The Hood River Glacier.

It's a Cold Day When We Get Left.

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ALMOST TIME TO GO.

XMAS IN KLONDIKE.

ONE DAY OF GOOD CHEER DURING A DREARY WINTER.

At 50 Degrees Below Zero, and While the Bitter Winds Were Roaring, Dawson City Celebrated in a Crude but Joyous Manner.

HE December days and nights, according to one of the miners who came back from the Yukon diggings with plenty of gold, are the most trying of the year in the Klondike region, especially at Christmas time. "If I live to the age of Methusaleh," he says, "I don't believe I shall ever forget Christmas. It was Dawson City's first. Dawson was three months and a half old, and had settled down to be a permanent town. All the miners who had made good locations had by this time housed themselves in pine-board shanties. A few had built shanty frames about tents to secure greater warmth within. All of us who made any strikes of gold at all had done so by October, so we were well along with our gold digging; but we could do less in December than in any month in the year. From the latter part of November to early in January there is only four hours of practical daylight in any day. Many days, when the wind blew hardest—in fact, it blows a gale there all the winter long, and snow and pellets of ice were blown along—candles were kept lighted all day long. In winter, candles and lamps were always lighted between 1 and 2 in the afternoon. The mercury ranged from 26 degrees below zero to 65 degrees below. So we could not make satisfactory headway even in the richest of the diggings. All through December about half the miners used to spend days in loafing about McCarthy's saloon at Dawson. The other half puttered about their cabins, dug a little now and then, mended their fur suits and made shoes from walrus hide.

"At McCarthy's sometimes 150 or more men would gather around the roaring fire and a strange scene it was. Imagine an assemblage of men in a rough, barn-like structure, furnished with board benches, and illuminated by a dozen flickering candles. Some men are dressed in baggy garments of fur, others in several coarse, heavy overcoats over heavy woolen clothes. All have caps of half-cured, shaggy, rancid-smelling fur, so that only the face appears. Every man has a prodigious growth of whiskers, sometimes a foot long, and hair that reaches below the rim of the caps and lies across the shoulders.

"There were but a dozen calendars in all that region and very few men had any idea of dates. Some did not even know what month it was. One day, as we sat at McCarthy's, some one suggested that Christmas was approaching and we thought of observing the occasion. A week before Christmas we all agreed upon a celebration, and, crude though it was, we had a day that none of us will ever forget. It was more remarkable from the fact that there were in and about the little hamlet of Dawson City over 1,100 men. No one earned less than $16 a day, and the larger part had each risen from poverty to possessions worth several thousand dollars in a period of three months. I suppose the combined wealth in actual gold in the district then was nearly $1,000,000, and a clear prospect of increasing it to twice or thrice that sum in another five months. I don't believe that a community richer per capita has existed in this world than that was at Dawson City. Yet we had a mockery of civilization and hardly any of the comforts of life of a lot of paupers.

"Every one was informed on Dec. 24 of the fact that next day would be Christmas. Some 300 of us went down to McCarthy's to celebrate the holiday. Darkness set in at that period at about 1:30 p. m., but we had become accustomed to the 20-hour nights. When it got along to about 11:50 p. m. we got our watches out and waited. At exactly 12 the signal was given. The whistle at Joe Ladue's sawmill screeched for a half hour, and over 300 shotguns, rifles and pistols were discharged, in volleys, singly, in quartets and in trios, for hours. Every one shook hands. Some danced about the room, and big, burly miners hugged one another, while 'Merry Christmas' was shouted again and again. It was the first time in the whole experience of the Klondike that we felt in sympathy with the outside world.

"On Christmas morning we brushed up a bit, and putting on our best rubber boots went and called on our best friends in the mining cabins and settlements, and received our friends from the mining cabins scattered up and down the frozen creeks.

"At 2 p. m., when the darkness was settling down in the valleys, several hundred miners met by agreement at McCarthy's. It was the only building in Dawson that could comfortably hold a large assemblage of people. Mac had prepared a program of events for the day and we had each chipped in an ounce of dust toward defraying the expenses. The sawdust had been removed from the floor and a score of candles and lamps were arranged about the room. McCarthy himself wore a boiled shirt in honor of the occasion. On a broad board table along one wall of the room a luncheon had been arranged for the Christmas celebrators. For a half hour after arriving at Mac's we were busy stamping snow from our rubber boots and walrus hide shoes, peeling off extra coverings and in general hand-shakings and more 'Merry Christmasings.'

"'Now, boys, fall right in and tickle your gizzards over there,' shouted Mac urbanely to the crowd.

