

ly, after hearing Thomas Mildmay's recital of the quarrel.

"I cannot imagine, sir, unless he committed suicide," was the rejoinder. "He was mad at the moment. His accusation, his language showed it. He was capable of anything."

"What do you intend doing, my poor boy?"

"I shall go abroad," answered the young man, gloomily. "What becomes of me there is of small consequence."

"Save to me, dear Tom," said May, moving near to him and lifting her brave eyes to his. "If you go, it shall not be alone. I do not think you guilty. I believe all you have said. I have promised to be your wife, and I will be so now as ever, dear."

For some moments his emotions were too great for words. Then, embracing her tenderly, he exclaimed:

"Heaven bless you for those comforting words, my darling. But no; you shall not bear a name shadowed by such a verdict, which implies my guilt, not sufficiently proved for the law to punish, but equally guilty."

Two years had elapsed, during which no intelligence had been heard of John Westmacott, were he living, nor lately of Thomas Mildmay, when, one stormy night, the anniversary of John Westmacott's disappearance, the inmates of the rectory were aroused by the deep, melancholy boom of the minute-gun. It was a sound unfortunately too often heard on that wild, rugged north coast; but its frequency did not deter the inhabitants from quitting their beds, anxious to render aid.

The rector was ever among the first to encourage the rescuers. On this night, despite his persuasions, for she had grown very delicate, May, her full wrapped around her, accompanied him.

The beach, crowded with men, presented an animated scene. Beyond tossed the stormy sea, as black as the

sky above, except when the white crests of the waves flashed out, before they broke with a deafening crash upon the shore. Among those waves, gored by the hidden reefs, was the ill-fated ship, rolling as in mortal agony, while clinging to the shrouds and rigging were tiny specs, known to be men, whose numbers after each sweeping wave, were mournfully lessened.

With difficulty the life-boat was launched, manned by brave-hearted volunteers, and pulled on its mission of rescue.

Twice successfully it made the journey, but the third time, caught by a side wave, it and its freight were hurried pell-mell upon the beach.

"The boat is done for," said the rector regarding it, "but praise Heaven, not before all are saved."

"No, no! O, papa, in mercy look," cried May, catching his arm. "There is yet one on board who has been left behind."

Her words attracted every eye on the beach, and there, holding to the shrouds, was visible the figure of a man. The next moment he had plunged into the boiling sea.

He would swim it. "It is impossible," ejaculated the doctor. "The boat is useless. We have no means to help him, unless any one here would risk their lives to meet him with a rope."

There was silence. The rope was ready—the man wanting. They were not cowards, but few there could swim, and those who were able regarded the attempt as pure madness.

Suddenly in their midst stood a man already divested of his coat.

"Fasten the rope around me," he said, quietly. "I am a strong swimmer, and perhaps can do it."

At the sound of his voice May sprang forward with a cry.

"Tom—Tom Mildmay," she exclaimed, "Oh, no, no—not you."

He smiled encouragingly upon her, watched for the resting wave, and the next instant was battling his way