



AWFUL SHIPWRECK.



AN AFFECTING NARRATIVE

OF THE

UNPARALLELED SUFFERINGS

OF THE

Crew of the ship *Francis Spaight*, which foundered
on her passage from St. John's, N. B. to Lim-
erick, in November last. The survivors,
after remaining on board the wreck
19 days, during which they were
driven to the most awful ex-
tremities, were re-
lieved by the

**BRIG ANGERONIA, CAPT. GILLARD, ON HER PASSAGE
FROM NEWFOUNDLAND TO TEIGNMOUTH.**

Communicated for the Press, by JOHN PALMER,
one of the survivors.

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PALMER'S NARRATIVE.

It is always at the extreme hazard of their lives, that navigators, as well as others, adventure upon the boisterous ocean ; and the past year (1836,) will be long remembered as a remarkable one, for the many melancholy shipwrecks and fatal disasters at sea, that have attended it—yet, seldom is it that it falls to our lot to record an instance attended with so great a portion of human misery, as the one narrated in the succeeding pages—the melancholy narrative cannot fail of exciting the sympathy of those who can feel for suffering humanity, wherever it may be read, and wherever the fate of the unfortunate sufferers may be disclosed to the heart and eye of sensibility.

The narrator, JOHN PALMER, who was a hand on board, (and to whom we are indebted for the melancholy particulars,) is a young man of unquestionable veracity, of respectable parentage, and of more than an ordinary education ; and who, it appears by his own confession, entered by a fictitious name, and without the knowledge of his friends, on board the British ship *Francis Spaight*, at St. Johns, N. B., bound from thence to Limerick ; and which he was induced to do for no other reason (it being his first voyage,) than to gratify a strong propensity to “ see the world,” and which, he observes, he saw no great cause to regret until the 3d day of the month proceeding that on which he entered, “ when (to use his own words,) it was our misfortune to experience a gale, which for severity, (in

the opinion of the oldest sailors on board,) was seldom surpassed, if ever equalled ; and during which, while lying to under a close reefed main topsail, the ship capsized, when three of her crew found a watery grave ! Orders were immediately thereupon given by the officers to the survivors, to do all in their power for the preservation of the ship, as well as their lives, and who, after much hard labor, succeeded in cutting away her masts, when she righted ; but, to the inexpressible surprise and horror of all on board, it was discovered that not a particle of either water or provisions could be obtained to sustain the lives of those who had not shared the fate of their unfortunate companions ! but this (as it afterwards proved) was only the beginning of our calamities. As there was nothing now that presented to our view but the horrible prospects of starving, without any appearance of relief, we were reduced to the most deplorable state imaginable ! peculiarly so as regarded myself, who had ever been a stranger to hardship, much less to hunger and want.

The wind continued to blow with unabated fury the two succeeding days and nights, and it was only by lashing ourselves to the wreck, that we were prevented from being washed overboard by the tremendous sea occasioned thereby ; and when partially relieved in this respect, our minds were agitated by the dreadful apprehensions that we had only escaped from a watery grave to experience tortures still more to be dreaded ! Five days were passed in this state of painful anxiety, when our sufferings, produced by craving hunger and burning thirst, were too great to be longer endured ;—and to alleviate which, we were finally driven to the dreadful alternative of casting lots, thereby to determine who of our number should be put to death, that his body might serve as sustenance for the remainder !—the lot fell on the youngest on board, a poor friendless youth, who had been

apprenticed to the Captain, and who by the great hardships that he had endured, as well as long fasting, was reduced almost to a skeleton. Whether there was a previous understanding among some of the ship's crew, that he should be the one selected as a victim, without allowing him an equal chance with the others for his life, is well known to Him, from whom no human act can be concealed; but, whether such was the fact or not, such was the distracted state of my feelings at that moment, that it was impossible for me to determine—it is enough for me to remember, nay, at the present moment, my blood chills at the bare recollection of the heart-rending scene that ensued, when the fate of this poor unfortunate lad was made known to him! he first burst into tears, and entreated that his life might be spared for a few days, which not being allowed him, he reduced the time to a single day; and when he found that there was even an objection to this, he became frantic, declaring it his determination to defend himself to the last, although he retained hardly sufficient strength to support himself erect; but, being in this respect but little inferior to that of his other shipmates, although attacked by three or four of the most able-bodied, he succeeded, with his jack-knife, in keeping them off for some minutes, when nature becoming exhausted, he fell prostrate on the deck, and in which condition he was instantly despatched, and his limbs detached from his emaciated body, and distributed among his still more wretched shipmates! Frequently had I heard and read that famine had led men to the commission of such horrible excesses, that insensible on such occasions to the appeals of nature and reason, they assumed the character of beasts of prey, and deaf to every representation, coolly meditated the death of a fellow-creature! but, foreign was it from my mind, that I should myself be brought not only to be an eye witness to a scene like this, but to be-

