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HEAVING THE LEAD.

OF the different guides to which the mariner has recourse in providing for the safety of his vessel as she forces her way through the trackless deep, none is of more importance, as none is more ancient, than that of the sounding-line and lead. How many a proud vessel and rich cargo, and how great a multitude of human lives have been preserved by the silent, but warning voice of this simple instrument, and how many have perished through neglecting to employ it, since the time, now 1800 years ago, when its use is thus recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, in describing the celebrated voyage and shipwreck of Saint Paul, when on his way to Rome to appear before Cæsar:—

“But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near some country, and ‘sounded,’ and found it 20 fathoms; and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it 15 fathoms. Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.”

We are not aware that there is any more ancient record than the above of the operation of sounding, but doubtless its first adoption was coeval with the building of vessels larger than mere boats. There can be little doubt also that the instrument used was identical with that of the present day, viz., a lead and line having marks affixed to it at different distances to indicate the depth; for so great a depth as 20 fathoms could not have been reached, except by a line with a stone or metal weight attached to it, and

the heaviest available substance would naturally have been employed: we know also that lead was used by the ancients for different purposes, and amongst others that it was at that very time employed by the Romans as sheathing for the bottoms of their ships, to which it was fastened with nails of bronze.

And certainly it is not a little singular, when we consider the refinements and improvements which the cumulative efforts of the human intellect have introduced in every art and science, and in all branches of knowledge, not a little singular is it, that so rude an instrument should have continued unimproved upon until the present day. We say rude instrument, not on account of its simplicity—for the most simple mechanism if it is exactly fitted to effect its end is the most beautiful—but rude, because it imperfectly fulfils its end, and is inadequate to meet the requirements of the present day when, owing to the enlarged size of shipping, with their consequent increased draft of water, and still more to the greater rapidity by which, through the adjunct of steam power they are propelled through it, it is impossible, even for the most skilful leadsmen, to obtain correct perpendicular soundings without checking the speed of the vessel and delaying her on her way. Whilst then, the compass, the sextant, the telescope, the chronometer, the vessel herself, have undergone change and improvement, we repeat that singular it is the rude and primitive lead and line of the Greek and Roman pilots remain in the hands of our seamen at the present time.

We would not, however, omit to mention the lead which was invented by Mr. MARRAZ.

the inventor and patentee of the well-known Patent Log. This lead is constructed on the same principle, viz., that of registering the distance run by the number of revolutions of a water-screw recorded on a suitable dial. In the case of the lead, the vane or screw registers the distance from the surface to the bottom, on the correct supposition, that as the axis of the screw revolves in a vertical direction when the weight attached causes it to descend, so the number of revolutions made by it will correspond with the vertical depth. With this lead correct soundings may be obtained in very considerable depths, even when the vessel is in rapid motion. It is not, however, in use as an ordinary lead to supersede the common and primitive hand-lead, either in the Royal or Merchant navies, probably for two reasons: first, because it requires to be delicately handled, as a blow would destroy the precision of its screw; and secondly, because it is hardly quick enough for use in shoal water, where it is essential to get cast after cast as quickly as possible: for this ingenious instrument must be taken out of the water and examined before the depth to which it has descended is known, and the fingers of its dial must be *reset* before it is hove again.

Still more strange, however, nay, inexplicable is it, that the use of this most important safeguard against disaster should be so almost universally neglected amongst our mercantile marine, notwithstanding the disasters which are constantly arising from it. In this respect, indeed, we have not simply stood still, but have retrograded, and the example of the seamen of Adramyttium, above alluded to, may even now be held up as a pattern to those of our own country; for we read that so soon as they deemed that they drew near land they sounded, and although they found so great a depth of water as 20 fathoms, they went but a little further, when they once more hove to and sounded again, and that then, on finding the water had shoaled to 15 fathoms, they

attempted to anchor.

This example of carefulness to the ships. True, it did not show their prudence in this in-

stance should enable them to save their vessel, since her loss was necessary to the carrying out his purposes as regarded his servant Paul; and so it may not be his will that such precautions should in every case be effectual now; but nevertheless, it is the duty, as well as the interest of those who hold command of ships, and have the lives of others intrusted to their care, to adopt every possible precaution to ensure their safety; since we are nowhere given to understand that God will interfere with the course of nature for the purpose of helping those who will not help themselves.

What is the reason then for this strange neglect, which is productive of so much disaster and misery? For there is a reason for everything under the sun. Is it that in our thriving, money-making, commercial country, the anxiety to grow rich, to add "field to field, and house to house," so engrosses attention as to leave no time for such precautions? That the vessel must hurry and disgorge her wealth, that she may hasten away for more? If human life only were at stake we should conceive this possible, when we consider how the sympathies and better feelings of our nature are blunted and hardened by the love of money, which is the "root of all evil;" but riches are also at stake, although the owners of vessels are generally, more or less, protected from loss by insurance. Is it then from the increased general activity of the human mind in the present day, ever urging onward its possessor, for whom the locomotive engine whirls not quick enough over its iron road—for whom the sharp prow of the leviathan steamer cuts not fast enough the parted wave—for whom the electric wire conveys but too slowly the expression of his will? Is this the reason that he cannot delay to be commonly prudent, and that one after another, to say nothing of smaller craft, our noble merchant steamers laden with rich cargoes, and having hundreds of human beings on board, run on shore and are lost, yet that in scarcely one of them do we ever hear of a cast of the lead being taken until too late. We have not space to multiply instances, but will merely quote two of the most recent as types of many more. Thus



in the able and judicious Report to the Board of Trade on the circumstances attending the loss of the *Taylor*, by Captain WALKER, recently presented to Parliament, we find it stated that "I further think the wreck of this vessel might have been prevented, had the master taken the precaution of using his lead."

