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Mercer F.P. 1898

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It Rages Furiously on the Pacific Coast.

EXCITING SCENES IN SEATTLE.

The Rendezvous of Gold Seekers From All Over the Country—Experiences of Returning Argonauts—Advice Alone Is Plentiful and Cheap.

[From Our Special Correspondent.]

SEATTLE, Wash., Feb. 23.

The Klondike craze is the mining event of the century. People are rushing to Alaska from the four quarters of the earth. The excitement waxes. What will be the end?

It has wrought a transformation in Seattle as if by magic. It has drifted Tacoma out of the doldrums. It has awakened the somewhat somnolent Portland. It has set San Francisco in a flutter. It has enriched Vancouver and Victoria. Hotels and restaurants swarm. Boarding houses multiply. Farmers are hurrying their surplus meats and vegetables to market. Dog fanciers are disposing of their finest canines at high prices, and the large cities have been ransacked for stray curs to bear the gold seekers and their outfits into the frozen recesses of the north.

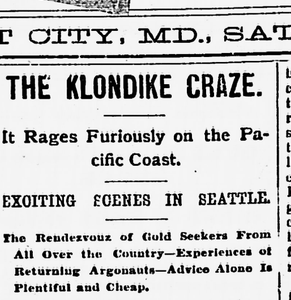
The schemer, the gambler, the thimble rigger and the fakir are seeking their victims with considerable success.

Wonderful Mining Devices.

There are devices thicker than leaves in Vallombrosa and more wonderful and intricate than the Keely motor for wresting the yellow metal from its icy shackles.

"Well, I swan!" said a weather worn old miner as he gazed in the window of a Seattle store today. "So they call that a new gold washer! Why, I wouldn't cart that thing across the street for it. Yet there is plenty of durn fools a-buyin on it."

There are great augurs to bore the shining metal from the frozen ground.



STEAMER LEAVING SEATTLE.

They work well—in the shop windows—and perhaps they may in actual practice, provided any shining metal can be found to bore out.

There is a rich crop of thawing machines. They work by steam and by electricity and by muscle and, oh, so smoothly by the well turned phrases of their promoters!

And the Alaska clothing outfits! Every other store has its complement. Much of it is both fearful and wonderful. Some of it is enough to scare the arctic beast from his lair or frighten fish out of water.

The meek reindeer, the proud elk, the fractious nannygoat, the patient ox, the docile mulley cow, the sturdy burro, the Texan pony and the Montana cayuse have been pressed into service. Each has its champion, each its detractor, for whereas you can load the bowwow, but you can't eat him; you can eat the ox, but you can't teach him to skate; you can drive the goat, but you can't prevent him from eating up your arctic boots, and so on ad infinitum.

A carload of dogs came in from the east the other day. They were crated in pairs, and, although they had been together long enough, they had only a speaking acquaintance and made the welkin ring with their howls and snarls. There was more or less dead dog too.

"Durn your picter," said their owner, a far down easter, to a fine Newfoundland that stood over the body of his roommate after having shaken the breath out of him and stripping his skin into shoestrings, "ef you hadn't cost me so much, I'd bore a hole clean through you! But you'll get fight enough afore you get to Alasky."

The big animal had bitten its master and stampeded the trainhands, but he was too valuable to be suitably punished when even dogs of low degree are worth $50.

All Sorts of Advice.

The one thing of all that is most plentiful and cheap—that is, most paradoxical, puzzling and bewildering—is advice. It floats along the streets, plays up and down the hotel corridors and rises and lowers with the elevator. It leans up against the bar and wanders in and out of the stores and restaurants. You cannot escape it. It has set some uncertain souls crazy. I have just had a talk with a young man from St. Louis.

"When are you going to start for the Yukon?" I asked.

"I don't know," was the reply. "I've been here four weeks, and I'm likely to stay here four more if I don't get hold of something more certain. I've talked with 100 people who know all about it, but I tell you it looks rather dubious. One tells me to go to Copper river; another offers me an eighth of a claim on Hunker creek for $1,500, and he shows the stuff he got out of it too. But how under the sun can I get up there? A fellow just in says it will cost at least $1,000 to pack a year's grub to Dawson City over the Chilkoot. There's a man standing over by the door who tells me to take the Dalton trail, and yesterday some one claimed that the Teslin lake route is the only one you can get to Dawson City by. He says the Skaguay and Chilkoot are lined with stalled goods and people. I may go to Cook's inlet yet. I'm keeping my eyes and ears open. Don't you forget it."

I am afraid the young man will be in Seattle or St. Louis another year from now.

Some Adverse Opinions.

