



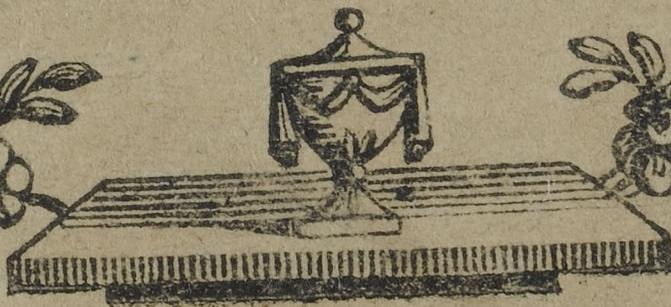
THE
SHIPWRECK.



PUBLISHED BY THE
American Tract Society,
No. 144 Nassau-St.
New-York.

SERIES II.

NO. XXVII.



SHIPWRECK;

SHOWING
WHAT SOMETIMES HAPPENS
ON THE
SEA COASTS:

Also giving a Particular Account of

A POOR SAILOR BOY,

Who was refused any Assistance by the Wreckers, and who died in consequence of their Inhuman Conduct.



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THE SHIPWRECK.



In winter's rude storm, when the tem-
pests blow loud,
And the hail drives full hard 'gainst
the door,
And babes run together, like lambs in a
crowd,
And cling to their mother, as, forth from
a cloud,
Fresh and deep-roaring torrents still
pour :

When wolves through the forest in sa-
vageness scowl,
And poor lambs cry for help, but in
vain ;—

And tigers for slaughter rush forward
and howl,

And *wreckers*, as cruel, do savagely prowl
Round the shores of the dark-troubled
main :

'Tis then the poor bark often sinks in the
wave,

And brave Seamen go down to the
dead ;

No harbour, nor vessel, nor mortal to
save,

To snatch one poor soul from a watery
grave,

Or in pity to hold up his head.

But, ah ! there are scenes and sad tales
yet behind,

Which may well make our heart-blood
run chill ;

When the poor stranded vessel, long
press'd by the wind,

Is driv'n on shore, but no safety can find
From the *wreckers*, who plunder or
kill.



'Twas gloomy December, and dark was
the night,

And the sky was so wild and so drear,
When to land all the sea birds, with
screams, urg'd their flight,

Ere the long-forked stream 'gan to flash
down its light,
And the thunders had burst on the ear.

'Twas then a poor bark was returning
from far,
After crossing the wide western main,
Where oft, through the night-watch each
long absent Tar
Had cast a glad eye on the bright east
ern star
Which directed his way home again.

And oft had they mus'd on the long-
hop'd-for morn,
When the wife and the husband should
meet ;
When the parents and children, and lo-
vers forlorn,
Should confess, 'midst the troubles to
which we are born,
There are mingled some portions of
sweet.

But who can now tell what to-morrow
may bring,
When so frail and uncertain our time?
While mirth fills each heart, and so gaily
we sing,
And dream not of danger, or any such
thing,
Oft our days are cut short in their
prime,

So it prov'd with yon crew, who, nearing
the land,
Had concluded their dangers were
past,
When, lo! their own coast must become
the fell strand
Where Death, in the storm, shall pro-
nounce his command,
Which numbers that day as their last.

A long time they strove, both with skill
and with might,
To surmount all the dangers around ;
But torn were their sails in the last dis-
mal night,
At day-dawn a lee-shore was full in their
sight,
So they drove on the hard rocky
ground.

Crash, crash, went the bark, as the big
waves assail'd,
And her masts were plunged over the
lee ;
Then, nor courage nor skill of command-
er avail'd,
Death drew a long 'dart, and o'er many
prevail'd,
And, half mangled, they sunk in the
sea.

Now high flew the foam, as it broke o'er
their head,

And the vessel groan'd under each
blow,
And the raging surf roll'd o'er the dying
and dead ;
And the rock's craggy cliff was their
last lonely bed,
When the life-blood had ceased to flow.

