

(No. 5969.)

"RESOLUTE" (S.S.)

AND

"SCINDIA" (S.S.).

REPORT of a Court of Enquiry held under section 7 of Act V. of 1883, the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, as amended by Act VI. of 1891, at the instance of the Government of Bengal, for the purpose of making an investigation into the cause of the collision between the steamers "Scindia" and the "Resolute," which occurred at Diamond Harbour, on the 14th August, 1899, resulting in the sinking of the latter vessel.

The evidence in this case is of a most contradictory character, both oral and documentary.

It appears from the evidence of Mr. Hoseason, the Chief Officer of the "Resolute," that the "Resolute" left Calcutta on the 14th August at 7.30 a.m., and proceeded down to Diamond Harbour in charge of her master, Captain Waller; he states she arrived there at 11.50 a.m., and hove to there in order to get the mails and put off a passenger; that both these matters were carried out, and the boats which had been into the creek returned to the "Resolute" at 12.30. Mr. Hoseason states he saw the gig hoisted partially, and went at once on the bridge, the "Resolute" by the time he got there being full speed ahead; he places her position there at the point marked E on Chart D. She was then, he states, heading the usual down channel course, keeping the Bushy Tree on her port bow. When he got on the bridge he states he saw a vessel, which he afterwards discovered was the "Scindia," coming up the river, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles away, being then about half a point off his port bow, nearly end on, the "Resolute" having then gone about 1,000 feet from the eastern bank, the tide at the time being half flood running about 2 knots. He states that when the "Resolute" was about a mile from the "Scindia," he sounded a single blast on the syren and slightly ported the "Resolute's" helm, and that, as far as he could judge, the "Scindia" then starboarded a little, bringing her about one point on the "Resolute's" port bow. That on this he blew a second blast on the syren after a reasonable interval, and on this second blast the helm of the "Resolute" was ported about four points, the "Scindia" then being about half a mile off, and being end on rather more than 2 points before the "Resolute's" port beam. Finding that the "Scindia" did not port in answer to his blast, the helm of the "Resolute" was put hard a-port, as before stated, and the starboard engine reversed full speed, the port engine being kept full speed ahead. The "Scindia," he states, however, came on and collided with the "Resolute," striking her on the walls of the engine-room on the port side about midships: that just before the collision the "Resolute's" port engine had also been put full speed astern. The "Resolute" is a twin-screw, and up to the time at which she reversed had been going at 5 knots an hour with one boiler only.

He states the "Scindia" cut a hole in the engine-room and remained there for about 2 minutes before backing out, thus driving the "Resolute" some 1,000 or 1,200 feet from the point of collision in a north-westerly direction, thus showing that the "Scindia" was not moving astern over the ground.

Mr. Hoseason has given the respective positions of the two vessels when approaching both on Chart D and on Chart I. We think Mr. Hoseason gave his evidence very fairly; and we see no reason to disbelieve him.

Mr. Jewell, the 2nd Engineer of the "Resolute," who only came on duty at 12 noon, speaks to the orders received by him in the engine-room, there being 70 lbs. pressure on the boiler, going at a rate of 5 or 6 knots; then orders were given in the following order at 12.36: "Both engines full speed ahead;" "stand by astern both engines" 7 minutes after the first order; "full speed astern starboard engine" about half a minute after the last order; "stop starboard engine" in about half a minute; "full speed astern port engine" at about the same time at which the last order was given: he then states the bow of the "Scindia" broke through into the engine-room, and displaced the port engine, stopping it. The orders given, he states, were all carried out, and

from first to last were carried out in about 8 minutes; and he states that the "Resolute" was going on slow before 12.36, possibly for about 3 minutes.

Mr. Wintgens, the 3rd Engineer of the "Resolute," who was on watch from 8 a.m. to 12 noon that day, and was relieved by Mr. Jewell at that hour and went below, is unable to speak to anything of any importance.

