

BLAMES PACIFIC COAST COMPANY

Official Report on Valencía Disaster.

GRAVEN CAPTAINS CENSURED

Rescue Work Badly Planned and Bungled in Execution.

VICTIMS LEFT TO PERISH

Government Commission Cannot Explain Failure of Captain Cousins and Associates to Approach the Wrecked Steamer.

WASHINGTON, April 14.—The Department of Commerce today made public the report of the special commission which held an investigation into the Valencía disaster last February, holding its sessions at Seattle. The report, which is made to the President and signed by the three commissioners, Laurence O. Murray, assistant secretary of the department; Herbert Knox Smith, deputy commissioner of corporations; and Captain William J. Russell, U. S. N., consists of 22 printed pages and exhaustively reviews the testimony and findings of the commission.

A feature of the report is its severe reprobation for the Pacific Coast Company, which owned the steamer. The brunt of the blame, however, is thrown on Captain Johnson, who perished in the wreck.

Sixty witnesses were examined, their testimony concerning 146 typewritten pages. Though the commission was without power to compel the attendance of witnesses and had no funds with which to remunerate them, substantially all the survivors of the wreck were examined, except a few who had gone to distant points before the inquiry began. In addition a large number of master mariners and members of the crew of vessels which went to the Valencía's aid were put on the stand. These facts and other preliminary matters are set forth in the first chapter of the report.

The second chapter deals with the Valencía and her owner, the Pacific Coast Company, and the operating corporation, the Pacific Coast Steamship Company.

On her last voyage the Valencía took out from San Francisco 46 first and 62 second-class passengers and a crew of 65, as near as could be ascertained. There were 11 women and a few children aboard.

Total Death List 136. Of the total officers and crew of 65, 49 were lost and 16 saved. Of the 101 passengers 110 were lost and 12 saved. The ratio of passengers lost to number of passengers was therefore 88 per cent, and of crew lost to number of crew 61 per cent.

In all, of the total ship's company of 173, 136 were lost (a percentage of 78) and 37 saved. All the women and children perished.

Chapter three gives a brief description of the voyage, the points emphasized being that Captain Johnson sighted no land after passing Cape Mendocino, 80 miles north of San Francisco, until just before the vessel struck. The weather being hazy, he sighted no lights and heard no fog signals and navigated by compass and dead reckoning, thereby missing the entrance to the Straits of Juan de Fuca and piling his vessel up on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island at 11:30 o'clock on the night of January 22.

Here, where fog was beached to avoid striking in deep water, the Valencía lay until about 1 o'clock in the afternoon of the following Wednesday, when she went to pieces, drowning all then on board. The scene of the tragedy was at the foot of a virtually continuous rock cliff, rising sheer from the water and beaten by a heavy surf, about midway between Cape Beale and Carmanah Light. The spot is nearly ten miles from any white settlement.

Going into the details of the story of the voyage as told by Second Officer Peterson, the only surviving deck officer, the commission states that Captain Johnson's fatal mistake was his assumption that his log had overrun about 6 per cent, contributing causes of the disaster being his lack of information concerning the winter currents of the ocean off the coast and his failure to heed the unmistakable warnings given by the soundings when he was casting about trying to pick up the Unstilla Reef Lightship.

As to the lookout on the bow the report says:

Lookout Probably Asleep. It appears from the evidence that there was a lookout on station man on duty in the bow of the ship at this time. This man's testimony cannot be had, as he is dead. Mr. Peterson, however, says that this lookout gave no warning of the approach of land and did not call out at all, and this fact, this lookout, whose sole business it was to keep watch ahead, should not have reported land ahead. It appears, however, that through a wholly improper arrangement of watches this lookout had been on duty since 6 o'clock that evening, and had been there nearly six hours at the time the vessel struck.

