

CHILD HEROES OF DISASTER.

BOYS AND GIRLS IN THEIR TEENS GIVE LIFE PRESERVERS TO WOMEN AND BABIES.

Lads Join in Rescue Work After Being Saved—Men Hold Sweethearts to Sides of Burning Boat—Cling to Paddlewheels.

STORIES OF SURVIVORS.

Men and Women Tell of Loss of Their Families.

Thrilling were the stories told by survivors of the burned steamer General Slocum last night. Miss Marie Kreuger, of No. 451 West End-ave., who was saved from drowning after jumping, told her story at the Harlem Hospital.

Lucy Hencken, fifteen years old, of No. 169 South Second-st., Williamsburg, lost her mother and brother in the disaster.

"I was sitting with my mother on the after part of the boat," said Miss Hencken. "My brother was on one of the lower decks. As soon as we saw the smoke and heard the cry of fire my mother asked me to go below and try to find my brother. When I got down the stairway I found the crushed bodies of three little babies who had been trampled on in the terrible scramble to get away from the flames.

John Ell, fourteen years old, lost his mother and two brothers. "When we left the pier the deck was packed with folks," he said. "The children were frolicking about and everybody was having a bully time. When we got up near Hell Gate we were told to go downstairs so we could get some ice cream and soda. The children were falling over each other to get to the tables. With my mother and my little brother I went close to the engine room to watch the engines work. I was standing there with John Gray, Albert Greenwall and Otto Hans and a number of children.

SAYS CREW WAS PANIC STRICKEN.

"All at once there was a puff of fire and smoke from down below, and I saw the engineer look scared. He tried to find out what was the matter. He didn't have to wait long to find out, as the fire kept coming up from down below. As the first thing we knew our clothes were on fire. We started to run, and found that fire was coming out all around. By this time my mother's dress and my little brother's clothes were on fire. I grabbed my brother by the wrist and tried to get him and mother over to the side of the boat. There was an awful panic. Everybody was getting burned and trying to get off the boat. The flames kept coming in big waves and people began to fall down on the deck and choke with the smoke. The men running the boat were just as scared as the rest of us. They ran around giving orders, but no one did what was told them, because the fire was hot, and we wanted to get off the boat. We were pushed to the side of the boat, and fell overboard with the rest. John Gray and John Fishman jumped and saved their lives by swimming until they were picked up. I got parted from my mother and mother in the rush, and I don't know what became of them."

HEARD ORDER TO MAN HOSE.

Miss Kate Gringle, of No. 459 East Houston-st., had a narrow escape from burning and drowning. "The fire seemed to spring out of the forepart of the boat, and the cry went around that the bow of the boat had taken fire," she said. "I could see the smoke coming up from down below, and soon the flames came bursting up the passageways. I saw the captain and heard him shouting to the crew to man the fire hose. He told the men that the fire was forward. I heard that distinctly. I was among the lot taken from the Slocum by a tug. I shall never forget the suspense while we were waiting for that tug to come up. The sight of the panic-stricken women and children was dreadful. I can't tell a connected story about it. I lost some of my relatives in the fire. I don't know what became of them. I am afraid they were drowned in jumping overboard. Before I left the deck of the Slocum I heard two or three say that the fire started in the lamp-room, where a colored man was cleaning lamps and working with kerosene."

POLICEMEN KNOCKED FROM BOAT.

Patrolmen Van Tassel and Kelt, of the Harbor Squad, were detailed to accompany the excursion. The first they knew of the fire was when the fire alarm of the boat was sounded. "The fire alarm had hardly sounded," said Van Tassel, "when the entire forward part of the boat seemed to burst into flames. Passengers who were in the forward part of the vessel tried to rush to the stern overboard, and, finding their way blocked, jumped overboard to escape the flames, which were being blown into great fury by the head wind and by the motion of the vessel."

"There was no checking the rush into the water, and there would have been no use in doing it, as the boat clearly was doomed from the start. It was better to jump and take the chances of drowning than to stay on the boat and meet almost certain death by fire."

