

And We hereby further warn all Our loving Subjects, and all Persons whatsoever entitled to Our Protection, that if any of them shall presume, in contempt of this Our Royal Proclamation, and of Our high Displeasure, to do any Acts in derogation of their Duty as Subjects of a Neutral Power in a War between other Powers, or in violation or contravention of the Law of Nations in that Behalf, as more especially by breaking, or endeavouring to break, any Blockade lawfully and actually established by or on behalf of either of the said Powers, or by carrying Officers, Soldiers, Despatches, Arms, Ammunition, Military Stores or Materials, or any Article or Articles considered and deemed to be Contraband of War according to the Law or modern Usages of Nations, for the Use or Service of either of the said Powers that all Persons so offending, together with their Ships and Goods, will rightfully incur and be justly liable to hostile Capture, and to the Penalties denounced by the Law of Nations in that Behalf.

And We do hereby give Notice that all our Subjects and Persons entitled to Our Protection who may misconduct themselves in the Premises will do so at their Peril, and of their own wrong; and that they will in no wise obtain any Protection from Us against such Capture or such Penalties as aforesaid, but will, on the contrary, incur Our high Displeasure by such Misconduct.

Given at Our Court at *Saint James's*, this twenty-third day of *April*, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, in the sixty-first year of Our reign.

GOD save the QUEEN.

### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 240.

The following Finding of the Marine Court of Enquiry into the stranding of the British Steam-ship *Ching Po*, Official No. 107,013, of Hongkong, is published.

By Command,

T. SERCOMBE SMITH,  
*Acting Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 27th May, 1898.

#### FINDING.

We find that the British Steam-ship *Ching Po*, Official No. 107,013 of Hongkong, of which PETER RYVES MARSH was Master, the number of whose Certificate of Competency as Master is 012,501 left Hongkong for Wuchow on the West River with a general cargo on 23rd March, 1898.

That she was provided with a sufficient crew and had one European Officer besides the Master—the Chief Engineer.

That she stranded in the Wang Moon Passage at 11.30 that night and that after getting off she stranded again on First Bar the following day but was again floated and proceeded on her voyage.

On the morning of 26th the ship was found to be making a considerable quantity of water and it was deemed advisable to beach her, and this was done.

That the owner, who was on board, went on to Wuchow the same day to get assistance, and later on, the 28th, proceeded to Hongkong with the same object in view.

That the Captain also went to Wuchow and reported the accident and returned to the ship, on the 6th he sent the Chief Engineer and crew away as he had no need of their services.

On the 7th the Captain himself left the ship taking all that remained and absolutely abandoned the ship.

That the ship was subsequently taken possession of by a certain Mr. WOODS, of Wuchow, who for some time after, when the owner returned, refused to leave the ship unless he received \$5,000.

Possession was, however, after some time obtained by the owner and Master, and the ship was floated and brought to Hongkong.

From the evidence before it the Court is of opinion that the stranding of the ship was not due to the wrongful act or default of the Master.

We are, however, of opinion that the ship was prematurely abandoned.

The Master alleges shortness of provisions as his reason for abandonment. The Court is satisfied that, if there was any shortness it was not such as could justify the Captain in abandoning his post.

As this premature abandonment amounted to a wrongful act the Court directs that his Certificate be suspended for 4 months from this date, and it is hereby so suspended.

Given under our hands at Victoria, Hongkong, this 21st day of May, 1898.

R. MURRAY RUMSEY, Retd. Comdr., R.N.,  
*President.*

RICHD. J. ROGERS, Staff Comdr., R.N.,  
*H.M.S. "Tamar."*

JOHN PANTON,  
*Master, British Steam-ship "Arizona."*

ALEX. CRUICKSHANK,  
*Master, British Steam-ship "White Cloud."*

B. BRANCH,  
*Master, British Steam-ship "Deucalion."*