

THE PERILS OF THE ICE

Boats Crushed Like Eggshells by Its Mighty Grip.

A TERRIBLE RACE FOR SAFETY.

Our Correspondent's Interesting Trip Through Water and Over Ice at Lake LeBarge—Partners and Their Petty Quarrels—Boats Mounted Upon Sleds.

[From Our Special Correspondent.] FOOT OF LAKE LEBARGE, May 26. We are a little surprised to learn that practically all who preceded us on the trail are camped at the head of this lake. This, by the way, includes some who crossed the passes from Dyon and Skagway as early as last September. They tell us it is impossible to get through with anything save a small portable boat that can be run from water to ice and ice to water easily. Of course most of them could have got through before except for the Fifty Mile river, which has been impassable nearly

upon the ice, drag up our boat after a good deal of tugging, place it upon four sleds, or sleighs, making a crosspiece for the two front ones with a rude swivel, so that the vehicle may be started easily if required, load up and turn across the lake diagonally. We have not gone a half mile before we are confronted by a crack, or fissure, in the ice about a foot wide, then a space of ice about five or six feet wide, followed by another similar fissure running parallel to it. We hesitate about crossing. The ice is apparently two feet thick or more, but there is a weight of four or five tons to be put upon it, and if we do not make the attempt to cross our goods must be taken from the boat and portaged over the weak spot. We seek out what we consider the strongest spot, and with a good start make a dash for the other side. The ice sinks startlingly beneath the heavy load, but we are able to drag the two forward sleds across safely upon the level ice. We are less fortunate, however, with the rear of the load, for it sinks down into the water and, despite all our efforts, lies at an angle of about 45 degrees and in a perilous position. The boat must be unloaded again, and after a good deal of hard work we succeed in getting the

"THOU ART THE MAN."

Great reforms are not secured by sitting down at home and waiting, like Micawber of old, for something to turn up. Action is an essential to success. The fight is on. Help to spread the truth. Get a few doubtful voters to read THE INDEPENDENT from now until the result is known. We will send the paper from now until November 15, to new subscribers, for 20 cents. Don't wait. Strike now. The time is at hand.

the time the inflow began to be noticed two boats are crushed like eggshells in its mighty grasp and another has been literally pulled in twain by a crowd of frantic men who attempt to release her from the pythonlike icy monster that holds her in its grasp. I believe no one suffered material damage to his outfit, but the loss of boats will be felt severely, for at this state of the trip material for the homemade variety is hard to find.

We render what assistance lies in our power to the unfortunate ones and at about 8 o'clock in the evening hoist our sail and slowly proceed down the river. A. A. HILL.

OUR GREENBACKS.

