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II SIGNS OF THE TIMES II

NEGRO LEADERSHIP

A CONVENTION, most significant for the negro race, was held in Atlanta, May 14-18, under the chairmanship of Dr. John R. Mott. It was convened under the joint auspices of the Edinburgh Conference Continuation Committee and the student department of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association. Five hundred delegates from a hundred colleges and higher educational institutions of the South were present. With the exception of the chairman, all the notable speakers were either negroes or white men from the South, thus securing an expert discussion of the various themes considered.

The purposes of the convention were: (1) To give to the present generation of negro students in the United States a strong spiritual and moral impulse; (2) to study with thoroughness their responsibility for leadership in Christian work at home and abroad, thus bringing them face to

face with Christian callings; (3) to face the responsibility resting upon the negro churches of America to help meet the claims and crisis of Africa; (4) to consider what light Christian thought may throw on present and future cooperation between the races. Commanding personalities like Booker Washington of Tuskegee, Major Moton of Hampton, Professors Pickens and Imes of Talladega and Tuskegee, and the very well-known colored missionary to Africa, Dr. W. H. Sheppard, were at the forefront, and all the negro speakers were well worth hearing, as were the strong friends of the race from among the white men of the South. All the objects aimed at in the call to the convention were very satisfactorily accomplished, and a wonderful spirit of unity and mutual helpfulness was manifested and extended through the days of fellowship and mutual discussion.

Most of the final day was devoted to hearing the reports of the commis-

The editors seek to preserve accuracy and to manifest the spirit of Christ in the pages of this REVIEW, but do not acknowledge responsibility for opinions expressed, nor for positions taken by contributors of signed articles in these pages.—EDITORS.



DR. S. HALL YOUNG AND GOVERNMENT MAIL TEAM CROSSING THE CROW CREEK PASS, CHUGACK RANGE (IN MARCH)

In the Mining Camps of Alaska

BY REV S. HALL YOUNG, D.D.

A Pioneer Missionary of the Presbyterian Church



THE story of the white man's Alaska is an inspiring one, while that of the native under Russian occupancy is sordid and cruel. The northern miners present the finest types of many races. The prospector lured by gold is the pioneer of progress, the settler of waste places, the conqueror of empires. No hardships are too formidable to be braved, no difficulties too great to be surmounted, no labor too strenuous to be undertaken by the man whose dreams are of untold wealth deep-locked in the icy North.

The Alaska miner is of a peculiar and sturdy breed. The greater part of these miners are American born. The 40,000 miners and their families illustrate the survival of the fittest. They are the winnowed wheat, the

sifted coal, the washed gold. They are those who have come through perils and labors, and have had the courage, the endurance, the indomitable spirit to remain and to conquer.

The women of the North are of like fiber with the men, and they are rearing a sturdy race. The "call" of Alaska is strong, and it is being heeded by the best of all races.

"Ho! Viking brood: ho! Norsemen, all;
The sturdy Swede, the hardy Gael:
Ye Finns, ye Celts, to you I call;
Ye Germans, Danes, I bid ye hail!
Whoe'er has breathed the Ice King's
breath,
Has braved his wrath, nor feared his
death!

"I call ye, strong, for strong am I.
My north-lights wage exultant war;
My fierce winds battle merrily;
My ice-guns boom, my torrents roar.
I bid ye leap to joyous strife,
To grander strength, to fuller life.

"My gold, deep-locked with icy hands—
Come, rive it, mine it, fling it free!
Come, dig my coal; come, plow my lands;
Snatch finny hordes from stream and
sea;
My copper rend from mountain walls;
My marble blast for stately halls."

When our first missionaries went to the Northwest there was no thought of any possible settlement of Alaska by white men, and there were then less than 200 whites in the whole territory. After the soldiers were withdrawn, in 1877, there was little to lure a population to those bleak and stormy shores, and Alaska was still called "Seward's Folly," and "Uncle Sam's Iceberg Farm." Missionary work was begun by the Presbyterian Church in 1877, and for five years this was almost the only denomination at work there. The Moravians commenced a small work on the Kuskokwim River in 1884, and desultory efforts were made by one or two other denominations, but the Presbyterians had the only sustained and progressive work, and that was confined to the South-eastern corner of the territory.

There were mines in British Columbia, in the Cassiar region reached by the Stickeen River. In 1878 they employed about 700 men, and these miners passed through the south-eastern cup-handle of Alaska on their way to and from the mines; only a few of them resided in the territory.

