

PERILS OF THE ATLANTIC.

'It is there that we would find every derelict that has been adrift in the Atlantic for the last thousand years—barring, of course, all such as have gone to the bottom. There's Spanish plate-ships there, and there's Atlantic liners there. The middle of that there sea will be as crowded as London Docks; and there's millions of pounds of treasure, not to speak of salvage, waiting for the man that takes a steamer there and back again.' So speculates a sailor, in one of Mr. W. L. Alden's stories, concerning the centre of the great Atlantic eddy, the Sargasso Sea, and, sure, enough, when the centre of that sea was made, there was the fleet of derelicts, fouling one another in all sorts of ways—the jib-boom of one poked through the main rigging of another; some dismasted, some with their sails hanging ragged and rotten from the yards, some with their bows stove in; and all lying together, grinding slowly against one another amidst the tangled weed and wreckage.

I was forcibly reminded of this imaginary spectacle, writes a *Pall Mall* reporter, when, upon calling at the offices of the Shipmasters' Society in Fenchurch street, I was informed by Captain Topper that there are scores of derelicts, not in the Sargasso Sea, but dotted about right in the path of navigation in the North Atlantic. Captain Froud, the secretary of the Society, upon my broaching the subject to him, was not content with mere generalities, but produced official evidence upon the subject.

'I have here,' he said, unfurling it upon the table as he spoke, 'the December pilot-chart, which is issued by the Hydrographic Office of the United States Navy Department. Look at the derelicts marked there. Here are the 'Ipota' brig, seen on October 24 last, the 'Helena' barque (November 14), 'Lady Lisgar' barque (November 10), the schooner 'Calob S. Ridgeway' (November 10), the schooner 'Robert P. Chandler' (October 25), the schooner 'Fanny Wolston' (October 30), the 'Ellen Isabel' barque (November 8), the barquentine 'Christina Redmond' (Oct. 16), three vessels which could not be identified, seen on October 5, October 6, and November 16, the 'Juan J. Murgay' barque (November 9), the barque 'Jury' (October 16), the barque 'Ceres' (Oct. 15), the ship 'Dorothe' (October 11), the barque 'Comorin' (October 20), the ship 'Columba' (October 6), and many others, as you can see for yourself. Most of them, of course, are seen in the way of the Gulf Stream, which sweeps them up here.'

'Our British captains, I see, are signing a petition to the First Lord of the Treasury, begging that the Government may join the United States Government and other powers in destroying these derelicts, as they are a great danger to life and property?'—'Yes. The United States Navy issue monthly pilot-charts like this, showing every known derelict, icebergs encountered, and so on.

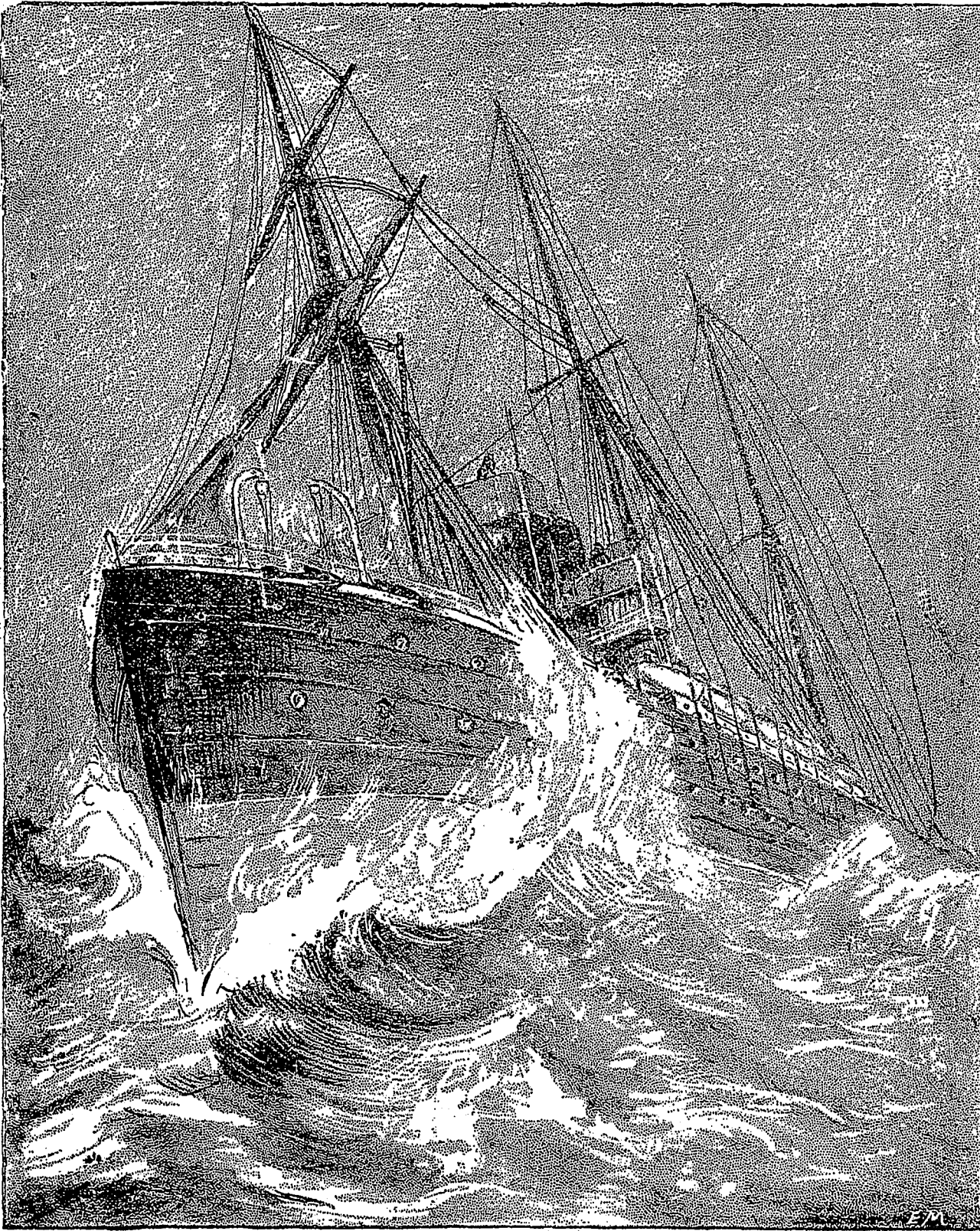
Our Government does nothing of that sort. My Society is in communication with the Indian Government, with the Government of Hong Kong, with Mr. Clement Wragge, the meteorologist of Brisbane, and with the meteorological offices of Sydney and Brisbane, suggesting the publication of similar charts in respect of their seas; and we have long been in correspondence with our own British Government, with no results in the last-mentioned case. Every captain who makes any United States port at once reports all obstacles he has encountered, and has them charted. In England we have nothing coming out periodically to show these dangers. The Americans do it wonderfully well.'

