The Klondyke Gold Mystery.

By JOHN R. MUSICK,

Author of "Mysterious Mr. Howard," "The Dark Stranger," "Charlie Allenby's Double," Etc.

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CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

"Course ye might hang him up by the neck until he was dead an' he wouldn't tell. What would a man care for bein' killed himself? It's when you begin an attack on his flesh an' blood he trembles."

"Well, d'ye reckon that's certain?" asked Padgett, rubbing his bullet head to get the idea through.

"Know it."

"Why didn't we light on that afore?"

"Because the youngster goes under a nickname. He's Cracaback here an' Paul Miller in Fresno. That's the whole long and short o' it."

"Well, call in on the capen an' see what ye kin do with him," growled Ned seating himself on a stone and twirling his stick in his hand. "I leave it all t' you; take it an' see how ye'll come out."

Then followed another long consultation among the other taree.

It was not until late that night they proceeded to carry out their plan. The old hermit whom they called the captain was taken apart from his fellow prisoner and seated on a stone. Ben Allen then proceeded to interrogate him.

"You are Captain Joseph Miller of the schooner 'Eleanor,' ain't ye?" he asked.

"Those two rogues told you that. They know it, and it's no use to deny it."

"You left a wife at home—a wife and child?"

"Yes."

"Your wife was named Mollie and your boy baby's name Paul?"

"I don't admit or deny."

"After you sailed away so many years your wife gave you up for dead, and with her child removed to Fresno, where she lives now. She never told her son the sad, uncertain fate of his father, fearing when he grew up he would start in search of him, and she always had a superstitious dread o' the forests o' Alaska."

The sea captain sat unmoved throughout the narrative. Ben went on:

"But when Paul Miller grew to be a man he heard of the fabulous riches in Alaska and came to find it. He had amassed quite a fortune, when he was robbed, followed the robbers to the woods and was captured by them. Now the young man yonder is Paul Miller, your son."

The stern old captain was unmoved save a slight twitching as the corners of his mouth, but he made no answer. Ben continued:

"Though you may have lost the walrus hide on which the map to the buried treasure is, yet you know the spot, and can take us there. You shall do it or I swear that your son shall die before your face."

Again Ben Allen was disappointed. The old man was wholly unmoved, as if he had been talking to stone. The captors waited about him with half suppressed breathing, hoping that something would occur to break his imperturbability, but they were disappointed.

The threat of Morris had only been to intimidate the prisoner. He was willing to make any sort of threats, but not being the hardened criminal Ned Padgett was he called a halt at the line of murder.

"Boys," continued Morris, "I haven't given up all hope yet. We may be able to do somethin' with him. Let's keep up the scare."

"Agreed."

"We can even get a rope and go through pretense o' hangin' the youngster."

"That's it; go through anything to make the old rascal tell us where it is."

With this resolution more firmly fixed in their minds they once more returned to where the old captain sat as unmoved as when they left him.

"Well, Captain Miller, have you decided to tell us where you cached the treasure?" asked Ben Allen.

"No," was the immediate answer.

"Do you want to see your son hang before your eyes?"

"I have no son."

"Don't you know that young man is your son?"

The prisoner fixed his great blue orbs on the speaker and in a firm, unmoved tone answered:

"He is not my son. I may have a son living. I once did, but he is not my son. I like the young man, for he is noble, brave and honest, but he is no relation to me."

They were wholly unprepared for this answer. The sincerity with which it was given took everyone aback and for several moments they stood aghast and silent. The ex-sea captain, after a brief silence, continued:

"Even if I had the walrus hide I would not give it to you. Even if I could now go and unearth that buried treasure I would not do it."

"Why?"

"For two reasons. First, I will not compromise with crime. Second, even if I did decide to do so and turn over the treasure to you it would be the signal for our own destruction. You would never dare let us go after what you have done."

