

The Daily Mail

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All correspondence on business and editorial matters should be addressed to Dr. H. M. Mosdell, Managing Editor.

Letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only and the real name of the author should be attached. This will not be used unless consent be given in the communication.

The publication of any letter does not signify that the Editor thereby shows his agreement with the opinions therein expressed.

ST. JOHN'S, N.F.L.D., APRIL 11, 1914

LACK OF CONSIDERATION

We learn that the Beothic is taking the bodies of the men who lost their lives in the recent disaster, belonging to the North Side of Bonavista Bay, as a favor.

The Government has made no arrangement whatever to send those bodies home to their friends.

The act is one of charity on the part of Job Brothers. The firm refuses to allow the Beothic to land the bodies at their former places of residence. The bodies belonging to Fair Island, Shambler's Cove, Greenspond, all are to be landed at Pool's Island and conveyed to their destination by motor boat.

The friends of the deceased object to such a course and wish to have the bodies sent direct and when Mr. Coaker approached the Government this morning about having the bodies sent home direct, he was informed that the Government had nothing whatever to do with sending them to their former homes; that Job Brothers were doing it and were responsible for the arrangements.

We protest against the indifference manifested by the Government in this respect.

We trust Job Brothers will be more considerate than to send those bodies past their homes, and then return them by a motor boat, regardless of the wishes of those concerned.

Fair Island is a bold place, and there is absolutely no danger to be encountered in calling at the island. The Government should have made the arrangements and insisted upon having everybody landed where the bereaved families wish.

We trust Mr. Bennett or Mr. Job will do the needful and not outrag the feelings of the people further in reference to the Beothic disaster.

MUST BE THOROUGH.

To be of any service whatever to the country, the inquiry now being held before Judge Knight must be broad in its scope and thoroughgoing in its methods.

Proceedings cannot be narrowed down to a mere effort to place any blame attaching to fatal occurrence on responsible parties. At the most, this would simply amount to "locking the stable door after the horse is stolen."

The investigation must embrace general conditions attendant on the sailing voyage, so that errors may be rectified, risks of human lives eliminated and necessary reforms provided. Mr. W. F. Coaker in his letter on this page strongly condemns planning of seals as at present practiced.

Dozens of sealers of years of practical experience have called at The Daily Mail office within the last week to represent the same fact to us.

They relate incident after incident of the imperiling of human lives through sending men too far ahead from the steamers.

The annual loss of pained seals is, of course, an important consideration but sinks out of sight where human life is concerned.

Now is the time to investigate this matter thoroughly. Hundreds of men with the experiences of many voyages behind them are in the city and can be induced to testify.

Then there is the question of wireless equipment.

What hearing did the lack of this outfit on the Newfoundland have on the tragedy?

Had the ship been so equipped would there have been any chance of alleviating the tragedy altogether or at least of saving some lives?

What about alleged overcrowding on the smaller steel steamers?

Some of the men say that their crews should be limited to two hundred in the interests of bare comfort. Let the Court take up these and allied matters and deal with them fully.

There should be no "ifs" and "ans" and "buts" about the matter. This is the time and the opportunity for thoroughly threshing out the whole question of the reform of conditions surrounding the sealing voyage. The ounce of prevention taken now may prevent terribly heavy payment for cure by and bye.

CONTRIBUTIONS STILL CONTINUE TO RELIEF FUND.

(Continued from page 1)

"WHEREAS our native country has just met with the greatest marine disaster in its history, whereby two hundred and fifty of our fellow countrymen have lost their lives, and some forty others were permanently disabled, leaving many hundreds dependent upon them for subsistence, and WHEREAS the Relief Committee organized at St. John's, realizing its inability to provide sufficient financial help from local sources, has appealed to Newfoundlanders abroad, and to those with local affiliations, for aid: RESOLVED that we, the Newfoundlanders residing in New York and its environs, tender to our fellow-countrymen through the Hon. Wm. J. Ellis, Mayor of St. John's, our heartfelt sympathy in the hour of their affliction. BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that we unite with the movement at home and in other places, to render them such financial aid as it is in our power; and be it further RESOLVED that a committee be appointed to take up the matter."

Sydney Helps.

Mr. Selby R. Joyce also wired indignation that Sydney City Council had voted \$500. Other Canadian contributors are Halifax Knights of Columbus \$100; Ogilvie Flour Mills Co., \$250; Oldest Colony Club, Sackville, \$20.

