

one end of the lifeboat down so much faster than the other, so as to precipitate any passengers in it into the sea.

I know of one boat launching gear that has been fitted with a lowering gear on davits of the "Pett" type, but as each is independent of the other it has the same dangerous feature of the possibility of one end being lowered faster than the other with equally disastrous results. This feature is the one that has caused the greatest number of accidents and loss of life in launching life boats, particularly during panics following disasters at sea, not only then, but it has even occurred in the launching of a life boat by seamen with only a few seamen in the boat, in comparatively calm weather, in view of all the ship's passengers, in an attempt to save the life of a crazed fireman, who jumped overboard to commit suicide. An account of which I will read you from a newspaper clipping of last year,—

TELL OF OCEANA DROWINGS

Rescue Boat Descended Stern First—Its Crew Emptied into the Sea.

Members of the crew of the German steamship Oceana, chartered by the Quebec Line and plying between this port and Bermuda, told yesterday on the ship's arrival here how four of their shipmates lost their lives on Sunday morning in a choppy sea when within a day of Bermuda.

Gustav Baruch, a Swiss stoker, who had willed his belongings to another stoker, intimating that an accident might happen to himself on the trip, jumped overboard on Sunday morning. The liner was stopped and her engines reversed and she backed to within a few hundred feet of Baruch. A ring buoy was thrown to him and he grasped it.

The port lifeboat amidships was made ready for launching in charge of Chief Officer Alois Boecher and seven seamen. The seaman who had charge of the stern fall found himself unable to hold it because of the heavy weight in the boat. The rope slipped through his hands, cutting them to the bone. The bow fall held fast and all hands in the boat were dumped into the sea.

A large number of the passengers had gathered on deck and they began throwing life buoys to the men in the water. Fifteen in all were hove overboard. Christian Dahl, the carpenter, and two other men clung to one of the buoys until they were picked up by another lifeboat, in charge of Second Officer Stormer, lowered from the starboard side. The port boat had dropped completely into the sea and Julius Meister and Otto Mierwalt, *able seamen*, were holding on to ropes attached to it.

The men in the starboard boat passed Meister and Mierwalt, supposing that they could hold out better than the men drifting