

THE "LISMORE."

Loss Due to Cargo Shifting

From Our Own Correspondent.

DUBLIN, Monday.

The finding in the inquiry into the loss of the City of Cork Steam Packet steamer *Lismore*, which foundered 16 miles off Hook Head, Co. Wexford, on July 10 last, when all hands except Able Seaman Carley were lost, was delivered this afternoon in Dublin Castle by Mr. Geo. P. Cussen, district justice. The loss was found to be due to the shifting of the cargo, and errors of judgment were attributed to the master and second officer.

The judgment resolved itself into findings on a number of questions laid down by the Department of Industry and Commerce, which ordered the inquiry. The President said the inquiry was protracted and difficult, and rendered the examination of 33 witnesses necessary, and he paid a tribute to the lawyers engaged for the assistance they had rendered, while the Court expressed sympathy with those who had lost relatives or friends.

Turning to the cause of the disaster, the Court found that the shifting of the cargo in No. 2 hold and on the main deck was responsible for the increasing list which caused the vessel to founder. The second officer did not appear to have reported the state of affairs to the master early enough before the disaster, and the master committed an error of judgment in not giving the order to lower the boats until a few minutes before the vessel went down. The Court was of the opinion that the cargo was too hurriedly loaded at Penrose Quay, and that in particular the loading of hold No. 1 was so loose that the vessel would have been in danger had she encountered bad weather, and the same also applied to most of the other parts of the ship.

ERRORS OF JUDGMENT.

Because of the absence of evidence it was difficult to apportion the blame for the disaster, but there was no doubt that the second officer and captain were guilty of errors of judgment. The Court was of opinion that vessels of the size of the *Lismore* were not built with a sufficient margin of safety for the conveyance of cattle and other cargo at the same time, and it was not desirable that such mixed cargo be carried in other vessels of the same kind. Such vessels should have at least six seamen, and the cattle pens should be so constructed that they could be tightened up when not full.

The City of Cork Steam Packet Company was justified in permitting the *Lismore* to sail in the way she was loaded. The errors of judgment were on the part of the master and second officer, but the company should pay the costs of the solicitor who appeared for the owner of the cattle on board, and contribute £200 to the Department of Industry and Commerce towards the costs of the inquiry. The cargo was not properly stowed according to the Stability Regulations, and when leaving Cork she had a list to port, but the master was correct in leaving with such a list in view of the weather that obtained and if she were properly handled. The vessel, no doubt, increased her list during the voyage and was lost because of the shifting of the cattle on board. It was impossible to assign blame, and the Court could only find that there were errors of judgment on the part of the master and second officer as stated.

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