Now here was as noble a ship lost as ever left an English port. Of great size, being 1979 tons; of the most approved form, being built to sail fast; new, this being her first voyage; with a valuable cargo, and 528 human beings on board; and lamentable to say, 290 of the unfortunate creatures, who had placed their faith in such encouraging appearances, miserably deprived of life, probably through the neglect of the simple precaution of obtaining occasional soundings.

The second case we will name is that of the *Olinda*, an iron screw-steamer, of 1138 tons, likewise new, (built in April, 1853) well built, well found, well officered, and well manned, which was lost on the north coast of Anglesea, on the 20th of January last. This, also noble vessel, in charge of a Liverpool pilot, is taken through an acknowledged intricate and dangerous passage, on a dark night when the land-marks could be but indistinctly seen, at the speed of ten miles an hour, at which speed no correct soundings with an ordinary lead and line could be obtained, and we are not told of its use being attempted until after the ship was on shore, when the Captain directed a quarter-master to take one and sound round the ship, to ascertain if there was any probability of their extricating her from her perilous position. It was, however, too late, and she became a total wreck. In this instance happily no lives were lost; but there might have been.

We abstain from making any comments or reflections on the captains of either of these two vessels, or on the pilot, or on any other circumstances connected with their loss, desiring only to exhibit them as indications of the too common neglect of the particular precaution we are treating on, as we have above quoted in contrast the practice of the ancient seamen of a bygone race.

We should not, however, complete our argument, or do justice to a public department of our own Government, if we did not also contrast with it the practice of the Board of Admiralty and its effects.

So strict, indeed, are the regulations enacted by them on this subject, that the leadsman is required to be at his post whenever the land is in sight, or there are any other reasons to suppose its proximity. And on a man-of-war being lost, or getting on shore, any breach of this rule is fatal to the Captain and Master, or the officer in command of the deck at the time. Now it may seem almost ridiculous to some, that on the steep shores of the Mediterranean, and other parts of the world, a man's time should be wasted hour after hour, and day after day, in heaving the lead where the depths of the water extend far below the utmost limit of his line, even hundreds of fathoms down; or it may again, as it has done, excite the risibility of some to see a tiny cutter tender assiduously heaving the lead in shearing under the stern of her leviathan sister the 120 gun ship in one of our own ports. But let this most judicious rule, which establishes a habit, and ensures as a piece of mechanism, that the leadsman shall be always in his place, be judged by its effects. How many men-of-war do we hear of being wrecked or getting on shore in comparison with merchant craft? The disproportion is indeed very great. On our own coasts alone, in the past year, upwards of 800 vessels were wrecked or seriously damaged, in addition to numberless other cases where they stranded, but got off again without much injury. Yet how rarely do we hear of the loss, or even the getting on shore, of a man-of-war. We do not mean to attribute this great disparity solely to the use or neglect of sounding; we know that there are many other causes; that, as a matter of necessity, a merchant vessel cannot be so fully and efficiently officered and manned; that she can seldom be so well found; that from her build, or the nature of her cargo, she cannot always be so manageable. Of some of these points we may hereafter separately treat; but we have no hesitation in stating that it is "one" of the

causes, and to it therefore we desire to draw the attention of the Shipowner and the Master; even if it be not considered deserving the attention of the Legislature, which however we think it is.

We have stated, that it is singular that no alteration or improvement has been made in the simple lead and line, still in general use, since its first employment by the primeval navigators on the shores of the Mediterranean until the present time. We have, however, much gratification in bringing now to the notice of our readers, a beautiful and likewise simple sounding instrument, recently invented by the Rev. E. L. BERTHON, of Fareham, whose scientific and ingenious mind has enabled him to render a well-known principle available for effecting this purpose; a principle which is so infallible that it cannot err, and the adoption of which possesses other advantages over the ordinary method of ascertaining the depth of water by lineal measurement. A description of this instrument will be found at p. 133 of the present Number of the *Life-Boat Journal*.

SERVICES OF LIFE-BOATS.

HAUXLEY, NORTHUMBERLAND.—On the 5th of January, 1854, the brig *Earl of Newburgh*, of Shields, coal laden, brought up in a sinking state in Coquet Roads, the wind blowing a gale from the eastward at the time. The danger to her crew being apparent from the shore, the Hauxley life-boat put off to their assistance through a heavy surf, and brought six of their number safely on shore. The master and mate, determining not then to desert their vessel, would not avail themselves of the opportunity, and contrived before night to get on board a light brig at anchor near them, which vessel also on the following day drifted on shore, when her own crew, and the master and mate of the *Earl of Newburgh*, succeeded at low water in getting safely on the beach.

On the morning of the 6th January, the brig *Monarch*, of Guernsey, also laden with coals, was driven on shore by stress of weather, near the same spot as the *Earl of Newburgh*, and became shortly after a total

wreck. The Hauxley life-boat was speedily launched through a heavy sea, and brought successfully to the land the whole of her crew, consisting of ten persons.

On the morning of the 9th January, in a heavy gale of wind from the east, the sloop *Heroine*, laden with wheat, was driven on the rocks within Coquet Island. The Hauxley life-boat immediately put off, and brought her crew of four persons safely on shore.

