

## HEROES OF THE LIFE-SAVING SERVICE.

BY GUSTAV KOBBE.

THERE is one power that wages a ceaseless war against whomsoever ventures upon its domain—the sea. No enemy is more pitiless. Wind and snow and fog are its weapons. It neither asks nor gives quarter. Who shall say how many centuries man has sailed the main? But, also, who shall say how many ships and how many lives it has claimed as tribute? With a kind of savage sarcasm, it often calls in its very opposite, the land, to aid in its work of destruction, so that what should be the sailors' hope and haven becomes at times his source of greatest peril.

A few nations, having awakened to a sense of their responsibility toward humanity, have sought to lessen this last and most cruel peril, so far as lies in human power, and maintain each a little band of men whose duty it is to patrol the coast, watch out for stranded vessels, and go to the rescue of their crews.

In the United States these men belong to what is known as the Life-saving Service. Year after year they are called upon to brave dangers before which the stoutest heart might well quail, and brave them calmly and coolly, without the stimulus of excitement which in battle carries everything along, and often makes a fictitious hero of a natural coward.

There is nothing fictitious in the heroism of the life-savers. They are aware of the possible consequences of their every act. Desperate chances are taken, but they are known to be desperate. As a plain recital of some of the rescues they have made will show, they deliberately go forth to save the lives of others, knowing they are imperiling their own; and this, too, without the hope of any adequate reward in case they are successful. There can be no truer «heroes of peace» than they.

For administrative purposes, the sea-coast and lake shores of the United States have been divided into twelve districts, each with a superintendent of life-saving stations. These superintendents, though supposed merely to exercise a general oversight, are often summoned at critical moments, and

personally assist in the work of rescue. Of their small number, two have been drowned, one has escaped that fate by the merest chance, and another has died of exposure.

Another district superintendent, Jerome G. Kiah, with headquarters at Sand Beach, Michigan, is one of the heroes of the Life-saving Service. He holds the gold medal, the highest award the United States government can bestow for heroism in saving life. His name is associated with what was both one of the most daring attempts at rescue and one of the greatest tragedies of the service—a tragedy which wiped out an entire crew, with the exception of this sole survivor.

Mr. Kiah was at the time keeper of the Point aux Barques life-saving station on Lake Huron. A vessel struck too far out to be reached with the shot and line. The peril of attempting a rescue with the surf-boat was only too apparent; but Keeper Kiah mustered his men, and made the launch. For a while their strength and skill enabled them to surmount or push through the tumultuous seas; but, once in the open lake beyond the shoals, where the storm was free to riot at will, the real danger began. It was a test beyond human powers. The keeper remembers that twice the boat capsized and was righted. After that he has a vague recollection of the boat capsizing and righting herself several times, and of the crew clinging to it until, one by one, the surfmen, perishing of cold, let go their hold, and vanished beneath the waves. He has a dim remembrance of the boat, with himself clinging to it, grating over the shoal, and then being flung up on shore.

He was found by two men, standing, with one hand on the root of a fallen tree, steadying himself with a lath in the other, and swaying as if walking, but not stirring his feet—a dazed, tottering wreck of his former self, murmuring in an incoherent way:

«Poor boys! Poor boys! They are all gone—all gone!» Temporarily shattered in mind and body, he was obliged to resign from the service. He was long in recovering, but finally it was possible practically to reward



his bravery with the appointment to his present position.

Keeper Silas H. Harding and his crew of the Jerry's Point, New Hampshire, station all received gold medals for a rescue the perils of which were almost unique. During a winter storm, with the thermometer below freezing-point, the schooner *Oliver Dyer* stranded on the ledges, a hundred and fifty yards from shore. As the life-savers were about to fire a life-line from the Lyle gun, a heavy sea caught the vessel on her broadside, and, lifting her bodily, threw her thirty or forty feet inshore, where the wash was so great that it would have been impossible to handle the line. The vessel now gradually worked shoreward to within about seventy-five feet of a large, flat, ice-covered, wave-swept rock.

