- If I could love thee, love, a little more,
 If thy fair love outlived the brief sweet roseIf in my golden field were all the store,
 And all my joy within thy garden close—
 Then would I pray my heart to be full fond
 For ever, and a little bit beyond.
- If daffodil and primrose were not frail, if snowdrop died not ere the dying day—
 If I were true as l'aphnis in the tale,
 If thou could'st love as Juliet in the play—
 Then would I teach my heart to be full fond
 For ever, and a little bit beyond.
- But since I fear I am but wayward true, And wayward, false, fair love, thou reem'st to be— Since I some day must sigh for something new.
- And each day thou for life's monotony— Prithee, stay here ere yet we grow too fond, And let use pass a little bit beyond.

RETURNED FROM THE GRAVE

By MRS. HENRY WOOD:

Author of "East Lynne," "Oswald Gray," Sc.

CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED.

Lord Dane released her hand, and broke out into a half laugh; its derision was not so wholly suppressed, but that it jarred on the ear of Lady Adelaide.

"You threw me away when you married Mr. Lester, Lady Adelaide, and I fully understood that I was thrown away forever: I have not allowed myself to comtemplate it in any other aspect. I ask you ten thousand pardons for having expressed myself badly, which I conclude I must have done. The house, is Maria Lester."

A burning passionate suffusion of shame dyed the brow of Lady Adelaide. Never did woman fall into a more awkward or humilisting error, She could have struck herself: she could have struck Lord Dane: she opened her lips to speak, but no appropriate words would come-none that would not make the matter worse. That Lord Dane should enjoy her confusion was but natural: perhaps he felt repaid for what she had made him suffer in days gone by.

"I have led a roving life long enough," he continued, in a calm matter-of-course tone, assumed possibly to put her at ease; " and it is time I settled down. I did not think it could have escaped your observation that I have been striving to win Miss Lester. I never met with any one I so thoroughly es- face upon him full of anxious expression teemed," he emphatically added; "and my "You know that I care for you more than I do motive in speaking to you is, to crave your influence with Mr. Lester that he will allow me to make her Lady Dane."

That Lord Dane had been marked in his attention to Maria had certainly not eluded the observation of Lady Adelaide, and a sus picion had crossed her mind that it might bear a serious meaning; this had been in her thoughts that very evening, when she had, somewhat mysteriously, inquired of Mr. Lester whether he had any idea why Lord Dane out fearlessly, Maria. Do you deem that, came so frequently. How was it, then, that she had forgotten this, and jumped to that to forbid our intercourse? I speak of you other idea, touching herself? Her face burnt still, but she essayed to turn it off defiantly, and threw back her head with a haughty gesture.

"Why do you not apply to Mr. Lester vourself, Lord Dane?"

"Because I prefer to apply, in the first instance, to you," he answered, in a courteous tone, as he took a seat near her. "I would ask it of your kindness to intercede with Mr-Lester. It has been told to me that he will not regard favorably any suitor for his

What was Lady Adelaide to reply to this? Mr. Lester would have no objection in the abstract to Maria's marrying; Lady Adelaide ered, "you know of the attack on Lord Dane's on her part, would have been glad to see the keeper?" day that removed her from the hall; but what they both did object to, and would find most inconvenient, was the resigning nine hundred a year. In short, they were unable to resign it, and the only alternative was, to keep Maria. Lord Dane, however, could dive into motives as quickly as most men, and he had formed his resolution.

"I scarcely need mention that, in seeking Miss Lester for my wife, I seek but her," he resumed. "There is, it occurs to me that I have heard, some trifling, paltry income that was bequeathed to go with Maria when she marries; but the large revenues of the Dane estate, the settlements I am enabled to offer, preclude the necessity of her bringing money to add to them. Will you, dear Lady Adelaide, tell Mr. Lester that I wish to take Maria alone; that any little fortune of hers I shall beg him to retain?"

" But why not tell him yourself?" reneated Lady Adelaide, in a far more gracious tone.

"Mr. Lester is a man sensitive on pecuniary matters," smiled Lord Dane, " and will receive that part of the communication better from you than from me. Legal arrangements, of course, can be called in, to bind the bargain. May I count upon your interest with Maria?"