come, in reality, one of its melancholy subjects!—Two days had, however, elapsed after the tragical death of the unfortunate youth, before I could be brought to follow the awful example of my starving companions! To what woful extremities can poor human nature be driven by extreme hunger! surely, none can be truly sensible of it, except those who have experienced it. It is not necessary for me to add, that to this state, I (who had been used to luxurious living, and who had unnecessarily left a home affording “enough and to spare,”) was brought!

However loathsome this food may be viewed by my readers, (some of whom may perhaps think, as I once thought, that even a lingering death by starvation, would be preferable to that of attempting to appease it by the use of human flesh,) it was found insufficient to support life but a few days, when a similar plan was adopted in the selection of another victim! and in a few days after, another! The first of the two appeared perfectly reconciled to his fate, and requested only a few moments to prepare himself for death, which he employed in fervent prayer for himself, and for our speedy deliverance, and then delivered up his life without a struggle! But, the piteous moans and lamentations of the latter, in consequence (as he represented,) of leaving behind him a beloved wife and several small children, dependant on him for support, were truly appalling, and could not have been withstood by any but such wretched beings as we were, whose sufferings and privations had driven to a state of desperation! This was, in reality, the situation of some of the unhappy survivors, who, deprived of their reason, and driven to a state of raving madness, had their strength admitted of it, it is not improbable that they would, like ravenous beasts, have fallen upon and destroyed one another, without any regard to the plan pursued in the selection of victims.

A few day previous to that on which we were relieved, four of our wretched companions expired, (by the names of O'Brien, Gorham, Beham, and Burns,) and all, apparently, in a perfect state of insensibility, as regarded their real situations. It was astonishing to witness how different were the effects produced by their sufferings. The ravings of O'Brien and Beham, in their last moments, were like those of madmen, and whose greatest efforts (with fists clenched, and with gnashing teeth,) appeared to be to commit violence on those of their shipmates by whom they were approached; and some of whom would, no doubt, have received serious injury, had they not retained sufficient strength to enable them to creep away beyond their reach. Burns, although he talked incessantly and incoherently, manifested a more harmless disposition—at one moment he would be engaged in singing some favorite sea song, and at the next, would appear to imagine himself the commander of the wreck, calling on his shipmates (by wrong names) to attend to their duty, assuring them that there was every prospect of a short, pleasant, and prosperous voyage! The behaviour of Gorham was different from that of either of the three mentioned; at intervals he appeared more rational, and not insensible of his situation, and while speaking of his unfortunate family as bereaved of one on whom they depended for support, would weep like a child; but soon would appear to lose himself, and call on and talk to his children as if present, calling them by name, and entreating them to take pity on and indulge their father with even a few drops of water.

As regarded myself, although in body exhibiting the appearance of a living skeleton, yet I bore my sufferings and privations with a great degree of fortitude, until three days previous to that of our deliverance, when it was my fate (as I was informed by my shipmates,) to become delirious. When re-

stored to my reason, I recollect that while I remained unconscious of my situation, all appeared like a dream. I imagined myself at home, in the presence of my affectionate parents, brothers, sisters, &c., but confined to a sick bed, a prey to a burning fever, and tormented with most intolerable thirst. I plainly, as I imagined, recognized my friends, standing by my bedside, but who not only appeared to disregard my entreaties for water, but to view me with much apparent indifference; and it was, when endeavoring by gestures, (as I either was, or imagined myself deprived of the power of speech,) to acquaint them of the true state of my feelings and the tortures with which they were afflicting me, by refusing to indulge me with a little water with which to cool my parched throat, that my reason returned, and I became more sensible of my wretched condition.