Keeper Harding at once realized that it was from this rock the battle must be fought.

He and his crew succeeded in reaching it between seas. They had barely gained a footing when they saw a man struggling in the breakers. Surfman Hall sprang to his rescue, but as he dragged him out, a wave swept both off the rock. Fortunately, they were carried to the inshore side, and, clinging to its ragged edges, his hands and arms torn and bleeding, the surfman was able, as the sea receded a moment, to regain his footing and draw the sailor up after him. Meanwhile, Surfman Randall had saved another man just as he was being carried out a second time by the undertow. Keeper Harding now made a successful throw with the heaving-stick; and as the men leaped from the vessel, with the line under the armpits, they were hauled ashore, whither the life-savers had retreated after they had succeeded in throwing the line to the vessel.

In their exhausted state no information could be obtained from the men who were rescued as to the number that were aboard the wreck; and Keeper Harding, fearing, although no more signals for help came over the line, that there still might be sailors aboard too benumbed to adjust it, sent Surfmen Randall and Amazeen back to the rock to see if there were any more men on the wreck. A big wave carried both surfmen off their feet; but Amazeen seized Randall as the sea rolled back, and clung with him to the rock. The rest of the crew dashed out to their rescue; but they were saved only just in time, for they were almost exhausted when brought ashore.

The rescue of these shipwrecked sailors was surrounded by most perilous circumstances; for while Keeper Harding and his

men were engaged in saving the crew of the *Dyer*, they were, in turn, engaged in saving one another.

To no life-saving crew does the term "heroes of peace" more exactly apply than to that of the station at Evanston, Illinois, on Lake Michigan. With the exception of the keeper, it is composed of students of the Northwestern University, who, when not on duty at the station, are quietly pursuing their studies. It is a kind of college team that has the waves of Lake Michigan for a playground, human lives for a goal, and the elements for umpire.

One Thanksgiving morning these brave fellows received word that the life was being pounded out of a steamer and her crew off Fort Sheridan, twelve miles distant. With the life-boat they made their way to the scene of the disaster. From the bluff they could see the vessel in the breakers, about a thousand yards from shore. There was a living gale, the thermometer was below the freezing-point, and the air thick with snow and sleet.

A wild ravine—a roaring, ice-glazed crack in the bluff—led down to the shore. It would have been impossible even for this plucky crew to have taken the boat safely down through the steep ravine; but soldiers and civilians, armed with picks and shovels, hewed out steps from its side, and mowed a path through the brush. The beach was a mere strip, exposed to the full fury of the sheeting waves. Thrice, in hauling the boat to the windward point, from which Keeper Lawson decided to launch, it filled.

The bluff was lined with soldiers and others from the fort, and every one held his breath as the frail-looking boat, which seemed a mere cockle-shell amid the writhing waters, left the beach. Once it nearly pitch-poled; once it filled to the thwarts; and though the crew pulled with the strength of desperation, it was driven to leeward, and had to be forced toward the wreck in the very teeth of the gale. The life-savers' clothing was frozen stiff; the vessel was shrouded with ice; her crew, half perished, huddled forward. At last the boat was forced under the steamer's lee, and six men were brought off and taken ashore. Three trips were made in all, and when the life-savers finally beached their boat, their condition was almost as pitiable as that of those they had saved. That was this college team's Thanksgiving game. They won it against fearful odds, a fact attested by the gold medals awarded to keeper and crew: Lawrence O. Lawson, George Crosby,



William M. Ewing, Jacob Loining, Edson B. Fowler, William L. Wilson, and Frank M. Kindig.

To me the rescue of the crew of the British schooner *H. P. Kirkham*, by the crew of the Coskata life-saving station, Nantucket Island, seems the most daring exploit ever performed within the scope of the service. Twenty-six hours elapsed between the time the life-boat was launched and its landing with the crew of the wrecked vessel—twenty-six hours of exposure in an open boat, amid the tide-rips and riotous cross-seas of the Nantucket shoals.