Some stifling weight seemed to oppress her, and she made no immediate reply. She rose from her seat, in agitation that she could not wholly hide, walked to the window, and drawing aside the blind, stood looking out on the boisterous night. Lord Dane watched her. Was her strange manner caused by any lingering tenderness for him on her own part? He could not think that; but he wondered, and he fell to speculating on its cause. Lady Adelaide came back, and interrupted him.

"I prefer to remain neutral in this affair, Lord Dane," she said. "I will not second your efforts to gain Miss Lester, but I will not impede them. All I can do is to repeat to Mr. Lester, impartially, what you have said, and then the matter must progress, or the contrary, unbiased, uninterfered with by

- "You will not be against me with Maria." "I have said I will not. I shall remain
- wholly and entirely neutral. Lord Dane bowed.
- "She is at home, I presume." "Yes," replied Lady Adelaide, ringing the bell. ... Tell Miss Lester that the ten is coming in," she said, to the man who answered
- "Miss Lester is gone out, my lady."
- "Out! This turbulent night!" "She has been gone this half-hour, my lady.
- She is taking ten at Miss Bordillion's. "Maria does do things that nobody else would think of," observed Lady Adelaide to Lord Dane, and at that moment Mr. Lester

entered. And now to follow Maria. As she sned along from the hall, the wind nearly took her | tainly was, and watching us," returned Maria. off her feet, but she kept up bravely, and laughed as she laid hold of objects to steady herself, by. By the road, Miss Bordillion's own house, but there was a path through the wood, half as long again; a quarter of an hour say, it would take her that way, and Maria

chose it as being the most sheltered. The shades of evening were drawing on apace, and the wood struck a gloom upon her

their very centre, imparting a weird-like, ghastly loneliness to the scene, Maria began thinking of the supernatural stories she had read of the old German forests; and as some object suddenly struck out from the trees, and stood in her path, she positively could notsuppress a scream. The next moment, however, she was laughing.

"How stupid I am. But you should not

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have started me, Wilfred.

A tall, slender young man of four-and twenty, wearing a shooting-coat, and carry-ing a gun in his hand. His face was almost delicately beautiful and his dark blue eyes, deeply set, were shaded by long, black lashes His forehead was broad and white, and his hair was black, like the lashes. Such was Wilfred Lester.

"I did not intend to startle you. Maria who was to think you would be in the wood to-night?" he said, as he turned to walk be-

side her. "Where are you off to?" "Miss Bordillion's. How-how-is Edith?"

she added, with much hesitation. "What! I suppose it is high treason even to inquire after her," returned he, noting the timid tone. "Have they forbidden you even her name? Come Maria, confess; you can't say more than I guess; perhaps not so much."

"Something very like it," she replied. "Of course. Perhaps they have interdicted your speaking to me, if we happen to meet?" he pursued.

"No, Wilfred. They have not done that

"Yet! That's to be the next thing. I suppose you live in daily expectation of it." "How are you getting on?" she returned, evading his question. "Is Edith better?"

"We are not getting on at all, Maria; unattraction I alluded to, as drawing me to this less going backward is getting on. It's backward with us, generally, and backward with Edith."

"Is she getting strong?" "No, and she never will, and never can, while things are as they are. If there's l iustice in Heaven---

"Hush, Wilfred! It will do no good." "And no harm-but have it as you like. You have not answered my question. Maria. I say you live in expectation, of an order to pass me when we meet. Is it not so?"

"Should it come, Wifred, it will be partially your own fault."

"No doubt of it. I am all in fault, and they are all in the right. But I did not expect to hear you say it."

"You are too petnlent with me without a cause. Wilfred," she said, turning her kind for any one in the world. Even papa, I am uot sure that I love and care for as I do for you," she added, in a cone of apology, " if it be not wicked to say it. But I have not seen much of him of late years, and-"

"And he has been so exclusively occupied with his lady-wife, with his children, to the neglect of us, that it would be little wonder if all of your love for him had faded and died," interrupted Wilfred Lester. "Speak the truth and myself," he added, dashing his hair from his brow, " not of Edith."

"If they did torbid it, I am not sure that I should obey," she steadily answered. I have debated the point with myself much lately, and I cannot tell what would be my course of action. I hope it will not be put to the proof. But I repeat that it will be partly your fault if it comes. What are these tales that are going about respecting you?" she asked, lowering her voice.