By the return of my reason my mind was once more distracted by the most awful forebodings; being sensible that by the selecting of one victim after another, we were fast reducing our number, I could not but expect that my turn would by and by come; or, what was, if possible, still more to be dreaded, that it might be my lot to survive all my wretched companions, and be the last to perish on the wreck, and thereby my afflicted parents ever left in suspense as regarded my wretched fate!—There was yet another circumstance that was calculated to increase, rather than to diminish our misery—the skeletons, &c. of the bodies of such of our unfortunate companions, as had been doomed to die by our hands, had (after having been stripped of all their flesh,) been committed to the deep, and which had, no doubt, the effect to attract numerous sharks, some of them of astonishing length, which in calm weather were always to be seen swimming around the wreck; and which too plainly told us what our fate would be, if through

weakness, any of our number should be so unfortunate as to fall overboard.

Sixteen days had now elapsed since that on which our unfortunate ship was capsized ; during the most of which time human flesh had been our only food, and this alone would have been found insufficient to have preserved our lives so long, had we not in this time been blessed with three or four showers, supplying us with a moderate quantity of water, and which we caught by spreading and wringing our clothes. Loathsome as our food had been, the day previous to that on which we were relieved, we had partaken of the last of it, with the exception of a part of two quarters of the last victim, and it was consequently considered necessary (while our strength would admit of it,) to select from among our diminished number, another, and the fourth victim ! To determine whom it should be, the same plan of deciding by lot was adopted, which fell on the mate. The poor fellow appeared but very little affected thereat, having been frequently heard to declare that so great were his sufferings, that he envied those of his shipmates their fate, who had been doomed in this manner to yield up their lives ; and could not but hope that if it should be found necessary to sacrifice another, that it might fall to his lot, as he had neither wife nor children to leave behind. His only desire was that he might die by strangulation, the deaths of the others having been caused by opening a vein. With the captain, the fate of his mate had quite a different effect ; his attachment for him had been great, and he therefore used much persuasive argument to prevail on his unfortunate crew to postpone the sacrifice for a single day. He had, by soaking in salt water, preserved the liver and brains of the unfortunate youth, (the first victim,) and was the next morning about to share this, with the remaining food, among his companions, when to the inexpressible joy of all, a vessel was descried bear-

ing down for the wreck, which proved to be the brig *Angeronia*, Captain Gillard, bound from Newfoundland to Teignmouth.

When the Captain and crew succeeded in reaching our ship's deck, and beheld the awful spectacle which we presented, and the melancholy remains of the last victim on which we had subsisted for the three days previous, they appeared for a moment as if doubting the reality of what they saw; but convinced, they united in one general exclamation of horror and surprize! Our appearance at that moment, must indeed have been shocking in the extreme; but two of our number possessing sufficient strength to stand erect, the remainder were only able to creep about upon their hands and knees—our faces, arms, hands, and other parts of our bodies, that had been exposed to the powerful rays of the sun, burnt nearly black; and our clothes having been continually wet, our emaciated bodies were chafed and nearly covered with painful soars.

We were by our kind deliverers conveyed on board the brig, where every thing was done that could be done to alleviate our miseries. Broths were made for us, but of which, as of water, we were permitted only to partake sparingly, and to which we may impute the salvation of our lives; for had we been permitted to eat as much as our appetites craved, it must have proved fatal to us. By the kind assistance of my benefactors (for which may Heaven reward them,) by the time the brig reached her destined port, I had, by kind treatment, gained sufficient strength to enable me, like another prodigal son, to reach that long wished for home, which had been the scene of many happy moments, but of which I had been unconscious, until I had unwisely deserted it, to experience trials and hardships of which none but those who have experienced similar, can have a true conception.—By my great sufferings, my health still remains impaired, and my constitution (which was previous-

ly good,) so much broken, as to render it very probable, that until the day of my death I shall remain a living monument of my past folly.