On the morning of the 10th January, the services of the Hauxley life-boat were again, for the fourth time in the short space of five days, called into requisition, but on this occasion unfortunately not with the same success. The Danish galliot *Catherine Maria*, in ballast, was driven on shore by the violence of the gale which was still blowing from the eastward, about five miles south of Hauxley; but although the life-boat at that place was manned and launched as speedily as could be, it was found impossible to reach the wreck until the whole of the crew, consisting of six persons, had been washed off and drowned.

BRIDLINGTON.—On the 4th of January, the brig *Ranger*, of Jersey, coal laden, was driven on shore in a strong gale from the E.S.E., a quarter of a mile to the southward of Bridlington Harbour. The life-boat at Bridlington Quay was quickly launched, and succeeded in taking on board and in conveying safely to the shore the crew, consisting of eight persons.

LYME REGIS.—On the 7th January, a French brigantine was observed four or five miles distant from Lyme harbour, drifting towards the land, with a flag of distress flying; the wind was blowing a gale from S.S.W. at the time, with a heavy topping sea. The life-boat, a new one on Mr. PEAKE'S design, lately furnished by the National Shipwreck Institution, was quickly manned by a volunteer crew, consisting of seven coast-guardmen and four boatmen of the place, and proceeded to her assistance.

She was found to be *La Jeune Rose*, of 100 tons, with a crew of five men, and laden with wine, a large quantity of which was stowed in casks on deck. Her master and crew were quite worn out, having been

several days without cooked provisions, and were ignorant of the position they were in. She was accordingly taken charge of by the coxswain and crew of the life-boat, the greater portion of whom went on board her. Finding that she had drifted to leeward of Lyme Harbour, they determined on working her up to it, in which, having the tide under their lee, there appeared a fair prospect of their succeeding; unfortunately, however, immediately after making the first tack, and before the vessel had way on her, or could be brought to the wind, she was struck by a sudden and very violent squall, which, in consequence of her having much water in her hold and a heavy deck load, threw her on her beam-ends. Falling over on the life-boat, into which a portion of the casks of wine stowed on her deck were also hurled, the latter, besides being much knocked about, was turned over keel uppermost, and the coxswain and four men who were in her at the time were thrown overboard.

Owing to the schooner's mainsail fouling the boat, her self-righting power was prevented from acting, and she remained keel uppermost, the coxswain and two of her crew being confined under her for some time, the latter for about twenty minutes. The coxswain, on getting from under her, handed his knife to another of the crew, who with the assistance of a third cut and ripped the mainsail until it was clear of the boat, when she was readily righted, and both her own crew and the crew of the schooner, with the exception of one of the former found missing, succeeded in getting into her, and were safely conveyed to the shore.

The unfortunate man whose life was lost, JOHN MARTYN, a coastguardman, was last seen struggling amongst a number of wine casks in the water between the wreck and the boat, and was supposed to have been struck and injured by them; he had also unfortunately, in consequence of feeling ill when rowing off to the vessel, loosened the fastenings of his life-belt, which was of sufficient buoyancy to have prevented his body from sinking, but which became detached from it, apparently by violence, and floated on shore, where it was picked up on the

following day, whilst the body did not come on shore until several days afterwards.

The coolness and intrepidity displayed by the crew of the life-boat was the subject of universal admiration in the neighbourhood where the accident occurred, as it was also matter of astonishment, considering the nature of the accident, that no more lives were lost. The behaviour of the boat throughout was also much extolled, both by those who were in her, and all who were witnesses of the transaction.

A stronger instance could not be afforded than the extraordinary accident above narrated, of the advantage of having everything connected with a life-boat of as complete a character as possible. The efficient form of the boat herself, her being sufficiently furnished with life-lines, and her crew provided with good life-belts, are all points of importance; and we have reason to believe, that had this boat been deficient in any one of them, greater loss of life would have ensued. The Committee of the National Shipwreck Institution may, therefore, well congratulate themselves on having been instrumental to providing at Lyme, and at many other localities, boats which are able to pass unscathed through so extraordinary and terrible an ordeal as that above related. But especially is it a proof of the advantage which may accrue from a boat's possessing the property of self-righting; for it is unquestionable, that had not this boat been again righted, the whole of the persons on board her, and those in the French vessel, would have perished. If, therefore, the self-righting principle can be secured without impairing other necessary qualifications, which is the case in Mr. PEAKE'S life-boats, ought not every life-boat to be constructed with self-righting power, although it might be only under some such extraordinary circumstances as the above that it would be ever called into requisition.

BOULMER.—On the 9th January, at daylight, a large barque, subsequently ascertained to be the *Montezuma*, was observed on shore on the South Steel rocks, on the Northumberland coast. The wind was blowing a heavy gale at the time from the

east, accompanied with rain and snow. The Boulmer life-boat was immediately launched, and succeeded in reaching the vessel, but found no person on board her. She drifted to the south and broke in two the same tide.

NEWBIGGIN.—On the 7th January, the brig *Embla*, of Christiana, laden with salt, went on shore about 2 miles to the northward of Newbiggin, Northumberland. The life-boat was immediately got ready, and horses having been procured, was conveyed on her carriage to the scene of the wreck, accompanied, not only by the seamen who should have manned her, but by a large portion of the female as well as male population of Newbiggin. On arriving at the spot a scene of noise and confusion ensued which much interrupted the launching of the boat, and it was then found that one-half of the crew, either influenced by the cries and persuasions of their wives, or deterred by their own fears, refused to take their places in the boat. After some delay, some volunteers were procured in lieu of them, but they were mere lads and deficient in the requisite muscular strength for such an arduous undertaking, although they showed a noble example of courage to the many others on the spot possessed of greater experience and bodily strength.