Nor is the advice by any means all in favor of Alaska. I should judge its concensus is against it. The charge is frequently made that the transportation companies are largely responsible for the craze, and some have said it has been carried to an extent little short of criminal, but I am bound to state that this is untrue. That there is great rivalry among the various railroad and steamboat lines to get the business is true, and of course the newspapers all lay the strongest claim for their own cities as outfitting and shipping points. But the boom itself has needed no organized or extraneous assistance. Success is usually voluble and is often bumptious. It is magnified as it is rolled from tongue to tongue. Failure is quiet, retiring and broods in silence.

Yet the cautious, discreet and contented are on deck. They say it is wicked and criminal for so many to borrow money, mortgage their homes and hazard their all on a proposition that stands at least 50 chances of failure to one of success.

I heard this well meaning advice given to a man here at the hotel the other day, and this was the reply he gave:

"I guess you don't know my business as well as you do your own, stranger. You say I have no chance of success up there, but I know better than you do how much chance of success I had where I came from."

I ventured to ask the man where he hailed from.

"I own a farm in Nebraska," said he, "or would if it wasn't mortgaged for about all it's worth, and for the past ten years I've been able to just about make both ends meet."

"But wheat brings a good price now?"

"Yes, when a man has got any to sell. But my buildings and crops have been swept away twice by cyclones, and we've had three droughts that burned up my crops cleaner than a fire would do it. I may be an idiot to hunt gold in Alaska, but my wife and boy will take care of the farm, and you can't lose what you haven't got."

Thus, while adverse and conflicting stories and advice may have caused individuals to waver and in some cases to turn back and while many who started are already stranded and "strapped" owing to insufficient funds, nothing can stem the incoming and outgoing tide.

A few days ago I talked with a man named Frank Harman of Meadville, Pa., who was grub staked by a friend and who left for the Klondike July 28 of last year. He arrived in Dyea Aug. 19 and went in over Chilkoot pass. The journey to Dawson City occupied his time and muscles until Oct. 17. He located a rich claim on Hunker creek which he expects will pay well, but as his food supply gave out and he could buy no food except sugar he was compelled to return for more. He started on the return Dec. 17 and made the trip to Dyea in 23 days over the same trail he went in on, but he had no food to carry beyond the amount he required for the journey. He slept in the snow, froze his ears, climbed ice packs ten feet high and was obliged to wait over a day on two occasions to avoid losing the trail in the storm. He is a rugged, determined fellow and says he shall return later in the season. When I saw him, he said he was waiting in Seattle for funds to take him home, which I learned he soon received. It occurred to me that if it had not been too fearfully cold he might have carried a day or so longer at his claim and washed out a few panfuls of gold or enough to have paid his way home, but perhaps he had no means of doing it. At all events, the young man showed me the lease of his claim from the Canadian authorities, and I have no reason to doubt his story.

A Determined Gold Seeker.

The latest arrival among the Klondike gold seekers is Mr. J. H. Blandy, who, with his wife and child, came all the way from Brainerd, Minn., a distance of 1,800 miles, in a small covered wagon drawn by eight powerful dogs. He brought about 400 pounds of provisions, and his dogs are well trained. While going over the snow belt he took off the wagon wheels and inserted runners. Mr. Blandy will take the entire outfit to Dawson City.

I have just returned from the wharf to see a large steamer sail for Dyea and Skaguay. Her decks were crowded, and nine-tenths of her passengers got aboard at Seattle, the balance having been booked at Tacoma. It rained—it always rains in Seattle at this season—but there was a great throng at the wharf to see the gold seekers off. They stood under dripping umbrellas for an hour and finally waved handkerchiefs and hands until the steamer was far out in the sound.

And there is room for every one who desires to take passage north, for all the available vessels on the coast—steam and sail—are being put into the Klondike trade. Seventeen lines are now in actual operation in this city, and each line has from one to five vessels. To these 17, 12 other companies will be added before the season is ended, while several small vessels are being constructed for private parties and individuals. These last will take north sawmills, mining machinery and tons upon tons of food. This competition will smash rates likewise both for transportation and outfits, for the rivalry is active and sharp. In fact, food may not be worth any more in Dawson City a year hence than it is now in Seattle, and Klondike clothing may soon be a drug in the market. It all depends

A. A. HILL.

Couldn't Be Done.

"Boys," began the Sunday school superintendent impressively, "I hope none of you will ever get into the reprehensible habit of alluding to your father as 'the old man.' When you grow up, no matter how big or old you may be, you should always look up to and respect the silver hairs of your father, who has grown bent and gray working for you in your helpless infancy. Now, all of you who think you can do this, please raise your right hands."

Up went every hand except one.