It may be that I ain't bin educated Sufficienter or more 'n th' laws allows. En possible to understandin money. Ain't possible to one that follows plow. En possible that int' rest foanecceers. En makin' of it put its debt in a money. Just doubled up in val's sense 'twas lent. En possible I wouldn't be jest handy. In takin money that wuz runnin square En turnin it to int' rest bonds on foolin. Th' tollin millions to believe 'twas fair. But what I sees I knows, I kind of reckon, En well ez them whose minds run on their pelf. En plan their schemes ag'in th' state on nation En how to take frum you on add to self. En I have seen th' old greenback on trial. Where gold on silver both had slunk to rear. En patriot hearts wuz darin storm of battle. En never yet wuz seen a foanecceer. En there with stars ez bright ez noonday shinin. Old Glory floated o'er th' cannon's glare, En there was that old greenback, strong on stedly. A-holdin Glory in th' pulvin air. En there he held it in th' storm on roarin. Patient ez mountains is to bear their load. En bringin guns on sust' nance to th' armies. In th'ir advancin on th' forward road. I say it stand there—the old army greenback—When gold on silver both had slunk to rear. En I bore th' nation's armies through to glory. Without th' help of any foanecceer. En simply 'cause its strong, or I'm mistaken. To help in time of war or toll or need. En costs th' nation nuthin for its service. Its death is called for by th' vampire greed. En I've a notion that th' foanecceers. I find their schemes come to a sudd'n end. Some mornin 'rly when th' voters an'ers. That th' old greenback is th' nation's friend. En I've a notion that in earth's progression. En man's conditions that are yet to be. Adv-ance slowly, and what might seem a bit laboriously, but the hardships are not half as bad as they probably seem when spread out in cold type upon white paper. Further we have the best reasons for believing that Thirty Mile river and the entire waters beyond to Dawson City are free from ice. So we are all in fairly good spirits. As I dictate this I am perched up in the middle of the boat and my wife is putting it down on the typewriter with the utmost speed. Dinner is cooking on a stove at one end of the boat, and I catch the smell of the savory and succulent stewed bean as it is wafted across to me by the chill wind. We have been out about three hours this morning and have chopped and broken our way through only about a half mile of ice, but there is clear water just ahead, and we hope to make it by 12 o'clock. We are second in a long line of boats and scows, trying to push their way through, the method being to join forces and with axes and axes out a passage broad enough for the widest craft to pass through. The leading boat has just out her way into open water and a mighty cheer goes up, for the argonauts well know that a passage has been made for them which they individually could not cut in a fortnight. The day is warm and the sun is shining brightly. Suddenly a breeze springs up and faces that have been wearing smiles begin to show alarm. The thick ice is creeping in on the line of boats as they are being pushed forward. "Go back! Go back!" is the cry. "Your boat will be smashed in pieces!" Crushed by the Ice Monster. The five foremost boats manage to get around the point and into open water in safety. Of the balance two or three are pushing madly on and the rest are as vainly attempting to retreat. Slowly but with a mighty power the ice creeps in. Men work as if for their lives. They begin frantically to unload their outfits of provisions and clothing, throwing the bags and boxes helter skelter upon the ice in a spirit of desperation. In less than five minutes from

While we have no means of knowing what was in the minds of the members of the committee, mostly composed of lawyers, who framed the war revenue act, laymen generally believed that it was the intention of congress that these burdens should be borne by the corporations. The latter, however, never pay any tax—national, state or municipal—that they can wriggle out of, and if there be no other way of escape from the law's exactions they endeavor to shift the tax to their patrons. Sometimes the latter object and appeal to the judiciary, but it is usually to no purpose, for it is the almost invariable custom that when the decision is handed down the corporation is the winner.—Journal of the Knights of Labor.

How Railways Rob the Mails.

If the coming campaign must be fought upon a single issue, it should be the restoring to the people their inherent right to pass final judgment upon laws whenever a reasonable number of them petition for such a privilege. I believe that as the people are recognized to be, and as they are in fact the sovereign power they should have the right to affirm or veto any legislation upon petition. This is known as "direct legislation" or "initiative and referendum." If any of our silver friends object in that this would indicate on my part a decrease of interest in the money question, I would say that under this system the people would steadily cause to be enacted not only the restoration of silver, but the other great reforms advocated in the Chicago platform.—Congressman Todd (Dem.) of Michigan.

The World Moves.

A new feature in the Democratic state platform is the indorsement of the initiative and referendum and advocacy of constitutional revision in order to extend their use in this state. The adoption of this system would tend to conservatism in the best sense of that word. Representative legislative bodies are more likely to give approval to wild experimental ideas than is the entire body of the people. Wise reforms, on the other hand, like the merit system and provisions for protecting public property rights, have an added stability and sanction from approval by popular vote.—Chicago Record.

What's the Use of Lying?

Based upon the estimated population of 74,522,000, the per capita circulation at the beginning of July was \$24.74. This is an increase of \$2.17 as compared with last year at this time.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Tell us how much of this money is hoarded up in the United States treasury, how much in banks and trust companies' vaults. Then we might perhaps get a true idea of the amount in circulation, the only portion that is of any benefit to the productive classes, and also the extent of the monstrous falsehoods promulgated by the gold organs.—Cleveland Recorder.

He Sees the Light.

It is not unnatural that there should have been an increase each year in the gross amount paid railways by the post-office for the transportation of mail matter, but the amount has grown from \$19,524,959 in 1888 to \$33,876,521 in 1897. The average annual cost per mile has also steadily increased, the figures during each year having been: 1888, 10.52 cents; 1889, 10.59 cents; 1890, 10.84 cents; 1891, 11.01 cents; 1892, 11.31 cents; 1893, 11.43 cents; 1894, 11.46 cents; 1895, 11.68 cents; 1896, 12.05 cents, and in 1897, 12.40 cents. The present rate is the highest since the war.