Thus manned, with 3 men short of her proper complement, and 5 of that number little more than boys, two strenuous attempts were made to reach the wreck without success, and 3 of the oars and an iron thowel-pin being then broken, she was thrown broadside on to the sea and driven on shore, when the attempt was given up and the unfortunate men on board the wreck left to their fate.

It is a melancholy reflection that the crew of this vessel should have perished when we believe the means were at hand which, with God's blessing, might have rescued them from their perilous position.

The life-boat was a new one, on Mr. PEAKE's design, as equal, we believe, to the emergency as any other in the kingdom, and she was reported to have behaved very well on this occasion. The fishermen at

Newbiggin are considered to be hardy and experienced boatmen, and the crew had, moreover, been previously off in this boat in a heavy sea, so that they were not ignorant of her capabilities. The coxswain is also as good a seaman and as fine a fellow as any on the coast of Northumberland; yet, notwithstanding these advantages, a vessel's crew were drowned almost within a stone's throw of the shore, and within the sight of a large crowd of persons. A panic, such as that which sometimes mysteriously seizes on soldiers in a battle, seems to have fallen upon the seamen who were present, and the lamentable consequences were such as we have above related.

We think that the names of the brave fellows, who, although unsuccessful, yet did their best under such discouraging circumstances to afford succour to their fellow-creatures, are deserving of being placed on record. We therefore give them as follows:—Coxswain, PHILIP JEFFERSON; Crew and Volunteers, ADAM STOREY, JAMES STOREY, EDWARD DENT, DAVID DENT, THOMAS BROWN, WILLIAM TURZELL, HUNTER TAYLOR, JOHN HARBOTTLE, REAFORD ARMSTRONG.

ALDBOROUGH, SUFFOLK.—On the night of the 24th January, the brig *Canadian*, of South Shields, laden with coals, in consequence of dragging her anchor, went on shore on the Ridge Shoal, about 2 miles S.W. of Aldborough, the wind blowing a gale at the time from S.S.E., and afterwards veering to S.S.W. The Aldborough life-boat, one on Mr. PEAKE's design, recently supplied (*vide* No. 9 of the *Life-boat Journal*, page 38), was quickly launched, and proceeded under sail to the rescue of the crew, 9 in number, whom she succeeded in taking off, in the midst of some heavy seas which were breaking over the wreck, and in landing them safely. The life-boat was much praised both by the crew and the master of the wrecked vessel, which shortly after broke up.

CEMLYN, ANGLESEA.—On the 26th January, at 8.45 P.M., the *Olinda* iron-

screw steamer, of 1138 tons, bound from Liverpool to the Brazils, with 28 passengers and a valuable cargo of assorted goods on board, ran on shore on the rocks between the Harry Furlongs and Cemlyn Point, on the north side of the island of Anglesea. The night was very dark, a fresh gale was blowing from S.W. with occasional heavy squalls and rain, and a strong tide running, thereby occasioning much broken water, and rendering any attempt to reach the wreck in a boat both difficult and dangerous. Blue lights were burned on the Furlong, which at 9.30 P.M. were seen from the residence of the Rev. JAMES WILLIAMS, the secretary to the Anglesea Life-boat Association, whose son, the Rev. OWEN LI. WILLIAMS, with great promptitude, got the crew of the Cemlyn life-boat together, and himself taking the helm, without a moment's loss of time proceeded in her to the assistance of the wrecked vessel, which they succeeded in reaching at about 10.30 P.M. Eleven persons, chiefly passengers, were taken on board, the life-boat being a small one and not having stowage room for a greater number, and were safely landed at Cemlyn Point. Mr. WILLIAMS then made a second trip and brought from the wreck seven more; the captain and crew declining then to leave their vessel, from which they were subsequently, at low water, enabled to walk on shore.

It may here be mentioned, as illustrative of the skill and judgment with which Mr. WILLIAMS, although a landsman, managed the life-boat, that the ship's life-boat which left the vessel at the same time as the Cemlyn boat on her first trip, and having on board 4 ladies, 2 gentlemen and 4 children, did not succeed in landing until 11 o'clock the next morning, after being twelve hours from the vessel.

Mr. WILLIAMS was also accompanied in the boat by a relative, Mr. AUGUSTUS E. VINCENT, a young officer in the service of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, who rendered valuable assistance on the occasion. The *Olinda* became a total wreck.

FILEY, YORKSHIRE.—On the 27th April,

at midnight, during a strong gale from the north, with a heavy sea running, the sloop *Comet*, of Whitby, laden with limestone, having previously sprung a leak at sea, ran on shore half a mile south of Filey. The life-boat at that place was thereupon manned, and succeeded in getting alongside and in rescuing the crew, consisting of four men. The life-boat got damaged in launching, which, however, did not deter the crew from proceeding to the rescue of the shipwrecked men. The boat behaved well on the occasion.

SHIELDS and HARTLEPOOL.—During the gales of the past winter, the life-boats at Shields and Hartlepool rendered important services, and rescued many persons from vessels wrecked in their localities, but not being able to obtain particulars, we are unable to give them in each case.

THE LATE

MR. ALDERMAN THOMPSON, M.P.

