

sent a chill to every heart, a great rain-drop splashed full into the centre of the fire. One good drop deserves another, I suppose, so the other was not long in coming, and it brought its sisters, its cousins and its aunts with it. Clearly we were in for a wet night, and we all gazed anxiously up at the roof of our Gothic shelter, wondering whether it would prove faithful to us. For some time the prospect seemed cheerful, and rugged swathed we were congratulating ourselves upon being able to fare pretty comfortably in spite of the rain, when a wicked irreverent globule hit me squarely on the nose. Then I realized that our fate was sealed and all hope of comfort banished. Oh! dear, but what a wretched time we did have! It gives me a rheumatic twinge to think of it now. Once the ice was broken the drops came in fast and furious until dodging them was quite out of the question, and passive submission to their impertinence the only resource. Then to make matters worse we found that the cosy little dell we had chosen for our camp, as being so well protected from the wind, was the favourite trysting-place of innumerable tiny streamlets which now hastened to one another's embrace, until the ground beneath us became little better than a morass. In fact there was water—water—everywhere, and nothing to keep us dry but a bottle of old rye, and my temperance principles debarred me from getting any comfort out of that. My fellow-sufferers being inured to all sorts of exposure made light of the matter, and with the aid of their pipes and the aforesaid old rye got along fairly well. I manfully did my best to "bob up serenely" under the depressing circumstances, but it was no use, so I just resigned myself to grumbling until as day dawned the rain was good enough to cease plaguing us.

The morning found us in a sorry plight: clothes, rugs, knapsacks, everything soaked and streaming, no dry wood to make a fire, and no chance of the sun appearing for hours. There was nothing for it but to gather up our traps, get on board our boat, and make for the nearest farmhouse, where by our piteous condition we so touched the heart of the good dame in command that she bundled us all into bed, dried our clothes before the fire, and as soon as we were once more presentable set us down before a smoking breakfast, which soon warmed the cockles of our hearts and sent us forth feeling like strong men about to run a race. It was not without reluctance that we bid our buxom hostess adieu, but hunters must not dally; so having given expression to our gratitude in the current coin of the realm we took up anew our murderous designs against the ducks. This being our last day we all felt in a very killing mood, but unfortunately there were no birds to be killed. Whether the rain had dispersed them, or the accuracy of my double-barrel had proved too much for their nerves, modesty forbids me to determine. At all events the ducks utterly refused to materialize. Digging clams was scarcely sufficient amusement, delicious as the juicy bivalves taste when roasted in a bed of eel-grass, and we had no lines wherewith to tempt the speckled sea trout from his briny lair. In this emergency I proposed a visit to the works then being carried on with the idea of reclaiming Cole Harbour from the sea and making it a fertile meadow. We accordingly posted off there. Cole Harbour, as has been already said, loses nearly all its water at low tide, and there is left to view long black banks of rich mussel-mud. One day it occurred to a gentleman who was familiar with what has been done in Holland that the Harbour might be reclaimed, just like the fat-meadow lands of the canal country. So a company was formed, the services of the notorious financial juggler, Baron Grant, secured to float the scheme, and presently a small army of men was at work at the harbour's mouth. The first proceeding was to build moles from either side stretching out towards one another across the narrow entrance until they reached the deep central channel, where the enormous force of the current rendered it impossible to find a firm foundation. Then came the rub. How could this gap, through which the tide was ever running in and out with irresistible energy, be filled up? The first plan adopted had so much originality and daring in its favour that it certainly deserved a better fate. A huge structure of mighty timbers, batted and braced together, resembling nothing so much as a lattice-work bridge, and several hundred feet in length, was built up on launch-ways some distance inside the moles in such a position that when launched it would be carried by the tide right down to the opening, where, being too wide to pass through, it would remain forced while stones by the thousand were dumped upon it, thus completely closing the gap. But alas! it was never launched. At the first attempt the unwieldy thing broke its back, and became useless forever. It also broke the heart of its projector, and he went back to England in despair, while the company went into liquidation. The scheme did not end there, however. Some time subsequently the heaviest stock-holder in the defunct corporation took up the matter on his own account. A new engineer essayed to cope with the difficulties of the undertaking. His method was to get together an immense number of gunny-sacks, pack them hard with sand, and drop them right into the chasm. It proved entirely successful. Slowly but surely the bags rose to the surface. Day by day the foaming torrent surrendered more of its strength. The works were not very far advanced at the time of our visit, but in what had been done we saw a prophecy of the coming day when Cole Harbour should know the snipe, the plover, the curlew, the duck, and that still nobler biped, the sportsman, no more.