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TALES OF CHILD BRAVERY

In Scene of Terror They Thought of Others First.

Many were the stories of heroism on the part of children and of hairbreadth escapes from death by flood of fire taken to the sorrowing lower East side last night. One man saved his sweetheart after a terrible struggle in the strong tide; a boy, scarcely thirteen years old, rescued a little girl, and nearly lost his life in his efforts to rescue a six-year-old baby; another boy, after being taken ashore, plunged overboard and swam ashore with the bodies of his mother and grandmother.

Arthur Link, thirteen years old, of No. 76 Avenue A, the son of a cigarmaker, was on the lower deck of the Slocum when the fire broke out, with his brother Edward, eleven years old, and his sister Lottie, eight. Sitting next to him was Mrs. Peter Heckert, of No. 88 Avenue A, who held her six-months-old baby in her lap.

"Everything around us," said Arthur last night, "began to burn at once. I was awfully frightened, and Mrs. Heckert was, too. She knows I can swim, and she gave me the baby. 'Never mind me,' she said, 'but save the baby.' 'I couldn't move myself, but every one began to push me to the side of the boat. A tug was almost touching us. I remember that a man took the baby from me, but I can't remember anything else. When I woke up on shore some one was putting a bandage on my head and telling me not to be afraid."

The Grosse children, of No. 93 First-ave., made up a party of five, all of whom were saved. They were in charge of Miss Mamie Grosse, who is twenty-one years old. Curt Grosse, eleven years old, saved the whole party by his coolness.

BOY SAVES ENTIRE PARTY.

"We were all on the upper deck," said the boy, "near the bow. We were talking and laughing and eating a lot of cakes that father had given us. All of a sudden there was a big fire right in the middle of the boat. My sisters got scared and started to run to the front of the boat, but it began to blaze there, too. They didn't know what to do, but I told them to go to the side of the boat, where it wasn't so fierce. I made them stay there, for every one else was trying to run to the back part of the boat. They were awfully scared, and kept yelling 'Fire!' and saying their prayers, but I didn't have time. 'I wanted to say mine, but I didn't have time. A lot of people who were hanging onto the front of the boat from our deck fell into the fire when a piece of it broke off. There must have been more than twenty of them. Then a towboat got up close to us and we slid down a post to the lower deck and climbed on board. My sister Mamie fell into the water, but a towboat man pulled her out. The men got all the life preservers they could and tried to put them around the women, but they were so scared that the men had awful hard work to do it."

CLINGS TO BOAT WITH FIANCEE.

In the last boatload to be saved from the burning steamer were Henry Eden, nineteen years old, of No. 100 East Fourth-st., and his sweetheart, Miss Amelia Swartz, of No. 141 East Third-st. Eden lost his four sisters—Annie, aged twelve; Etta, nine; Minnie, seven, and Grace, five. Miss Swartz was hysterical with grief over the loss of her mother, Mrs. Louisa Swartz; her grandmother, Mrs. Anna Swartz; and her aunt, Mrs. Christina Burkhardt, and her three-months-old daughter. Mrs. Burkhardt's son Adam, eight years old, was saved.

"Miss Swartz and I went to the rail," said Eden. "We saw a lot of people waving their arms at us. We stayed close by the rail where it wasn't so hot, until the steamer grounded. Then we jumped into the water. I couldn't swim with Miss Swartz, so we held on to the boat. It got so hot in two or three minutes that I had to keep ducking her to keep her hair from being burned, and had to keep myself. We were finally saved by a towboat, but not until our faces had been blistered and our eyebrows burned off."

GIRL GIVES BELT TO WOMAN.