Sternly eying the delinquent, the superintendent solemnly observed:

"Why, young man, I am horrified—absolutely horrified—as well as astonished at your behavior. Don't you wish to raise your hand and put yourself on record as being willing to respect the gray hairs of your father when you grow up to be a man?"

"No. No use tryin; can't do it nohow," unblushingly responded the lad.

"Why not sonny?"

"'Cause he ain't liable to have no gray hair. Dad's bald," chirped the youthful philosopher triumphantly, and amid a general titter the discomfited superintendent gave it up and passed on to something else.—Strand Magazine.

Skulls of the Magi.

In the cathedral at Cologne is a magnificent chapel in which are still kept three skulls reputed to be those of the three magi.

BEATEN BY SHINER.

THE PROFESSOR A RUINED MAN OWING TO THE HOTEL CLERK.

A Novel Use of Hypnotism That Earned Him a Comfortable Living Until He Undertook to Flash a Paste Diamond on the Dapper Night Clerk.

"If it had not been for one of you fellows, I might now be supporting myself comfortably by my hypnotic powers instead of playing the piano and doing vaudeville turns," said the professor after he had finished his stunt at the Friday night smoker of the Hotel Clerks' Life Saving, Social and Outing club.

"It was four years ago," he continued, "when I landed in New York with enough money to run me for two weeks and no prospect of an engagement. It was purely by chance one morning after I had paid my last dollar for room rent that I discovered a way to utilize my hypnotic powers with profit. I am the inventor of it, and if it hadn't been for a hotel clerk I might now be working it. I was down on my luck, and I began looking through the personals and lost and found notices hoping that something would turn up. This notice caught my eye:

"'Found, a sum of money in a pocketbook on Broadway. Owner may get it by proving property and paying for advertising. Mary K. G., 100 West —— street.'

"It occurred to me that Mary was a very honest woman, and I wondered if I couldn't guess a description of the pocketbook and the amount of money and so get it to tide me over. I speculated on what sort of woman Mary was and then came the thought, 'Why not hypnotize her and get her to tell about the pocketbook?' The more I thought it over the better I liked it, and I went to Mary's address to see what I could accomplish. You know that it is an easy matter to hypnotize the average woman. I have done it easily many a time. For ordinary cases I wear a large paste diamond in my scarf, and I ask the subject to look at it closely. In half a minute she is under the influence. When the maid answered my ring at the address given in the advertisement, I told her that I had come to claim the purse. She shouted up stairs:

"'Mrs. Green, here is the gent what lost the money,' and Mrs. Green came down, evidently very much disturbed by her maid's awkwardness.

"'Before I say anything about the pocketbook, madam,' I said, 'won't you be good enough to look into this diamond in my scarfpin and see if it is cracked? A boy threw a stone at me as I entered the house, and it struck this pin. I am afraid that he injured it.'

"Mrs. Green was sympathetic and as I stepped to the light she looked at the pin. She brought her eyes close to it and at my request stared at it steadily until I said:

"'Now, Mrs. Green, that is not a pin. It is a pocketbook. Can you see it?'

"'Yes, it is a pocketbook,' she answered in a mechanical voice.

"'It is the pocketbook which you found on Broadway.'

"'Yes,' she answered.

"'Describe it in detail,' I commanded.

"'It is a black pocketbook,' she said, 'with a silver monogram, "J. T. B." on the back. It contained three $20 bills and one $5 bill. That is all.'

"'Thank you, Mrs. Green,' said I, passing my hand across her forehead, and as she gave a little start on coming back to her normal self I continued, 'I am glad that you didn't find any flaw in that diamond.'

"'No, it seems to be all right,' she said naturally. She had come out of the trance without suspecting anything.

"'I came,' I said, 'to see if by chance it was my purse which you found.'

"'If you will describe it,' she said pleasantly, 'I can tell. If it is yours, I shall be pleased to return it.'

"I described the purse as she described it to me, and when I had finished she said:

"'It is undoubtedly your purse, sir, and I will get it for you at once.'

"Wasn't that easy? I got the money all right, and I saw that I had struck it rich. Each day I looked over the papers for such advertisements. You would be surprised to find how many honest people there are in this town. Nearly every week two or three pocketbooks are picked up by people who are anxious to return them. Then there is jewelry, and between the two I managed to make a very good income. Occasionally I would find that the advertiser was a person whom I couldn't hypnotize, and then I backed out as graciously as I could.

"Well, sir, it so happened in the course of business that I investigated an advertisement which ran as follows:

"'Found, in the hall of the Hyphen hotel, a pocketbook containing money and papers. Inquire of Shiner, night clerk at hotel, after 7 p. m.'

