

When they were brought ashore, it was noticed that the captain was quite drunk, and the rest, with the exception of the cabin-boy, were more or less intoxicated. It was afterwards discovered that as soon as they found they had missed the harbour, and were drifting helplessly on to the rocks, upon which they expected to be lost, they gulped down a quantity of liquor so as to meet death unconsciously. I have been told that this practice is not at all uncommon among dissipated sailors.

The captain of the second vessel stated that he mistook the bright torches which were being burned upon the pier, for harbour lights, and, steering straight for them, only discovered his mistake when it was too late to save his vessel. There was a sermon in that statement.

The above wrecks and rescue took place in the Tynemouth harbour, where such wrecks are very frequent during the winter months. The river Tyne flows into the sea from a shore that is comparatively straight, hence its mouth, being exposed to the open sea, forms but a poor harbour. In order to remedy this in some measure, broad piers of solid masonry have been built out from each side of the harbour, extending about a mile out to sea. These check the seas as they roll in from the wild north-east, and form a good harbour and entrance to the river.

A few nights after these wrecks took place, a gale was blowing from the north-east, and a heavy "ground sea" was running. A large barque was coming from the south, and had been struggling for a long time with the storm. Near midnight the man at the mast-head called out that he saw a light away to the north-west, that seemed to him like the red light of Tynemouth. The captain could not believe that they were at all

near enough to see that light, and so ordered the man down, and went aloft to see for himself. He saw the light, counted its revolutions, and was satisfied that the man was right, and reckoned that they must be about nine miles from the harbour. While he was aloft the vessel gave a deep plunge and trembled for awhile as though she had shipped a sea; but so intent was he upon watching the light, that he took but little notice of so common an occurrence.

Having fully satisfied himself, he returned to the deck. But what was his horror to find that there was not a soul aboard except himself. The men had evidently been all standing together talking about the light that had been seen, when a sea had broken over the vessel and swept every man overboard. The captain took the wheel, and managed to keep close hauled along the wind, but it was impossible for him to take in a stitch of canvas. Still he kept her along, and, as he had nearly nine miles of "sea-way," he was able to run far enough past the harbour so as to make it by putting about and running right before the wind. He entered the mouth of the harbour all right, and was safely past the ends of the piers; but it was only then he came to his greatest danger. She was driving along at a terrific speed, and to drop the anchors was useless, for the cables would snap like threads, and to bring her round to the wind with all her canvas set, was an utter impossibility for one man.

He was fast nearing the river, where fleets of vessels were riding at anchor, or moored to the wharves, and he knew that to run among them only meant the destruction of everything he touched, and the sacrifice of his own life and probably of many others. A terrible alarm ran among the people on shore, as they saw her