True it is, as I have frequently heard it remarked, that dear-bought experience often proves a most valuable instructor, and that we are sometimes indebted to adversity for our wisdom. I had heard much of foreign countries and had long felt a strong inclination to visit them ; and although I had not unfrequently read of, and listened with no inconsiderable interest, to the narratives of the surprising adventures of sailors, as they recounted their many hair breadth escapes, and the great perils and privations to which they were daily exposed while navigating the deep ; yet it had but little effect to deter me from an attempt to accomplish my views—to gratify a too common propensity to adventure abroad, even at the risk of my life, “to see the world!”—others, I argued, had been and returned in safety, and why not I? With this encouragement alone, I adventured—but, alas, too soon did I experience the difference between that peaceful and comfortable home, the habitation of endeared friends, the scene of every enjoyment that I could reasonably desire, to that of being tossed to and fro upon a boisterous ocean, and occasionally confined to a damp and dreary fore-castle, subsisting on the coarsest food, and with none but perfect strangers, of almost every country, for my companions. But, what was all this to what I was afterwards doomed to suffer? The sad tale has been told—the melancholy particulars have been truly and faithfully recorded in the preceding pages.

Although while I remained on the wreck, my sufferings were so great as in one instance to deprive me of reason, yet, in my most rational moments, I could but contrast my own miserable situation with that of some of my young acquaintance on shore—that while they were, in all probability, reposing in

security by the firesides of their friends, and blest with and enjoying every necessary of life that their hearts could wish, I was enduring all the tortures which extreme hunger and parching thirst could be productive of; and to relieve which, was finally driven to the awful extremity of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of those who had been my ship companions! My dear young friends, it is my sincere prayer that you may not follow my examples, and unwisely attempt to gratify a similar propensity "to see the world," but rather learn wisdom by my folly; take the advice of one who knows—who by his imprudence and too hasty conclusions, has been doomed to drink deep, very deep, of the cup of adversity! Never be so unwise as to exchange a certainty for an uncertainty; if you have comfortable homes, and possess the means of procuring even a humble living, be satisfied therewith, for should you be otherwise inclined, you may have cause ever after to regret it. As regards myself, I can truly say with the poet, that

"Mid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;
A charm from the skies, seems to hallow us there,
Which seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
There's no place like home.

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain,
Oh! give me my lonely thatched cottage again;
The birds singing gaily, that come at my call,
Give me them with peace of mind, dearer than all.
Home, sweet home, &c.

If I return home overburdened with care,
The heart's dearest solace I'm sure to meet there;
The bliss I experience whenever I come,
Makes no other place seem like that of sweet home.
Home, sweet home," &c.

I have more than once heard it remarked, and by those who were probably more wise than myself, that "he who would know how to prize health,

should for a period be deprived of it." A very correct remark, in my estimation, and one that will with equal propriety apply to some few in the humbler walks of life, who, although blessed with health, and with the means of earning by their daily avocations a comfortable subsistence, yet manifest much uneasiness and discontent, because there are others who appear to have been the greater favorites of kind fortune, and to enjoy more profusely her gifts—~~wrongfully~~ imagining that the splendor of *wealth* and possession of *riches*, are alone essential to their *happiness*; but, such an opinion I know by sad experience, to be an erroneous one, for although it has been with me from early age, (as with thousands,) the great object of my pursuit, yet I can truly say, that I never did experience *true happiness* until that joyful moment, when, after having been driven to the most awful extremities by hunger and thirst, I was presented by my deliverers with a cup of *pure water* and a *bowl of broth*; and which I at that moment, would have been found unwilling to have exchanged for all the wealth of Peru. And such, I am confident, would be the conclusions of those, who, although strangers to real want, yet too frequently murmur against Providence, for debarring them from the enjoyment of the luxuries and superfluities which she has placed within the reach of others, would they for a moment condescend to look down upon the thousands who are so far more miserable than themselves, as to find it difficult to procure from day to day, food sufficient to satisfy the cravings of nature, they would not, while enjoying the necessities of life, conceive themselves so extremely unhappy, although deprived of the enjoyment of some of its luxuries. But such is the aspiring disposition of man, generally speaking, and such his natural thirst for wealth, that he is seldom found willing to *look down* and to contrast his situation with those who move in the lower ranks of life. (altho'

it is not improbable that some were born to greater fortunes,) but is continually *looking up*, and envying the rich for their great wealth, although the possession thereof, it is possible, would render him ten times more unhappy than he would otherwise be. Pity it is, that such could not be made sensible that the real source of all human happiness is not *riches*, but CONTENTMENT.

