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THE WRECK OF THE ELBE.

The pitiful details furnished by the survivors of the crew of the shipwrecked Elbe recall to recollection many similar harrowing stories. The steamer which did the damage has yet to be heard from, but apparently the Elbe was not to blame. When the collision happened all reasonable steps appear to have been taken to do what could be done. The good instincts of men are not all dead yet, and Captain von Gossel is one more name added to the long roll of seamen who have died at their posts. In every accident there is something sure to happen which is incongruous with the surroundings. One of the passengers says he met the mail officer shortly after the collision and asked him what was the matter. The answer was, "Nothing." As a well-meaning attempt to calm reasonable apprehension this reply strikes us as unique. And yet in ordinary life how often does the same system exist of endeavoring to conceal the facts! The policy of hiding disaster is resorted to by many men. It is seldom a success, and those who are deceived by it are doubly injured, first by the calamity itself and then by the deceit but for which other steps might have been taken.

The sufferings of those who were rescued make one think that life at sea is not so deadly a thing. The instinct of self-preservation comes to the surface and men under the guidance of that instinct endure sufferings and make efforts which they would not have themselves capable of in any circumstances.

Another reflection which arises in such a catastrophe is on what principle any those saved who are saved? Is it chance, predestination, providence, fortune or what element is it that picks out twenty-two persons from four hundred as being those to be rescued? Of all problems presented to the human mind for solution this question is the most difficult. The past lives of those saved or their future fate seems to have nothing to do with the matter. "The Devil takes care of his own," has become a proverbial way of expressing one popular notion about those who escape.

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left." Which of the two? On what principle is the choice made? The lesson that is taught is, "Watch therefore! If men know not the day of the Lord, certainly, which ought to make them 'watch.' But most men take their chance, without reflection, until the lot falls on them, and then they wonder why they should be the persons picked upon. To go behind these questions, which only interest the individual, and ask, "Why should there be a wreck at all?" opens up another field for thought and discussion too unpleasant to dwell upon.

The immense loss of life and the terrible destruction of property annually on the British coast is something very few people know. Two thousand lives and seven or eight hundred lives are lost every year on the shores of England, Scotland and Ireland. The value of property destroyed is estimated at \$10,000,000. The powers of nature have lost none of their force. Man has harnessed some of them, and controls them sufficiently to use them. But the gigantic waves of the ocean, the fierce cyclones of the tropics, the terrible typhoon of the China Sea, still lay havoc. The man who goes down into the sea in ships still sees the works of the Lord, and still requires the heart of oak and the strength of triple brass, as in the days of old Homer wrote, "To stand on the bridge of a ship and see eggs rolling on, a couple of miles away, a tidal wave, topped all his lesser brethren who are big enough of themselves to knock the ship about like a cork-toy, that in a few moments that wave must be surmounted or cut through, that the chances are equal that it will break over the ship, and send every soul to the bottom, that will try a man's courage. If the ship rides over the wave all will be well, if not—the wave is here. The ship climbs up a mountain of black water with a snowy summit—then down on the other side and the wave has passed. While this happens a man goes through a lifetime of suspense, and after all, it takes only a few moments. The wave might have broken over her. But it did not, and in a few minutes it is forgotten, except in a man's dreams.

We who live on the inland lakes do not have such frightful weather as on the ocean, but we have it quite badly enough. Before long the icy bands of water will have burst. Our steamers will once more cross the lakes. Their want of life-rafts and other sufficient life-saving appliances is too well known for people not to feel nervous about it. A catastrophe like this terrible disaster to the Elbe recalls these matters. Whoever is responsible for the steamship equipment on the lakes has a great burden placed on his shoulders.

JAPAN BELIEVES IN PROTECTION.