WE much regret to have again to record the death of another tried friend and valuable supporter of the Shipwreck Institution, in the person of Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, M.P., its late esteemed Chairman. Although he had occupied that office only for a period of about twelve months, his connexion with the Institution began at its formation in 1824, when he was elected a member of the Committee of Management, and one of the auditors. Since he assumed the post of Chairman, he devoted himself with much assiduity to its duties, and worthily emulated, in this respect, his excellent predecessor and friend, the late Mr. THOMAS WILSON. At the time Mr. THOMPSON was seized with his fatal illness, he was engaged in making arrangements for celebrating the festival of the Shipwreck Institution, which had been fixed to take place on the 17th of May last, at the London Tavern, but which, on account of his recent demise, and of the continued absence from England of the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND, K.G., President of the Society, has been postponed to next year; and here it may not be amiss to

state, that his lamented death has probably not been more forcibly and feelingly expressed by any of the deceased's numerous acquaintances than it has been by His Grace, who, in a recent communication received from him, dated from Naples, thus alludes to the circumstance:—"I read with much concern the melancholy report of the death of Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, our much-valued Chairman. His public and private character stood so high, that his loss will be great to the Shipwreck Institution, as it is sincerely regretted by me."

The Alderman was the second son of JAMES THOMPSON, Esq., of Grayrigg, in the county of Westmoreland, where he was born in 1793. When about fifteen years of age he proceeded to London, where his uncle was at the head of the eminent iron firm of Messrs. THOMPSON, FORMAN, and HOMFRAY. After finishing his education at the Charterhouse, he was taken to his uncle's counting-house; he subsequently became a partner in the firm; and at his relative's death he was left in the possession of a large amount of capital, in addition to his share in the business, which laid the foundation of the colossal fortune which his own commercial enterprise and sagacity afterwards raised on that superstructure. It would be foreign to our purpose to enter into any account of the deceased gentleman's enterprise in commercial transactions; suffice it, therefore, to state, that as an ironmaster and a shipowner, he wielded with great skill a large capital, and acquired much eminence in the mercantile world. His foresight in these matters was remarkable, and rarely did his tact fail to discover the right time requisite for success.

He also, at an early age, sought and obtained parliamentary honours, for we find that in 1820 he was returned for Callington, in Cornwall. He did not, however, remain for any lengthened period in the representation of that small borough. His business habits, and the commercial standing of his firm, pointed him out as a fit representative for London; and at the general election in 1826, he was accordingly elected one of its members. In the years 1828 and 1829 he was consecutively chosen Lord Mayor of

London, an honour of rare occurrence. He had been elected the alderman of the ward of Cheap in 1821, the gown of which he retained till the day of his death. He remained in the representation of London till 1832. In the following year he was returned for Sunderland, which he continued to represent till 1841, when he was returned for his native county, Westmoreland, where he had become the possessor of large estates.

Although endowed with considerable fluency of language, he was not a frequent speaker in Parliament. His energy and talents were, however, duly recognized by the onerous share which was imposed upon him in the working of the legislative business; and he was often selected to take part in the most important Parliamentary Committees, especially those relating to monetary and commercial matters. Probably few men worked harder than he did, till the pressure of illness compelled him to pause. He was no doubt enabled to get through a large amount of business by his early rising, his punctual habits, and the systematic manner with which he pursued his object. His vigour, activity, and unremitting attention to his parliamentary duties, appear the more striking when the immense amount of labour is considered, which not only his own particular business required, but that of the great mercantile corporations in the direction of which he was actively engaged, must have entailed. We will enumerate a few of the leading companies in which he took an active part:—He was a director of the Bank of England, a director of the Chester and Holyhead Railway Company, director of the Blackwall Railway Company, chairman of the St. Katherine's Dock Company, chairman of the Society of Merchants Trading to the Continent, director of the Globe Insurance Company, and a director of the Marine Insurance Company. Amongst his other offices was that of Chairman of the Royal National Shipwreck Institution, Treasurer of King's College Hospital, Deputy-Lieutenant of London, and Vice-President and Colonel of the Honourable Artillery Company. He was also for sometime Chairman of the Committee for Lloyd's. But

one of the most important and honourable offices which he held, and in which he took peculiar pleasure, was that of President to Christ Hospital, which he filled with much advantage to that national educational institution for twenty-six years.

Mr. THOMPSON married in 1817, Amelia, daughter of SAMUEL HOMFRAY, Esq., late M.P. for Stafford, and niece of the late Sir CHARLES MORGAN, Bart., of Tredegar. He had but one child, a daughter, who married in 1842 the Earl of BECTIVE, who has succeeded his father-in-law in the representation of Westmoreland. Mr. Alderman THOMPSON died in the sixty-second year of his age, on the 10th March last, at Bedwelty House, Monmouthshire, in the neighbourhood of which his extensive iron-works are situated. While there he caught a severe cold, which terminated fatally. His remains were interred at Kirkby Lonsdale, Westmoreland. In his personal habits the Alderman was plain and unostentatious. None who ever had business to transact with him could fail to recognize the urbanity and kindness of his disposition, and the sterling integrity of his character.

At a Special Meeting of the General Committee of the Royal National Shipwreck Institution, convened in consequence of his lamented death, the following Resolution was unanimously passed:—

“That the General Committee desire to record their deep regret at the demise of Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, M.P., V.P., whose cordial co-operation in the cause of humanity they had often occasion to appreciate, and by whose lamented death the Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck has been deprived of a most esteemed and valued Chairman.

“That the Committee do offer their condolence to the widow and family of the late Chairman on their recent bereavement.”

