

Mr Rose, the chief officer, handed in a report to the effect that the vessel suddenly listed to about 45 degrees, and became un navigable. She was allowed to drift inshore to within a mile of the land, when the starboard anchor was let go in 13 fathoms of water.

Eventually the No. 5 hatch started, and was washed adrift. The vessel settled down on her broadside, and sank stern first. He had no idea what caused the ship to list over and eventually founder.

Examined by the President, witness said that the ship was on the bottom the day before leaving port, and had a list of three or four degrees to starboard on leaving. When the pilot left the ship, the captain asked witness to look after the navigation, as he was not well.

Pressed on the point, witness said he thought the captain had been drinking heavily.

There was no indication that the vessel struck anything. He, with the second officer and a Lascar, tried to clear the boat in which the captain had been placed, but she fouled the rigging, and they had to abandon the attempt. The vessel had not collapsible boats or service rafts. The best behaviour obtained among the officers and crew.

The President: "What was the captain doing?"

Witness: "We found him lying on the floor of his cabin in a dazed condition. Evidently the sudden list had jerked him out of his bunk. He was sensible, but seemed frightfully weak. I helped him on deck, and put him inside the boat abreast his cabin. He was too weak to take command, but said he believed the vessel would have ridden through but for the hatch coming off and letting the water below."

All the boats were free when the steamer sank, and witness could only account for the accident by the vessel being top-heavy in the sea-way, through carrying 70 tons of coal on her turret deck.

The inquiry was then adjourned, a diver having been dispatched to examine the hull of the sunken steamer.

**Sensible.**

The Sydney Wharf Labourers' Union has decided to secede from the Labour Council owing to the power the latter have taken with regard to declaring a general strike.

**Discredited.**

The Colonial Sugar Company is inclined to look with suspicion on the alarmist reports cabled from Auckland with respect to a possible Indian rising in Fiji. The company is in daily cable communication with Fiji, and so far have heard nothing of any trouble.

The Sydney Agent of the Fiji Government also states that he has no official information on the subject.

**The Broken Hill Dispute.**

The Federal Arbitration Court has commenced an inquiry at Broken Hill into the dispute between the Proprietary mine officials and their employees.

**How the Chinese View It.**

Kwang Yung Liang, Chinese Consul for New Zealand, arrived at Fremantle last week by the R.M.S. China, accompanied by his wife and daughter.

Interviewed on the subject of the Australian restriction of Asiatics, he said the Chinese did not like it, but he desired to make an investigation before expressing an opinion.

China was developing rapidly, and paying more attention to foreign affairs, as evidenced by the institution of the Australian Consular Service.

Some leading Chinese residents waited on Mr. Liang and informed him that the Australian laws were not so vigorously enforced against Japanese as against Chinese.

**A Reckless Master.**

The marine inquiry respecting the ship Iverna and the tug Advance collision, resulted in the Court finding that the master of the tug brought about the disaster by bringing his vessel round from a position on the starboard bow of the Iverna to a reversed position on her port bow.

The Court stated that everything that was reasonable and proper was done by the master of the Iverna to save the crew of the tug.

The Judge commented on the recklessness of the master of the tug in coming alongside the ship.

On the night of December 25 the tug Advance went out from Newcastle to take the ship Iverna in tow, when she was struck by that vessel and sank. The Iverna was doing 11½ knots at the time, with a southerly gale behind her. The eight members of the crew of the Advance were drowned.

**A Threat.**

The Treasurer of the New South Wales State Government, in a speech at Grafton, complained that New Zealand and other States were exploiting the London money market by selling their stocks up to 4 per cent. The N.S.W. Government had not increased the rate interest paid on stock issued by the Treasury, realising the vital importance of traders and others keeping the interest rates low.

If the neighbouring Governments continued to exploit the market by out-bidding in rates of interest, N.S.W. might be forced, in self-defence, to raise the rates.

**Imperial Defence.**

Lord Dudley, the Governor-General, speaking at a yachting luncheon, referred to the value of sailing as a pastime and to keeping alive the love of the sea.

He hoped to see a larger number of Australians wearing the British naval uniform.

It was his wish that they should be part of the general defence forces of the Empire. He would like to see absolute equality in all services of the Crown between all British citizens wherever they were born, and believed they would never get the idea of Empire until that was accomplished.