Bob Allen and Morris and the sailors were abashed. They fell back before the piercing glance of the officer against whom they had mutined. The baffled rascals swore like troopers, and Ned Padgett made an appeal for his knotted stick, but was overruled, and after some more deliberation it was decided to try the effect of the rope on the young prisoner.

"I tell you he is the son of the old man; watch him closely when we go to hang him up and see if his eye does not grow moist."

They had a rope made of seal hide, and, cutting a pole with their hand axes, stretched it across the narrow end of the cavern and placed a rope about Paul's neck.

"Now old man, confess that you have lied, and swear that you will take us to the gold, or this young fellow will die." Paul, who had not heard the conversation between the hermit and his captors, was unable to explain their conduct to his own satisfaction. He believed his last hour had come and determined to meet his fate like a hero. When told to prepare for death, he rose, made no resistance, and his arms were tied behind his back. The noose was adjusted about his neck, and he took his position under the cross bar, and, closing his eyes, murmured a short prayer.

All eyes were on the other captive, but he sat with face averted and said not a word. There was no change in his expression—no more indication of grief than might have been expected at the death of a stranger. When the miserable farce was over Paul had been released, and the four rascals retired again to confer with each each other. Tom Ambrose said:

"Well, it's my opinion that we've lost our last chance of ever getting his buried millions."

At this Padgett again proposed his knotted stick and swore he would brain both with it, but he was prevented by Morris and Allea, who declared there should be no real violence. The two prisoners were given a meager supper of dried beef and a little meal gruel, and driven to the far end of the cavern for the night.

When they were apart from the guard Paul asked:

"What was meant by their extraordinary course today?"

"They labor under the mistaken idea that we are related and both have some knowledge of the buried treasure. As they are mistaken they will succeed in getting nothing from us."

"I have been mystified at their strange conduct all along," said Paul, "and I would not be surprised at any time at their taking our lives."

His companion shook his grizzled head and answered:

"No, no, they won't harm us so long as we have the secret in our own breasts. If we should tell them and they should find the treasure, then we would be killed in short order."

Paul shuddered, was silent for a while and asked:

"Then you don't believe we have any hope of escaping at their hands?" The sea captain answered:

"No."

"Captain, let's make our escape."

"Sh! Speak lower, you may be heard."

"I will, but I am in earnest."

"So am I, but we must be cunning as the fox to escape from those rascals."

"I am willing to trust you implicitly."

"Then say nothing."

Through night and day were the same in that dungeon, the captors had their sleeping and waking hours. Paul and his companion threw themselves on their miserable pallet of straw, but not to sleep. They lay so they could watch their captors.

At last, one after another, they began to grow drowsy. One rose and went toward the pile of straw, and stretching himself upon it, was soon snoring. A short quarrel followed on the subject of guarding the prisoners. Padgett was the man selected and he swore he had done more than his share at that business and he wouldn't do any more of it, but Morris, who seemed the person in command, declared he must take his turn of two hours, and left him on duty while the others went to their rest.

The whole matter could not have been better planned for Paul, for Padgett was careless and yawned sleepily before his companions had closed their eyes. For a long time he made a fight against the wiles of Morpheus but at last his head dropped forward on his chest.

Paul raised his own head and shoulders from his pallet of straw and surveyed the entire cavern at a sweeping glance. There was a fire burning in the center which threw out a dull, ruddy glow, dimly lighting the scene. Where the fire had been built the cavern was wide, and from the lofty ceiling ages ago great fragments of stone had been torn loose and lay in a heap on the floor, a little to one side of the fire, leaving a dark patch in the shadow. Paul could also see that their captors had placed their rifles in a corner farthest from them. The three men sleeping on the straw were between the prisoners and the rifles, which were on the right of the sleeping sentry. All the advantages and disadvantages of the position were taken into consideration at a glance. Paul's companion arose and gave their surroundings a quick survey, and then they exchanged glances. The look was sufficient. They understood each other as well as if they had spoken volumes. Paul was to look after the guard and the captain to seize the rifles. The young man nodded assent to the request expressed by the captain's eyes, and began to act. They rolled up the blankets and left them on the straw, with their caps stuck over them, giving them, in the uncertain light, the appearance of two sleeping men. Paul went first on hands and knees, creeping around the little mound of stone and earth and over the loose stones with all the caution possible. He was closely followed by the hermit, who seemed to possess the wonderful faculty of moving without noise.