Hamid Ali, a secunny of the "Resolute," states that when the boats came back to the "Resolute," she was a little outside the mouth of the creek, heading towards the sea; that when on the deck he saw the "Scindia" coming up, two ships' lengths off, when the "Resolute" was a short distance from the shore; the "Resolute" was then going in a slanting position towards the sea and the "Scindia" coming towards the "Resolute" on that vessel's port bow; the vessels, he states, collided, and that at the time of the collision the "Resolute" had gone a long distance from the creek crossing the river. His idea as to time and distances are, however, not to be relied on, he, as he admits, speaking only by guess.

Neamat Ali, a secunny of the "Resolute," who was at the wheel at the time of the collision, states that when the boats returned from the creek, the "Resolute" was a little outside the creek, heading south at a standstill. After the "Resolute" got a little above the Fort he saw the "Scindia" about four or five ships' lengths off, she being then half a mile above the Bushy Tree and the Fort, coming up on the "Resolute's" port side, the "Resolute" being then at a slant about 3 to 4 points from south. He then states that the "Scindia" had starboarded and that the "Resolute" had ported, and that they then collided, the collision happening after the "Resolute" had proceeded a long distance: he also states that he himself blew the whistle once. He states that the orders he got from the Captain were "to port" and "hard a-port" within an interval of 1 or 2 minutes.

Esuf Ali, the leadsman of the "Resolute," gave evidence of next to no value and is unreliable as to what he states, seeing that he does not know on which side of the ship he was heaving the lead, and if he was on the starboard side, as was most probable, he would in all probability not have been able to see the "Scindia." The only point on which his evidence is of use is that he states that the "Resolute" was hove to close to the creek, heading towards the sea.

Arsad Ali, the serang of the "Resolute," states that the "Resolute" was hove to at the mouth of the creek, heading towards the sea; he states that after the vessel had got under way his attention was drawn to the "Scindia" about by guess 3 to 4 ships' lengths off; at the time the "Resolute" was going further east in a slight slant to the south; he states the "Resolute" ported her helm when the "Scindia" was coming towards them, the "Resolute" then being by guess about 4 ships' lengths off the bank; he states he heard no whistle and that the vessels collided; he, however, states that he heard the whistle of his own boat, and explains how he came to make his first statement as to the whistle. He states that the "Resolute" whistled twice at an interval of a minute between the blasts. His evidence as to the whistling we do not think is to be relied on, however, having regard to his conversation with Mr. Lakin.

Assunuddin, a man on board the row boat of the "Resolute," attached to that vessel's stern, states that he was in the row boat at the time of collision. He states that when the "Resolute" was going down the river from the creek on a slant in a south-westerly direction, he saw the "Scindia" coming up the river straight on to the "Resolute," and saw it strike the "Resolute" about the jolly boat abreast the engine-room.

Mr. Ross, an independent witness, who is in charge of the East Indian Railway flotilla at Diamond Harbour, speaks to the position of the "Resolute" when at the mouth of the creek, and says she was heading down the river in a line with the west bank of the creek below the point about 100 yards from it.

This is all the evidence adduced for the "Resolute." We consider that the native evidence is of no value as to time or distance. It is to be noted that this evidence does not altogether agree with that of Mr. Hoseason as to the direction taken down the river, the native crew stating that she went down the river on a slant, whilst Mr. Hoseason speaks to the vessels being "end on or nearly so" to the "Scindia."

We think it was, however, possible for the vessels to have been nearly end on for a short time at a point soon after the "Resolute" left the creek, as Mr. Skinner says

that from Bushy Tree to the Fort, he was steering 200 or 300 yards from the bank, but the vessels would cease to be "nearly end on," when the "Scindia" starboarded to go up mid channel. Mr. Hoseason's evidence, moreover, as to the course he took down the river tallies to a very great extent with the conclusions we have come to, stated later on, as to his probable course and the position of the vessels when at the creek and at the Bushy Tree, as he states he had both the "Scindia" and the Bushy Tree, a little on his port bow when leaving the creek, and Mr. Skinner admits that he was steering down the eastern bank about 200 yards or so from it.