It is a lamentable truth that a thirst for, or a pursuit after *imaginary* happiness, too much engrosses the attention of mankind generally, and too much do they expect to find it in the possession of great wealth. This is a great mistake, for no one can be pronounced happy, who depends upon fortune for his happiness. That man alone is most happy who is contented with the situation in which Providence has placed him. We live in a world naturally subject to lamentable events; and every day's instruction teems with lessons teaching us the vicissitudes, as well as the vanity and emptiness of all transitory things. Although we may at times see cause to rejoice, yet very soon we may see equal cause to mourn, by being unexpectedly humbled by adversity; and as these are vicissitudes to which the wealth and honors of this world can form no barrier, we ought not to indulge ourselves in repining, in uneasiness, or despondency, because we do not possess them to profusion.

How little disposed should we be to find fault with and to murmur at our condition in life, however humble it might be, were we to reflect for a moment how much more miserable they *might* be! I have seen the time when I would have been unwilling to have exchanged conditions with any one within the circle of my acquaintance; and I have seen the time, and that very recently, when I would have gladly exchanged conditions with the poorest beggar in existence; nay, would have given thousands, had I possessed them, for the privilege of sharing with him the humble fare bestowed on him

in charity. Mysterious, indeed, are the ways of Providence ; the same wheel which raises us to-day, on the smooth, unruffled ocean of prosperity, may, before the morrow, roll us in the stormy sea of adversity. The scenes of life are continually shifting, and mankind are ever subject to ills, perplexities, and disappointments ; and we are too apt to find fault, and conclude that we are possessed of a greater share of worldly afflictions than our fellow-men, or more than our proportion in the scale of justice ; but on reflection, I am persuaded mankind are not so unequally provided for in this world as many imagine. "God is no respecter of persons," he favors one man no more than another, and his blessings are equally showered upon all his offspring.

In all the changing scenes of life, we behold man ever in pursuit of happiness—it is his aim and object ; nay, the very desire of his heart to be happy ; and in hopes of being so, ere his days, even of this transitory life shall end, he toils and labors with an unceasing and unwearied hand—no obstacles that meet him in his path are too great to be overcome ; but, alas ! before it is attained, how often does life itself, with all its anxieties and cares, vanish forever. It is a great mistake to account those things necessary and essential to our happiness, that are superfluous. Let the man of a firm health not account himself happy only in the enjoyment of this good, but may the thought of suffering nothing among so many calamitous events to which he is subject, make him yet more content—let him enjoy himself, not only from the good circumstances that are his lot, but from the evils too, which do not befall him. The restlessness and inquietude peculiar to a great portion of mankind, through all the several stages of their existence, are the sole immolators of time. They are continually looking forward to a time, when they shall be rich in the possessions of the world ; and even

in him, who has the abundance of riches, "a full basket and full store," the same anxieties, the same uneasy spirit and restless mind, embitter the sweets of his life, and waste his time and years.

Let us remember that we are but sojourners here on earth—that we are fast hastening to our long homes, and let the benign anticipation of happiness hereafter, make us triumph over adversity, and instruct us in the proper improvement of afflictions, that they may efficaciously work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—Thus suitably impressed with the hopes of consummated happiness and fruition in the realms of peace, and with minds dilated above the annoying influence of worldly troubles and adverse events, we can tranquilly withstand all the buffetting billows of time, and welcome the auspicious hour which transports us from these tenements of clay, to an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

Success and disappointment, mirth and despondency, alternately accompany us through the journey of time. One day we set forth on our road with vigor and animation, favored by an auspicious atmosphere and a serene sky, full of anticipation and elated with hope; but ere night arrives, to lay our weary limbs to rest, some incident has blasted all our expectations—the morn which beamed forth its radiance and dispensed to us pleasure, is supplanted by a sable night, which brings to us a sad reverse, of many pains, anxieties and sorrows.—Hence, it is not an abundance of riches that can secure to us that degree of happiness and tranquillity of mind that all are anxious to experience—a good share of prudence is far more preferable; as for the want of it, the young and inexperienced frequently and rashly launch their frail barks before they are able to stem the adverse current of life, and are wrecked among the shoals and quicksands of adversity.

