

sympathising looks and heard the exertions of the cutter. They were in that very painful position which forced them to be inactive spectators. The hope of being able to render assistance to the shipwrecked mariners vanished in proportion as the storm increased in strength and violence.

"A brave set of sailors!" said a grey-haired old pilot, with a pained expression of countenance. "If I were young and strong I could never sleep quietly again unless I had saved them."

"Do you think, Pierson, that it is in the least possible?" inquired the pilot Bissard.

"Possible, Bousard! What impossible to the courageous man who trusts in God and puts forth all his strength? But, Bousard, there is no chance with a boat."

"How then?" inquired Bousard quickly.

"I consider that only a strong and expert swimmer could successfully reach the cutter, and save her from being dashed on the point; for the captain seems to have lost all his courage, and with his senses and firm presence of mind," said Pierson, looking all the time through his telescope.

In the meantime the danger the cutter incurred of foundering on the point had increased.

Bousard, who had already made several unsuccessful attempts with the pilot-boat to approach the cutter, could now be kept back no longer. He tied a rope round his body, and sprang into the sea. A loud cry of surprise at such courage and humanity arose from the hundreds on the pier who witnessed Bousard's noble action; but grief and pity for the brave man were mingled in that exclamation of admiration. Prayers rose to heaven, and all hearts beat rapidly, while eager looks were averted between the struggle of the vessel and the struggle of the brave swimmer with the wild waves of the raging sea.

It was something dreadful to behold that man, now borne up high as a house on the foaming crest of a wave, visible to all eyes, and then, the next moment, buried in a deep hollow.

"He is lost!" cried many.

"Bousard is Dieppe's best swimmer!" cried others. "He has courage and strength. His equal is nowhere to be found."

"God will protect him who faithfully trusts in His Divine Providence," cried others.

It was light enough for the crew of the cutter to see the man who was risking his own life to save theirs. Already he had approached considerably nearer to the vessel. He could be seen by those on board. They hoped soon to be able to seize the end of the rope, which now and then he held up in his hand; then a tremendous billow seized him, and cast him as if he had been a tiny twig, back, very far back, on the shore which he had just left with the hope of bearing deliverance to the struggling mariners. But, alas! the cutter too had stranded; the same wave had cast her on the shore.

The cry, "Bousard has jumped into the sea to try and rescue the perishing seamen!" had brought his wife and children down to the pier, where they stood wringing their hands as they looked on the mighty

waves. And now, as he reclined on the shore, and waited a few moments to refresh himself, they entreated him to desist; for heaven itself, by casting him so violently back, had shown that it was not to be. Sympathising strangers, too, implored him to give up the attempt to rescue.

"You never were in such a position, and have no idea how *they* feel," said he, refusing to listen to them all.

The next moment a wave cast him again on the shore. Crowds of suppliants now surrounded him, and entreated him to spare himself.

"Do you not hear the cry for help from the vessel?" cried Bousard; and, pushing them all back, he sprang again into the deep.

It seemed as if the noble fellow was not to reach the goal. Again the sea threw him back on the shore. Five times, with unshaken courage, he repeated the attempt; four times he was cast back; the fifth time he succeeded. He reached the stranded vessel, but a wave which broke against the cutter seized him, and threw him so violently against her beam that the men on board thought their noble deliverer had been stunned by the shock and would now sink.

One of the sailors sprang into the sea to save him. Wonderful! the eye of the All-merciful had seen that love in Bousard's heart which made him ready to lay down his life for his brethren, and graciously protected him. He remained unhurt, as if by a miracle; while the sailor who had sprang into the sea to save him lost his presence of mind, and Bousard perceived that he would only be able to keep up for a few moments. He quickly seized him, swam with him to the shore, and saved him.

"Take care of him," cried he; and dashed again into the raging waters.

His wife and children wept aloud. His strength must be exhausted! He was lost!

"God is my Protector!" he joyfully cried, for his powers were still fresh.

To have saved *one* was not enough to have done for his Lord; it inflamed him with a holy ardour to save them *all*. Six still remained on the perishing wreck. Six! How would it be possible to save them all, as Bousard desired? His plan was formed. He had judged correctly. If the unfortunate men understood him, and the Almighty gave His blessing, then he would succeed in the project he had conceived during his struggle with the waves.

Bousard successfully reached the vessel. He threw his rope to the men, and they seized it. With a voice which sounded above the howling of the storm, he called out, "Hold it fast." He quickly unwound it, and held the end firmly, and making use of a wave rolling towards the shore, it cast him on the strand, where a hundred arms were stretched out to drag him on land.

On a signal from the shore the six who had fastened the rope to their bodies sprang into the sea. Hundreds pulled at the rope, and in a few moments they were safe on shore, and their dreadful death-struggle with the raging sea was fought out, and over.