In 1880, two Cassiar prospectors discovered placer gold on what is now the site of Juneau, the capital of Alaska, and two years later a thriving little city had sprung up. The Treadwell mine was located at Douglas Island, three miles from Juneau, and presently the rocky hills about Gastineau Channel were resounding to the

roar of 300 iron stamps which were working day and night to crush the mountain of low-grade, gold-bearing quartz. The progress of Juneau since then has been steady, and now it presents the largest collection of great stamp mills in the world.

As the Presbyterian Church has been the first to enter the native work, so it was the first to attempt to carry the gospel to the incoming white miners. In 1882 the Northern Light Log Cabin Presbyterian Church was erected. In a few years this gave way to a neat frame structure, and the Presbyterians have had a minister there ever since. Now the church is prosperous and almost self-supporting, and is branching out into the surrounding camps.

At Douglas City, built near the Treadwell mine, the Congregationalists started work in the late '80s. The Methodists, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics built churches at Juneau and all of these denominations pursue their work to this day. At Wrangell, where the first native mission was located, and where the first American Protestant church in the territory was built in 1879, there has existed a separate organization for the whites since the mining boom of 1898. But altho there is considerable mining done at scattered points accessible from Wrangell there has never been a large and settled mining population at that place. Ketchikan, in the southern part of the Alexandrian Archipelago, is another distinct mining town. Small gold mining properties have been located all around it, and at distances of from twenty to sixty miles valuable copper mines have been opened. There are also large salmon canneries at Ketchikan and near it. The Methodists



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A VIEW OF JUNEAU, SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA

The city has a population of 6,000 people. Note the churches over the figures: 1. Presbyterian Church; 2. Episcopal Church; 3. Methodist Church; 4. Native Presbyterian Mission

were the first to enter this mining field; the Episcopalians also having a small church there.

But the growth of the white population in southeastern Alaska was slow. It was not until the great Klondike boom of 1897 and 1898 that the attention of the world was drawn to the empire of the Northwest. Previous to the commencement of that stampede there were not 3,000 white people in the whole territory. When the news of marvelous discoveries of gold in the Klondike was published a heterogeneous mass of men was literally "dumped" upon the shore at the head of Lynn Canal, that strange body of water which, with its continuation, Chatham Strait, stretches straight as

an arrow 200 miles due north from the sea into the coast range of mountains.

The town of Skagway was built as a gateway city, and in 1899, two years from the discovery of gold in the Klondike, it numbered some 4,000 people, with all the comforts and many of the luxuries of civilization. Here again the Presbyterians were the first to open Christian work. For ten years I had been a missionary at Wrangell and was asked by the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions to lead the work among the Klondike miners. My first sermon was preached at Skagway in August, 1897, and on my way through that camp in the woods, over the Chilcoot Pass into the Klondike.

The White and Chilcoot Passes, in

the fall of 1897 and the spring of 1898, were the shaken gold pans that separated the human gold from the gravel. The twenty-five thousand lawyers, doctors, clerks, merchants, artisans, and farmers, who essayed to cross those terrible mountains, build their boats, and take their provisions over six hundred miles of dangerous river to Dawson in the fall of '97, and the fifty thousand who tried the same task in the spring of '98, were nearly all new to such experiences. Comparatively few won into the Klondike; fewer still stayed in the North. The weaklings fled, defeated, or left their bodies on the trail; the strong, the brave, the resourceful remained, and spread all over Alaska as prospectors, miners, and settlers.

The Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics soon followed the Presbyterians to Skagway, and built churches there. The town began to decline after a few years, and, one after another, the denominations ceased active work until now there is a Union church—the Methodists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians uniting in the support of one pastor.

After the organization of the Presbyterian church by the American Presbyterians at Dawson in 1898, that organization was turned over to the Canadian Presbyterians. The great majority of the 30,000 or 40,000 miners who came to the Klondike during these two or three years were from the United States. The Klondike being limited in extent, perhaps three-fourths of these miners sailed down the Yukon into Alaska, where soon started the towns of Eagle, Circle, Rampart, and Tanana, on the Yukon. Thence they began to prospect up the various rivers and creeks of the whole

territory, finding gold in paying quantities in many camps. Wherever the towns promised permanency and large growth the churches made an effort to enter. The two churches that were most active in this pioneer work were the Presbyterian and Episcopalian. I visited the new towns of Eagle and Rampart in 1898, and in '99 these towns were manned by Revs. Kirk and Koonce.