CLOSING REMARKS.

The foregoing concludes the interesting Narrative and Address of PALMER, to which a friend begs liberty to subjoin some few remarks. As has been remarked at the commencement of the Narrative, the year 1836 will be long remembered as a peculiar one for the many unfortunate occurrences at sea that have attended it. Scarcely a week has passed, that some awful shipwreck, great loss of lives in consequence of vessels taking fire, &c. has not been announced to us. Since the commencement of the year, it is probable that not a less number than one thousand persons, (men, women and children,) have become the victims of one or the other of these devouring elements, on, or in the vicinity of the American coast, attended with all the horrors, and in some instances, by the most aggravating circumstances that the human mind can conceive of.

To maintain a commercial intercourse with foreign nations, it is necessary, notwithstanding the perils to which they subject themselves, that there should be found some willing to adventure their lives; and it is not surprising that there should be many of that useful class, who, accustomed from their youth to a seafaring life, are found willing to brave all dangers, and to subject themselves to almost incredible hardships, for that support which they would find it difficult to obtain for themselves and families on shore—but, that there should be so many of quite a different class, a class compos-

ed of some of our most active and promising young men, of educations that would fit them for the most respectable stations, and produce them ample support, found willing, merely to gratify a silly propensity to see the world, to subject themselves to the dangers and perils of the sea, is indeed, astonishing. The fate of the unfortunate Palmer should afford such a lesson, which ought never to be forgotten. He (Palmer) was, it appears, of respectable parentage, a stranger to hardships, blessed with a competency, and with an education sufficient to qualify him for the performance of the duties of the profession in which he was about to engage; but, alas, what a reverse of fortune was produced by a single act of imprudence. He has, indeed, painted his deplorable situation, while confined to the wreck, in deep colors, but we do not believe the picture too highly colored; for what situation on earth is there in which man can be placed, so awful as that of being driven by hunger and thirst to drink the blood and eat the dead body of a fellow being! Such appears to have been the fate of this unfortunate young man—and which, we would again say, should serve as a beacon to deter others from an attempt to gratify similar propensities, which may, for aught they know, prove equally fatal.

Whoever has perused the melancholy account of the late awful conflagration which occurred on board the steamboat *Royal Tar*, when forty-nine of her unfortunate passengers perished; and the still more recent account of the loss of the ship *Bristol*, bound from Liverpool to New-York, (when no less number than sixty-seven of her crew and passengers found a watery grave,) must be satisfied of the imminent danger to which mariners, and others who adventure upon the deep waters, are exposed. “Shipwreck (as a late writer observes,) is always, even in its mildest form, a calamity which fills the mind with horror. But what is instant

death, compared to the situation of those who are doomed to contend with hunger and thirst? Behold the ship safely gliding along upon the smooth sea, every heart bounding with joy, at the prospect of their soon reaching the destined port, and once more embracing those friends from whom they have long been separated, when, all at once, a cloud arises—the sun withdraws its light—the tempest rolls on, accompanied with all the horrors of midnight darkness—she drives headlong upon the rocks. Ah! fatal moment. Where now shall they seek for refuge? No kind friend is present to lend the aid sufficient to protect these unhappy sufferers; but a small solitary boat, or fragment of the wreck, must float them, they know not where; destined often, to satisfy the cravings of hunger and to prolong a lingering life, by casting lots for a victim to be sacrificed to serve for food for the rest.” That the picture of horror and despair here presented to view, is not one of the imagination alone, the affecting narrative of the unfortunate Palmer affords a melancholy proof. Similar instances too frequently occur; nor does the two, of which we have made mention, and of very recent occurrence, in some respects, fall but little short of it. The awful scene of distress that attended the loss of the steamboat *Royal Tar*, as related by the few who were miraculously preserved from the dreadful conflagration, must still be fresh in the minds of my readers—the unfortunate passengers, comprising men, women, and children, to escape from the devouring element, hanging to ropes and various parts of the burning vessel, until compelled by the approaching flames to loose their holds and to drop into the ocean, to rise no more; and to enhance still more the scene of horror, several unfortunate mothers, to put an immediate period to the sufferings of their tender infants, threw them overboard, and leaped after them to perish with them! Nor were the scenes which attended the more re-