THEY DON'T INVEST.

But They Loan to Investors, Whom They Hurl by Their Outrageous Usury. A subscriber takes us to task for our comments on the National Bankers' association convention that meets here next month and sings the song so familiar to all of us about driving capital out of the state. We want to ask any of our readers if they ever knew of a banker investing money? Out of all the eastern money invested in the city of Denver and the state of Colorado, we venture to say that not 5 per cent of it has been invested by bankers. The very nature of the national banking laws prohibit these men from investing. How much money has Denver bankers invested in Colorado enterprise? Mighty little, except such enterprises as they have been forced to take in.

We believe there is a field for bankers, and we have no objection to money lenders and three ball men, but we do not understand why a lot of these fellows who are able to pay their way as well as anybody else on earth are able to do should be encouraged to visit us, believing that they can come to Colorado and have a bully good time at the expense of our people. Every one of them coming to this convention will ride on a pass procured by some railroad treasurer, and when they get here our people are expected to entertain them royally. We hope our people will entertain them royally, just to make them understand that we are a great big, liberal, broad minded people and treat everybody decently that come here from a Christian Endeavor convention to a convention of bogeys. But it makes us weary to hear people talk about the amount of money this convention is going to leave in Colorado or induce to come to Colorado. We are not very rich ourselves, but we venture to say as poor as we are we will invest more money in Colorado in ten years than the entire National Bankers' association will. Let us be sensible about these things.—Denver New Road.

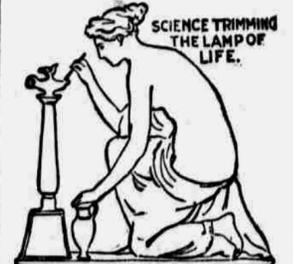
Corporations and the War Tax.

A United States commissioner at Ottumwa, Ia., has decided that express companies must pay the 1 cent tax attached to each receipt given by them, and be caused to be arrested and held for trial the cashier of a company who insisted that the shipper must pay the tax. The decision of the Federal court in this case will be watched for with more than ordinary interest, as it will have an important bearing on the future transactions of other corporations that have thus far successfully transpired the war taxes to their customers.

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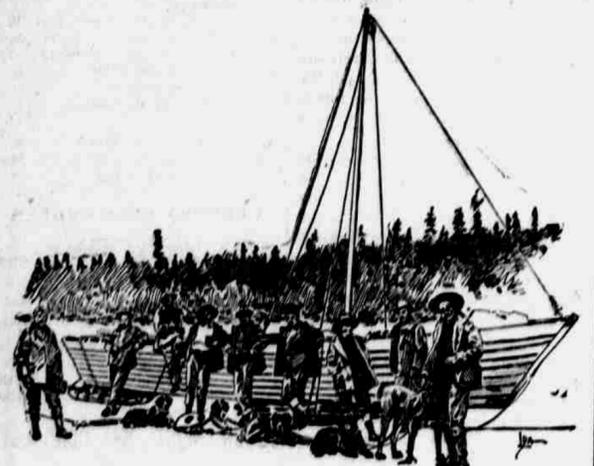
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PULLING BOATS OVER LAKE LEBARGE ON THE ICE. (Copyright, 1896, by L. E. Robertson, photographer, Chicago.)

all winter, owing both to barriers of piled up ice and to stretches of open water where the river runs rapidly. Thus they wait for the ice to break up on the lake. As they wait they spend their not very precious moments in conjecturing whether it will go out in three days or three weeks. We rather demur to their statements that it is useless to try to cross Lake LeBarge just now, and they reply by saying that if there had been even the slightest chance of getting through they would not have waited in many cases for a month, eating up their precious provisions when there is so much to be gained by rushing on. However, we resolve to make the attempt and our start is not only watched with interest, but it spurs others up to follow us.

Partners Who Quarrel and Separate.