The sentry stirred in his sleep when Paul was within ten or fifteen paces of him. The determined youth seized a stone and leaped toward him. Ned Padgett suddenly started up with a yell and half half raised his rifle, when the stone, hurled with great precision and force struck him on the shoulder. Down he went under the blow, dropping the rifle at Paul's feet.

To seize the gun and turn at bay on the others was the work of an instant. They were starting up from their sleep and Ben Allen shouted:

"The prisoners! They are making their escape!"

CHAPTER XI.

The Dog Courier.

Paul Miller drew his rifle to his shoulder and let drive two or three shots in quick succession, sending their late captors flying helter skelter to the rear of the cavern. Whether any of them were wounded by his bullets or not he did not stop to learn. He then seized the rifles, blankets and caps and the two men hastened away from the cavern, taking the precaution to secure not only the rifles, but three pistols and all the belts of cartridges they could find. Both of them had filled their capacious pockets with dried moose meat until they stuck out like ruffed turkeys.

They broke two of the rifles because they could not carry them and swapped the others on their backs. Long they traveled in a western direction, guided by the stars. They had given up all hope of finding their Metlakahan friends, who no doubt supposing them lost, had returned to their home on the island. After wandering three or four hours into the forest and being completely exhausted, the two fugitives rolled themselves in their blankets and slept. They dared not build a fire, for it might attract the attention of their pursuers.

When day dawned they made a breakfast on some of the dried moose they had brought with them and prepared to resume their journey. They discovered that they were gradually ascending a mountain side. On all sides of them were forests of serpent spruce, the trees seldom being over five or six inches in diameter, and ferns and other forms of plant life were occasionally noted.

At last they came to a great cleft between gigantic snow-robed mountains.

The first night after they began their ascent they camped on the mountain side near a spring and spread their blankets under the lee of a large bowlder.

Hope had been revived in the breast of Paul Miller, but his companion, who had been deceived and cheated so often by outrageous fortune, evinced little or none of his spirits.

"We are a long way from civilization yet," he said to one of Paul's remarks about their being safe. "So often, my friend, have I had my hopes raised only to be blighted that I allow myself to believe nothing good can come to me. A terrible fate seems to have taken possession of my being. I seem doomed." The old gray head was bent on his hands, and he was silent, while darkness came over the scene.

The next day's travel over this unknown region was but a repetition of the experiences of the day before. Higher they climbed, up, up and up, approaching on the mountain side the line of eternal snow. A few hundred yards more of climbing brought them to the summit of the divide, where there was a pile of stones which seemed to have been placed there by human hands. No life of any kind was visible, unless that white speck on the distant ledge be a dog or a goat.

(To be continued.)

BIBLICAL TALE OF POWER.

"Jezebel," by Miss Lafayette McLaws, Has Won Favor.

Miss Lafayette McLaw's "When the Land Was Young" instantly sprang into popular favor, and for a first book was a pronounced success. The promise in her first book has been more than realized in "Jezebel," a work of singular power and insight. It is a Biblical tale of the days when Omri and Ahab were kings of Israel and Elijah was a prophet of Jehovah. Ahab, the Israelite, takes to wife Jezebel, the worshiper of Baal. When Ahab comes to the throne and Jezebel sets up the worship of Baal, the prophets and believers of Israel are incensed against the queen, and Jezebel begins a fierce persecution of her enemies. This contest is the chief motive of the story.

