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EXTRAORDINARY WEDDINGS.

Eight of the most remarkable marriages on record took place within a few weeks in the parish of St. Marie, Quebec. Two neighbours named Morin and Rheume have each eight children, four sons and four daughters. Rheume's four sons have married Morin's four daughters, and Morin's four sons have married the daughters of Rheume.

READS LIKE A DIME NOVEL.

DESPERATE GANGS OF MEN IN THE KLONDIKE REGION.

A Returned Klondiker Gives His Experience—Some of His Friends Murdered for Their Gold—A Chicago Man's Experience With the Ghouls of the Mountains.

The expected is happening. The sudden rush of desperate men into the Klondike region late last season is being followed by the appearance of tales of violence and robbery in the new El Dorado.

Dawson City itself is believed to be fairly safe, as the desperate characters there are overawed by numbers. The worst that can happen to a man is to be cheated of his hard-won gold-dust in a gambling den. But in the sparsely settled region round about murder and robbery are rife.

George F. Barry, a recently returned Klondiker, makes this statement: "My story sounds so much like a dime-novel adventure that I am almost ashamed to talk about it. I went over the Dyea trail with a party of six early in March, 1897. The trail was then new and in bad shape, and we were compelled to throw away a lot of supplies. We finally settled in what is now known as Dead Mule Valley, and laid out our claims. We had fair luck, and before the winter set in had cleared up nearly \$2,000 apiece. In the mean time twenty other miners had come down from the Klondike region and made their homes in the valley.

Toward the last of September, two strangers, claiming to be unlucky prospectors, wandered into camp and spent a week with us. By that time we were all anxious to get back to Dawson, but had not made up our minds as to the best way of reaching the town. The two strangers said they could lead us through the passes to the Dawson trail. A deal was made with them to act as guides for the party, their pay to be \$500 each.

"I don't know how it was, but in some manner I became suspicious of the strangers, and at the last minute Pete Farrel, 'Dutch' Bauer and I dropped out of the party. Our only fear then was that the guides were making a bold bluff to earn the \$1,000, and might get us

LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS.

We had no idea they were pilots for a band of ghouls, as they afterward turned out to be. We tried to induce the other campers to wait, but the strangers had won them over, and early in October Farrel, Bauer and myself bade the others good-by. Nobody has even seen or heard of any member of that party, except the guides, since that day.

"One week later Farrel, Bauer and I struck camp and took up a trail to the west. After a five-weeks' struggle and great suffering our little band of three reached Dawson, and we were surprised to learn that our friends had not arrived there. We waited nearly a month for them, and then started for home. Dawson is full of energetic newspaper men and the arrival of a party of twenty men with fully \$100,000 in gold dust could not have been overlooked. All three of us made efforts to induce the Dawson people to get up a rescuing party, but were unsuccessful.

"As I have said, we waited for nearly a month, and then got ready to start for home. Just as we were about to leave town I ran into one of the ghoulish guides in a gambling house, and at once asked him where our friends were. The chap was drunk and ugly and replied, with an insolent leer: "If you'll go back a few hundred miles on the trail you'll find them waiting for you." The boldness of his answer made me lose my head, and instead of letting the matter drop there I started in to 'mix up' with him. This was a job I got the worst of, as the room was full of desperadoes who were plainly in sympathy with him, and at the first opportunity I turned tail and ducked out of the den, something I should have done at the beginning before speaking to the bandit.

"Hunting up Farrel and Bauer, I told them of what had occurred, and we at once went to the authorities and laid the matter before them. Inside of an hour a posse of

THIRTY ARMED MEN

was ready to surround the gambling-house and take out the ghoul, but the fellow had been taken away by his companions and we could not pick up the trail.

"Later we learned that the man went under the name of 'Yellow Tom,' and was an all-round bad man. Two days before we reached Dawson he had shown up with a big lot of gold dust, which is now plain was stolen from the men he murdered. Stronger proof than this was found in a sled which was owned by one of our Dead Mule Valley party. This was unearthed in a second-hand supply store along with some guns and blankets which I had some trouble in identifying, and the proprietor said positively he had bought the stuff from 'Yellow Tom.'