These sights, so afflicting, to *wreckers*
were dear,
Who live by fell rapine and crime ;
Whose eyes never shed soft *Compassion's*
sweet tear,
Whose hearts never learnt e'en their
Maker to fear,
Or reflect on the end of their time.

Awhile lash'd to ring-bolts, some few yet
remain,
And their shrieks rend the pitiless air ;
From the *wreckers* on shore no relief can
they gain,
(They beckon, and call, but they beckon
in vain)
Who rejoice in the cries of despair.

Now shore-ward the masts and their
tackling swing round,
And the *wreckers* begin their glad toil ;
They curse and blaspheme, while they
cover the ground

With spars, and with sails, and whatever
is found ;

For each seizes his share of the spoil.

When the tempest's wild fury had some-
time allay'd,

They launch'd off, and boarded the
bark ;

Where their hearts and their eyes still
on plunder were stay'd,

Though the captain and crew for assist-
ance oft pray'd

Ere extinct was life's faint, trembling
spark.

Their cords were untied ; but the wet
and the frost

Had so stiff'ned their limbs with the
cold,

That the next breaking wave, as the ves-
sel it cross'd,

Swept them over the side, and they
quickly were lost,

While the *wreckers* held on a fast hold.

One fine youthful Sea Boy alone rode
the wave,

And half lifeless was thrown on the
sand ;

While his captain and comrades had
each found their grave

Unpitied by *wreckers*, who strove not to
save,
Or convey them for shelter to land.

Awhile those on shore throng'd the Ship
Boy around,
And rudely asked all that he knew;
He told them his tale, as he lay on the
ground,
While the blood from his temples a free
course had found,
And still weaker and fainter he grew.

Now reviving, he turned his pale cheek
from the earth,
And concluded his sorrowful tale,
By speaking of her who had given him
birth,
A parent of tenderness, piety, and worth,
Who lived in a far distant vale.

“My mother,” said he, “she is old and
gone blind,
But I love her most dearly and true—
In my chest some relief for her wants
you will find—
Oh! save it for her who to me was so
kind,
And the Lord will be kind unto you.”

They heard him, as wolves hear the ewes
intercede
For the lambkins they torture and
slay;

In an instant they left him to faint and
to bleed,
While they grappled his chest from a
bank of sea-weed,
And like harpies they strove for the
prey.

The news of a wreck, it soon spread
along shore,
And women and men ran for gain ;
Thus numbers they harden each other
the more,
Till to mercy and justice their hearts
close the door,
That the love of curst money may
reign,

Anon came the pious old Vicar that way,
For he heard there was evil abroad :
Against wrecking, and plund'ring, for
many a day
He had preach'd ; but, alas ! there were
few t' obey,
Or give heed to his tears or his word.

Arriv'd at the spot, what a scene was
display'd !

For its numbers 'twas like to a fair ;
Dead bodies, and cargo, and trunks
about lay'd,
Or pil'd up in heaps where a sentinel
stay'd ;
But, nor mercy nor pity was there.

The poor fainting Sea Boy the Vicar
espied,

With his head lying hard on a rock ;
To aid whose distress, he sat down by
his side,

And many a tear of compassion he cried,
While the *wreckers* continued to mock.

“ Ah ! Sir,” spake the Sea Boy, “ my
blood it runs cold,

Here life’s voyage it shortly must end ;
I shall ne’er see my home, nor my pa-
rent behold ;

My tales and adventures for ever are
told,

I shall never shake hands with a friend.

“ But four days ago, oh ! how happy
was I,

And so was our cheerful ship’s band ;
But, alas ! the rude storm that late howl’d
in the sky,

It has wreck’d our fine bark, and I short-
ly must die

On the shores of this hard-hearted land.

“ My mother oft said, when the young
ravens cry,

How kind Heaven some succour still
brings ;

Ah ! why then give up us poor seamen
to die,

To perish, while men their assistance
deny ?

Do explain, my good Sir, these
strange things.