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIFE-PRESERVERS ON BOARD PASSENGER-SHIPS.

WE have in different parts of this Journal pointed out the advisability that we believe

exists for providing on board all vessels, and especially on board passenger-ships, some provision for decreasing the risk of life to those on board them in the event of their being cast on shore, or accident befalling them at sea.

We introduce the following extracts from a letter recently received from the United States of America, addressed to his Grace the President of the Institution, as illustrating that not only has the same opinion existed in another great commercial country, only second to our own, but that that opinion has been to some extent acted on, and that a law actually exists there which compels every *passenger-steamer* to carry a *life-preserver* for each person on board; thus evincing a practical appreciation of the value of human life, and a sense of the responsibility which rests on every Government to provide for the protection and welfare of those committed to its care.

The letter was accompanied by a description and diagrams of a life-belt, of which the writer of it is the inventor, who, however, states, that his “motive for forwarding the communication is not a pecuniary one,” but that his “object is only the saving of life.”

“The life-preservers of the annexed description are carried in many of the steam-boats on the Mississippi river, and on the Gulf Coast, in accordance with a *law of the Congress of the United States*, which requires all steam-vessels carrying passengers to be supplied with one for each passenger carried.

“The loss of the ship *Tayleur*, in Dublin Bay, is the occasion which has prompted me to introduce to your Grace’s notice a life-preserver which, if it had been on board the ship and kept in such places as it might be without inconvenience to the crew or passengers, would have saved many lives, if not all; for it appears from the account of the wrecking of the ship received here, that she struck so near the shore that persons jumped from her deck, or swung from her yards to it. Now as she remained above water fifteen or twenty minutes, every one in her might during that time have supplied themselves with life-preservers, had they been on board and been kept in proper places.

"The ship *Lady Evelyn*, wrecked within a quarter of a mile off shore, is also an instance where life-preservers would have been of some use.

"Again, in the instance of the loss of the steam-ship *Amazon*, burnt off Sicily, if each of the passengers and crew had had on a good life-preserver, made in a proper shape, and so placed on the person as to allow free use of the arms to work, they might have freely gone into the water, and have formed rafts of such spars and other floating articles that did not burn, which would have been the means of saving many from drowning.

"Now, it appears to me, that if the Governments of Great Britain and the United States were to pass laws compelling all vessels to carry for every person on board, life-preservers possessed of about 20 lbs. buoyancy each, (and, I believe, from my experiments in the water that is little enough) and would designate the proper places where they should be kept, that many valuable lives would be saved—fully one-half of those shipwrecked.

(Signed) EDWARD G. FITCH.

"*New Orleans*, 20th Feb., 1854."

PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM DROWNING.

SIR,

It is an important and cheering feature of the present age, that the general interests of our common humanity are so extensively cared for; and this has in various ways been exemplified, as it regards the physical wellbeing of our own countrymen, as in the deep interest recently taken in the sanitary movement, in the prevention of explosions in coal-mines, and in the preservation of life from shipwreck, &c. It is particularly from consideration of the loss of life by shipwreck, the collision of vessels, and other casualties frequently occurring in rivers and at sea, that I am at present induced to suggest that far more serious attention ought to be given to this subject by individuals, families, and the public generally, than it has hitherto received. Now there are two modes whereby life may be preserved from drowning, the one is by the

exercise of natural capabilities, as by swimming, the other is artificial, such as by the use of life-preservers; I will endeavour to treat each of these separately.

It is not necessary to dwell at length on the fact that, among the animal tribes, land quadrupeds generally can swim, although this rather humiliating inference may be drawn from it, that, in this respect, the great majority of mankind are really more helpless than the inferior races over which they hold dominion; and while the horse and the dog, man's most cherished companions among domestic animals, would swim across an ordinary river with comparative ease, their master, if left to himself under the same necessity, would often as certainly go to the bottom. And yet, if the power of swimming be an important faculty to be possessed by the lower animals it must be more so to man, inasmuch as his nature and the objects of his existence are justly held to be of more importance than theirs. Nor can any sufficient reason be shown to justify this disparity between man and the inferior races in relation to the one question of self-preservation, because, from what we know of savage life in some countries, we have the best evidence to prove that every healthy individual, with the free use of his physical capabilities, may cultivate the practice of swimming to a remarkable degree of perfection. In the South Sea Islands the natives of both sexes are generally expert swimmers, and the children who live near the ocean take to the water soon after they can run abroad, so that while quite young they find in it their chief sport.

It may be difficult to estimate the proportionate number of swimmers in our own adult male population, but, after some little inquiry, I have been led to suppose that the probable average, even among seamen, would not exceed 45 per cent., and, taking landmen into the account, perhaps not more than 30; whence it follows that the number of swimmers in Britain must certainly be regarded as comparatively small, considering the extent of our sea-coast, our fine rivers, and other places suitable for bathing, together with the facilities for

reaching such places now afforded to those who live at a distance from them. But whether the above calculation be anything near the truth or no, I am still less liable to err in supposing that, amongst Europeans at least, swimming has scarcely ever been cultivated for its most important use—that of self-preservation. There seems to be no reason, however, why civilized men should be inferior either to animals or barbarians in the ability to swim. To be sure what I suggest cannot be equally practicable to all, but it certainly is so to very many; and I would earnestly urge upon all young men of every class, that to excel in swimming, both as a healthy, pleasurable, and manly exercise, is equally worthy of their efforts and ambition.