John Tischner, thirteen years old, living at No. 401 Fifth-st., is scarcely four feet tall and does not weigh more than ninety pounds. Small as he is, he was one of the numerous child heroes that the disaster revealed. When the fire first broke out he found a life preserver for Ida Wytzka, fourteen years old, who was with him. She lives at No. 404 Fifth-st., directly across the street from the Tischner boy, and the two have been playmates for years. The girl saw a woman with a baby unable to get at a life preserver, and she unhesitatingly gave the woman hers. Tischner tried to get another from the racks, but was not strong enough.

"We were sitting on the lower deck eating ice cream and smelling the clams they were frying, thinking how nice they would taste," he said after he got home. "All of a sudden everything around us got afire, and for a minute I didn't know what to do. Every one was crying and praying and yelling 'Fire!' A lot of women around me were running back and forth with their hair and clothes afire. I pulled Ida back out of the way, so she wouldn't catch fire. Finally I got a life preserver for Ida, and she gave it to a woman with a baby. I tried to get her another, but it stuck in the rack and I couldn't reach it well enough to pull it down. Finally a man gave me another life preserver and I put it on Ida and pushed her overboard. Then I jumped in the water and held her up until a tug picked her up."

NEARLY GIVES LIFE FOR ANOTHER.

"When Johnny pushed me overboard," she said, "I tried to paddle away from the steamer, but the water kept pushing me back. It was awful hot, and my face got burned. Johnny then swam up to me and pulled me away. After he and I had been pulled out of the water he tried to save a baby. A lot of the women were throwing their babies into the water, and Johnny saw a little boy, about six years old, hold on to a piece of wood. He swam to him and tried to bring him over to the tug. We were a long way off then, and he was too tired to hold on to him. He sank two or three times before he let go, and was almost dead when one of the men on the boat got him aboard."

Last night Mrs. Richter and six of her children, living at No. 314 Sixth-st., were missing. Her daughter Frances, eleven years old, in the only one of the family known to be alive. Her face was badly burned, and she was hysterical all day from fright. In the rush for the rail that followed the first outburst of flame the little girl was separated from her family and pushed overboard. Her clothes were torn from her body. She held on to the boat until picked up by a tug.

Charles Schwartz, of No. 141 East Third-st., lost his mother and grandmother, but recovered their bodies. He told the story of his experience.

"My mother, grandmother and I were all sit-

ting together on the upper deck when the fire broke out," he said. "I put my arms around both, but my mother broke away, saying that she could look after herself, and for me to save grandmother."

"I picked up my grandmother and carried her to the rail, waiting for some boat to come near enough to put her on board. Suddenly the rail and a part of the deck gave way, and we fell with twenty-five or thirty others into the water. There were hundreds of others in the water with us, and in the fight for our lives my grandmother was torn from me and drowned before I could get to her again. I was picked up by a tug and taken to North Brother Island."

"From the shore I saw a lot of bodies floating, and I took off my clothes and swam out, looking for my mother and grandmother. I found my grandmother's body and took it to the shore. Then I swam out again, and after a while found my mother's."

Gertrude Nagy, of No. 80 Avenue A, says that three times she got a life preserver, only to have it torn from her by the fire. She said that she was at the stern when the fire broke out. She at once climbed up on a bench and pulled a life preserver from the rack. A man, she says, seized it from her, put it on and jumped overboard. The second and third life preservers, she declared, were likewise torn from her. She says she was then picked up by a towboat.

POLICE AND FIREMEN SAVE MANY.

Otto Goehring and George Tyrrell, life savers at the One-hundred-and-thirty-fourth-st. bath, did splendid work in the rescuing. Between them they took seventy persons—dead and living—from the water. They worked from the tug Cummins, whose crew lent a willing hand in taking the bodies as they were handed up by the two life savers.

George H. Griffen, a policeman attached to the Thirty-third Precinct, who lives in Prospect-ave., near St. John's-ave., in the Bronx, saw the burning boat as she came up the river opposite North Brother Island. He heard the screams and shouts of the passengers, and saw them jumping into the river by the score. He got a boat and rowed out to the burning Slocum. He met Patrolman Rush Webster, of the Thirty-sixth Precinct, and the two officers quickly jumped overboard. They pulled many persons from the river and swam with them to tugs and other boats which were arriving at the scene. Policemen Goss and Sullivan, of the Thirty-fifth Precinct, were others who rendered valuable aid by jumping into the river and rescuing many from drowning and taking those already dead from the water. Goss has a reputation for life saving in the Bronx.