"Tales!" uttered Wilfred. "That you are taking to ill-courses-to poaching for game and fish—to stealing out at night with evil men! Wilfred," she shiv-

"I shauld think all the world, for ten miles around, knew of that," returned he, carelessly " Well?"

"They say that-that you were one of them, disguised."

"Oh, they do, do they! Give a dog a bad name, and bang him! I wonder they did not bring in my wife as well, and say she accompanied me. Who carried this precious news to you, Maria?"

"I don't know how it reached the hall: I was too sick and terrified to inquire: I have some idea it was through Tiffle-that she communicated it to Lady Adelaide. Papa walked into his own room when it was told him, and I saw him shaking like a leaf. Wilfred, I know you are forbidden the hall, but, accused of such a crime, you should brave the mandate. Go into my father's presence and

deny it—that is, if you can deny it."
"If I can deny it! What do you mean, Maria? Do you think I go out by night to murder gamekeepers?" "Then you will, for once, come to the hall

and disclaim it," she eagerly said. "No. If I did murder, it would be my

father and his wife who have driven me to it let them enjoy the doubt as they best may.' "But, Wilfred, is it true that you go out poaching?"

"I poaching? How has your mind been thus poisoned against me? I have my game

"But they talk—they talk of gins and snares," she whispered: "of the entrapping wholesale, to-Wilfred? Wilfred! game, whol what's that?" The hasty, startled tone in which the last

words were uttered, caused Wilfred Lester to lift his head and peer around him. He saw nothing. "There was some one watching us," she

breathed. "There; where the trees are thick. How strange!" "It must have been your fancy, Maria.

Who would be likely to watch us? To what end?" "I am quite certain it was not fancy. I saw a face bending toward us, trying, as it seemed, to bear what we were sa, ing. I was not quite sure at first, and I looked steadfastly, and then it moved away. It seemed about the height of a boy, and it was like a

boy's face. Wilfred, you need not doubt Wilfred Lester strode to the snot indicated and pressed through the trees. Not any creature was in right, human or inhuman, but there was a narrow path striking off farther

into the wood, favorable to escape. "Some wandering thief of a youngster, come to hunt if there might be a stray partridge dropped," he remarked. "The sight of us has scared him away."

"What his motive may have been, or what he came for, I know not; but there he cer-They 'emerged from the wood. To the what is amiss in yours."

the left the little cottage inhabited by Wil- necessities, was the reply of Miss Bordillion. house was about ten minutes walk from her fred Lester; the latter not many yards off, "My household and luxuries have nearly but an angle of the road hid it from view. As they stood, talking yet, before branching me, I have been thrown entirely upon my off, on their separate paths, a very curious own income; and that, you know, is little looking lad came running past. Slim to a degree, with restless, wriggling movements, he was not unlike a serpent; he had that old. not impede ber; though, as it mound and formed, and sly, sly eyes. Not that he was "No great deprivation to me," smiled Miss It was that of Mrs. Ravensbird, and her One old sailor, who possessed fine eyesight, seamen! Come, on; my men! if there be any shricked overhoad, and shook the trees to deformed, only very stunted for his years, Bordillion. "And considering I do not pay husband proceeded to the room where she keener than Mitchel, professed to make out of you who deserve the name." as she turned into it. There the wind did precocious face sometimes seen in the de-not impede ber; though, as it mouned and formed, and sly, sly eyes. Not that he was "No great deprivation to me," smiled Miss

which were near fifteen. An ordinary spectator might have thought him ten.

"Hallo, Shad," cried Wilfred Lester where are you scuttering off to?"
The boy stopped. Rejoicing in the bap-

tismal name of Shadrack, he had never, in the memory of the neighborhood been called anything but Shad. His other name nobody knew, and it did not clearly appear that he had one. Nearly fifteen years ago, he was first seen at the hut of old Goody Bean; she said he was her daughter's who had been many a year away from home; but Goody Bean was not renowned for veracity. To whomsoever he belonged, there he had been from the first day to this.

" Please, sir, I'm going home; and I've been getting some sticks for granny."

He spoke more like a boy of ten than of his own years; but, looking at his sharp face, it might be doubted whether the simplicity was not put on. It was one of two things: that he was a very unsophisticated young gentlemen, or else one of rare and admirable cun-

"Have you been in the wood to get those Shad?" demanded Miss Lester, looking at a

few bits of fagots in the boy's bands. "I've been o'ny on t'other side of the hedge. miss; I doesn't like the wood when the trees moans and shakes."