Continuing down the river in the fall of 1899, I came to Nome, which had just begun its mushroom growth on Seward Peninsula off the shores of Bering Sea. The Congregationalists and the Presbyterians reached this big new boom camp near the same time. Both erected self-supporting churches in the summer of 1900, when 30,000 people landed on that bleak, wind-swept, treeless shore. The Episcopal Church manned Circle City, erected a building at Rampart, and also sent a man to Nome.

The Pioneers' Task

The work at all these points was peculiar and hard. That which at the same time gives the greatest difficulty and creates fascination about this pioneering work among the miners is that there are a thousand difficulties which must be met and overcome. The missionary needs to be of the same caliber as the sturdy pioneer miner. He must be able to do what the miner has to do, to live under severe conditions, and to enjoy life there. He should be able to build his cabin or his log church with his own hands, if need be; to cook for himself year after year; to travel by dog-team or on snow-shoes with the temperature fallen to 60 degrees below zero; and to think nothing of

camping and traveling under such conditions. He must not consider himself a martyr or whine about his hardships. He should be able to enjoy this life and consider it the finest in the world. For if he can not meet these difficulties in such a spirit he is not fit to cope with the conditions of pioneer life in the North. The

Nome in 1905, and the two denominations formed a confederated church under one pastor. The Episcopalians have also had a minister most of the time.

The third great gold stampede was to the Tanana Valley, where rich gold deposits were discovered from the years 1903 to 1905. Soon two rival



A VIEW OF RUBY, ALASKA, AS IT WAS IN THE SPRING OF 1912

Ruby is a mining town of 1,200 to 1,500 inhabitants, on the Yukon River, which is here over a mile wide

Presbyterian Church chooses, in general, young men of fine physique and adventurous spirit, who have at the same time a passion for soul-saving.

After exploring the Seward Peninsula I was able to start missions at Teller and Council, of which Rev. Herman Hosack and Mr. Whipkey afterward took charge. So long as these were booming mining camps the work was continued.

In 1901 the Presbyterians and Congregationalists united at Nome under the Congregationalist Board, and that work is continued there until the present time. The Methodists entered

towns sprung up on the Tanana River, Chena, and Fairbanks, ten miles apart. Having been appointed General Presbyterian Missionary to all Alaska, I came to Fairbanks in the summer of 1904 and soon organized a church. Rev. Howard M. Frank, a young man just from the Theological Seminary went to Chena and erected a church, but the town of Chena declining while Fairbanks increased, after a few years the mission at Chena was abandoned. The church at Fairbanks has had a prosperous and useful history and its influence is felt in every part of the territory.

In the fall of 1904 the Episcopalians also entered Fairbanks. A log church and hospital were built by Archdeacon Stuck, a man of English birth and American training. This is the man who, after scientific parties had repeatedly failed to ascend Mount McKinley, conquered that sky-piercing summit in the spring of 1913.

These pioneer missionaries, including the brave Bishop Rowe of the Protestant Episcopal Church, thought it no hardship to travel hundreds of miles across the country with their dog-teams in the winter, to canoe up and down the streams of the great Yukon Valley, or to take long journeys on foot in the summer through the mosquito-infested forests, and to become explorers as well as ministers of the gospel. One and all they became infatuated with that life which none who have tasted would willingly exchange for life and work anywhere else under the sun.

The Methodists came into Fairbanks in 1905, and erected a church which is still doing its work there. The Roman Catholics came later to all of these mining camps, but the Protestant missionaries were the pioneers.

The restless prospector continued to roam up the gorges and along the mountain ranges of interior Alaska and almost every year from one to four or five new mining stampedes have started. Some of these have died almost in the beginning; others have developed into permanent and prosperous camps.

The churches have not kept pace with the movements of the miners, and it is probably true to-day that not more than one-half of the population of Alaska is able to go to church on Sunday, because there is no church

within reach; not more than two-thirds of the white children of Alaska are able to attend Sunday-school, for the Sunday-school is not there, and yet an honest effort has been made on the part of some denominations to supply the spiritual needs of the territory.

In 1911, I went to the new prosperous mining camp of Iditarod, in the Innoko Valley, and continued there a year, organizing missions at Iditarod and Flat City. In order to attend the meeting of the presbytery in the spring of 1912, I had to harness my dog-team and travel over three ranges of mountains, and across two great valleys, 520 miles to the coast, and 200 miles further by boat to Cordova, where the meeting was held. Dr. Condit came from Fairbanks to that meeting, traveling 310 miles over the trail, and then 132 miles by rail to attend the meeting. This gives some idea of the difficulty of convening presbyteries, conferences, and church conventions in Alaska.