An overcast sky, with occasional snowsqualls, the thermometer twenty degrees below the freezing-point, an icy norther whistling over the sand-dunes—such was the night preceding this rescue.

The Coskata patrols went over their dreary beats, returning to the station chilled and worn with their long trudge through the heavy snow and sand.

At daybreak wind and sea were still rising. Keeper Chase carefully swept with his long glass as much of the coast as he could bring within range; but no vessel was visible. Just then there was a ring at the station telephone, and the lighthouse-keeper at Sankaty Head reported that, just before dawn, he had seen torch-flashes offshore, and thought he could discern the masts of a vessel on Bass Rip, ten miles out. Keeper Chase again made a careful search. There was no vessel in sight. She must be outside even of Bass Rip. The crew was quickly mustered, and Sankaty Head was called up.

«Is the vessel still there?»

«Yes; still there.»

«All right. We will launch and go to her at once. Call up Vineyard Haven, and, if there's a tug in port, ask the master to run off toward Great Rip. Tell him a vessel somewhere beyond there may need a tug; that we've gone out to her; and that, if he can't render assistance to her, we'll probably need him to get back against wind and sea.»

Not a man of the crew but knew what it meant to run before a gale on Nantucket Shoals. The gale must moderate, some vessel must pick them up, or seven more men would share the fate of those on the wreck. These descendants of old-time whalers had no need to speak of this to one another. With the fathers it had been, «Dead whale, or stove boat»; with the sons it was, «Rescued crew, or drowned life-savers.»

Sail was made, and Bass Rip reached in a

comparatively short time. From there the vessel was first seen, five miles farther out. «On the Rose and Crown Shoal!» exclaimed Keeper Chase. This is the most dangerous of the numerous outlying shoals; but, nothing daunted, the keeper headed the boat for it. When the life-savers got near enough they could make out seven men clinging to the rigging of a three-masted schooner, the hull of which had already worked itself so deep into the treacherous shoal that only part of the port rail could be seen. The sea broke high over the bow, and swirled over deck and stern.

The life-boat was anchored, a hawser taken over the bow, and, carefully steadied by the oars and the long steering-sweep, the boat dropped down with the current toward the wreck, the life-savers intent upon the keeper's every command, whether by word or gesture. One misstroke might mean failure and death. Carefully working in between seas, it became at last possible to hurl a heaving-stick with a small line attached into the rigging. A heavier line was «bent» on to the stick by the schooner's crew, drawn aboard the life-boat, and made fast to the after thwart; and then two of the boat's crew began to haul in carefully toward the wreck.

And now occurred one of the dramatic incidents of the rescue. The half-frenzied sailors, intent only upon saving their own lives, began hauling rapidly on their end of the line, at the imminent danger of swamping the life-boat.

«Make that line fast!» shouted Keeper Chase. But the schooner's crew was demoralized and undisciplined, and no attention was paid to the command.

Keeper Chase passed his knife to the stroke-oarsman. «I have charge here,» he shouted. «Pull this boat another foot nearer that wreck, and the line shall be cut!»

Keeper Chase stands six feet four inches in his boots, and he has a six-foot-four-inch voice. He towered above the seas in the eyes of the shipwrecked crew, and his command rang in their ears above the storm; and there stood the stroke-oarsman, knife in hand, ready to sever the line. The little wave-tossed boat at the end of that line was their only hope of safety; and so they made fast, and the life-savers worked in as close to the wreck as caution would permit. One after another, the seven men were taken off the wreck, where for fifteen hours almost certain death had been staring them in the face.

Keeper Chase knew that the rescued men, hungry, cold, and exhausted with their long



night struggle, drenched with icy seas, and pierced with the north wind, were worse than useless—mere dead weight in the boat. In fact, it would be little less than a miracle if they reached shore alive. So they were simply stowed away lengthwise in the bottom of the boat. From the deeply laden craft no land could be seen. Only the tall red-and-white tower on Sankaty, Nantucket's boldest headland, was now and then barely discernible as the boat rose on the crest of a high sea.

