

## Alaska's Suddenly Rich.

People Who Have Leaped from Poverty to Wealth—Fortune of a Swedish Missionary—Mrs. Danvers's Boarding House a Gold Mine.

Said George F. Fisher, when he came down the coast from Alaska the other day: "The most interesting things I found in my year of travel in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands were not the extraordinary golden placers, but the men who have leaped from poverty into large wealth. And the way the newly made rich men up in Alaska live and spend their money is, in some instances even more interesting than the ways they came quickly to have princely incomes."

"For instance, there is Sandy Flaherty, the king of the placers on Dominion Creek in the Klondike country. I suppose that anyone in Dawson would say that Sandy's wealth is upward of \$600,000, and is increasing by \$50,000 a year. Four years ago he was on a main gang on the streets of Omaha, Neb., and three years ago he was tending bar on the Barbary Coast of San Francisco's water front. He told me in detail the story of his rise in worldly riches one day last summer at Dawson. He never knew who his parents were. He was left when a baby a few weeks old, on the steps of a county almshouse at Moberly, Mo. That was in 1860. An old pauper woman in the almshouse named May Flaherty took pity on the waif and asked to be his foster mother. So the child became known as Sandy Flaherty because of his sandy hair. He was a poorhouse lad until he was 10 years old, when he was taken by a cigarmaker who wanted a boy to do chores and gardening for his board and clothes. There the boy learned to read and write by instruction by the cigarmaker's seven and eight year old boys. The cigarmaker died, the home was broken up, and Flaherty had to get a new place to work.

"In a word, Sand Flaherty experienced a constant round of toil, and felt ceaseless, biting poverty for twenty-two long years. He tramped for two years and he labored in pretty lowly walks of life from direct necessity. He was arrested in Omaha for vagrancy in 1896, and worked two weeks in the chain gang. He beat his way to Seattle. There he lived with half breed Siwash Indians, and got a living by fishing and cooking for a camp of fishermen. He drifted down the coast to San Francisco, and there he fell in with some whalers who were about to sail for the Behring and Arctic seas on a year's cruise. Sandy Flaherty jumped at the chance to go along. For once in his life he was sure of steady employment and sure board and lodging for twelve successive months. He told me last summer that the happiest day he had known since earliest youth was when he sailed out through the Golden Gate. The whaler cruised about the Aleutian Islands, and in May 1897, touched at St. Michael. Flaherty was seriously ill with typhoid fever and he was left there, apparently to die. It was two days after the whaler had sailed before he recovered enough from delirium to know where he was and that he had been left behind at a Godforsaken whaling port at the mouth of the Yukon River.

"When he had been nursed to health by some Esquimaux fishermen, he began to look around for any sort of work to earn money to get back to the States. Suddenly the news came down the Yukon River that wonderfully rich gold diggings had been struck in the Klondike creeks, at the headwaters of the Yukon. A score of men at St. Michael started at once in a little skiff up the river to Dawson. Flaherty was among them. He had but \$2.00 in his pocket and the clothes on his back when he started for the Klondike goldfield. He cooked for his comrades and did general work to pay for his passage. Arrived at Dawson, Sandy Flaherty got a job as cook in a rough sawed pine barn that answered as boarding house. His pay was \$60 a week and his own board and lodging. One of the men who came to the boarding house for meals was an original Klondiker. He had two claims on Dominion Creek. One day he had delirium tremens and Sandy nursed him to health. To reward Sandy the old fellow gave him the poorer of his two claims. Sandy gave up his job as cook and began gold mining the next day. He worked day and night, scarcely stopping to sleep two hours out of twenty four, so anxious was he to know what sort of claim he owned. Before the cold weather set in, in October 1897, he had dug down to bedrock on his creek bench claim, and was panning gold at the rate of \$3 and \$3.50 a pan. He never

