

was said that the particular method adopted to repair the damage was of a unique character; and Sybil's eye flashed when she was told that the idea of it had been the suggestion of the third engineer.

At last it seemed as though the life of the ship might depend on the repairs being completed within a narrow margin of time. Once more the aspect of sky and sea became threatening, the wind shifted several points, and the captain calculated that a very few hours would bring him in dangerous proximity to the rocky shores of Newfoundland. On the other hand, the reports from the engine-room were encouraging. The repairs would be completed in a few hours, and the engineers had every confidence that they would prove effective. Thus another anxious night was passed.

Next morning Sybil was on deck betimes. She stood on the very spot where Tom had parted from her, and she recalled his promise that he would seek her there in case of need. Conflicting rumours as to the actual state of affairs were already abroad. During the night steam had been got up, and the clouds of white vapour were now blowing noisily through the safety valves. That was read as a hopeful sign, but, on the other hand, the line of cliffs dimly visible on the horizon to leeward had a fearful significance. It being no longer safe to go before the wind, the *Peruvian* was lying on one side, and pitching heavily in the endeavour to beat to windward, or, at all events, to weather Cape Race, which now lay not many miles distant on the port bow.

Steadying herself, as she had done on the day of the accident, by the handrail that ran along the line of central cabins, Sybil looked up at the huge fore-and-aft sails, under the force and strain of which the great iron ship lay over like a tin boat on a pond. Suddenly a hot hand grasped hers, and she heard the words spoken with quick emotion—

"So you are here to congratulate me? I dared to hope you would be."

Sybil started, and for a moment scarce recognised the haggard, perspiring face that was close to hers. Perhaps she recoiled unconsciously, for he dropped her hand, and said, apologetically, as he wiped his steaming brow—

"I thought you wouldn't mind my hand being a bit dirty, under the circumstances."

"Of course I don't mind," cried the

girl with honest warmth. "But tell me what has happened; you look quite scared."

"Hush!" he almost whispered, as he took her hand again. "Watch! they are going to start the engine. I could not bear to see it—I am over-wrought—so I said I'd come up for a breath of fresh air."

He led her to an open window through which the upper part of the engine-room was visible. There was the wooden-cased cylinder and the great motionless piston, that looked as though it had been paralysed in the midst of its strength and activity. A bell rang sharply.

"Now," gasped Tom, "my work is to be tested. Will the bolts hold?"

Slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, the piston rose; then it seemed to stop, and Tom's heart stopped too, till it began to fall. Down, down it seemed to creep, then hesitated, and commenced to rise once more.

The young engineer fairly broke down, and burst into tears as he sobbed out—

"Thank God! thank God! the bolts have held, and we are saved!"

"You must control yourself. The people will be looking at you," remonstrated Sybil, with a woman's eye to the proprieties.

"What care I who looks at me?" he cried, throwing back his head. "I've won the fight on which I was ready to stake my life. I'm a made man—though, God knows, it's not of that I was thinking all those hours. Won't you congratulate me? Won't you say you are a bit proud of me?" And as he thus appealed to her he seized her two hands in his, and looked her in the face with glowing eyes.

Half frightened by his eagerness she drew back a little.

"I do congratulate you from my heart," she said, "but I've no right to be proud of you; you do not belong to me."

"Ah, that is just it! but you know you might have me if you would. Why will you not be content, Sybil, to give up this mad scheme of yours, and to settle down with me in the old country?" he cried passionately.

Sybil drew her hands away. "Perhaps I don't know my own mind. But I am not content, and that is all about it. I see my path before me, and I mean to tread it."

"Well, there was but one thing wanting to make my cup overflow," said the young engineer quietly, as his eyes