Chapter four deals with the events following the striking of the vessel and prior to the arrival of the so-called rescue fleet. Captain Johnson had beached the Valencía

astern-on, within 100 feet of the base of the cliffs. Briefly summarized, the report says that Captain Johnson's failure to hold boat drill on the way up the coast led to great loss of life when the boats were lowered.

Net Result of Negligence.

The net result of the handling of the boats on the night of the disaster was that not over a dozen people got ashore alive. Probably from 40 to 50 were drowned in the various accidents to the boats and only one boat was left of the wreckage. It seems fairly clear from the experience the next morning, when the last remaining boat went out successfully through the surf with comparatively little difficulty, that Mr. Peterson is correct when he says that if the boats had not been launched at all until the next morning they then could have gone out successfully and saved such a reasonable boatload of passengers.

Summarizing the report, it continues: Toward Tuesday morning it was evident that the vessel was beginning to break up. Early that morning, the captain called for a volunteer crew to

SALEABLE FEATURES OF VALENCIA INVESTIGATION COMMISSION'S REPORT.

The Valencía went ashore through the faulty navigation of Captain Johnson. Master censured for navigating vessel in a crude, unscientific fashion; for allowing lookouts to keep alternate watches of six hours each; for not equipping the crew with new men; for not leaving the lifeboats in their chocks after the vessel struck, thus preventing premature and unskillful launching.

Master showed courage and judgment after fatal loss of boats. The construction and equipment of steamer was excellent and did not contribute to loss of life.

Captain Cousins, of steamer Queen, and Captain Peterson, of steamer Pacific Coast Steamship Company, blamed for failing to stop at Neah Bay on way to wreck to pick up any available sailing tug; both should have known that such tugs have anchored there, despite interrupted telegraphic communication between Neah Bay and Seattle; proved that such tugs were at Neah Bay at that time.

Company and its various officers harshly criticized for ordering sailing Queen away from scene of wreck, thus depriving the rescue committee of the presence of every possible vessel and additional lives probably could have been saved had Queen remained; Topeka left without knowledge of exact location of wreck.

There was no fall chain or equipping communication with wreck from the Queen; was not breaking outside of breaker line and small boats would have been perfectly safe; "there was certainly no display of heroic daring."

Canadian tug Cape and Salvor desisted wreck to seek shelter without sufficient reason.

Mistaking action of rescue vessel, or, as stated shortly after wreck by capturing of Neah Bay, instead of returning to life-overshooting canoe, prevented getting ashore by means of life-boat; by means of this line and breeches buoy all then alive on Valencía could have been saved; saddest feature of disaster.

Officers of Topeka failed to interrogate with sufficient thoroughness 16 survivors rescued from lifeboat; Topeka's crew thereby failed to learn exact location and condition of Valencía.

Elaborate review of need for aid to navigation and life-saving facilities of dangerous entrance to Straits of Juan de Fuca, where "in the last 50 years between 500 and 700 lives have been lost, to say nothing of millions of dollars' worth of property."

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SEVERE WITH MAN WITH MUCK-RAKE

President Speaks on Slander-Mongers.

CONFOUNDS GOOD WITH EVIL

Legislation Against Huge Fortunes Suggested.

CONTROL OF CORPORATIONS

Cornerstone of House Office Building Laid With Masonic Ceremony and Remarkable Address by President.

WASHINGTON, April 14.—The laying of the cornerstone of the office building of the House of Representatives with solemn Masonic ceremonies this afternoon was made notable by the presence of the President of the United States and many of his Cabinet, of the Supreme Court, of the representatives of foreign governments, of the Senate and House of Representatives and a large proportion of Washington's population.

The day was ideal for such an important ceremony and, without so much as even a trifling delay, the immense stone, which occupies the northeast corner of the building, was placed in position with the ancient ceremonial of the Masonic faith. Great attention had been paid to the care and comfort of the thousands who were accorded an opportunity to witness the exercises and to listen to one of the most notable addresses ever delivered by the President during his public career.