The Globe's trade theories are all right from a theoretical point of view, but in practice the progressive nations of the world do not follow them. About the only country that does is Japan, and progressive and aggressive nations of the world believe throughly in protection, and use it as a means of developing their resources. Japan, the latest addition to civilized nations, is a recent convert to the principle of protection. It is proceeding to develop its industries by means of that policy as rapidly as it knows how. Japan believes not only in affording protection to its own manufacturers, but when subprotection fails to create any given desired industry the country even goes so far as to undertake the business itself and carry it on as a national undertaking. The new dictator in the east has determined to establish an iron and steel industry within its own limits, and with

that end in view an expert from Chicago, Mr. Edward C. Potter, has been summoned to Japan at the request of the Mikado's Government to introduce this industry. It will cost the Japanese Government about \$1,000,000 to secure the plant that will be adequate to carry on the business contemplated. There is a circumstance in connection with this affair that we would like to draw the Globe's attention to. It is not to free-trade England that the Japanese are looking to secure the enlightenment and the mechanical means for developing their country, but of the United States the greatest protectionist country in the world. In iron and steel-making apparatus the United States leads the world. Mr. Potter expects that steel rails can be turned out in Japan at from ten to fifteen dollars per ton. Speaking on the subject of iron production, Mr. Potter makes the following observation:

"There are only two reasons why any country should not produce its own rails and other iron and steel materials. One is the lack of raw materials, the other lack of capital. These drawbacks do not exist in Japan. It has the raw materials in vast quantities and of excellent quality. As to money, the Japanese have plenty of it, and their credit is excellent if they are not more. There is only one hindrance that I know of to the successful operation of a modern steel-working plant in that country. It is the distance between their beds of iron ore and the deposits of coal."

"This question has been touched upon in our correspondence and maps showing the location of the ore, coal and limestone deposits have been sent to us. The difficulty can, of course, be remedied. It is simply a question of transportation. It will necessitate the building of a line of railway, and then everything will move on to accomplishment."

As a temporary relief to the situation, the Secretary of the Treasury, it was reported yesterday, has determined upon issuing 100 millions of four per cent gold bonds. The rumor is that this was offered for these by a syndicate of foreign capitalists, and it is doubtful if this price will be accepted, it being relatively lower than that paid for recent issues.

A Prosperous Insurance Co.

The phenomenal growth of the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association is shown in the annual report published in its column. That report shows that the assets were larger, the surplus greater, and the payments to beneficiaries more than in any preceding year. The gross assets had increased during the year 1894 from \$5,135,516.86 to \$5,581,153.90, a net gain for the year of \$397,599.63.

The Reserve or Surplus Emergency Fund had increased its total assets from \$3,589,326.13 to \$3,827,635.12, making a net gain for the year of \$238,308.99.

The income from all sources during the year 1894 amounted to \$4,943,739.50, as against \$4,494,424.00 in 1893, a net increase of \$444,924.50.

The report shows that at the end of the year 1894 we had disbursed to the widows and orphans and representatives of the deceased a total of \$1,006,471. The net assets of the company now foot up to \$298,539, an increase of \$11,365. The income for the premium income amounts to \$17,834, which enables the company to add to its assets \$10,000.

The report shows most careful management on the part of the officers of the company, as although the volume of business had been greatly increased during the past year, but \$327.53 was the amount of agents' balances, showing that the staff of agents had been most carefully selected and supervised.

Thomas F. Sullivan, General Manager, T. W. Thompson, L. J. Brethaupt and C. Cabot, Fenell and George Lang re-elected as president and vice-president respectively. The Toronto agent of the Economical Insurance Co., Mr. T. S. Minton, corner Scott and Wellington, who will be glad at all times to answer any questions regarding his company.

Herbert in Texas.

It was reported in the city yesterday that C. S. Herbert, who conducted the large drygoods store at the corner of Slater and Yonge-streets, had gone to Texas to follow the ranching business and to spend the remainder of his days in agricultural pursuits. Whether this is fact or not cannot be learned, but it is a fact that Garland & Jenkins have decided on selling off the entire stock of goods at the corner of Slater and Wellington, who will be glad at all times to answer any questions regarding his company.

E Co. 48th.

The annual meeting of E. Co., 48th Highway, in the hall of the treasurer, was held last night at full attendance of members. The various committees for the year were elected, including a committee on the special duty it will be to see to it that the company's interests are protected in the various regional events of the year.

The company will hold a smoker at the armory on Friday evening next. Hard and soft coals cannot be withstood in the North country, but it is a pity. Get a bottle at once and be happy.

FIRE NOTICE.

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