The story as told by Captain Skinner and the witnesses for the "Scindia" is an entirely different one.

Captain Skinner states that when the "Scindia" was at Kulpi, 6 miles from Diamond Harbour, he sighted the "Resolute" through his glass at Diamond Harbour, heading, as far as he could judge, down the river; and when the "Scindia" arrived at Bushy Tree, and even at Chingri khal, he then noticed that the "Resolute" was angling out for the bank across the river. At that time he says the "Scindia" was $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the creek on a starboard helm* at about 200 or 300 yards from the eastern bank, a distance which he kept to that bank until just above the Fort; that when abreast of the Fort, the "Resolute" was still angling out about 150 yards from the bank. He then states that a little above the Fort he hard a-starboarded from a point marked on Chart K, Point B to Point C, and when at Point C reversed his engines and went full speed astern, as the "Resolute" was then coming right across the "Scindia's" bow, and was at point D, about 300 or 400 yards off the "Scindia," the "Resolute" being at a distance of about 2,000 feet from the east bank. He states he was going up the river making for the Mooring Buoy at 10 knots on half flood-tide, and that he kept that pace till he reversed his engines. He states that it was not till he reached Point B on the Chart that he saw the "Resolute" moving out, heading south-west, a little westerly, and that from that time to the collision was 7 or 8 minutes. He states that he hard a-starboarded and reversed to avoid the collision, but that then the collision was inevitable, but that he thought the best way of keeping out of the way of the "Resolute" was by continuing to starboard which he did and collided. Mr. Skinner states he heard no whistle (but there is no doubt but that his attention was drawn to the "Resolute's" whistle by the 2nd Officer of the "Scindia"). He states he could do nothing to avoid the collision. He places the place of collision at about 150 yards from the place she sank. Mr. Skinner has shown the course which he states the "Resolute" took on Chart K.

Mr. Smith, the Master of the "Scindia," says that when he got on the bridge, he observed the "Resolute" running right across the "Scindia's" bows heading S.-W. about 500 yards from her, and he has marked on Chart N the positions of the two vessels, indicating their courses by pencil dots. He states he heard the "Resolute's" whistle, but that the collision was inevitable, and that nothing more than was done could have been done by the "Scindia," but that had the "Resolute" gone astern, the collision might have been avoided.

We think the evidence of the Master of the "Scindia" is of little value as to either time or position, for he speaks on hearsay as to the former, and as to the latter most roughly; and the positions and course which he has marked on Chart I show that the "Resolute," the smaller and slower vessel, ran a longer distance to the point of collision from her starting point in the same time in which the "Scindia," the larger and faster vessel, ran a shorter distance from the place from which he first saw the "Resolute" marked A to the point of collision, the former going 5 knots over the ground and the latter 11 knots. He also states that the "Resolute" was lying off the Magistrate's house and that when he first saw her move she was 200 yards from the eastern bank, and the "Scindia" was 400 from the bank. We cannot accept this.

Mr. Hoscroft, the 2nd Officer of the "Scindia," gives no distances, but states he saw the "Resolute" apparently lying to on the "Scindia's" starboard bow; he saw her first going ahead between 12.37 and 12.40, crossing the

* NOTE.—It is, however, impossible to come all the way from Bushy Tree to the Fort on a starboard helm, as this would take a vessel right across the river before she got to the Fort. Mr. Skinner must therefore mean "starboard and steady," "starboard and steady" tending his course up the river. Therefore, at the Fort, the "Scindia" was under control, and not on an unrecoverable starboard helm.

