

Vol. XXXII, No. 9,987.

THE ATLANTIC TRAGEDY.

A VISIT TO THE SCENE.

THE POSITION OF THE WRECK A PROOF OF UNPARALLELED CARELESSNESS—GRASSY SCENES ON THE ROCKS—INCIDENTS OF HORROR—A CHILD VICTIM—SEARCHING FOR THE DEAD.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

IN SIGHT OF THE WRECK, April 6.—All that remains of the Atlantic lies in a circular cove, nearly parallel to the shore. She is distant about 40 feet from the rock on which the people first landed. Her position justifies the inference that when the order was given to reverse engines the helmsman brought her head slightly round, as it is impossible that she could have been thrown along the shore in her present berth, going at full speed. There was no severe shock when she struck, but she tore over the rocks, tipping away the iron plates as though they were paper, and could offer no resistance to the tremendous force that urged her to destruction. She sailed almost in a moment, and the people below deck were drowned before they could realize the cause of the disaster. After the vessel struck she broke in two at the foremast—her fore part having surged forward on to the shore, and the after portion lying over the rock, a gap of 80 feet between them. The officers of the Coast Wrecking Company, who came down to-day, full of the idea of raising her, saw at once that it was impracticable.

It is impossible that the ship could ever have reached this position without the greatest carelessness. The coast line, it is true, is somewhat low, but the rocks are of a whitish gray, and a line of snow borders them. A careful lookout would have discovered this coast long before the ship struck there. Again, she must, for some time, have been running in full view of Sable Island, distant 10 to 12 miles, and of Peggy's Point light, distant nine miles, she being, in a measure, between them. But will not anticipate the official investigation, which will exhibit a story of gross neglect and criminal carelessness unparalleled in the annals of this century.

No man can look unmoved on this splendid ship without feeling indignant at the loss of property, but when he turns to the long rows of dead lying stiff on the cold gray rocks, his indignation turns to horror, and he hesitates between a wall for the helpless victims and a cry of revenge against the authors of the calamity. Just before the wreckers have brought up a little girl about six years old, with a wealth of flaxen hair and sweet lips, from which even death has not robbed her beauty. But her eyes are staring and dull, and her face is covered with the sand of the sea bottom. And here is an elderly lady, stocky, and with her dress thrown around her hastily. Her hands show her to be a gentlewoman, and she proves to be Mrs. Davidson, a cabin passenger. An examination of her body shows that she has £200 sterling in her possession. A steward, large-limbed Scotchman, is identified as Mr. Murray, a steamer passenger, on his way to Chicago, where he had two daughters. The corpses lie in rows, side by side, some cut by being thrown on the rocks, and some gashed by the grappling-irons. Some are recognized and some are not, though all are searched for valuables and for some mark to establish their identity. The divers were enabled, yesterday, for the first time, to go down, but they could not enter the ship, and such of the wreck must be cleared away before they do this. The boats of the wreckers cover the sea, but the bulk of the cargo is yet in the vessel, and the impression is that the dead are there in great numbers.

Standing in view of this great calamity, I realize how impossible it is to reproduce correctly incidents of the fearful interval between the striking of the ship and the rescue of the last survivor. The story of Carmody, a steamer passenger from Clare, Ireland, is one of the most interesting. The water found him in his berth, and he grasped the stanchion, in involuntary effort for life. Between him and the outer world was the iron ship and the glass in the port. He was in darkness, his body dead. Had he let go he would have dropped down, or the ship was lying on her beam ends, but his strong arms kept his head out of water and against the ship's side. He could feel the drowned and drowning men sweep by him, and for a moment rest on some dead body that passed under his feet. He kept this position for a period which seems to him to have been two hours, until he got the light broken and crawled through the port.

