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Scenes and Incidents at Sea.

*Adventures in the North Seas.*—Page 10.





Scenes and Incidents

AT SEA.

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# SCENES AND INCIDENTS AT SEA.



## A HEROIC ACT OF RESCUE:

**M**R. WILLIAM TEWKSBURY, of Deer Island, and his son, Abijah R. Tewksbury, a lad seventeen years old, were at work, one afternoon, on the eastern part of Point Shirley, near Winthorp's Head. About four P.M. a boy came running from the point, and informed him that a pleasure-boat had upset in a direction between Deer Island and Long Island. Without waiting for further information, he immediately took his son

into his canoe, set a small foresail, and ran through Pulling's Point gut toward Broad Sound. The wind was so high that with the smallest sail the canoe nearly buried herself under water. Having relieved her, he stood in a direction for Long Island, nearly half a mile, without discovering any indication of the object of his search. He then observed his wife and children on the beach of Deer Island, running toward Sound Point. This induced him to keep on the same course, and in a short time he discovered the heads of several men in the water; and, as they rose and fell on the sea, he was impressed with the belief that there were more than twenty buffeting the waves, and contending against death. Being perfectly aware of the little burden and very slight construction of his canoe, which was one of the smallest class, and the wind blowing a violent gale, his apprehensions for his son's and his own safety had almost caused him to desist from the extreme peril of exposing his frail bark to be seized on by men agonized to despair in the last struggles for life. He, however, prepared for the event, took in his sail, rowed among

the drowning men, with a fixed determination to save some or perish in the attempt. By an exertion of skill, to be equalled only by an aboriginal chief in the management of a canoe, he succeeded in getting seven persons on board, and was attempting to save the eighth when his son exclaimed, "Father, the canoe is sinking—we shall all perish." This exclamation, calling his mind from the purpose on which it was bent, exposed to him his most perilous situation. Six inches of water in a canoe, nine in number on board, the upper part of her gunwale but three inches above water, the wind high, a heavy sea running and constantly washing on board, and nearly a mile from the nearest land. That these *nine* might have a chance of being saved, he was obliged to leave one unfortunate man hanging on the stern of the jolly belonging to the pleasure-boat.

Of the men saved, one was so little exhausted that he could assist in bailing; another could sit up; but the others lay motionless, and apparently lifeless, in the bottom of the canoe. There not being room to row, Mr. Tewksbury had no alternative but to paddle

before the wind, and was only able to reach the extremity of Sound Point. The instant she struck, she filled with water from the violence of the sea. Exertions were still necessary to save the five helpless men in the bottom of the canoe. In giving her assistance at this time, Mrs. Tewksbury was much injured by the convulsive grasp of one of the men, apparently in the agonies of death. They were taken to Mr. Tewksbury's house, and by the application of hot blankets, tea, and medicine they soon recovered. Four did not recover so as to be able to speak for more than three hours. Eleven persons were in the pleasure-boat when she over-set, two of whom attempted to swim to the shore, and were seen by the survivors to perish thirty or forty rods from the boat. One was drowned in the cabin. After landing those saved, Mr. Tewksbury returned with all speed to the relief of the man left on the jolly-boat. He was gone! The distance from the place where Mr. Tewksbury and his son were at work, to the place of the accident, was one mile and a half.

The above facts being made known to the



Trustees of the Humane Society of New York, they voted that seventy dollars in money, and a silver medal of the value of ten dollars, with suitable inscriptions, should be presented to Mr. Tewksbury ; thirty-five dollars to his son, and twenty dollars to Mrs. Tewksbury.





## CAPTAIN JAMES'S ADVENTURES IN THE NORTH SEAS.

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**I**N the year 1630, several wealthy merchants of Bristol united in fitting out a vessel for the purpose of accurately examining the whole northern coast of America. The command of this vessel, which was small, only of seventy tons burden, but one of the strongest ships of her size that had ever been built, was given to Captain James. She was provisioned for eighteen months, and manned with only twenty-two seamen, but these were all excellent sailors.

His stores having been all shipped and the men on board, Captain James left Bristol in the month of April, 1631. After pass-

ing the southern coast of Ireland, he sailed in a west-north-westerly direction, and on the 4th of June discovered the coast of Greenland. Two days subsequently to this, his vessel was encompassed with ice, some immense pieces of which beat so violently against her that the captain was fearful she would have been staved and sunk. The boat which accompanied her was crushed to atoms. In one instance he was obliged to order the ship to be made fast to a great piece of ice, and during a day and night to employ men incessantly in pushing off such masses of ice as floated against her; but in this labor all their poles were broken. The wind at length blew a perfect hurricane, and, though the broken ice on almost all sides rose higher than the decks, and the vessel was beaten about in a most alarming manner, she suffered no injury.

On the morning of the 10th of June, these hardy adventurers passed some masses of ice reaching as high as the topmast of their vessel, and left Cape Desolation, in Greenland, to the eastward. The weather was now so cold that at one time the sails and rigging

were all frozen. On the 20th, the ship reached the southern point of the Island of Resolution, at the entrance of Hudson's Strait, but she was several times carried round by the current and floating ice, and was in imminent danger of being crushed to pieces before she could be brought to anchor. It now began to snow heavily, and the wind blew a storm from the westward. This drove the ice from the sea into the harbor where the vessel was stationed, until it was choked up. For some time the ice seemed to be perfectly firm and immovable, but it floated out again at the ebb of the tide. The various dangers to which the vessel was exposed in this harbor, of being thrown against the rocks, crushed to pieces in the ice, and sunk, were so great that the captain almost gave up all hope of being able to save her. He describes the thundering noise of the masses of ice beating against each other, the rushing of the water, and the fury of the current to have been tremendous. After much difficulty and the most persevering exertions, however, she was navigated into a little cove or harbor, where, be-

ing made fast to the rocks, she was at length rendered tolerably secure.

Captain James landed on the island, but found that, although the summer was far advanced, the ponds were yet frozen. The ground was rocky and barren, and no traces of animals were visible in the snow, though it was evident from some hearths and remains of firewood which were seen that human beings had not long before visited the place. Captain James continued here two days, and then sailed westward; but the masses of ice were still almost impenetrable. They grated on the sides of the vessel with such violence that it was feared they would burst through the planks. On looking out from the mast-head, scarcely an acre of open sea was visible: nothing was to be seen but a continued and irregular range of ice, towering in different places to an immense height. The ship was thus surrounded till the 27th of June, when, by a gale from the south-east, the ice opened, and she was enabled to make some way.

Though exposed to incessant danger by the immense masses of ice which floated on

the surface of the ocean, Captain James and his associates proceeded still westward, and entered Hudson's Strait about the beginning of July. On the 15th of that month, they arrived between Digg's Island and Nottingham Island, but the summer was so cold and unfavorable that it was now evident there would be no possibility of proceeding much further northward this year. About a fortnight afterward, they were so fast enclosed in the ice that, notwithstanding the ship had all her sails set, and it blew a strong breeze, she was immovable and as firmly fixed as if she had been in a dry-dock. On this, the captain and many of the men walked out of her to amuse themselves upon the ice. Several of the crew now began to murmur, and to express great alarm, lest they should not be able either to proceed or return, and lest their provisions, which were beginning to fall short, would soon wholly fail. The captain encouraged them as well as he was able, and, though he was aware their murmuring was not without reason, he affected to ridicule their fears. Among other contrivances to amuse them, he took a quan-

tity of spirits upon the ice, and there drank the king's health, although there was not a single man in the ship, and though she was at that time under all her sails. This was the 28th of July. On the 30th, they made some little way through the ice, part of the crew heaving the vessel along with their shoulders, whilst others, at the same time, broke off the corners of the ice with mallets and iron crows to clear the way. This labor was continued on the following day, and after much fatigue they got the ship into thirty-five fathom water. All this time they were in latitude 58 deg. 45 min. north, and a few days afterward they were in an open sea free from ice. The captain and his crew now joined in devout thanksgiving for their deliverance from the dangers to which they had been exposed.

A few days subsequently to this, whilst the ship was under sail, she struck upon some rocks that were concealed by the water, and received three such terrible blows that the captain was fearful her masts would have been shivered to pieces, and he had no doubt that a hole had been pierced through



her sides. But such was the strength of her timbers that she received little injury, and in a short time was again out of danger.

On the 20th of August, and in latitude 57 deg. north, they came within sight of land, part of the continent of North America, which the captain named New South Wales, in honor of Charles, Prince of Wales, afterward King Charles the Second: and on the 3d of September they passed a cape, to which he gave the name of Cape Henrietta Maria, after the Queen. In the ensuing evening, they encountered such a tempest of thunder, snow, rain, and wind, as none of the crew had ever before been exposed to. The sea washed completely over the decks, and the vessel rolled so tremendously that it was not without great difficulty all things could be kept fast in the hold and between the decks.

As the winter was now approaching, Captain James began to look out for some harbor, where he and his companions could pass that cheerless season, with as little discomfort and in as much security as possible. Landing, on the 3d of October, upon an



island in the bay that has since been called James's Bay, he found the tracks of deer and saw some wild fowl ; but, not being able to discover a safe anchorage, he proceeded onward with the vessel, and two days afterward moored the ship in a place of tolerable security near the same island. It now snowed without intermission, and was so cold that the sails were frozen quite hard, and the cable was as thick with ice as a man's body.

Several men were sent ashore to cut wood for fuel, and they collected as much as, it was estimated, would last two or three months. It was found inconvenient, particularly for some of the crew who were sick, to continue entirely in the vessel ; a kind of house was, therefore, erected on shore, under the direction of the carpenter. In the meantime the captain and some of the men went into the woods to see whether they could discover any traces of human beings, that, in case they found such, they might be on their guard against attack. None were found. The top-sails were now taken down from the vessel, thawed and dried by great fires,

and then folded up and secured from wet between the decks. The main-sail was carried on shore, to be used as a covering for the house. In about four days the house was ready, and a portion of the crew slept in it every night, armed with muskets to defend themselves in case of attack, and guarded by two buckhounds which had been brought from England for the hunting of deer. Such of the other rigging of the vessel as could be taken down was now removed and placed under the decks.

On the 14th of October, six of the men set out with the dogs, in the hope of killing some deer, the tracks of which they had previously seen. They wandered more than twenty miles over the snow, and returned the next day with one small and lean animal, having passed a cold and miserable night in the woods. Others went out a few days afterward, and to a still greater distance; these were not only unsuccessful, but they lost one of their companions, who, on attempting to cross a small frozen lake, fell in and was drowned. The captain consequently gave directions that hunting to

such distances should be no more attempted.

The crew at first brought beer ashore from the ship ; but this, even in their house, and close by the fire, was frozen and spoiled in one night. After this they drank water, which they obtained from a well that they sank near the house. Their time was chiefly passed in setting traps and hunting for foxes and other animals, and in such occupations as were requisite for their own preservation.

The winter was now so far advanced that the ship appeared, from the shore, like a piece of ice in the form of a ship. The snow was frozen on every part, and her decks and sides were covered with ice. The captain began to despair of ever again getting her off. Every day the men were employed in beating the ice from the cables, and digging it out of the hawsers with a calking iron ; and in these operations the water would freeze on their clothes and hands, so as very soon to render them unequal to almost any exertion.

The ship was found to beat so much that the captain could devise no other means of

preventing her from being shattered to pieces and destroyed than by directing holes to be bored through her sides, and sinking her in shallow water, where, in the ensuing spring, he might have a chance of again raising her. This was a fearful expedient ; but, after all the provisions and things requisite for use on shore had been taken out of her, it was adopted, although it was the general opinion of the crew that she could never be floated again. They, however, had so strong an attachment for their captain, and so much confidence in him, that, even in the midst of despair, they obeyed implicitly all his commands. With true Christian confidence, he exhorted them not to be dismayed. "If," said he, "we end our days here, we are as near heaven as in England ; and we are much bound to God Almighty for having given us so long a time for repentance, and having thus, as it were, daily called upon us to prepare our souls for a better life in heaven. He does not, in the meantime, deny that we may use all proper means to save and prolong our lives ; and, in my judgment, we are not so far past hope

of returning to our native country, but that I see a fair way by which we may effect it." He then said that there was timber enough in the island for them to build a pinnace or large boat, by which they might endeavor to effect their escape, in case their vessel should be destroyed. This was on the 30th of November.

The sufferings and the hardships which these brave men encountered for many successive months, it is impossible to describe. Happily, they had a tolerable store of provisions from their ship, and had not to depend upon the precarious subsistence to be obtained by hunting. Their liquids of every kind, wine, vinegar, oil, etc., were all frozen so hard that they were obliged to cut them with hatchets, and then melt them over the fire for use.

In the beginning of January, the whole surface of the adjacent sea was so entirely frozen that no water whatever was to be seen. Some of the men were obliged to be out of doors a considerable part of the day, in fetching timber, and in other necessary employments. Their shoes were all destroyed,

except some that had been sunk in the ship, and which were now, of course, inaccessible. They were consequently reduced to the necessity of binding up their feet, as well as they could, in pieces of cloth. Their noses, cheeks, and hands were sometimes frozen in blisters, which were as white as paper; and blisters as large as walnuts rose on different parts of their skin. Their mouths became sore, and their teeth loose.

Timber was cut down according to the direction of the captain, and the carpenter and crew worked hard at the pinnace, till nearly the end of March, when the carpenter became so weak and ill that it was necessary to lead him to his labor.

Though they were in the midst of a wood, yet when their fuel began to fail, they had great difficulty in obtaining more. Almost all the axes had been broken in felling timber for the pinnace, and it was peculiarly requisite that care should be taken of such cutting implements as remained, lest there should be none left for finishing it. And, in felling the timber now, the trees were so hard frozen that it was first requisite



to light large fires round such as were to be cut, in order to thaw the wood before the axes could make any impression upon them.

During all this season of distress, Captain James and his crew never omitted to perform their religious duties. They particularly solemnized Easter day, the 26th of April, 1632; and it was on this day, whilst they were sitting round their fire, that the captain proposed to attempt, on the first opening of the warm weather, to clear the ship of ice. This was considered by some of the crew impossible, because they believed her to be filled with one solid mass of ice. The attempt, however, was resolved upon, and the question was as to the implements with which it was to be made. These were brought into review, and were only two iron bars, one of which was broken, and four broken shovels, apparently very ineffectual instruments for such a labor.

The time passed miserably and slowly on till the 16th of May, when they had a comfortable and sunny day. Some efforts were this day made to clear the decks of snow.