"Have you not been in the wood?" she re-

turned, looking keenly at him. "I was there yesterday, miss."

"I spoke of this evening."
"No," he shaking his head from side to side something like the trees. "Granny telled me togo into the wood, and bring her a good bundle, but I wouldn't when I heard the wind; and I expec's a whacking for it.

He shambled off. Miss Lester turned to her brother. "Is he to be believed or not? It may have been he who was watching us."

"Very likely. It is of no consequence if he was. As to believing him, I think he is even less worthy of credit than his grandmother, and that's saying a great deal. Why! what does she want? A decent looking woman, with a sour face,

was coming full pelt toward them from the direction of Wilfred's cottage, calling out as she ran:

" Master! master!" Wilfred took a step forward to meet her.

"Is the house on fire?" quoth he. "Sir,' returned Sarah,-for that was the name she bore, and she was his servant-'my mistress is lying like one dead; I'm not sure

but she's gone." A moment's bewildered hesitation, and he started off; but arrested his steps again, and turned to Maria.

"Will you not come, in the name of humanity? Your entering my house to say a word of comfort to Edith-dying as she may be, as I fear she is, for the want of countenance, of kindness-will not poison Mr. and Lady Adelaide Lester. Judge between me and them, Maria."

He waited for no answer, but sped on. The appeal was successful, and Maria followed

with the maid. Edith, who had been for some weeks in a very precarious state of health, had fallen on the floor in attempting to move from the sofa. Sarah heard the noise, and 1an in; her mistress looked so still and death-like, for she had fainted, that the woman was frightened, and as speedily ran out again, hoping to get assistance; and in the road she saw her master. They lifted her up, and she revived; but she could not talk much to Maria. The latter, who had not seen her for many, many weeks, interdicted, as she was, from going near her brother and his wife, was shocked at the

long in this world. "Sarah!" she exclaimed to the servant. with whom she was alone a few moments ere departing, "what a terribly weak state your mistress appears to be in! What can cause

change, and surely thought she would not be

"It's just famine," bluntily returned the and nothing Maria was shocked and bewildered at the

answer, and could only stare at the speaker. "Famine!" she uttered, feeling ready to faint herself. "Oh, Sarah! things cannot be as bad as that with my brother!"

"They ain't much better, and haven't been for some time, so far as missis is concerned, Miss Lester. Me and master, we can eat hard food-bread and cheese or bread and bacon, or a bit 'o meat and a heap o' potatoes and onions made into Irish stew-and we can wash it down with water and thrive upon it. But missis, she can't; she could no more swallow them things than she could swallow the saucepans and gridirons they're cooked in. When folks are delicate and weak in health they require delicate food. Beef-tea, and jellies, and oysters, and a bit o' chicken, or a nice cut out of a joint of meat, with a glass or two of good wine every day; that's what Miss Edith wants. And she's just going into her

grave for the want of it." Maria turned from the door on her way to Miss Bordillion's feeling that her brain was a chaos. Suffering, dying, from want of proper food! Maria had never been brought into contact with there hard realities of life-had never glanced at the possibility of their touch-

ing her own family. Miss Bordillion-a gentle lady now, in a close cap and white hair, was surprised to see Maria come in. She had not expected her in such wind, and it was later than Maria's usual hour. No trace of the heart-conflict she had to do battle with for years, and to conquer, was discernable on her features-always excepting the hair; that had turned

white before its time. Maria threw off her shawl and bonnet, and sat down to the-table, in the middle of which meal she had disturbed Miss Bordillion. The latter rang the bell, and the maid brought in

a cup and saucer.
"Some butter," said her mistress. "You never were taking your tea without hutter?" exclaimed Maria. "Eating dry

toast!" "It is well to abstain from butter sometimes if we are billous," said Miss Bordillion. But Maria observed that she got quietly up, and, surreptitiously taking the sugar-basin from the sideboard, placed it upon the table. So that she was also abstaining from that-

and Maria had never heard that sugar would

do good or harm to bile. An inkling of the

truth flashed over her. "You are abstaining from motives of economy!" she said in a low tone.

Miss Bordillion would have smiled off the subject with a jest, but Maria was eager and persistent. "Why should you treat me as a child or a

stranger?" she continued. "Dear Miss Bordillion, I have just been initiated into the necessities of one household; let me hear right lay the residence of Miss Bordillion; to "You have mentioned the word, Maria-

parted company. Since you and Edith left | all?" more than a hundred a year."

