

CAPE NOME STORIES

The Gold is There, but Not for Everybody.

OVERADVERTISED, OVERCROWDED

No Truth in the Reports of Rich New Discoveries—Most of the Gold Hunters Disappointed.

NOME, July 28.—Perhaps never in the history of the world did one turn out a more complete disappointment than has this Cape Nome.

Some of the reports of rich new discoveries in the Nome country are so exaggerated that they are almost unbelievable.

What, then, is the matter with the Nome country? Is it a whole street, a tremendous lake and a swindle, gotten up to enrich the transportation companies?

No doubt many such reports have reached the states by this time and found full credence among those who stayed at home and "told you so" before you left.

But in justice to the Nome country let me say that it was not all a fake; the country was never a swindle.

There is a lot of gold here; some of the richest placer mines in the world are to be found here.

The mines on Anvil, Snow and Pioneer creeks, and the claims on Anvil Creek (Discovery No. 1 above and No. 1 below) between \$30,000 and \$40,000 are taken out every 24 hours.

One set of sluices takes a very scant supply of water. With plenty of water, they expect to more than double this amount.

The gold is here, but what has happened to the country in the head is that the conditions for working the mines have been exceptionally unfavorable.

Driest Summer Ever Known. This summer so far has been the driest ever known in this section of Alaska.

No rain to speak of having fallen for the last two months. All the creeks, gold-producing creeks, with the exception of Anvil, are almost entirely dried up.

On the other hand, the water supply has gradually decreased, men have been laid off, and on some of the open claims work has stopped.

The waterworks and the Lane railroad out to Anvil Creek have furnished employment to some 300 men, most of whom were shipped to the coast by San Francisco by contract.

Both of these works will be finished in a few days, thus throwing more idle men on the labor market.

On the railroad the wages are only \$2 per day, and the conditions here, that even at these figures hundreds of men are anxious to go to work.

The beach diggings, which last year proved such an attraction to the gold-hunters and which made Nome world-famous as a poor man's camp, have not come up to promise.

It seems that the richest beach diggings were worked out last winter and now, to use the words of a poor Russian Finn, whom I spoke with yesterday, "the beach is gone to black." I have had some evidence of that, but you must bear in mind that the paydirt was only found in streaks and spots which were soon worked out.

The extent of the beach diggings was the beach to not as some of the papers stated—40 to 150 miles—but about 25 miles at the most; that is, between Nome and Sincock Rivers, or, to be more correct, very little was done above Penny River, which is about 10 miles west of Nome.

The beach between here and Penny River presents a lively appearance. It is literally honeycombed with rockers, and steam pumps, the latter puffing away tirelessly night and day.

The beautiful smooth beach has been torn up in a horrible shape until every inch of ground has been turned over and robbed of its golden treasure.

After this summer the famous Nome beach-diggings will be a thing of the past and old ocean will have a job to smooth down this natural high beach to patch up the damage caused by man's greed of gold, and put everything back in its accustomed shape.

What will be done with the many hundreds of steam pumps after this fall is a matter of speculation. Most likely the most of them will be bought up by speculators and shipped down to the States.

What Beach-Washers Get. I wish I could give a correct estimate of the average amount of gold taken out of the beach every day, but this is next to impossible to find out, and can only be speculated on. I would say, however, that \$3 to \$4 per day for the rockers is a very high average.

As for the amount of gold to be guessed at. Some of them are doing fairly well, others merely paying expenses, and a great many others run behind, and after many of the "specs" trial close down.

Many of the ships steam plants up here, after looking the situation over, concluded not to set them up at all, and left them lying on the beach.

I have spoken of many men who have prospected the beach from here to Fort Clarence, but have returned disgusted and discouraged.

The farther up the coast you go the less gold there. Last winter there was a great cry about great strikes at Cape York by the yellow journals below. Let me say there is absolutely nothing in these reports.

There have been no strikes made there, and the beach don't hold enough to work the working. I have this from many reliable sources.

There have been absolutely no new strikes made in this part of the coast since the strike at Topkapi River (30 miles below here), last fall. This was an immense, rich beach-pocket, but it did not last long. I have been told that it yielded about \$100,000.

CHINESE AS FIGHTERS

NO MEAN FOE UNTIL TIME FOR RETREAT COMES.

They Cannot Retreat in Order—Bad Country in Which the Allies Are Now Working—No Forage.

A comparison between the fighting men of Japan and the Chinese soldier shows the balance of strength to be immeasurably in favor of the former.

The Chinese fighter is a fatalist. He fears death but little and in that respect he will prove a foe more to be dreaded by the allied troops in China.

A Chinaman will die bravely, stoically, indifferently, or he will bear wounds patiently and without a murmur.

No matter what hardships he is called upon to undergo there will never be a word of complaint. Death by starvation will be borne as patiently as death by bullet or shell.

Such a man, it would be thought, would make an ideal warrior, and in success there is much to admire about the Chinese soldier.

But in adversity he shows his weak points and herein lies the secret of the power of disciplined troops over the hordes of China.