Miss McLaws has endeavored to throw new light upon the character of Jezebel, and, while she does not depart from the Biblical account, she surely presents this strong-willed, beautiful queen in a somewhat novel and striking manner. We get glimpses of Jezebel the woman as well as Jezebel the queen, and it is as a woman with warm passions and jealous instincts that Jezebel is most and best portrayed.

The book is replete with dramatic situations, the narrative is rapid and stirring, and the denouement is original and startling. Altogether it is one of the books of the day and a distinct contribution to the novel-literature of Biblical days.

Parisian Trees.

Paris is said to lead the world in the culture of city trees. The success of the French capital is due not so much to an admirable soil climate as to a well organized system of caring for the trees.

In large nurseries young trees are grown and prepared for the Parisian streets. The culture of the soil is elaborate. From the very beginning the trees are pruned and staked to compel a straight growth. By frequent transplanting the roots become so hardened that they are enabled to withstand injury due to transportation. When a tree is sufficiently large, it is set out in the streets with the same care that was lavished upon it in the nursery. Often the cost of planting a single tree is $50. Wherever a storm destroys the city trees the nursery can be immediately drawn upon for another supply.

Thoughtful.

Young Wife—"There is a gentleman in the library, dear, who wants to see you."

Young Husband—"Do you know who it is?"

Young Wife—"You must forgive me, dear, but that cough of yours has worried me so of late, and you take such poor care of your health, and—and, oh, if I were to lose you, my darling!"

Bursts into tears.

Young Husband—"There, there, dear! Your fondness for me has inspired fools and unnecessary fears. I'm all right; you musn't be alarmed. But I'll see the physician, of course, just to satisfy you. Is it Dr. Pellet?"

Young Wife—"No, it is not a doctor; it's a—a life insurance agent."

Keenness of Elephant's Scent.

An elephant's sense of smell is so delicate that the animal can scent a human being at a distance of 1,000 yards.

Got Soldiers' Guns

Clever Trick Played on British Troops by Heroine of the Revolution.

"Gurdie" has not been quite fairly dealt with by history. The name is seldom heard nowadays, but it belonged to an energetic, brave woman who, in revolutionary times, had the applause of her country for cleverly outwitting a part of the British army.

"Gurdie lived at Union, N. J., in those days a place aspiring to be the capital of the state. One finds it today fast asleep, away from railroads, and even trolley cars. Her husband was known either as the man with the stovepipe hat, a mark of aristocracy then out of the ordinary, or as the man with the stumbling tongue. His most salient characteristic was his admiration for Gurdie.

When the British came up the little elevation known as "the hill" at Union and entered the precincts of the sacred First Presbyterian church, taking the hymn books and Bibles from the pews and ruthlessly tearing them to use as wadding for their guns, it was Gurdie who boldly spoke up and asked "Is that the way you're going to give us Watts and thy Bible?"

The fight which followed was stiff and long, the power of the young American cannon, placed nearly opposite the church, was taxed to its utmost. To day any one passing the spot can see this cannon preserved as a relic where it then stood, looking the very baby it is in the face of modern warfare.

The enemy proved over strong, but winning one point after another of the rich farms then lying about Union, they were more likely to repay ransacking than that of Gurdie and her spouse. One of this stalwart woman's strong points was her excellent housekeeping.

Near her great brick oven stood always a huge pot of indigo ready to dye the wool from the shorn sheep. Clean, smooth and in order, the loom also awaited her pleasure at weaving. Her water from "the north side of the well" was cooler than could be had elsewhere; her cream invariably "came to butter; Gurdie could smooth out most folks' wrinkles.

When the muddy, swaggering feet of the British despoiled her polished floors she made it understood that they should rest in the cellar, where home-made wine was in casks, until she had prepared their meal.

Leading to this place was a narrow flight of steps and an old-fashioned trap-door. It was, however, light and spacious, and the men cracked many a joke over their entertainment.

At last Gurdie called to them that their supper was ready. "Leave your guns stacked in the cellar," she said; "there's no room for them above." This they did and came tumbling up the stairs.