"There was room for only fifty to eat at a time, so while one squad was standing up and eating at the table, the rest were sitting about on the benches. We told stories of other Christmas days in other camps, talked about what the people down in the States were doing, wondered what had transpired since we last heard from there (five months before), wondered who was dead, how election had gone, and what the people would say when we go back with our heaps of gold and stories of how rich we had struck it.

"At last the last man in the crowd of Christmas celebrators had been to the long table and had filled up on baked beans, fried pork and bacon, codfish balls, macaroni and coffee. Then Mac read the program and the concert proceeded. A dozen men made speeches—a few of them genuinely humorous—appropriate to the occasion. 'America' and 'God Save the Queen' were sung and resung. The Norwegians and Swedes sang their national songs, and the sounds of the first Christmas celebration in the Klondike were carried on the wind down among the icy crags of the lonely, frozen Yukon. It must have been below 50 degrees below zero when we pulled our fur caps on and strapped our heavy garments about us late that arctic night and went trudging home through the snow to our cabins along the creeks."

Christmas in Russia.

The Russian Christmas is ten days later than the English one, but is celebrated very much in English fashion. Families all meet upon that day and country house parties are many. The tree is a Christmas yew and is beautifully decorated. The gifts are placed on small tables near the tree. The churches are decorated with greens and so are the houses, but no mistletoe is used. Two or three days are public holidays at Christmas time, and the people greet each other with "Happy feast to you." A huge pyramid of rice with raisins in it, which has been blessed at the church, is served at the Christmas dinner, and the meats are goose, duck and sucking pig. A great delicacy at a Russian Christmas dinner is veal which has been fed entirely upon milk for that special day.

A Reminder.

"Why, Mr. Goslin, how good it is of you to call on Christmas day," said Miss Gaskett, extending her hand to the newcomer.

"I wish you the compliments of—aw—the season, Miss Gaskett," replied the young man.

"Do you know, Mr. Goslin, that I can scarcely ever see a Christmas tree without thinking of you?"

"How kind of you to associate me with—aw—something so bwight and intewesting. Is that—aw—why you think of me at such a time, aw?"

"Well, I don't think that is it, exactly, Mr. Goslin. I suppose I think of you when I see a Christmas tree because it is an evergreen."

CONFIDENCE.

Hain't they told you uns the ruin
That has come ter Deacon Chase,
An' the big church row that's brewin'
Sense he danced an' fell from grace?
Wal, on Chris'mas night his darter
Betsey run off ter the dance,
An' the Deacon straightway after
That most wayward gal did prance.
When he reached the Chris'mas party
An' seen Betsey on the floor
Dancin' with Jerome McCarty,
What an ugly scowl he wore.

Betsey growed a right smart paler
When her pap come inter sight,
An' big, buxom Harner Shaler
'Lowed she'd try ter set things right.
As he stood aroun' him glancin'
Harner spoke up mighty peart,
"Did you aim ter jine the dancin'?
Come along an' don't be skeert."
Then she grabbed him, an' the fiddle
Kinder drowned the Deacon's squeal
As she snaked him down the middle
In the ol' Virginia reel.

Now the gait they went gyratin'
Sent the ol' man's stagnant blood
Thro' his veins a-circulatin'
Like a rushin', springtime flood;
An' before he hardly knowed it
He had joined the sinful fun,
An' the way he heeled an' toed it
Shamed the boys of twenty one.
It was wuth a keg o' cider
Jes' ter see him hoe her down,
An' all night that ol' backslider
Bowed an' scraped an' skipped aroun'.

Now you've heerd the tale o' horror,
How from off the hights o' grace
Ter the depths o' sin an' sorrer,
Harner yanked ol' Deacon Chase.

A Proper Christmas Gift.

She had been reading "Aunt Tabitha's Counsel to Young Society Buds," and had fallen into a brown study.

"Yes," she mused, "Tabby is quite right. It is unbecoming for a young woman to accept any Christmas present of value from a young man."

That night Algernon Thinklittle threw himself prostrate before her.

"Take me, Ernestine," he implored; "take this bleeding heart as a Yuletide remembrance—an earnest of years of happiness to come."

She didn't hesitate. She accepted him so quickly that his head swam in a delirium of joy.—New York Herald.

Journal of the Year.

How fair into our hands it came.
Snow-white was every separate page,
Whereon each day we were to keep
The record of our pilgrimage.

Our hearts were tender with regrets
Over past failures; eyes were dim
With watching out the dying Year;
We sorely grieved to part with him.

And grieved still more because the book
Of life he brought and bore away,
Our hands had blotted carelessly
And sadly marred from day to day.

And so we took the New Year's book
With naught of boasting, much of prayer
That when complete, the Judge might find
A cleaner, purer record there.

