

shrieking, howling, all night long. Hither come the sounding voices from the caverns on the coast, and hither to meet them rush the blasts from unknown desert places of the world. Here, in the fury of their unchecked liberty, they storm and buffet with each other until the sea leaps up in ravings mightier than theirs, and the whole scene is madness.

"On, on, on, over the countless miles of angry space, roll the long heaving billows. Mountains and caves are here, and yet are not, for what is now the one is now the other; then all is but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit and flight and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggle ending in a spouting up of foam that whitens the black night; incessant change of place, and form, and hue; constancy in nothing but eternal strife; on, on, on they roll, and darker grows the night, and louder howl the winds, and more clamorous and fierce become the million voices of the sea, when the wild cry goes forth upon the storm—'A Ship!'

"Onward she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her tall masts trembling, and her timbers starting on the strain; onward she comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low down in the hollows of the sea, as if hiding for the moment from its fury; and every storm-voice in the air and the water cries more loudly yet—'A Ship!'

"Still she comes onward bravely, and though the eager multitude of waves crowd thick and fast upon her all the night, and dawn of day discovers the untiring train yet bearing down upon the ship in an eternity of troubled water, onward she comes, with dim lights burning in her hull, and people there, asleep, as if no deadly element were peering in at every seam and chink, and no drowned seaman's grave, with but a plank to cover it, were yawning in the unfathomable depths below."

Thus Dickens pictures for us a stormy night on the Atlantic, such, no doubt, as he himself had seen when crossing from Liverpool to Halifax about seventy years ago. Steamships were then a novelty, and the first steam liner, the *Britannia*, had only recently begun her voyages between England and the