Mast and sail, useless now against a head wind and sea, were cast overboard. The anchor was lifted, and the boat headed shoreward. Wind and current combined to force it toward the breaking shoal, which was weathered only after three hours of the hardest pulling. It was impossible to make further headway at that time, and the boat was again anchored, to await the turn of the tide, which might aid in reaching land.

At sunset, six hours after leaving the wreck (which had split up an hour after the rescue), the boat had made only one mile of the fifteen toward shore. To be at anchor in such seas meant no rest. Rolling and pitching, the boat was shipping water with almost every wave, and the utmost exertion was required to keep it even comparatively free. The southern tide was due at 9 P. M., but the fierce norther had caused such a set that, after an hour's pull, the crew was obliged to anchor again. The rescued men weighted the boat and added to the danger of swamping; one of them was moaning piteously; and the bow-oarsman of the rescuing crew was also overcome for a while.

At last one of the life-savers, Perkins, or, as his boat-mates called him, «Perkie,» said, «Captain, let me sleep ten minutes, and I'll be all right.» So the members of the crew were allowed to sleep in turn, but only a few minutes at a time, for fear of freezing.

The boat had been launched at eight o'clock one morning; it was three o'clock of the next. At last the southern tide made up, wind and sea moderated somewhat, and with sunrise another pull was made for shore. At ten o'clock, twenty-six hours after the crew had left Coskata, they beached the boat at Siasconset, on the southeastern shore of Nantucket, some eight miles across the island from the station, to which they were too exhausted to return until the afternoon.

When the crew started from Coskata, they left behind them in the station a woman, Keeper Chase's wife. As hour after hour wore away, she watched and waited, hoping

against hope. When the crew reached the station, she came out, stood up on tiptoe, drew the keeper's bearded face down to hers, and kissed him.

There are times when the tension upon the emotions is so great that the least giving way results in a total collapse; and perhaps this is the reason Keeper Chase—his voice a bit husky, it is true—merely turned to his crew and called out:

«Now, boys, stow away the boat, and get your suppers. It's 'most time for the sunset patrol to be out.» And so the routine was quietly resumed.