The town of Ruby on the Yukon, 125 miles below the mouth of the Tanana, was built within a few months in 1912 and 1913. I visited this town in 1912, and in the spring of 1913, Dr. E. N. Bradshaw took up the work after having traversed the trail from Cordova to Ruby with horse-sled and dog-sled, a distance of some 700 miles.

The mining excitement was not by any means confined to the interior of Alaska, for as early as 1895 gold was discovered at the head of Cooks Inlet, and the mining towns of Sunrise, Hope, and Knik were erected. This region was, however, entirely neglected by the churches, until my journey to Presbytery Meeting in 1912, when I

preached the first sermon in all that region. My appeals brought Rev. T. P. Howard to that field in the fall of 1912, and he is now extending his work over this great territory as best he can. In the summer he travels by boat to four or five preaching points, and in the winter by dog-sled; while sometimes he tramps 125 miles between Sundays to fill his appointments.

In 1898, the town of Valdez, on Prince William Sound, was settled as a starting-point to the Klondike excitement, and there, in 1899, the Congregationalists and Episcopalians erected churches which still continue to do their work. Valdez has grown to be a prosperous camp from the discovery of gold quartz and copper near it. About 1905, the town of Seward, on Kenai Peninsula, was erected, and a railroad called the

Alaska Northern was pushed 72 miles toward the Matanuska gold beds. The Methodist, Episcopalian, and Roman Catholic churches entered this field and erected buildings, but the Methodist Church is the only one at present carrying on the work.

In 1908, I reached Cordova near the mouth of the Copper River, where the Copper Valley Railroad was soon pushed 225 miles to the Great Bonanza copper mine, owned by the Morgan Guggenheim Syndicate. The Episcopalians had already erected a church club-house at Cordova, and the Catholics built a church and manse in 1909-10.

While this brief survey does not, by any means, exhaust the number of mining camps, or recount all the missionary efforts made in their behalf, yet it comprises the greater part of both. The Presbyterian and



NOME, ALASKA, IN THE YEAR 1900

Nome is now a city of 3,000 people, and extends for twenty miles along the shore

Episcopal churches have general missionaries constantly on the field, whose business it is to go with the new stampedes and, wherever practicable, to organize churches.

The Outlook

With the recent passage through Congress of bills providing for the construction of one or more government railroads from the coast to the interior, and other bills opening up the vast coal fields and vaster agricultural lands, Alaska has entered upon a new era. The steamboat companies are putting new vessels upon the Alaska lines, and every boat is crowded with eager adventurers, bound for the mineral, farming, and fishing regions. The white population of the territory will, in all probability, be doubled or trebled within two or three years. The discussions in Congress, and the many articles that have recently appeared in print, have opened the eyes of the world, as never before, to the astounding wealth of Alaska and its almost unlimited possibilities for investment and settlement.

The van of every squadron of this great army of exploration ought to be led by the soldier of Christ, carrying the Banner of the Cross. Five ardent young ministers, of the Presbyterian Church, have been sent to three new

fields, and two already established, and three or four more are needed. The other denominations of the Christian Church are also awaking to this most urgent call.

The call is loud and clear for brave, strong, adaptable, resourceful, and devoted men. There is a wider and higher range of qualities demanded in the successful missionary to this north-west frontier, than that required in a minister to almost any other point in the world. The mining populations are intelligent, independent, critical, and yet warm-hearted. Reading-rooms, hospitals, Y.M.C.A. work, as well as church work must be undertaken, carried on, and supported. These pioneer churches can not be successfully manned either by weaklings or by bigots. Humble-minded heroes are required who take pleasure in their work.

Let the Church arise and take this opportunity. Let Gospel preaching, the Sunday-school, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Christian club, be found in every new camp. Let the men of Alaska feel that the Church is not a "back number," a medieval institution, a decrepit, and dying body; but a living, growing, progressive, up-to-date institution, having the dew of youth, and the strength of the Almighty. Who will go for us?

A LAWYER'S PRAYER FOR UNSELFISHNESS

O MERCIFUL GOD, whose Blessed Son came into the world not to be ministered unto, but to minister. grant me such a measure of His spirit that the aim of my life may not be self-gratification, but unselfish service. Train me to find in the little events of daily life opportunities to help my companions and to bring brightness into their lives. Grant that, if need be, I may have courage to die for them and for Him who is the best of friends. Grant that, till death comes, I may have grace to live for them and for Him, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. Amen.—GEORGE WHARTON PEPPER.