river at a time the "Scindia" was heading up and crossing. He states he heard a blast from the "Resolute" when the "Scindia" was starboarding her helm, and informed the pilot of it, and that after that the "Scindia" kept on at 10 knots, still starboarding, and that when the "Resolute" was observed going ahead, the "Scindia" starboarded a little more, and when the "Resolute" ported, the "Scindia" then put her helm hard a-starboard. He states that when the "Resolute" ported, he thought the "Scindia" would have gone clear across the "Resolute's" bow, but instead the vessels collided. He states that it is possible, though doubtful, that the collision could have been avoided, if when the "Resolute" ported and the "Scindia" starboarded both vessels had kept their course. He states the "Scindia's" engines were put full speed astern at 12.43, and that the collision occurred at 12.45. This witness states he noted down on a piece of paper at the time the time at which he first saw the "Resolute" move; this we do not believe, as it could not have been his duty to note the movements of other vessels.

Mr. Turner, a Branch Pilot in charge of the "Fazelka," going up the river before the "Scindia" on the 14th August, states he saw the "Resolute" when he passed Diamond Harbour, and that she was then heading about S. 30 east.

The Chief Officer of the "Scindia," Mr. Macdonald, states that when near his cabin on deck, he saw the "Resolute" on the "Scindia's" starboard bow, apparently at right angles to the "Scindia's" course, about 250 yards from her, he riveted his attention on the "Resolute" and saw the collision.

There is one other witness, Mr. Millard, Senior Master Pilot, in charge on the 14th August of the "Ethiopia," taking her up the river: he states that when he passed Diamond Harbour he saw the "Scindia" about 10,000 feet behind him on her starboard helm somewhere near the Fort, heading as near as he could judge N.-W. by N. He states he also saw the "Resolute" hove to at the creek, heading S. S. E. down the river; he passed that vessel about 1,000 feet to the west of her, and considers she was about 300 feet from the shore. He states when he was about 12,000 or 12,500 feet from these vessels higher up the river, he saw the vessels approaching at a very dangerous angle, and saw them collide, and the "Resolute" sink about three minutes after the collision. He states that after passing the "Resolute" and the "Scindia" they were heading about S.-W. and N.-W. respectively, but that he was too far off to judge of their distance apart.

Mr. Millard has further given some evidence as an expert. As to some of his answers the distance he was ahead of the "Scindia" precludes the possibility of those answers being of value; as to others, they are free from that disability; he amongst other matters has stated the following propositions:—

1. That if he finds a vessel in his fairway, he sometimes takes the precaution to whistle, or slow down, or give the order to stand by.

2. That if he had been the pilot of the "Scindia" going up the river N.-W. on a starboard helm, and had seen the "Resolute" on a port helm going S.-W., and the vessels had been likely to meet, he would have kept on at 12 knots, if the "Resolute" had been well clear of his bow; but if not, he would have taken every precaution.

3. That if the vessels under the circumstances last above mentioned were crossing each other, he would consider it prudent to have gone full speed at 12 knots up to within 400 yards of the "Resolute," putting "a standing by" below.

4. He explains that the order to "stand by below" has this consequence in his opinion—that after that order is rung down to the engine room "to stand by," a vessel does not go so fast as it was going before the order, notwithstanding that no other order than stand by is given.

5. That if the "Scindia" had gone full speed astern at 400 yards from the "Resolute," this would have avoided the collision.

6. That if he had been on the "Scindia" that day, he would have whistled two blasts to show that he was directing his course to port, when he thought the vessels were approaching danger.

7. That if he had reversed to avoid collision, he would not have blown three blasts.

8. That it was a fatal error for the "Resolute" to have ported and crossed the channel and that she should have kept inside.

9. That if he were coming up off the Fort on a flood-tide on a starboard helm, he would not expect a vessel lying alongside Diamond Harbour to port and cross his bow.

