

The Daily Record

and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

No 322.

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10 PFENNIGS.

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THE WRECK OF THE "BERLIN."

It will probably be some time before an accurate list can be obtained of those who lost their lives in the terrible disaster off the Hook of Holland. The list published by the Great Eastern Railway Co. contains of course only the names of those who had booked berths, among them being 18 Englishmen and one lady, presumably an Englishwoman, by name Miss Thomson.

The "Berlin" was well-known to passengers to the Continent by the Harwich route as being, with the "Dresden", the largest and most luxurious of all the Great Eastern fleet. The two boats were those generally employed on the Harwich-Hook of Holland traffic; smaller vessels work the Harwich-Antwerp line. This is the first accident the Great Eastern Railway have had on their route since it was founded some twenty years ago.

The Dutch Coast, however, near the Hook of Holland, is well-known as being of a dangerous character; some six or seven years back a small Dutch trading vessel, with several English passengers who were going to play at a music-hall in Rotterdam, went down with all on board just outside the river. One of the Great Eastern boats grounded last year at Maasluis, but was got off without any serious damage. There have been several other wrecks in the neighbourhood; and hardly a month passes in the fishing season without one of the Dutch fishing smacks from the neighbouring villages of Katwyk, Nordwyk, and Scheveningen being lost. It is safe to say, however, that nobody who ever went across by the Great Eastern route thought there was the least danger in the journey, for apart from the slight mishap above alluded to, nothing has ever occurred to give the least alarm to passengers.

The "Berlin" was due at the Hook of Holland Pier at 5.5 a. m., and the fact that she had hardly entered the Nieuwe Waterweg (the new channel) at six o'clock, indicates that, had all gone well, she would have been about an hour and a half late on arrival. There is nothing exceptional about this, seeing that at this time of year, when gales are frequent in the North Sea, the cross-channel services are often three or four hours late.

Most people who have been in Holland during the winter months will remember the tremendous force of the gales; and the Maas Channel is absolutely unprotected from the wind. The country lies below sea-level for miles; not a hill is to be seen; and it is nothing unusual for a vessel to be blown ashore.

As we announced yesterday the surmise that there were still some survivors on the wreck turned out to be correct, and after repeated unsuccessful attempts ten persons, who were still alive, were released from their terrible predicament. The tugboat "Hellevoetsluis" with a jolly-boat in tow managed to make fast to a buoy in the vicinity of the wreck and eventually succeeded in establishing communication with the "Berlin". A member of the tugboat's crew managed to swim to the outer end of the mole and make a line fast there, another line was then thrown from the wreck and eventually caught and made fast to the first line. Communication thus being established, the jolly-boat was dragged alongside the "Berlin" and the ten survivors still on board were taken in the boat to the pilot steamer "Jan Spanjaard" on board of which was Prince Henry of the Netherlands, who had come over in an automobile from the Hague in the morning to visit the scene of the disaster and personally express his deep sympathy and that of his consort, the Queen of the Netherlands.

Up to Friday evening some 35 corpses had been brought ashore, but the boisterous wind and heavy sea makes it dangerous and, indeed, impossible for small boats to approach the wreck.

The s. s. "Amsterdam", a sister ship of the ill-fated "Berlin", has reached Harwich safely from the Hook. Her passengers are unable to throw

any light on the disaster since they embarked late on Thursday night and of course passed the wreck, which is fast breaking up, in the darkness.

A member of the crew of the s. s. "Clacton", which lay to in the vicinity of the wreck and attempted in vain to rescue those on board, has made the following statement: "We started about an hour and a half later than the "Berlin" and reached the mouth of the Maas at about 6.30 a. m. There we saw the "Berlin" lying broadside on at the end of the North Mole. Captain Dale at once sheered off and as we made a circle to avoid the fate of the "Berlin" we nearly went aground ourselves. After we had turned, Captain Dale at once went to work and endeavoured to give assistance to the stranded steamer. A fearful north westerly gale was blowing and the sea was running mountains high. We steered close to the rocks but had to retreat again as we could do nothing. We then attempted to launch the lifeboat but found it impossible, so tremendous was the sea. Again and again we attempted to reach the wreck and only desisted after several hours when we could see no more sign of life on board of her. At first we had seen groups of persons on board, some on deck and some in the smoking room, and as we got near the "Berlin" they called out to us. There seemed to be nothing like panic on board, perfect order prevailing. All were wearing lifebelts and had clustered together on the lee side of the ship to find some shelter from the tremendous seas which were breaking over the ship, hiding the funnels and masts in clouds of spray. We approached within a hundred yards of the wreck and threw our lifebelts over attached to lines but failed to reach the "Berlin". Suddenly she broke in two and we saw the passengers and crew swept away and drowned before our eyes. We heard their cries for help but could do nothing. When we passed the scene of the disaster on our way back to Harwich we could only see the stern of the ship sticking up from the water and not a soul was to be seen on board. The fore part of the ship sank first and numbers of persons were drowned then. Captain Dale did everything he possibly could and we were ourselves in great danger as the waves were beating over us with tremendous force. We could not, of course, recognise those on board the "Berlin"; they were huddled together, but we could hear their cries for help sounding over the storm-lashed waters."

