

REPUBLIC'S CREW ANGRY AT CONNOLLY

Stewards Sign a Statement That the Writer Tried to Enter a Boat Ahead of Women and Children.

HIS INDIGNANT DENIAL

Declares He Was the Last Passenger to Leave the Republic—Angry Dispute on the Baltic.

In the midst of the happiness and good humor which characterized the words and conduct of almost every one on the Baltic as the ship drew near to her pier, there was just one incident that threatened for a moment to develop into a serious situation.

The principal actor in it was J. B. Connolly, friend of President Roosevelt and writer on seafaring topics.

Mr. Connolly had been a passenger on the Republic on his way to join the United States battleship fleet in Mediterranean waters, by permission of the President, who authorized Mr. Connolly to rejoin the fleet after he had once departed from it.

The writer was bitter in his criticism of the crew for having failed to save any baggage. He also declared to inquirers that he had been prevented from sending wireless messages ashore by order of Capt. Ranson and the purser, who not only declined his messages but, according to Mr. Connolly, refused to allow him to wire an explanation of his failure to get off a story of the accident.

Accused by Ship's Barber.

He was thus talking when G. F. Fletcher, barber of the Republic, who had taken a courageous part in the transfer of the Republic's passengers both to the Florida and afterward to the Baltic, pushed his way through the crowd surrounding Connolly and, in a voice hot with anger, exclaimed:

"You have little to do to talk of cowards. You were the coward. You tried to force your way into the boats ahead of the women and children."

Mr. Connolly flushed with anger. It seemed that a personal collision was imminent, and the author's friends hustled him off to his cabin. A few moments later, however, Mr. Connolly appeared again on the upper promenade deck, where Fletcher, with F. S. Spencer, a second steward on the Republic, and J. E. Matthews, a chef, were standing with a group of Republic seamen. All these men had shared in the work of transferring passengers, and Connolly's words threw them into a state of utter disregard of the attitude usual between seamen and passengers.

Stewards Make Charges.

The seamen behind the steward were becoming more angry each moment. There was a sudden shout, "Put him out of here!" and a surge toward the writer. Friends gathered around him and hustled him back to his stateroom, where he remained until the Baltic docked, when he walked down the gangplank and disappeared up the pier.

While Connolly stuck to his cabin, however, Spencer, Fletcher, and the others held an indignation meeting on deck. They declared, among other things, that he had tried to get into the boats intended

for women and children, saying that he had a wife and child, either in the boats or already removed from the steamer, which it was the angry Republic sailors did not know.

When he was aboard the Florida, declared the men, Connolly walked the decks with a life preserver strapped around his waist. Spencer signed this statement:

Dr. J. J. Marsh pushed Connolly back when he tried to get ahead of the women and children who were being transferred from the Florida to the Baltic. I stood at the top of the gangway for twelve hours without moving, and I saw this happen.
F. S. SPENCER, Second Steward.

Fletcher added his signature as a witness to Spencer's, and J. E. Matthews did the same.

Charges False, Connolly Says.

Mr. Connolly was indignant when informed of the charges. He said plainly that he was "the victim of a job" but up against him because he had dared to assert his rights concerning the dispatch of wireless press messages. He said every charge was absolutely false, and just the reverse was true.

"I was the last passenger of the Republic," he said, "to leave that ship after the order to desert her was given. In the last boat that left the wrecked liner I was a passenger. When I was not pulling an oar, I was doing what I could to relieve the sufferings of a fellow-passenger who was ill, and was among those taken to the Florida in the last boat that left the Republic.

"These fellows said I was 'trying to

make myself strong with the women passengers.' This all because I had the decency to bring some of those poor women a cup of coffee or a glass of water now and then. I also had trouble with Capt. Ranson over the refusal to send wireless messages to the papers. They even tried to prevent my notifying the papers of the reason I was unable to send the stories which had been ordered of me.

"That I ran around that vessel with a lifebelt strapped around me or that I tried to get off in the first boat is absolutely false. As I said, I was the very last to leave that vessel. All this trouble began because I had enough red blood in my veins to want to investigate a good story that it was in my power to give to the newspapers. It's small business. The whole thing is a tissue of falsehoods."

LAST RITES TO THE DYING.

Clergyman Almost Swept Away Getting to Mr. Mooney's Stateroom.

The Rev. John W. Norris, rector of St. Mary's Catholic Church at Deal, N. J., told on his arrival at Newark yesterday of his remarkable struggle on the Republic to reach the staterooms of Mrs. Eugene Lynch of Boston and W. J. Mooney of Langdon, N. D., where he administered the last rites of the Church to them before they died.

"I was thrown from my bunk by the impact," said Father Norris, "and had on only my pajamas when I reached the

deck. Soon a steward came up and said that several passengers had been apparently badly injured in their staterooms. I started to go to the staterooms, when the lights went out. I had to feel my way and fight against the stream of passengers in the corridor.

"When I got near the point of impact I could hear the water rushing in. I reached Mrs. Lynch before she died and ministered to her. She seemed to be conscious. In getting to the adjoining stateroom I had to swing myself across a chasm made in the side of the vessel. The cold water caught me and nearly carried me away, but I was just able to swing myself into what had been Mr. Mooney's stateroom.

"I pried out a bunk which had been crushed against the wall. There I found Mr. Mooney in a frightful condition, almost dead. Both he and Mrs. Lynch were dead before I left them. When I had completed my religious errand, it was too late to reach my own stateroom for cloth-

ing, and I had to come into port in my pajamas and a borrowed overcoat."

MRS. EARLE FELL INTO SEA.

Brooklyn Woman Nearly Drowned While Her Sister Looked On.

Two women who had thrilling experiences on the Republic were Mrs. Alice Morse Earle of 242 Henry Street, Brooklyn Heights, and her sister, Miss Frances C. Morse of Worcester, Mass., who were on their way to Cairo, Egypt, for the Winter. Miss Morse said:

"The transfer to the Baltic from the Florida was a terrible experience. It was dark and wet, and we were drenched. Our lifeboat was so heavily laden that I feared she would sink. For more than

three-quarters of an hour we pitched about in the sea trying to shape a course to the Baltic.

"When we reached the side of the Baltic the lifeboat was much lower than the gangway. Two Italian seamen on the ladder lifted my sister, Mrs. Earle, so that she might grasp the end of the ladder, but she lost her hold and dropped into the sea. She sank twice when one of the sailors caught her dress with a boat hook and dragged her near, so that the other sailor could grasp her by the hair.

"In this way they pulled her alongside until they could get hold of her. Every second seemed an hour until finally they got her back on board, and this time on to the ladder, up which she was assisted to the deck.

"We saved only the clothes we have on. We lost all our money, jewelry, and baggage. Mrs. Earle suffered from shock, but was not much hurt by her experience."