10. have passed position
11. lute" doubt
12. ported at
13. have she t right
14. to have vessel
15. whilst other
was g course movin
instea been, mile,
16. ing a it wo
As be th
As
As that furth
appro nation
Th of op
27 of case
prude
Th temp prop
Th the v the F
W altho
as to phati
for a down
was 12,50
Th ance,
not a comm
Th been
"Faz
W tradi
diffic
we t of th
such at w
us in evid
W Ross
hove yard
oppo Mill
fix t place
Th anot
collie the v
wind posit
T time
at t

10. That it was impossible that the vessels could have been "end on," having regard to what he saw as he passed the "Resolute" at Diamond Harbour and to the position he saw them in when he saw them later on.

11. That having regard to the position of the "Resolute" that day, the "Resolute" could not have had any doubt but that the "Scindia" was starboarding.

12. That in his opinion the "Scindia" could not have ported and gone inside from the angle he saw the vessels at.

13. That it was not prudent for the "Resolute" to have gone over to the starboard side of the river; but if she thought she could do it in time, it would be all right.

14. That it would not be a fatal error for the "Resolute" to have steered out over the river when the approaching vessel was a mile off, but it would be risky.

15. That if a vessel was 4 points on his starboard bow, whilst his own vessel was steaming 12 knots and the other vessel had indicated by giving a blast that she was going to starboard, and he had directed his own course to port to cross her bow, and that he found after moving that the other vessel was getting more ahead instead of further aft of the position in which she had been, the distance between the two vessels being one mile, he would have eventually reversed his engines.

16. That if he saw a vessel on his starboard bow heading across his bow, he is unable to say whether or not it would be a risky thing to starboard his helm.

As to the first of these propositions it would no doubt be the right course to take.

As to the second proposition it is hedged by a condition.

As to the third and fourth propositions it appears to us that if "stand by below" alone were rung up, and no further order given, such an order would not make the approach more prudent; we do not agree with the explanation given as to the effect of the order to "stand by."

The sixth and seventh propositions are an expression of opinion that Mr. Millard would have made use of Rule 27 of the Regulations for preventing collisions in one case and not in the other—questions of discretion or prudence.

The eighth proposition is a strong statement, but it is tempered down by the statement made by the witness in propositions 13 and 14.

The ninth proposition appears to us to assume that the vessel at Diamond Harbour is a stationary one, which the "Resolute" was not when the "Scindia" reached the Fort.

With regard to the tenth proposition we think that although Mr. Millard might be able to hazard an opinion as to this, we think that he is not in a position to emphatically deny that the vessels were or were not end on for a short time at any period of their journey up and down the reach, considering the very long distance there was between him and those vessels, viz., from 10,000 to 12,500 feet.

The fifteenth proposition does not give as much assistance, as the point put to Mr. Millard in the question is not answered, and the sixteenth proposition requires no comment.

The whole of the witnesses called in this case have now been mentioned, save Mr. Turner, the Pilot of the "Fazelka"; his evidence is, however, not of importance.

We consider this evidence in this case to be very contradictory in material points, and that it is exceedingly difficult for us to come to a proper conclusion on it, and we think that under these circumstances a consideration of the distance run by either vessel, the time at which such distances were run from given points, and the speed at which each vessel was going, will be the best guide to us in this difficulty, taking into consideration also such evidence as appears to be reliable.

We consider that the independent evidence of Mr. Ross and Mr. Millard shows that the "Resolute" was hove to off the west bank of the creek, about 100 to 300 yards from it. We think that Mr. Ross had a better opportunity of judging of the distance than had Mr. Millard. Taking Mr. Ross's evidence on this point, we fix that distance from the west bank of the creek at the place at which the "Resolute" was about hove to.

Then the position at which the wreck is placed is another fixed point; we therefore locate the point of the collision taking into consideration in so doing the speed the vessels were going at the time, the flood-tide and the wind, to be at a spot about 700 feet to the S.-E. of the position of the wreck.

The Bushy Tree is another fixed point, and at the time the "Scindia" was at Bushy Tree and "Resolute" at the point of her departure from the creek, the

"Scindia" was travelling at 11 knots over the ground and the "Resolute" 5 knots.

