauling over good roads."

FRUITS AND FLOWERS.

Don't neglect to grow petunias. Handle fruit as if you were handling eggs.

It is the early sprayer that catches the worm.

The Bartlett pear beats the world in popularity.

Akebia quinata is a hardy, pretty vine for the porch.

The Norway and sugar maples are desirable trees.

Pear growers say that clay soil is the best for the pear.

Cut out all the limbs from the pear tree that show blight.

Evergreens are hardy, pretty and make fine wind breaks.

A bed of tulips is a gorgeous sight, having all the colors of the rainbow.

If the tree peddler comes from a reputable nursery you can afford to listen to him.

Trim up the old orchard and give the old tree a banquet of potash spread on the ground.

Send for what you want to any reputable nursery and you will get what you order.

There is no difference between budded and grafted apple trees as to superiority.

It is cheaper to buy fruit trees and plants than to buy fruit—a good deal cheaper.—Western Plowman.

VILLAGE WITH A HISTORY.

The Prominent Part Fountain City, Ind., Played in Abolishing Slavery.

Nine miles north of Richmond there stands the unpretentious village of Fountain City, with its population of 400 or 500 people, most of whom are Quakers or direct descendants of Quakers. In these days Fountain City is scarcely ever heard of outside the borders of Wayne county; but a half century or more ago, when the anti-slavery movement was sweeping through the north, the little settlement was known the country over. The town has a history, unlike any other city or town in Indiana. It was the central station of what was known as the "Underground railway," and the house still stands that sheltered hundreds of fugitive slaves who were en route to Canada. Fountain City was originally called Newport, and it was laid out by Quakers about 1829. This religious sect began the anti-slavery work in Indiana, and the Newport settlement was the first to bring about means to assist in carrying on the underground railway. Anti-slavery work was carried on in secret for several years, but finally the Quakers became bold, and the subject was discussed in the churches and in public meetings. As early as 1830 there were two newspapers published in Newport, both advocating the abolition movement, and they had considerable strength. Levi Coffin, president of the Underground railway and one of the greatest abolitionists of his time, was one of the residents of the town. His fame spread far and wide, and his deeds are a portion of the slavery history of America. Early in life he became convinced of the sinfulness of slavery, and this conviction grew with every year of his life. In 1826 the fugitive slaves began to arrive at the home of Levi Coffin, which then and now stands upon the main street of the village. Benjamin Stratton, Dr. Henry Way, Benjamin Thomas, Samuel Charles and other prominent Friends became identified with the work, and not a day passed in which slaves were not brought into the town, given food and shelter and assisted on their journey toward the north. The burden of the expense was borne chiefly by Levi Coffin, who fortunately was wealthy. Three lines of the "railroad" converged in the town—one from Cincinnati, one from Madison and the other from Jeffersonville. For 20 years this work went on, and in 1847 Levi Coffin went to Cincinnati and there continued the work of assisting the fugitive slaves. In 1864 he went to England as agent for the Western Freedmen's Aid society and aroused the greatest interest in the work and succeeded in getting from prominent men of that country substantial contributions. In 1876 he published a volume of 700 pages relative to the anti-slavery work carried on by him and his associates. He died at Avondale, near Cincinnati, in 1877.

Newport, or Fountain City, is still much as it used to be in appearance. Its people are quiet and law-abiding and noted for their extreme hospitality. Many of the historic landmarks stand as they did 60 years ago, and the home of Levi Coffin will never be torn away.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

An Easy One.

"Tell me," said Snaggs to Spiffins, as they met on the street, "how you can judge whether a man has wheels in his head."

"If that is a conundrum I'll give it up," replied Spiffins. "What is the answer?"

"By the spokes that comes out of his mouth."

"Good enough! I'll try that on my wife."

When Spiffins reached home he said: "My dear, I heard a good conundrum to-day. How can you tell whether a man has wheels in his head?"

"That's easy," replied Mrs. Spiffins. "He has wheels in his head if he talks and acts like you."

This was not the right answer, but Spiffins said never a word in reply.—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

Progress of Japan's Masses.

A newspaper printed in the interest of workmen has been established in Japan. It aims to advance the rate of wages and advocates as a means to that end the establishment of labor unions. The danger apprehended by other manufacturing nations that cheap labor in Japan would give the producers an overwhelming advantage is not likely to prove seriously menacing. As new demand shall be created for labor in Japan wages will commensurately advance. The indications are that that swiftly progressive nation is making an advance along the lines of civilization which involves the whole body of the people. There is a general lifting up of the mass, which is one of the most remarkable occurrences of the present century.—Philadelphia Record.

Didn't Think It Necessary.

"George, dear," said the young wife, with a deep-drawn sigh, "why is it you never talk sweet nonsense and flatter me like you did before our marriage?"

"Oh, then it was purely a matter of business," replied George. "My employer always told me it was a waste of time to praise the goods after the sale had been made."—Chicago Evening News.