Firemen Dean and Plato, of Engine Company No. 60, which was early ordered to the scene, dived overboard time and again, and returned with bodies to New-York Central Tug No. 10, which stood by to receive them. Both men were so exhausted by their efforts that they had to be pulled up by those on board the tug. Plato declared that the crews of many tugs coolly watched the people struggling in the water without lifting a finger to save them. When the police and firemen became active, however, the men on the tugs began to jump in for bodies. Plato says that every time he went over a dozen persons would grab him, and he had to shake them off to save himself and the person he was rescuing. This was the experience of many of the rescuers.

The crew of the tug D. S. Arnott, of the Keeler Transportation Company, assisted in rescuing the living and recovering the dead. The tug was under command of Captain Van Etten, who was severely burned about the hands and arms. His face, too, was scorched.

They were coming down stream toward New-York when the ocean hoove in sight near the Sunken Meadows off Hell Gate," he said. "Dense clouds of smoke were rising from her, and she was heading for North Brother Island, with the evident intention of beaching. As soon as she struck shallow water she became a mass of flame from stem to stern, and then I saw people jumping from her. It was a terrible scene. Women and children ran frantically to the rail and tried to get overboard to escape the fire, many of them to meet death by drowning. It seemed to me that the Slocum was carrying pretty near to her capacity. By the time I got my tug near enough to be of any service there were hundreds of people drowned and drowning. We managed to pick up six women and two children, and also hauled in fifteen bodies, which were taken aboard the hospital boat on North Brother Island and placed alongside the others on the shore."

MADDOO DIRECTS WORK.

Photographs of Bodies Taken by Flashlight.

Police Commissioner McAdoo, accompanied by Secretary Howell, arrived at North Brother Island early in the afternoon in the police boat Patrol. After a quick survey of the situation he went to the telephone and called up Commissioner Tully of the Department of Charities and asked him to have at once erected at East Twenty-sixth-st., close to the pier, a temporary morgue for the reception of the bodies sent from North Brother Island. This was to be done, he explained later, not only to relieve the regular Morgue from the great throng that was sure to look for relatives for a week or more, but also because it was nearer the homes of those interested in the identification of the bodies.

Commissioner Tully at once agreed to Commissioner McAdoo's suggestion, and said the work would be begun at once.

"I have nothing but praise for Coroner O'Gorman," said Commissioner McAdoo, as he was leaving the island in the launch Oneida, "for the great work he is doing, and for his great assistance to us in another way. He might have raised all sorts of obstacles by refusing to allow the bodies to be transferred from the Bronx Borough to Manhattan Borough; but he has been broadminded and liberal in this great emergency."

The photographers next called up a firm of photographers, and asked them to send at once some men with cameras, to take flashlight pictures of the dead for identification. Some 250 bodies were at the time laid out on the lawn. Owing to the coldness of the water, they were in a good state of preservation, and their features and clothing, he said, could be recognized by their friends if pictures were made at once. Results would be different in twenty- or thirty-eight hours after being taken from the water.

The photographers arrived with two large cameras at 9 o'clock. They took the first flashlight picture of a dozen bodies in a group at 9:20 P. M., and they continued until long after midnight. The Commissioner's plan was carried out to the letter.

He said that he had sent for divers, who, when the cases were reported to Inspector Albertson, and he took occasion to thank Commander Franklin of the 1st Naval Battalion, who so promptly sent the two steam launches, the "Slocum" and the "Oneida," to ply as ferry-boats between One-hundred-and-thirty-second-st. and the island.

