

Travellers' Guide.

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY (N. W. Division)
CANADA PACIFIC RAILWAY

A Trip to Dawson.

I have not written to you for some days for the reason that I have neither time nor materials. I left off at the bottom of page 70 of this letter, and since have got this paper and pencil. I mentioned above the two Seattle men. Well, I saw them and their outfit, which consists of food and a cabin. The food could not last in both outfit, but it is ample to last in the cabin. The cabin is located about one and a half miles up the Klondike river and from Dawson. It is a nice little cabin, 11x14, and in it we could be very comfortable had we plenty of food. Well, I told the boys, Mr. McNally and Mr. Elmer, just how we were situated. They were willing to sell for \$1,700 because they wanted to get out of the country before spring, realizing that they had not enough food for both of them. I told them that I had only \$500 in gold dust (there is no such a thing as coin here). They finally consented to take the \$500 and accept my order on Mr. McKay, payable in San Francisco. I took them up and we moved into the cabin four days ago, and here we are now. The boys expected to get right out, but yesterday, and before the bargain was consummated by the payment of the money, the river froze up and the ice piled so high and rough that they were unable to get out, and probably will not get away for a month. In consequence the sale is off, and we are once more left destitute, or rather dependent on each other. The two boys are as fine men as I ever came across. They insist that we stay right here until we can provide for ourselves. God only knows how and when we can do this. As for myself I can easily provide for myself if I were sent I have been unable to provide for Alfred, and of course I can accept nothing which does not include him. Since last writing I have met Dick Healy here in Dawson, and I can tell you he is a "rich" fellow. He heard me talk and I did him, and his actions showed him to be a man, every inch of him. He made inquiries of a party who knew of me and my misfortunes, a man by the name of Pierson. Pierson said to him, "You do not want to see Miller, because he is the hardest luck story you ever heard." Heathy very indignantly said, "If that be so I shall make it my business to hunt him up, because he will need me all the more." He at once asked what kind of a look-alike was he, and was told I was an old man with grey hair and whiskers, about 50 or 60 years of age. He replied I could not be the man he was looking for, as the Miller he knew was a young man. Well, to cut the story short, I sent four men and I got it. I had been offered to take me right in with himself and partner, and to share with me equally on everything, food, clothing and cabin, as also mining ventures. This, of course, I could not do, because of my partnership with Alfred. He then went to Captain Hanson, the Manager of the Alaska Commercial Co., and told him he would be responsible for the payment of anything the captain might let me have. Captain Hanson told him the same as he did me, that he had no food, but finally consented to outfit me out of his own private stock. This is the position I am now in. I still have my \$500 and that is all. I do not at all, either, because I accidentally came across Fred, Spencer, to whom Harry Young gave me a letter, and he, too, has proven a friend. He has outfitted me with clothes, and the clothes the Alaska Co. gave me. I can give to Alfred. Both Alfred and I have offered to do any kind of work for our board, no matter what it might be; but have failed to get it; but we could get all we wanted at fifteen dollars a day if we had food. In fact the first question asked when one applies for work is, "Have you grub?" and if you have not you cannot get work. To-night I am seated in a nice warm cabin and as comfortable as I have ever wanted to be. The moon shines so brightly that we can almost read out of doors. You can easily see by moonlight what time it is. The weather is not cold, being above zero. Twice since I have been here I have been below zero, but I have not minded it since I have been warmly dressed. I have completely recovered from the trip, and never felt better in my life. The cold weather I really enjoy, it is so invigorating. One can feel as though he could stand anything. I am not the "old man" any more, as I have shaved, the boys in the cabin having a razor. My hair, of course, is gray, and hangs down well over my ears. Henry Ward Beecher, but this I do not mind enough to pay \$100 to get it cut. In fact I am afraid to spend any money for fear of being cheated. The only way you spend money here is to give the seller your sack of gold dust, and he weighs out the price