Flags and bunting were everywhere. Stand after stand was provided and high above all other vantage places, was the President's box overlooking the Capitol plaza and fronting the great white dome of the Capitol on the west and the Library of Congress on the east. Palms and growing plants were there and the faint touch of the new green of the trees shading off into the richly green of the plaza made an inspiring picture. To this add the rich dress of hundreds of Knights Templar with their waving plumes and the subdued costumes of the Masons with their lambskin aprons and white gloves, the scarlet uniforms of the Marine Band and the blue of the United States Engineer Band and the picture is complete.

Gathering of Dignitaries. President Roosevelt, accompanied by members of his Cabinet and escorted by the Office Building Commission, Speaker Joseph C. Cannon, Representative W. P. Hepburn, of Iowa, and ex-Representative James D. Richardson, of Tennessee, arrived comparatively early. When the President came into view of the immense audience, a roar of kindly greeting met him. After the arrival of the President, some of the United States Senators with Vice-President Fairbanks at their head, entered the stand reserved for them, followed by a large membership of the House of Representatives. Vice-President Fairbanks took a seat to the left of the President and his presence, too, was loudly indicated by the assemblage. A large number of ladies were on the President's stand, among them being Mrs. Roosevelt, Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, Mrs. Cowles, sister of the President and Mrs. Fairbanks. Upon the arrival of the Grand Lodge of Masons of the District of Columbia, with Walter A. Brown, grand master, at its head, the ceremony of laying the cornerstone was carried out.

A hermetically sealed copper box containing an inside copper box with glass top was then placed in position so that the stone would completely envelope it. The box contained government articles, books, pictures, autographs, etc.

Grand Master's Address. As the stone was lowered on its foundation, the Marine Band played the intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana." The corn, who and all were then in turn poured upon the stone by the grand master, according to ancient custom, while an octave of male voices chanted, Mr. Brown then delivered the following address:

"This gavel, known as the Washington gavel, was made out of the marble used in the construction of the United States Capitol, and for the specific purpose of and used for the first time in laying the cornerstone of that edifice, September 18, 1270. This ceremony was performed with full Masonic rites by General George Washington, acting grand master, and upon the completion of the ceremony this gavel was presented by President Washington to Valentine Reitzel, then master of Potomac Lodge, of this city, which lodge has ever since possessed and guarded with zealous care this historic relic.

"Five other Presidents, James K. Polk, Millard Fillmore, James Buchanan, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, have also used this gavel on notable occasions. It is by the courtesy of Potomac Lodge that I am permitted to use it at this time.

"Within these walls the Nation is to be beneficiary through the laws that shall here have their beginning. We can only hope that this structure, which has the best thought of many minds in its planning, will house faith and honor and duty, and that selfishness and passion will be noticeable by their absence.

"Here we hope the Constitution will be august assemblage, here before the Pres-

ident and illuminated by knightly courage to do the right. Here before this dent of the United States, here in the presence of the Secretary of the United States and the Senate, here in the sight of representatives of foreign governments, here before the Speaker of the House of Representatives and its membership, and here before this great concourse of people, we lay the cornerstone and dedicate the structure to rise thereon to the larger glory, the greater wisdom of the Nation, this land, the radiant center of the Anglo-Saxon power."

Long Cheering for President.

An instrumental selection followed, and then the President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives entered the President's box. Their appearance was greeted with round after round of applause. Without so much as waiting for the applause to cease, the Speaker, waving his hand to silence the audience, said: "Citizens: It is my privilege at this time to introduce to you one who needs no introduction—Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States."

The President was in splendid voice, and throughout the address hearty and long-continued applause greeted his words. He said:

President on Man With Muck-Rake.