From this period the vessel began to occupy much of the attention of the captain and his crew. The great cabin was found to be free both from ice and water, and a fire was lighted both to clear and dry it. One of the anchors, which was supposed to have been lost, was found under the ice and recovered. The rudder, which had been torn off by the ice, they were not able to find. By the 24th of May, they had labored so hard in clearing the vessel that they came to a cask, and could perceive that there was some water in the hold. They pierced the cask, and found it full of good beer, which was a cause of great joy to them.

Their next object was to dig through the ice on the outside of the vessel, to the holes that had been cut for the purpose of sinking her. They succeeded in this operation, and through the lowest of these a considerable quantity of water flowed out. The holes were then prevented from admitting any more water, by having strong boards nailed on the outside. Five days afterward the weather became much warmer than it had been. The water in the hold of the



vessel tended to thaw the ice; and, by means of pumps, it was gradually cleared. Several butts of beer, one of cider, and another of wine were found perfectly sound and good, as well as many barrels of salt beef and pork. A considerable store of shoes and clothing was now also found. These, when dried, were peculiarly acceptable. But it was a subject of sincere rejoicing, that, on examination of the vessel, no defect could be perceived in her; and sanguine hopes began to be entertained that she might still prove capable of performing the remainder of the voyage. Not long after this, the rudder was discovered and got up from beneath the ice.

The carpenter now died. He had been a man beloved by the whole crew, and, with the most exemplary patience, had endured a long illness, in the course of which, with great exertion, he had completed all the most difficult parts of the pinnace. Thus, although he was deeply lamented by his comrades, the loss of him was not so severely felt as it might otherwise have been. At this time nearly the whole of the crew were

disabled, by illness, from working ; nor did any of them recover until after the commencement of the warm weather.

From the elevated parts of the land, the open water was first seen on the 19th of June. Four days afterward the provisions and other articles that were ashore were carried on board. A cross was next erected : the king and queen's pictures were tied to the top of it ; and the island was named Charlton Island. The rigging of the ship was now set. On the 13th, the sea was clear of ice ; and on the 2d of July, after the captain and his crew had all devoutly paid thanksgiving to the Almighty for their providential deliverance, they weighed anchor, and proceeded on their voyage.

Still, however, though in the open sea, they suffered great inconvenience from the beating of the floating ice against the ship. On the 22d of July, they again passed Cape Henrietta Maria. The ship had now become so leaky, that, for some time, it was found difficult to keep her clear of water by the pumps. After almost incredible exertions, they made their way northward, ac-

ording to their estimate, as far as 69 deg. 35 minutes, when at length they came to an impenetrable mass of ice. It was the opinion of the whole crew, that in the present condition of the ship, the autumn now fast approaching, it would not only be imprudent, but wholly impracticable, to make any further attempt to discover the hoped for passage of the sea to the north-west. The captain, therefore, with a sorrowful heart, consented to relinquish his object: and, on the 26th of August, determined on returning to England. In his passage homeward, the vessel encountered many difficulties from contrary winds and stormy weather, but, at length, safely arrived at the mouth of the Severn, on the 22d of October, 1632.





## THE IRISH SAILOR BOY.



ABOUT eighty years ago, there lived a little boy in Ireland of the name of Volney Beckner. He was born at Londonderry, his father having been a fisherman there, and so poor that he did not possess the means of giving his son a school education. What young Volney lost, however, in this respect, was more than compensated to him by the instructions of his parents at home. He was naturally healthy and active, and his father delighted to have him in his boat with him. Almost as soon as he could walk, he taught him to move and guide himself in the midst of the waves. He would throw him from the stern of the boat into the sea, and encourage him to sustain himself by swimming; and

not till he saw his strength failing did he plunge in to his aid. In this way the little boy was taught from his very cradle to brave the dangers of the sea, and to move about in it with fearless confidence. At four years old he was able to swim a distance of three or four miles after his father's vessel, which he would not enter till completely fatigued, and then catch a rope that was thrown to him, and, clinging to it, mount safely to the deck. When Volney was about nine years old, his father placed him in a merchant-vessel in which he himself occasionally served. Here the boy soon made himself exceedingly useful. The squirrel does not clamber with more agility over the loftiest trees than did Volney among the stays and sail-yards. When he was at the top of the highest mast, the wind blowing to a storm, he was as much at ease as a passenger stretched on a hammock. The little fellow also was regardless of all ordinary toils and privations; he was all life and cheerfulness, though fed only with biscuit broken with a hatchet and sparingly moistened with muddy water. Such was the cleverness, the good temper, and

trustworthiness of Volney Beckner, that in his twelfth year he was judged worthy of promotion in the vessel, and of receiving double his former pay. The captain of the ship on board which he served said once before the whole crew, "If this little man continues to conduct himself with so much valor and prudence, I have no doubt of his obtaining a place much above that which I occupy." He was always willing and ready to assist his fellow-sailors, and he won the esteem and affection of all about him. An occasion at length arrived in which the young sailor had an opportunity of performing one of the most heroic actions on record. The vessel to which he belonged was bound to Port-au-Prince in St. Domingo, and this voyage his father was on board. They were not far from the island, having that morning taken in some passengers. Among these passengers was a little girl, daughter of a rich American merchant; she had slipped away from her nurse, who was ill and taking some repose in the cabin, and ran upon deck. There, while she was gazing on the wide world of waters around, a sudden heav-

ing of the ship caused her to become dizzy, and she fell over the side of the vessel into the sea. The father of Volney, perceiving the accident, darted after her, and in five or six strokes he caught her by the frock. Whilst he swam with one arm to regain the vessel, and with the other held the child close to his breast, Beckner perceived at a distance a shark advancing directly toward him. He called out for assistance. The danger was pressing. Every one ran on deck, but no one dared go further; they fired off several muskets with little effect; and the animal, lashing the sea with his tail, and opening his frightful jaws, was just about to seize his prey. In this terrible extremity, what strong men would not venture to attempt, filial piety excited a child to execute. Little Volney armed himself with a broad and pointed sabre; he threw himself into the sea; then diving with the velocity of a fish, he slipped under the animal, and plunged his sword in his body up to the hilt. Thus suddenly assailed and deeply wounded, the shark quitted the track of his prey and turned against his assailant, who attacked



him with repeated lunges of his weapon. It was a heart-rending spectacle: on one side the American trembling for his little girl, while the whole crew were full of breathless anxiety for the father and his son! The combat was too unequal, and no refuge remained but in speedy retreat. A number of ropes were quickly thrown out; they each succeeded in seizing one, and were quickly drawn up. Already they were several feet above the surface of the water. Already cries of joy were heard: "Here they are, here they are, they are saved!" Alas! they were not *all* saved. Enraged at seeing his prey about to escape him, the shark plunged to make a vigorous spring; then issuing from the sea with impetuosity, and darting forward like lightning, with the sharp teeth of his capacious mouth he tore asunder the body of the intrepid boy now suspended in the air, while his father and the fainting child were saved.





## THE CRUISE OF THE AGAMEMNON.\*



**N**OT often have so many adverse and disheartening circumstances been crammed into a voyage of thirty-three days, and never have the enterprise, skill, and courage of all connected with the undertaking been more conspicuously displayed than in overcoming each obstacle as it rose almost with every day. The attempt to lay the cable failed three times, and once in the most mysterious manner; and those on board have only the satisfaction of knowing that everything that care and foresight could suggest was done. Beyond this con-

\* One of the vessels employed to carry the Atlantic Telegraph Cable.

sciousness, that all has been achieved that was possible with such materials, no comfort is to be gleaned from the late attempts, except, perhaps, in the fact that as much wire or more still remains than the expedition was commenced with last year, and that both vessels will start again for another and a last attempt the instant they have filled up with coal. Both the "wire" ships quitted England in the most unfavorable trim for bad weather. According to appearances at starting, however, bad weather seemed of all others the risk least likely to be encountered, so everything had been foreseen, prognosticated, and provided for except a gale; that, all thought, was out of the question. We might meet light winds, and encounter some delay from calms and sultry weather, but a gale—a regular Atlantic storm—the very idea was food for laughter. So the wire squadron went to sea, with the two chief vessels laden almost to the water's edge, and in all other respects so little fitted for rough water that, had a tithe of the tremendous weather they experienced been foreseen at home, not a ship would have moved from Plymouth Sound.

The Agamemnon had 2840 tons dead weight in her, a monstrous load for any ship of her tonnage, but made still more dangerous and overbearing by the manner in which it was stowed. In her hold was the main coil, a compact mass of 1100 miles in length, and therefore 1100 tons in weight. On her orlop deck, right forward, between the eyes, as sailors say, was another coil of 100 tons, while on her upper deck, and also right forward, was a coil of 236 tons. The latter was of sufficient size to interfere seriously with the proper working of the vessel from the deck, and the united weights of all, of course, brought the Agamemnon down by the head to an almost unsafe extent. However, nobody thought of these things when, on the morning of the 10th of June, the squadron quitted Plymouth. It was then to be a yachting cruise—a mere summer trip—and any talk of waterproofs and sou'-westers would not have been more out of place in a drawing-room than on the deck of the Agamemnon. The day favored this illusion. The barometer stood at 30.64, the weather was hot and sultry, and after all sail had been set

and reset, and every naval artifice adopted to catch the breeze that would not come, Captain Preedy reluctantly (for we had little more than coals for the voyage home) gave orders to get up steam. The Niagara, having plenty of coals, had the advantage of being always under steam, and the Valorous and Gorgon did mostly as the Agamemnon. Friday was the ditto of the previous day. The same coquettish breeze came fluttering through the rigging now and then, and it was "Hands, up screw and make sail," and "Down screw and shorten sail," all day, till even Captain Preedy wearied in his efforts to save fuel, and so we steamed again. Saturday the weather was cold and dull, but the breeze was so *prononcé* that the screw was finally hoisted and fires raked out, while the Agamemnon under royals and studding sails went through the water at a rare pace, sending the foam from her bows, and leaving a broad trail of still water upon the angry sea behind. What could be better? But it became less enjoyable toward noon, when the wind and sea got up as the glass went down, and the water grew darker, and the clouds on the horizon

were merged into a dirty haze, thickening toward the sea, and boding very ill indeed to a summer cruise. Before evening came the sail on the ship was reduced to half, for the wind was up, with squally gusts of heavy rain, and the barometer had gone below 29, and was still falling rapidly. Such was the night; but Sunday told its own tale, for even those least versed in the boisterous premonitory symptoms of an Atlantic gale could see at a glance that we were in for it. The sky seemed a wretched mist—half-rain, half-vapor—through which the other vessels of the squadron loomed faintly like shadows, watery and unsubstantial as the Flying Dutchman. The sea had changed its bright, crisp blue for a turgid, foamy aspect, and the great waves of the Atlantic came rolling toward us in rapid succession, like hills of water with their tops all jagged and broken by the fierce wind, and their white crests of foam blown out into a stream of feathery spray that almost hid the huge, dark gulfs between them. The *Agamemnon*, however, still kept on her way, rolling and straining heavily, and giving all a fair foretaste of what

they might expect when the gale set in worse, for the wind was fast going round to the south-west, and it was evident we were only at the beginning. There was divine service that day on the main deck, and, as officers and men sat in respectful silence, every change in the fast-increasing violence of the gale could be distinctly noted through the open hatchways. Heavy rain was falling, and a grayish-looking scud was flying across the sky with inconceivable rapidity; every rope and shroud, tightened to the utmost, was humming with a loud, clear noise, as if ten thousand accordions were going at once, while now and then, as the ship fetched up near the wind, her great sails flapped and slotted like peals of thunder, jerking the vessel with an uneasy vibration, as if the masts were coming out of her. Still, among the little congregation no one moved more than was necessary to keep his seat as the ship lurched over, and the service proceeded, as little disturbed by the war of elements outside as if all were assembled within the walls of a cathedral. Service over, and it was "Hands, reef topsails;" then again, after a



little lapse, the same cry ; and yet again, till at four in the afternoon the *Agamemnon* was rushing through the foam under close-reefed topsails and foresail. At half-past four we caught the last glimpse of the *Gorgon*, as, making a long stretch to windward, she was lost in the misty darkness that marked the horizon. At five the *Valorous* began to drop astern, and by six she also had disappeared, but still the *Niagara* and *Agamemnon* held on together, the former under sail and steam, the latter, like all the English vessels, under sail alone. Of the two vessels specially appointed to convoy and assist, if necessary, the *Agamemnon* and *Niagara* we saw no more till all danger was past, and the squadron had reassembled at the rendezvous some twelve days afterward. On Sunday night the gale seemed at its worst. The ocean resembled one vast snow-drift, the whitish glare from which, reflected on the dark clouds that almost rested on the sea, had a tremendous and unnatural effect, as if the ordinary laws of nature had been reversed by the storm. The *Niagara*, which had hitherto kept close, began to give us a very



wide berth, and as darkness increased she too went out of sight, and it was every one for themselves. There may be some of our readers who know what a line-of-battle ship is in a gale of wind, though such an experience would give them but a faint notion of how the *Agamemnon* went at it all that night. She strained and labored under her heavy burden as if she were breaking up, and the massive beams under her upper deck coil cracked and snapped with a noise resembling that of small artillery, almost drowning the hideous roar of the wind as it moaned and howled through the rigging, jerking and straining the little stormsails as though it meant to tear them from the yards. Such was Sunday night, and such was a fair average of all the nights throughout the week, varying only from bad to worse. Daybreak on Monday ushered in as fierce a gale as ever swept over the Atlantic.