"If I find it necessary," said Mr. McAdoo, "I shall ask the Navy Department to loan me a tug to assist in the work of finding the bodies. The Metropolitan Street Railway Company has promised to send us some cluster lights to use on the beach to-night. They will be of great assistance."

On the question of responsibility for the disaster Commissioner McAdoo said last night that he was as ignorant as the rest of the city.

"I have ordered a strict inspection by the police of all excursion boats that leave New-York, and especially those running to Coney Island and other resorts, and I have instructed this work I have entrusted to Captain Dean, of the Steamboat Patrol, and it will be pushed vigorously."

MANY SMALL COFFINS.

SCENES AT THE MORGUE.

Police Keep Back a Big Crowd—Still Clasped by Mother.

There was a crowd of more than five hundred near the entrance to the Morgue when the Fidelity tug up at East Twenty-sixth-st., shortly before 4 p. m. An hour before a wagon filled with coarse pine wood coffins, with their diminutive size pitifully significant, had unloaded at the Morgue. The arrival of the coffins preceded the coming of five thousand pounds of ice to preserve the bodies.

In long rows along the deck of the boat were blankets covering the bodies. Deputy Coroner Weston was in charge, and the crew were on the boat besides. The bodies of twenty-two women and eight children were the cargo. The children were mostly very young. In one case a child was still locked close in its mother's arms.

Dr. Weston said that all the bodies were picked up in the water near the scene of the wreck. Half, he said, had met death by drowning and the remainder by burning or asphyxiation. Some were charred terribly and had evidently fallen from the boat after being partly incinerated.

BELLEVEUE INMATES WATCH.

Captain Shire, of the East Thirty-fifth-st. station, with twenty-five men, maintained order, keeping the crowd well behind the rope stretched across the street to keep the entrance clear. There was little demonstration when the bodies were carried off the boat and landed at the northern entrance to the Morgue. Inmates of Bellevue lined the fire escapes and verandas. A student or two hurried back into the Morgue, tennis racket in hand, and save for the stretchers and what their blankets were known to hide, the coarse pine coffins and the blocks of ice, there was little indication of the presence of death.

One by one the bodies were carried into the autopsy room in the Morgue and deposited in the open wooden coffins. Then the clothing of the bodies was searched for effects. The bodies were carefully tagged, and whatever effects were found were placed in envelopes with corresponding numbers, for future reference.

SEKES MOTHER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

Henry Cordes, who visited the Morgue seeking his mother, brothers and sisters, was one of those who lived through the disaster. His story was an example of many.

"We left the Third-st. pier," said he, "at about 9 o'clock, and all went well until we were within a short distance of North Brother Island. With the rest of my family I was on the lower deck when the smoke appeared on the starboard side from somewhere below. Although the sight of the smoke and its keen, pungent smell alarmed every one, all went well until some one shouted 'Fire!' Then every one ran pell-mell toward the upper decks; those who were on the main deck also rushed up the steps to the hurricane deck, until it was literally jammed. The people kept on crowding, however, until I heard a sudden tearing sound, and zip! the railing gave way and the people were pushed over the edge into the water."

"As the fire increased and ate away the deck supports, the deck caved in with an awful crash, carrying many into the flames. The crew were a little excited, but they did all they could, stretching hose and lowering boats. The boats on the starboard side could not be used, however, because of the spurting flames, and the rest would not nearly hold the hundreds to be saved."

"In the scramble up the stairway I missed the rest of my family, all except my brother Charles, whom I escaped with on a tug that put us ashore somewhere near One-hundred-and-thirty-ninth-st. I fear that the rest of us perished."

"The scene when the deck fell in was awful. The flames roared and licked at people who, in their desperation, leaped headlong overboard, while those who were too late went down into the hell underneath."

Scarcely had the Fidelity's human cargo been disposed in the morgue, when, about 4:45 p. m., the Massasoit, Captain Parkinson, with 123 bodies and two girls who escaped alive, tied up at the Charities pier, abutting on the morgue. The two survivors were Minnie Weiss, of No. 1,235 Third-ave., eleven years old, and Hanna Ludeman, sixteen years old, of White Plains. Both owe their escape largely to Albert Rappaport, a deckhand.