"I ought to have known better, but I didn't. That evening I went to the hotel and inquired for Shiner. He was a very dapper little man, and as soon as I saw him I had my doubts. I didn't intend to back down until I was forced to, however, and, telling him that I came to recover a pocketbook, I asked him to step into the inside office with me and incidentally tell me what he thought of my diamond pin.

"The pin interested Shiner, and as soon as we got under the light he began to examine it. I saw from the expression on his face that I had made a mistake.

"'Why, it's simply imitation. It's not the real thing,' he exclaimed. "Just look at mine by way of comparison.' And he unbuttoned his coat and displayed a stud as big as a walnut. It radiated light in many colors. I turned my eyes toward it, and, although I was nearly blinded, I couldn't take them away. It was real and dazzling.

"As I looked it seemed to be winking at me, and then it told me to tell why I had come to the hotel. I told the whole story from the beginning and suddenly I was aroused by a slap on the back. I was in the office. Shiner was looking at me with a grin.

"'Well, you are a smooth article,' he said, 'but you should not attempt to hypnotize a hotel clerk, and above all to flash a paste diamond on him. Did you know that my stone hypnotized you and that you have given your snap away? Well, it did. I know your little game. I am not going to expose you unless I hear of your working it again. Let me tell you, however, that your nerve is gone. You can't hypnotize again because your nerve is gone. Now get out of here, quick.'

"I got out, and I found that the clerk had told the truth. My hypnotic powers were gone. I was ruined. I went back to thumping the piano and doing vaudeville acts. It doesn't pay nearly so well. Because of the evil that Shiner did to me I charged you double rates for my act tonight. Good night, gentlemen. Remember to give me a call when you have another smoker." And out he walked.—New York Sun.

"The Horse Fair."

General di Cesnola informs the New York Times that the Metropolitan museum painting "The Horse Fair" is the original, and that its twin in the National gallery, London, is a replica. Rosa Bonheur painted both, but she painted the New York one first. He thinks she also made a copy in water colors, but he does not know where it is. "The Horse Fair" was given to the Metropolitan museum by Mr. Vanderbilt, who bought it from the collection of the late Alexander T. Stewart, who bought it from Rosa Bonheur herself.

ESTABLISHED 1870.

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4. furnishes the books and stationery with out extra charge.
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WILBUR'S SEED MEAL FOOD.

WILL PUT ANIMALS IN GOOD CONDITION QUICKLY.
WILL MAKE MILCH COWS GIVE MORE MILK.
WILL WARD OFF DISEASE.
WILL FATTEN ANIMALS IN A NATURAL WAY.

5 lb. Box	$ 1.00
15 lb. Pail	2.50
25 lb. Pail	3.75
50 lb. Cabinet	7.00
100 lb. Cabinet	13.00
1,000 lbs.	110.00
2,000 lbs.	200.00

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Home Office, N. W. Cor. Charles & Lexington Sts.,
BALTIMORE, MD.

RESOURCES, December 31st, 1897:

PAID-UP CAPITAL	$1,000,000.00
SURPLUS	1,000,000.00
RESERVE REQUIREMENT	461,427.18
UNDIVIDED PROFITS	37,099.15
	$2,500,524.33

THE OLDEST AND STRONGEST SURETY COMPANY IN THE SOUTH.

BECOMES SURETY ON BONDS of Executors, Administrators, and in all undertakings in Judicial Proceedings. Does nothing to conflict with the business of lawyers.
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—DEALER IN—
Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machines,
Ball-bearing, very latest improvement—excels all others.

Buggies, Stick Wagons and Daytons. Prices to suit the times.
Orders taken for FURNITURE and STOVES of all kinds.

LIVERY TEAMS FOR HIRE, with or without driver
☞HANDY TO RAILROAD STATION.☜

GREAT * OPENING * SALE

OF NEW FALL GOODS

Selected With the Greatest Care Before the Advance of Prices.

We again urge consumers in their own interest TO MAKE THEIR PURCHASES NOW. These prices will have to be advanced to correspond with wholesale market when present stock is sold.

—OUR REPUTATION FOR CARRYING THE MOST COMPLETE LINES OF—

MEN'S, YOUTH'S AND BOYS' CLOTHING,
OVERCOATS, LADIES' CAPES AND COATS,
BOOTS, SHOES, HATS AND CAPS,
DRY GOODS, NOTIONS,
LADIES' AND GENTS' FURNISHINGS,

has been well established and it is due to our never-ceasing efforts ever since that

WE ARE THE ACKNOWLEDGED HEADQUARTERS FOR CLOTHING.

—WONDERFUL BARGAINS IN—

BLANKETS AND COMFORTS.
DON'T FORGET TO GIVE US A CALL.

PEOPLE'S BARGAIN STORE,
AARON SCHROEDER, Propr.,
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