As regards life-preservers for individual use, I cannot but think that their importance has been sadly overlooked; for, however valuable the ability to swim undoubtedly is, yet there are so many difficult circumstances connected with shipwreck and other dangerous occurrences at sea, that swimming ought never to be relied on to the neglect of any other means which foresight can suggest for self-preservation in the event of such calamities. If the most expert swimmer in full strength should be cast upon the foaming billows of a stormy ocean, he could hardly be expected long to maintain the unequal strife, while the effects of cold, previous exhaustion, or other liabilities by which he might be crippled, would render him an easy prey to certain destruction; but a life-preserver might enable him to retain his buoyancy till help reached him if any was at hand, or, if land was not distant, he might gain the shore. But if life-preservers would be so important to men, even swimmers, in such circumstances, how much more so to women who have no pretensions to swimming; for though I am now treating this as a general question, it was the appalling loss of female life in recent shipwrecks, which first turned my attention to it.

The large emigrant ship *Tayleur*, on her voyage from Liverpool to Melbourne, was wrecked on Lambay Island, 13 miles from Dublin, in January of this year, having on

board 579 persons. Of these, 349 are said to have perished, 230 were rescued; but out of 200 women and 50 children, only 3 women and 2 children were saved. The *Staffordshire*, a fine clipper-built vessel of 2000 tons, sailed from Liverpool for Boston in November last, with 198 passengers, including several ladies. She was wrecked off the Seal Islands, Nova Scotia; 21 seamen and 25 passengers were saved, but that number of passengers included only one female. In April of this year, the *Ercolano* and *Sicilia* (steamers) came into collision at night between Nice and Antibes, in the Mediterranean, when the former vessel sank, and 36 passengers and 12 seamen were lost, the number that escaped is not mentioned. But we are informed that the four boats of the *Sicilia* were launched immediately and "saved as many of those who were swimming as could be heard." A passenger of the *Ercolano* says that the sailors having launched one of her boats he was saved by it, and then adds "I heard piercing cries and the voices of women," from which it seems probable that some of the female passengers at least had got on deck; but we are told again—"Of all the women on board the *Ercolano*, only one was saved." Can any one calmly contemplate these and similar catastrophes without being shocked at the appalling loss of life which they involve as a whole, and not at the same time be deeply affected on perceiving how fearfully the loss of female life preponderates. Truly—when the sea shall give up its dead—how many wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters, will be there!

The horror-stricken state of females, under the circumstances above described, cannot be conceived, and this must be greatly aggravated by the consciousness of their not possessing any means to aid their individual efforts to save themselves; for in all the accounts we have of the fatal occurrences referred to, not a single instance is recorded of any one having been provided with a life-preserver, although there is abundant evidence of the want and necessity of such an article. A gentleman, one of the passengers saved from the *Tayleur*, among other statements concerning her loss

says, "To attempt to paint the heart-rending scene would be impossible — wives clinging to their husbands, children to their parents, women running about the decks uttering the most heart-rending cries, many offering all they possessed to persons to get them on shore." A little further on he states, "Great numbers of women jumped overboard, in the vain hope of reaching land." And how intense the anxiety for self-preservation at such times is, the evidence of another survivor, Mr. Tew of Wakefield, shows; he says, "Just as I came on deck a lady came up to me and asked if I could swim. I told her I could. (She was the same lady who afterwards offered 3000*l.* for her life.) She said she would keep near me; she, however, went away." He further tells us what came to his knowledge on shore:—"It was here that I heard the most heart-rending tales. One man had lost six sisters, four brothers, and a mother; a German had lost a whole family. Another man told me he had lost his brother, his brother's wife, her three sisters and four children; others had lost their wives and children." This gentleman, the captain, and a sailor-passenger, were the only persons who saved themselves by swimming; but, considering the efforts that were made by the unfortunate passengers, can it be doubted that, by the aid of life-preservers, many men, women, and children, might have been rescued?

But now, as it regards these, the storm is past and the struggle is over! Nevertheless, the elements are not changed, and, therefore, the storm will repeat its ravages; while, even with the best intentions on the part of human beings, their want of judgment, skill, or foresight, will often be such as to render it too certain, that other fatal calamities at sea still belong to the catalogue of evils which must be anticipated: so that whatever may be accomplished by the public to remedy this class of evils, they are of such a nature as must always leave much for individuals to do for themselves. And, since the Almighty accomplishes many of his purposes in the world by means of human agencies and contrivances, if, with the facts before us,

which have been enumerated, the neglect of individual life-preservers should continue to be as general as it has been, I cannot but consider that the wise and benevolent designs of a superintending Providence will be most wilfully and culpably disregarded. For we have seen—what should never be forgotten—that what many might have obtained, each for a few shillings, while in circumstances of safety, they would have given their all to possess, even to render escape probable, in the terrible time of their need.

I hope that I have said enough to show that the most expert swimmer should not consider a life-preserver a thing of small importance when life is really in peril; for even if it should not be necessary for his own safety under all circumstances of danger, it might enable him to rescue some poor child cast upon the stormy waters, or some other person not furnished with such an article, though it is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when every man and woman, without distinction, will consider this among the indispensable requisites for a sea-voyage. But it is clearly desirable that all who are not swimmers, whether men or women, should accustom themselves to the use of them when bathing, because they would thus become satisfied whether they might be relied on in time of need. It seems hardly likely that men should use life-preservers and not learn to swim with them, even though they never endeavoured to swim without them, and there seems no reason why women should not attempt to do the same; so that with a life-preserver on, in time of danger, they might the better be enabled to keep afloat by its aid or propel themselves in any direction which their safety might require.