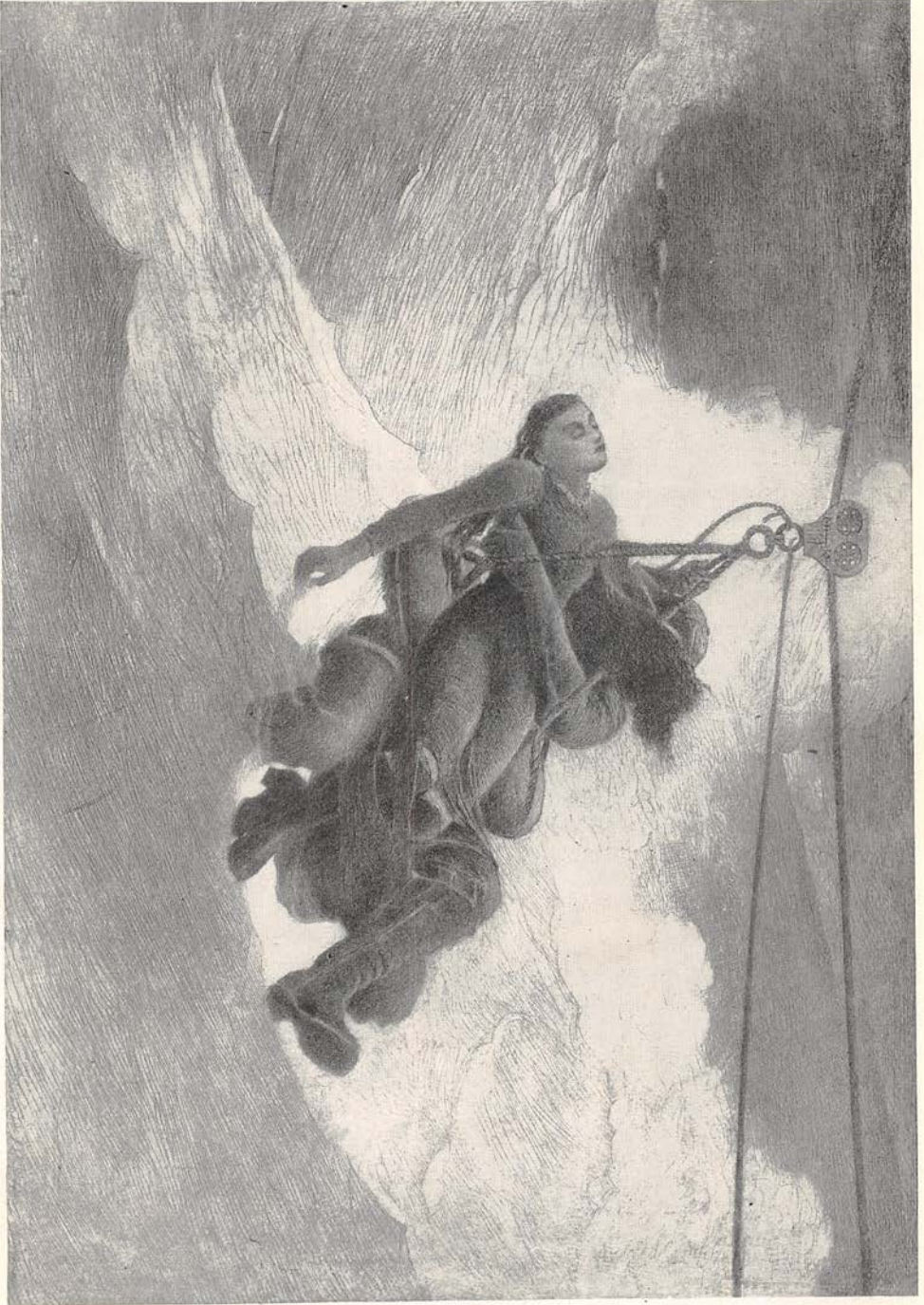
From the time the life-boat left the wreck until at sunrise the next morning the imperiled life-savers had kept a constant lookout for any tug that might have put out to their aid from Vineyard Haven. Did a tug start in response to the message from Sankaty? Yes; it stood offshore some five or six miles, and then, afraid to proceed farther in such seas and gale, ran for shelter!

The medals which were awarded to this valiant crew arrived too late for one of its members, the cheerful «Perkie.» He had been weakened by an attack of pneumonia the previous winter, and the exposure of those terrible twenty-six hours brought on consumption. He knew the medals had been awarded; and when the keeper visited him shortly before his death, he asked, «Captain, have n't those stove-covers come yet?»

«Perkie» was the sole joy and support of an aged mother, and the medal which came too late for him is the only consolation of this poor sorrowing soul.

A number of other crews in the life-saving service have received medals for heroic rescues. The crew of the Hog Island, Virginia, station were awarded medals, not only by our government, but also by Spain, for saving nineteen men from the Spanish steamer *San Albano*. Two daring attempts with the surf-boat having failed, Keeper Johnson most ingeniously ran his gun-cart far into the surf in the wake of a receding wave, and before the next sea boomed in quickly shot a line out to the wreck, and scrambled back to the beach. Christopher Ludlam and his crew were decorated for rescuing in their surf-boat, during a heavy northeast gale and snow-storm, the crew of the lime-schooner *D. H. Ingraham*, stranded and afire among the breakers on the bar at Hereford Inlet, New Jersey; John C. Patterson and his crew, of the Shark River, New Jersey, station, for a rescue effected during a heavy onshore gale—the keeper, as he





