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OCEAN LINERS SMASH INTO VAST ICE FIELD

Carmania Gets Out of It and Brings News of a Call for Help from the Niagara.

LATTER'S PLATES PUNCTURED

Full-Rigged Ship and Fishing Smack Fast in Ice – Twenty-five Big Bergs Counted by Capt. Dow.

A great ice field in which there are many bergs, some of them mountain-like in ice, and in which three ocean steamships are known to have been damaged, and at least one full-rigged ship and one fishing smack are imprisoned, has drifted into the westbound transatlantic track about 1,000 miles east of Sandy Hook. The Cunarder Carmania, in yesterday from Liverpool, ran into this ice field. Although the big vessel got out without damage, she nevertheless had a perilous time while in the field, and everybody breathed easier when the bergs had been left behind.

The French liner Niagara, from Havre, ran into the ice about the same time as the Carmania, but she did not have the good luck of the Cunarder. The Niagara, which is due to arrive here this morning, had two holes knocked in her bottom, and many of her plates dented and twisted. At one time her Captain considered his condition so serious that he wirelessly to the Carmania for help. The Carmania was on her way to render aid when a second message said the Niagara had been patched up and would be able to proceed without assistance.

For a week the ice field has covered the westbound track off the Grand Banks, and besides the Carmania and the Niagara, the steamers Excelsior, Kura and Lord Cromer, which have arrived at New York, and the Armenian, which arrived at Boston, have reported battles with the ice. The Lord Cromer and the Kura were damaged below the water line. The Kura had about twenty-five of her plates ripped off, while the Lord Cromer had about the same amount dented and otherwise damaged. The Armenian reported that the field was at least seventy miles long and half as many miles wide when she encountered it.

The Carmania had on Board 1,400 Passengers, of whom 400 were in the Cabin. She entered the ice field last Thursday afternoon at about 1:30 o'clock. It was ice everywhere, according to the passengers, the great cakes being so closely jammed together that it was impossible to see a crevice between them. A heavy swell prevailed at the time, and the passengers described the upward and downward motion of the ice both beautiful and weird. The sun was shining brightly and the glitter of the ice field made the spectacle all the more magnificent.

Picks Up Niagara's Call for Help.

For three hours the Carmania was in the sea of ice, and at times as far as the eye could see there was nothing but ice, with here and there a great berg to break the monotony of the picture. One berg was described as being like a great mountain of chalk, and one of the passengers said it looked to be about 40,000 tons in size. When Capt. Dow was asked about this he said the passenger had been far too conservative, and then added laughingly, "Forty million tons would be more like it."

It was about 3 P.M. when the Carmania passed the chalk-colored berg. She passed within a quarter of a mile of it, and the passengers all agreed they never had seen anything more beautiful. Another big berg stood out conspicuously in a fleet of twenty-five bergs because of the fact that its top was a perfect plateau that appeared to be as smooth as a billiard table.

The twenty-five bergs were grouped in a comparatively small area, and all of them were in view from one side or the other of the liner all of the time. Six were lined up in majestic fashion on the horizon. Many of them were only a few hundred yards away when the Carmania, proceeding at what the official log calls "dead slow," passed them.

Capt. Dow never left the bridge a second during the hours he was feeling his way through the ice, and the sirens of the liner were constantly sounding out the warning of the ship's progress for the benefit of other ships that might be in the same fix but not in view. It would have been easy for a ship as big as the Carmania to have been within hearing distance of the siren and yet have been hidden from view by one of the big bergs.

Miss Claudia Sturm, one of the Carmania's young woman passengers, said yesterday that she had never seen anything so grand and inspiring as the great ice field and the big bergs that dotted it. "It was beautiful," she said, "but it was mighty scary. The heaving up and down of the ice because of the great swells was awe inspiring, and I was glad when we got back into clear water where there was no field ice and no bergs.

1,000 Passengers on Damaged Liner.

The Carmania still was in the ice pack when the wireless message from the French liner Niagara was received. It was the message the French skipper said that two holes had been stove in the Niagara below the water line. The Carmania, which had been compelled to change her course in order to get free of the ice field, was heading in the direction of the Niagara's position when the second message was received, saying that the liner would be able to continue without any assistance, and it is presumed that the crew was able to effect repairs without outside aid, although some of the passengers said that a message had been received to the effect that another liner was alongside the Niagara.

Capt. Dow after the Carmania docked met the reporters with a smile. "Really," he said, "I never saw so much ice and so little whisky and lime juice in all my life before. Had the ingredients been handy, there would have been a highball for every man in the world.

"I entered the ice field," the skipper went on, "on a southwest course and when I saw the extent of the field I tried to find a northwest passage out of it. Failing to find one, I was compelled to follow a northeast course, in order to get clear of the ice. In other words, it was necessary for me to swing back to a certain extent over my course.

"The ice was on all sides of me, and was trembling, undulating, and rasping and every once in a while we would run across a growler."

"What's a growler?" Capt. Dow was asked.

"It is a piece of ice," he replied, "that has become detached from a berg or larger piece of ice, and which, beating against the larger pieces, makes the sound that we call the ice growl."

"How about the plateau berg the passengers are telling about?" was another question put to the skipper.

"Yes, that is right. It was a wonderful sight, and when I first saw it I thought for a moment it

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was the hulk of a ship, but after we passed it I saw the green reflection, and that, of course, set my doubts at rest," he answered.

"In three hours," continued Capt. Dow. "on Thursday afternoon we passed twenty-five bergs. The passengers never saw anything like it before. On the bridge I am seventy feet above the water line, yet there were times when I could not see a thing but ice, and at no time did I see a piece of ice that was smaller than a lifeboat. We passed a full-rigged ship in the field. She was nodding in the swell, bobbing up and down, but apparently was in no danger."

Soon after the sailing ship was passed the Carmania passed a fishing smack, which like the big sailer, was fast in the ice and curtseying with the swell. When the Carmania cleared the ice field she ran into a dense fog, and had to come almost to a dead stop. The fog soon lifted, however, and the liner headed full speed for New York, arriving off the Hook only a few hours behind her schedule.

The Niagara has Probably 1,000 passengers on board. On her last voyage this way she brought 976. The Excelsior, which arrived from Rotterdam yesterday, reported an experience in the ice pack similar to that of the Carmania. She also reported seeing a sailing ship fast in the ice. This is believed to be the same ship sighted by the Carmania.

(Following this article was originally another article printed about Carmania's passengers but this is of little interest compared to the article about the ice field in April 1912)

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