and keeps it; giving you back the rest of your sack. If he weighs correctly you are all right, but if he takes fifty cents, one dollar or whatever he wants more than the price, you are here a wiser until the bottom of the sack is reached. One of the Chelchis boys found in spending \$500 that he was out \$11.75. There is great indignation here at the recent mining laws. They have cut down the number of feet you can take in a claim in any new district from 500 feet in length to 100 feet, and are going to charge 20% royalty on all gold taken out. Two meetings of miners have been held since we have been here, to protest to the Government against the enforcement of the law. It will drive lots of people who are here away, over to Alaska, and will stop lots of those who are coming. Nothing but absolute starvation for either myself or Alfred will induce me to make the trip out this winter, with or without dogs, as I fully realize the dangers and difficulties of the journey. I was introduced last night to an old timer here, who has traveled all over the country at all times of the year, and he says lots of people will freeze to death on the trip out this year, as many are going to attempt it with no more than a few pieces of clothing, and barely sufficient food, to make it under the most favorable circumstances. If I am compelled to go I will make clothes of one of the fur robes, and take the other to sleep in, and will take 60 days' provisions with me; and even though we may be ten miles a day this will be sufficient, as the distance is only 688 miles, so take it altogether, I am sure to be safe. Don't worry about me, therefore. I think I have had my share of bad luck anyway, and the probabilities are greatly against anything serious happening on the way back, as it would hardly be reasonable to expect bad luck would attend a poor devil on both trips. 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For this \$161.75 I have obtained credit, and sold Capt. Hanson's outfit either when I got to work or when I give him an order on San Francisco. If he wants the order this will make \$661.75 altogether. Of the \$500 obtained through Livernash I have used \$130.75 as follows: 25 lbs. of beans.....\$ 3 75 10 lbs. corn meal..... 2 00 10 lbs. griz..... 2 00 25 lbs. bacon..... 27 50 25 lbs. dried peaches..... 6 25 1 doz. cans milk..... 6 00 1 doz. cans peas..... 6 00 25 lbs. sugar..... 7 50 10 lbs. butter..... 12 50 2 pr. mukluks (winter boots)..... 7 00 These things I managed to get from the N.A.T. & T. Co. store. I am satisfied I never would have got them but for the help of the wife of the manager, who became interested in the story of my wreck. When I went from Capt. Healy's home to the store, the clerk would not fill the order until I had seen Capt. Healy, and while I was waiting dozens of persons tried to purchase provisions and boots, but were refused. I could easily sell the same things on the street to-day for \$300, so you can see how fortunate I have been. I also purchased a sheet iron stove with two stove holes, the top from the only tin store in the place, which I paid \$50, making a total of \$130.75, and leaving me still on hand \$369.25, with which to get other things needed. I am going to-day to see a man who I heard last night has two 50-lb. sacks of flour, for which he will take \$100, or \$50 a sack. This is \$25 a sack cheaper than the street price, and I will buy it if he will sell for that price, as we have only four sacks. In this country it takes three pounds of dry food per day for one man. We have now about 700 lbs. of the two of us. It will be seven months, or 210 days before the boats get in. At three pounds a day each the two of us will consume 1,260 lbs. of food, which compels me to rustle up 500 lbs. more. I have given up the idea of going out. 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He is going to take Alfred out with him, and does not know, although he has no use whatever for him for three months; and will feed him and give him \$100 a month. He is simply to help me in case I am unable to get more money, to make the fur and barely sufficient food, to make it under the most favorable circumstances. If I am compelled to go I will make clothes of one of the fur robes, and take the other to sleep in, and will take 60 days' provisions with me; and even though we may be ten miles a day this will be sufficient, as the distance is only 688 miles, so take it altogether, I am sure to be safe. Don't worry about me, therefore. I think I have had my share of bad luck anyway, and the probabilities are greatly against anything serious happening on the way back, as it would hardly be reasonable to expect bad luck would attend a poor devil on both trips. 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