

Tells of Wreck of Theano.

Mr. James L. Smith, chief engineer of the steamer Theano, wrecked in Lake Superior in the great storm of the 16th inst., arrived home this week and to-day appears none the worse of his terrible experience. With several other members of the crew he came down on the C.P.R. steamer Alberta.

Telling of the wreck one of the crew, James Powse, a deckhand, pays a high tribute to Capt. George Pearson and Mate Barrett. He emphatically declares that had it not been for the heroism displayed by these two men not one of the crew would have lived to tell the tale. Telling of the wreck, Mr. Powse, who by the way has sailed for twenty-three years along the west coast of Africa and on the Atlantic Ocean, says:—The steamer started out from the Soo on Thursday, 15th inst., bound for West Fort William with a cargo of about 2,500 tons of steel rails consigned to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and to be laid on the Fort William branch of the road now under construction. The steamer was in command of Captain Pearson who had a crew of nineteen men. All went well until a blinding snow-storm, accompanied by a heavy sea, broke over the lake on Friday night when the steamer was nearing Port Arthur. During the violence of the raging storm the steamer ran on the rocks on Silver Island and punched a big hole in her bow. While the crew were preparing to go ashore the fierce wind carried the steamer off the rocks again and a few minutes later to their surprise the men found the stern of the boat right up against the rocks where they had first struck and a second effort to escape was attempted with a ladder, but this also failed as the hurricane had carried the steamer back into the foaming sea. The captain and his men realized then that there was no hope for them except through the lifeboats which were lowered and made fast to the stern of the Theano. The steamer struck the rocks at a quarter to one o'clock on Saturday morning and when the two lifeboats were lowered Captain Pearson took charge of one boat and Mate Nat Barrett, of Owen Sound, took command of the other, each officer having nine men under him. When the officers saw the Theano filling up and gradually sinking at the bow they concluded there was no hope of their being able to hold on where they were until daylight, so they determined to cut away from the steamer. Captain Pearson and his men were the first to get free and their boat was soon swept away from the scene of the wreck by the terrible gale that was blowing. Owing to the dense storm the occupants of the two boats lost sight of each other in a few moments and they did not come together again until they were all landed safely at Port Arthur on Saturday afternoon. The crew in Mate Barrett's boat experienced great difficulty in cutting away from the ill-fated Theano. They had been free but a few minutes when the steamer plunged forward and downward like an arrow creating a terrific noise above the roar of the sea. Captain Pearson and his crew rigged up a sail on their little craft and they got into Port Arthur safely about eleven o'clock in the morning, but as the afternoon wore on and there was no sign of Mate Barrett's boat there was great anxiety for their safety. About four o'clock, however, the U.S. Iroquois which had been sent out to search for the shipwrecked sailors picked the missing crew up a few miles outside the harbor, and brought them into port in a pretty much exhausted condition.