

"A STORM."

THE storm was increasing in violence. Every now and then the little boat, which seemed like a speck far out on the lake, appeared on the top of a wave. The small crowd on the beach watched that white speck, whenever it appeared, with more mingled hope and despair than they would have felt for everything else in the world combined. Nor is it any wonder, since the lives of those nearest and dearest to some of the party were in great danger. Most of the women on shore were weeping, with no attempt at concealing the fact, while a few followed a safer and more sensible course, and prayed to God to intermit the storm. But what is very often according to His way, the storm seemed to grow fiercer almost immediately.

The tiny white sail tossed more frequently and more terribly. The dark waters were rolling in great long columns capped with white, frothy foam. The sky was growing darker, and black ridges of clouds, fringed on their lower edge with white curtains, were following close on the waves, as though there were a sea overhead as well as underneath. Either the sky or the lake might have been a reflection of the other, so troubled and fretted was the appearance of each. And now, oh, horror of horrors! a terrible wave had seemed suddenly to rise far out on the lake, like a huge snow-capped mountain, and the tiny sail had seemed to dip towards the water, and then it was gone!

Seven men had gone down to a boathouse, near the little village as soon as the news had spread around that three citizens of the place were out in the storm. They secured a large boat, and, jumping into it immediately, shot out on to the broad waters of Lake Ontario. Just at the moment that the big wave had appeared towards the horizon, these stalwart fellows waved their hands to the party on the beach, saluted a large Union Jack flying on the town hall, and then they were off. They struggled on for half a mile against the wind and waves, determined to rescue their friends, so long as there remained any hope that these might still be living. At this juncture they were obliged to lean on their oars with all their might, as an enormous mass of water, on its way to the shore, struck them. Their boat came near being capsized, and they were drenched with water. But, what a sight that instant met their eyes! The little boat, still upright, came into view for a moment after the big wave passed, and it was much closer than when they had last seen it.