"" But to go without sugar and butter?" repeated Maria, unable to lose sight of the

rent for my house, which your father has my income suffice for my moderate wants; but, alas, Maria, two families have to be kent

out of it." "Two!" uttered Maria.

"Can I see your brother and Edith

starve?" Maria made no reply. Her heart was beat-

How do you suppose they have lived?" proceeded Miss Bordillion. "For a few months after their marriage, I remained very angry, and did not see them; I thought it so imprudent so unjustifiable a step to have taken. and I joined Mr. Lester in his blame. They were positively without resources, without any, and during that period they parted with all their trifling valuables, and also got into debt. Of course that stopped their credit; that, and Mr. Lester's known displeasure

"The tradespeople might safely trust them," interrupted Maria. "Wilfred is my father's eldest son, and the estate will descend to him some time."

"Have you forgotten that the estate is not entailed?" asked Miss Bordillion, striving to speak in a careless tone. "Not an acre of it need come to Wilfred, not a single shilling; he may find himself as penniless at his

father's death as he is now." "Oh, Miss Bordillion! do not hint at any-

thing so unjust." "A few weeks ago Edith's baby was born, and died. She was very ill, and they sent for me. I deliberated whether or not to go; my own heart was inclined to forgiveness, but I did not like to do what would displease Mr. rent of the cottage was in arrear, and they had nothing. What could I do, but help them?"

"And you help them still?" "My dear, but for me, they never would have a meal. And all out of my poor little income. So don't wonder," she added, with an attempt at merriment, "that my butter and sugar are too costly to be approached

Maria fell into a most unpleasant reverie. She was revolving all she had heard and seen, all she feared. The part of the whole which she most shrank from, was the rumor touching the ill-doings of her brother. Urged on by the necessities of home, of Edith, what might he not do?

"Have you heard the whispers about Wil fred?" she asked, aloud, flying from her own might get whirled off the heights into the thoughts. "That he—that he—has been seen out at night, on Lord Dane's lands ?"

"Hush," interrupted Miss Bordillion, glancing around her with a tremor that seemed born of fear.

CHAPTER XIII.

RARELY had such a night been known with in the memory of the oldest inhabitant of Danesheld. The storm of wind was terrific; now, it swept through the air with a rushing, booming sound; now, it shook old gables and tall chimnies, unhinged shutters, and crushed down out-houses; and now it caused men and women to stagger as they strove to walk along. But for the wind, the night would have been nearly as bright as day, for the large clear moon was at the full; but the clouds that madly swept across its face ob scured its brightness, causing a dark shadow to fall upon the earth. Even the fitful gusts when clouds were absent, seemed to hide the

moon's rays, and dim them. A knot of men were congregated in the tap-room of the Sailor's Rest. Richard Ravensbird, looking not a day older than when you saw him last, bard, composed, phlegmatic as ever, was waiting on them, or joining in their converse, as the case might be. Sophie was in the bar-parlor. She did look older. Somehow, Frenchwomen, after they pass thirty, do age unaccountably. Not that Sophie had changed in manner; she vas free of tongue and ready she always had been.

"How's Cattley getting on? Have ye heard?" asked one of the men of Ravensbird,

taking his pipe from his mouth to speak. Ravenshird had handed a fresh jug of ale to another of the company, and was counting the halfpence returned into his hand. "Cattley may be better, or he may be

worse, for all I know," returned he, when he had finished counting. "It's no concern of mine; I don't meddle with other folk's business.' "Tain't much meddling, landlord, to hear

whether an injured man's getting on his legs again, or whether he's a goin to have 'em laid out stiff," retorted the questioner. "I ha'been at sea three days, and 'tis but nateral to ask after a poor fellow as have been a'mort murdered when one gets to shore again."

"A fine trouble your boat had, to get home, nut in a man, before any one else could speak. I was down the beach this afternoon, and see it a-laboring."

"Trouble!" echoed the other. "I never hardly was out in such a gale—and the wind blowing us right ashore. It took our best you." management, I can tell ye, to keep her off it. Does nobody know anything of Cattley?"

"Cattley's better," answered one who sat in a corner. "I saw Mr. Bruff to-day, and asked him. He said be was going on all right. My lord's downright savage, though, because the fellows are off."