“ My Captain was kind to his lads and
his men,

And kind was my mistress so dear,
That the poor never call'd and were bid
call again ;

Who asked her relief never asked it in
vain,

For she lov'd to dry misery's tear.

“ But now her kind heart, it will sorrow
and break,

When she hears the sad tale of our
wo ;

Keen anguish will pour its sharp stream
down her cheek ;

In vain for support to these sharks may
she seek ;

Down to ruin and death she must go.

“ And must the young babes of our dead
plunder'd crew

Come and beg for their bread on this
shore,

And be charg'd by the *wreckers* as idle,
untrue ;

And be curs'd, and abus'd, as their cry
they renew,

And some food for their hunger im-
plore ?

“ Oh, Sir ! can kind Heav'n look on all
the while,

And refrain its dread thunders to hurl?
Methinks, its blest spirits would speed
 down, and smile,
To inflict their dread anger on *wreckers*
 so vile,
And all angels their vengeance un-
furl."

"Hush, hush, my dear child," cried the
pious old man,

"All was right that was taught in thy
youth :

From the day yonder sun his bright
course first began,

Has thy Maker pursu'd one beneficent
plan,

And his ways are all wisdom and truth.

"But deep, nay, and dark, they some-
times may appear,

Yet judgment surrounds his blest
throne,

Whence he calls thee to trust him, to
love, and to fear,

To submit as a child, while a sojourner
here :

So far are his purposes known.

"What though yonder *wreckers* live out
a long day,

And thyself find an early rough grave;
Though the wicked appear to succeed
in their way,

And the kind-hearted Seaman becomes
their fell prey,
Yet the righteous for ever he'll save.

“Not save from all troubles of life's
stormy day,
But from evils hereafter to come;
Oft as death finds their feet treading du-
ty's safe way,
Still aiming their Saviour to love and
obey,
He conveys their blest spirits straight
home,

“But wo to the *wrecker* that dies in his
sin!
To his soul there no peace can remain;
When his heart fails to beat, Oh! what
torments begin,
The worm, never-dying, shall fasten
within,
And the flame rage with infinite pain.

“From realms of despair he shall lift up
an eye,
And behold the blest spirits above;
He shall call out for death, but he never
shall die;
But shall plunge down the gulf, and in
misery lie,
While the saints share a heaven of
love.

“Nay, on earth, the dread curse often
enters his door,

And his children they die in ill time ;
His wealth is consum'd, and he, wretch-
ed and poor,

Can revel in plunder and pillage no
more,

But must smart in old age for his
crime.

“Oh ! turn then, dear youth, all thy
thoughts to the sky,

For thy spirit must quickly depart :
To the Saviour of sinners direct thy last
cry—

To pardon, and cleanse, and accept, he
is nigh ;

May his peace now possess thy whole
heart.”

So spake the good man, in kind accents,
as mild

As the zephyrs that fan the still air ;
Then he wip'd off the blood from the
poor dying child,

Who, looking to heaven, with confidence,
smil'd,

And thus uttered his last dying pray-
er :—

“O Jesus, thou Saviour of sinners below !

On thy mercy my soul it relies ;
Cleanse its stains in thy blood, which so
freely did flow ;

And, when thou shalt bid it these troubles forego,
O take it to thee in the skies.

“Forget not my mother, poor, aged, and blind,

Nor leave her to sink down in grief;
Let a sense of thy love ever comfort her mind,

While her Sea Boy lies dead in a land far behind,

And can bring her no further relief.

“O pardon these *wreckers*, thou God of all grace!

Let their many dark crimes be forgiven;

Save, save them from wrath, from that horrible place,

And grant them to see a Redeemer's blest face;

O receive them, in mercy, to heaven!”

Thus saying, he bow'd his faint head to the ground,

And, expiring in peace, clos'd his prayer;

His soul, we may hope, will in glory be found,

Where no cries of distress ever utter their sound.

For no pains, no afflictions, are there.

R. M.

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