F. L. Keating is a Chicago man who has had experience with the ghouls of the Klondike. Mr. Keating's story is as follows: "I came out of the Klondike district with two comrades early in November last by the overland route. For two weeks we struggled on over mountains of ice and snow, and, being pretty well tired out, got a little careless. Suddenly two strange men were where us. Nobody seemed to know where they came from; apparently they had just sprung up out of the underbrush,

and I didn't like the way the thing looked.

"We left Dawson with \$16,000 in dust, and this fact must have been known to the gang, for nothing else would have brought those men out there in that weather. They insisted that they were prospectors bound to the diggings, but they had no packs, no mining outfits, and only two days' rations of food and their rifles.

"We were then crossing the Dalton trail and were heading for Fort Selkirk. Repeatedly we had to lay down our weapons and assist in handling the packs and helping each other up and down the hills. The two strangers were always together in the centre of the party, and their guns were always close by them. I did not believe they would attack us alone, but suspected they would try to

LEAD US INTO A TRAP.

At the first halt I informed my companions of my suspicions. We decided upon a plan. We were to drop behind the strangers at the first open stretch of country and then do a little hold-up business ourselves. We were convinced that the strangers were robbers, and that they were after our lives and gold, which practically meant the same thing to us, for we had risked our lives for the gold and were determined to do so again. Phil Daly, one of my partners, was a big, strapping fellow, always ready for a fight. Nelse Thompson, my other comrade, was a fighter and full of nerve.

"All went well until about 2 o'clock that afternoon. We managed to keep the strangers in front of us, and our guns always ready for action. When the right moment came I sang out: 'Hold up your hands,' and at the same time our rifles came to a level. The strangers faced about, looked down the muzzle of our rifles, and up went their hands. Then Daly gave the strangers a short talk, plain and to the point.

"We don't like your company," said Daly, "and you can't travel with us any longer."

"Daly then ordered them to retrace their steps. The rascals swore and pleaded, but when at last Daly lost patience, and lifted his rifle, saying: 'Get along now, or you are both dead men,' the pair started on a run back over the trail. We could hear their curses and threats for ten minutes.

"We were determined not to be taken unawares, and I stood guard for the first three hours of the night. Nelse took his turn next, and I went to sleep near Daly. Daly went on watch just before daylight. Suddenly I was awakened by

THE SOUNDS OF SHOT.

I jumped up, grabbed my rifle and ran toward my comrades, whom I saw kneeling behind a group of bowlders to the left of our camp. I did not know what was up, but Daly soon enlightened me by shouting: "The devils are behind those trees and the woods are full of them."

"We opened a steady fire, and the unseen enemy was just as wasteful of ammunition as we were. Finally, just as the light was growing, six men broke from the clump of trees and made a rush for a steep hill a hundred yards to their left. Two were wounded and had to be assisted. We recognized one of the wounded men as our companion of the day before, and among the uninjured bandits we distinguished the ugly features of the second stranger. We winged another of the bandits as he reached the bottom of the hill, but he was quickly caught up by his comrades.

"By the time we had made our way across the stream that divided our camp from the hill over which the bandits had retreated all trace of them had disappeared. We hunted for an hour, but finally gave up the chase and resumed our march.

"Ghouls? The mountain trails are full of them, and many an honest fellow, after months of suffering and hardship, has come out with a happy heart and full sacks of dust, only to be cruelly robbed and murdered.

"The transportation and outfitting companies will deny my story, but they have good reasons to keep the truth back."

WISE WORDS.

They who forgive most shall be most forgiven.—Bailey.

Charm strikes the sight, but merit wins the soul.—Pope.

Learning makes a man fit company for himself.—Young.

Sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.—Tennyson.

To know how to wait is the great secret of success.—De Maistre.

Who makes quick use of the moment is a genius of penance.—Lavater.