**THE OLD COUNTRY.**

An anonymous lady has presented the Royal Institution of Great Britain with an unconditional gift of £10,000.

Lord Northcote, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., C.B., Governor-General of Australia, has been appointed a Privy Councillor.

The death is announced of Lord Robertson, who had been a Lord of Appeal since 1899, in his 64th year.

In an international Rugby match Wales beat Scotland by a goal (5 points) to a penalty goal (3 points).

Raleigh's co-operative farming scheme carried out in Essex yielded the labourers a return of 4 per cent. on their investments.

Mr. T. A. Coghlan, I.S.O., Agent-General for New South Wales in London, has had his term of office extended for another twelve months.

Two hundred and fifty members of the Victorian Ironworkers and Boilermakers Assistants' Society have struck against the old rates of pay.

The late Mr James Duncan, of Ayr, Scotland, bequeathed the sum of £60,000 for the purpose of founding a College of Industrial Art at Dundee.

The authorities of Girton College, Cambridge, are appealing for £50,000 in order to pay off the debt on the buildings and endow scholarships.

British imports during January decreased by £2,852,000, and the exports by £5,605,000. The value of the exports, however, increased by £88,000 compared with the previous January.

Major-General J. C. Hood, C.M.G., Inspector-General of the Military Forces of the Commonwealth, was granted a private audience with King Edward, for the purpose of discussing matters relating to Australian military defence.

At the instance of Mr. T. A. Coghlan (Agent-General for New South Wales), the International Cold Storage Association has agreed to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa each having one representative on the Permanent Committee.

**Blown to Pieces.**

While a Trinity House wrecking party was blowing up a submerged barge near Yarmouth last week, their boat was blown to pieces, and six of them killed.

It is believed that the barge was laden with an unknown explosive. The concussion was felt for several miles around.

**Under the Flag.**

The London Chamber of Commerce has drafted resolutions for the forthcoming congress, advocating the extension of trade reciprocity between Great Britain and the colonies, and co-operation in keeping British emigrants under the flag. They also suggest that the heads of the

Postal Departments in the Empire should confer with a view to devising a scheme for cheaper cablegrams.

**Defence of Great Britain.**

On behalf of the National Service League, Lord Roberts, the Duke of Wellington, the Earl of Meath, Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, and Lord Raglan have proposed that all youths between 18 and 21 years of age, spend from four to six months' training in camp, followed by a musketry course and a fortnight's camp for three years.

They estimate that the territorial force can be increased within four years to 400,000, with 150,000 recruits, and eventually a reserve of 600,000 at a cost of £4,000,000.

Referring to the present territorial force, they state that it does not provide sufficient men even for peace, that the training is hopelessly inadequate, and the burden unfair in its incidence.

**Haldane's "Territors."**

Lord Esler has estimated the deficiency in the territorial forces at 105,000 men.

The War Office has removed the King's Colonials from the jurisdiction of the London Territorial Association, and it becomes a special Imperial unit, managed by a colonial committee.

In consequence of the attitude of the newspapers towards the question of defence and the sensation created by Major du Maurier's play, "An Englishman's Home," Lord Esler, through the "Daily Mail," is appealing for 11,000 Territorials in order to complete the London establishment.

An anonymous donar has forwarded £10,000 to the funds of the London Territorials' Association.

The Mayors of the London boroughs have been calling meetings with the result that over 200 large firms have decided to grant the territorials in their employ three weeks' holiday in order to encourage enlistment.

**Command of the Home Fleet.**

Vice-Admiral Sir W. H. May is to succeed Vice-Admiral Sir Francis Charles Bridgeman as Commander-in-Chief of the Home fleet.

Vice-Admiral Sir William Henry May, who entered the navy in 1863, served in the Arctic expedition of 1875-6, was naval attaché for Europe from 1891 to 1893, in command of the Naval Contingent in London on the occasion of the Jubilee procession in 1897, and was in attendance on the German Emperor during his visit to England in 1899. Afterwards he was Director of Naval Ordnance and Torpedoes, and Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic fleet from 1905 to 1906. Vice-Admiral Bridgeman, who is 61 years of age, has been in command of the Home fleet since 1907.