The barometer was lower, and, as a matter of course, the wind and sea were infinitely higher than the day before. It was singular, but at twelve o'clock the sun pierced through the pall of clouds and shone bril-

liantly for half an hour, and during that brief time it blew as it has not often blown before. So fierce was this gust that its roar drowned every other sound, and it was almost impossible to give the watch the necessary orders for taking in the close-reefed foresail, which, when furled, almost left the *Agamemnon* under bare poles, though still surging through the water at speed. This gust passed, and the usual gale set in—now blowing steadily from the south-west, and taking us more and more out of our course each minute. Every hour the storm got worse till toward five in the afternoon, when it seemed at its height, and raged with such a violence of wind and sea that matters really looked serious even for such a strong and large ship as the *Agamemnon*. The upper deck coil had strained her decks throughout excessively, and though this mass in theory was supposed to prevent her rolling so quickly and heavily as she would have done without it, yet still she heeled over to such an alarming extent that fears of the coil itself shifting again occupied every mind, and it was accordingly strengthened with additional shores, bolted down to the

deck. The space occupied by the main coil below had deprived the *Agamemnon* of several of her coal-bunkers, and in order to make up for this deficiency, as well as to endeavor to counterbalance the immense mass which weighed her down by the head, a large quantity of coals had been stowed on the deck aft. On each side of her main deck were thirty-five tons, secured in a mass, while on the lower deck ninety tons were stowed away in the same manner. The precautions taken to secure these great masses also required attention, as the great ship surged from side to side. But these coals seemed secure, and were so, in fact, unless the vessel should almost capsize—an unpleasant alternative which no one certainly anticipated then. Everything, therefore, was made “snug,” as sailors call it, though their efforts by no means resulted in the comfort which might have been expected from the term. The night, however, passed over without any mischance beyond the smashing of all things incautiously left loose and capable of rolling, and one or two attempts which the *Agamemnon* made in the middle watch apparently to

turn bottom upward. In all other matters it was the mere ditto of Sunday night, except, perhaps, a little worse, and certainly much more wet below. Tuesday the gale continued with almost unabated force, though the barometer had risen to 29.30, and there was sufficient sun to take a clear observation, which showed our distance from the rendezvous to be 563 miles. During this afternoon the Niagara rejoined company, and the wind going more ahead, the Agamemnon took to violent pitching, plunging steadily into the trough of the sea as if she meant to break her back and lay the Atlantic cable in a heap. This change in her motion strained and taxed every inch of timber near the coils to the very utmost. It was curious to see how they worked and bent as the Agamemnon went at everything she met head first. One time she pitched so heavily as to break one of the main beams of the lower deck, which had to be shored with screw-jacks forthwith. There was the same sea and less wind on Wednesday, heavy sea and rain on Thursday, with gusts and squalls and heavy rain on Friday. Saturday, the 19th

of June, things looked a little better. The barometer seemed inclined to go up and the sea to go down, and for the first time that morning since the gale began some six days previous, the decks could be walked with tolerable comfort and security. But, alas! appearances are as deceitful in the Atlantic as elsewhere, and during a comparative calm that afternoon the glass fell lower, while a thin line of black haze to windward seemed to grow up into the sky, until it covered the heavens with a sombre darkness, and warned us that, after all, the worst was yet to come. There was much heavy rain that evening, and then the wind began—not violently, nor in gusts, but with a steady, increasing force, as if the gale was determined to do its work slowly, but do it well. The sea was “ready-built to hand,” as sailors say, so that at first the storm did little more than urge on the ponderous masses of water with redoubled force, and fill the air with the foam and spray it tore from their rugged crests. By and by, however, it grew more dangerous, and Captain Preedy himself remained on deck throughout the middle watch, for the wind

was hourly getting worse and worse, and the *Agamemnon*, rolling thirty degrees each way, was laboring heavily, and straining to a dangerous extent.

At four P.M. sail was shortened to close-reefed fore and main topsails and reefed fore-sail—a long and tedious job, for the wind so roared and howled, and the hiss of the boiling sea was so deafening, that words of command were useless, and the men aloft, holding on with all their might to the yards as the ship rolled over and over almost to the water, were quite incapable of struggling with the masses of wet canvas that flapped and plunged as if men and yards and everything were going away together. The ship was almost as wet inside as out—and so things wore on till eight or nine o'clock, everything getting adrift and being smashed, and every one on board jamming themselves up in corners or holding on to beams to prevent their going adrift likewise. At ten o'clock the *Agamemnon* was rolling and laboring fearfully, with sky getting darker, and both wind and sea increasing every minute. At about half-past ten o'clock three or four gigantic



waves were seen approaching the ship, coming heavily and slowly on through the mist nearer and nearer, rolling on like hills of green water, with a crown of foam that seemed to double their height. The *Agamemnon* rose heavily to the first, and then went down quickly into the deep trough of the sea, falling over as she did so, so as almost to capsize completely on the port side. There was a fearful crashing as she lay over this way, for everything broke adrift, whether secured or not, and the uproar and confusion were terrific for a minute; then back she came again on the starboard beam in the same manner, only quicker, and still deeper than before. Again there was the same noise and crashing, and the officers in the ward-room, who knew the danger of the ship, struggled to their feet and opened the door leading to the main deck. Here for an instant the scene almost defies description. Amid loud shouts and efforts to save themselves, a confused mass of sailors, boys, and marines, with deck-buckets, ropes, ladders, and everything that could get loose, and which had fallen back again to the port side, were being hurl-



ed again in a mass across the ship to starboard. Dimly and only for an instant could this be seen, with groups of men clinging to the beams with all their might, with a mass of water which had forced its way in through ports and decks surging about; and then, with a tremendous crash, as the ship fell still deeper over, the coals stowed on the main deck broke loose, and, smashing everything before them, went over among the rest to leeward. The coal-dust hid everything on the main deck in an instant, but the crashing could still be heard going on in all directions, as the lumps and sacks of coal, with stanchions, ladders, and mess-tins, went leaping about the decks, pouring down the hatchways, and crashing through the glass skylights into the engine-room below. Still it was not done, and, surging again over another tremendous wave, the *Agamemnon* dropped down still more to port, and the coals on the starboard side of the lower deck gave way also, and carried everything before them. Matters now became most serious; for it was evident that two or three more such lurches and the masts would go like reeds,

while half the crew might be maimed or killed below. Captain Preedy was already on the poop, with Lieutenant Gibson, and it was "Hands, wear ship" at once, while Mr. Brown, the indefatigable chief-engineer, was ordered to get up steam immediately. The crew gained the deck with difficulty and not till after a lapse of some minutes, for all the ladders had been broken away and the men were grimed with coal-dust, and many bore still more serious marks upon their faces of how they had been knocked about below. There was some confusion at first, for the storm was fearful; the officers were quite inaudible, and a wild, dangerous sea, running mountains high, heeled the great ship backward and forward, so that the crew were unable to keep their feet for an instant, and in some cases were thrown across the decks in a dreadful manner; two marines went with a rush head-foremost into the paying-out machine, as if they meant to butt it over the side; yet, strange to say, neither the men nor the machine suffered. What made matters worse, the ship's barge, though lashed down to the deck, had partly

broken loose, and, dropping from side to side as the vessel lurched, it threatened to crush any who ventured to pass it. The regular discipline of the ship, however, soon prevailed, and the crew set to work to wear round the ship on the starboard tack, while Lieutenants Robinson and Murray went below to see after those who had been hurt, and about the number of whom extravagant rumors prevailed among the men. There were, however, unfortunately, but too many. The marine sentry outside the ward-room door on the main deck had not had time to escape, and was completely buried under the coals. Some time elapsed before he could be got out, for one of the beams used to shore up the sacks, which had crushed his arm very badly, still lay across the mangled limb, jamming it in such a manner that it was found impossible to move it without risking the man's life. Saws, therefore, had to be sent for, and the timber sawn away before the poor fellow could be extricated. Another marine on the lower deck endeavored to save himself by catching hold of what seemed a ledge in the planks, but unfortunately it was

only caused by the beams straining apart, and of course, as the *Agamemnon* righted, they closed again, and crushed his fingers flat. One of the assistant-engineers was also buried among the coals on the lower deck, and sustained some severe internal injuries. The lurch of the ship was calculated at forty-five degrees each way for five times in rapid succession. The galley coppers were only half-filled with soup, yet nevertheless it nearly all poured out, and scalded some of the poor fellows who were extended on the decks, holding on to anything in reach. These, with a dislocation, were the chief casualties ; but there were others of bruises and contusions, more or less severe, and of course a long list of escapes more marvellous than any injury. One poor fellow went head-first from the main deck into the hold without hurt, and one on the orlop deck was being "chevied" about for some ten minutes by three large casks of oil which had got adrift, and any one of which would have flattened him like a pancake had it overtaken him.

As soon as the *Agamemnon* had gone

round on the other tack the Niagara wore also, and bore down as if to render assistance. She had witnessed our danger, and, as we afterward learned, imagined that the upper deck coil had broken loose and that we were sinking. Things, however, were not so bad as that, though they were bad enough, Heaven knows, for everything seemed to go wrong that day. The upper deck coil had strained the ship to the very utmost, but still held on fast; but not so the coil in the main hold, which had begun to get adrift, and the top kept working and shifting over from side to side as the ship lurched, till some forty or fifty miles were in a hopeless state of tangle, resembling nothing so much as a cargo of live eels, and there was every prospect of the tangle spreading deeper and deeper as the bad weather continued.

Going round upon the starboard\* tack

\* The writer subsequently corrected this. He says, "I was wrong in my previous statement. The ship never went round on the starboard tack at all, but, when the attempt was made to wear her, fell off into the trough of the sea, and became unmanageable. In this state she remained for a considerable time, and all that the most consummate

had eased the ship to a certain extent, but with such a wind and such a sea, both of which were rather getting worse than better, it was impossible to effect much for the *Agamemnon's* relief, and so by twelve o'clock she was rolling almost as bad as ever. The crew, who had been at work since nearly four in the morning, were set to clear up the decks from the masses of coal that covered them, and while this was going forward a heavy sea struck the stern, and smashed the large iron guard-frame, which had been fixed there to prevent the cable fouling the screw in paying out. This guard, which from its peculiar hooped shape, suspended round the stern by chains, the sailors had nicknamed "the crinoline," was about the most cumbersome and ill-contrived piece of mechanism which could possibly have been adopted.

skill, coolness, and daring could effect to extricate her was tried in vain. For the first time in their lives the officers found their experience was valueless—that the vessel was as helpless as a log upon the water, and that in the fullest and most painful significance of the term she lay at the mercy of one of the wildest storms that ever raged in the Atlantic."



From the first hour every one had known that it was perfectly useless for the purpose it was intended to effect, and what was worse than useless, that it was a source of positive danger also. Now that one side had broken, it was expected every moment that other parts would go, and the pieces hanging down either smash the screw or foul the rudder-post. It is not overestimating the danger to say that had the latter accident occurred in such a sea, and with a vessel so overladen, the chances would have been sadly against the *Agamemnon* ever appearing at the rendezvous. Fortunately it was found possible to secure the broken frame temporarily with hawsers, so as to prevent its dropping further, though nothing could hinder the fractured end from striking against the vessel's side with such force as to lead to serious apprehensions that it would establish a dangerous leak under water. It was near three in the afternoon before this was quite secured, the gale still continuing, and the sea running even worse. The condition of the masts, too, at this time was a source of much anxiety both to Captain Preedy and Mr. Moriarty the



master. The heavy rolling had strained and slackened the wire shrouds to such an extent that they had become perfectly useless as supports. The lower masts bent visibly at every roll, and once or twice it seemed as if they must go by the board. Unfortunately nothing whatever could be done to relieve this strain by sending down any of the upper spars, since it was only her masts which prevented the ship rolling still more and quicker, and so every one knew that if once they were carried away it might soon be all over with the ship, as then the deck coil could not help going after them. So there was nothing for it but to watch in anxious silence the way they bent and strained, and trust in Providence for the result. About six in the evening it was thought better to wear ship again and stand for the rendezvous under easy steam, and her head accordingly was put about, and once more faced the storm. As she went round she of course fell into the trough of the sea again, and rolled so awfully as to break her waste steam pipe, filling her engine-room with steam, and depriving her of the services

of one boiler when it was sorely needed. The sun set upon as wild and wicked a night as ever taxed the courage and coolness of a sailor. There were, of course, men on board who were familiar with gales and storms in all parts of the world, and there were some who, with the writer of this article, had witnessed the tremendous hurricane which swept the Black Sea on the memorable 14th of November, when scores of vessels were lost and seamen perished by thousands. But of all on board none had ever seen a fiercer or more dangerous sea than raged throughout that night and the following morning, tossing the *Agamemnon* from side to side like a mere plaything among the waters. The night was thick and very dark, the low black clouds almost hemming the vessel in; now and then a fiercer blast than usual drove the great masses slowly aside, and showed the moon, a dim, greasy blotch upon the sky, with the ocean, white as driven snow, boiling and seething like a caldron. But these were only glimpses, which were soon lost, and again it was all darkness, through which the waves, suddenly upheaving, rushed upon the ship

as though they must overwhelm it, and, dealing it one staggering blow, went hissing and surging past into the darkness again. The grandeur of the scene was almost lost in its dangers and terrors, for of all the many forms in which death approaches man there is none so terrific in appearance, though so easy in fact, as death by shipwreck.

