

The Daily Astorian.

ASTORIA, OREGON:

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1885
MEANS TOWARD GREATER SAFETY AT SEA.

The number of vessels reported among the missing the past season is considerable. It is probable that the number is as large as that of any previous winter. It is distressing to think of the many losses placed under this class, especially in these enlightened times when so many inventions looking to the safety of human life have been brought forward and have proved to be of great value. Life preservers of every kind and form of construction are used on ships. Even the mattress in the berths and seats upon deck can be turned into life preservers. Life-boats and life-rafts without number testify to the ingenuity of man in providing means of saving life in case of disaster at sea. These are not to be considered lightly, for they are part of the necessary equipment of sea going vessels and have proved instrumental in saving hundreds of imperilled lives. Through the knowledge of the nearness of these safeguards the ocean traveler feels a certain sense of security and is relieved of much anxiety as a consequence. Yet, these appliances for saving life point to the fact that the ocean presents almost as many dangers even to our great steamers as it did to the smaller vessels of earlier times. This seems to be acknowledged by the very manner in which in these days we provide for saving life at sea, for it is after a marine casualty that such appliances are most sought after. They are in no sense a part of a vessel on which they are carried, nor do they add in any way to the strength or safety of the ship. It seems, therefore, incongruous that while an immense amount of time and ingenuity has been expended in perfecting apparatus for escaping from a sinking vessel, so little comparatively has been done toward perfecting construction with a view to making vessels practically unsinkable. The nearest approach to this is to be seen in the ocean steamer in which a number of bulkheads are fitted—the theory being that these would be of sufficient buoyancy to keep up the vessel in case of damage through collision or otherwise. But in practice this has failed in many instances and is not adequate to the demands of the present time.

There are really no vessels afloat that could stand the test that would be necessary to pronounce them practically unsinkable. And yet instead of attention being turned in that direction it is for the most part strained to discover some better means of rescuing the victims of this neglect. All this seems to be very unwise, and for many reasons. It would seem, if only in the interest of the ship-owner, that to make his property as strong and durable as possible in the beginning would be to provide to a certain extent against the loss of it or the expenditure of much money in repairs. In exclusively cargo carrying vessels it might be impracticable to carry out this idea of a perfectly safe vessel under all conditions of weather. In passenger steamers, however, it would seem possible that this could be done—although the value of having cargo room in them has yet to be considered—the internal devices to make them absolutely safe from the danger of fire and of foundering would not be of a character that would prevent the stowing of some cargo. This is somewhat a matter of education. Many may doubt the practicability of an innovation of this kind, but there is little doubt that when better times for shipping set in new ideas in the matter of construction of vessels will be brought forward and the above mentioned class of vessel is not likely to be overlooked in the consideration which will then be given to these matters. The first cost of a vessel might be somewhat increased in meeting these requirements, but it might then be considered more profitable to build smaller vessels. Furthermore much of the life saving appliances might be done away with, considerable money being saved in consequence and besides the matter of longevity of the vessel is no mean thing to be considered.

One seventh part of the land surface of the earth constitutes the domain of the czar of all the Russias. More than 100,000,000 people call him father, and are under his absolute government. In Russia a child is born on an average every eight seconds throughout the year, and a death occurs every eleven seconds. At the present rate of increase the population will double in about sixty years. But Russia is very far behind most civilized nations in the care of

children and in the preservation of life. Statistics show that 60 per cent. of all the children die under the age of five years. The average duration of life in Russia is only twenty-six years, which is much below the average in the western countries of Europe and in the United States.

When Admiral Nachimoff destroyed the whole Turkish fleet at one blow off Sinope in 1853, Russia, of course, "regretted the unfortunate occurrence," and made a show of blaming its author. But the offending admiral was privately invested with the order of the White Eagle, and the advantage he gained was utilized to the utmost. So, too, when General Teberniaeff, in June, 1855, captured Tashkend (the present capital of Russian Turkistan), by a sudden dash like that of Komaroff, similar protestations and assurances, of precisely equal value, were made by the cabinet of St. Petersburg. But Teberniaeff, while ostensibly censured, was secretly rewarded, and Russia took good care to retain the captured city.

The president is said to be much disappointed at the poor prospect of relief from the pressure of office seekers. He has refused again and again to consider cases until applicants went home and left him unembarrassed. By this policy he has driven away one set after another, but the stream of arrivals does not diminish and every day at least a dozen states are represented by delegations or individuals. He at first thought he could close the doors by refusing to make any appointments until the crowds had departed. He now begins to think there is to be no relief as long as an appointment remains to be made.

The Jersey fisherman couldn't catch shad as long as he remained a Jerseyman, but by becoming a citizen of Delaware there was no law against his catching all the shad he could inveigle into his net. It doesn't cost a great deal to take up a temporary residence in the state of peaches and great statesmen, and so, rather than go to war about the matter, the Jersey fisherman has resolved to try the peaceful method of emigration by moving across the river.

A RARE instance of Christian toleration is exemplified in Aarau, Switzerland, where Protestants and Catholics occupy the same church. On New Year's eve it was filled, and the whole congregation united in singing a hymn, after which the Catholic choir executed a piece of music. The priest and pastor then alternately spoke on the religious thoughts appropriate to the close of the year, and on the good relations that should exist between Christians.

M. Lessar speaks of Turkistan as the most pacific country in the world. Not a crime has been committed in Turkistan for two years and a half, he says. The obvious explanation is that since Russia conquered the country there has been no one there to engage in such a diversion.

Few people are aware of it, but it is a fact that Greece owes to Great Britain a debt of \$5,000,000, on which it pays only 1 per cent of interest. Russia and France are creditors to Greece on the same terms.

A BILL, before the British parliament to authorize a federation of the Australian colonies, provides that any colony may, at its discretion and without consulting the others, secede from the union.

The Boston Journal says: "There are millions of capital in New England waiting for investment at 5 per cent."

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