**Divided.**

The "Daily Chronicle" admits that sharp differences of opinion in the Cabinet have developed at recent meetings with respect to the Naval Estimates.

The Admiralty propose an immediate addition of £2,500,000, increasing to £5,000,000 and £6,000,000 in succeeding years.

Mr. Lloyd-George (Chancellor of the Exchequer), Lord Morley (Secretary for India), and Mr. Winston Churchill (President of the Board of Trade) are opposing the scheme, while Mr. R. McKenna (First Lord of the Admiralty) and Mr. T. J. MacNamara (Parliamentary and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty), though previously rigid economists, are strongly supporting it.

There are rumours of possible resignations.

The "Daily Express" states that the Lords of the Admiralty informed the Cabinet that unless their programme was accepted they would resign in a body.

Viscount Morley (Secretary of State for India) and Mr. John Burns (President of the Local Government Board) withdrew their opposition, but Mr. Lloyd-George (Chancellor of the Exchequer) and Mr. Winston Churchill (President of the Board of Trade) continue to oppose the proposals.

**Judicial Changes.**

The Right Hon. Sir John Gorell Barnes, P.C., has been raised to the baronage upon his resignation as President of the Probate and Divorce Court, owing to ill-health. He will be succeeded by Sir John

C. Bigham, Judge of the Bankruptcy Court.

Sir John Gorell Barnes held the position of Judge of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court from 1892 to 1905. He was then appointed President.

Sir John Charles Bigham contested the Exchange Division of Liverpool in 1892, and was elected in 1895. He held the seat until he received a judgeship in 1897. He was a member of the South African Committee of the House of Commons from 1896-97, enjoyed a large practice at the Common Law Bar and was leader of the Northern Circuit. In 1902 he was a member of the Royal Commission on Martial Law in South Africa, and since 1904 he has been judge of the Bankruptcy Court.

**A Big Estimate.**

Mr. Charles E. H. Holthouse, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for India, states that nine millions must be found in order to carry out the English old age pensions scheme.

The Government's scheme of providing old age pensions was unfolded by Mr. Asquith in his 1908 Budget, and was later embodied in a bill. The age limit was fixed at 70, and the amount of pension at £13 per annum, though the principle of a sliding scale was subsequently accepted by the Government and inserted in the measure. Mr. Asquith estimated that 500,000 persons would satisfy the conditions and be entitled to pensions, and the cost at first was estimated at £6,000,000. The bill received the Royal assent on August 1, and the pensions came into operation on January 1, 1909.

**Government of India.**

There is continued discussion on Viscount Morley's reply to a deputation of Indian Mohammedans last month.

The petitioners deny Viscount Morley's dictum that the population statistics are the main factor in determining representation under the new scheme of reform. They urge that the Mohammedans have many powerful claims for exceptional treatment.

The India Office denies that Ashutosh Makarji, a Brahmin and a judge of the High Court of Calcutta, has been appointed as first native member of the Indian Executive Council.

A deputation of Indian Mohammedans waited on the Secretary of State for India last month and suggested that of the six members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, one should be a native Mohammedan, and another a Hindu. Viscount Morley, in reply, emphasised that the appointment of an Indian member was intended as a signal proof that race was no disability to the attainment of this tremendous trust; but no man would be selected either as a Hindu or as a Mohammedan. While ready to make one of the six a native, he saw no chance of appointing two natives. Viscount Morley added, with reference to other suggestions made, that separate electoral colleges for Mohammedans would possibly be arranged. He declared that the Government's reform scheme had been generally welcomed in India, and emphasised the goodwill of the Indian Civil Service, and said he also had derived encouragement from President Roosevelt's recent utterance concerning British rule in India.

**Costly Strikes.**

The General Federation of Trade Unions reports that during 1908 the expenditure reached the record sum of £137,152, including £34,000 for the North-east Coast Engineering dispute and £65,500 for the Lancashire cotton workers' dispute.

**The Open Door.**

Mr J. F. Deacon, presiding at the annual meeting of the Society for Befriending Foreigners in Distress, complained bitterly that the Aliens Act was inoperative.

Pauper immigrants were being admitted into the country without restriction, with the result that they soon had to appeal to this Society for repatriation.

**Defence of Army Protesges.**

"Captain" Howell, the head of the Salvation Army's Immigration Department.