

Curiosities of Everyday Life on the Klondike.

WHIMSICAL THINGS THAT HAPPEN THERE.

1. Panic Created by a Vaudeville Actress Dropping in on a "Strictly Society" Ball.
2. The Difficult Burial of Jim McClarty.
3. Sold a \$50,000 Mine for a Fifty-Cent Chromo.
4. The Three Days' Hilarious Labor of the First Piano in Camp and Other Whale-Oil Sidelights on Society "as Construed" by Klondike Mining Laws.

By Sam W. Wall.



SOME of the very strangest phases of frontier life are now going on in the Klondike. Odd, pathetic, humorous and strange things happen according to you happen to see them from any particular standpoint of civilization. California, Australia and South Africa have all seen something like this. The Golden Rule is fresh with no fear of civilization, sought of great fortunes through hardships. But new and different conditions prevail in the Northwest, and many unique happenings pertain to these frozen fields are to be seen there. Some of the interesting side lights on this life are shown in the sketches by The Call's correspondent, Sam Wall.

Indignant Cad Wilson at the "Strictly Society" Ball

THERE was a ball advertised some time ago as going to be for "strictly respectable society," and to any man might with no fear of contamination, take his sweetheart or his wife. The ball was well attended, the ladies being chiefly of the married order, and all went beautifully until after midnight. By that time the heaters had closed and the attendance at the dance had grown slim.

Then came Cad Wilson, a popular figure at one of the vaudeville theaters, and a dozen of her female companions. Their entrance created a furry among strictly respectable society women. Several of them put on their wraps and departed. Others went to the manager, who had guaranteed the ball to be a thoroughly respectable manner.

The manager, very loth, went to Miss Wilson and represented the situation.

"Did you not personally invite me to the ball and did I not consent to come only after repeated assurances that it was your desire?" demanded the perturbed actress.

The uneasy manager admitted his fault, saying: "But you see how it is; I—I," etc.

"Very well," retorted the irate actress; "you go up on that platform and just announce to these people that I came here on your personal invitation, and add, so, that you know I am a respectable woman."

"Oh, but, Cad, you wouldn't ask me to do that! See the position it would place me in!" protested the perspiring manager.

"Exactly," returned the woman; "but see the position you have placed me in. When you do as I say, I'll go, and until you do it I won't budge."

To settle the excitement the manager was obliged to do as the actress asked. He added: "I consider Miss Wilson a perfect lady, the very best of her class in Dawson"—whatever that meant.

The actress then retired in dignity and triumph.

making scheme to be attempted only by the pure and holy! Could one set in a single quartette be filled if all of our elect who answer the description should attend at once? We believe it could be filled—but with difficulty.

This incident and editorial created quite a fuss in and out of Dawson "society," and at least one man went to the editor with the expressed intention of doing him harm in the belief, no doubt, that some woman dear to him who, perhaps, had been the ball, was by the editorial besmirched. But the editor talked him out of it.

Sold a \$50,000 Mine for a Chromo

JAMES MORRISON, well known at Juneau, is the owner of one of the richest claims on Hunker Creek—No. 23 below. He has twenty-four men at work, eight or ten holes down, and the smoke from his fires at night envelopes the creek valley for a mile.

He was offered \$40,000 for the claim by J. J. Healy last winter, declined and has been trying on development ever since, and his dumps are probably worth now more than \$50,000. Among the workmen on the claim is old Tom Young, the man who staked it.

Morrison came to Dawson in 1897 with the intention of starting a saloon, but finding rents so high and whiskey so scarce he decided to tend bar and weigh gold for another man instead. On the wall of the saloon hung a large picture of a wood nymph which Morrison had brought with him.

Among the patrons of the bar was Tom Young, and he took a great fancy to this picture. Young had been shut up in this country for ten years, and to him this particular chromo was a revelation in art. Tom was then married to or was living with a squaw, their home being a dingy little cabin across the Klondike in what was then an Indian village. But he wanted to take that picture home to his cabin and his squaw, and in exchange for it he offered Morrison the claim No. 23, Hunker.

Not much was known of Hunker at that time. Although Discovery and some adjoining claims away up had been turning out rich dirt, few claims lower down had been more than prospected. However, Dick Low, the man who discovered the riches at Skookum's benches, had just at that time paid \$1000 for No. 40, and Morrison argued that if so wise or lucky a man might risk so much money he (Morrison) could afford to chance so little as a cheap chromo.

The trade of the picture for the mine was made and Tom carried the garish thing away in great satisfaction, and Jim went out to look at his purchase.

He let a couple of lays that same year. The layman found the pay streak. Jim is now his own foreman and Tom, the man who gave the picture, is hauling the



TREATING THE CORPSE: "MAC, OLD MAN, HERE'S TEN THOUSAND BLESSINGS ON YOUR SOUL!"

Wood and sharpening the axes at \$1 an hour

Jim says Tom shall have a big share at the clean-up, as there's sure to be enough for all and the picture of the nymph was hardly worth the gold mine.

Wearry Trials of the First Piano in Camp

THE new piano was brought up on one of the very late boats, and arrived at Circle in good order about the first week in September, bearing on the box the address of the man who kept the big saloon on the corner of the front street, in the same block with the company stores.

