

"Yes! help me! Do help me! Bring men and bring a lantern; the ship has sprung-a-leak!"

I hastened, and headed in a more eager tone,—

"Make haste, I will try and hold it till you come back."

I waited to hear no more, but hurried on deck as soon as possible, and returned with a lantern and three men. I leaped down beside the boy, and could scarcely believe the evidence of my own senses. Three of the timbers were completely worm-eaten to the very heart, and one of the outer planks had been broken, and would burst in any moment the boy might leave it, whose feet were braced against the plank before him. Half-a-dozen little jets of water were streaming about him, and he was wet to the skin. I saw the plank must burst the moment the strain was removed from it, so I made my men brace themselves against it before I lifted him up.

Other men were called down with planks and spikes and adzes, and, with much care and trouble, we finally succeeded in stopping the leak and averting the danger. The plank which had been stove in was six feet long by eight inches wide, and would let in a stream of water of that capacity. It would have been beyond our reach long before we could have discovered it, and would have sunk us in a very short time. I know it must be where the iceberg struck us.

Jack Withers was taken to the cabin and there he managed to tell his story. Shortly after I put him in the hold he crawled forward, and when he became used to the dim glimmer that came through the dead-lights, he looked for a snug place in which to lie, for his limbs were very sore. He went to sleep, and when he awoke he heard a faint sound like water streaming through a small hole. He went to the open place in the cargo and looked down, and was sure

that he saw a small jet of water springing up through the bottom of the ship. He leaped down, and, in a few moments, found that the timber had given wholly away, and that the stream was increasing in size. He placed his hand upon the plank and found it broken, and discovered that the pressure of the water without was forcing it inward. He had sense to see that if it gained an inch more it must all go and the ship be lost, and perhaps all hands perish. And also saw, that if he could keep the broken plank in its place he might stop the incoming flood. So he sat himself upon it, and braced his feet against the cask, and called for help. But he went too far away—so low down, with such a mass of cargo about him, that his voice scarcely reached other ears than his own. Some of the men heard him, but thought he was talking to himself, and there he sat, with his feet braced, for four-and-twenty hours, with the water spirting all over him, and drenching him to the very skin. He had several times thought of going to the hatchway and calling for help, but he knew that the broken plank would be forced in if he left it, for he could feel it heave beneath him. His limbs were racked with pain, but he would not give up. I asked if he should not have given up, if I had not come to time as I did. He answered that he could not have done it while he had life in him. He said he thought not of himself; he was ready to die; but he would save the rest if he could—and he had saved us, surely saved us all from a watery grave.

The boy lay sick almost unto death; but I nursed him with my own hands; nursed him through all his delirium; and when his reason returned, and he could sit up and talk, I bowed myself before him and humbly asked his pardon for all the wrong I had done him. He threw his arms round my neck, and told me if I would be kind