Gurdie then closed the trap door with a spring, which only she knew. The men, suspecting nothing, fell eagerly to eating. To her stuttering husband, outside the window, she quickly passed the word; and thus a short while later a goodly number of unarmed men were carried off as prisoners by the time-honored "ruse."

The signal which her husband gave about the town as he passed from man to man, and which has come down to us through history, was simply the record of his clever wife's deed. "Gi' Gurdie Gaudie's gaggit th' th' guggin guns."

It sometimes costs a man six months of rheumatism to catch one little sixinch fish.

Cocoanuts as Fuel

They Are Likely to Prove of Great Value in Naval Warfare of the Future.

Copra consists of dried cocoanuts. In view of the enormous tracts of land throughout the tropic zone that have lately been planted with cocoanuts, it is remarkable that copra has maintained its price.

From both coasts of Africa and from the West Indies the export has been steadily increasing, and yet, though the world seems to be easily satedwith every other kind of tropical product of copra it never seems to have enough.

Handicapped by a sea carriage of 12,000 miles, the South Sea Island copra has always commanded a local price of from $10 to $35 a ton, and now that a soap and candle factory has been established in Australia, it is more likely to rise than fall.

Ten years ago most of the copra went direct to Europe on German sailing ships, which came out to Australia with a general cargo, and loaded copra in the islands. In the long homeward voyage of from four to six months the rats and the little bronze copra beetles tunnel through the cargo, destroying large quantities.

On arrival at the oil mills it is crushed by rollers, and the refuse, after every drop of oil has been squeezed out of it, is pressed into oil cake for fattening cattle. The oil is then resolved into glycerin and stearine, from which more than half the candles and soap used in the world are made.

At first sight it would seem more economical to press the oil on the spot and so save the freight upon the waste material, but the explanation is that oil must be shipped in tanks or in casks. Ships fitted with tanks would have to make the outward voyage empty, and casks, if shipped in "shooks," require expert coopers, and when soaked in oil become a prey to borers.

It is possible that a new use may be found for copra as fuel for warships. It burns with a fierce heat. It is very easily stored and handled, and it is only one third more bulky than coal, its disadvantage in this respect being more than compensated by its superior heating qualities and its freedom from ashes.

It is expensive, but in naval warfare, where quick steam is everything, the dearer fuel may often be the cheaper. Lest—Sugar Island.

A "Wildcat" Mine

Dynamite Used to Dislodge Ferocious Felines from Their Stronghold.

Several mining men who had chanced to meet in a hotel lobby in this city were discussing the various mines in a certain district, when one of them spoke of a "wildcat" mine.

A logger who was sitting near pricked up his ears at this and chipped into the conversation. He said that there was the most productive wildcat mine he ever heard of near the logging camp where he had been working on the lower Columbia. One of the mining men remarked that his idea of a wildcat mine was one that yielded nothing but assessments and asked what this wildcat mine produced.

"Why, wildcats, of course," replied the logger. He then proceeded to explain that many years ago someone had run a tunnel into the side of a hill in search of coal and had run a number of short branches and had gophered about generally in the bowels of the hill, but finding no coal had finally abandoned the working.

There were wildcats in that section and the parties who had been prospecting for coal left several cats at their cabin. The wildcats and the dog were about the only inhabitants of the place, and the dog was admitted to his master's ward in the jail.

Of late months many of "Blind Harry's" nights have been spent in the city jail, and when the dog is lost from him, this is always the base of his operations until he is found. For three days the dog has haunted the jail, watching for his master, and going out on long searching expeditions, always returning tired and draggled, and ever refusing to touch food. The kindly jailer gives him shelter and tries to feed him, but it is his opinion that unless "Blind Harry" is found soon the dog will die of grief.—Denver Post.

DOG IS DYING OF GRIEF.

Has Lost His Blind Master and Is Starving to Death.