For the "Resolute" to have gone from her position at the creek to the point of collision it would be necessary for her to travel over a distance of about 3,400 feet, which distance at the rate of speed she was making would take her $7\frac{1}{4}$ minutes.

The "Scindia" travelling at the rate at 11 knots over the ground would travel in $7\frac{1}{4}$ minutes 1 mile and 2,000 feet, and that distance from the place of collision would place the "Scindia" at the time the "Resolute" started from the creek going full speed well below the Bushy Tree.

This tallies with Mr. Hoseason's evidence as to the position of the "Scindia," and enables us to get rid of a mass of contradictory evidence, and at the same time allow us definitely to conclude that at the time the "Resolute" left the creek the "Scindia" was a little below the Bushy Tree. This conclusion also leads us to accept Mr. Hoseason's statement that when he got on the bridge he had the "Scindia" and the Bushy Tree a little on his port bow when the "Scindia" was first seen by him, and we think that under these circumstances the course of the "Resolute" spoken to by Mr. Hoseason as the "usual down-channel course" was about the course taken by the "Resolute." As the position of the Bushy Tree and of the "Scindia" at the time he got on the bridge tallies with such a course, we think that such a course was a safe and practical one, and was one which would allow both vessels to pass each other on their proper sides of the channel; and somewhat in confirmation of this view as to the course taken we have the evidence of Mr. Skinner that he was steering up the river from Bushy Tree to the Fort 200 or 300 yards from the eastern bank. We find that the "Scindia," although coming up the river on her starboard helm from Bushy Tree, i.e., starboarding and steadying as required, when nearing the Fort came gradually across the river still further starboarding her helm, and that the "Resolute" seeing this gave warning by a single blast that she was directing her course to starboard, and slightly ported her helm. We find that the pilot of the "Scindia" took no notice of this warning and still continued to put his helm to starboard without slackening his speed; and that the "Resolute" noticing this gave a second blast on her whistle and ported her helm, doing all she could to clear the "Scindia," seeing that she was in imminent danger of collision; and that the "Scindia" nevertheless starboarded at full speed ahead and endeavoured to cross the "Resolute's" bow.

We think that the "Scindia" when seeing the "Resolute" on her starboard bow crossing from starboard to port after the warning given infringed Rule 19 of the Regulations for preventing collisions at sea, by an improper use of his starboard helm, and it appears that in acting in this way he gave no intimation of his intention to go to port, and the Captain of the "Resolute" would naturally think, after sounding her whistle, that some action would be taken by the "Scindia" in accordance with the rules. It appears to us that the "Scindia" seeing, as she did, a steamer crossing her bow from starboard to port it was her duty to get out of the way of the "Resolute," and by Rule 22, if the circumstances of the case admitted, to avoid crossing the "Resolute's" bow.

It also appears to us that prompt precautionary measures were not adopted by the "Scindia" to avoid collision, it being her place to get out of the way; for had she eased down and gone astern when she saw that the "Resolute" was first crossing her to port, or even had she gone full speed astern on hearing the "Resolute's" whistle, no accident would have occurred.

We have no doubt that the pilot of the "Scindia" intended by starboarding to keep clear of the "Resolute," but it appears to have been most injudicious for him to have attempted to cross the bow of a steamer which he was endeavouring to clear.

It seems possible, however, that if the "Resolute" had continued her course prior to the last second blast, with the "Scindia" starboarding the vessels might even then have passed clear. The pilot, however, states he could in no way have avoided the collision. The "Resolute" however, on giving the first blast, finding that collision was inevitable, and with the intention of avoiding immediate danger and collision, put her helm hard aport after sounding a second blast, and the vessels collided.