The Young Ladies' Guild of St. Andrew's Church, this city, have voted \$50 to the fund and the Star of the Sea Society, Holyrood, \$20.

Mr. James Balrd has notified the Colonial Secretary of a contribution of One Thousand Dollars, and the Bank of Montreal of one of Five Thousand Dollars.

NOT AUTHORISED.

It has come to the notice of the Sealing Disaster Committee that certain parties are making a house to house canvass collecting for the Relief Fund.

No person is authorised to undertake such work as yet and the general public are asked to take notice that regular collections will not be sent out till next week.

THE MINERS' SYMPATHY

The miners of Bell Island, numbering about 900, decided to work yesterday and give the day's pay to the Sealing Disaster Fund.

The amount will be over \$1,000.

NOTICE!

ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT ON ACCOUNT OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND DISASTER, KINDLY PRESENT THEIR BILLS TO DR. CAMPBELL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

J. B. BENNETT
Colonial Secretary.

C.L.B. BOAT CLUB.

There will be a SPECIAL and important MEETING OF THE BOAT CLUB on MONDAY, April 13th, at 8 p.m., at the Armory. All members are requested to attend.

By order,
H. BARNES,
Secretary.

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F. CHISLETT,
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CALLS THE DISASTER PRICE OF NEGLIGENCE AND OF INDIFFERENCE

Mr. Coaker Declares All Ships Must Have Wireless Equipment in Future.

CHARACTERISES CERTAIN SHIPS AS "FLOATING WOODEN COFFINS."

Which Must Never Again Be Allowed to Clear For the Sealfishery.

(Editor The Daily Mail.)

Dear Sir,—Since my arrival on Thursday night I have endeavored to acquaint myself with the contents of articles and letters published concerning the dreadful disaster of the 1st of April. I have also carefully scrutinized the evidence taken before Judge Knight as published.

I can assure you that unless a more searching and thorough course is adopted regarding the investigation, it will not meet with the approval of the sealers and very little good will come out of it.

Superficial.

I am surprised to learn how superficial the investigation is. I presume the object of it is to locate if possible any negligence, want of foresight, bad judgment, want of taking proper safeguards to protect valuable lives, on the part of masters or officers and to learn all possible of the risks to life entailed by the present custom and rules governing the capture and taking of seals, and to recommend legislation in view of reducing the risks to life which confront every man who now engages in the hunt for seals.

Only Touches the Fringe.

In my humble opinion the evidence so far produced only touches a fringe of the matter. Scores of questions yet remain to be put and answered. The so-called Minister of Justice has now an opportunity to lay aside his legal napkins and do something to justify the outrageous action of the Government in tramping underfoot vital constitutional practices and defying so brazenly and deliberately the verdict of the electorate by appointing him to a position which under the circumstances would be scorned by all but those determined to rule irrespective of whether their actions are right or wrong, constitutional or unconstitutional, acceptable or unacceptable to a large majority of the electorate.

Change of Justification.

I repeat if this man thrust as he is—into a position of power and emolument in defiance of the decision of the People, wishes to demonstrate that there was some justification for the outrage, let him prove his ability and devotion to the true interest of the masses by doing what he has not yet attempted respecting the terrible disaster for which so many are now mourning.

Should Be Open.

Every detail and movement must be laid bare. The investigation should be open to the public. The officers of all the steel ships and scores of experienced sealers should be called upon to give evidence. Hundreds of sealers who sailed on March the 13th in the steel ships believe that someone blundered. Very few believe that this calamity is the Will of God. Hundreds are convinced that the seventy-seven dead heroes of the crew of the Newfoundland could have been rescued even with the facilities within the reach of the four powerful steel ships which almost surrounded the graveyard of the disaster. I contend that those heroes who died so nobly would be alive to-day if the ordinary rudiments of common sense had been exercised.

Sacrifice to Negligence.

Now that the price of negligence and indifference to the value of the lives of the common sealer, has been paid by the sacrifice of seventy-seven of poor Terra Nova's noble sons, let us bestir ourselves and resolve that such a catastrophe will never again fall to the lot of Terra Nova.

The right of property in panned seals must be abolished. Wireless telegraphy must become a part of the equipment of every sealing steamer.

Such Floating Coffins as the Newfoundland, Ranger, Kite and Viking must never again be allowed to clear for the sealfishery.

