

matter. But I tell you what it is, friend—ye know what the Bible says—'The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;' now, the way to face breakers, or a storm at sea, is not to pull through desperation, as if your life depended on the pulling; but when ye see a wave coming, ye must back-water, and not pull again until ye see an opportunity of gainin' forward. It is the trusting to mere pulling, Sir, that makes our life-boats useless. The rowers in a life-boat should study the sea as well as their oars. They should consider that they save life by watching the wave that breaks over the vessel, as well as by straining every nerve to reach her. Now, this is a stormy night, nae doubt, but we maun just consider ourselves gaun off to the lugger in a life-boat. We maun work cannily and warily, and I'll take the management o' the boat mysel'."

"If ye dow that, master," said Ned Thompson, "then I gang wi' ye to a dead certainty."

"Well, Harry," replied the merchant, "if it maun be sae, it just maun be sae; but I think it a rash and dangerous undertaking. I wad sooner risk a' that I have on board."

"Why, man, I really wonder to hear ye," said Harry; "folk would say that ye had been swaddled in lambs' wool a' your life, and nursed on your mother's knee—get a boat, and let us off to the lugger, and nae mair about it."

His orders were obeyed—and, about an hour after sunset, himself, with Ned Thompson, the merchant, and four others, put off to sea. They had, indeed, embarked upon a perilous voyage—before they were a mile from the shore, the wind blew a perfect hurricane, and the waves chased each other in circles like monsters at play. Still Harry guided the boat with unerring skill. He ordered them to draw back from the bursting wave—they rose over it—he rendered it subservient to his purpose. Within two hours he discried the lights of the lugger. He knew them, for he had given directions for their use, and similar lights were hoisted from the cable which he steered.

"All's well!" said Harry, and, in his momentary joy, he forgot the tempestuous sea in which they laboured. They reached the lugger—they gained the deck.

"Put back, friend—put back," was the first salutation of Harry to the skipper; "the amp is blown, and there are sharks along bore."

"The devil!" replied the captain, who was an Englishman; "and what shall we do?"

"Back, back," answered Harry, "that is all in the meantime."

But the storm now raged with more fierceness—it was impossible for the boat to return to the shore, and Harry and his comrades were compelled to put to sea with the lugger. Even she became in danger, and it required the exertions of all hands to manage her.

The storm continued until daybreak, and the vessel had plied many miles from the shore; but as day began to dawn, and the storm abated, an enemy that they feared more appeared within a quarter of a mile from them, in the shape of a cutter-brig. A gun was fired from the latter as a signal for the lugger to lie too. Consternation seized the crew, and they hurried to and fro upon the deck in confusion.

"Clear the decks!" cried the skipper; "they shan't get all without paying for it. Look to the guns, my hearties."

"Avast! Master Skipper," said Harry; "though my property be in danger, I see no cause why I should put my neck in danger too. It will be time enough to fight when we canna better dow; and if we can keep them in play a' day, there will be sma' danger in wur g'ien them the slip at night."

"As you like, Mr. Teasdale," said the skipper; "all's one to me. Helm about, my lad," added he, addressing the steersman, and away went the lugger as an arrow, scudding before the wind.

The cutter made all sail, and gave chase, firing shot after shot. She was considered one of the fastest vessels in the service; and though, on the part of Harry and his friends, every nerve was strained, every sail hoisted and every manœuvre used they could not keep the lugger out of harm's way. Every half-hour he looked at his watch, and wished for night, and as his friend, the skipper, followed his example. There was a hot chase for several hours; and though tubs of brandy were thrown overboard by the dozen, still the whizzing bullets from the cutter passed over the heads of the smugglers. It ought to be mentioned, also, that the rigging of the lugger had early sustained damage, and her speed was checked. About sunset a shot injured her rudder, and she became, for a time, as Harry described her, "as helpless as a child." The cutter instantly bore down upon her.

"Now for it, my lads," cried the skipper—"there is nothing for it but fighting now—I