We consider that the question does arise as to whether the "Resolute," by further porting her helm after the first blast when the "Scindia" was on her starboard helm, did not thereby put the "Scindia" into difficulties; but having regard to the fact that the "Resolute," when further porting, signalled with her whistle that she was

so doing, and having regard to the fact that the "Scindia" did not, on further starboarding, signal at all to the "Resolute," or clearly intimate that she was further going to starboard, which, if she had done, would have given the "Resolute" warning and offered her an opportunity of using suitable measures to meet this change, we think that the second signal of the "Resolute" was a sufficient warning and safeguard, even assuming that Rule 27 does not cover the movement.

It appears to us to be necessary to say something as to the evidence given by the witnesses of the "Scindia" as to the position at which most of them state they saw the "Resolute" leaving the creek. As to this we are not prepared at all to accept the statement that the "Scindia" was either off the Fort or off Chingri khal or below it when the "Resolute" left her position near the creek, nor can we accept the statement that it was at that time impossible for the "Scindia" to have gone inside the "Resolute," because it has been shown on page 4 of our report that when the "Resolute" left her position at the creek the "Scindia" must then have been well below the Bushy Tree; she would therefore make the run from Bushy Tree to Chingri khal at the same rate of speed, viz. 11 knots, the distance being 1 mile and 800 feet in about 6 minutes; whereas the "Resolute" in those 6 minutes at her rate of speed would have gone less than half a mile from her position at the creek towards the place of collision, and would be at least 1,200 feet from the eastern bank. Having that space between the "Resolute" and the eastern bank, the "Scindia" would, therefore, have had no difficulty whatever in going inside the "Resolute" along the eastern bank, even at Chingri khal.

We come to the conclusion on the whole of the case that the collision was due to the want of skill and care of the pilot of the "Scindia."

The result of this collision has been disastrous, resulting in the loss of Captain Waller, Mr. A. J. Hudson, Chief Engineer, Mr. G. K. Stone, 2nd Officer, and Mr. H. J. Huntly, 3rd Officer—all of the "Resolute"—and of the native crew, including servants, 13 or 14 men, and as a further result the "Resolute's" survey boat belonging to the Port Commissioners has become a total wreck.

The evidence of both the Officers of the "Scindia," the pilot and the witnesses from the "Resolute" all show that every effort was made to save life, both by lowering the boats of the "Scindia" and by the tow-boat of the "Resolute," as well as by native boats on the spot, 46 of the crew being saved, together with the lives of the 1st Officer and the 2nd and 3rd Engineers of the

"Resolute." We are satisfied that no blame attaches to any one with respect to the endeavour to save life.

We desire to make some remarks relative to the evidence given by Mr. Skinner; there is no doubt that it is in some important points contrary to the evidence given by him before the Port Officer. It was, however, very noticeable that when giving his evidence before us, Mr. Skinner was very excited and very careless in his statements, and at times made statements which could not be by any possibility correct, and which were not set right until he had been repeatedly asked to reconsider his answer. We, therefore, do not place so much stress on the contradictory character of his two statements, and consider that it is highly probable that he was in an equally excited frame of mind when being examined by the Port Officer as he was in when before us. We are not, however, as we have said, prepared to accept his story as to the position of the "Resolute" when he was off Chingri khal or the Fort; and we have found that when giving his evidence he was often very inaccurate and careless, that it does not seem to us that it is very reliable.

As regards the evidence which relates to the time at which Mr. Skinner sent in his report of the collision to the Port Officer, there no doubt appears to have been a good deal of apparently unnecessary delay in drawing and delivering his report, and we consider that the rule that a pilot should deliver his report at once on reaching Calcutta after an accident should be strictly enforced, whether forms are at hand or not. We send up with our report the exhibits in the case with keys to the different positions marked on the charts.

T. A. PEARSON, President.

HORACE C. ROBINSON,
Master, S. "Main," Member.

JAMES HAMILTON,
Master, S.S. "Bohemia," of Glasgow, Member.

Calcutta,

The 28th August, 1899.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on
the 5th day of January, 1900.)