What about the Southern Cross. Was she a fit and proper ship to clear for such a perilous voyage as seal hunting? Who will dare to say she was. Have not the insurance agencies refused to insure the Newfoundland for the past three springs?

Captain Ab. Kean and a few other captains insistently opposed some of the clauses of the Sealing Bill passed five weeks ago and backed up their opposition hourly and daily, as is well known to all interested in public matters, but these same gentlemen were exceedingly silent over such matters as Floating Sealing Coffins, concerning which their knowledge and experience should have been weighty enough to arouse the authorities to a sense of their duty and if their love for the toilers was as great as their hatred of the improved conditions provided by the Sealing Bill those Floating Coffins would long ago have passed into oblivion.

Never Sail Again.

Those coffins will never sail again. And what the F.P.U. asked for three years ago, viz., the abolition of the right of property in panned seals will now be recognized and conceded, but only after poor Terra Nova has paid such an awful price.

I was ridiculed and laughed at when I added a clause to the Sealing Bill making provision for the return to port of the wooden ships on the front in order to permit the captain to land a portion of his crew, when he wished to continue the voyage to the close of the season, but we find the Florizel had to bring in one hundred and fifteen of the Eagle's crew and the Nascope brought in seven of the Diana's crew who stowed away when the Nascope was coaling the Diana and some of the Diana's crew told me that half her crew would board the Nascope if they were allowed. They did not, for I advised them not to do so, as any such action would be marked down against me.

Not Personally Blameable. Fortunately I was not on board of the Eagle this spring and cannot be blamed for advising the men, but the lessons taught in this respect ought to convince the owners and captains that the solution offered by the section in the Sealing Bill introduced by me the past session of the Legislature which the wisecracks of the Upper House threw out is the sole cure, if the voyage is to be prolonged to the 30th of April.

My letter has grown lengthy but I cannot conclude without publicly censuring the owners of the Steel Fleet for storming my suggestion made last Saturday to recall all the steel ships to port as an escort to the Bellaventure. All the ships were about fifty miles off Cape St. Francis and there were no prospect of securing any further addition to the seals taken, and as the crews of all the ships were grief-stricken and many of the men had relatives who had succumbed in the blizzard and desired to see their faces once again—even though in death—it was a cruel blow to all when they realized that this very reasonable request was received by the owners with disregard, if not indignation.

Loss in Respect. I shall never again have the respect for them that I had. I believed them reasonable and anxious to do right by the men who risked life and limb at the seal fishery, but their action in this respect will add nothing to their reputations.

The Nascope's crew offered their tribute of respect for the dead and sympathy for the bereaved by holding a Memorial Service of three hours duration on board last Sunday which will never be forgotten by those present. To all bereaved by this terrible disaster I extend my heartfelt sympathy, and pray that Providence will strengthen them to bear the awful blow.

My thanks are also due Mr. Morine for the faithful manner in which he attended to the many calls made upon him during the past week in representing me.

I also sincerely offer my thanks to Friends Stone and Halfyard for the manner in which they performed their duties as representatives of the districts to which so many of the dead heroes belonged.

—W. F. COAKER.

DAILY MAIL ADVERTISING PAYS

IN MEMORIAM.

"Watchman, What of the Night?"
I stand upon the shore of the great Sea,
And my dim light
Is flickering in the night-wind;—
answer me,
Watchman above me on the distant Height,
What of the night?"

"This of the night,
Tired Pilgrims through the shadows and the mist,
There shall be Light;
The fair Dawn cometh shortly up the East:
—also, for toil-worn hands and failing sight,
There shall be Night."

It is the Night:
The Pilgrims lay them down at last to rest
Among the snowdrifts white;
Rest for the toil-worn hands and anxious breasts,
In those dim shadows underneath the Height,
In the still Night.

It is the Night;
And they sleep well beneath those cold gray skies
After the fight:
The night is come upon them, and each lies
Wrapped closely from all earthly sound or sight
In God's still Night.

It is the Night,
And God has given His Beloved sleep:
The stars are bright,
And, as they lie within those shadows deep,
The Watchman bendeth o'er them from the Height
And guards their Night.

It is the Day;
No more sad watchings by the midnight Sea,
No twilight gray,
But, crowned with light and immortality,
They stand from henceforth, triumphant always
In God's own Day.

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