Sleeping was impossible that night on board the *Agamemnon*. Even those in cots were thrown out, from their striking against the vessel's side as she pitched. The berths of wood fixed athwartships in the cabins on the main deck had worked to pieces, chairs and tables were broken, chests of drawers capsized, and a little surf was running over the floors of the cabins themselves, pouring miniature seas into portmanteaus, and breaking over carpet-bags of clean linen. Fast as it flowed off by the scuppers it came in faster by the hawseholes and ports, while the beams and knees strained with a doleful noise, as if it was impossible they could hold together much longer ; and on the whole it was as miserable and even anxious a night as ever was passed on board any line-of-battle

ship in her Majesty's service. Captain Preedy never left the poop all night, though it was hard work to remain there, even holding on to the poop-rail with both hands. Morning brought no change, save that the storm was still as fierce as ever, and though the sea could not be higher or wilder, yet the additional amount of broken water made it still more dangerous to the ship. Very dimly, and only now and then through the thick scud, the Niagara could be seen, one moment on a monstrous hill of water and the next quite lost to view, as the Agamemnon went down between the waves. But even these glimpses showed us that our transatlantic consort was plunging heavily, shipping seas, and evidently having a bad time of it, though she got through it better than the Agamemnon, as, of course, she could, having only the same load, though 2000 tons larger. Suddenly it came on darker and thicker, and we lost sight of her in the thick spray, and had only ourselves to look after, which was quite enough, for every minute made matters worse, and the aspect of affairs began to excite most serious misgivings in the minds of those in

charge. The Agamemnon is one of the finest line-of-battle ships in the whole navy, but in such a storm, and so heavily overladen, what could she do but make bad worse, and strain and labor and fall into the trough of the sea, as if she were going down head foremost? Three or four hours more and the vessel had borne all which she could bear with safety; the masts were rapidly getting worse, the deck coil worked more and more with each tremendous plunge, and, even if both these held, it was evident that the ship itself would soon strain to pieces if the weather continued so. The sea, forcing its way through ports and hawseholes, had accumulated on the lower deck to such an extent that it flooded the stokehole, so that the men could scarcely remain at their posts. Everything went smashing and rolling about. One plunge put all the electrical instruments *hors de combat* at a blow, and staved some barrels of strong solution of sulphate of copper, which went cruising about, turning all it touched to a light pea-green. By and by she began to ship seas. Water came down the ventilators near

the funnel into the engine-room. Then a tremendous sea struck her forward, drenching those on deck, and leaving them up to their knees in water, and the least versed on board could see that things were fast going to the bad unless a change took place either in the weather or the condition of the ship. Of the first there seemed little chance. The weather certainly showed no disposition to clear; on the contrary, livid-looking black clouds seemed to be closing round the vessel faster and faster than ever. For the relief of the ship three courses were open to Captain Preedy: one, to wear round and try her on the starboard tack, as he had been compelled to do the day before; another, to fairly run for it before the wind; and the third and last, to endeavor to lighten the vessel by getting some of the cable overboard. Of course the latter would not have been thought of till the first two had been tried and failed; in fact, not till it was evident that nothing else would save the ship. A little after ten o'clock on Monday, the 21st, the aspect of affairs was so alarming that Captain Preedy resolved at all risks to try wearing the ship round on the



other tack. It was hard enough to make the words of command audible, but to execute them seemed almost impossible. The ship's head went round enough to leave her broadside on to the seas, and then for a time it seemed as if nothing could be done. All the rolls which she had ever given on the previous day seemed mere trifles compared with her performances then. Of more than two hundred men on deck at least one hundred and fifty were thrown down and falling over from side to side in heaps, while others, holding on to ropes, swung to and fro with every heave. It really seemed as if the last hour of the stout ship had come, and to this minute it seems almost miraculous that her masts held on. Each time she fell over, her main chains went deep under water. The lower decks were flooded, and those above could hear by the fearful crashing, audible amid the hoarse roar of the storm, that the coals had got loose again below, and had broken into the engine-room, and were carrying all before them. During these rolls the main deck coil shifted over to such a degree as quite to envelop four men, who, sitting on the top, were try-



ing to wedge it down with beams. One of them was so much jammed by the mass which came over him that he was seriously contused, and had to be removed to the sick bay, making up the sick list to forty-five, of which ten were from injuries caused by the rolling of the ship, and very many of the rest from continual fatigue and exposure during the gale. Once round on the starboard tack, and it was seen in an instant that the ship was in no degree relieved by the change. Another heavy sea struck her forward, sweeping clean over the fore part of the vessel, and carrying away the woodwork and platforms which had been placed there round the machinery for under-running. This and a few more plunges were quite sufficient to settle the matter, and at last, reluctantly, Captain Preedy succumbed to the storm he could neither conquer nor contend against. Full steam was got on, and, with a foresail and foretopsail to lift her head, the *Agamemnon* ran before the storm, rolling and tumbling over the huge waves at a tremendous pace. It was well for all that the wind gave this much way on her, or her stern would infallibly have been stove in. As it

was, a wave partly struck her on the star-board quarter, smashing the quarter galley and ward-room windows on that side, and sending such a sea into the ward-room itself as literally almost to wash two officers off a sofa on which they were resting on that side of the ship. This was a kind of parting blow, for the glass began to rise, and the storm was evidently beginning to moderate ; and, though the sea still ran as high as ever, there was less broken water, and altogether, toward midday, affairs assumed a better and more cheerful aspect. The ward-room that afternoon was a study for an artist, with its windows half-darkened and smashed, the sea water still slushing about in odd corners, with everything that was capable of being broken strewn over the floor in pieces, and some fifteen or twenty officers, seated amid the ruins, holding on to the deck or table with one hand, while with the other they contended at a disadvantage with a tough meal—the first which most had eaten for twenty-four hours.

Throughout the whole of Monday the *Agamemnon* ran before the wind, which moderated so much that at four A.M. on Tuesday

her head was again put about, and for the second time she commenced beating up for the rendezvous, then some two hundred miles further from us than when the gale was at its height on Sunday morning. Tuesday was a calm, fine day, though, of course, with a heavy swell on. Wednesday was also warm, fine, and calm, and for the first time for a fortnight we had a real summer day, and the reefs were shaken out of the topsails. Immediately the ship began to run before the wind on Monday the shrouds of the main and fore masts were lashed in such a way as to give some support to the masts, and on Wednesday advantage was taken of the calm to "tauten" up the main rigging three inches, which, for wire rope, was a great gain. It was well that this was done in time, for on Wednesday, the 23d, the glass again went down; it was the old song of wind and rain, with heavy squalls, rough sea, and reefed topsails. So little was gained against this wind that Friday, the 25th, sixteen days after leaving Plymouth, still found us some fifty miles from the rendezvous. So it was determined to get up steam and run

down on it at once. As we approached the place of meeting, the Valorous hove in sight at noon ; in the afternoon the Niagara came in from the north, and in the evening the Gorgon from the south ; and then, almost for the first time since starting, the squadron was reunited near the spot where the great work was to commence. The rendezvous actually agreed upon was 52°2 north latitude 33°18 west longitude, but the place where the vessels met was in 51°54 latitude 32°33 longitude, or about thirty miles more toward the English coast than had been agreed upon. The Valorous, it appeared, had been first on the real rendezvous. The Niagara was the next, arriving under steam two days before the Agamemnon, and the Gorgon, which had had a very bad time of it, and was also near losing her masts, was third. The Niagara seemed to have weathered the gale splendidly, though, nevertheless, with her, as with all the others, it had been a hard and anxious time. She had lost her jib-boom, and her spare spars and buoys, for the cable had been washed from her sides and gone no man knew where.

On the evening of Friday, the 25th of June, the four vessels lay together side by side, and there was such a stillness in the sea and air as would have seemed remarkable in an inland lake ; on the Atlantic, and after what we had all so lately witnessed, it seemed almost unnatural. I have said how, during the awful rolls which the *Agamemnon* made on the 20th and 21st, the upper part of the main coil shifted and became a mere shapeless, tangled mass, with which it seemed impossible to deal in any conceivable way. However, neither Mr. Bright, nor Mr. Canning, nor Mr. Clifford was to be daunted by the aspect of a difficulty however formidable. Absurd as the statement seemed at first, they were all positive that the tangle did not extend far down the coil, and they were right. Captain Preedy gave them his hearty assistance ; men were at work day and night, drawing it out of the hold and coiling it aft on the main deck. For the first twenty-four hours the labor seemed hopeless, for so dense was the tangle that an hour's hard work would sometimes scarcely clear a half-mile. By and by, however, it began to mend,

the efforts were redoubled, and late on Friday night one hundred and forty miles had been got out, and the remainder was found to be clear enough to commence work with. On the morning of Saturday, the 26th of June, all the preparations were completed for making the splice and commencing the great undertaking. The end of the Niagara's cable was sent on board the Agamemnon, the splice was made, a bent sixpence put in it for luck, and at 2:50, Greenwich time, it was slowly lowered over the side and disappeared for ever. The weather was cold and foggy, with a stiff breeze and dismal sort of sleet, and, as there was no cheering or manifestation of enthusiasm of any kind, the whole ceremony had a most funereal effect, and seemed as solemn as if we were burying a marine, or some other mortuary task of the kind equally cheerful and enlivening. As it turned out, however, it was just as well that no display took place, as every one would have looked uncommonly silly when the same operation came to be repeated, as it had to be, an hour or so afterward. When each ship had payed out



three miles or so, and they were getting well apart, the cable broke on board the Niagara, owing to its overriding and getting off the pulley leading on to the machine. The break was, of course, known instantly, both vessels put about and returned, a fresh splice was made, and again lowered over at half-past seven. According to arrangement one hundred and fifty fathoms were veared out from each ship, and then all stood away on their course, at first at two miles an hour and afterward at four. Everything then went well, the machine working beautifully, at thirty-two revolutions per minute, the screw at twenty-six, the cable running out easily at five and five and a half miles an hour, the ship going at four. The greatest strain upon the dynamometer was 2500 lb. ; and this was only for a few minutes, the average giving only 2000 lb. and 2100 lb. At twelve at midnight twenty-one nautical miles had been paid out, and the angle of the cable with the horizon had been reduced considerably. At half-past three, forty miles had gone, and nothing could be more perfect and regular than the working of everything, when sud-



denly, at 3:40 A.M. on Sunday, the 27th, Professor Thompson came on deck and reported a total break of continuity; that the cable, in fact, had parted, and, as was believed at the time, from the Niagara. The Agamemnon was instantly stopped, and the brakes applied to the machinery, in order that the cable paid out might be severed from the mass in the hold, and so enable Professor Thompson to discover by electrical tests at about what distance from the ship the fracture had taken place. Unfortunately, however, there was a strong breeze on at the time, with rather a heavy swell, which told severely upon the cable, and before any means could be taken to ease entirely the motion on the ship, it parted, a few fathoms below the stern wheel, the dynamometer indicating a strain of nearly 4000 lb. In another instant a gun and a blue light warned the Valorous of what had happened, and roused all on board the Agamemnon to a knowledge that the machinery was silent, and that the first part of the Atlantic Cable had been laid, and lost effectually.

The great length of the cable on board

both ships allowed a large margin for such mishaps as these, and the arrangement made before leaving England was that the splices may be renewed and the work recommenced till each ship had lost 250 miles of wire, after which they were to discontinue their efforts and return to Queenstown for orders. Accordingly, after the breakage on Sunday morning the ships' heads were put about, and for the fourth time the *Agamemnon* again began the weary work of beating up against the wind for that everlasting rendezvous which we seemed destined to be always seeking. Apart from the regret with which all regarded the loss of the cable, there were other reasons for not wishing the cruise to be thus indefinitely prolonged, since there had been a break in the continuity of the fresh provisions, and for some days previously in the ward-room the *pièces de résistance* had been inflammatory-looking *morceaux*, salted to an astonishing pitch, and otherwise uneatable, for it was beef which had been kept three years beyond its warranty for soundness, and to which all were then reduced.

It was hard work beating up against the wind ; so hard, indeed, that it was not till the noon of Monday, the 28th, that we rejoined the Niagara ; and, while all were waiting with impatience for her explanation of how she broke the cable, she electrified every one by running up the interrogatory, "How did the cable part?" This was astounding. As soon as the boats could be lowered, Mr. Cyrus Field, with the electricians from the Niagara, came on board, and a comparison of logs showed the painful and mysterious fact, that at the same second of time each vessel discovered that a total fracture had taken place at a distance of certainly not less than ten miles from each ship—as well as could be judged, at the bottom of the ocean. The logs on both sides were so clear as to the minute of time, and as to the electrical tests showing not merely leakage or defective insulation of the wire, but a total fracture, that there was no room left on which to rest a moment's doubt of the certainty of this most disheartening fact. That of all the many mishaps connected with the Atlantic telegraph this is the worst and most

disheartening is certain, since it proves that, after all that human skill and science can effect to lay the wire down with safety has been accomplished, there may be some fatal obstacles to success at the bottom of the ocean which can never be guarded against, for even the nature of the peril must always remain as secret and unknown as the depths in which it is to be encountered.

No time was lost after the vessels rejoined in making the third and last splice, which was lowered over into 2000 fathoms' water at seven o'clock by ship's time the same night. Before steaming away, as the *Agamemnon* was now getting very short of coal, and the two vessels had expended some 100 miles of cable between them, it was agreed that, if the wire parted again before the ships had gone each 100 miles from the rendezvous, they were to return and make another splice; and as the *Agamemnon* was to sail back, the *Niagara*, it was decided, was to wait eight days for her reappearance. If, on the other hand, the 100 miles had been exceeded, the ships were not to return, but each make the best of its way to Queens-

town. With this understanding, which, from the rate of speed which had been agreed on, both vessels would be able to observe with perfect accuracy, the ships again parted, and, with the wire dropping steadily down between them, the Niagara and Agamemnon steamed away, and were soon lost in the cold, raw fog which had hung over the rendezvous ever since the operations had commenced.

The cable, as before, payed out beautifully, and nothing could have been more regular and more easy than the working of every part of the apparatus. At first the ship's speed was only 2 knots, the cable going 3 and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  with a strain of 1500 lb., the horizontal angle averaging as low as 7, and the vertical about 16. By and by, however, the speed was increased to four knots, the cable going five, at a strain of 2000 lb., and an angle of from 12 to 15. At this rate it was kept, with trifling variations throughout almost the whole of Monday night, and neither Mr. Bright, Mr. Canning, nor Mr. Clifford ever quitted the machines for an instant. Toward the middle of the night, while the

rate of the ship continued the same, the speed at which the cable paid out slackened nearly a knot an hour, while the dynamometer indicated as low as 1300 lb. This change could only be accounted for on the supposition that the water had shallowed to a considerable extent, and that the vessel was in fact passing over some submarine Ben Nevis or Skiddaw. After an interval of about an hour the strain and rate of progress of the cable again increased, while the increase of the vertical angle seemed to indicate that the wire was sinking down the side of a declivity. Beyond this there was no variation throughout Monday night, or indeed through Tuesday. The upper deck coil, which had weighed so heavily upon the ship, and still more heavily upon the minds of all during the past storms, was fast disappearing, and by twelve at midday, on Tuesday, the 29th, 76 miles had been payed out, to something like 60 miles' progress of the ship. All seemed to promise most hopefully; and the only cause that warranted anxiety was that it was evident the upper deck coil would be finished by about eleven o'clock at night,



when the men would have to pass in darkness along the great loop which formed the communication between that and the coil in the main hold. This was most unfortunate, but the operation had been successfully performed in daylight during the experimental trip in the Bay of Biscay, and every precaution was now taken that no accident should occur. At nine o'clock by ship's time, when 146 miles had been payed out, and about 112 miles' distance from the rendezvous accomplished, the last flake but one of the upper deck coil came in turn to be used. In order to make it easier in passing to the main coil the revolutions of the screw were reduced gradually, by two revolutions at a time, from 30 to 20, while the paying-out machine went slowly from 36 to 22. At this rate, the vessel going three knots and the cable three and a half, the operation was continued with perfect regularity, the dynamometer indicating a strain of 2100 lb. Suddenly, without an instant's warning, or the occurrence of any single incident that could account for it, the cable parted. The gun that again told the Valorous of this fatal



mishap brought all on board the *Agamemnon* rushing to the deck, for none could believe the rumor that had spread like wild-fire about the ship. But there stood the machinery, silent and motionless, while the fractured end of the wire hung over the stern wheel, swinging loosely to and fro. There was a regular gloom that night on board the *Agamemnon*, for from first to last the success of the expedition had been uppermost in the thoughts of all, and all had labored for it early and late, contending with every danger and overcoming every obstacle and disaster that had marked each day with an earnestness and devotion of purpose that is really beyond all praise.