Two or three others had similar escapes. John Charles Elery, a steward, tells of Robert Streat, about three years old. "She sat at my table," says he, "with her father, mother and brother, and was dead of me. When I got out Mr. Streat placed her in my arms in her night dress, and asked me to save her. I thought of my own little girl of the same age in Liverpool, and I kept her as long as I could. I saw her father and mother swept away by the sea, and the little one moaned and continually called, 'Papa! Papa! I am so wet!' She died in my arms and I had not the heart then to let her drop, but handed her to a man who was stronger than myself. Mr. Price perished with the sea. The captain urged him to move, but he could do nothing. He simply looked up and moaned. Those who came out scantily clad perished with cold, and many actually froze to death. The captain tried on all to beat their arms and legs to keep up the circulation. There is a man in the hospital now whose legs are completely decayed from beating them against the rigging, but then they had not feeling."

"I urged my claim to beat his arms, but he could only see-saw them up and down," said another. "When I got to the rocks I had to go on my hands and knees. I felt as if I had no legs. Two men carried me away or I would have died."

There are many instances of heroism, and the way men and wife died together can never be forgotten. I visited the house of Clancy, at which the sufferers were first relieved, and as he told me of the drowning, of the shrieks of the moans of the haggard, frenzied, half-drowned people who crowded into his house, he tears no doubt his face in streams. His daughter, a frail woman, did all she could, but that was comparatively little, for such a famished army. Holed had to be bored in the floor to allow the water which dripped from the people to drain away.

The Americans who are here express themselves greatly disatisfied with some of the proceedings. As the bodies are brought up they are laid on the rocks and searched for valuables. From Mrs. Davidson's finger, yesterday, was taken a gold ring, which was shown in with many other valuables taken from others. There is no record kept except of large sums of money, so that identification of property will be impossible. From the body of one man £200 were taken, but as there is no description of it, even the coffin is not numbered. The Roman Catholic priest buried in the cemetery at Lower Prospect, all who are known by their surnames or heads to be Catholics. I saw four fine-looking women to-day all lying side by side, and all wearing a Catholic badge.

The body of Miss Davidson has been found. Mr. Dorr is still at his spot, anxiously looking for the remains of Mr. and Mrs. Fisher. To-day the number of visitors was very large, and included Mr. Merritt of New-York, who is looking for his relatives. Among the statements made is one

by Mr. Kinane, a cabin passenger, which is worth of note. He says there was not more than one day's provisions on board for the steamer and two for the cabin passengers, and that this as much as the shortage of coal compelled entering Halifax. Mr. Pennell, special agent of the company, has assumed the management of affairs, but Sheridan, the local diver, will continue his operations until the arrival of the Coast Wrecking Company's apparatus. Comparatively little property has yet been taken up.

AFTER THE CALAMITY.

REMINISCENCE OF THE INVESTIGATION—THE CAPTAIN CONDEMNED—THE SCENE OF THE WRECK—MORE BODIES RECOVERED—SURGEON CUFFAGES STATEMENT—THE DIVERS AT WORK.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

HALIFAX, April 6.—The real tale which threatened today an investigation has been out, and at yesterday's Court of Inquiry, in the Collector's Office, the horrible story was retold only as the men who lived and suffered through it all can tell it. The Captain's statement was the only one formally prepared, but even this precaution could not suppress his feelings. He broke down in reading it, and with difficulty resumed. He may be guilty, but no man with the memory of that fearful night throbbing in his soul could remain impotent. He keeps his room closely, and says little, but who can tell what he thinks? There is a current of sympathy for him here, but the flood of censure is overwhelming. I have seen men here almost frenzied by the sight of the bruised and mangled forms of those they loved, who said they did not dare to meet that captain face to face. In a less sober and justice-loving town than Halifax, the man's life would scarcely be more safe now than it was when his vessel struck on Meagher's Rock. The statements of several passengers and the first officer closed proceedings for the day. Mr. Brady, the third officer, and Mr. Brown, fourth officer, give in their testimony to-morrow. The conduct of the fourth officer in refusing to give to the press any statement of his connection with the affair until it is dragged out of him at Court, is stretching prudence too far, and naturally excites disfavor. The second officer, who shared the watch with him, was buried yesterday in this city. The discrepancy between the Captain's testimony and the Company's telegram from Liverpool, as regard to the quantity of coal on board, needs clearing up. The three officers stick to the Captain's statement that the coal ran short. They say the consumption was ordinary, and says Mr. Fitch, "we don't throw coal overboard." Their evidence is scarcely reconcilable with the Company's statement of an over supply. The price of coal here is about \$8 a chaldron; in England it is \$13. This accounts for the presumption, denied alike by the Company and the officers, that the ship was sailed for Halifax instead of New-York.

