

(No. 3736.)

"ARAMINTA."

REPORT and Decision of a Court of Inquiry held at the Magistrates' Court, Port Elizabeth, on the 26th and 28th January 1889, to inquire into the cause which led to the stranding of the British Barque "ARAMINTA," of Swansea, official No. 61,472, 747 tons, at this port on the 19th instant.

Report.

It appears from the evidence of the mate, the carpenter, and boatswain of the "Araminta," together with the written statement of the master, that on the 19th January the "Araminta" was moored with two bower anchors and 60 to 65 fathoms of cable to each, wind moderate, gale from S.E., and choppy sea.

About 1 p.m. the main pawl of the windlass broke and the others slipped, the cables being fastened abaft the windlass kept it from revolving until springs were fastened on both cables before the windlass. Before this was effected cable had been veered out to 70 and 75 fathoms respectively.

At 5 p.m. the third bower anchor and coir warp was let go. About 7.30 p.m. both cables parted, and the vessel drifted towards the shore until the coir warp and anchor brought her up, and she rode by it for an hour-and-a-half; in the meantime signals of distress were made by flare-up and torch lights, but no assistance came.

About 9 p.m. the coir warp parted, and the jibs and staysails were set at once, they being the only sails bent at the time, and made for the beach, when she stranded about 9.30 p.m. and became a wreck.

There was about 500 tons of coal, part of her original cargo, and 65 tons of sand ballast on board at the time of stranding. From the evidence of the port coxswain, her cables when measured were found to be $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch under Lloyd's scale.

Decision.

From all the particulars connected with this casualty, the Court finds that the stranding and loss of the "Araminta" is due to defective cables, and not to the default of the master or crew.

It appears neither the cable chains or the coir warp were adequate to hold the "Araminta" during a moderate S.E. gale, when all the other sailing vessels in port, 18 in number, rode safely and without parting a cable.

(Signed) ALFRED WYLDE, R.M.
ROBT. ALLAN, Assessor.

Port Elizabeth,
29th January 1889.