"In 'Plegrim's Progress' the man with the muck-rake is set forth as the example of him whose vision is fixed on carnal instead of on spiritual things. Yet he also typifies the man who in this life constantly refuses to see aught that is lofty and fixes his eyes with solemn intentness only on that which is vile and degrading. Now, it is very necessary that we should not flinch from seeing what is vile and degrading. There is filth on the floor, and it must be swept up with the muck-rake; and there are times and places where this service is the most needed of all the services that can be performed. But the man who never does anything else, who never thinks or speaks or writes, save of his feats with the muck-rake, speedily becomes not a help to society, not an incentive to good, but one of the most potent forces for evil.

"There are in the body politic, economic and social, many and grave evils, and there is urgent necessity for the sternest war upon them. There should be relentless exposure of and attack upon every evil man, every politician or business man, every evil practice, whether in politics, in business or in social life. I hail as a benefactor every writer or speaker, every man who, on the platform, or in book magazine or newspaper, with merciless severity makes such attack, provided always that he in his turn remembers that the attack is of use only if it is absolutely truthful. The liar is no whit better than the thief, and if his mendacity takes the form of slander, he may be worse than most thieves. It puts a premium upon knavery untruthfully to attack an honest man, or even with hysterical exaggeration to attack a weak man with unfairness.

Injury of Character-Assassins. An epidemic of indiscriminate assault upon character does no good, but very great harm. The soul of every good citizen is gladdened wherever an honest man is assailed, or even when a scoundrel is untruthfully assailed. To assail great and admitted evils of our political and industrial life with such crude and sweeping generalizations as to include decent men in the general condemnation means the seating of the public conscience. There results a general attitude either of cynical belief in and indifference to public corruption or else a disastrous inability to discriminate between the good and the bad.

"Either attitude is fraught with untold damage to the country as a whole. The fool who has not sense to discriminate between what is good and what is bad is no whit as dangerous as the man who does discriminate and yet chooses the latter. There is nothing more distressing to every good patriot, to every good American, than the hard, scolding spirit which treats the allegations of dishonesty in a public man as a cause for laughter. Such laughter is worse than the crackling of thorns under a pot, for it denotes not merely the vacant mind, but the heart in which high emotions have been choked off at their source and good citizenship is at this moment we are passing through a period of great unrest—social, political and industrial unrest. It is of

(Continued on Page 16.)

JOHN A. LINN, OF CHICAGO, WHO CONSENTED TO FRAUD AND WAS SENTENCED TO PENITENTIARY.

John A. Linn, of Chicago, who recently pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud and was sentenced to the penitentiary for an indefinite term, had been for many years "boss" of the Twenty-second Ward and was a power in Republican politics. It was while clerk of the Superior Court that the offense which he acknowledged was committed, and in 1894 he was elected clerk of the Circuit Court, which position he resigned recently. Linn was born in Kalmar, Sweden, in 1848, and was but 14 years old when he arrived in Chicago. His first work was that of water-carrier for men who were paving lake street with cedar blocks. He was a member of the Chicago City Council twice—in 1873-81 and in 1887-87—and for two years also held the office of County Commissioner.

"I first observed Mount Vesuvius giving unusual signs about a month ago, when the lava began to overflow, taking a southwest direction. This gradually increased as several small lava streams formed into one great current. The real danger began the middle of last week. Then an enormous stream of lava came from the summit, meeting the other streams, which burst from the lower strata. It was this that overwhelmed Boscotrecase. Throughout the lava discharge the volcano was comparatively quiet and without electrical phenomena or explosions. The only ominous sign was the advancing wave and the cinders forming an enormous cloud in the shape of a pine tree over the crater.

Torrent of Huge Rocks. "Our first terrible period came at 2 o'clock Sunday morning and lasted until 9 o'clock. The mountain, which hitherto had been silent, suddenly gave out a deafening roar and a great rent was made in its cone. Huge solid rocks were hurled skyward. Some of them fell near the observatory, threatening to crush it in the roof, but most of them fell far outside the observatory zone. There was no scoria in this discharge, but solid ball-like stones, which out the roof and damaged the windows.