By the courtesy of Capt. Merritt of the Coast Wrecking Company, an opportunity was afforded to see the harbor and scene of the wreck. When once within its gates a safer or more beautiful harbor could not be desired. The bay is broad, the water deep, the channel unobstructed, but the harbor approaches are dangerous in the extreme. The western coast especially is a stern, pitiless, rock-bound stretch, hard, bleak, and barren. The water is studded with dangerous shoals and islands, and all mariners give the west shore a wide berth. Sable Island Light sends its warning 30 miles to sea. The rock on which the vessel struck is nine miles from Sable Island Light, in a small bay on the western side, on which lies Pennants Point running some distance into the ocean. The wonder of every man who visits the place, the wonder of twenty pilots whom I talked with on the coast, is how a vessel under full deck and watch could strike where she did and her deck officers suppose he was out at sea. The pilots agree that Sable light can be seen 18 miles out, but the Atlantic came within nine miles of it on a clear night. After the vessel passed into the cove, the light would be lost to view; but Peggy's Point on the other side, with its white snow line, must have been visible. The ship had "her way" from the captain on a false reckoning, but had the watch on deck done its duty, what might not have been.

The ship's officers and several of the passengers return to England on Tuesday. Mr. Fitch and Mr. Brady, the first and third officers, and some of the passengers are still suffering from bruise and frost-bitten fingers, but otherwise are doing well. Mr. Markwell of Brooklyn, one of the rescued passengers, has spent the last two days in the vicinity of the wreck, looking out for the bodies of the saloon passengers. He has recovered from fishermen near the wreck some of the jewelry and personal effects found on saloon passengers' remains. Dr. Cuffage, the steamer's surgeon, gave me a statement yesterday, which differs, however, in no important particulars from statements already made. As soon as the vessel struck he rushed upon deck leading the stewardess by the hand, but a mighty wave dashed over the ship and carried her out to sea. The doctor escaped by means of the rope, but was not able to come to the city until Friday. Dr. Cuffage agrees with the passengers, that the crew were as bad as dead of men as could well be got together; and thinks that if they had behaved better more passengers might have been saved. One of the saddest features of the horrible story is the fact that not a woman was saved; only those of iron constitution and vice like grasp could live in the rigging or on the ship's side.

The rock near the wreck is precipitous and slippery. Many men died from being unaided to climb upon the rock when the sea had washed them to its side. The waves that cast one on it dashed another to pieces.

One of the sweetest things to remember, linked with all this multitude of horrors, is the constancy of friends and relatives. Those whom God had joined, the sea could not put asunder. Husband and wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters clung to each other in the perilous moment and met a common fate. Not a single member of a family was saved alone.

To-day the weather was beautiful, calm and clear, and judging it to be a favorable time for diving operations, I procured a horse and wagon, and made the journey of 22 miles before 10 o'clock. A small boat carried me from Lower Prospect to the wreck. A calm had settled on the ocean, as though remorse for its sudden league with death had conquered its fury and silenced its roar. Around the wreck were 20 or 30 boats, some filled with fishermen from the shore, grappling for floating pieces of the wreck, or watching the work of the divers. I immediately got an interview with Capt. Sheridan, and made arrangements for a special descent to be made for THE TRIBUNE.

Capt. Sheridan chose one of his most skillful, experienced, and intelligent divers, John Stone, to search the vessel and report the result. Clad in his rubber armor, with his lifeline and tube, he prepared to descend. The face-front was closed, the two men in the boat started the air-pump, and the diver went over the side of the boat and down the ladder into the depths of the sea. I was sitting in a boat near to Capt. Sheridan, watching his retreating figure. We were over a portion of the rigging deeply submerged; the captain gave me his water-glass, and I looked through it.