What has become of "Blind Harry?" is he on another protracted spree, or is he lying dead somewhere, or has he abandoned his only friend and left town? Whatever has happened to him is killing his only friend in the world. King, the intelligent black spaniel that has been his guard and dependence for many years. King has spent most of his time for three days and nights at the police station, waiting for his master, and he will not touch food. He is grieving himself to death. "Blind Harry," with his black curly dog and his long cane and his wheezy old hand organ, have been known to all Denver for years. The dog would lead the old man to his favorite corners, lead him to the restaurant, take him home, or take him to the city jail, or any other of his haunts at bidding. Apparently he understood spoken language as well as a human being, and certainly he obeyed better than most. Only a few months ago some practical joker took off his collar and stole the dog away when his master was drunk. For days the dog was frantic, while the master was quickly arrested and sent to the county jail. There was a most affecting scene when tame cats had affiliated and had taken up their abode in the tunnel and had increased in numbers.

Finally a colorated bear hunter of that region discovered the half-closed entrance to the tunnel, and, thinking that perhaps some wild animals might be occupying the place, sent his dogs in to investigate. In a few minutes the dogs came rushing out, literally covered with wildcats and howling like lost spirits. While the fight was going on the old hunter took a hand to help his dogs and killed twenty-seven wildcats.

Dynamite was put in the tunnel at night when the cats were out seeking food and next day the fuse was lighted. As it burned some cats came out and were shot down. The shooting of the dead cats terrified those in the rear and they held back till the tunnel was fairly choked with a gurgling squalling, spitting army of cats, and then the giant powder exploded and several tons of cats were shot out of the hole.—Portland Oregonian.

The coal miner kicks because he is kept down in the world.

Not Easily Produced.

John H. Converse, president of the great Baldwin Locomotive works, not long ago submitted himself to some prosy interviewer, by one of those wouldbe philosophers who are fond of talking of abstract matters. Along in the course of the conversation, the interviewer inquired:

"Now, Mr. Converse, tell me—what is it you find most difficult to get out of your men?"

"A day's work!" grimly and promptly replied Mr. Converse.

No, Maud, dear, you can't fill a poker hand with an ash tray.

SHE CRIED WHEN SHE PUT HER CLOTHES ON.

This is what Miss Jessie Stephenson of 30 Hartington Road, Aberdeen, says when writing to the Proprietors of St. Jacobs Oil, the remedy which cured her:

"I was very bad with rheumatism. I could not put my clothes on without crying out. I always had to have assistance to dress myself. I obtained a bottle of St. Jacobs Oil, and after its contents were used I was much better. I used the contents of two more bottles, and now I am able to do my work as usual. I would recommend anyone troubled with rheumatism to use St. Jacobs Oil."

Miss Stephenson's present condition is a very great contrast to what it was before she used St. Jacobs Oil; then she was practically helpless, suffered the greatest agony—but now she is free from pain, and able to do her work. Surely such evidence as this is most convincing that St. Jacobs Oil "Conquers Pain."

Shabby, but Had the Price.

A shabby old man recently came driving through Allen county. He said he was from Arkansaw, and his crow-bait team and rattletrap wagon had the stamp of Arkansaw upon them. He wiggled along until he came to the farm of Mr. McAdams, near Kincaid. There he stopped and began to survey the farm in an indolent sort of a way. "Is she for sale?" he drawled to Mr. McAdams, who had come to the fence to observe him. "Yep, she's for sale—$13,500—were you thinking of making a purchase this morning?" replied McAdams sarcastically. The old man took another dreamy look over the landscape, then he sighed in protest at the exertion and pulled a fat wallet from somewhere about his person. From his wallet he extracted cash and drafts in excess of the amount required. "Kin yer turn her over now?" he plaintively inquired. McAdams was knocked speechless, but he rallied and completed the deal.—Moran (Kan.) Herald.

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George Crocker Grows Better.

London cable. George Crocker, the California capitalist, is slowly recovering here from blood poisoning, which set in a fortnight ago as the result of an ulcerated tooth.

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