Immediately after the mishap a brief consultation was held by those in charge on board the *Agamemnon*, and as it was shown that they had only exceeded the distance from the rendezvous by fourteen miles, and that there was still more cable on board the two vessels than the amount with which the original expedition last year was commenced, it was determined to try for another chance

and return to the rendezvous, sailing there, of course ; for Mr. Brown, the chief-engineer, as ultra-zealous in the cause as a board of directors, guarded the coal-bunkers like a very dragon, lest, if we came to paying out the cable again, we should be short of steam, and so endanger the success of the whole undertaking. For the fifth time, therefore, the Agamemnon's head went about, and after twenty days at sea she again began beating up against the wind for the rendezvous, to try, if possible, to recommence her labors. The following day the wind was blowing strongly from the south-west, with mist and rain, and Thursday, the 1st of July, gave every one the most unfavorable opinion of July weather in the Atlantic. The wind and sea were both high—the wet fog was so dense that one could scarcely see the masts' heads, while the damp cold was really biting. Altogether it was an atmosphere of which a Londoner would have been ashamed even in November. Later in the day a heavy sea got on ; the wind increased without dissipating the fog, and it was double-reefed topsails, and

pitching and rolling as before. However, the upper deck coil of 250 tons being gone, the *Agamemnon* was as buoyant as a life-boat, and no one cared how much she took to kicking about, though the cold, wet fog was a miserable nuisance, penetrating everywhere, and making the ship as wet inside as out. What made the matter worse was that in such weather there seemed no chance of meeting the *Niagara* unless she ran into us, when cable-laying would have gone on wholesale. In order to avoid such a *contretemps*, and also to inform the *Valorous* of our whereabouts, guns were fired, fog-bells rung, and the bugler stationed forward, to warn the other vessels of our vicinity. Friday was the ditto of Thursday, and Saturday worse than both together, for it almost blew a gale, and there was a very heavy sea on. On Sunday, the 4th, it cleared, and the *Agamemnon*, for the first time during the whole cruise, reached the actual rendezvous, and fell in with the *Valorous*, which had been there since Friday the 2d, but the fog must have been even thicker there than elsewhere,

for she had scarcely seen herself, much less anything else, till Sunday.

During the remainder of that day and Monday, when the weather was very clear, both ships cruised over the place of meeting, but it is needless to say that neither the Niagara nor Gorgon was there, though day and night the lookout for them was anxious and incessant. It was evident then that the Niagara had rigidly, but most unfortunately, adhered to the mere letter of the agreement regarding the 100 miles, and after the last fracture had at once turned back for Queens-town. On Tuesday, the 6th, therefore, as the dense fogs and winds set in again, it was agreed between the Valorous and Agamemnon to return only once more over the rendezvous. But, as usual, the fog was so thick that the whole American navy might have been cruising there unobserved, so the search was given up, and at eight o'clock that night the ship's head was turned for Cork, and under all sail the Agamemnon at last stood homeward. The voyage home was made with ease and swiftness, considering the

lightness of the wind, the trim of the ship, and that she only steamed three days, and this morning, at 12:30, the *Agamemnon* cast anchor in Queenstown harbor, having met with more dangerous weather and encountered more mishaps than often fall to the lot of any ship in a cruise of thirty-three days.





## NOVA SCOTIA FOGS.



**T**HERE are few things more provoking than the fogs off Halifax, for, as they happen to be companions of that very wind, the south-east, which is the best for running in, the navigator is plagued with the tormenting consciousness that, if he could be allowed but a couple of hours of clear weather, his port would be gained and his troubles over. The clearing up, therefore, of these odious clouds or veils is about the most delightful thing I know of; and the instantaneous effect which a clear sight of the land, or even of the sharp horizon, when far at sea, has on the mind of every person on board, is quite remarkable. All things look bright, fresh, and more beautiful

than ever. The stir over the whole ship at these moments is so great that even persons sitting below can tell at once that the fog has cleared away. The rapid clatter of the men's feet, springing up the hatchways at the lively sound of the boatswain's call to "make sail!" soon follows. Then comes the cheerful voice of the officer, hailing the topmen to shake out the reefs, trice up the stay sails, and rig out the booms. That peculiar and well-known kind of echo, also, by which the sound of the voice is thrown back from the wet sails, contributes in like manner to produce a joyous elasticity of spirits, greater, I think, than is excited by most of the ordinary occurrences of a sea life.

A year or two after the time I am speaking of, it was resolved to place a heavy gun upon the rock on which Sambro light-house is built; and, after a good deal of trouble, a long twenty-four pounder was hoisted up to the highest ridge of this prominent station. It was then arranged that, if, on the arrival of any ship off the harbor, in a period of fog, she chose to fire guns, these were to be answered from the light-house, and in this way



a kind of audible though invisible telegraph might be set to work. If it happened that the officers of the ship were sufficiently familiar with the ground, and possessed nerves stout enough for such a groping kind of navigation, perilous at best, it was possible to run fairly into the harbor, notwithstanding the obscurity, by watching the sound of these guns, and attending closely to the depth of water.

I never was in any ship which ventured upon this feat, but I perfectly recollect a curious circumstance, which occurred, I think, to his Majesty's ship *Cambrian*. She had run in from sea toward the coast, enveloped in one of these dense fogs. Of course they took for granted that the light-house and the adjacent land, Halifax included, were likewise covered with an impenetrable cloud or mist. But it so chanced, by what freak of Dame Nature I know not, that the fog on that day was confined to the deep water, so that we, who were in the port, could see it at the distance of several miles from the coast, lying on the ocean like a huge stratum of snow, with an abrupt face fronting the

shore. The Cambrian, lost in the midst of this fog-bank, supposing herself to be near the land, fired a gun. To this the light-house replied; and so the ship and the light-house went on pelting away, gun for gun, during half the day, without ever seeing one another. The people at the light-house had no means of communicating to the frigate that, if she could only stand on a little further, she would disentangle herself from the cloud in which, like Jupiter Olympus of old, she was wasting her thunder.

At last the captain, hopeless of its clearing up, gave orders to pipe to dinner; but as the weather, in all respects except this abominable haze, was quite fine, and the ship was still in deep water, he directed her to be steered toward the shore, and the lead kept constantly going. As one o'clock approached, he began to feel uneasy, from the water shoaling, and the light-house guns sounding closer and closer; but, being unwilling to disturb the men at dinner, he resolved to stand on for the remaining ten minutes of the hour. Lo and behold! however, they had not sailed half a mile further before the

flying-jib-boom end emerged from the wall of mist, then the bowsprit shot into daylight, and, lastly, the ship herself glided out of the cloud into the full blaze of a bright and "sunshine holy day." All hands were instantly turned up to make sail; and the men, as they flew on deck, could scarcely believe their senses, when they saw behind them the fog-bank, and right ahead the harbor's mouth, with the bold cliffs of Cape Sambro on the left, and, further still, the ships at their moorings, with their ensigns flying, light and dry, in the breeze.

A far different fate, alas! attended his Majesty's ship *Atalante*, Captain Frederic Hickey. On the morning of the 10th of November, 1813, this ship stood in for Halifax harbor in very thick weather, carefully feeling her way with the lead, and having lookout men at the jib-boom-end, fore-yard-arms, and everywhere else from which a glimpse of land was likely to be obtained. After breakfast a fog signal-gun was fired, in expectation of its being answered by the lighthouse on Cape Sambro, near which it was

known they must be. Within a few minutes, accordingly, a gun was heard in the north-north-west quarter, exactly where the lighthouse was supposed to lie. As the soundings agreed with the estimated position of the ship, and as the guns from the *Atalante*, fired at intervals of fifteen minutes, were regularly answered in the direction of the harbor's mouth, it was determined to stand on so as to enter the port under the guidance of these sounds alone. By a fatal coincidence of circumstances, however, these answering guns were fired, not by Cape Sambro, but by his Majesty's ship *Barrossa*, which was likewise entangled by the fog. She, too, supposed that she was communicating with the lighthouse, whereas it was the guns of the unfortunate *Atalante* that she heard all the time.

There was certainly no inconsiderable risk incurred by running in for the harbor's mouth under such circumstances. But it will often happen that it becomes the officer's duty to put his ship as well as his life in hazard ; and this appears to have been exactly one of those cases. Captain Hickey was charged with urgent despatches relative to the enemy's

fleet, which it was of the greatest importance should be delivered without an hour's delay. But there was every appearance of this fog lasting a week: and as he and his officers had passed over the ground a hundred times before, and were as intimately acquainted with the spot as any pilot could be, it was resolved to try the bold experiment; and the ship was forthwith steered in the supposed direction of Halifax.

They had not, however, stood on far, before one of the lookout men exclaimed, "Breakers ahead! Hard-a-starboard!" But it was too late, for, before the helm could be put over, the ship was amongst those formidable reefs known by the name of the Sisters' Rocks, or eastern ledge of Sambro Island. The rudder and half of the sternpost, together with the greater part of the false keel, were driven off by the first blow and floated up alongside. There is some reason to believe, indeed, that a portion of the bottom of the ship (loaded with one hundred and twenty tons of iron ballast) was torn from the upper works by this fearful blow, and that the ship, which instantly filled with water, was

afterward buoyed up merely by the empty casks, till the decks and sides burst through or were riven asunder by the waves.

The captain, who, throughout the whole scene, continued as composed as if nothing remarkable had occurred, now ordered the guns to be thrown overboard; but before one of them could be cast loose, or a breaching cut, the ship fell over so much that the men could not stand. It was, therefore, with great difficulty that a few guns were fired as signals of distress. In the same breath that this order was given, Captain Hickey desired the yard tackles to be hooked, in order that the pinnace might be hoisted out; but as the masts, deprived of their foundation, were tottering from side to side, the people were called down again. The quarter-boats were then lowered into the water with some difficulty, but the jolly-boat, which happened to be on the poop undergoing repairs, in being launched overboard, struck against one of the stern davits, bilged, and went down. The ship was now falling fast over on her beam ends, and directions were given to cut away her fore and main masts. Fortunately, they



fell without injuring the large boat on the booms—their grand hope. At the instant of this crash the ship parted in two between the main and mizzen masts, and within a few seconds afterward she again broke right across, between the fore and main masts ; so that the poor *Atalante* now formed a mere wreck, divided into three pieces, crumbling into smaller fragments at every heave of the swell.

By this time a considerable crowd of men had got into the pinnace on the booms, in hopes that she might float off as the ship sank ; but Captain Hickey, seeing that the boat was so loaded that she could never swim, desired some twenty men to quit her ; and, what is particularly worthy of remark, his orders, which were given with perfect coolness, were as promptly obeyed as ever. Throughout the whole of these trying moments, indeed, the discipline of the ship appears to have been maintained not only without the smallest trace of insubordination, but with a degree of cheerfulness which is described as truly wonderful. Even when the masts fell, the sound of the crashing spars



was drowned in the animating huzzahs of the undaunted crew, though they were then clinging to the weather gunwale, with the sea, from time to time, making a clean breach over them, and when they were expecting every instant to be carried to the bottom!

As soon as the pinnacle was relieved from the pressure of the crowd, she floated off the booms, or rather was knocked off by a sea, which turned her bottom upward, and whelmed her into the surf amidst the fragments of the wreck. The people, however, imitating the gallant bearing of their captain, and keeping their eyes fixed upon him, never for one instant lost their self-possession. By dint of great exertions, they succeeded not only in righting the boat, but disentangled her from the confused heap of spars and the dash of the breakers, so as to place her at a little distance from the wreck, where they waited for further orders from the captain, who, with about forty men, still clung to the poor remains of the gay *Atalante*, once so much admired!

An attempt was next made to construct a raft, as it was feared the three boats could

not possibly carry all hands ; but the violence of the waves prevented this, and it was resolved to trust to the boats alone, though they were already to all appearance quite full. It was now, however, absolutely necessary to take to them, as the wreck was disappearing rapidly ; and in order to pack close, most of the men were removed to the pinnace, where they lay flat in the bottom, like herrings in a barrel, while the small boats returned to pick off the rest. This was no easy matter in any case, while it was impossible in others ; so that many men had to swim for it, others were dragged through the waves by ropes, and some were forked off by oars and small spars.

Amongst the crew there was one famous merry fellow, a black fiddler, who was discovered at this critical juncture clinging to the main chains with his beloved Cremona squeezed tightly but delicately under his arm—a ludicrous picture of distress, and a subject of some joking amongst the men even at this moment. It soon became absolutely necessary that he should lose one of the two things—his fiddle or his life. So, at last,

after a painful struggle, the professor and his violin were obliged to part company!

The pinnace now contained seventy-nine men and one woman, the cutter forty-two, and the gig eighteen, with which cargoes they barely floated. Captain Hickey was, of course, the last man who left the wreck; though such was the respect and affection felt for him by his crew, that those who stood along with him on this last vestige of the ship evinced the greatest reluctance at leaving their commander in such a perilous predicament. So speedy, indeed, was the work of destruction, that by the time the captain was fairly in the boat, the wreck had almost entirely "melted into the yeast of waves." The crew, however, gave her three hearty cheers as she went down, and then finally abandoned the scattered fragments of what had been their house and home for nearly seven years.

The fog still continued as thick as ever; the binnacles had both been washed overboard, and no compass could be procured. As the wind was still light there was great difficulty in steering in a straight line. Had

there been a breeze, it would perhaps have been easier to have shaped a course. In this dilemma a resource was hit upon which for a time answered pretty well to guide them. It being known loosely, before leaving the wreck, in what direction the land was situated, the three boats were placed in a row pointing that way. The sternmost boat then quitted her station in the rear, and pulled ahead till she came in a line with the other two boats, but took care not to go so far as to be lost in the fog; the boat which was now astern then rowed ahead, as the first had done, and so on doubling along one after the other. This tardy method of proceeding, however, answered only for a time; at length they were completely at loss which way to steer. Precisely at this moment of greatest need, an old quarter-master, Samuel Shanks by name, recollected that at the end of his watch-chain there hung a small compass seal. This precious discovery was announced to the other boats by a joyous shout from the pinnace.

