

## THE BRAVE SEAMAN.

A Steam-boat is making her way through the sparkling waters of a lake in America. The pilot at the wheel is a bluff, weather-beaten sailor, tanned by many a burning summer's sun and many a wintry tempest. From one end of the lake to the other he is known by the name of "Honest John Maynard;" and the secret of his honesty is his love to God.

The land is about ten miles off, when the captain, coming up from his cabin, cries to a sailor,—

"What's all that smoke there, coming out of the hold?"

"It's from the engine-room, sir," said the man.

"Down with you, then, and let me know."

The sailor disappeared for a moment beneath, and then returned much faster than he went, and exclaimed, "The hold's on fire, sir!"

The captain rushed down, and found the account too true. Some sparks had fallen on a bundle of tow. No one had seen the accident; and now, not only much of the baggage, but also the sides of the vessel were in a smouldering flame.

All hands, passengers as well as sailors, were called together, and two lines being formed, one on each side of the hold, buckets of water were passed and re-passed. Filled from the lake, they flew along the line of ready hands, were dashed hissing on the burning mass, and then passed on the other side to be refilled. It seemed, for a few moments, as if the flames were subdued.

"How's her head?" shouted the captain. "West-sou'-west, sir" answered Maynard. "Keep her sou' and by west," cried the captain; "we must go ashore anywhere."

It happened that a draught of wind drove back the flames, which soon began to blaze up more furiously towards the saloon; and the partition between it and the hold was soon on fire. Then long wreaths of smoke began to find their way through the sky-light; and seeing this, the captain ordered all the women forward. The engineer put on his utmost steam; the flag was run up with the union down, in token of distress; and water was thrown on the sails to have them hold the wind. And still John Maynard stood by the wheel, though now

he was cut off from the ship's crew by a sheet of smoke and flame.

Greater and greater grew the heat. The engineer fled from the engine-room; the passengers were clustering round the vessel's bow; the sailors were sawing planks to lash the women on; the boldest passengers were throwing off their coats and waistcoats, and preparing for one long struggle for life. And still the coast grew plainer; the paddles as yet worked well; they could not be more than a mile from the shore; and boats were seen starting to their assistance.

"John Maynard!" cried the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir!" said John.

"Can you hold on five minutes longer?"

"I'll try, sir."

Noble fellow! And he *did* try. The flames came nearer and nearer; a sheet of smoke would sometimes almost suffocate him; his hair was singed, his blood seemed ready to boil with the intense heat. Crouching as far back as he could, he held the wheel firmly with his left hand, till the flesh shrivelled and the muscles cracked in the flames. Then he stretched forth his right hand, and bore the same agony without a scream or a groan. It was enough for him that he heard the cheer of the sailors to the approaching boats, and the cry of the captain, "The women and children first, then every man for himself, and God for us all!" These were the last words he heard. Exactly how he perished was never known. Whether, dizzied by the smoke, he lost his footing in endeavouring to come forward, and fell overboard; or whether he was suffocated and fell into the flames, his comrades could not tell. At the moment the vessel struck, the boats were at her side; passengers, sailors, and captain, leaped into them, or swam for their lives; and all escaped save him to whom under God they owed everything.

All honour to the memory of brave John Maynard. He was a truly great man—great in the sight of men, but what was still better, he was great in the sight of God; for though rank and riches were not his, we are told that he was a true Christian. The grace of God had made him what he was; and at a time when many brave men would have shrunk from such a scene of danger, he stood amidst the flames doing his duty and trying to save his fellow-men: a noble example of what the grace of God can do for a man

by lifting him above the terrors of death in its most awful form.

## THE NUMBER NINE.

There is something curious in the properties of the number 9. Any number multiplied by 9 produces a sum of figures which, added together, continually make 9. For example, all the first multiples of 9, as 18, 27, 36, 45, 54, 63, 72, 81, sum up 9 each. Each of them multiplied by any number whatever produces a similar result; as 8 times 81 are 648, these added together make 18, 1 and 8 are 9. Multiply 648 by itself, the product is 419,904—the sum of these digits is 27, 2 and 7 are 9. The rule is invariable.

## A JAPANESE HOTEL.

A chair was brought for me to sit in, in European style; and the Japanese landlady, a middle-aged, black-toothed personage, of comely looks and polite manners, made her appearance. Her husband soon rejoined our party, and both combined their endeavours to ascertain our wants and meet our requirements. They were soon followed by three young waiting damsels, wearing their natural sets of glittering white teeth, with their native ruddy complexion enhanced by a little artificial addition of pearl-dust and rouge, and their lips stained with a dark purple crimson. These young waiting-girls are always selected as the most beautiful and prepossessing of their sex, and conducted themselves with simple artless modesty. In all parts these public hotels are served by the most handsome girls; and I was informed that they are a well-conducted class, and that Japanese law rigidly protects them, while filling such a capacity in these houses of refreshment. On this occasion, the landlady and her native damsels overburdened me with their attentions, placing my chair in the most convenient spot, rearranging my travelling coverlets, wiping my shoes, placing a cushion on my seat, and anticipating every want. Cakes, soup, rice and sweetmeats were brought in succession. One laughing, bright-eyed damsel approached me kneeling, with a cup of tea in her hand; another held some sugar, kneeling on the opposite side; while a third, from her lowly posture on the ground, held to my lips a boiled egg, already broken and peeled, with the spoon containing the inviting