

friends, to announce our arrival, or say we were alive. On passing "Beechy Head," however, a Deal pilot-boat afforded us that opportunity, and gave our most anxious friends a short note.

Our ship was towed into Sheerness by two powerful steam-tugs, in the midst of a north-west gale. All our sick, fifty-two in number, were sent to the hospital. Poor fellows, what delight they left the ship with; they had improved in health from the effect of inhaling their mother climate, but many of them were beyond all hopes—walking spectres, only held together by Nature's last impulse.

The anchor was scarcely let go when the letter-bag arrived on board. I had been exactly one year and eight months without a letter. I did not know whether all my friends may be dead or alive. I eagerly tore open my letter. "Thank God!" I exclaimed; "not only alive, but 'all well.'" Not so, I grieve to say, with *many* others.

Letters lay unclaimed, unopened, for those long since committed to the deep sea—mouldered away to dust, or torn to fragments by demons of the ocean; others expecting letters from those who had ceased to exist. It was a moment of singular uniting of pain and pleasure.

We were "mustered" (that is, our names called over) and inspected by the admiral, and (as on every other occasion when going through this ordeal) highly complimented on the general efficiency, cleanliness, and discipline of the ship. This was exceedingly complimentary and gratifying to all, but the credit was wholly due to a