The compass, being speedily handed into the gig to the captain, was placed on the top

of the chronometer, which had been nobly saved by the clerk, and, as this instrument worked on gimbals, the little needle remained upon it sufficiently steady for steering the boats within a few points.

This was enough to insure hitting land, from which they had been steering quite wide. Before reaching the shore, they fell in with an old fisherman, who piloted them to a light called Portuguese Cove, where they all landed in safety, at a distance of twenty miles from Halifax.





## DOLPHINS AND FLYING-FISH.



PERHAPS there is no more characteristic evidence of our being within the tropical regions—one which strikes the imagination more forcibly—than the company of those picturesque little animals, the flying-fish. It is true that a stray one or two may sometimes be seen far north, making a few short skips out of the water; and I even remember seeing several close to the edge of the banks of Newfoundland, in latitude  $45^{\circ}$ . These, however, had been swept out of their natural position by the huge Gulf Stream, an ocean in itself, which retains much of its temperature far into the northern regions, and

possibly helps to modify the climate over the Atlantic. But it is not until the voyager has fairly reached the heart of the torrid zone that he sees the flying-fish in perfection.

We were once stealing along under the genial influence of a light breeze, which was as yet confined to the upper sails, and every one was looking open-mouthed to the eastward to catch a gulp of cool air, when about a dozen flying-fish rose out of the water, just under the fore-chains, and skimmed away to windward at the height of ten or twelve feet above the surface.

A large dolphin, which had been keeping company with us abreast of the weather gangway, at the depth of two or three fathoms, and, as usual, glistening most beautifully in the sun, no sooner detected them take wing than he turned his head toward them, and, darting to the surface, leaped from the water with a velocity little short, as it seemed, of a cannon-ball. But although the impetus with which he shot himself into the air gave him an initial velocity greatly exceeding that of the flying-fish, the start which his fated



prey had got enabled them to keep ahead of him for a considerable time. The length of the dolphin's first spring could not be less than ten yards ; and after he fell we could see him gliding like lightning through the water for a moment, when he again rose and shot forward with considerably greater velocity than at first, and, of course, to a still greater distance. In this manner the merciless pursuer seemed to stride along the sea with fearful rapidity, while his brilliant coat sparkled and flashed in the sun quite splendidly. As he fell headlong on the water at the end of each huge leap, a series of circles was sent far over the still surface, which lay as smooth as a mirror ; for the breeze, although enough to set the royals and top-gallant studding-sails asleep, was hardly as yet felt below. The group of wretched flying-fish, thus hotly pursued, at length dropped into the sea ; but we were rejoiced to observe that they merely touched the top of the swell and scarcely sank in it—at least they instantly set off again in a fresh and even more vigorous flight. It was particularly interesting to observe that

the direction they now took was quite different from the one in which they had set out, implying but too obviously that they had detected their fierce enemy, who was following them with giant steps along the waves, and now gaining rapidly upon them. His terrific pace, indeed, was two or three times as swift as theirs, poor little things! and whenever they varied their flight in the smallest degree, he lost not the tenth part of a second in shaping a new course so as to cut off the chase, while they, in a manner really not unlike that of the hare, doubled more than once upon their pursuer. But it was soon too plainly to be seen that their strength and confidence were fast ebbing. Their flights became shorter and shorter, and their course more fluttering and uncertain, while the enormous leaps of the dolphin appeared to grow only more vigorous at each bound. Eventually, indeed, we could see, or fancied we could see, that this skilful sea-sportsman arranged all his springs with such an assurance of success that he contrived to fall, at the end of each, just under the very spot on which the exhausted flying-fish

were about to drop! Sometimes this catastrophe took place at too great a distance for us to see from the deck exactly what happened; but on our mounting high into the rigging, we may be said to have been in at the death; for then we could discover that the unfortunate little creatures, one after another, either popped right into the dolphin's jaws as they lighted on the water, or were snapped up instantly afterward. It was impossible not to take an active part with our pretty little friends of the weaker side, and accordingly we very speedily had our revenge. The middies and the sailors, delighted with the chance, rigged out a dozen or twenty lines from the jib-boom end and sprit-sail yard-arms, with hooks baited merely with bits of tin, the glitter of which resembled so much that of the body and wings of the flying-fish that many a proud dolphin, making sure of a delicious morsel, leaped in rapture at the deceitful prize, and in its turn became the prey of a successful enemy.



## ADVENTURES OF PIERRE VIAUD.

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**P**IERRE VIAUD, a sea-captain of Bordeaux, after performing several voyages with great success, undertook a mercantile expedition to the West Indies, which led to the series of adventures we are about to relate.

He arrived without accident at St. Domingo, but here a severe illness detained him for a considerable time, and on his recovery he was induced to accept the proposals of a stranger, with whom he became accidentally acquainted, and who was about to proceed to Louisiana, with the view of bettering his fortune. The brigantine in which he sailed, called the Tiger, was commanded by his new friend, Captain Lacouture, and had on board, besides the wife of the captain

and his son, a youth of fifteen years of age, a Monsieur Desclau, a negro whom Viaud had purchased after his last voyage, and nine sailors.

The ignorance of the captain very soon exposed them to great dangers, which the courage and experience of Viaud enabled them for awhile to ward off; but at last the vessel sprang a leak, the wind being at the same time contrary. Having relieved the ship as much as possible by throwing all the weightier kinds of merchandise into the sea, the utmost efforts were made to run the ship into the port of Pensacola, but in vain; it was impossible to contend against the opposing fury of the elements.

At last, about a league's distance from the coast, the brigantine ran aground with so much violence that the poop gave way. She floated again, however, by the force of the sea, and, the wind driving them anew toward the coast, they were thrown in a few minutes on the shore of a desert island. We will leave Viaud, however, to relate his adventures in his own words:

We were about to cut away our masts for

the purpose of making a raft to convey us to the island, when the fury of the sea drove our vessel on shore. The shock was fearful, and several of the sailors were thrown into the sea by its violence, though happily we succeeded in rescuing them. The moon, which should have lighted us, was at that time completely obscured, and as it was impossible to reach the land in the darkness, we resolved to pass the night on board. Alas! how long did that night appear to us! Torrents of rain fell, as if all the clouds of heaven were discharging their contents at once; the foaming waves covered the ship; the fleeting glare of the lightning at intervals showed the raging sea threatening to engulf us; while every flash was succeeded by a still more terrible gloom.

Hanging from the sides of the vessel, and clinging convulsively to anything we could lay hold of, drenched with the incessant rain, and exhausted with fatigue, we awaited with trembling the approach of dawn. Day came, but its light only revealed to us in all their horror the dangers we had already gone through, and those which were

yet before us. We shuddered as we beheld at a distance the coast, which we could no longer hope to reach, for the fury of the sea was such as to deter even the most daring swimmers.

Thus passed several hours, without any change taking place in our condition, when a Dutch sailor, who had shed more tears and showed less courage hitherto than any of the rest, seemed on a sudden to arouse himself, and exclaimed in a firm voice, "Why do we linger here? Death encircles us on all sides: let us dare it at once, and perhaps we shall escape! There is the land: is it impossible to reach it? What, at least, is there to hinder us from making the attempt? I will show the example; and, if I perish, I shall at least have saved myself some hours of terrible anguish!"

With these words, he threw himself into the sea. Several of the other sailors were about to follow him, and I could with difficulty restrain them by pointing to their comrade vainly contending with the raging sea. We beheld him tossed by the waves, at one time impelled toward the coast, at



another driven back from it, appearing and disappearing by turns, till at last he was hurled with fearful violence against the rocks and we saw him no more.

Evening came, and we trembled at the horrors of the approaching night. One boat still remained, but in so battered a condition that it was impossible to make use of it, even for the short voyage to the shore. We examined it repeatedly, but always came to the same sorrowful conclusion. At last, three sailors, more courageous or more desperate than the rest, undertook to venture in this frail bark. They got into it without mentioning their design, of which we were not aware until we saw them shove off. We quite gave them up for lost; but, contrary to our expectation, they battled successfully with the waves and reached the shore.

After awhile the gale somewhat abated, and one of the sailors resolved to try and swim to shore, in order to assist in repairing the boat, and then to come back with it and carry us from the wreck. We followed him with our eyes until he landed, and then gazed with increasing impatience while the sailors

worked diligently in the preparation of the boat. At last it was committed to the waves, and, as our comrades approached us, our hearts beat high with hope ; but our joy was greatly diminished when we found that the boat would not hold more than four persons. After a short deliberation, it was resolved to decide by lot who should go first, each person promising faithfully to abide by the result. As for me, I determined to remain until the last. After all the others had left, I resolved, with Desclau and my negro, to make an attempt to reach the land on a piece of the wreck. This happily proved successful ; and we all soon found ourselves together on the long-wished-for shore. We first refreshed ourselves with some oysters, and then, betaking ourselves to rest, we passed a tolerably quiet night. On the morrow, however, the lieutenant of the ship sank under the fatigue and privations he had endured, and we buried him sorrowfully in a hasty grave dug in the sand of the shore. The goodness of Providence willed that the waves should throw up some casks of rum, which were a most precious boon to us ; but we had no fire, and our

stiffened limbs, above all, required relaxing by a gentle warmth. This pressing necessity induced me to adopt the resolution of returning to the brigantine with the boat, in order, if possible, to bring off some portion of the cargo, and more especially to procure a steel and some biscuits. I had the good fortune to reach the wreck, and succeeded in bringing from it twenty-four pounds of powder, two hatchets, a flint and steel, some blankets, and a bag containing about forty pounds of biscuit.

A large fire was very soon lighted ; and with our biscuit and oysters, we enjoyed what was for us a splendid repast. Wrapped up in our blankets, we passed in safety two nights and two days, though our minds were, nevertheless, disturbed by the continual fear of being attacked by savages. On the third day, in fact, we were startled by the appearance of five natives, among whom were two women ; but we contrived to make friends with them by means of a little rum and some other trifling presents. The chief among them spoke a little Spanish, and called himself Antonio. He was a native of San Marco,

and lived at that time on an island about three leagues off. We begged him to take us to San Marco, which was only about five leagues distant, and after some hesitation he agreed. I, therefore, embarked in the boat with the captain, his wife and son, Desclau, and my negro, (being all that it would hold,) hoping to reach our destination in two days, when I proposed to take measures in behalf of our companions whom we were leaving behind. In this hope I was, however, disappointed by the perfidy of Antonio. Seven days had already elapsed since our departure, and we seemed as far as ever from San Marco. I saw that Antonio was deceiving us, and my indignation at his conduct was so great that, but for the entreaties of my companions, I would have killed him. My anger was, indeed, but too well justified by the event. One night, when we were ashore and asleep, the traitor made off with his boat ; and, on our awaking, we found to our utter dismay that we had been robbed of everything that belonged to us—nothing, in fact, being left us but the clothes we had on, the

flint and steel, and a knife which I always wore about me.

We wandered about for several hours, without finding either a spring of water or any species of food. At last, while deploring our misfortunes to each other, and considering the means of extricating ourselves from them, we fancied we perceived in the distance an old canoe ; and we began to think it might be possible to put it into such a condition as to convey us across the arm of the sea which separated us from the continent.

Full of this project, we fondly indulged our hopes, as if its execution had been a matter attended with no difficulty. After a long and fatiguing walk, we succeeded in reaching the canoe. To repair it required our utmost efforts ; and when we had finished our laborious task, we found, to our great grief, that it was not sufficiently sound to carry us. M. Lacouture got into it alone, and directed it toward the spot where his wife had remained ; while M. Desclau and myself took the land route, and thus rejoined our companions.

Oysters and roots had now been for eight

days our only nourishment, but it pleased the Divine Goodness at length to send us some more substantial support. I was walking on the shore, absorbed in gloomy reflections, and had wandered further than I had intended, when, raising my eyes and looking around, I perceived a roe lying on the shore. I turned it over and found that it was still fresh; it had apparently been killed by a musket-ball, and had fled for refuge to our island. Regarding this as a gift from Heaven, I joyfully took it on my shoulders, and in about an hour's time I got back to my friends, who were agreeably surprised at the sight of my precious burden, and rendered fervent thanks to Heaven for the relief. We speedily cut up and prepared the roe; and having roasted a portion of it for our present use, we partook of an excellent repast, which was followed by the enjoyment—no less welcome to us all—of a sound and undisturbed repose.

On the following day, which was, I believe, the 26th of March, the strong desire we felt to escape from this desert island induced us to turn our eyes again toward the abandoned



canoe. We set diligently to work once more, and endeavored this time to avoid our previous blunders. The same materials we had used before served us again, and we added to them a couple of blankets, with which we stopped the leaks as well as we could. After several days' labor, however, we had but little cause to be satisfied with the result; the unfortunate canoe would not float a quarter of an hour without filling with water. Notwithstanding this, our anxiety to escape was so great, that we were determined to incur any danger rather than remain where we were. It was not more than two hours' passage from our island to the continent, and we fondly hoped that the canoe, frail as it was, might carry us so far. As it would have been the height of imprudence, however, for us all to embark at once, we proposed to venture three at a time, M. Lacouture, Desclau, and myself being the first; two of us were to row, and the third was to bail out the water with his hat. The following day was fixed for the execution of this project, and we endeavored to persuade Madame Lacouture to wait with her son and the negro till we



could procure a better vessel, which we expected there would be no difficulty in doing when once we had reached the main-land. We found it no easy matter, however, to persuade them; and I was obliged to promise that I would leave them my knife as a pledge, with the flint and steel, though, I must confess,<sup>1</sup> I parted with these precious articles with great reluctance. We consoled the poor woman as well as we could, and collected some food both for her and for ourselves, our own portion being stowed away carefully in the boat.

At last, about sunrise on the 31st of March, we ventured into the canoe, and put off from the shore. No sooner, however, had we done so, than it began to take in so much water that every moment I expected it to sink. At this sight I was seized with terror, and with one bound sprang from the fatal skiff.

“Do not deceive yourselves, my friends!” I exclaimed; “it is impossible we can proceed in this way a quarter of a league. Let us remain here, and patiently resign ourselves to that Providence which is inexhaustible in its resources. To venture to sea in

that frail boat would be nothing short of self-murder, which the law of God forbids !”