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«THE LIFE LINE,» BY WINSLOW HOMER.



stood, his hand on the gunwale, ready to make the launch, receiving a summons to a brother's death-bed, notwithstanding which, he, with pale, determined face, gave the order to "shove her in"; Keepers Benjamin B. Dailey of the Cape Hatteras, and Patrick H. Etheridge of the Creed's Hill station, adjoining, and six surfmen from the former, forsaving the crew of the barkentine *Ephraim Williams*, a five-mile pull in a wintry gale, the boat, in passing through the second line of breakers, rising so sheer that the whole inside was visible from shore, and the little craft seemed about to fall over backward; Keeper C. C. Goodwin of the Cleveland, Ohio, station, and his crew, for rescuing within eleven days, during gales and in freezing weather, twenty-nine lives from three vessels; Keeper Chadwick and his crew of the Mantoloking, New Jersey, station, and five volunteers, for remarkable skill and endurance in the rescue of the crew of the schooner *George Taulane*; and Keeper Charles H. Valentine and his crew, of the Monmouth Beach, New Jersey, station, for rescuing the crews of two vessels, the second rescue being effected through what was a hand-to-hand fight with the surf and the wreckage from the first vessel. Some fishermen formed what was literally a life-line, reaching from the beach into the surf by locking hands, and thus assisted in the rescue.

The award of medals was authorized in 1874. Almost the first award was made to two English life-saving crews for the rescue of the crew of an American ship wrecked at the mouth of the Mersey—an act of recognition pleasantly matched by that of Spain in decorating the rescuers of the *San Albano's* crew.

During the session of 1894-95 the New York legislature passed resolutions praising in the highest terms the heroism of several life-saving crews on Long Island, among them that of the Lone Hill station.

"Lone Hill!" What a dreary name, suggestive of a wind-swept sand-dune rising in desolate isolation from a sea-worn beach! No wonder the disaster, in spite of the heroism it called forth, has lineaments as terrible as storm and death can present. It combines with a marvelous exhibition of endurance and courage, not only on the part of the life-savers, but also on the part of one of the sailors of the ill-fated vessel, the most tragic aspects of shipwreck. After a forty-four hours' fight for life, only two survivors of a crew of eight were brought ashore, and of these two, one died soon afterward. That

he reached shore with a spark of life in him was due to the almost superhuman efforts of his shipmate, who, with death staring him in the face, and at a time when self-preservation would have been uppermost in the mind of almost any one, watched over this unfortunate with a care, tenderness, and devotion bordering on the miraculous. Yet he was only a common sailor; and when he himself had recovered from the effects of that winter storm, quietly went his way, and is probably still before the mast.

It is needless to follow the three-masted schooner *Louis V. Place* through all the stress of winter weather which she encountered after she weighed from Baltimore on her last voyage. It converted the vessel into little more than a drifting iceberg. Her running-gear was frozen in the blocks, her sails were as stiff as boards, her decks sheeted with ice. On the morning that was to be her last, the captain, her whereabouts being wholly a matter of conjecture (he thought he was off Sandy Hook), tried to let go his anchors in hope of holding her off the lee shore which his soundings told him was near. But the crew, already subjected to four days and nights of bitter exposure, failed in their efforts to clear away the ice-bound anchors. Though the halyards were cut, the sails, rigid with ice, remained upright in their places, and the vessel's course landward was unchecked. When the shock came—the shock a vessel feels but once—all hands took to the mizzen-rigging.

The men of the Lone Hill station, eight miles east of Fire Island light, were returning from the rescue of a shipwrecked crew when they were notified that a vessel had just stranded near their station. They were soon abreast of her. She lay some four hundred yards out, swept from end to end by the waves. Frequent snow-squalls obscured the atmosphere; the surf was full of porridge ice, and great cakes of ice were piled up on the beach. To launch, let alone pull, a boat under such conditions was beyond human strength. While the Lyle gun was being made ready, two of the men in the rigging were seen to let go their hold and drop into the sea. This occurrence, so early in the catastrophe, was appalling evidence that the crew's vitality was at a low ebb, and that succor, to be of much avail, must be immediate.

