

**TOWING THE PUEBLA**

**Passenger on Chehalis Relates Story of Rescue.**

**WAS A STRENUOUS VOYAGE**

**Chehalis Picks up Puebla Off Mouth of the Columbia River and Taking Disabled Ship in Tow Returns to San Francisco.**

died away over the sea a baby's voice quavered 'Saur Mite,' and of course we all laughed. After a lengthy confab we learned that the Puebla had broken her tail shaft during the heavy weather of the day before, and since then had been drifting around the ocean at the mercy of the elements. We also learned that the Charles Nelson had tried to give her a lift, but had failed to make good on account of troubles to her own machinery.

A line was made fast, after a great deal of maneuvering and at 8 o'clock New Year's eve we started on our long journey back to the city. Just think of it, only forty miles from home, with the light of home almost visible and forced to turn around and start on a journey of another thousand miles. It made me a little sore, but of course I had to stay by the old boat or swim.

About an hour after we had started south with our prize we were spoken by the oil tank Whittier. At first all the talking was done with the search lights, a sort of flashy wig-wag that's nice to see. The long beams of light shoot back and forth and up and down for a time, then to signify that the message is done, they swing straight up at the Zenita, and remain motionless. Then the other party to the dialogue takes up the waggie. The Whittier promised to report us the next day at Vancouver and steamed away into the north.

"All New Year's day we ploughed south over a calm sea at a six knot clip. They say that what you do on the first day of the year you will do all the rest of the year. I certainly don't want to tow boats down the coast during quite all of 1906. It's too monotonous.

"At 4 a. m. January 2, we hailed the Norwood. We had some difficulty in establishing our identity, but she was finally persuaded that we had been introduced at some soiree or other, and consented to give us a lift. She belongs to the same company as the Chehalis, you know.

"There was nothing doing on the 3rd. We sighted several vessels, but they were too close in shore to identify and none of them seemed inclined to a closer acquaintanceship.

"At 2 o'clock on the morning of the 4th we came up with the ocean going tug Relief, which had been sent out by the Underwriters to look for the lost passenger steamer. The tug begged to

be allowed to put a line to the Puebla, but Capt. Johannson, who was not taking any chances of losing the \$100,000 salvage, refused to allow it, so the little fellow trailed along in our wake, hanging on to the quarter of our tow like a leech, wishing and waiting for some accident which might place the prize in her hands, an accident like the parting of our line for instance. At 6:30 we passed Point Reyes, and here we were joined by another tug, which made another acceptable addition to our imposing marine parade, though the tug derived little satisfaction from that.

"We started across the bar at 1 o'clock against a strong ebb tide, and right in the middle of the breakers our line parted. After towing 580 miles to lose the ball on the five-yard line was enough to make a person swear and sailors aren't parsons. We cut away in a jiffy and went about, but the tug got her, and when we put our heaving line aboard the sailors on the Puebla threw them off again. But the salvage, all the way from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and the honor, which cannot be estimated belong to the Chehalis and as she steamed up the harbor the passengers cheered her to the echo.

Just inside the heads we were met by the newspaper boats and interviewed and photographed. Then we went to the dock.

"There has been a great deal of excitement over the fate of the Puebla for several days. The papers printed scare head extras and the steamship offices were besieged constantly by friends and relatives of the derelict steamer. It was even reported that both the Chehalis and the Puebla had been lost and one account had the Chehalis disabled off Cape Flattery with two tugs out looking for her."

**The Grip.**

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