spent a dime unnecessarily, and early Klondikers still tell how hard he worked with pick and shovel and pan. Then he got capital, put up a sluice on his claim, and built a \$1,000 cabin. The old fellow who gave him the claim had a second case of tremens, and urged Flaherty to buy him out for sixty pounds of gold, and Flaherty bought on six months' time. Then the young fellow had two adjacent claims, and from that time his fortune has been rising fast. He has bought and sold altogether some fifteen placer mines in the locality of Dominion Creek, and some of his single deals have amounted to \$75,000. He bought two well worked claims on Beaver Creek a year ago for \$26,000 together. Two months later, when he had taken out fifty pounds of gold from them, he sold each for upward \$40,000. Last June he sent 300 pounds of gold to the San Francisco Mint by the Alaska Commercial Company. He carried a bank deposit at one of the big San Francisco banks of between \$150,000 and \$200,000, and has invested thousands of dollars of his surplus cash in Yukon River Transportation Company stock, and in Seattle city bonds. He has a lawyer employed at \$5,000 a year solely to attend to his business.

"In some ways Sandy Flaherty is a very unusual man. One might naturally believe that a man who has been reared in an almshouse, had lived the life of a semi-tramp for twenty years, and had never owned more than the ragged clothes on his back until he was thirty-seven years old, would be a pretty poor sort of a business man. He invested some \$5,000 in a patent two years ago. It was a swindle and from that time he has never been wheedled out of a dime except for legitimate charity. His business sense seemed to come to him as fast as his piles of gold. He bought a Yukon steamboat that had been hawked about Dawson for weeks for \$13,000. He had new boilers put in and then he sold her on her first trip up river from St. Michael for \$6,000 more than the craft had cost him. Flaherty told me that about two years more of the Klondike would be enough for him. He believed that he could then come away with enough capital to keep him like a gentleman all the rest of his life. He said he had lived in squalor and poverty long enough to know what practical charity was, and he proposed some day to alleviate the condition of children reared as he was.

"Then there is the Rev. Matthew M. Anderson, the richest man of Cape Nome. His life has not been so picturesque as Flaherty's. He is a Scandinavian about 45 years old. He was reared in poverty in Sweden and came to the United States an emigrant. His father died during the voyage, and young Anderson was landed at Castle Garden with only a few dollars and no friends in the new country. He got to Philadelphia, where he got a chance to work in a Swedish boarding house for his board and lodging. In a year or two he and another Swede walked to Minneapolis where young Anderson worked in a lumber mill. He was converted in a Lutheran mission there and resolved to be a missionary among the Indians. Then he was a wiper in a railroad locomotive round house in Minneapolis, and at night studied for his missionary labors. The Lutheran church of Minneapolis helped him get to Alaska in 1886, and there he began his labors among the Innuits or natives at Cape Prince of Wales, on Behring Sea. His salary as a missionary was never more than \$275 a year, and for four years it was less than \$200. His field was up and down the coast of Alaska from Cape Prince of Wales to Sitka. He was frozen in at some desolate, disheartening camp of Esquimaux on the coast winter after winter, and one who has never known how filthy, debased, ignorant and intractable the Behring Sea Esquimaux are can have no idea what fearful, what blighting environments and savage primitiveness a white man must endure in a long winter in an Esquimaux settlement. I know a lot of men who think they are pretty tough and heroic, who would just about go mad during seven or eight months amid such conditions and environment. But Anderson endured all that for thirteen years.