"At midnight of Saturday I ordered the women and children of the household removed. This was just before the rain of huge stones began, and I was then left with Professor Peretti, of New York, my American assistants and two domestics. There was scarcely any eating and all domestic order was abandoned. We watched a few times now and then, most of the time I ate right here," the observer pointed to the remains of a recent meal on his desk at his study.

Was Veritable Hell. Throughout Sunday enormous solid blocks of stone rained to a height of 250 feet from the crater, while ashes and sand were thrown much higher, but toward Monday the terrible shocks of earthquake gradually diminished. One of the worst features of the eruption was the unusual extent of the electrical phe-

ERUPTION SEEN FROM ITS MIDST

Matteucci Describes Horrors He Saw.

TORRENT OF HUGE HOT ROCKS

Almost Famished While Hell Raged Around Him.

AMERICAN HIS COMPANION

Greatest Eruption Since Destruction of Pompeii, Says Dweller Highest on Mount Vesuvius, where Professor Matteucci, director of the Royal Observatory, has courageously held his post throughout the eruption.

ERUPTION ABOUT TO CEASE. NAPLES, April 14.—Professor Matteucci, in a bulletin issued this afternoon, said: "The instruments in the observatory are relatively calm. The crater continues to emit sand, but with less violence. I am awaiting information regarding the streams of lava toward Boscotrecase, to which spot I cannot go in person. The conditions in the zone surrounding them indicate that a complete cessation of the eruptive phase is near."

NAPLES, April 14.—The Associated Press correspondent today succeeded in reaching the highest inhabitable point on Mount Vesuvius, where Professor Matteucci, director of the Royal Observatory, has courageously held his post throughout the eruption. The dust-covered clothes told of the ordeal through which he passed. The portico where he stood was knee-deep in ashes, which had been swept aside to make a small footway. From the observatory terrace, to which narrow paths had been cut through the ashes, the correspondent looked out over an ocean of ashes and twisted rivers of lava, while Vesuvius rose grimly in a mantle of ashes and shrouded dark vapor, rising like a gigantic fan.

Professor Matteucci was asked to tell in his own way the story of the cataclysm from the outset. This he readily consented to do, and, speaking in good French, gave the following detailed narrative:

His Story of Eruption. "I first observed Mount Vesuvius giving unusual signs about a month ago, when the lava began to overflow, taking a southwest direction. This gradually increased as several small lava streams formed into one great current. The real danger began the middle of last week. Then an enormous stream of lava came from the summit, meeting the other streams, which burst from the lower strata. It was this that overwhelmed Boscotrecase. Throughout the lava discharge the volcano was comparatively quiet and without electrical phenomena or explosions. The only ominous sign was the advancing wave and the cinders forming an enormous cloud in the shape of a pine tree over the crater.

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nomena, the darkness being broken by vivid flashes of lightning, giving the sky a bloodlike color with short, heavy peals of thunder interspersed. These moments were terrible—very terrible. Yes, it was a veritable hell.

Asked if his scientific observations had yielded any valuable results, Professor Matteucci replied: "Observation was extremely difficult under such disturbing conditions. The seismic instruments were badly affected by the electrical intensity, each explosion being announced by a violent movement of the instruments, which seemed ready to burst into pieces.

One of Greatest Eruptions.

"Compared with other great eruptions, this is one of the most important in the history of Vesuvius. Its effects are less terrible than those of the eruption in the year 79 A. D., when Pompeii was buried, but it equals in intensity the great eruptions of 1611 and 1872. What results this eruption will yield to science is not yet certain. Eruptions are not exact in science. You cannot count on Vesuvius; each of its eruptions has its characteristics. This was marked by an abundance of electrical phenomena. I have collected quantities of cinders and scoria for comparison with similar matter from other eruptions, and later I will collect large stones."

The Professor pointed to the shelves in his laboratory, where there were plates containing cinders varying in size and bottles filled with ashes, and there also in the room enormous stones, each labeled with the date of its ejection from the volcano.