M. Lacouture pressed me to return, ridiculing at the same time what he called my timidity ; but he could not persuade me, any more than I could succeed in making him listen to my advice ; so he rowed away with M. Desclau, and soon after a little promontory concealed them from my view. I felt quite convinced that they must have perished a few moments afterward, as I never heard their voices again.

I found Madame Lacouture drowned in tears. Alas ! poor woman, she knew not as yet the full extent of her misfortune ! My return surprised her, and she scarcely knew whether to rejoice or to grieve at it ; for, though glad of it on her own account, she was sorry that her husband should be deprived of my assistance.

After six days of fruitless expectation, we gave up all hope of seeing our companions again, and had almost abandoned ourselves to despair, when a sudden thought flashed like lightning across my mind : we might escape upon a raft ! I communicated the

idea to my companions, who gladly caught at it; and without further delay we began to work with the greatest activity, and after we had finished it, we set about collecting oysters and roots for the voyage. We had fixed on the break of the following day for our departure; but, unfortunately, a violent storm came on during the night, which annihilated in a moment all our hopes. The waves, lashed by a furious wind, broke in pieces our poor raft, without the possibility of our keeping it together. This was a terrible loss, and, to crown all our misfortunes, sickness began to show itself amongst us. Nevertheless, the love of life, the mysterious instinct of self-preservation, for a time triumphed over all obstacles, and we resolved to attempt the construction of a fresh raft. The work succeeded to our satisfaction; but at the moment of our proposed departure, a new difficulty presented itself. Young Lacouture was unable to be moved. He had passed a terrible night, and now lay on the ground without motion, and as cold as ice, so that for some moments we believed him dead. I then ordered the negro to kindle as soon as

possible the almost extinguished fire, and began to rub the cold limbs of the youth, so as to restore, if possible, the vital heat. My efforts, happily, were crowned with success, and the young man partially recovered, to the great joy of his disconsolate mother.

I next hastened to secure the raft in such a manner that, in case of a storm, it would resist for some time the fury of the elements. I took away the masts; detached the ropes and all other articles, the loss of which would have been irreparable; and, above all, I brought back to our poor invalid the blankets which were so necessary for his preservation. I spent the whole day in endeavoring to procure him some relief, hoping that the good effects of my care would soon enable him to embark. The young man showed a calmness and presence of mind rarely exhibited at his age. Toward morning, his malady became more severe, but his courage did not abate. Having called me to his side for a few moments, during which his mother had left him, I was especially struck with admiration and surprise at his language. "Go!" said he to me, "I entreat you; set forth at

once ; but, for pity's sake, take away my poor mother. Leave me only some provisions ; I promise you to make use of them as long as it may please God to continue my life. But lose no time, save my mother, and conceal from her my resolution !”

I was so much moved that I could not utter a word ; a thousand conflicting thoughts distracted my mind. I clearly perceived that I must either follow his generous but heart-rending counsel, or perish on this desolate island. Equally agitated by sorrow and compassion, I fell on my knees beside the magnanimous youth, and embraced him with tears. Though my heart revolted at the thought of leaving him, yet, on further reflection, I felt convinced that we must all perish if we delayed our departure longer.

The recurrence of this idea made it gradually familiar to me, so that it appeared less horrible. It was a question of our deliverance and that of his mother, and reason seemed to command me, however unwillingly, to turn a deaf ear to the voice of compassion. The day, however, passed without terminating my anxieties, and I had not yet arrived

at any conclusion on the point. But when young Lacouture himself renewed the subject and again desired me to leave him, in order to save his mother, desiring that I would tell her that he was dead, I decided, and this with less hesitation when at break of day I found him quite senseless. Placing near him, therefore, a store of provisions and some shells full of water, I awoke his mother, who, worn out with fatigue, was asleep at a little distance. "Providence," said I, "wills that we set forth at once, and we must obey its commands. The least delay may cause our destruction; and as to you, madam, you have henceforth to think of yourself alone, for your son—"

She did not give me time to conclude. "Merciful God!" cried she, "my son is dead! I have lost my husband, and now my son is also taken from me." She ceased to speak, and a torrent of tears fell from her eyes.

Without delaying to offer useless consolation, I made a sign to my slave, and we conveyed her to the raft without her offering any resistance. I trembled lest she should desire to see her son again; but her convic-



tion that he was no more threw her into a stupor of grief, of which I was glad to take advantage.

On the 19th of April, we happily reached the continent, after a twelve hours' voyage. Our first impulse was to fall upon our knees on the shore, and thank God that we had reached it. We then abandoned the raft, after taking from it our provisions, as well as the blankets and ropes.

We found on advancing, however, that the land had been inundated, and was still almost impassable. The sun was on the decline; and our fear of venturing further into an unknown country during the night, combined with our fatigue, made us first look out for some place where we might pass the night in safety; and we selected a hill, the height of which would protect us from the moisture around. Here, three large trees, the branches of which were interlaced in the form of a cradle, offered us a tolerably commodious asylum. I lighted a large fire, beside which we ate a portion of our provisions; and we had begun to flatter ourselves with the hope of enjoying some undisturbed repose, when



scarcely had we laid ourselves down than we were roused by a terrible howling of wild beasts, which reached our ears from all sides. They seemed to respond to each other, and absolutely to surround us. We started up; terror froze our very hearts, and we expected every moment to see the wild beasts rush out and devour us. The negro, in his fright, ran to one of the trees, and, climbing it with wonderful agility, did not stop until he had reached the top, where he ensconced himself among the branches.

Madame Lacouture, no less terrified, had followed the negro, and besought him to help her also to mount the tree. In vain I implored her not to leave the fire, which would serve to scare the wild beasts, and be a better defence than flight. She paid no attention to my entreaties, and still continued to supplicate the assistance of the negro, who, on his part wholly absorbed in his terrors, remained deaf to her cries.

On a sudden I heard a shrill and piercing cry for help, proceeding from Madame Lacouture, and, looking round, I saw an enormous bear approaching her. To abandon

the poor woman was impossible ; and yet, unarmed as I was, what could I do? Not a moment, however, was to be lost ; so, snatching quickly a flaring brand from the fire, I ran toward her, as she rushed to meet me. The bear pursued her close behind, but stopped when he saw me approach, while I still advanced, thrusting in its face the flaring brand. Then seizing Madame Lacouture by the hand, and without turning my head, I brought her back to the blazing fire, to which the bear had not the courage to pursue us.

But before long the sound of renewed shrieks reached my ears, and, by the light of the still blazing fire, I saw the bear erect himself against the tree in which the negro was concealed, and prepare to climb. How to assist the unfortunate negro I knew not. I therefore shouted to him to take refuge on the smaller boughs, which, though strong enough to support him, would not admit of the bear following him ; for these animals, guided by their instinct, do not in general venture upon any but the thickest branches. Meanwhile I continued throwing great fire-

brands at the tree, in order to terrify the monster into a retreat; and these were so well directed that in a short time they made quite a blazing fire round the foot of the trunk. The glare of the flame at length so dazzled the bear that he abandoned his position, and went off at a brisk trot.

After such alarms, it was impossible for us to sleep during the remainder of the night, especially as the roaring of the wild beasts continued without interruption. Several animals ventured to roam around us, and some of them came near enough for us to distinguish among them an enormous puma. Some large brands which we threw at him induced him to retreat, though growling with rage; while the other monsters scattered in the neighborhood kept answering and emulating his roars with their fearful howlings.

To prevent any more of these terrible visits, we scattered about us a quantity of burning wood, so that we were surrounded on all sides by a girdle of flame. This precaution gave us more security; and as fortunately the night was considerably advanced, the howl-

ings began gradually to decrease, and to be heard at a greater distance. At last, these ominous sounds entirely ceased by the dawn of day, the savage animals having no doubt returned to their dens to wait the arrival of another night. I profited by this respite to gather a further supply of wood, which I threw upon the fire ; and I then brought back the negro, who came down from his retreat, creeping toward us more dead than alive.

Our distress was presently increased by the want of shell-fish and eatable roots. The following night it reached its height ; and the torments of hunger became so intolerable, that in our frenzy we prayed to be released from our sufferings by death. The leaves which we tried to eat brought on nausea and vomiting ; and when night fell, we were so much weakened that we had not even strength to light our fire.

We were now reduced to the greatest straits, and despair began to seize upon us. The negro was already dead, and we, too, felt ourselves on the brink of the grave. At last, when we were reduced to the greatest

extremity, we found two enormous rattlesnakes, which the flame had no doubt attracted, and which had been suffocated in the smoke ; and soon after, we found an alligator asleep in a pool of water, which I despatched with a heavy stick. We ate the flesh of these animals, which appeared to us delicious, and being now somewhat strengthened, we determined to travel onward, trusting that Providence would yet show us some way of escape.

We arrived at last at a deep torrent, which we were unable to cross ; but we were fortunate enough to find there a turtle weighing about twelve pounds, along with some eggs, which proved a delicious refreshment, and greatly revived our strength and courage.

I undertook without delay to construct a raft, by means of which we might pass the river ; but when we had embarked, we found it impossible to resist the rapidity of the stream, which carried us away, and broke our raft. In this juncture, we should, no doubt, have perished, if Providence, ever watchful over our preservation, had not given us new strength, and showed us the trunk

of a tree, one end of which hung over the bank, and by the help of which we escaped destruction. Our lives were prolonged, however, only to suffer new agonies: privation, terror, and constant fatigue had exhausted our strength; our provisions were nearly gone, and, if we had not found another turtle, we must have died of hunger. After this last wreck, too, I felt myself so weak, that, believing my last hour was approaching, I desired my companion to continue her voyage alone, and leave me to my fate. That generous woman, however, declared that she would live or die along with me.

I had been in this miserable condition for three days, when it seemed to me that I heard, at no great distance, the sound of men's voices, as if coming down by the river's side, where they would have to pass near the place where I was lying. "All merciful God!" I said to myself, "dost thou, then, deign to send us assistance? and do those voices betoken our deliverance?"

As I murmured these words, I perceived a large boat gliding past, not far from me. I endeavored to cry out, but the sounds died



on my lips ; I had not even strength to crawl upon my knees, and make a signal with my hat. Excited at once by the opposing sentiments of hope and despair, I exerted all my power to fasten an old rag to a stick, which I waved in the air. A delirious joy then shook my whole frame, when I saw that my signal was observed, and that the boat, in which I could perceive several Europeans, was approaching me. I thanked God with the utmost fervor : the hour of deliverance had at last arrived !

The strangers immediately disembarked, and, looking at me with the greatest curiosity, began to ask me questions. An involuntary trepidation deprived me of speech ; but a mouthful of rum somewhat relieved me, and my first words were a request that they would wait for my poor friend. She presently appeared, and it would be impossible to paint her joy when she beheld me surrounded by Europeans, and, as we had reason to believe, generous and compassionate men.

We learned from our deliverers that that day was the 6th of May. They were En-



glishmen ; and as I could speak their language, I gave them a complete and faithful narrative of all that I and Madame Lacouture had suffered since our unhappy shipwreck. When I had finished my recital, I asked the chief of the crew (whose name was Wright, and who was an infantry officer, on duty at the fort of St. Marc des Appalaches) to what accident I was indebted for this meeting with him. I then learned that a savage having reported that he had found the dead body of a man upon the beach, the remains of whose clothes showed that he had been a European, Mr. Sweetenham, the governor of the fort, fearing that some ship had been run aground on the neighboring coast, had been induced by feelings of humanity to despatch a boat, in case any of the sufferers should still be in a condition in which assistance would avail them. I had little doubt that the corpse in question was that of M. Lacouture, or his companion, which had been washed ashore after the sinking of the unfortunate canoe.

We embarked the following day, the eightieth since our shipwreck. How long had

that time appeared to us—through how many terrible trials had we passed! Our satisfaction even now was not without alloy, for we could no longer share our happiness with those whom we had lost.

Though I had, perhaps, less cause than my poor friend to deplore those bereavements, yet I could not think of them without bitter grief. The remembrance of young Lacouture especially pierced my heart. I had not forgotten that the unhappy youth was still living when I left him—a circumstance about which it will be recollected I had led his mother into an error, though under the circumstances an excusable one. I therefore implored Mr. Wright to add still further to the favors he had conferred upon us, by taking me to the island, where the remains of my unfortunate friend were left, so that I might render them the last duties before quitting those savage shores.

The English officer, actuated by a spirit of true charity, did not deny me this satisfaction, and we accordingly set off on our sorrowful mission. When we were on the point of landing, Madame Lacouture showed so

eager a desire to disembark, that we found it impossible to restrain her. A soldier, who had been sent on before, returned presently to tell us that he had seen the body of which we were in search. In vain we implored the weeping mother to remain upon the shore ; she was deaf to all our entreaties, and determined to accompany us at all hazards.

At last we approached the unfortunate youth, who was lying with his face toward the ground. The fond mother threw herself upon the body, covered it with kisses, and bathed it with her tears. Then she put her hand upon the heart, and remained for a moment immovable. Suddenly a light shone in her eyes, and she started up. "No!" she exclaimed in a loud voice ; "my son is not dead! God has had compassion on my sorrows ; he has restored me my son! I feel the beating of his heart!"

On hearing these exclamations, I supposed, at first, that excess of grief had deprived the poor woman of her reason. To satisfy myself, however, I placed my hand on the heart of the young man, and it seemed to me that I really felt a slight warmth. Mr. Wright

was of the same opinion ; and he thereupon poured a few drops of rum into the young man's mouth, while one of the soldiers gently rubbed him with the same liquor. At length, after about an hour of extreme anxiety, it was impossible to doubt that young Lacouture was still alive ; he raised his heavy eyelids, and, recognizing some of those who surrounded him, " Where have you been ?" he exclaimed, in a languishing voice. This, however, was not a time for entering upon lengthened explanations. " My son !" exclaimed his mother, transported with joy, " do you not know me ? I am your mother. I have come to deliver you from this frightful desert !"

A little nourishment, administered with great precaution, finally restored the youth to full consciousness, and we prepared to take our departure. After a safe voyage, which the invalid supported tolerably well, we arrived at the fort of St. Marc, where Mr. Sweetenham, the governor, deeply moved by our unfortunate situation, provided us with every comfort necessary for the reëstablishment of our strength, so terribly exhausted by our many sufferings.

My next care was to interest the governor in the fate of our companions, whom we had left behind after the shipwreck, and to request him to send a boat in search of them. This he, with his usual generosity, consented to do ; but as the boat had not returned before my departure, I had not the consolation, until many years after, of hearing that they had been rescued.

