

The fishermen strained their eyes as she approached the black and threatening spot—Now she seems inevitably lost—No! she has seen the danger—She has put her helm down—She is coming about, and for the moment is saved. "Now," said one of the men on the beach, "let us go off to the ship." "No," said another, "that's no use; no boat can live in that sea, and besides, with the wind where it is, you can't get through the Herling Gut—as a passage through the rocks is called—to board her." Nothing more was said for some time, till the excitement grew so much stronger, that the first speaker repeated—"Let us go to the ship and offer her a pilot." "Well," said one "if you say the word, we won't hold back, though it seems certain no boat can live in that sea." Then they pushed out under the lee of a ledge of rocks, but when they got into the sea way, it seemed really as if no boat could live; and their friends on shore, when they saw them descend into the hollow of one wave never expected to see them mount another. At length through all the foam and hurricane they succeeded in getting under the lee of the ship—"Do you want a pilot?" "No," was the reply, to the great disappointment of the boatmen; but presently they were again hailed by the captain, who had been below for a moment, and asked to put a pilot on board. A pretended pilot was on board, and it was he who had declined the first offer. It was impossible to go alongside the ship, for a moment's contact with that solid mass in the raging sea would have dashed the boat to pieces; but a rope was thrown and one of the fishermen having tied it round him, was dragged through the surf on board the ship. After a shake or two, "Captain," said he, "what sort of a ship have you got?" "A capital ship." "Does she stay well?" "Yes." "Then away, sloft boys, and shake out a couple of reefs." "She won't stand it," said the captain; "but she must stand it," he replied; and when the reefs were shaken out she went staggering through the water, as though every moment the masts would be over the side. "Steady as she goes," said the pilot, as walking forward to the heel of the bowsprit, he looked out on the coast he was approaching. The captain was close at his elbow, saying over and anon, "is it not time to go about," and he constantly replied by the command to the helmsman, "steady! steady! again! keep her full as she goes!" At last the time came, and then in a voice of thunder, he exclaimed, "now hard down your helm," and the ship coming up beautifully into the wind payed off the other way, and, "then the order was given to fill away the foretopsail, she fairly went off on the other tack.—Along that dangerous coast she pursued her way seeming instinct with life, and conscious of the desperate game played for existence, determined that nothing on her part should be wanting to its successful issue. Again as they approached the frowning rocks, the firm voice of the pilot gave the word, "Steady! keep her as she goes! Keep her as she goes!" The seamen standing round with faces blanched by fear, began to whisper that unless he went about quickly it would be too late. The captain by this time knowing that he was in skilful hands did not venture to interfere, and still the order from time to time rose above the blast—"Keep her as she goes!" It was too late to go about, the ship was in the breakers, but covered with foam, staggering like a drunken man, she still pursued her way as the pilot still repeated to the helmsman,—"Steady now! steady again!" and a few moments more she had passed through a narrow passage of the reef into quiet waters, and the vessel was saved! This was an instance of self-sacrifice. If the example of that humble man carrying help to the ship and her gallant crew, at the risk of life itself, were only followed out, how soon we should escape the perils growing out of the sale of intoxicating drinks.

But I have digressed too far, and I return to the question of bringing this matter into politics. An intelligent man would say that politics included whatever involved the interest of the State and people, and, if this definition be true, must it not include the question we speak of to-night? Why, this involves the welfare and happiness of the people more than all the political questions of the times—the salvation of the lives of thousands of men—the salvation of thousands of women from error—describable—and of thousands of children from suffering, and invariable to any but the children of drunks. But then, we are told, "you have no right to enact the law," and we are asked if we are in favor of destroying the rights of citizens. We are not in favor of it, and the lawyers who make this objection, if they are intelligent, know that no man has any private right inconsistent with the general good. This law is a principle as old as Justinian, and is as good law in England, the United States, or Canada, now as it was then—*Salus populi suprema lex*—the welfare of the people the supreme law. And yet they talk of our prohibition being inconsistent with private rights, though the principle that the welfare of the people is the great rule of action—is the foundation

