

demonstrate as far as my ability will allow me, one thing before proceeding to the consideration of another, I will beg leave to direct your attention for a few minutes to this part of my subject.

Some might mistake the meaning which I intended to be applied to the word *courage* in the sentence, and some may say, "what do you call true courage," I reply that to define a thing is, and always has been considered a difficult task, even by the most intelligent; but my idea of true courage, are not those deeds of bravery or hazard, which man does under no fear, or under the influence of personal excitement; I do not call that true courage which induces the soldier or the sailor to undertake and accomplish some perilous enterprise, when his judgment is under the sway of passions, which render him more of the fiend than human; but that is true courage in man, who, under the influence of no excitement, with his passions entirely subservient to his will, with a full knowledge of the danger of the enterprise in which he is about to embark, yet does his duty nobly and dignified, without even for a moment flinching; I say that such a man is the possessor of true courage, and never was such courage more nobly portrayed, than in the wreck of the *Birkenhead*, and never were the bravery and disinterestedness of the British character more fully exemplified than on that occasion. The occupants of that ill-fated vessel consisted of male and female passengers. Striking forcibly against a concealed rock, she so shattered her sides as to render all attempts to save her useless; the boats were only sufficient for the female portion of the passengers; it was utterly impossible for all to be saved; the vessel was rapidly sinking, and each second was a second nearer to eternity; there was no time for deliberation; what was left to be done must be done instantly. The captain appeared on deck; the bugle rang the summons for a general muster; every man came to his post calmly and placidly, as though his bark were tight, and swiftly glancing over the waves of the ocean; not a syllable of murmur disturbed the air; the boats were ordered out; the order was instantaneously obeyed, "Place the ladies in the boats" was next hurled from the trumpet, and they were placed there accordingly, now came a moment of anxiety and intolerable suspense, what was to be done next? before scarcely time had been given to think "start the boats from the vessel" issued from the captain's lips, and with a magnanimity unequalled, with a devotion unparalleled in the pages of History, this order was instantly executed, and then that gallant little band of heroes returned to their posts, with death before them, and their eyes fixed on eternity; nothing could now save them, they had parted from their only hope. A calm clear voice was instantly heard to call to order, every man obeyed, planting his foot firmly on the deck, and folding his arms as if on ordinary parade. Their captain presented himself before them, he told them in a few words

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