

and coast of Ireland, 1,259; north coast of Scotland, 129; and other parts, 159. Total, 3,317. "It is recorded that the greatest destruction of human life happened on the north and east coasts of England and Scotland."

It is interesting to observe the ages of the vessels which were wrecked during the period under consideration. Excluding foreign ships and collision cases, 221 wrecks and casualties happened to nearly new ships, and 396 to ships from 3 to 7 years of age. Then there are wrecks and casualties to 631 ships from 7 to 14 years old, and to 907 from 15 to 30 years old. Then follow 459 old ships from 30 to 50 years old. Having passed the service of half a century, we come to the very old ships, viz., 71 between 50 and 60 years old, 33 from 60 to 70, 24 from 70 to 80, 9 from 80 to 90, and 5 from 90 to 100, while the ages of 68 of the wrecks are unknown.

On distinguishing these last named casualties near the coasts of the United Kingdom, according to the force of the wind at the time at which they happened, we find that 739 happened with the wind at forces 7 and 8, or a moderate to fresh gale, when a ship, if properly found, manned, and navigated, can keep the sea with safety; and that 1,046 happened with the wind at force 9 and upwards, that is to say, from a strong gale to a hurricane.

"We must say one word on the subject of casualties to our ships in our rivers and harbours, as the fearful calamity to the steamer *Princess Alice* last September in the Thames has directed afresh intense attention to them throughout the civilised world. We find from the Wreck Register Abstract that the total number during the year 1876-77 was 984, of which 17 were total losses, 245 were serious casualties, and 722 minor casualties.

"Of these casualties, collisions numbered 658, foundering 13, strandings 184, and miscellaneous 129.

"These 984 casualties caused the loss of or damage to 1,725 vessels, of which 1,020 were British sailing-vessels, 560 British steam-vessels, 118 foreign sailing-vessels, and 27 foreign steam-vessels. The lives lost in these casualties were 15.

"With reference to the collisions on and near our coasts during the year 1876-77, 48 of the 847 collisions were between two steamships both under way, irrespective of numerous other such cases in our harbours and rivers, the particulars of which are not given in the Abstract. No disaster at sea or in a river is often more awful in its consequences than a collision, as was too strikingly illustrated last year in the cases of the German ironclad *Grosser Kurfürst*, and the Thames steamer *Princess Alice*.

"As regards the loss of life, the Wreck Abstract shows that the number was 776, and of these 92 were lost in vessels that foundered, 57 through vessels in collision, 470 in vessels stranded or cast ashore, and 93 in missing vessels. The remaining number of lives lost (64) were lost from various causes, such as through being washed overboard in heavy seas, explosions, missing vessels, &c.

"This number (776) may appear to the casual observer a comparatively small one by the side of the thousands who escaped disaster from the numerous shipwrecks before mentioned. We are, however, of opinion that it is a very large number; and when we bear in mind the inestimable value of human life, we are convinced that no effort should be left untried which can in any way lessen the annual loss of life from shipwreck on our coasts.