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A THRILLING SEA STORY.

BY AN EYE WITNESS.



It was at the close of a stormy day in the year 1835, when the gallant frigate *Constitution*, under the command of Captain Elliot, having on board the late Edward Livingston, then Minister at the Court of France, and family, and manned by nearly five hundred souls, drew near the "chop" of the English Channel. For four days she had been beating down from Plymouth, and on the fifth, at evening, she made her tack for the French coast.

The watch was set at eight, P.M., the Captain came on deck soon after, and having ascertained the bearing of Scilly, gave orders to keep the ship "full and bye," remarking at the same time to the officer of the deck, that he might make the light on the lee beam; but he stated, he thought it more than probable that he would pass it

without seeing it. He then "turned in," as did most of the idlers, and the starboard watch.

At a quarter past nine, P.M., the ship headed west by compass, when the call of "Light ho!" was heard from the foretop-sail yard.

"Where away?" asked the officer of the deck.

"Three points to the lee bow," replied the lookout man, which the unprofessional reader will understand to mean very nearly straight ahead.

At this moment the Captain appeared and took the trumpet.

"Call all hands!" was his immediate order.

"All hands!" whistled the boatswain, with the long, shrill summons, familiar to the ears of all who have ever been on board a man of war.

"All hands!" screamed the boatswain's mate, and ere the echo died away, all but the sick were on deck.

The ship was staggering through a heavy swell from the Bay of Biscay; the gale, which had been blowing several days, had increased to a severity that was not to be made light of. The breakers,