"What fellows?" cried the sailor in a quick tone. "Not Beecher and Tom Long?" "Beecher and Tom Long. Cattley was well enough to be taken into the hall yesterday, from his bed; they wrapped him up in blankets, put him in a chair, and carried him in : and Beecher and Tom Long were brought up from the guard-house in charge of the police. But Cattley couldn't swear to them : he said he had no moral doubt that they were the two, but could not speak to it with certainty. Of course that put a stop to all chance of conviction, and Lord Dane was obliged to liberate them. Such a lecture as

he read them first!" "Did he?" "Bruff heard it. He was present during the time, close to my lord's chair, and he said his lordship was as vexed and snappish as could be. Old Beecher came forward, with all the brass in the world, and said he'd take an the row happened. Lord Dane told him his oath went for nothing and he regretted the evidence was not more conclusive.

"But there was a third, engaged in the attack," resumed the sailor. "Said to be. Cattley speaks of another.

who was watching from a short distance. He did not join in the a tack ". "That was Drake, then; not a doubt on't Smuggling or poaching, it all comes alike to

him. I'll lay any money it was Drake."
"You'd lose it, then. The third fellow was a tall, thin man. Drake's short and stumpy. I say, landlord, what's your opinion of it "Haven't I just told you that I mind my

"If everybody did the same there'd be less contention in the world." "Richard, Richard," a voice was heard call-

own business?" returned Mr. Ravensbird.

was sitting. She had a candle in her hand, never yet permitted me to do. I could make | and appeared as though she had just been up stairs.

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"I'm afraid, Richard," she said, "I protest I am; the very house seems to rock: I shall broken not go to bed to night."

Her p "Nonsense!" returned Richard Ravensbird.

"Folks sleep best in windy weather." "If they can get to sleep. It's what I sha'n't try at to-night. You just go up to our bedroom, and see what the wind is there; the bed itself's shaking."

"They are calling for more ale in the tap room," cried a very smart maid, entering at and groaned as she bent to their fury. this juncture: "Am I to serve it, sir? The "Oh! the scene on board!—could those clock wants but two minutes of eleven."

"Oh, for goodness sake let them stop on as long as they like to-night," put in Sophie to her husband. "Better be in danger in com-

pany, than alone." Richard Ravensbird looked at her in sur-

prise. "Danger!" he repeated; "why, what is the matter with you, Sophie? You are surely not awful bearings of the scene. Bewildering turning coward, because the wind is a little higher than ordinary."

"The wind is worse than I have ever known it since I lived in the Sailor's Rest," she responded. "It's awful enough to make the bravest think of danger."

Ravensbird returned to the tap-room, and told the company it was eleven o'clock. They did not, however, seem inclined to move; and whether it was the wind howling without, which certainly does induce to the enjoyment of comfort within, or whether in compliance with his wife's words, Ravensbird proved less rigid than usual as to closing his house at eleven, and suffered more ale to be drawn. Lester. However, I went. Apart from The servant was bringing it in, when a fresh Edith's state, I found things very bad. The customer entered. It was Mitchel, the preventive-man. He took off an oil-skin cape he wore, and sat down.

"Why, Mitchel! is it the wind that has blown you here?" were the words Ravensbird greeted him with. "I thought you were on duty to-night."

"Tke wind won't let me stop on duty, Mr. Ravensbird, so it may be said to have blown me here," replied Mitchel. "I saw you were not closed through the chinks in the shutters. It's an awful night."

"Not much danger of a contraband boatload stealing up to the beach to-night," laughed one of the company. "No, the Flying Dutchman himself couldn't bring it up," said Mitchel. "What with the security from that sort of danger, and the nonsecurity from another; namely, that we

sea, and be never more heard of, the supervisor called us off duty. What a sight the waves are, to be sure!" "The men have not been on duty below all

day." "Couldn't have stood it," answered Mitchel, "the sea would have washed them away. It's great rubbish to keep men there at all, now they have put us on the heights. I'm afraid of one thing," he added, lowering his

voice.
" What's that?"

"That there's a ship in distress. My eyesight's uncommon good for a long distance, as some of you know, and I feel sure that I made her out, and even her very lights. The worst was, the gusts whifiled one's sight, and steady for one minute, one couldn't stand. I pointed the ship out to Baker, when we met, but he could see nothing, and thought I was mistaken."