cent loss of the ship *Bristol*, (almost within view of the harbor of New-York,) less distressing. The description given of the lamentable catastrophe by the few that escaped from the wreck, were in terms almost too shocking to describe! Mothers calling to their children, and husbands for their wives, and on the next wave they were buried in the deep!—So sudden and unexpected was the disaster, that several of the passengers, (principally women and children,) perished before they could leave their berths. The ill-fated ship, on striking the shore, instantly bilged, filled, and all below were drowned—not a groan was heard to denote the catastrophe, so awfully sudden was it. The ship, in a few hours went to pieces, and the ensuing morning presented a scene truly melancholy to behold—sixty of the lifeless bodies of those who perished, were driven on shore. Such are some of the dangers, and such frequently the awful consequences of adventuring upon and exposing our lives to the boisterous ocean. On this melancholy subject, we think that we cannot present our readers with any thing more appropriate than a description of a wreck at sea, by an eminent writer. He remarks: “We one day descried some shapeless object, drifting at a distance—it proved to be the mast of a ship that must have been completely wrecked; for there were the remains of handkerchiefs, by which some of the crew had fastened themselves to this spar to prevent their being washed off by the waves. There was no trace by which the name of the ship could be ascertained. The wreck had evidently drifted about many months; clusters of shell-fish had fastened about it, and long sea-weeds flaunted at its sides—but, where, thought I, is the crew? Their struggle has long been over—they have gone down amidst the roar of the tempest—their bones lie whitening in the caverns of the deep—silence, oblivion, like the waves, have closed over them, and no one can tell the story of their

end ! What sighs have been wafted after that ship ! What prayers offered up at the deserted fireside of home ! How often has the beloved wife and affectionate mother pored over the daily news, to catch some casual intelligence of this rover of the deep ! How has expectation darkened into anxiety—anxiety into dread—and dread into despair ! Alas ! not one memento shall ever return for love to cherish. All that shall ever be known, is, that she sailed from her port, “and was never heard of more.”

“The sight of the wreck as usual, gave rise to many dismal anecdotes. This was particularly the case in the evening, when the weather, which had hitherto been fair, began to look wild and threatening, and gave indications of one of those sudden storms that will sometimes break in upon the serenity of a summer voyage. As we sat around the dull light of a lamp, in the cabin, that made the room more ghastly, every one had his tale of shipwreck and disaster. I was particularly struck with a short one related by the captain.

“As I was sailing,” said he, “in a fine stout ship, across the banks of Newfoundland, one of the heavy fogs that prevail in those parts, rendered it impossible for me to see far ahead even in the day time ; but at night the weather was so thick that we could not distinguish any object at twice the length of our ship. I kept lights at the mast head and a constant watch forward to look out for fishing-smacks, which are accustomed to lie at anchor on the banks. The wind was blowing a smacking breeze, and we were going at a great rate through the water. Suddenly the watch gave the alarm of “a sail ahead !” but it was scarcely uttered till we were upon her. She was a small schooner at anchor with her broad side towards us. The crew were all asleep, and had neglected to hoist a light. We struck her just amid-ships. The force, the size, and weight of our vessel, bore her down be-

low the waves; we ^{jumped} ~~leapt~~ ~~overboard~~ and were hurried on our course.

"As the crashing wreck was sinking beneath us, I had a glimpse of two or three half naked wretches, rushing from the cabin; they had just started from their cabins to be swallowed shrieking by the waves. I heard their drowning cry mingled with the wind. The blast that bore it to our ears swept us out of all farther hearing. I shall never forget that cry! It was some time before we could put the ship about, she was under such headway. We returned as nearly as we could guess to the place where the ship was anchored.—We cruised about for several hours in the dense fog. We fired several guns, and listened if we might hear the hallo of any survivors; but all was silent—we never heard nor saw any thing of them more!"