Miss Ludeman was seriously burned about the face, but Miss Weiss seemed outwardly little the worse for her terrible adventure.

"I started for the trip this morning," said she, "with my mother, Mrs. Ida Weiss; my brother George, who is fifteen, and a cousin, Miss Louisa Roth. I was in the front of the boat on the second deck and my brother was on the top deck when the fire broke out. My brother ran to get a life preserver for my mother. In the confusion I missed my mother and followed a big, strange woman, and the sailor picked me up. That is all I know."

Miss Ludeman, whose face was barely visible under its bandages, said she left home with her mother, Mrs. Hannah Ludeman, and her brothers, Fred and John, eighteen and sixteen years old. "We were on the upper deck on the rear of the boat," she said, "when we saw the smoke. I helped mother put on a life preserver and put on one myself. Then the upper deck caved right in, and I don't remember anything."

Never within the memory of the most hardened hospital attendant have such scenes been witnessed as those that occurred in the morgue and the temporary morgue at the Charities dock from sunset throughout the night.

Veteran patrolmen, and even middle aged surgeons, blanched at the long series of horrors. Bodies charred beyond recognition into the semblance of brown mummies; wives whose features were so disfigured with blood, whose bodies were so twisted with pain, as to pass un-identified by husbands at the first close inspection; men who covered their faces and blubbered like children; young men who seemed to go insane at the sight of distorted clumps of flesh that only a few hours before had been their dearest—the remembrance of all these things onlookers will carry with them to their dying day.

A mere man hurled himself, sobbing, on a mangled form, and a man raised his hands appealingly and screamed, "Lily, Lily, look at me! Oh, darling, speak!" Now a man threw up his arms and swooned, now a girl went into hysterics, or a woman's face in a moment took on years of age.

ONLY HER RINGS TO IDENTIFY HER.

"No. 11" in the line of bodies was that of a woman. Not an inch of the woman's frame was untouched by the flames. On the head only a small remnant of the black skull remained. On the fleshless fingers the police found two rings, one a diamond. Inside the ring no mark could be found. The other, a wedding ring, bore the initials "H. H. to A. H."

As the evening wore on the scene at East Twenty-sixth-st. and the river became more harrowing. At the immense pier of the Charities Department the boats loaded with the dead tied up long enough to unload, and then started on their way back to North Brother Island. Health Commissioner Darlington spent the night on the Health Department boat, Franklin Edson, who had brought fifty-seven bodies. These were added to those already stretched out on the pier.

Two hundred coffins had been sent to North

Brother Island late yesterday afternoon by the Charities Department, but not enough men could be found at the scene of the disaster to pack the bodies in the coffins. It was decided that the coffins should be taken back to the pier at Twenty-sixth-st., and the bodies there placed in coffins as they were identified.

In the evening the crowds outside swelled to thousands. Between 9 o'clock and midnight, when the Minnahonock came in with eighty-three bodies from Riker's Island, the pier was the scene of the most orderly and the most orderly of the most orderly order ever seen in New-York.

The long double line of watchers still reached from the pier to Avenue A, broken only by ambulances and the occasional wagon. The acute grief of the early evening had given way to the weariness of sorrow, and the sound of shuffling feet on the asphalt pavement was broken only when the guardians at the door of the pier permitted a fresh instalment of men and women to enter.

The percentage of the morbidly curious had been reduced, the policemen said, by 50 per cent, and those who waited waited for their dead.

The pier had been divided into two sections, the first half containing the living, the second the dead and those who were waiting to be recognized. The line of coffins reached in triple tiers, and around these the line constantly moved.