A year ago last October Anderson's sole worldly possessions might have been bought for about \$75. Last October when

I saw him he was worth about \$300,000, and I believe that he has real estate at Nome that is going to raise \$75,000 higher during this year. He was one of the five original gold diggers at Cape Nome, and he had his pick of the richest placers in the virgin gold field. He had gone to St. Michael to spend the winter and to do missionary work among the whalers and Innuits, when it was whispered about that the natives on Cape Nome had found gold nuggets a few months before. Anderson organized a party, and although it was late in the season, and there was danger of being frozen in the ice miles from St. Michael, several ex-Klondikers accompanied the Lutheran missionary across Norton Sound to Cape Nome. The party found the benches of the Cape Nome creeks more liberally strewn with gold than they had imagined, and they would not risk a chance location of placer claims then when they had departed for St. Michael. So Anderson and his party stayed right on the scene of the find all winter. They lived in tents amid snow and ice, endured a temperature of sixty below zero for weeks, and subsisted on frozen half cooked food for six months, until spring came and they could go about digging nuggets and flakes of gold from the gravel of the creek benches.

"Anderson happened to claim the two richest spots on Anvil Creek. He got over 1,000 ounces of gold, worth at Nome about \$16,500 an ounce, from one claim in twenty-two days when he had the sluices in operation there last summer. He claimed seven acres of land in what is now the heart of Nome, and his claim being legal, he has sold some lots, 30x70 feet, for \$5,000 each, and many for \$800 and \$1,000 each. It is generally understood that Anderson will stick to Nome until he gets a half million of dollars. Then he will give a lot of it to the Lutheran Church of Sweden, for in spite of his enormous business activity he is always religious. He will build a \$10,000 Lutheran church at Nome this year or next.

"Jim' Grady, who is the king of the sports of Alaska, was a sailor on the United States cruiser Philadelphia three years ago last January. His income was then about \$160 a year and found. He has an income nowadays of about \$8,000 a month. It is difficult to gauge the actual wealth of a sport like Grady, but he must surely be worth \$170,000. He owns the sloop of business property at Dyea, Dawson and Nome. Besides, he has three saloons that would sell for \$20,000 each, and he owns one half the Lehman mine on Snake Creek at Nome, and that is a good gold producer. Grady was a bootblack in Baltimore twenty years ago. He came from a poor hod carrier's family. He ran away to sea and has been a sailor on a dozen craft. He heard in January, 1897, that an old sailor chum of his was running a saloon at Skagway, Alaska. He forthwith got a discharge from the United States Navy and went to Alaska with no other idea than to visit his friend. He helped his friend run the bar. The Klondike boom came on. Thousands of thirsty men with money poured through Skagway and over the Chilkoot Pass on the way to Dawson. Grady embarked with \$100 in the saloon business at Dyea. He introduced faro and roulette gambling, and he had a mint from the hour of opening. He went next to Dawson and opened the most palatial saloon and gambling hall ever known there. His place was crowded day and night. Games with stakes of thirty and forty pounds of gold were played many a time. His daily gross receipts for months were from \$3,000 to \$3,600. On Christmas, 1898, he took in at Dawson \$8,400. Everything he touched seemed to turn to gold. He invested in a patent oil heater, suitable for thawing the frozen gravel in the Klondike placer mines. He was advised by many men to keep out of the patent enterprise. But it proved a success and when the things had sold like hot cakes, he sold the patent at a profit of \$15,000 or \$18,000.

"He got wind that rich strikes had been at Nome, which is some 1800 miles west of Dawson, and he started last March with several dog teams and companions, overland, across snow and ice, for Nome. That he tripled his fortune, for he is the king sport of Nome and he was more than duplicating his Dawson wealth getting at Nome last summer. When I came away from Nome last October he was planning to spend some \$30,000 on a mammoth dance hall, saloon and gambling hall at Nome, when the summer season of 1900 opened.