Opportunity sooner or later comes to all who work and wish.—Lord Stanley.

Hard workers are usually honest; Industry.—Bovee.

To see what is right, and to do it, is want of courage or of principle.—Confucious.

The drying up of a single tear nas more of an honest fame, than shedding seas of gore.—Byron.

A man's own good breeding is the best security against other people's ill manners.—Chesterfield.

Judge thyself with the judgment of sincerity, and thou wilt judge others with the judgment of charity.—J. Mason.

Make no display of your talents or attainments for every one will clearly see, admire and acknowledge them, so long as you cover them with the beautiful veil of modesty.—Emmons.

Let falsehood be a stranger to thy lips; shame on the policy that first began to tamper with the heart to hide its thoughts, and doubly shame on that righteous tongue that sold its honesty and told a lie!

FAMOUS PRIVATE RESIDENCE.

No. 10 Downing Street, London—Prime Minister's Official Residence.

The most famous private residence in London is No. 10 Downing street, Whitehall, the official residence of the Prime Minister of the British Empire, and it is satisfactory that although the Government has decided to erect a new front to it, the alterations about to be carried out in the street will not render the demolition of this house necessary. Downing street gets its name from Sir George Downing, Secretary to the Treasury in 1667. No. 10 originally belonged to Lord Lichfield, Master of the Horse, who retired from England with James II. It then fell into the hands of the Crown. George I. gave it to the Hanoverian Minister, Baron Bothman, for life.

After the Baron's death, George II. in 1732, offered the house to the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole. Walpole accepted it, on condition that the residence should attach to the Premiership forever. Three years passed before he took up his residence there. Then he was succeeded by Lord Carteret, who was followed by First Lord after First Lord until the present day. Outside there is a well-worn brass plate upon which may be deciphered the words,

"FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY."

You enter a large, square hall as wide as a room, and occupying nearly the whole of the depth of the house. The hall is plainly furnished with a hat stand, an old eight-day clock, and a porter's old-fashioned upholstered chair. An ugly Georgian fire grate completes the picture. From the hall to the garden at the side and rear of the house runs a narrow corridor, while the vista is closed at the right by the stairs leading to the first floor. The ground floor is chiefly occupied by secretaries' rooms, and by the old Cabinet chamber. This room is some fifty feet long by twenty in breadth.

It is now found too small for use as a Cabinet chamber, and the Cabinet meetings take place in a larger apartment upstairs. The old room, however, is much the pleasanter of the two. In the first place, its windows—five in number—open on to the famous terrace overlooking the garden of No. 10. Both terrace and garden are of historic interest. A cartoon by John Leech, showed the Palmerston Cabinet taking an airing on the terrace while awaiting war news from the Crimea. The garden is very pretty, with its trim lawn overlooking the Horse Guards. The lower window is the room so closely identified with Lord Beaconsfield's tenure of No. 10. The reception rooms are of considerable interest. The first of the series contains a number of striking portraits of bygone occupants of the house, the most notable being that of Richard Weston, Earl of Portland, a Lord High Treasurer of Charles II.'s days.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY DINNERS

The dining room is an imposing apartment, and here it is that the Queen's birthday dinners take place.

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and market reports accurate.

The chief feature of this, as of the inner reception room, is the fine candelabra hanging from the ceiling. Each contains at least fifty candles. The appearance of the house from Downing street does not suggest its real extent. There one sees three stories and attic; but the curious would find at the rear, a large addition, built over a century ago, in which are situated the most important apartments of the house. One of the customs of the Cabinet is that every member of the Cabinet has a key of the garden gate at the back, which he returns on leaving office. Memories of many famous men cluster round this old house, and it is only fitting that it should be preserved as long as possible.

FLOGGING BY MACHINE.

Flogging has become so indispensable in Russia that some inventor has perfected a machine which saves the human arm. Under the flagellation of the machine taxes and arrears are to become speedily collected.

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We take this opportunity of thanking our customers for past patronage, and we are convinced that the new system will merit a continuance of the same.

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