Many had made the march time and time again, the top of finding their dead, and the grim task brought about many curious friendships. When the Franklin Edson arrived a man and his wife, accompanied by a younger woman, stood close together. The woman brought together, began the weary march again. Finally the elder woman stopped before the body of a child, and, reaching down, smoothed the hair of the child's face. The woman tried to comfort her awkwardly, stammering, "But it's not in the river," he said huskily, "and we will have her with us at home this night. 'All right,' said the young woman, 'I broke in with force entry. God won't give me mine, even dead.'"

The ghastly glare of the arc light made identification more difficult than it had been, and frequently the red flame of a match would give a temporary warmth to a white, stiff face.

One old man would not heed the commands of the officers, and when he saw a group surrounding a body, he would crowd in among the rows, and, hurrying the group aside, peer down at the face that looked up at him. "It ain't her; it ain't her," was the sob he repeated again and again. "I know it ain't her because she wore the locket I give her, and it wouldn't be no more."

After Commissioner Tully sent a request to the recreation pier that there should be no music, this request was construed by the crowd outside as an announcement that the next boat would unload its cargo at the recreation pier. For an hour the officer in charge was besieged by a crowd, asking for admission tickets and other favors. The officer, tired and tearless, approached him. "There ain't goin' to be no music on the pier to-night," he said gently, "There ain't goin' to be no music to-night. 'There ain't goin' to be no music to-night.' The man repeated the words over and over, and I've waited and waited since she went away on the boat. She had on her first communion dress what we made over, and there ain't goin' to be no music to-night, you say."

One young fellow with a shock of red hair finally found the body he had been searching for. It was that of a young woman. The rigor of death had left her with a ghastly appearance. "Just like she was awavin' to me," he said to the man next to him in the line.

At the order of Police Commissioner McAdoo and Coroner O'Gorman photographers began last night to photograph the bodies as a means of identification. After sixteen bodies had been photographed it was deemed inadvisable to do the work that day, and the photographers were ordered to go at once to the Bellevue morgue to continue the work, as it was thought there it could be done more systematically.

When the bodies arrived at the island twelve of the bodies were in coffins. Four of the coffins were placed in an upright position against the south wall of the scarlet fever hospital and a flashlight picture was taken of the bodies which had been placed in coffins were photographed in the same way in groups of four.

The coffins had been slow in arriving, and it was thought that the work would better be done at the morgue.

A striking phase of the search for missing members of families by survivors was the apparent lack of interest in the bodies. The dead seemed to have been so shocked by the catastrophe, the immensity of it, that they could not realize their own losses. A family with a loss of only one child, a young woman, who was holding her sister's baby, the only survivor of her children so far as she knew, talking and laughing without any apparent feeling of the greatness of her loss.

SMALL HOPE OF DAMAGES

Court Decisions Against Money Recovery in Such Disasters.

Lawyers familiar with admiralty practice said yesterday that there was little hope of recovering damages from the owners of the General Slocum. In order to encourage the merchant marine there was passed several years ago a law which limits the recovery of damages in case of a vessel foundering to the actual value of the vessel.

"In a case like this to-day," said a lawyer to a Tribune reporter yesterday, "all the owners need to do is to say to the first claimant for damages: 'We've been paid what is left of the Slocum over to the United States government. Any verdict for damages will have to be satisfied with the value of the vessel as turned over. Our liability stops with transferring the boat to the government.'"

This is the statute that was invoked when the French liner Bourgogne was lost, and recently in the Federal Court in Brooklyn a defendant sought to avail himself of the same law.

The Bourgogne was in a collision with the Cromartyshire, off Sable Island, on July 4, 1898, and 571 lives were lost. In the next three years more than one hundred and fifty suits for damages were brought against the French government, the United States courts and the Supreme Court of this State. There were fifty similar suits in France and several in English and Canadian courts. Only in the English courts were there any decisions against the French line.

On March 30, 1900, Jones & Govin, of No. 45 Cedar-st., attorneys for the French line, got an injunction from Judge Brown, in the United States District Court, restraining the government, the United States courts against the French line. The court held, in granting the injunction, that liabilities, under the federal law, were limited to the value of the ship in her injured condition, with the freight. As the cargo included freight were a total loss, it was held that the liabilities were nothing.