of the law in every free country. Perhaps in Russia or Austria it is otherwise. You pay taxes—light ones I believe in Canada, but light as they are, the tax gatherer takes from your pockets just as much as he thinks your proportion of the payment to the general fund, and thus shows in this simple matter, that the whole property of the citizens is held to belong to the State, to the extent necessity may require. You are about to develop the resources of Canada to an extent unknown to any part of this continent, and you will do it by running railroads over every man's land, no matter whether he likes it or not. The public convenience requires it, and the road goes. I remember a story of some half dozen young larks rowing up the Thames, when the coxswain said to the rest, that he thought it was dinner time,— "Yes," said another, "there is a good tavern just here." "Ah! I did not think of that," replied the first: "I thought of dining with his Lordship there," pointing at the same time to the palace of a nobleman, whose beautiful lawn came down to the water's edge, and terminated with a handsome stone water stair, to which were moored a number of equally painted barges. One declared they would have an invitation to dine with his Lordship, and a wager was bet to that effect. After some explanation they went ashore, each planting an oar at a certain distance from his comrade, and the steersman making sights along them. Their operations being noticed by some ladies on the lawn, were quickly made known to his Lordship, who, coming down to the water's edge, inquired the occasion which had procured him the honor of a visit. They were making a railway they told him, which ought to pass through his grounds. His Lordship was mortified, as you can easily conceive, at the idea of grounds which had cost him so much money and trouble being thus spoiled, and at the prospect of a railway engine passing daily under his drawing-room windows. He demonstrated, and at last was assured by our coxswain that he fully appreciated his Lordship's objections, and that so far as he was concerned, every effort should be made to find another route. This good nature was so gratifying that the whole party received an invitation to dine with the nobleman. The whole story turns upon the fact, that the nobleman and the peasant stand on the same ground, if the public interest requires his land to be taken; and yet there are people who pretend that the Maine Law is an infringement of personal right. Just as if a man had any personal rights at variance with the public good. Then we are asked if the application of our principle is to be without limit? And we say yes. Can a man's family be taken from him?—Yes. Can his fortune?—Yes. There was a man who became intemperate, and the law took away from him both his property and his children, a guardian was appointed, who drove up to his house one day, and handed his two daughters out into a carriage, as if it were merely to take them to dine, or spend the evening, for the public good required that these young girls should not be exposed to the contaminating influences they might be expected to meet in the home of a drunkard. When the father ceased to be the proper guardian, society thrust him out from the guardianship of his children. So in times of great fires, when conflagrations spreading with the velocity of the wind, I suppose you have some authority—in the States it is the Chief Engineer—to direct the destruction of houses. He says, tear them down, and they are torn down. Perhaps the wife or children see strong men laboring at the foundations of these houses; but they must get out, it is imperative, for the house must come down. The Engineer says, put a keg of powder into the cellar and blow up the house. Suppose the owners protest, what matter! When the public exigency requires it, we have proceedings just as arbitrary and despotic as are to be found in Russia or Austria. We have the conscription by which in time of war, the Executive may cause all persons of legal age to be assembled, and compel them to take knapsack and gun, and to abandon their families, to fight the battles of their country. Is there anything more arbitrary than that? One man comes up and makes the excuse that he is sick—he is told to go to the regimental Surgeon and get, if he can a certificate from him. He says he is earning \$16 a month, and hopes the State will pay him as much—\$7 is the reply. The man must go, for the public good requires it. If all men were good men, then, indeed, we should not want many of these stringent laws; but laws are wanted because many men care neither for God nor their neighbor; and society tells these men it will try to restrain them. In the case of passing counterfeit money, or even that of highway robbery, the offender's personal liberty is adjudged inconsistent with the general welfare; or in the case of setting a man's house on fire, the offender's life is deemed inconsistent with the general welfare, and the law tells the criminal you shall be hanged by the neck till you are dead. Thus you see *salus populi suprema lex*. But we shall be told, well, what of it? What of it?—why, the inference I draw is,