Once turn the tide of battle against the Chinese and the army becomes a disorganized rabble; once get a Chinaman on the run and he will never stop running while there is a possibility of an enemy in the vicinity.

There is no such thing as organized retreats on the side of the Chinese in the fighting that seems destined to take place in China; the battles will result either in Chinese victories or Chinese routs with rallies out of the question so long as the allies are able to pursue the beaten Orientals.

The fatalistic beliefs that enable a Chinaman to bear himself bravely in battle, or to fight with a stoicism that is a good substitute for courage, add wings to the Chinaman's feet when he feels that his gods are against him, and that nothing is left but flight.

At its best, the Chinese Army is but a horde of men lacking proper organization, badly deficient in discipline and training, offered by utterly incompetent officers, without esprit de corps, or any patriotic pride, and reports to the contrary notwithstanding, armed with out-of-date weapons for the most part, which weapons they are unskilled in using.

I know it has been stated that the Chinese Government has been investing great sums in the purchase of modern arms, and that the police adopted by the forces after the Jameson raid has been followed by the officials at Peking.

To purchase such a store of guns and ammunition as that spoken of needs a great deal more money than the Chinese Government has had at its command, and lacking the money, it is certain that the arms have not been forthcoming.

It is not the collision with the Chinese Army that has the worst effect on the allies, but the difficulties presented by the route leading from Tien Tsin to Peking.

The distance that separates Peking from Tien Tsin is 200 miles, and the route is a long one, unimproved stretch of country presented for the taxation of a military leader's genius than that over which the allies must travel to reach the city of Peking.

One must look long before finding a region where absolutely nothing is to be found by the forager capable of sustaining the life of an army on the march. It will surely be fuel to cook it with if food be taken along. If fuel is scarce there will be food of some kind.

On the march to Peking, however, there is neither fuel nor food. Houses are there, but they are built of dried mud. It is a fact that the army that marches from Tien Tsin to Peking must take along with it all the food and uncooked food and go without the luxury of coffee and fire at night. The roads are bad. That is putting it mildly. The Chinese do not take a pride in their highways, and the only first-class road in this case and the dangers rather increased, for the Chinese will be in immense numbers, although they will not be able to stand before the attack of disciplined troops.

The alternative route is by water and railroad. This is the easier plan of transportation, and the news that the railroad has been cut does not present any very formidable obstacle to the march of the allies, for railroads are repaired very quickly and easily with the material at the command of the military engineer of today.

These problems of transportation are merely those with which military engineers are familiar, and they present no more serious obstacle than those which entail delay and necessitate hard work to overcome. Supplies will have to be taken along for the entire army, just as though the troops were crossing a stretch of sea, instead of an immense expanse of land.

A parallel to the march will be found in the British expedition to Khartoum with its difficulties of transportation rather lessened in this case and the dangers rather increased, for the Chinese will be in immense numbers, although they will not be able to stand before the attack of disciplined troops.

I have likened the Chinese Army to a huge boneless giant that must collapse at the first earnest attack by a well-ordered army. I cannot see any reason why, after a month or two of marching, the Chinese Generals are selected to lead the illustration. I should modify it. While the Japanese have made admirable strides in both military and naval matters, the Chinese have stood still. The Chinese Generals are selected not because they have shown marked aptitude for directing the movements of an army, but because they have proved themselves to be wise men, or men above their fellows in some respects.

Their strategy they know next to nothing. Their simple plan of battle is to hurl the masses of fatalistic soldiers at their command against the enemy, caring little how many men fall, and paying no attention to the simplest rules of war.

The bigger the Chinese armies the greater the slaughter that will result when the Oriental hordes meet the disciplined, well-armed soldiers of the allied forces in a stand-up fight. The story of the Japanese War will be repeated, in all probability. The Chinese will die in a manner that may be described as heroic, but which in reality will be pitifully useless, while the well-trained soldiers of Japan, taught by European and American experts at the game of war, will use their weapons as such weapons were intended to be used, and show again the superiority of skilled fighters over undisciplined masses.

It is my opinion that the Japanese soldiers should be placed in the van on the march to Peking. They understand the Chinese better than the other races do, they are thoroughly familiar with their style of fighting, and, if the march to Peking necessitates the provisioning of the forces on cereal supplies, the Japanese can get along better on that variety of food than their meat-eating allies can.

While the Japanese have gladly availed themselves of the assistance of foreign teachers in learning the art of war, the Chinese have, for lack of a suitable director-general of military affairs, taken advantage of the proffered help of competent instructors in merely a desultory manner. The immense Chinese Army is supposed to be directed by a Board of War, which is divided into four bodies, and has control over a vast host of men, which are split up into forces that are

CHINA WANTS PEACE

done excellent work for the Chinese and they have great confidence in his discretion and wisdom.

Earl Li has traveled over a large part of the world, has met with the foremost people and they are familiar with his ability.

I hope his appointment will be acceptable to the powers and I know the results of the negotiations conducted by him will be satisfactory alike to Chinese and to foreigners for he will be just and honorable in all his dealings.

COMPLIMENTS OVER WALDERSEE. Correspondence With United States Prior to His Appointment.

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GENERAL JAMES H. WILSON

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