Far down in the deep blue water was a white form. I looked closer and saw that it was a half nude woman caught fast in the rigging. Swinging to and fro with the motion of the water, near by on the same spar, was a woman's night dress. As we watch the black figure of the diver, who looks like some submarine monster seeking his prey, seizes the corpse with his burly arms, disentangles it, and at his mandate the sea gives up its dead, the life line is pulled in and the diver ascends bearing with him the livid corpse. They lift the body gently from the water and lay it in the boat.

The weather beaten wreckers though no strangers to such forms of death reverently drop a word of pity and regret before they leave this hapless victim of a great tragedy. Soon another comes up, and another. They are all young men, with beautiful hair, and another is a young girl with beautiful hair, which the old wreckers do not forget to admire. Then there is a low murmur of pity as the girl is raised and laid on the pile of a corpse. So in the space of an hour a dozen bodies were brought up. Then the diver comes up and Capt. Sheridan takes his story. He has come up on the steamer on the first two decks and down into the hatchway. He reports that the steamer passengers are crowded together into the hatchway, and a number are jammed in every conceivable way among the cargo in the lower hold. The passengers were doubtless rushing to the hatchway, but many were cut off and tumbled into the lower hatches when the ship careened. The diver could not make his way into the cabin, access not being possible through the doorways, but he looked in through the side lights and ventilators. No corpse was visible. There are still some cabin passengers missing, who may have been carried out to sea. The cargo was examined and a large portion of it can be saved. The situation of the vessel is in many respects bad for the divers, but the work will be continued when the weather permits with five divers and 65 men.

DIVERS AND WRECKERS AT WORK.

MORE BODIES RECOVERED—SERVING THE VICTIMS—PLUNDERING THE WRECK.

HALIFAX, April 6.—Fourteen bodies were recovered yesterday, all of them by grappling. To-day the weather being very favorable, divers worked for the purpose of finding bodies, and 27, all apparently steamer passengers, were recovered. Many of them had considerable sums of money. One whose name appeared from papers found in his pocket, was Mr. Crooke, a bill of exchange for £200, and considerable money besides. The divers' crew number 65 men.

The only bodies now remaining uncollected on the shore are those found to-day, all the others having been buried or coffined ready for burial. Those recognized by prayer-books or otherwise as Roman Catholics were taken to Terrence Bay, a few miles distant, and buried in the Catholic cemetery. The remainder have been buried in the Episcopal Cemetery at Prospect. Some of the bodies brought up to-day showed that they died by suffocation, and not by drowning. As the bodies are brought up by the divers they are placed in a boat under the charge of George Longard, a Justice of the Peace, and conveyed to the hillside on Ryan's Island, where Edmund Ryan, another magistrate, receives them, and takes from them all money and valuables, noting them in a book, with such marks of identification as can be found on the persons. The bodies of Mrs. Davidson and her daughter were found nearly at the same time. There was found on Miss Davidson, sewed to her dress, a letter from her mother advising her, in case of any unforeseen occurrence taking her (the mother) away, to take possession of all her money and letters of credit, and proceed with all speed to San Francisco and inquire for Mr. McDonald, who would send her to her uncle, L. H. Templey of Calaveras County, Cal.

Four men, belonging to Halifax, picked up a bale of silk appropriated it, and sold a part of it. The Customs authorities heard of it, recovered most of the silk, and arrested one man. Had the men given up the silk to the agents, they would have been entitled to £200 salvage. The Customs officers found some silks in crates of crockery ware, showing an intention to smuggle them into New-York.

ARRIVAL OF THE STEERAGE SURVIVORS.

OVER THREE HUNDRED OF THE RESCUED EMIGRANTS WESTWARD-BOUND—AN EVENTFUL DAY AT CASTLE GARDEN—JOYFUL GREETINGS—FACES THAT WERE MISSED.

