

A CHEE-CHA-KO IN THE KLONDIKE

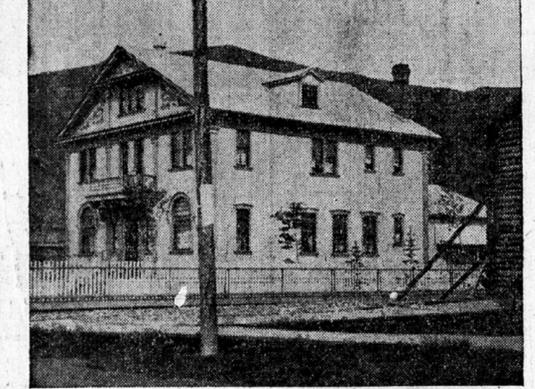
Some Impressions of the Great Gold Camp on the Yukon.

How They Live North of the 64th Degree—Enforcement of Law and Order—The Northwest Mounted Police—Winter Amusements and Social Functions—A Visit to the Mines—Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks—\$4,000 in a Tin Bucket.



In Dawson you are either tolerated as a "Chee-cha-ko" or you have established a social standing as a "sour dough."

More than those under the center of the building and particularly those on the south side, so that, while there may be little change by reason of freezing or thawing in some parts of the building, in other parts there is considerable. This would ultimately destroy a building constructed of brick or stone and loosen the plastering on the walls of a wooden building.



Residence of the Governor of Yukon Territory, in Dawson.

With the outside world and daily newspapers—and were very cordially received. The warmth of the welcome extended to the representatives of the United States senate was nowhere more marked in Alaska than here on the British side under the Union Jack.

THE public buildings of Dawson are exceedingly creditable. They consist of the postoffice, which serves the postal department on the first floor and the customs and other federal departments on the second; a fine eight-room public school building; what is known as the administration building—the office building of the Yukon territory; the municipal courthouse; the governor's elegant residence; the mounted police barracks and others.

THE first sensation experienced in Dawson was that of surprise at the size and appearance of the town. With a population of about 7,000, with streets solidly built up nearly a mile along the river, and business extending back from the river front to Third street, with graded streets, water service and sidewalks and comfortable log and frame store-houses and dwellings, the impression created is one of solidity and permanence, which I venture to say is not generally entertained by those who have not seen this metropolis of the Yukon.

THE town of Dawson extends back from the river bank half a mile and as well up the slopes of the encircling hill or mountain, the extreme summit of which is called the dome. Here on the 21st of June great crowds repair to witness the midnight sun. Visitors are promised a grand prospect from this dome and up its steep ascent Mr. Brackett, Senator Patterson of Colorado and I climbed.

ence. And yet the "sour doughs" speak with real enthusiasm of the winter climate. "It is all right here in winter," said our hospitable host at the Regina. "except when it moderates sometimes and the temperature rises to 25 or 30 below. You see, it feels so much like spring people foolishly expose themselves and catch cold." I can bear no testimony to Dawson's winter climate; I am only a "chee-cha-ko"; but I can testify as to five perfectly glorious days there in July.

In this far-away, isolated country the people are thrown almost wholly upon their own resources for the winter amusement, which, becomes a necessity to successful resistance of the depression which often seizes upon those who are shut off so completely from sharing in the pleasures and occupations of the outside world.

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THE British Yukon enjoys something which American Alaska is asking for and is destined to secure in time. The British Yukon is an organized territory, having a governor, who is known as a commissioner of the Yukon territory, three judges and an executive council or legislature, consisting of five members elected and five appointed in parliament, another body of whom is also appointed and who presides over the sessions of the council, giving the appointed members a majority of one.

THE second day of our stay in Dawson was devoted to the mines. As the guests of M. L. Washburn of the Northern Commercial company, our party was driven in road wagons eighteen miles up Bonanza and Eldorado creeks thru the heart of the Klondike mining region.

THE work on Bonanza and Eldorado creeks, where the first gold strikes were made, consists now mainly of working over the gravel which was panned and sluiced and rocked in the first handling, bringing out only the coarse gold. Dredging machines, hoisting machines and hydraulic giants make it possible to handle so much larger quantities in the same time and at so much less expense to the yard that ground which it was once thought had been worked out with the pan and rocker is now producing rich returns on the best claims.

cause the earth and decomposed rock to flow off. Finally the contents are reduced to a mere handful and on one side of the pan. This is carefully washed in the stream and as the dirt flows out the gold will be found adhering to the bottom. If the gravel contained any. It takes about ten or twelve minutes to wash out a pan of gravel carefully, so that ore which produces 50 cents to \$1 or \$1.50 a pan makes pretty good wages. On the very rich strikes, of course, it produces more, running as high sometimes as \$100 to the pan. The rocker is a different contrivance; a wooden box is made to rock in such a way as to sift down the gold, which is always heavier than gravel, while the refuse is worked off thru an opening near the bottom. A sluice box operated by two men is known as a "Long Tom"; it is eight to twelve feet in length. One man shovels in the gravel on one side and the other one, with a dipper on a long pole, throws in the water from the other side. The gravel is sluiced out thru the lower end and the gold is gathered in the bottom, either on riffles or on a blanket, where it is in the form of fine dust, or by the aid of quicksilver. Where water is more abundant and operations are carried on a larger scale, the sluice boxes are from 50 to 100 feet long, a rapid current of water is turned thru them, the gravel is shoveled into the sluice box by several men and the rapid current works the sand and the pebbles and loose dirt down the sluice and out at the lower end; the gold, in the meantime, collecting in what