It was only at intervals between the snow gusts that the gun could be fired. The second shot landed the line over the rigging, almost within grasp of the shipwrecked sailors; but



not one of them stirred to reach for it. By one o'clock in the afternoon four lines had been fired; but it was evident that the crew was too exhausted or too nearly dead to aid in its own rescue.

The weather now closed in so thick that the vessel was invisible for three hours. Then a glimpse of a few minutes disclosed only four instead of six figures in the rigging. Two had silently frozen and dropped into the sea. Twice more the gun was fired, but again without avail. Darkness now set in. It was a wild, pitiless night. The life-savers built a beacon fire, and watched the surf for any chance, however desperate, to launch their boat. None came, and with daybreak, almost twenty-four hours after the vessel had stranded, it was seen that of the four figures in the rigging only two showed signs of life.

It had been evident already the previous day, and became more so on this, that one of these, if he survived, would owe his life to his shipmate, who, during these awful hours, instead of concentrating his efforts upon his own preservation, made every endeavor to keep up the feeble vitality in the other, beating him with the end of a rope, and shaking and pounding him, in turn. The mizzenmast seemed to be growing insecure; and at low tide, when part of the vessel's deck was not awash, this man slowly and painfully made his way down to it and along it to the main rigging. But before going up he turned and looked at the man he had left in the mizzen. Tottering back, and groping his way up until he reached him again, he in some miraculous way brought him down to the deck, and, by shoving and dragging him, got him over to the main rigging and up it. That the two other figures on the wreck were only frozen corpses soon became apparent. When the sailor who would not desert his shipmate, evidently with the intention of lashing him fast, unwound some rope near these figures, they were suddenly loosened, and swung, one by the head, the other by the feet, to and fro in the gale, nearly knocking the two survivors out of the rigging.

The second day was now rapidly waning. The ninth and last shot was fired. It laid the line fair across the hull, between the main and fore-mast. The watchers held their breath as the sailor who had shown such unexpected vitality slowly came out of the rigging. He bent over stiffly and painfully, picked up the line, made an effort as if to haul, staggered, fell, and crept feebly back to the rigging. The tension among those

ashore had been so great that, when this seemingly last hope of saving what little of life remained on the doomed ship failed, three of the men burst into tears.

During the waning hours of that second day, and even in the gathering darkness, desperate, almost frantic efforts were made to launch the surf-boat. Each time it was simply tossed back upon the ice-rimmed beach. Again a fire was built, and again the surf watched, as it rushed into the glare, for a favorable opportunity for action. At last, almost at midnight, more than forty hours after the vessel had stranded, the surf seemed a little less powerful and the ice less densely packed. This was the supreme moment. With a mighty rush, the boat was sent into the surf. Waves breasted her, ice pounded her; but, driven on with all the strength her resolute crew could gather, she was at last laid alongside the storm-swept hulk, and the two perishing men were taken off. It was one o'clock on the morning of the third day when they were borne into the Lone Hill station. The heroic sailor, William Stevens, who had done all he could to save his shipmate, recovered. The latter's condition was so pitiable as to beggar description. His feet were frozen solid in his boots. Amputation became necessary, and he died at the hospital to which, at the earliest possible moment, he had been taken from the station.

This gallant rescue was accomplished by Keeper Baker of Lone Hill, Keeper Rorke of Blue Point, and five surfmen. As the resolution passed by the New York legislature says, «Such a service belongs to humanity, and deserves universal admiration.» True; but true also of William Stevens of the fo'c'sle.