The test case in France was that of the widow of Paul Buisson, who died in 1894. A verdict for 200,000 francs was granted to her in the lower courts, but the decision was reversed on final appeal, with the declaration that neither the United States courts nor the French courts could be held responsible for the catastrophe.

WORK OF THE CHARITIES BOATS.

Charities Commissioner Tully, as soon as he heard of the catastrophe, ordered the four boats of the Charities Department—the Vitality, the Gitroy, the Companion and the Wickham—to proceed at once to North Brother Island and render whatever aid they could. Mr. Tully said last night he had heard indirectly that they had given out their help.

Commissioner Tully also telephoned to Dock Commissioner Featherston, who immediately gave orders to the band on the recreation pier at East Twenty-second-st. to stop discharging the bodies until all the bodies had been removed from the temporary morgue at the Charities pier.

The Commissioner will keep the boats of the department on relief work all day to-day, and will be issued to the islands in the East River and other points. Persons desiring to go to Blackwell's, Ward's or to the other islands in the East River will have to take the ferry at Fifty-fifth, One-hundred-and-twentieth or One-hundred-and-twenty-fifth-st.

THROWS BABIES TO A TUG.

Woman Tells How She Saved Nieces and Herself.

Miss Mary Hoelder sits in her little home, rocking hour after hour and moaning that her mother who never came back to her. Miss Hoelder, who is forty years old, and her mother, of seventy-nine, lived together in two neat little rooms at No. 165 Avenue A. Yesterday morning, after the boat had gone fairly under, Miss Hoelder settled her mother comfortably on the deck and went below. "I was on the committee to help serve refreshments," said Miss Hoelder at her home late yesterday afternoon, "and I was just passing some clam chowder to a woman when I saw some men running with a line of hose. I said 'What's the matter?' and one of the teachers at the Sunday school came up to me and said, 'Oh, it's all right; don't be scared.' But I knew something was the matter, so I ran up to my mother. Just then everything seemed on fire, and when I got up the stairs it was all flames where my mother had been, and I couldn't find her. Then I jumped and caught hold of a beam. A lot of other women were holding to it, and there was one man. He acted like he was crazy, and he yelled to us, 'Get off! here, or I'll bite you!' I couldn't hold on any longer, so I let go and dropped into the water. I went down twice, and then a sailor got hold of me and put me in a boat and took me to the hospital. All my clothes were new, just for the occasion, but they took them off for they were all wet, and gave me these things."

She pointed to a calico dress and black cape. "They gave me calico to come home. Oh! where is my dear mother? She always told me to keep up the home, so I'm going to do it, if she doesn't come back. No, I haven't heard that she's dead, but I know she is."

Next door to Miss Hoelder the Michael family is mourning the loss of four of its members—a married daughter, Mrs. Catherine Cohrs, of No. 70 First-ave.; her two children, Frida, six years old, and Harry, one year, and Carlotta Michael, thirteen years old. Mrs. Cohrs's husband spent all of the afternoon and evening searching for his family in the hospitals, while his wife's old mother and father waited anxiously for news. Neighbors, sympathizing, yet full of a morbid curiosity, hung around the door, offering occasional words of encouragement. The father sat in a chair by the window, his head buried in his hands, while the mother paced the floor. Another daughter, who had thought of going on the excursion, sat by, and her baby, evidently recognizing that all was not well, kept up a continuous crying. "My daughter's husband saw the boat on fire," said Mrs. Michael. "He drives an ice cream wagon, and he was over near the East River when a woman called to him if he saw the boat on fire. 'What is it?' he asked. 'It's the General Slocum.' 'Good God, my whole family is on that boat!' he cried. He ran right over to us as fast as he could, but by that time we had heard about it. Oh, God, it is awful! And that dear little baby is gone, too! We just have to wait, I know, but it's so awful not to know where they are."

Mrs. Charles