in order to explode or sink them.' 'How do all these vessels become derelicts, because I thought a ship was never deserted while she would float?'—'No. When a ship has rolled her masts over the side, or gets leaking badly, or has a heavy list, or from a thousand-and-one other causes gets dangerous, her crew are frequently only too ready to leave her. There are some notable cases; and only just within the last week or two the 'Bahama,' a fine large steel sailing-vessel on her first voyage, was deserted in the Atlantic, and was sighted afterwards in an apparently seaworthy condition. But there is to be an inquiry into her case, so I will say nothing more about her, except that

'Why cannot more derelicts be towed into port instead of sunk?'—'Well, when the derelict is waterlogged, and nearly under the water, the difficulty of towing is a terrible one, because the derelict yaws and sheers about so. The mail steamers do not trouble about towing derelicts, because the courts have awarded such small salvage. They stop to save life, but for nothing else. The "tramp" steamers generally have a try to tow any derelicts they may come across; and, quite recently, a captain belonging to this Society tried to tow a coal-laden vessel to port, but he had to leave her. In the old days, many of the derelicts which were seen were mistaken for and reported as rocks by captains who saw seas breaking over them, and any old Atlantic chart is dotted quite thickly with rocks in consequence. But now-a-days more care is shown, and the present Atlantic chart is perfectly clear in comparison with the old. That, of course, makes it all the more important that pilot-charts like these, indicating the derelicts, should be issued.'

WHERE TO GO.

For the first fourteen or fifteen weeks of the school year James (an Irish boy) had proved a constant source of disturbance in the schoolroom. He neglected his work, was entirely untrustworthy, seeming to prefer a lie to the truth even where the latter was to his advantage. I tried everything to effect a change, but the boy grew worse. At last, humbly acknowledging to God my complete defeat, I begged his help to save a boy whom he had died for. I told James that night to remain after the others were dismissed, and, after a talk of about ten minutes, I punished him on the hand with a rattan. He had been punished before, so that the punishment most certainly was not the thing that brought about the change. Several weeks after, the superintendent and the secretary of the committee had both mentioned the change to me, for it seemed miraculous. He became one of the hardest-working students, and a boy whose word was to be accepted under any circumstances. This year he is with another teacher, who calls him one of her best boys. — *Golden Rule*.



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'Will you explain for the benefit of landmen, the nature of the danger from derelicts?'—'In a fog or on a dark night there may be nothing to mark the derelict as it lies, just showing above the water, and a collision with a derelict—say with one chock-full of timber—would be as dangerous as hitting a solid rock. She would mean possibly two or three thousand tons, you know. We want practice for our sailors, and surely none better could be provided than by ending a man-o'-war or two, or a training-ship or two, to search for derelicts, with the object of sinking them. Not in the winter, of course, but in the summer. The Americans have certainly one, and perhaps more, ships on the search for derelicts

she is not yet charted, and is knocking about without lights, without foghorn, without anything—in fact a tremendous danger to navigation. Over and over again a crew has left a ship when another crew from the relieving vessel has stayed behind and brought the otherwise derelict safely into port. Many of these derelicts, I should tell you, are water-logged timber-ships; and it may interest you to learn, while I think of it, that one of the United States vessels engaged in sinking derelicts is the old 'Kearsage,' who fought and sunk the 'Alabama' in the English Channel.*

*Since this article was written, the old 'Kearsage' was sunk on the Roncador Reef, off the coast of Nicaragua.

TWO SMALL BIBLES.

The Clarendon Press has issued two new miniature editions of the Bible, printed on Oxford India paper. One of these, 'The Brilliant Text Bible,' is the smallest ever produced with this type, and contains 1,216 pages, with maps. It measures 3½ by 2 1-8 inches, and it is just over half an inch thick. It is bound in limp morocco, and weighs 2 7-8 ounces. The other edition is a reference Bible, and is slightly larger and heavier.

HE OF WHOM many are afraid ought himself to fear many.