"Mrs. Danvers is probably the richest woman either in Klondike or at Cape Nome. She has made every dime of her \$150,000 or \$175,000 in the last four years and with her knowledge of Alaskan mining ways and business methods she is going to increase her wealth during the next few years. She is at Dawson City. Her husband was a steam engineer in the employ

of the Alaska Commercial Company, and she and her husband lived at St. Michael two summer seasons, returning to Sitka, Alaska in the winter. Mr. Danvers was killed in an accident on the steamer Weare at Circle City in 1896, and Mrs. Danvers was left practically penniless at St. Michael. Starting up the Yukon for Circle City to get the body of her husband she heard of the finding of gold on the Klondike Creek. Dawson then consisted of rude shanties and Ladue's saw mill. She decided to stop at Dawson and earn her living by cooking and mending for the miners who were flocking there from all the Yukon River camps. Her enthusiasm was infectious. She got \$1,200 worth of pine lumber on credit from the saw mill for a boarding house and she had credit at the merchandise store for food. Her boarding house was a success from the day it opened for business. She had three rooms twelve feet square, and on each of the four walls of these rooms were fixed pine bunks in tiers. These were furnished with dry moss and blankets. Mrs. Danvers had altogether 60 such bunks. Her charge for sleeping there was \$1 a night or \$5 a week. For a year none was ever vacant. After a few months she added a few more, and they, too, were always occupied. Her meals generally consisted of stewed dried fruit, dry codfish, herring, salt pork, bacon, bread, oatmeal, and occasionally butter and eggs. She got \$1 for each meal, and she had more than 100 people at a meal many and many a time. She was one of the first in the gold-crazy and impetuous population at Dawson that saw possibilities in real estate investments. She bought several acres of marsh land from Joseph Eadie for \$1,000 or \$2,000 and she sold it a few months later at fifteen times what she had paid for it. She started the original bakery in Dawson and she made thousands of dollars there. Then she conceived an idea of a dog-team express company to deliver merchandise, food and mining supplies to the men in the cabins out on the creeks of the Klondike country round about Dawson. She took two partners into her scheme and a company was organized that has been highly profitable. Mrs. Danvers has been sending regularly her spare capital down to a Seattle bank. It is said at Dawson that she declined more than 200 offers of marriage during her first year of widowhood, and that she now has a printed form of declaration of matrimonial proposals, and that she hands a printed card to each proposer.

### MYSTERY OF A BLACK EYE.

There's More Than One Way to Make Money Or Play a Joke.

[New York Sun.]

The other afternoon a young man with visible means of support in the shape of sundry and divers diamonds carelessly strewn about his person walked into that Sixth avenue establishment on the exterior of which this sign is exhibited.

BLACK EYES PAINTED.  
BLACK EYES CURED.  
SCRATCHED FACES PAINTED.

"Say," said the young man with the precious stones to an artist in charge. "I want to have one of 'em painted."

"One what?" asked the artist.

"Lamp," replied the young man with the numerous transparent carbons.

"What for?" inquired the artist. "Your lamps are all right."

"Uh-huh, I know that," said the bejeweled youth. "But I want you to put one of them to the bad. Make it look like it'd been hit by a steamboat. I want to get the bunch guessing."

"Oh, that's it, hey?" said the artist getting out his brushes. "Going to con 'em out of a piece of change?"

"Well, not exactly that," was the reply. "I'll let them make the book themselves. All you've got to do is to make one of these windows look like I'd had a mix with a trolley car and been counted out, or been trying to bronco-bust up at the Garden. Make it the worst ever. I'm going to give my Willie Wise friends the chew of their lives."

The artist went to work, and in something less than eight minutes the young man with the dazzling crystals had as bad-looking a left orb as ever resulted from a mixed-ale social in Hancock street. The artist made a thoroughly workmanlike job of it. The eye was black and raw-looking both atop and below. When the job was done the young man looked at himself in the glass with manifest satisfaction.

"Make 'em look like I got mine all right don't it?" he asked with a grin. "Couldn't ha' got a worse one if I'd been rude to Jid McCoy's."

The artist named the price of the job and the young man paid him and departed. He walked to a housed refreshment oasis in Twenty-eighth street. Every man that he met on the way turned and grinned at him. A large number of 'the bunch' were sitting and standing around the Twenty-

eight street place. The entrance of the young man with the left eye in mourning appeared to tickle most of them foolish. They threw these and other remarks at him.

