

lay there just beside him an indescribable mass of blood and mangled flesh! The cruel sea in another moment took him to her treacherous breast. This tragedy was a forerunner of the fast approaching disaster; the wind was blowing steadily from the west, from America, an ungracious forbidding wind; from ten in the morning till twelve at noon the advance had been perfectly null, it was only a weary, despairing effort. France was now more than a thousand miles behind, America more than a thousand miles ahead, it was clearly a case of "lost in mid-ocean." The passengers were locked in their cabins or in the saloons, our friend and another Oblate, his confrere, together with several other passengers were in one of the latter. Some had fallen asleep despite the tossing of the steamer, so little chance had there been for any-one's sleeping day or night since the second day out. Father B——, was trying to say some part of his office and just as he was reading these words: "*Noctem quietam et finem perfectum concedat nobis Dominus omnipotens,*" an awful crash was heard, the steamer seemed to have made a final plunge, only the sound told of something like a mountain falling on the prow rather than of a dashing against rocks beneath. In a few seconds those who had not lost consciousness at the shock were able to realize that a water-spout had burst and fallen upon them, the volume of water in its tremendous force breaking every thing in its way. The main mast snapped beneath it as a twig might snap in a child's fingers. The saloon in which the terror-stricken passengers were confined was broken in from all sides and for a few seconds all who could think at all, felt sure they were at the bottom of the sea; the water was rushing in, as if in reality the good ship had foundered. In the first panic, Father B—— did not realize that he felt the floor secure beneath him for they were actually struggling against drowning in the saloon. The next realization was to find himself, without having gone there, on deck and then he saw his confrere covered with blood painfully making his way to this only place of relative safety—relative indeed, for scarcely had they time to comprehend the shout of warning from one of the distracted crew, when a great mass of broken yards and torn rigging came down with a violence that must have been in-

stant death to all who stood in its way, and there where the horrified men had been standing by, in splinters and tatters lay the tangled debris. Now was the hour of direst distress, the wind had not abated in the least, the dismantled, crippled steamer was a mere plaything of the mad genius of the storm and panic had seized the crew and all on board but the valiant captain, whose coolness alone proved the safety of all. Some were beyond further agony, the first shock had killed them outright; among these was a Russian lady on her way to New York. She had exchanged a few words with the Fathers just before the catastrophe; when the blow came, she fell forward and her head struck the table beside which she was seated with such violence that her death was instantaneous. Other deaths were recorded afterwards, for a little while the two priests were sure they were the only survivors and there was nothing for them but to commend their souls to God, and there in mid-ocean wait in agony the next big wave that would bear them into eternity. It was an awful interval and though only of a few moments it seemed endless. A poor ray of hope came to them when in one of the short lulls of the wind they heard the captain's voice calling to them and pointing out a safe shelter. They scrambled through the wreckage on the two decks and were able to get some comfort in the smoking room which had not been much injured, still it was a cheerless refuge, drenched as it was by the disastrous wave. The wounded were lying stretched out on the sofas and tables, moaning, and some of them in their great suffering uttering piercing shrieks, women lying unconscious from the fainting that had mercifully saved them from the full knowledge of the peril, and strong men sat there helpless in their terror. However there were two exceptions. A couple of Americans, the first whom Father B—— had laid eyes on, were there nonchalantly puffing at their cigars and gazing out of the window apparently as secure as if they were looking out of the windows of a New York club house. The cook was a sorry, and at this late day, a most ludicrous spectacle. He was very lightly clad, and as the galley was in the path of the water spout, the dancing and breaking plates and cutlery literally scratched him all over, till he was covered with blood and unrecognizable as a human