While we were waiting to take the train at Skagway an Indian, dressed in the ordinary garb of the white man, but very drunk and very tearful, addressed himself to nearly every one on the platform, expressing his grief in broken English over the death of his mother. It appears that his mother had died a long time before, but he was indulging in a new burst of grief, along with some other things, and seeking sympathy wherever he could for his former condition. This weeping inebriate was "Skookum Jim" and "Skookum Jim" was in at the beginning of things when gold was discovered on Bonanza creek in 1896. "Skookum Jim," by the way, means big.

THE Klondike gold is generally coarse; that is, it is in the form of grains from the size of very coarse corn meal to grains of rice, cracked hominy, peas and full grains of corn, with occasional larger pieces, as large sometimes as twenty-dollar gold pieces. This gravel may either be washed out by the use of a pan about the size and shape of an old-fashioned milk pan, or in what are known as rockers or in sluice boxes. Panning consists of taking a pan full of gravel, stopping over by the running water in the stream, waiting the gravel shaking it until the larger stones come to the surface, throwing them off by hand and gradually working down the gravel until only the sand remains, the contents being repeatedly dipped in the water to

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Senator Patterson of Colorado, Senator Nelson of Minnesota and Senator Dietrich of Nebraska, Watching Mr. Brackett of Minneapolis Pan Out Gold.

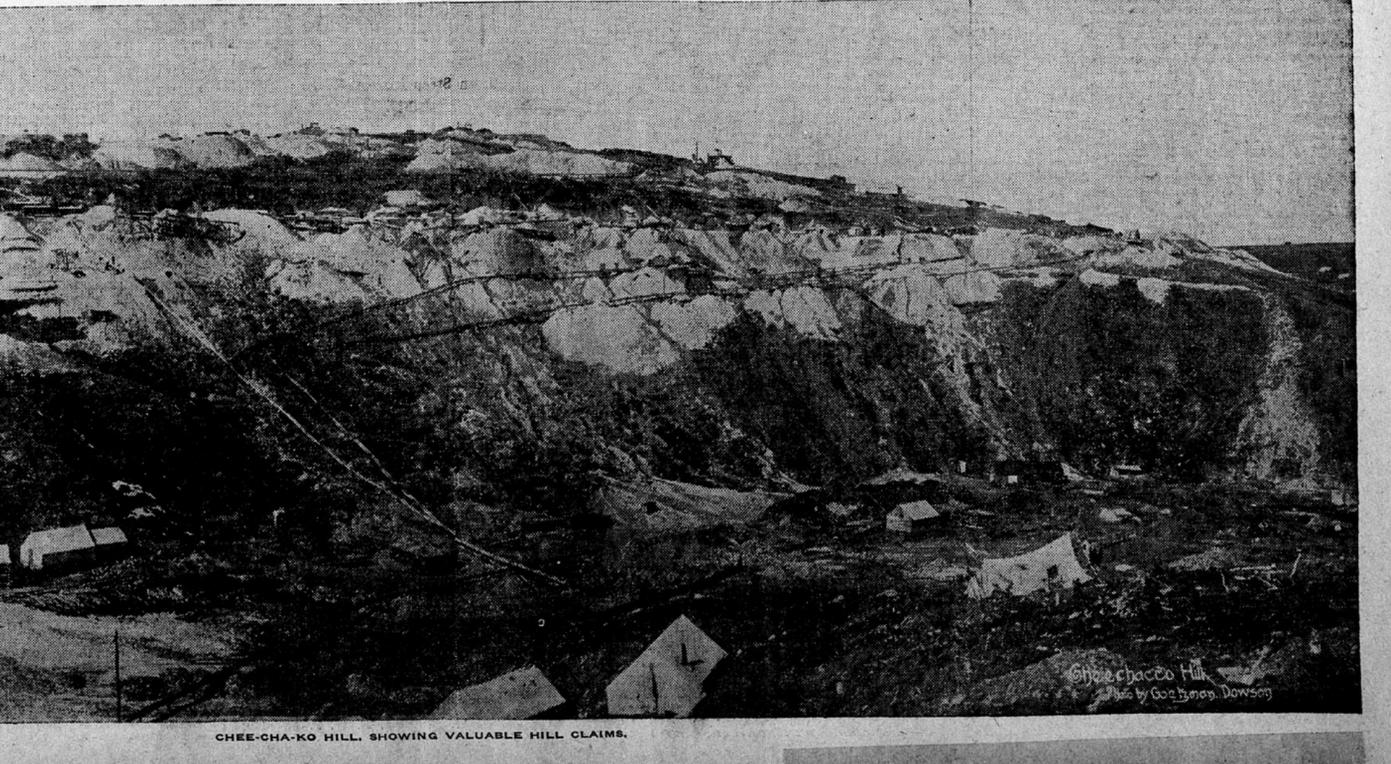
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