

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 556.

The following Finding of the Marine Court, held on the 22nd instant, to enquire into the loss of the British Steam-ship *Lorne*, Official No. 62,297 of Leith, WILLIAM HUNTER, Master, is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 31st December, 1887.

FINDING.

We find that the British Steam-ship *Lorne*, Official No. 62,297 of Leith, of which WILLIAM HUNTER was Master, sailed from Saigon on or about the 29th November last, bound for Hongkong with a cargo of Rice and Paddy, and a crew of 6 European Officers besides the Master, 10 Malay Seamen, 10 Chinese Firemen and Cook, 5 Stewards, besides about 60 Chinese Passengers and one European.

(2.) That all went well until the night of the 3rd December, when shortly after mid-night, she struck on a danger off the East Coast of Hainan Island, which according to the position of the ship as brought out in the evidence before the Court (Latitude 19° 22' N., Longitude 111° 0' E., 17 miles South $\frac{1}{2}$ West of Ton Con Point) is not marked on the Admiralty Chart, and so sustained such damage, as to cause her to founder, resulting unfortunately in loss of life, the only surviving Officers so far as can be ascertained being the 2nd Mate and the 3rd Engineer.

(3.) That the ship appears to have been properly found and in a sea-worthy condition.

(4.) That the ship appears to have been supplied with proper charts, and that the error of the compass was known.

(5.) No steps appear to have been taken to keep the water under, after the ship struck, but seeing that the ship went down in about half an hour after striking, we conclude that the water came in so rapidly that no means which could have been adopted are likely to have proved effectual.

(6.) We are of opinion that the Master would have shown more precaution in navigating the ship, if he had not steered a course so close to the land up to 6 P.M. on the 3rd, but we are not prepared to give it as an opinion that this contributed to the casualty. Apart from this it would appear that the ship was navigated with proper and seamanlike care, and we attach no blame to the Master or any of the Officers.

(7.) We are further of opinion that if discipline and order had been maintained on board after the accident, the deplorable loss of life would not have occurred; the boats appear to have been in good condition and of sufficient capacity for the requirements of all on board, but the Officers, deserted as they were by the Malay crew, were quite unable to maintain order.

(8.) That the Officers appear to have conducted themselves properly, and to have used their utmost endeavour to save the lives of those on board.

(9.) The Court notices with great satisfaction the kindness with which the shipwrecked men and women were treated by the Natives with whom they were brought in contact.

Given under our hands at Hongkong, this 22nd day of December, 1887.

R. MURRAY RUMSEY, *Ret. Com. R.N., Acting Stipendiary
Magistrate, President of Court.*

J. BUCKNER,

JAS. ARNOLD,

M. COULTER,

FRANCIS COLE,

Staff Commander, R.N.

Masters of the Mercantile Marine.

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The following Notice is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 31st December, 1887.

POST OFFICE NOTICE.

The packets of the Messageries Maritimes Company, between Colombo, Madras, and Calcutta now run fortnightly instead of four-weekly as hitherto. Mails will therefore be made up for Madras and Calcutta by each French Packet, instead of, as heretofore, by each alternate packet only. Mails from Madras and Calcutta by French Packet may also be expected to arrive fortnightly.

ALFRED LISTER,
Postmaster General.

General Post Office, Hongkong, 28th December, 1887.