Heroism in the life-saving service is not confined to any one part of our coast. Crews along the Atlantic, as well as on the Lakes, hold medals; and Joseph Napier and Ingar Oleson, members of Lake crews, have been similarly honored for individual daring. The Pacific coast also has its heroes in the service, among them John Regnier, who, while engaged with his crew in a rescue on Humboldt Bay, California, sprang into the surf and recovered a child whom the boat had twice failed to reach—a deed for which he holds the gold medal.

There may be, in the record of the life-saving service, instances of failure through lack of judgment, but none through shirking. On the contrary, the occasions when chances too desperate have been taken have been almost too frequent. Crew after crew



has calmly gone to its death rather than give quibbling critics of the service the slightest chance to question its spirit. One winter night the Barnegat life-savers launched their boat, and disappeared into the storm and the darkness, never again to be seen alive. The wiping out of the Point aux Barques crew has already been related. Such instances are not isolated. Hardly a season passes without adding its tribute of lives sacrificed to the honor-roll of the service.

Circumstances singularly pathetic surround the loss which befell the crew of the Peaked Hill station, near Provincetown, Cape Cod. Keeper Atkins of this station was one of the true and trusted veterans of the service. But one stormy day in winter, after twelve hours' exposure on the beach, exhausted by futile efforts to launch the surf-boat, he and his crew had the mortification of seeing the rescue they had attempted made by a crew of volunteers. It mattered not that these had made no previous exertions, that they had come fresh and unwearied upon the scene; Keeper Atkins and his crew had to take from the community what, in the staid, old-fashioned speech of the Cape, is known as the "goading slur."

The keeper made no attempt to answer his critics; but gradually, as that season and the following summer wore away, a settled look of determination became stamped on his face, and his bearing took on a dignity almost tragic. When, at the opening of the next season, his wife, as he left his home for the station, begged him not to expose himself to needless danger, he replied:

"Before this season is over I will have wiped out the 'goading slur.'"

Reaching the station, he called his crew about him, and informed them that, no matter at what peril, a rescue would be attempted at every wreck within the limits of the station.

That winter a storm of almost unprecedented fury burst over the coast, and a vessel was swept upon the Peaked Hill bars. A surf-boat, launched by seemingly superhuman power, put out from shore. But neither desperation, nor even madness, could keep a boat afloat in such a sea; and when, one after another, those who had braved it were cast upon the beach, three were dead. One of these was Keeper Atkins. He had wiped out the "goading slur."

Of such stuff are the heroes of the life-saving service.

## TIMROD THE POET.

BY L. FRANK TOOKER.

HENRY TIMROD'S life was so heartbreaking that one finds it hard to linger over it. The reader is constantly reminded of the cumulative sadness that was the lot of Keats, as he is reminded of the latter's excessive sensibility of temperament—his sensitiveness to outward influences. Indeed, in spirit the two poets were essentially kin, though in poetic insight and expression—in the true province of the poet—Timrod, of course, dwelt on a lower plane. He also dwelt in a different atmosphere; for while the influence of Keats may be traced in his work, the feeling, the local coloring, the habit of thought, are his own. Yet Timrod's unworldliness linked him in temperament still closer to his elder and greater brother, and the time and place in which his lot was cast deepened the same ineffectual struggle against a bitter fortune. For no poet could have found a more unpromising time for graceful love-songs, and

for lyrics in praise of spring and woodland,—to fit "a green thought in a green shade,"—than that in which the shy young poet began to sing. Repose had gone from the troubled South, and the ominous days were carrying it nearer and nearer to war. It was no time for music, and Timrod was not one to draw the gaze of busy men. Later, when the fever of war heated his verse, men carried his stirring songs in their hearts, but forgot the singer. Later still, when they came back crushed and heartbroken, yet ready to take up manfully the struggle of life anew, it was still less the fortunate hour for the poet.

Timrod was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on the eighth day of December, 1829. His father, a bookbinder by trade, but a man of wide reading and much natural force and eloquence, had died in the boy's early youth, leaving to his son an increased measure of his own poetic taste and ability,