As it had been announced that the greater number of the steamer passengers would be in this city yesterday morning, by the steamer Newport of the Fall River line, a number of their friends assembled at the pier of that company, at the foot of Murray-st., at an early hour, and made anxious inquiries concerning their friends. Finding that the vessel had not arrived, they waited patiently, or departed only to return and make further inquiries. At 7 a. m., the Newport steamed up and was made fast to the pier, her decks loaded with a motley crowd of ship-wrecked emigrants, occasionally relieved by the fresher garb and more placid countenance of weather and less troubled Fall River passengers. As soon as the vessel appeared efforts were made by the friends of the emigrants and a few curious spectators to pass through the gates of the pier, but it was without result, as the several policemen on duty refused to permit their entrance until the passengers had departed. After the regular passengers had gone ashore the emigrants were mustered in a body between decks and transferred to the tow-boat William Fletcher, which steamed up to the pier, under the care of Mr. Gardiner, the general passenger agent of the White Star Line. They were transferred to Castle Garden for registration and shelter pending their departure.

On the trip from the foot of Murray-st. to the Battery the emigrants were very communicative, and although somewhat addled by their terrible experience cheerfully imparted their history and the events of the voyage and wreck. They appeared, with few exceptions, to be men of rugged health, very muscular, and evidently accustomed to hard labor. They were of average intelligence, and some of them appeared to have received a good common school education. Each man wore the clothes he had on when wrecked, but their wardrobe seemed to have been supplemented by little articles, some of which were contained in red bandanna handkerchiefs. All wore red worsted comforters, evidently the gift of some philanthropists, who pitied their cold and forlorn condition. They stated that they had been very well cared for in Halifax and Boston and expressed their thanks. One topic they never tired of, and that was the heroism of William Hoy, an Irishman, who, after reaching a landing place, saved about 20 of his fellow passengers. An idea of his efforts may be derived from the fact that when his hands had become numb with the cold he grasped the struggling men in the water with his teeth.

REMINISCENCES.

Arriving at Castle Garden the emigrants left the Fletcher and strode forward to the land where they remained for a few minutes, and then passed, one at a time, before a desk, the attendants at which registered their names, places of birth, departure, etc. After this had been accomplished, the names of such of the emigrants as had letters awaiting their letters were delivered. By this time a large number of their friends having found that Castle Garden was the place to communicate with them, had filled the room of the Bureau of Information and were keeping the clerk and the attendant policeman busy with their inquiries. The names of the emigrants sought were written on slips of paper and sent into the building where they were called, and when the emigrants responded they were conveyed in squads to this room where ensued the most affecting scenes since the wreck at Halifax. Long parted friends greeted one another with a hearty clap of the hand and a fervent "Thank God!" but it was when the relationship was of a closer tie that the scene became dramatic. Husband and wife, mother and son, sister and brother, fell on each other's necks and wept from joy, and not infrequently from agonizing grief, the presence of the saved reminding them of the loved ones who had been lost. There were many eager inquiries for friends who have

drifted away from all earthly havens. These were generally warm-hearted and impulsive inquirers, who, hoping against hope, were determined not to believe the published statements, and yet were only to be overwhelmed eventually by the truth.

Perhaps the most pathetic incident of all was the perception of little Tommy Hanly by his friends, Little Tommy, who is the only child saved, is about 13 years of age, and very bright and intelligent. At the time of the wreck he lost his parents and all the relatives who were with him. After he reached the shore he excited the pity of all, and he was speedily furnished with an attractive suit of navy blue, and was the subject of the most tender solicitude on the part of all who met him. When he left the tow-boat he was carried on the shoulders of several of the survivors. When his friends, consisting of a sister and her husband, called for him, he was standing apart from every one and peering with melancholy interest through the railings. He was conveyed to the reception room, and was convulsively clasped to his sister's bosom in a paroxysm of mingled grief and joy, after which he was seized by her husband and similarly embraced, the scene affecting the bystanders to tears.

THE DEPARTURE.