This question of starting or remaining argonaut partners that it stirs up some foolish quarrels. In one case I see two men who have the appearance of possessing ordinary good sense and intelligence fight like demons simply because two of the party of four wish to make the attempt to go on and the others desire to remain until the ice goes out of the lake, claiming that the start now will be too great a risk. "I have got my provisions in so far," said one of the two combatants after they had been separated, "and I can't afford to lose them now."

As it is impossible to effect a reconciliation, the crowd of gold seekers quickly form a circle about the two men, each tells his tale of woe, and the matter of a division is settled by a committee. I dislike to report such cases of physical encounters and personal quarrels, because to an outsider it can but reflect upon the character of those who come in here, but it should not be forgotten that such cases are rare and are not any more frequent than might be expected, considering that many of the men are worn out with the self imposed hardships of their journey and that partnerships in many cases have been formed hastily. I have really seen a dissolution of partnership over a question of no less "pith and moment" than as to who was eating the most bacon.

But we resolve to go on over the lake or on the ice, or both, as the case may be, even though it be a difficult undertaking. In some parts of this sheet of water of some 40 miles in length the ice is four feet thick, and in others it is not four inches, and there are great stretches of open water here and there near the shore, the season being at least 15 days earlier than usual. In some places we must use ax and pike poles to get through, and high rubber boots are an absolute necessity for the purpose of wading. Beginning with where we start, there is a narrow channel of water near the shore, and through this we carefully and slowly pull the boat until, after getting around a bend, we find the way obstructed by thick ice, which must be cut and pushed out of the way. Wading in the ice clogged water up to one's middle to clear a passage for the boat is not a decidedly pleasant occupation, but I have yet to experience the least ill effects from practicing it. Over Ice and Through Water. In some cases part of the load must be removed from the boat and portaged along the shore to a point where the way is easier. Thus we "plod our weary way," not homeward, like Gray's travelers, but a little farther from home. Finally, after some eight or ten miles of progress, we come to a place where the ice is apparently in good condition and strong enough to bear our entire load and outfit. Then we unload our goods

empty boat and the sleds on the ice and making a fresh start. For some time now we make good progress by putting up a sail and allowing the wind to do our hauling for us. A snow squall comes up, and so long as we can see ahead, so we may not run into thin ice or other dangerous places, all goes well. We finally cross an opening in the ice that is about six inches wide, when suddenly the wind shifts and in a half hour people who are just behind us on the trail are confronted by an almost impassable barrier, for the fissure has spread out to a width of six feet.

Blocked by Ice Barriers.

Finally we come to a space of open water made by the inflow of a river, and we again take to the boat, but for a short distance only, for the way is soon blocked with icy barriers, and we wield the ax, saw and pike pole in order to effect a passage. Thus we advance slowly, and what might seem a bit laboriously, but the hardships are not half as bad as they probably seem when spread out in cold type upon white paper. Further we have the best reasons for believing that Thirty Mile river and the entire waters beyond to Dawson City are free from ice. So we are all in fairly good spirits. As I dictate this I am perched up in the middle of the boat and my wife is putting it down on the typewriter with the utmost speed. Dinner is cooking on a stove at one end of the boat, and I catch the smell of the savory and succulent stewed bean as it is wafted across to me by the chill wind. We have been out about three hours this morning and have chopped and broken our way through only about a half mile of ice, but there is clear water just ahead, and we hope to make it by 12 o'clock.

Crushed by the Ice Monster.

The five foremost boats manage to get around the point and into open water in safety. Of the balance two or three are pushing madly on and the rest are as vainly attempting to retreat. Slowly but with a mighty power the ice creeps in. Men work as if for their lives. They begin frantically to unload their outfits of provisions and clothing, throwing the bags and boxes helter skelter upon the ice in a spirit of desperation. In less than five minutes from

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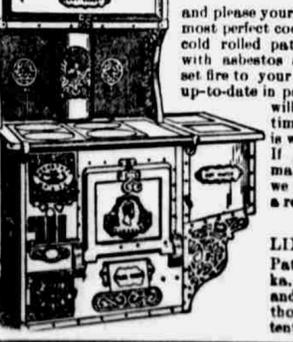
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