

THE ROUGH WEATHER.

DAMAGE TO SHIPPING IN THE BAY.

THE STEAMER LONSDALE DRIVEN AGROUND.

The boisterous weather which prevailed in town yesterday was palpably brought under the notice of pedestrians, but was still more severely felt by those on shipboard, and the shipping in Hobson's Bay received some damage. The most serious mishap which occurred was the stranding yesterday afternoon of the steamer *Lonsdale*, belonging to the Port Phillip Bay Excursion Company. The *Lonsdale*, which is a two funnelled paddle composite steamer, was brought to this port about six years ago, to be used as an excursion steamer in Port Phillip Bay. For about four years she made pleasure trips to Queenscliff and other places of holiday resort, but a couple of years since was, to a great extent, superseded by the *Ozone*. During last season she was unused, and for some time she had been lying in the Bay near the Port Melbourne railway pier in charge of one man. During Thursday strong winds were blowing from the south-west, which yesterday morning increased to a gale and were accompanied by a heavy sea and extraordinarily high tides. About noon yesterday the *Lonsdale*, whose registered tonnage is 228, had only a bow line out, and was noticed to be dragging her anchor. Mr. R. Johnson, the railway station master at Port Melbourne, observed this, and seeing that it continued, telephoned, about 1 o'clock, to Mr. W. R. Evans, the manager for the Port Phillip Bay Excursion Company, at the office in Collins-street, Melbourne, but Mr. Evans was out at the time, and he then communicated, by the same means, to one of the directors of the company, Mr. W. Greenlaw, manager of the Colonial Bank. In the meantime the steamer drifted perceptibly for half a mile, and when she was opposite the baths, a heavy sea struck her broadside on, and she steadily drifted shoreward in that position till 3 o'clock, when she rested on the beach. She lay above the ordinary high water mark, presenting her port side to the sea. Last night she was lying about a cable's length from land, and within 200 yards of the baths. The man in charge was still on board, and no communication

with the shore had been effected. The manager of the company, having heard of the occurrence to the steamer, went down to Port Melbourne at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, but no tugs were then available to tow the *Lonsdale* off the beach, and it was decided to allow her to remain as she was till to-day. Captain J. Vine, the pier master at Port Melbourne, states that one tug was absent from its berth at the time of the occurrence to the *Lonsdale*, having taken a ship up the Yarra, and the other tug, the *Rescue*, had just started to tow a schooner to Williamstown, and that by the time the *Rescue* was able to assist the stranded steamer assistance was useless, as the small draught of the tug would prevent her making any headway with the work of getting the *Lonsdale* off. Captain Vine alleges that, when he went to dinner at 1 o'clock, the *Lonsdale* was not then dragging her anchor, but that when he returned, at 2 o'clock, the steamer was out of reach. The height of the tide was such that three houses, standing above the beach and about 200 yards from the *Lonsdale*, were inundated and rendered uninhabitable by the presence of some inches of water on the floors. An unusually high tide was necessary to place the steamer in her present position on the beach, and a similarly high tide would be required to float her again. About a year ago another accident occurred to the *Lonsdale* at Queenscliff. On that occasion she struck a sand bank, was thrown out of her course, and cut 16 feet into the decking and girders of the old pier. After the arrival of the steamer in this port, although she had been built for excursion use, various improvements were effected in her cabin and awning deck accommodation. The *Ozone*, which has almost entirely replaced the *Lonsdale*, is a swifter steamer and more elaborately decorated.

In addition to the stranding of the *Lonsdale*, other mishaps to vessels at anchorage and small craft in the Bay took place yesterday. In one case a lighter was almost carried ashore, but was recovered. The *Cardigan Castle*, a vessel lately arrived from British ports, had her fore chains swept away during the height of the storm in the afternoon, but with the aid of a cable the vessel was promptly secured. Last evening, the piermaster made arrangements for having all the vessels berthed at the piers made safe for the boisterous night

at the piers made safe for the boisterous night which was expected. The same precautions were taken with respect to the vessels anchored off the pier.

The effects of the gale also extended landward. The waters of the Bay were thrown on to the river, and the road from the city to Port Melbourne was in many places flooded. From the railway gates at Port Melbourne to 600 yards west of the baths ground that once stood 50 feet above high water was yesterday covered with foam and drift wood, and the road for foot passengers along the beach was, for the time being, invisible.