The 324 emigrants who had not been claimed by their friends were furnished with a palatable and substantial breakfast at the expense of the White Star Line, under the supervision of J. H. Sparks, the agent, Coles, Coonan and Contador, and Henry Jackson. Three tables were again covered with neat white cloths at about 4 o'clock, and a substantial dinner of soup, bread and butter, and meat was served to the men. They were then ready to leave the city, and at 5 o'clock embarked in the steamer Virginia Seymour for the Erie depot, giving three cheers as the steamer away. As the White Star wharf came in view, with a bright crimson flag streaming over it, the sorrows of the emigrants were revived. The men seemed to feel acutely how different their circumstances might have been had they been duly landed at the place they were now passing. They bitterly lamented their misfortune, but spoke gratefully of the kindness they had received every where since the wreck. Two first-class cars were given for their use at the depot, and at 7 p. m. they left Jersey City in the Western express. Of the survivors of the Atlantic steamer passengers who went to their destination by the Erie Railway, 30 received tickets to Chicago, 20 to Cleveland, 4 to Duluth, 3 to Minnesota, 2 to Yonkstown, Ohio; 2 to Detroit, and 1 to Saginaw, Michigan. The White Star Company furnished emigrant transportation, but the Erie Railway Company paid the difference in cost and furnished all with first-class passenger tickets and had them forwarded by an express train. The number of emigrants who arrived by the steamer was 316.

The agents for the Pennsylvania Central Railroad volunteered to take all those having emigrant tickets over the road on first-class trains—palace cars for long journeys.

VOICES FROM THE STEERAGE.

Among the knots of weary voyageurs clustered in the parlors at Castle Garden, yesterday afternoon, was one young man whose countenance and manner marked him as a social superior to his fellows. His easy overcoat was stained by salt water, and his other garments were torn through violent usage. Some benevolent person had given him a pair of new boots, which were the only unimpaired part of his attire. He carried his left arm in a sling, stretched out his right hand frankly to the many persons who saluted him. This was Emil Christensen, a doctor of medicine, who had saved enough money to purchase a steamer passage to America, and had sailed in the Atlantic from Liverpool for New-York, hoping that he might there find better chances of establishing a practice than in his native town of Erdes, in Schleswig-Holstein. Among the crew of the ill-fated vessel he had found, fortunately, a German sailor, from whom he learned on the day before the disaster that the Captain had decided to call at Halifax for coal and provisions. This news he communicated to his neighbors in the unmarried men's stowage, but the permission which grew as the low land came nearer day by day was not lessened; indeed, it was thought that a glimpse of dry land would be a pleasant relief to comparative cash and after a hearty supper at 6 p. m. on March 16, the steamer passengers resorted to their usual recreations. Those persons who had been in America readily gathered around them deeply-interested audiences by their descriptions of the novel scenes and manners the emigrants would find on landing. A few pairs of quiet backbones improvised straight-boards with a piece of chalk, using for men the quairess and most convenient odds and ends. Here a Mississippian, with a sanded pack of cards, was steadily revealing to a group of canny Scandinavians the mystery of a very wicked game, and in another part of the lower-roofed compartment an Italian violinist was strumming an air of Verdi's. At 9 o'clock the lights were extinguished and the emigrants crept into their bunks to talk for a little while and then to dream of the land they would see in the morning.

Mr. Christensen fell asleep almost immediately, and was not disturbed until the vessel, which had been speeding along smoothly, suddenly began to tremble. He heeled neither to the right nor the left, however, and the accompanying rattle was precisely like that of the anchor chains falling over the bows. An exclamation was heard in the darkness that the Atlantic was nearly wrecked in Halifax at last. The shock was repeated, and the ship quivered in every part. The emigrants waited another moment in suspense, and when the Atlantic was driven against the rocks once more they sprang from their narrow bunks, covered themselves with whatever clothing was within reach, and rushed madly toward the ladder leading on deck, expecting every moment to be engaged. Dr. Christensen was first to mount the ladder, and when he saw his fellow emigrants crept into their bunks to talk for a little while and then to dream of the land they would see in the morning.

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