

THE RESCUE, APRIL 1, 1873.

The ship went down at break of day—
There—in the cold grey light,
A broken, useless wreck she lay,
Ghost of her midnight might!
She who had ridden on the waves,
Their strength her scorn—the winds her slaves!

There—in her charnel house went down,
Strong man and little child;
Of many a home the light and crown—
Sweet voices—lips that smiled
On péril passed—and voyage done
But yesterday at set of sun!

Exiles from German Fatherland,
Pilgrims from Sweden's Coast;
From England's vales, and Erin's strand
A hardy hopeful host!
Seeking new homes beyond the wave
To find their promised land—a grave!

All through the dawning, and the light
With death the living strove:
The morning watched the cruel fight
Of courage, strength, and love!
The weak and strong, heart-sick with dread
The living struggling by the dead!

Till all with life were safe at last
Above that fatal beach;
Save one, who clinging to the mast
No helping hand could reach,
Ten weary hours he waited there
Till hope died out in dull despair!

Martyred and silent by his side
A pallid woman hung—
Long hours above the black cold tide
To hope and life she clung?
Until the little child that lay
Upon her breast was swept away—

Then life and hope together went,
And he was left alone;
So chilled and weary, strength was spent
Yet still the grasp held on!
While round the broken ship the waves
Rose fierce and high like yawning graves!

Brave men had looked on death that day,
And fought and conquered there;
But now the strongest stood at bay
The bravest would not dare,
Where breakers roared upon the lee
No boat could live on such a sea!

Strength faints, and fear may courage kill
Even in the bravest heart—
But Faith, and Love are stronger still
True manhood to impart!
Facing the death that filled each wave
An English Priest went forth to save!

He looked upon the stormy sea
As Peter looked of old
When Christ on Lake of Galilee
Walked where the tempest rolled!
His heart no Peter's doubting stirred
For he believed his Maker's word!

And like true Soldier of the Cross
He put his armour on;
Counting his life and all as loss
When duty must be done!
He heard the Master's voice and knew
That He who sends gives victory too!

Calm and reliant forth he went,
Two brave hearts shared his quest!
The tide was strong, the waves were rent,
Boiling in wild unrest!
Yet bravely on the boat they bear
For Jesus walked beside them there!

They reached the wreck—the line upran
Swift to the dizzy mast—
Until the almost dying man
Was grasped, and saved at last!
Well had the true and noble striven,
Earth rang with cheers—joy thrilled through heaven!

In all the sorrow of that scene,
Above the loss and wrong—
The heaped up dead, the anguish keen
Of these who suffered long!
Where all men's best and worst may claim
Our admiration and our shame!

By noble men, this noble deed
Redeems and brightens all!
It comes in time of sorest need,
To dry the tears that fall,
Its eloquence more hearts have stirred,
Than spoken words, or sermons heard!

The precepts of the grave, and wise,
May warn, exalt, appeal;
One deed of such self-sacrifice
Has made Religion real;
Wayfaring men have heard it plead;
So plain—that he who runs may read!

It tells of living faith in God
By working out his will;
That He who once the wine press trod
Is with His Servants still!
Thus bringing out of pain and loss
The grace and glory of the Cross!

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