I was the first of our party who was in a condition to profit by the liberality of the governor, who kindly offered to have us conveyed wherever we chose. I accordingly went on board a vessel bound for St. Augustin, where I hoped to find some ship to take me back to France. I did not separate from Madame Lacouture and her son without shedding many tears, and without promises of continuing that friendship which had been begun and cemented in the midst of so many hardships and sorrows.

My farewell of the commandant and Mr. Wright was scarcely less affecting. The former gave me a letter of introduction to Mr. Grant, the governor of St. Augustin, which insured a most kind reception. Madame

Lacouture and her son shortly afterward quitted the fort of St. Marc, and arrived safely in Louisiana, where they were at last consoled for their misfortunes in the bosom of their affectionate family.





## THE WRECK OF THE FORFARSHIRE AND GRACE DARLING.



GRACE DARLING was one of the numerous family of William Darling, a light-house keeper. Her grandfather, Robert Darling, originally a cooper, at Dunse, in Berwickshire, England, removed to Belford, in Northumberland, and finally settled as keeper of the coal-light on the Brownsman, the outermost of the Farne Islands, on the coast of the last-mentioned county. William Darling succeeded his father in that situation, but in 1826 was transferred to the light-house on the Longstone, another of the same group of islands. Grace was born November 24, 1815, at Bam-borough, on the Northumberland coast,



being the seventh child of her parents. She assisted her mother in managing her little household at Longstone, and was remarkable for her retiring and somewhat reserved disposition. She had reached her twenty-second year when the incident occurred by which her name has been rendered so famous.

The Farne Islands, twenty-five in number at low tide, though situated at no great distance from the Northumbrian coast, are extremely desolate ; and through the channels between the smaller Farne Islands the sea rushes with great force. Mr. Howitt, speaking of his visit to Longstone, says, " It was, like the rest of these desolate isles, all of dark whinstone, cracked in every direction, and worn with the action of winds, waves, and tempests, since the world began. Over the greater part of it was not a blade of grass, nor a grain of earth ; it was bare and iron-like stone, crusted round all the coast, as far as high-water mark, with limpet and still smaller shells. We ascended wrinkled hills of black stone, and descended into worn and dismal dells of the same ; into some of

which, where the tide got entrance, it came pouring and roaring in raging whiteness, wearing and rounding the loose fragments of whinstone into smooth pebbles, and piling them up in deep crevices, with sea-weed, into heaps. Over our heads screamed hundreds of hovering birds, while the sea-gull mingled wildly its hideous laughter."

Such was the scene of the early days of Grace Darling: this young person is said to have been about the middle size, of fair complexion, and a comely countenance, with nothing masculine in her appearance; but, on the contrary, gentle in aspect, and with an expression of the greatest mildness and benevolence. "She has the sweetest smile," says Mr. Howitt, "that I have ever seen in a person of her station and appearance. You see that she is a thoroughly good creature, and that under her modest exterior lies a spirit capable of the most exalted devotion—a devotion so entire that daring is not so much a quality of her nature, as that the most perfect sympathy with suffering or endangered humanity swallows up and annihilates everything like fear or

self-consideration ; puts out, in fact, every sentiment but itself."

The following is the account of the event which withdrew the name of Grace Darling from its hitherto humble obscurity :

"The Forfarshire steamer, a vessel of about 300 tons burden, under the command of Mr. John Humble, sailed from Hull, on her voyage to Dundee, on the evening of Wednesday, the 5th of September, 1838, about half-past six o'clock, with a cargo of bale goods and sheet-iron ; and having on board about twenty-two cabin and nineteen steerage passengers, Captain Humble and his wife, ten seamen, four firemen, two engineers, two coal-trimmers, and two stewards ; in all, sixty-three persons.

"The Forfarshire was only two years old, but there can be no doubt that her boilers were in a bad state of repair. Previous to leaving Hull, the boilers had been examined, and a small leak closed up ; but, when off Flamborough Head, the leakage reappeared, and continued for about six hours ; two of the fires were thus extinguished, but they were relighted after the boilers had been

partially repaired. The progress of the vessel was of course retarded, and three steam-vessels passed her before she had proceeded far.

“ In this inefficient state the vessel proceeded on her voyage, and passed through the ‘ Fairway,’ between the Farne Islands and the land, about six o’clock on Thursday evening. She entered Berwick Bay about eight o’clock the same evening, the sea running high, and the wind blowing strong from the north. From the motion of the vessel, the leak now increased to such a degree that the firemen could not keep the fires burning. Two men were then employed to pump water into the boilers, but it escaped through the leak as fast as they pumped it in. About ten o’clock, she bore up off St. Abb’s Head, the storm still raging with unabated fury. The engines soon after became entirely useless, and the engine-man reported that they would not work. There being great danger of drifting ashore, the sails were hoisted fore and aft, and the vessel put about, in order to get her before the wind and keep her off the land. No attempt was made to anchor.

The vessel soon became unmanageable, and, the tide setting strong to the south, she proceeded in that direction. It rained heavily during the whole time, and the fog was so dense that it became impossible to tell the situation of the vessel. At length, breakers were discovered close to leeward; and the Farne Lights, which about the same period became visible, left no doubt as to the imminent peril of all on board. Captain Humble vainly attempted to avert the catastrophe by running the vessel between the islands and the mainland; she would not answer the helm, and was impelled to and fro by a furious sea. Between three and four o'clock she struck with her bows foremost on the rock, the ruggedness of which is such that, at periods when it is dry, it is scarcely possible for a person to stand erect upon it; and the edge which met the Forfarshire's timbers descends sheer down a hundred fathoms deep or more.

“At this juncture a part of the crew, intent only on self-preservation, lowered the larboard quarter-boat down, and left the ship. Amongst them was Mr. Ruthven Ritchie, of

Hill of Ruthven, in Perthshire, who had been roused from bed, and had only time to put on his trousers, when, rushing upon deck, he saw and took advantage of this opportunity of escape, by flinging himself into the boat. His uncle and aunt, attempting to follow his example, fell into the sea, and perished in his sight. The scene on board was of the most awful kind. Several females were uttering cries of anguish and despair, and amongst them stood the bewildered master, whose wife, clinging to him, frantically besought the protection which it was not in his power to give. Very soon after the first shock, a powerful wave struck the vessel on the quarter, and, raising her off the rock, allowed her immediately after to fall violently down upon it, the sharp edge striking her about midships. She was by this fairly broken in two pieces; and the hinder part, containing the cabin, with many passengers, was instantly carried off through a tremendous current called the Pifa Gut, which is considered dangerous even in good weather, while the fore part remained on the rock. The captain and his wife seem to have been amongst those



who perished in the hinder part of the vessel.

“At the moment when the boat parted, about eight or nine of the passengers betook themselves to the windlass in the forepart of the vessel, which they conceived to be the safest place. Here also a few sailors took their station, although despairing of relief. In the fore cabin, exposed to the intrusion of the waves, was Sarah Dawson, the wife of a weaver, with two children. When relief came, life was found trembling in the bosom of this poor woman, but her two children lay stiffened corpses in her arms.

“The sufferers, nine in number, (five of the crew and four passengers,) remained in their dreadful situation till day-break, exposed, amidst darkness, to the buffeting of the waves, and fearful that every rising surge would sweep the fragment of wreck on which they stood into the deep. Such was their situation when, as day broke on the morning of the 7th, they were descried from the Longstone by the Darlings, at nearly a mile's distance. A mist hovered over the island; and though the wind had somewhat abated its



violence, the sea, which even in the calmest weather is never at rest among the gorges between these iron pinnacles, still raged fearfully. At the light-house there were only Mr. and Mrs. Darling and their heroic daughter. The boisterous state of the sea is sufficiently attested by the fact that, at a later period in the day, a reward of twenty-five dollars, offered by Mr. Smeddle, the steward of Bamborough Castle, could scarcely induce a party of fishermen to venture off from the mainland.

“To have braved the perils of that terrible passage then would have done the highest honor to the well-tried nerves of even the stoutest of the male sex ; but what shall be said of the errand of mercy being undertaken and accomplished mainly through the strength of a female heart and arm ? Through the dim mist, with the aid of the glass, the figures of the sufferers were seen clinging to the wreck. But who could dare to tempt the raging abyss that intervened, in the hope of succoring them ? Mr. Darling, it is said, shrank from the attempt ; not so his daughter. At *her* solicitation the boat was launch-

ed : with the assistance of her mother, the father and daughter entered it, each taking an oar. It is worthy of being noticed that Grace never had occasion to assist in the boat previous to the wreck of the Forfarshire, others of the family being always at hand.

“ In estimating the danger which the heroic adventurers encountered, there is one circumstance which ought not to be forgotten. Had it not been ebb tide, the boat could not have passed between the islands ; and Darling and his daughter knew that the tide would be flowing on their return, when their united strength would have been utterly insufficient to pull the boat back to the lighthouse island : so that, had they not got the assistance of the survivors in rowing back again, they themselves would have been compelled to remain on the rock beside the wreck until the tide again ebbed.

“ It could only have been by the exertion of great muscular power, as well as of determined courage, that the father and daughter carried the boat up to the rock ; and when there, a danger—greater even than that which they had encountered in approaching

it—arose from the difficulty of steadying the boat, and preventing its being destroyed on those sharp ridges by the ever-restless chafing and heaving of the billows. However, the nine sufferers were safely rescued. The deep sense which one of the poor fellows entertained of the generous conduct of Darling and his daughter was testified by his eyes filling with tears when he described it. The thrill of delight which he experienced when the boat was observed approaching the rock was converted into a feeling of amazement, which he could not find language to express, when he became aware of the fact that one of their deliverers was a female!

“The sufferers were conveyed at once to the light-house, which was in fact their only place of refuge at the time; and, owing to the violent seas that continued to prevail among the islands, they were obliged to remain there from Friday morning till Sunday. A boat’s crew that came off to their relief from North Sunderland were also obliged to remain. This made a party of nearly twenty persons at the light-house, in addition to its usual inmates; and such an unprepared for

accession could not fail to occasion considerable inconvenience. Grace gave up her bed to poor Mrs. Dawson, whose sufferings, both mental and bodily, were intense, and contented herself with lying down on a table. The other sufferers were accommodated with the best substitutes for beds which could be provided, and the boat's crew slept on the floor around the fire.

“Nine individuals, as we have said, were thus saved from the wreck. The party in the boat, also nine in number, were picked up next morning by a sloop, and carried into Shields. The entire number saved was therefore eighteen, of whom thirteen belonged to the vessel, and five were passengers.

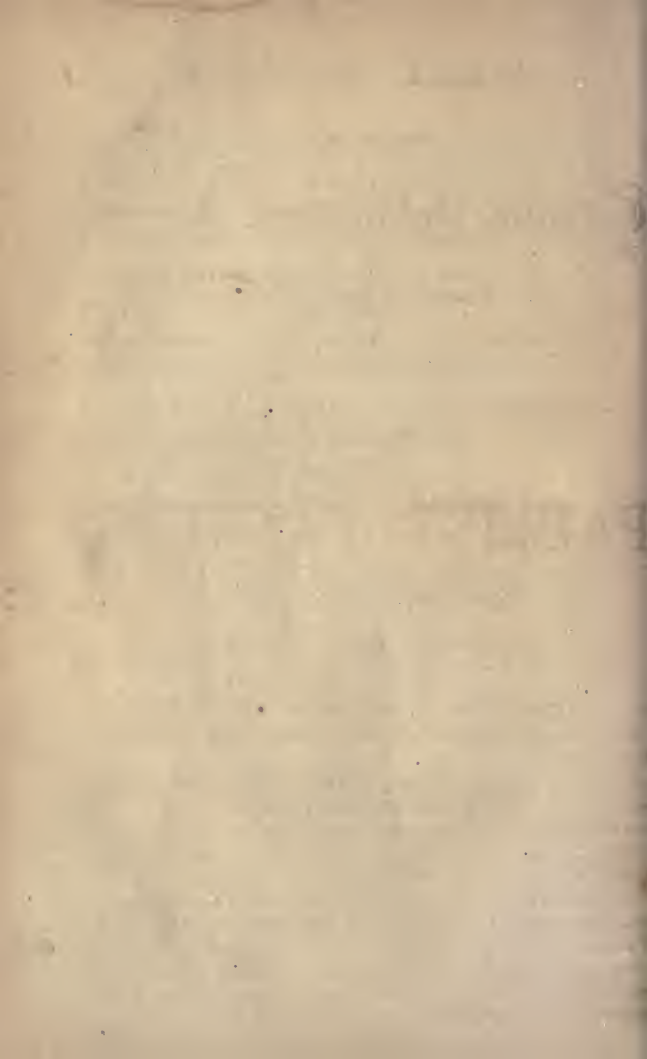
“The subsequent events of Grace Darling's life are soon told. The deed she had done may be said to have wafted her name over all Europe. Immediately on the circumstances being made known through the newspapers, that lonely light-house became the centre of attraction to curious and sympathizing thousands, including many of the wealthy and the great, who, in most instances, testified by substantial tokens the feelings with

which they regarded the young heroine. The Duke and Duchess of Northumberland invited her and her father over to Alnwick Castle, and presented her with a gold watch, which she always afterward wore.

“The Humane Society sent her a most flattering vote of thanks; the president presented her with a handsome silver tea-pot; and she received almost innumerable testimonials, of greater or less value, from admiring strangers. A public subscription was raised with a view of rewarding her for her bravery and humanity; her name was echoed with applause amongst all ranks; portraits of her were eagerly sought for; and to such a pitch did the enthusiasm reach, that a large nightly sum was offered her by the proprietors of one or more of the metropolitan theatres and other places of amusement, on condition that she would merely sit in a boat, for a brief space, during the performance of a piece whose chief attraction she was to be. All such offers were, however, promptly and steadily refused. It is, indeed, gratifying to state that, amidst all this tumult of applause, Grace Darling never for a

moment forgot the modest dignity of conduct which became her sex. The flattering testimonials of all kinds which were showered upon her never produced in her mind any feeling but a sense of wonder and grateful pleasure. She continued, notwithstanding the improvement of her circumstances, to reside at the Longstone Light-House with her father and mother, finding, in her limited sphere of domestic duty on that sea-girt islet, a more honorable enjoyment than could be found in the crowded haunts of the mainland ; and thus affording, by her conduct, the best proof that the liberality of the public had not been unworthily bestowed."







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