

they transpire; and it would seem as if something like general exemption from poverty and the accidents which produce it, were already contemplated by the men who devote their lives to thinking and prescribing for the people. In no instance is this important fact more apparent than in the spread, during the last few years of Assurance Companies throughout all Europe and America. What was formerly an advantage only attainable by wealthy men through the medium of high premiums and heavy rates of assurance, is now becoming accessible, not only to the middle classes, but to the humblest individuals, through the enterprise of companies which have started on principles so sound as well as liberal, that all the chief benefits of assurance are insured to the assured, without half the former risk, and in all instances at a great reduction of the usual cost.

The intent, the use, the value of assurance are also becoming better understood than formerly; and hence its advantages are more widely sought. Not many years ago nine-tenths of the population of Europe and America were ignorant of even its elementary principles, and looked upon life assurance as a sort of child's caul, intended to save them from dying before their time. It is now, however, known that an Assurance Company is a species of benefit club on a scale of great magnitude, supported by vast capital, governed by men of profound mercantile sagacity and judgment, and securing to individuals and their families, in cases of death, poverty, &c., benefits which have been mathematically calculated by algebraical rules of such nicety that no contingency can prevent the assurer from reaping them. In Canada there are several establishments which are one and all conducted on principles of fair and open honesty, affording facilities to people of all classes for enjoying the benefits of assurance. Did the limits of our Journal permit, we could point out some admirable feature, peculiar to each of those establishments, adapted to the different emergencies and requirements of the assurer and we think "The Britannia Life Assurance" "The Eagle Life Assurance" "The National Loan and Life Assurance" "The United Kingdom Life Assurance" and the "Colonial Life Assurance Companies," peculiarly entitled to the consideration of all prudent men; we look upon the system of life assurance as the poor man's safeguard against poverty, because we believe the principal aim of the several offices to which we have alluded is to benefit the striving middle classes and those who struggle along the yet humbler walks of life. Nothing can better illustrate that characteristic of peculiar business habits by which the people of England are identified with everything of a practical tendency in all their pursuits and avocations, than the meaning and purpose of assurance. It is from the great commercial character

of the English nation that has sprung out its capability of effecting so much as it does in unobtrusive silence, while it is at the same time displaying to the world an hourly example of plodding perseverance, pushing activity, invention, and thought, which appear to leave no leisure for those social schemes by which communities are aided and preserved without one pebble falling to ripple the stream of affairs, or one sound being heard "to fright the isle from its propriety." The correctness of this commentary upon the English national character is borne out by the rise and progress of Assurance Companies, which, beginning with the enterprise of a few private individuals, have spread and advanced so extensively as to yield at the present moment a revenue of more than three quarters of a million per annum to the British Government; a more splendid exhibition of what may be accomplished by human perseverance, and individual talent, spirit, and energy, does not exist, for the originators of the system had no helping hand from the ruling powers; and it was not until its moral and political benefits were appreciated by the people that the rapid growth of which we speak took place. The moment these were seen, competition and new offices were the natural result, and hence the variety and usefulness of the projects which on every side allure us to the banners of prudence, in spite of the united influence of folly and temptation. In conclusion we earnestly recommend the system of Life Assurance to all our readers and believe that in doing so we are calling their attention to a most valuable institution.

[We shall recur to this subject in some future number.]

AN OLD TAR'S YARN.

(A STORY FOR SAILORS.)

Some years ago, half a dozen friends and myself visited Greenwich Hospital. Our conductor was a weather-beaten middle-aged tar, whose larboard glim had been doused since boyhood with the smallpox, and his starboard fin was carried away by a chain shot. By the gold lace which he sported on his chapeau, the sleeves of his coat, &c., he appeared to hold the rank of boatswain in the college. He was a communicative old boy; and we felt indebted to his civilities. He, however, spurned the idea of being rewarded with money. "No, blow it!" he exclaimed, "not a tissey, not a single brown—but a drop of grog, gemmen, if you please." So saying, he led the way to a neighbouring tavern, and entrenched himself in a corner of the parlour, with which he seemed intimately familiar. I placed myself at his elbow with the intention of drawing from him some favourite yarn. During the first glass he spoke only of the hospital; during the second, he advanced to actions and bombardments; but, as he finished the third, as if to induce us to call for a fourth, he said, "But it's of no use talking about battles and