Impossible to Prophecy. Asked concerning Mount Vesuvius in the future, Professor Matteucci replied: "I am unable to tell with any degree of certainty. I sincerely hope this eruption is over; but who can tell whether another terrible convulsion may not come during the next minute? However, all my indications point to a period of calm for the next few days, and therefore I am hopeful. But I was hopeful last night, although a serious explosion occurred at 10 o'clock in the evening without any warning."

Professor Matteucci handed the correspondent a stone the size of a three-inch shell as a souvenir of his visit, saying: "His Precious Stones. "These are very precious stones. Some of them have hit me at one time or another. They represent my wounds."

He then led the way to his sleeping quarters, which showed the confusion that existed throughout the domestic branch of the observatory during the eruption. (Continued on Page 23.)

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FIRE WIPES OUT KAMM BUILDINGS

Ancient Structures Go Up in Smoke.

FLAMES SOON UNDER CONTROL

Crowd Urges Firemen to Let Old Wooden Block Burn.

LOSS ESTIMATED AT \$8000

Tenants of Row at First and Washington Street Only Sufferers by Early-Morning Blaze—Old Houses of Small Value.

The Kamm buildings at the northeast corner of First and Washington streets were destroyed by fire early this morning. The conflagration broke out in the restaurant and lunch counter of Louis Walters at 112 First street about 12:30 o'clock, and before the alarm was turned in the entire building, which was of the flimsiest construction, was a mass of flames.

The watchman at the tower of the freeboat house on the East Side was the first to notice the blaze, and telephoned fire headquarters, and, as the big truck was heading out of its doors in response to the call, an alarm was turned in from box 12 by Nightwatchman Childress.

Almost before Chief Campbell could get his men into action, the big throng of persons attracted to the scene commenced to implore the firemen to "let her burn" and make other suggestions of the same tenor.

Breaks Out in Restaurant.

From Walters' restaurant the flames quickly spread to the adjoining butcher shop of Chris Taffer and upstairs to the sign painting establishment of J. P. Zirnigebel, which latter probably suffered the greatest loss. Zirnigebel had just laid in a stock of paints and oils, which was destroyed.

Splendid work on the part of Night Watchman Childress, Special Policemen Wagon and Morgan, and spectators saved the 14 head of horses quartered in the stable of Thomason & Cassidy, which was destroyed. Many vehicles in the stable were taken out undamaged.

Considerable excitement prevailed owing to the proximity of several lodging-houses, but a patrol of police under Captain Bailey served to keep order and calm the inmates of the adjoining buildings.

Loss About \$8000.

The losses will probably aggregate \$8000, divided as follows: Jacob Kamms, owner of burned buildings, \$2000; Louis Walters, restaurant, \$500; Chris Taffer, butcher shop, \$750; J. P. Zirnigebel, painting establishment, \$2500; cigar stand at corner of Washington, \$250. The insurance is small.

The fire was under control within 20 minutes after the arrival of the department.

The buildings burned this morning were erected in the early '80s by the pioneer steamboat man, Jacob Kamms, and have been threatened with destruction several times. Only recently the owner was importuned to tear the structures down.

GORKY MAY BE DEPORTED

Accused of False Representations on Entering Country.

CHICAGO, April 14.—(Special.)—A special to a Chicago paper from New York says Maxim Gorky and the woman who is known as his wife may be deported because of false representations made during their entrance to this country. Officers of the Immigration Bureau declare that, if the matter is properly brought before the Bureau, Gorky may be deported. It is believed that persons who do not admire his opinions will lose no time in getting his case before the department.

Representatives of the Russian government are following Gorky, and it is thought that the Russian Consul will take the initiative.

FORMER WIFE STILL DEVOTED

She Petitioned for Gorky's Release, Though He Returned to New Love. ST. PETERSBURG, April 14.—