

BRAVE BOUSSARD, THE FAMOUS PILOT OF DIEPPE.

(From Chatterbox.)

Hundreds sank down on their knees on the shore and prayed for the brave man, that the Almighty God would protect him, and bless his heroic effort: all hearts beat rapidly, while eager looks were divided between the struggle of the vessel and the struggle of the brave swimmer with the waves of the furious sea.

Those who have not beheld the sea when it is lashed by a violent storm can have no idea of the terrible power of the waves. Nothing can impress the heart more with a feeling of the littleness and weakness of man, than when he stands confronted with the raging of the elements. But we often see, too, that there is One Hand that can protect and guide him. This was proved in the case of the brave, generous Boussard. It was dreadful, indeed, to behold him, now borne up high as a house on the foaming crest of a wave visible to all eyes, and the next moment buried from sight in the deep trough of the breakers.

"He is lost!" cried many, in the anguish of their hearts.

"No! no! he is the best swimmer in Dieppe," cried others.

"He has strength and courage, his equal is nowhere to be found."

"God will protect and bless him!" cried those who, with piety and faith, trusted in the help of the Almighty and merciful God.

Thus an anxious quarter of an hour passed between hope and fear. With the strength of a giant, Boussard breasted the waves. The bold swimmer could no longer be seen from the shore, but it was just light enough for the crew of the cutter to watch the man who was risking his own life to save them from impending death. A loud cry of joy greeted the approaching deliverer. The unhappy seamen had long since given up all hope. They had seen how vain all the attempts

which had been made to save them had hitherto been—they could not imagine how the solitary man should venture to accomplish what had been impossible to so many. All the greater was their joy when they saw the brave fellow approaching. They were as full of hope, as just now they had been of despair; they imagined themselves, indeed, safe on the shore. But much, very much, had to be done before their hope could be realized.

Boussard had already approached very near to the cutter,

mariners had brought his wife and children down to the pier, where with anguish they had watched the struggles of their beloved husband and father. They had wrung their hands with terror whenever he threatened to sink; they had shrieked and lamented when the waves had cast him back. Now they surrounded him with mingled feelings of sorrow and joy. They implored him to give up the attempt, and not uselessly to sacrifice his life. Many of his relations and friends—even

children, and to the advice of companions, he tore himself from the arms which would hold him back, and again jumped into the water. But it did not last long. In a few moments a tremendous billow cast him back again on the shore.

All surrounded the brave fellow again, imploring him to desist with tears and cries. But the noble Boussard only answered, "Don't you hear their cries for help?" He pushed back his friends who would detain him, and dashed again into the waves.

It seemed as if the noble pilot was destined not to reach his goal. He had only swam a very little way when the sea again hurled him back upon the shore. Five times, with unflinching valor, he repeated his attempts. At last, the fifth time, he succeeded. He reached the stranded vessel, and with a cry that sounded far and wide, even above the roar of the wind and waves, the perishing seaman greeted their heroic deliverer. But he was not yet on board the vessel. A wave threw him so violently against the ship that the crew uttered a shriek of terror, for they thought that their brave deliverer had been stunned by the shock and would certainly sink. One of the sailors from on board sprang into the sea to help him; but Boussard, marvellous to relate, was quite unhurt, while the sailor who had wished to save him was stunned by the fall,



when suddenly a huge wave seized him, and hurled him back with its might. He was completely stunned. Before he could recover his senses he was back again on the shore, which he had left such a short time before, so full of courage and hope. There lay the poor generous man on the strand, and it was several minutes before he revived from the fearful exertion and exhaustion.

The tidings that Boussard had jumped into the sea to try to rescue the poor shipwrecked

strangers, too—joined in their request. His own comrades now thought that all would be in vain. It was not to be. God Himself had declared it by allowing him to be cast back upon the shore. All entreated him to give up the attempt, as the poor shipwrecked seamen could not be helped.

"You were never in such a plight yourselves, and don't know how those poor fellows feel," said Boussard.

Deaf to all entreaties and to the lamentations of his wife and

and would certainly have been drowned if the brave pilot had not seized him with his strong arm. He swam with him back to the shore, and brought him safely to dry land.

"Take care of him," cried he, as, for the sixth time he dashed into the sea.

His wife and children wept aloud. Surely his strength must be exhausted! Unless the Almighty God works a miracle, without doubt he will perish, they thought.

God watched over the life of