"But-if it is a ship-why do you assume that she must be in distress?" inquired Ravensbird.

"Could a ship be off the coast, in such a storm as this, and not be in distress?" was Mitchel's answer. "And the wind blowing dead inland! Mark me! if that is a ship she'll be on the rocks to-night."

"Mitchel," cried one of the company, " you were always one of them given to croaking. And croaking don't help us on in the---" The man's voice stopped abruptly, and the ssembly simultaneously started to

A heavy, booming sound had struck upon their ears. Mrs. Ravensbird rushed into the room. "It is a cannon!" cried she. If it was a cannon, it was firing off quick and sharp strokes, one after the other, as no cannon ever had been known to do yet.

Some of those startled listeners had heard that

sound before: some had not. "It's the great bell at the castle!" uttered Mitchel. "I am sure of it. The last time it rang out, was for that fire in the stables, before the old lord died. What can be the matter?" They moved in a body to the house door, and stood in the road outside, listening and looking. Though the Sailor's Rest stood alone, somewhat apart from any dwelling, they could see that the alarming sound had brought others to their doors, and night-cap-

ped heads to windows. "The castle must be on fire," exclaimed one, drowning the chorus of voices; "we

ought to set off to it." "I wish you would be still for an instant," interposed Ravensbird. "Listen: as keenly as the wind and that heavy bell will allow

They hushed their clamor and bent their ears in obedience to the injunction. And then they caught what the noise in the taproom had prevented their hearing before; minute-gun fired from the sea.

"It is the ship in distress," eagerly uttered Mitchel. "I knew she would be. She's signaling for help. And the castle bell is give ing notice of it; it used to in the old times.' Before they decided what to do, or whether to do anything-some being for rushing off to the castle, others to the beach-one of the footmen in the Dane livery, white and purple

came flying toward them. "A large ship in distress!" he exclaimed. "We think she may be an Indiaman, with home-bound passengers. Is the sea too bad

for help to go out?" The man spoke in agitation; it is an agitating moment, when the lives of our fellowcreatures are at stake within sight. That the lives of those, now in dauger, must inevitably be lost, appeared only too sure. Somebody inquired of the servant, what Lord Dane

thought. "My lord's not at home," was the man's re-"Some of us fancied we heard signals of distress from sea; and we went up to the turoath his son was in bed at home the night ret chamber, and there made out the ship, and saw quite plainly the flash of her minute guns, though the wind deadened their sound. Mr. Bruff gave orders then for the alarm bell. to be rung, to arouse the village; first of all sending a messenger to my lord, that he might not fear it was anything amiss at the castle itself." istle itself."
"Is he far away ?" an est waren

"Who? my lord? He is only spending the evening at Mr. Lester's."

The company got their caps, which they tied down firmly on their heads; those who possessed no caps tied on handkerchiefs, for their hats would be useless on the beach, and they left them at the Sailor'r Rest, and hastened down. The news had spread. The ship, drifting gradually in shore with the wind, was nearer now, and all Danesheld was flocking toward the beach.

They could discern her very plainly in the snatches of bright moonlight—a noble ship.

her build, and declared she was an American Whatever she might be, she was certainly drifting on rapidly to her doom. She had probably been at anchor, and the chain had

Her position was a little to their left hand as the people stood, and she would most likely strike just beyond the village toward Dane Castle. The wind was as a hurricane, howling and shricking, buffeting the spectators, and taking away almost their life's breath; the waves rose mountains high, with their hoarse roar; and the good ship cracked

watchers from the shore have witnessed it! Awful indeed seemed the jarring elements to them; what then, must they have been to those who were hopelessly in their power!

Reader, we may assume that it has never been your fate to be on board one of these illfated ships at the moment of its doom. No imagination, however vivid can picture the confusion, sickening distress, unbounded fear. Almost as terrible is it as that Great Day, pictured to us of what shall be the last judgment: for that Great Day for them is at hand-time is over-eternity is beginning-and all are not prepared to meet it!