And yet—and yet—oh, heedless hearts!
How have your promises been kept?
How many crooked lines were penned
And errors made while conscience slept?

And now the final page is turned;
And, in the solemn midnight tryst,
This one last line we humbly add:
"Forgive! forget! for love of Christ!"
—The Interior.

An Old-Time New Year.

The method in vogue in New York City half a century ago was for the ladies of the family to remain at home, much as they do now, while the gentlemen went abroad visiting friends. The visitor entered, shook hands, took a seat, conversed for a few moments, and after partaking of refreshments—of which boned turkey and pickled oysters were the staple dishes and sherry and whisky the most popular drinks—had another handshaking and terminated the visit. The custom is of Dutch origin.

HE American soldiers doing camp and garrison duty may not be able to celebrate this Christmas just as they would like, but most of them will not make a mournful time of it. They have become accustomed to soldier life and indurated to strange climate. This is one of the first requisites in the West Indies towards the enjoyment of rare fruits, rare scenery, and festivities that always crowd the Christmas season. Christmas trees, the American Santa Claus, and stockings, cut comparatively little figure in the celebrations at Havana and in the other Cuban cities, still balls, parties and masquerades follow one another in bewilderingly rapid succession, and it is not to be assumed that the soldier boys will remain in camp all of the time that this fun and variety is going.

This mardi-gras class of celebration, particularly prominent in Porto Rico, is, however, bound to pall on the true American taste, and while it extends over a week or more, the one especial day will be remembered and signalized. In the Philippines our soldier boys find European tastes quite in evidence, with a fair representation of residents from the United States. Manila is a progressive city—cosmopolitan enough to include the energy and variety that make the holiday season quite a gay round of entertainments and celebrations.

In the tented field proper the soldier has occasion to feel joyous and hopeful. Another Christmas tide, and nearly every regular and volunteer on soil now foreign will have returned to where the home Stars and Stripes wave in peaceful grandeur. The palm tree will be a memory, the Christmas tree—real and generous—will bear a double gift for the soldier and the hero!

IN THE CIVIL WAR.

Holidays Were Not Notably Different from Other Days.

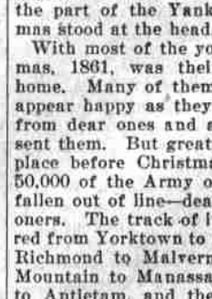
N the armies during the civil war holidays were not notably different from other days. This may be accounted for on the ground that every day with armies in active service, liable at any moment to be ordered to engage in dangerous undertakings, all had nearly enough to think about without spending days or weeks in preparing for a proper celebration of holidays. Of all of the days that attracted unusual attention on the part of the Yankee soldiers, Christmas stood at the head, however.

With most of the young fellows Christmas, 1861, was their first away from home. Many of them had hard work to appear happy as they looked at presents from dear ones and ate the good things sent them. But great changes had taken place before Christmas, 1862. At least 50,000 of the Army of the Potomac had fallen out of line—dead, wounded or prisoners. The track of its march was red—red from Yorktown to Richmond and from Richmond to Malvern Hill; from Cedar Mountain to Manassas; South Mountain to Antietam, and the reddest spot was Fredericksburg. What a gloomy Christmas it was for the Northerners. They had, only a few days before, been badly defeated in their attempt to drive Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia from the heights of Fredericksburg. The people at home may have started a Christmas dinner to the boys, but it did not reach them.

On Christmas, 1863, the army was shivering along the Rappahannock and Rapidan, and as far out as Culpeper Court House. It was too cold, and the men were too poorly housed to enjoy the day.

Christmas dinners were the order of the day in 1864. The army was strung along behind fortifications from Richmond to below Yellow House, on the Weldon Railroad, a distance of nearly forty miles. The Sanitary and Christian Commissions had arranged to supply the army with a Christmas dinner. Few men were overlooked. Except that in 1861, it was the happiest Christmas for the Yankee army since the trouble began. There were many signs that the next Christmas would be enjoyed at home, and so it was by all who escaped from the hot times from March 29 to the evening of April 9, after Grant and Lee had met at Appomattox.

A MOTHER'S MUSINGS.



UET, three-quarters of a pound, bread crumbs, three-quarters, eight eggs. I told her to be careful in weighing, but you can never tell. Last year it fell to pieces before it came to table, and spoiled my pleasure for the rest of the dinner. Father used to say that nobody's puddings were like ours, but that was when I made my own. I wish I could have made them this year, but I dared not suggest it. They are so flighty nowadays, these fine servants. Maria would have taken offense at once, and it would never have done to be without her just now with a house full of visitors.

