

WE HAVE PUBLISHED, WITH THE OMISSION of certain passages that seemed to us objectionable, the correspondence regarding the survey of the *Magnolia*, which appears in another column, as the subject appears to us to be of considerable importance to the mercantile and shipping interests of this port, and to stand in need of ventilation. In doing so, we wish it to be understood that we express no opinion regarding the rights and wrongs of the case. On this point Captain Stewart will, no doubt, have something to say.

Since writing the above we have been put in possession of the following declaration by Captain Stewart:—

“I, William Stewart, Surveyor of Shipping to Lloyd's Agency, and Surveyor to Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping, having been informed that Captain Cator, the master of the barque *Magnolia*, has made a statement which contains reflections upon me in my professional capacity, and that he intends to publish such statement, and being desirous that the public should be in possession of the true facts of the case, I do hereby solemnly, sincerely and truly, declare and affirm as follows:—

The barque *Magnolia* arrived in the port of Calcutta in the month of July last. Whilst unloading her cargo she was moored off Prinseps' Ghaut. In the course of my daily rounds of inspection amongst the shipping in the river, I observed that a large quantity of zinc sheathing had gone from both bows of the vessel, and that as she lightened the deficiency became more and more apparent. Twice in the early part of the month of August I went on board the vessel (which was classed and registered at Lloyd's), and pointed out to Captain Cator what I considered to be the defects in the vessel. Shortly after my last visit Captain Cator called upon me at my office, and I recommended him to dock strip and caulk the barque. He did not approve of my recommendation, thinking, as I understood him, that all that was necessary might be done, as the vessel lay at her mooring. On or about the fourth day of August having seen the *Magnolia* anchored abreast off the Caledonia Dock, and knowing that there was no European foreman at that Dock, and also knowing that the Superintendents of Docks are not at all times able, in consequence of their other works, to give personal supervision to the repairs of vessels. I wrote to Captain Cator recommending that he should take his vessel to some other Dock, and stating the same reasons as those above given for such recommendation. On the following day I went on board the *Magnolia* where she lay abreast the Caledonia Dock, and there renewed my objections. Captain Cator replied, as I thought very offensively, that he would not alter his arrangements for me or words to that effect. I was a little irritated and told him that in that event he must not look for my services as surveyor, as I thought (and still think) that repairs done under native supervision, are not to be depended on. I had previously urged the same objections in a letter to Messrs. Finlay, Muir and Company, the agents of the vessel. Subsequently I received renewed requests from Captain Cator to attend his vessel and inspect the repairs.

It is my custom to go a round of inspection every morning, starting (during the freshets) at 5-30 A.M., at the Northern end of the port, where the Caledonia Dock is situated, and proceeding down the river amongst the shipping. On two occasions while the *Magnolia* was in the Caledonia Dock, I specially visited her at about 5-30 in the morning. On both occasions I found no one stirring either in the Dock or in the vessel, but I attended the ship and fully inspected the work which I had previously recommended to Captain Cator, on one occasion going on board. The work I had recommended was outside work. On or about the 2nd September, instat, I went again on board the vessel at the special, and as I understood official request of Messrs. Finlay, Muir and Company, and in accordance with the usual practice in such cases I obtained from Captain Cator and the dock-master a detailed account of the repairs, and made such further inspection as with the knowledge I had acquired on my previous visits, appeared to me to be necessary. On the following day I forwarded, through Messrs. Gladstone, Wyllie and Company to Messrs. Finlay, Muir and Company, the usual certificate required by the latter firm, and which I considered myself under an engagement to furnish to them in pursuance of the request made to me by them to inspect the vessel.

On the same day I also forwarded to Messrs. Finlay, Muir and Company for Captain Cator the Lloyd's registry certificate usually furnished after a satisfactory survey of a vessel classed in the register.

Since giving the certificate last mentioned, I have been compelled to withhold the report which I had intended to send to the committee of Lloyd's Register. The reason which compels me to withhold, it is, that since the vessel has been loading, the new metal put on in the dock has wrinkled, a contingency which could not be fore-seen when my surveys were made. The wrinkling of the sheathing is probably attributable to the straightening of the keel while in dock, and the curvature subsequently ensuing when the vessel floated.

I have absolutely no interest or concern whatever in any dock or other establishment connected with the repairs or supplies of shipping in Calcutta or elsewhere, and I make this latter statement in consequence of insinuations which I believe Captain Cator has made. And I make this declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the sixth year of the reign of His late Majesty King William, the fourth, intituled an Act to repeal an Act of the present Session of Parliament, intituled an Act for the more effectual abolition of oaths and affirmations taken and made in various departments of the State, and to substitute declarations in lieu thereof, and for the more entire suppression of voluntary and extrajudicial oaths and affidavits, and to make other provisions for the abolition of unnecessary oaths.”