Two gentlemen came together, arm-in-arm. and the crowd parted to give them place. They were Lord Dane and Mr. Lester. Mr. Lester carried a night-glass, but the wind

"Why, she's nearly close in shore!" uttered Lord Dane, in an accent of horror. "Another half-hour, my lord, and she'll be upon the rocks," responded a by-stander.

see her drift!" "My men," said Mr. Lester, addressing himself more particularly to the fishermen and sailors, many of whom had congregated

"Mercy! how fast she's drifting! One can

in answer. "No." "If one of 'em, any crack swimmer, could leave the ship and come ashore with a hawser, that's their only chance," observed an old man. "Not that I think he'd succeed; the waves would swallow him long before he got

"There's the life-boat," cried Lord Dane.

this !" Never, perhaps had been witnessed a more hopeless spectacle of prolonged agony. Once, twice, three times, a blue light was burnt on board the ship, lighting up more distinctly than the moon had done her crowd on deck, some of whom were standing with outstretched hands. And yet those on shore

The night went on; the hurricane raged in its fury; the waves roared and tossed in their terrific might; and the good ship came steadily to her doom. In two hours from the time that the castle-bell boomed out she struck; and simultaneously with the striking, many souls were washed overboard, and were buttling their own poor might and strength with the water as hopelessly as the ship had done. The agonized shrieks of woe were borne over the waters with a shrill, wailing sound, and

mercy on the spirits of the drowning. "She'll be in pieces! she'll be in pieces! and no earthly aid can save her!" was the cry

that went up around. As it was being uttered, another dashed into the heart of the throng-one who appeared templated the beating vessel.

tinued after another pause. "Human beings drowning. They are being washed off the ship fast?" All that Wilfred Lester possessed of excite-

are not attempting to rescue them! Are you

"It is no answer," said Wilfred Lester.
Where's the life-boat?" Mr. Lester drew away to hide himself

come in contact with his son. But Lord Dane pressed forward.
"You are excited, Lester," he observed to Wilfred; "and I acknowledge the sight is sufficient to excite the most stoical man on earth. You might as well talk of a balloon

as a life boat; the one could no more get to the ship than the other." "The effort might be made," returned Wil-

Wilfred turned to where a knot of fishermen were congregated. He was familiar with them all, and had been from boyhood. "Bill Gand, where's the life-boat?" he said

"Is she ready?" Bill Gand pointed with his finger to a small and snug creek at some little distance; he was not a man of fluent words. The life-boat was moored in the creek, and could be out at sea (wind and weather permitting) in a few

"Couldn't dare!" scornfully echoed Wilfred seemed to be rising. "I never knew a British sailor could be a coward until now; I never thought 'couldn't dare' was in his vocabulary. I am going out in the life-boat; those of you who can overcome, 'fear' had

He turned to quit the spot and make for the creek, but fifty voices assailed him. "It would be sheer madness to attempt it." "Did he mean to throw away his life?" and the life-boat would be swamped to-

his hand in the direction of the ill-fated ship; "when your fellow-creatures lives are being swamped wholesale, when you see them buffeting with the pitiless waves, does it become you to hesitate attempting their reacte for fear yours should be?—and you brave

would render it almost useless.

there, "can nothing be done?" One unanimous, subdued sound was heard

The crowd shook their heads with a smile. "No life-boat could put off in such a sea as

could give no help. Men ran from the beach to the heights, and from the heights to the beach, in painful, eager excitement, but they could do nothing. On she came—on, on, swiftly and surely.

were echoed by the watchers; some of whom -women-fell on their knees in their nervous excitement, and prayed God to have

not yet to kave been among the spectators. It was Wilfred Lester. He wore his sporting-clothes, as he had done when Maria met him in the evening. Pressing through it to the front with scant ceremony, he leaned his

"Good Heavens!" he uttered, after a few

moments' steadfast gaze; "she must have struck !" "This five minutes ago!" "What is that in the water?" he con-

ment was aroused within him. "Human beings drowning!" he repeated, his voice harsh with emotion. "And you

mad, or only wicked?" One by his side pointed to the foaming "Let that answer you."

amidst numbers; he had not cared lately to

fred, eagerly. "And the lives of those making it sacrificed," returned Lord Dane.

to a weather-beaten tar, who looked sixty at the least, to judge by the wrinkles on his face.

"Was made ready when the castle-bell tolled out, Master Wilfred," answered he.
"And why have you not put off in her?" demanded Wilfred, in a tone of command. "Couldn't dare, sir. And the sea be higher now nor it was then."

Lester, whose anger, like that of the waves, better come with me."

gether!" ""Then swamped we will be !" retorted Wilfred. "Do you see there?" he added, waving