"Light up. Your lamp's out."

"How does the other geezer look?"

"Say, get somebody to soak the right with a golf club, so's they'll match."

"Don't look like the same fair-haired boy, does he?"

"Why, didn't you throw one of your rocks at him?"

"You will take advantage of John L. because he's fat and try to tell him how to run a bar, will you hey?"

"Well, don't play quarter-limit poker in a flat, then."

"Why don't you blind him with you hat and land on his wind before he got that one in on you?"

"Oh, yes, you're fit to be seen."

The young man with the awful looking off orb didn't make any reply. He only smiled weakly, ordered a vichy and milk, drank it, and walked out.

In the course of the afternoon he met about twenty members of "the bunch" singly or in pairs, at different places on his route. They all asked him in confidence how he'd got it. He told them in confidence first come, first served, and these are some of the various way he pushed it at them when they asked him, singly or in pairs, how it happened.

"I was playing ball."

"Pet dog jumped at me while dreaming—the dog, I mean."

"A banister got sore on me in the dark and patted me."

"Got it in the siege of Ladysmith."

"Sparrow cop clubbed me with a beer bottle for picking pansies in the Park."

"Was singing 'Because' when it happened—don't remember the rest."

"Got hit with a bean bag."

"Told a fan out at the ball game that the New Yorks were mutts and selling-platers."

"Steering-rod of my automobile hit me."

"Asked a Broadway cop if he was making a handbook on the Aqueduct races."

"I was fighting with a man who knew how to fight and he gave me a black eye."

The above are only a few that he told the different members of "the bunch" who asked him about it singly or in pairs.

They were all back in the Twenty-eighth street place a few hours later when the young man with the mused eye again turned up. The eye was still a sight to behold.

One of 'the bunch' was making a book on how it happened. They all put down a bet. The book went something like this:

He got punched by a man who knew how, 1 to 5 on.

He fell off his bike, 5 to 1.

He was pushed off a car, 7 to 1.

He fell upstairs, 10 to 1.

He fell out of bed, 15 to 1.

He wasn't Johnny on the spot with his room rent 20 to 1.

He told the waiter girl at the hashery where he eats that she had nice eyes, 30 to 1.

His fox-terrier pup accidentally butted into him, 50 to 1.

Field 3 to 5 on.

Most of them were playing the odds-on chance at 1 to 5. A few pikers and long-shot players nibbled at the more liberal odds, but the plungers considered that any price was a good one on the chance at the top of the list, and they stood to go broke on it.

The young man with the eye sat down, ordered another vichy and milk, and grinned. He didn't say anything. The man who was making the book took all the bets in sight, being finally compelled to rub the 1 to 5 to 1 to 10 on the 'favorite.'

"All set?" said the bookmaker, looking around the room.

No more betters came forward, and so the maker of the handbook walked over to the young man with the eye.

"Now it's up to you, pal," said he. "Cough up, and hand it out straight. How'd you get it?"

"All right," said the youth with the eye, yawning and stretching. "I'll be back in a minute."

He got up and disappeared for thirty seconds in the rear room. When he returned, still yawning and stretching, his left eye was as good as the right. There wasn't a mark on it.

"The bunch" gazed at him agape.

"It's a split," said the bookmaker, clutching the bills he had taken in. "The house—or the book, and that's me—draws down half," and he edged around toward the door.

"It's a job!" yelled the frenzied betters. "We get a draw down or there'll be crime! Don't let him out! Soak him!"

But the maker of the handbook did get out, with about half a dozen of 'the bunch' in pursuit. They hadn't returned with him up to the hour this report closed.

You're a nice gang of come-ons, you are," said the youth with the erased black eye, leaning back in his chair and leaning at the members of 'the bunch' who didn't join in the pursuit of the welcher.

You're smart people, ain't you?"

Then he had to punch a hard loser who intimated that he was in with the welcher in the handbook.