The latest news from the Hook is that of the ten persons saved six were passengers, among them Fräulein Gäbler of the Dresden Opera House, and the rest were English members of the crew. It was believed on Friday night that three women are still on the wreck.

It was rumoured at first that the opera singer Herr Kraus was on board the doomed vessel, but his father, a retired army surgeon living in Prague, has received a telegram from Leipzig that his son and his wife have arrived there safely. Herr Kraus might easily have been one of the ill-fated passengers, but it appears that Herr van Dyck told him a week ago in confidence that his continued indisposition made it impossible for him to continue his season of German opera in London. Herr Kraus accordingly left England with his wife on Sunday, but the unfortunate chorus singers, who were not told of Herr van Dyck's change of plans, were unable to leave until last Wednesday night and so perished.

It is understood that among those on board the "Berlin" were J. F. Rollason, the jockey, and his father. Rollason left Harwich last night for

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Holland, where he was under orders to ride for Chev. Kattendyke for eight months.

Another account, dated Friday evening, reaches us from Rotterdam of the rescue of the survivors of the disaster. After repeated endeavours to reach the wreck on Thursday night, the lifeboat made three attempts at rescue on Friday. The first two were unsuccessful but the captain of the lifeboat remarked, on returning from his second trip, that the third attempt, which he purposed to make during the afternoon, promised greater success. At 1.45 the pilot steamer the "Hellevoetsluis", started out; the weather was at first tolerably favourable, but soon storm and snow made it impossible to see far. The "Hellevoetsluis" first launched and took in tow a small boat in which was seated a pilot. Soon afterwards six pilots were to be seen in the iron tower of the lighthouse. After several fruitless attempts by means of a hawser, communication was established between the wreck of the "Berlin" and the lighthouse tower. Immediately, one person from the wreck let himself down from the hawser and landed on the Mole. Other persons followed and, at the end of three quarters of an hour, a number of the rescued were on the Mole. A tug brought the news to the Hook that ten persons had been saved and that the attempts at rescue were being continued, although rendered difficult by the driving snow. When the first lifeboat ran in, it was greeted with enthusiasm. This boat announced that eleven persons, among them two women, had been saved and were all on board the "Hellevoetsluis", and that there were still two women on the wreck who were too exhausted to trust themselves to the hawser. Although the rescue parties had been working for 36 hours, they wished to continue their efforts, in order to save these two women too. When the "Hellevoetsluis" arrived, and Prince Henry landed, he was greeted by the crowd with loud cheers and cries of "Long live the Prince!"

The rescued persons were at once conveyed in automobiles to the "Hotel Amerika", where every preparation had been made for their reception. They received every possible attention and were put at once to bed.

The *Amsterdam Telegraaf* of yesterday learns that the three women who were still on the wreck were rescued at 3 o'clock on Saturday morning.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

London, February 22.

The Lower House, by 263 votes to 34, today passed the second reading of the deceased wife's sister Bill.

The Secretary of State for War has issued a memorandum on the army budget for 1907-1908; the total outlay is estimated at 27,760,000 pounds, which is a reduction of over two millions on the 1906-1907 estimates. In the memorandum it is announced that not only will extra pay be given for long service, but that those men who have reached a required standard of excellence in shooting, signalling, &c. will receive special service pay in proportion to their progress.

The memorandum repeats the points of view and proposals put forward by Mr. Haldane in his recent speeches.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

THE JAPANESE DIFFICULTY.

New York, February 22.

Now that the new Immigration Bill has been signed, and Washington is still without any representations from the Japanese Government, it is taken for granted that Japan agrees for the present, at any rate, to accept the situation. Dispatches from Tokio show that the act has been received there by the Press and public generally with more calmness than was expected. The feeling among the coolies in Hawaii is no guide to Japanese feeling generally. A large number of the Japanese who have emigrated to Hawaii have done so merely in order to qualify themselves for emigration to San Francisco, where the conditions of labour and the opportunities for advancement are much more favourable. Under the new condition of things they see themselves doomed to remain in Hawaii, or return home, a choice of two evils for those who desired to make fortunes in California. The only thing that can save them is an unexpected generosity on the part of the President, but this is not likely.

SERIOUS RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

Johnstown, Pennsylvania, February 23.

The New York—Chicago express train was derailed last night near Mineral Point. Three