

operate on the lakes overcrowded and underballasted and in other ways unseaworthy, even predicting loss of life on a boat tied to the pier, as the Eastland was.

"Yet the department did nothing.

"Sec'y Redfield I do not hold responsible, for in the multitude of his duties he has to depend upon his bureau chiefs.

"And these bureau men—in this instance—the men in the inspection service, have proved unfaithful to him.

"Had they done their duty the Eastland would not have been allowed to run until finally she fell over on her side and become a 'coffin ship,' for she was known all over the lakes as a 'crank.'

"Inspected in Cleveland in 1913 her excursion permit only allowed 653 people to be carried in addition to the crew. The inspectors knew her faults and knew that more than 700 people would prove dangerous.

"But in Grand Haven in 1914 she was issued a permit for 2,000. Then this year a permit is issued allowing the shipowners to load her down with 2,500 people, a load which the poor old ship could not possibly carry unless her bottom had been filled with iron ballast, which was not done.

"It is the System. The existing laws leave it to the discretion of the inspectors to fix the number of passengers a ship may carry with safety.

"And the inspectors are appointed mainly upon the recommendation of shipowners. And what happens? If an inspector develops a conscience, out he goes. There are lots of good men in the service, but they can do nothing—they are helpless. If they do do anything they don't last.

"And it is this system—the shipowners—that are fighting for a repeal of the seamen's act. A law which, had it been in force now, would have prevented the loss of 1,000 lives on the Eastland.

"It would have been impossible to carry the necessary number of life-

boats and rafts for 2,500 as made necessary under the new law which goes into effect Nov. 1, and therefore the number of people would have had to be cut—probably to less than 1,000.

"Of course, they are fighting the seamen's act. It puts a value upon human life without considering the cost of operation or of lifeboats.

"Naturally the owners want to carry the maximum of people, regardless of danger, at the minimum of expense. Can you blame foxes for eating geese?"

### INVESTIGATIONS OF EASTLAND DISASTER BEGIN

State and federal grand juries acting with the coroner's jury will lay the blame for the Eastland horror.

The state grand jury and coroner's jury start work this morning. Before these bodies hundreds of survivors, many policemen, several officials of the steamship company, federal inspectors and experts on lake traffic will testify.

To run through the line of witnesses which will be called will take some time. Meanwhile as sufficient evidence develops indictments may be voted and returned.

Thursday, the federal grand jury, called by Judge K. M. Landis will take up its burden. Landis says that in view of the fact that federal inspectors are blamed by state and city authorities all evidence which he holds will be passed, as used, to the other investigating bodies.

The city council will take a hand in the investigation which every authority has ordered. The committee on harbors, wharves and bridges was ordered to report to the council.

Acting Mayor Moorehouse ordered closed all city departments except fire, police and health tomorrow, when most of the victims of the ship disaster will be buried.

Divers today saw dozens of bodies in ship's diningroom.