It felt like old times to-night, and how happy father looked welcoming them all! I'll ruin those boys before the holidays are over. It was the same with our own children; if he was obliged to disappoint them, he was miserable for the rest of the day. Such a tender heart as he has! I never knew a man like him. He has never lost patience with me in all these years, and I have been sharp with him many a time—about such little things! When I have fretted about the children going away and leaving us, one by one, I have remembered his faithful love and been comforted.

Four children, three grandchildren, all of them back beneath the old roof, except—oh, my boy! where are you to-night? What are you doing? You can't go to sleep on Christmas eve without remembering the old home, and your mother, Robbie—the old mother who tried to make your Christmases happy years ago! Father doesn't say anything, but there is a look on his face I know well. He is getting an old man, and he depended on Rob to help him. He was our first. None of the others were quite the same. I remember the Christmas after he was born as if it were yesterday. Eleven months old, and he sat on his high chair like a prince. We gave him a Punchinello on the end of a stick, and when he turned it round it played a tune. His little face of astonishment, how sweet it was! How we loved him! If you had died, Rob, it would have been easier; but to know that you are alive, and don't care—that's the hard part; it is that that breaks my heart!

I shouldn't like to die before Rob comes back. His brothers might be harsh with him. William is very bitter. He has always been a dutiful boy himself, and he cannot understand such behavior. How handsome he looked when he arrived to-night, and how prosperous! He must be making a big income, I should say, by the way they live; but he was always close, and he is worse than ever since his marriage. Emily must have bought a new traveling cloak! Last year she wore a brown one trimmed with fur. It didn't look shabby to me, but she is so extravagant! Five servants now, and only those two children. No wonder Will is getting gray; it must be a strain on him to provide for such a household. I wonder if Hannah remembered to put frilled pillow cases on her bed. I shall be annoyed if she has forgotten, for it is just one of the things Emily would notice. She has all her sheets hemstitched.

The children are beauties! Eric is the picture of his father at the same age, and what a spirit! Cecil takes after his mother's family. I love them dearly, but it's a good thing children come while one is young—I couldn't stand the racket for long nowadays. Ernest looks thin. He doesn't get on, poor boy. It would have been wiser if we had given him his own way and let him go abroad, but we did it for the best. Father says we cannot do more than act upon the light of the moment, and that it is useless grieving over what is irretrievable, but I can't help grieving. Amy has had a hard time! No one would think, to look at her now, what a pretty girl she was when they were married. She has no nurse girl for baby, and that is the same dress she wore last year, with new trimmings to freshen it up. We must give them a check with their Christmas present, but not before the others—they would not like that—just quietly when we are alone.

Minette and Charlie came last, though they live nearest of all. She planned that, the little rogue! I know her tricks. She was not going to arrive in the character of bride without making sure of her audience; and how pretty she was—a perfect picture in those lovely furs. Father says she is exactly what I was as a girl, but my hair was never so golden. And Charlie adores her. I ought to be thankful for that marriage. Her house is prettier than any of the others, but I don't know how she will manage. She uses the best things every day, and never draws the blinds for the sun. When I say anything she pulls my cap on one side and asks if I remember Aunt Christina's soft blanket. They all laugh at me about that, but I can't see the joke. It was far too grand for our room, and the red and green stripes made the furniture look shabby, so I put it aside for one of the children, and now none of them will have it. It can't be soiled, for it is wrapped up in the same paper in which it arrived ten years ago, and it's a beautiful thing—there must be pounds of wool in it, not to mention the silk.

Charlie sits next to Emily. I wonder what she will wear! I wonder which cap I should put on! The one with the pearl drops is the most becoming, but the lace is not real. I'll wear the new one, and let her see that my Brussels is as good as hers. I think I'll give Amy the old Honiton. She has brought presents for everyone, the kind little thing, though she is so shabby herself. She showed me Nell's to-night. Pink silk covers for cushions! She is going to sew them on in the morning, and they will be on the couch as a surprise for Nell when she is carried down to dinner. The pink will make her look less pale. My precious lamb! A week ago I thought she would not be able to come down, but she has stayed in bed and taken every care. She knew it would spoil our Christmas if she were not among us. Ah! what was I saying? Last year she walked down; this year she must be carried—next year, perhaps—— My baby! The last of them all! I can't face it, I can't let her go! I have nursed her night and day for nineteen years, I should have nothing to do if Nellie were not here. And yet to see her grow more and more helpless; to suffer worse pain! She would be well and strong, and she has had nothing but suffering here—never any enjoyment like other girls. There are worse troubles than death—much worse. If I could think of Robbie in heaven! Ah! my boy, where are you to-night? What are you doing? Have you forgotten me, Robbie, altogether? Twelve o'clock striking! Father in heaven, Thy Son's birthday! Hear a mother's prayer. My children! Remember my children!