When our plans for the night were under discussion, Gordon actually had the hardihood to propose a return to Flying Point. This, however, I promptly vetoed. Camping out is all well enough in fine weather, but there is no fun in sitting in the lap of Nature when she has been in a tearful mood, and her lap is decidedly damp, not to mention the probabilities of rheumatism, lumbago, and so forth. My motion, therefore, to return to the hospitable roof under which we had already been treated so kindly prevailed, and the setting sun found us once more enjoying its domestic comforts.

The advent of bed-time brought with it a curious dilemma; our worthy

hostess informed us that she could not possibly place more than two beds at our disposal. Now Dick and Gordon, accustomed to the solitary luxury of a hammock, looked decidedly askance at the idea of having a bed-fellow. But I, foreseeing the result, made haste to proclaim my preference for a companion and pre-empted a bed forthwith. Dick and Gordon, therefore, had no other alternative than to toss up for the vacant couch. The coin turned up tail, and Gordon, disdaining my cordial invitation to bunk with me,

Just smiled a sort of sickly smile,
And curled up on the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings
Interested him no more.

The following morning, with lightened packs but weighty game-bags, we turned our faces homeward, well pleased with the results of our three days' camping out at Cole Harbour.

JAMES M. OXLEY.

HERE AND THERE.

THE Montreal Branch of the Free Navigation League has issued a circular explaining the objects of the organization and inviting coöperation. The document sets forth that the navigation of the St. Lawrence was improved by canals and deepening of the channel between Montreal and Quebec under legislation that included a system of tolls upon all vessels and merchandise using the same. That corresponding traffic by the great rival route, the Erie Canal, was in former years subjected to similar charges, which have, however, been entirely removed. That the continuance of the charges upon the St. Lawrence route is detrimental to the trade and industry of Canada, and that whereas the Government did on former occasions grant only temporary relief under representations made by the trade of the country, it is now expedient to initiate a movement of a general character which shall continue its efforts until the route is entirely relieved from all Government charges in excess of those imposed upon the Erie Canal and in Atlantic ports. To that end the formation of other branches is solicited for conference and united effort to secure the objects set forth. The facts stated being true, it is continued, the changes in the Government policy suggested are worthy of fair consideration by all commercial organizations. In the public reference that has already been made to the efforts of the organization it is claimed that extraneous subjects have been introduced. Whether by the want of elevators at Kingston, and of enterprise on the part of merchants and forwarders, the decadence of the commerce of the St. Lawrence has been accelerated, or whether it would be expedient for the City of Montreal to assume the debt created by harbour construction, entirely relieving the trade from wharfage, are considerations of great importance, but it is alleged they are entirely foreign to the main question. The contention of the League is at present confined to one point, *i.e.*, that, inasmuch as the American waterways have been freed from tolls upon much of their trade, corresponding relief should be granted by the Legislature of the Dominion throughout the waterways of Canada.

WHATEVER helps to reduce the friction of life, to abate its anxieties, is of the utmost value in this high-pressure age. It is well known that more men break down from worry than from work. The average family man is usually more concerned about possible difficulties than about the duties which lie next his hand. Before the days of life-insurance, as a rule wealthy benedicts alone could look to the future complacently; now-a-days that valuable institution has enabled thousands of middle-class business men to live their lives with equanimity who might otherwise have been filled with anxiety for their families. An essential feature, of course, in providing for future contingencies, is to insure with a thoroughly sound company, and happily this is not difficult. Occupying a foremost place amongst trustworthy corporations of the kind is the Canada Life, to whose report, in another column, we commend attention. Read in the light of the statements and figures there supplied, Mr. Ramsay's management appears to have been conspicuously successful, with the result that the company's business has increased by leaps and bounds—the profits having risen from \$192,891 in 1870 to \$1,350,464 in 1885.

THERE were nineteen failures in Canada reported to Bradstreet's during the past week, against seventeen in the preceding week, and seventeen, twenty-three and eight in the corresponding weeks of 1884, 1883 and 1882 respectively. In the United States there were 180 failures reported during the week as compared with 160 in the preceding week, and with 176, 179 and 132, respectively, in the corresponding weeks of 1884, 1883 and 1882. About 80 per cent. were those of small traders whose capital was less than \$5,000.

It is gradually coming to be recognized, as THE WEEK long ago prophesied would be the case, that the electric light is a failure as a general street illuminant. A motion, practically endorsing this view, and tantamount to a proposal to revert to the use of gas, was submitted to the Toronto City Council the other day, and it might be politic for Quebec—in which city there is a feeling in favour of the electric light—to await developments before committing herself to a change. There is a growing impression that gas, where there is enough of it, gives a much more satisfactory light, does not throw such uncomfortable shadows as the rival illuminator, and is withal cheaper. Moreover, it is apparent that the hideous poles from which electric lamps are suspended are a chief contributing cause to the increasing unsightliness of our public thoroughfares.