

# TITANIC CLAIMANTS TO ACCEPT \$664,000

## Tentative Settlement Reached by Lawyers Represent- ing Both Sides.

### SOME MAY HOLD OUT

Prefer to Await Judge Mayer's De-  
cision—Suits Aggregate  
\$16,804,112.

For some weeks negotiations have been in progress between the Oceanic Steam Navigation Company, the owner of the White Star Line, and the lawyers of claimants on account of the Titanic disaster for a settlement of their claims. As filed with Alexander Gilchrist, Jr., Clerk of the District Court, they reached the total of \$16,804,112, which, even allowing for the considerable scaling down of some of them, which on their face were excessive, was out of all proportion to the amount for which the steamship company would be liable if it was enabled to establish the limitation of its liability under the American law. That only requires the owner of a vessel to pay compensation for the loss of life or property to the amount of salvage and freight and passage moneys, and in the case of the Titanic this is only \$97,772.12, which, with interest added, now amounts to about \$112,000.

The negotiations have been so far successful that last night C. C. Burlingham of Burlingham, Montgomery & Beecher, counsel for the steamship company, announced that "counsel for the various claimants for loss of life, baggage, &c., have liquidated the claims as between themselves at about \$2,500,000, and the great majority of the lawyers who represent these claimants have agreed with the White Star Line to recommend to their clients to accept \$664,000 in full settlement of all claims filed in this country."

The way this tentative settlement has been reached has been through a committee composed of some of the lawyers with large interests in the case, among whom were Hunt, Hill & Betts and Harrington, Bigham & Englar, who have gone through the claims as presented, and have scaled them down. They have endeavored to standardize them, so as to allow the same amount of compensation to similar cases, and to cut down those which were palpably extravagant. Those lawyers who have been members of this committee will now advise their clients to accept the offer of the steamship company, which works out at between 26 and 27 per cent. of the revised claims.

It is not certain yet, however, that all the counsel interested in the case will assent to this settlement, and A. Leonard Brougham, who was prominent in the early stages of the litigation, and was fined by Judge Hough \$200 for contempt of court in order to bring one of the points of the controversy to an issue, said last night that he would not advise his own clients to accept this compromise.

Mr. Brougham is confident that a better settlement may be obtained by awaiting the decision of Judge Mayer in the Federal District Court in the suit tried before him last June to decide the right of the Oceanic Steamship Company to take advantage of the limitation of liability granted by the American statutes. In the first place, the claimants endeavored to show that the White Star Line on technical grounds could not claim the protection of this law, but was under the British statutes, but this was decided against them in May, 1914, by the Supreme Court of the United States.

The result was that last Summer the claimants again attacked the right of the steamship company, alleging that there were such defects in the navigation of the Titanic as well as in its construction as to render its owners liable for the settlement of the claims in full. The decision of Judge Mayer on this suit has not been rendered. In Mr. Burlingham's statement it is announced that after the Oceanic Steamship Company had won its victory on technical grounds "a settlement was suggested, but the negotiations to this end were not successful." Then after the case in which negligence was alleged had been argued before Judge Mayer "the negotiations for settlement were renewed, with the result that most of the claimants by their counsel agreed to a compromise on the basis of \$664,000, which is to be distributed to the claimants pro rata. A formal agreement has been drafted by counsel and only awaits execution."

### "Matzoth King" Left \$168,000.

Meyer London, "the matzoth king," who died Nov. 28, left an estate of \$168,000, divided almost equally between realty and personalty, according to an estimate made yesterday by his widow, Etty London, in applying for letters of administration. London died intestate. The next of kin are eight sons and seventeen grandchildren, the children of two deceased daughters.