Its advent in camp created almost a holiday, and the saloonman was at once satisfied that he had made no mistake, costly as his purchase probably was by the time it reached him. For three days from the hour the thing was put up on the pedestal prepared for it and formally thrown open with great eclat it did not again become silent.

The saloon-keeper's wife hammered at it most, but everybody in the town took his turn, struck the chords he loved the best, sang his collection of "comics and sentimentals," and gave place to the next improvisator on the keys.

On the night of the third day the place was filled with men of the rough miner sort, gathered in groups about the piano, the big stove, the faro bank and along the bar. A few women were in the crowd near the piano, which was doing its noisiest. The group at the faro bank was quiet and absorbed, that at the bar was trying in drunken fashion to keep along with the song, the smoke-blue atmosphere quivering under the influence of Jim. Just tell them that you saw me and they will know the rest; Just tell them that I'm looking well, You know.

In the middle of the song the pianist was pulled off the stool, and the next man in the long line waited to get a whack at the piano was pushed toward it. Though it was the night of the third day this stranger had not yet taken his turn, although he had been a constant and impatient attendant. This night he had taken a drink or two more than previously. He fell on the stool with a sigh of satisfaction and a hicough. The stranger satisfied himself struck the keys with both hands. Suddenly his face changed, he forgot the rhaud crowd about him and with only a few preliminary chords he began to sing "The Holy City."

By any single voice I have not heard it done better—a round, smooth, strong, certain voice, that sang the song as it was intended it should be sung, with dignity and power, it seemed to me, before the slowly opening gates of the New Jerusalem.

The first verse was not finished before the faro dealer had stopped the game at the faro bank, the bartender lifted his finger to the man who had called for a drink as a sign that he must wait, the

The Uncertain Funeral of Jim McClarty

WHEN making my tour of the mines last March I stopped at the cabin of James McClarty, a hearty old whiskered Scotchman, at No. 3 below Discovery on Hunker Creek. Cabining with him were two extra congenial mates as joint owners with him in the mine, Harry McDonald and Philip Kenay. McClarty had led

The String of Men Along the Bar Held Their Glasses Suspended

Tom Young, an old miner who had been shut in on the Yukon for years, had a claim staked on Hunkers Creek. One day he wandered into a saloon where a bathing nymph chromo was tacked to the wall. He was greatly struck with the colors, and as he had no money he offered his claim for the picture. Jim Morrison, the bartender, was working for wages and he accepted the offer. He has just refused \$50,000, and Young is now working on the claim for him. He still has the chromo and calls it his "\$50,000 beauty."

the hard miner's life for years from choice, because of its comparative independence, but it had afforded him only an existence heretofore. Now he had struck it rich and modestly enough, as we lay together on a convenient bunk that



A "strictly respectable ball of the season" was organized on the Klondike, and all went sweetly till shortly after midnight, when Cad Wilson and several actresses suddenly appeared. Part of the "strictly respectable set" fled, and the others indignantly demanded of the manager of the affair that "those actresses must be removed." The perplexed and nervous manager approached Cad Wilson and explained the situation. "Ain't it respectable?" demanded Miss Wilson. "Of course," replied the abject manager, "but, but—" "Then get right up on that stage and tell the audience so. I won't go till you do." And the perspiring manager had to do it. Next day the Klondike was bitterly divided in opinion over the "strictly respectable ball."

evening watching his partners and a pair of the neighbors in a bolsterous game of pedro, expressed the confidence that this strike would yield him all he needed.

I went my way up the creek next morning, but was back at Dawson again in June. McClarty had been taken with the fever, died and was buried so long before that those who loved him most could smile while they told the story of it. When he realized that he would not get well he made his will, put everything in shape and, the time arriving, quite content, bade the boys good-by. There remained his body in the grimy little cabin and the four in an effort to save it stumpled and fell with it. Slowly they climbed to their feet one by one and then united in lifting the heavy lump.

"It's the first time I ever knew you to turn away from old Scotch, Mac," said one, "but you're off your liquor now, and it's not we that are blaming you, Slowly and unsteadily they swung the sack between them again and lumbered out of the door, the weight swinging with their uncertain steps, striking heavily against the door posts and causing the passers-by to give them a wide way to avoid contact with its mud and slime. They turned naturally into the next saloon, and from it went into the next and the next, all down the Front-street line, the handling of their burden and the treatment of their dead guest becoming in each more free and reckless. The ghastly jest soon attracted a following, and a crowd surrounded the four and their queer charge, and went with them from saloon to saloon, buying drinks in their turn to lighten the effects, until at last a squad of policemen broke through the party, who, glasses in hand, were at the time dancing a cancan about the dirty bag as it was made to sit in a chair at a stud poker table. The police took charge of the body



It was evening when they arrived there very tired and very thirsty. They turned in at the first saloon, set their burden on the floor and had a long drink of old Scotch. This was very reviving and they had another. There were four in the party and each must buy the liquor of the neighbors in a bolsterous game of pedro, expressed the confidence that this strike would yield him all he needed.