It is hardly to be expected that these hints will influence persons who are not in the habit of bathing, but to those who do bathe, and especially such as enjoy the custom, their practical adoption would be quite easy. Let any such lady of active habits make the trial with a life-belt, and we doubt not that this new employment of the physical energies would soon become a pleasure to her. It is only necessary for

the bather, after a plunge or two, to advance into the water till it reaches the armpits, when the sustaining power of the belt will be experienced; then let the person rest upon it while moving forward in a direction in which the same depth of water may still be available, at first only using the arms with an easy motion in the manner of a swimmer, and then by degrees learn the similar use of the legs also, till satisfied of being borne afloat in the water and likewise conscious of the power of moving in any direction at pleasure; and while this power would certainly add much to the enjoyment of bathing, if it should ever be needed to aid in the struggle for self-preservation, it would then be found of supreme importance.

While, therefore, we may cherish the hope that the practice of swimming among females, from youth upwards, will be voluntarily cultivated to a large extent, both for healthful pleasure and self-preservation, we think also that it should be considered an important part of the physical training of the young of both sexes for the same objects. I see no reason why the children of savages should be able to sport among the billows of the ocean like creatures possessing an amphibious nature, so that under ordinary circumstances they can hardly be drowned, while those of civilized parents are constantly in danger of certain destruction, from any accident that throws them into water only a few feet deep, and this mainly for the want of a little training, in which they themselves would take the greatest delight. How many facts might be collected respecting young persons of both sexes being drowned, under circumstances favourable for their rescue, and who, but for their utter inability to make any effectual effort to raise themselves to the surface of the water when accidentally submerged, or to keep themselves afloat for a few minutes, might probably have been saved. With regard to boys generally, the importance of swimming needs only to be suggested and urged upon them, to induce them to cultivate the practice without any artificial aid, and this would be the case with many girls too, if they were really desired to attempt it.

The interest felt in this subject, and a desire to impress the public mind with a sense of its general importance, has led me to some inquiry respecting the manufacture of life-preservers. It appears that an air-inflated belt is the most convenient because of its greater portability, and it would, therefore, be preferred as an auxiliary in learning to swim, but could not be so well depended on as a life-preserver, since a cut or puncture with anything sharp would render it useless for such a purpose; whereas a cork belt would retain its sustaining power as long as it held together. I have been informed that the larger sizes of either of these kinds of belts, which are usually kept for sale, are quite sufficient to float an adult person in the water; this, however, should always be carefully ascertained when procuring a belt for a life-preserver. It is of great importance also, on a sea voyage, that these should always be in a state of readiness, and hung up in a bed berth or any place where they could be laid hold of in a moment, even in the dark, because any neglect of such preparation might, in case of an emergency, lead to fatal results.

Your obedient Servant,
W. T.

North Shields,
6th June, 1854.

Note.—The buoyancy of any life-preserver may be readily learned by attaching iron weights to it and ascertaining how many pounds it is capable of sustaining at the surface. For an adult person it should not be less than 20 lbs.—EDITOR.

NEWLY-INVENTED SOUNDING INSTRUMENT.

THE principle on which this novel instrument is constructed to act, consists in obtaining the weight of the column of water resting on the ground, a principle which, simple as it is, and beautiful in its simplicity, could only have been discovered and applied by the light of science, as the principle of lineal measurement first was by the light of nature.

As there may be some of our readers who are unacquainted with the subject, we will here shortly explain that it is a property common to all fluids to exert an equal pressure in every direction, the amount of which pressure increases in proportion to the depth below the surface, and which is in fact the weight of the superincumbent mass; thus on every part of the earth's surface is borne the weight or pressure of the whole atmosphere lying above it, which amounts at the level of the sea to about 15 lbs. on every square inch; and as this pressure is exerted in every direction it presses equally upon all objects, whether upwards, downwards, or laterally. So again, at any given depth below the surface of water, there is exerted in every direction a pressure equal to the column of water lying upon it up to the surface, added to the weight of the column of air resting on it there; thus at 1000 feet deep in the sea any substance there immersed in it would be exposed over every square inch of its surface to the weight of a column of water 1000 feet high, or 12,000 cubic inches, and weighing about 446 lbs., added to the weight of a corresponding column of air equal to 15 lbs. more. The above is the property of water which Mr. BERTHON has availed himself of; we will now endeavour to explain the manner in which he has got over the difficulty of applying it, and point out its advantages over the ordinary method of ascertaining the depth of water from a vessel in motion by lineal measurement.

A lead and line are still used by Mr. BERTHON, but they are each different in character from those commonly in use. The lead is a hollow oblong, having openings in it at the sides to admit the water from without, and one on the top to allow the line to pass into it. The peculiarity of the line is, that it is a hollow one, in fact it is a small flexible tube, the one we have seen is made of gutta percha; but as that substance would not answer in hot climates, or possibly in a very cold one, they will in future be made of another material which will secure the same object, which will be as strong as rope of similar size, and which is not affected by any change of temperature to which the atmosphere or waters are sub-

ject in any part of the globe. To one end of this line a waterproof bag is attached, which bag is inserted within the hollow lead above described, the latter being then hermetically secured to the line at its point of junction with the bag. We have now secured a bag inflated with air, which by means of the tubular line will instantaneously transmit any pressure on it to the opposite extremity of the line, however long it may be; thus, if a similar bag but uninflated were hermetically attached to that end, the two bags might alternately be filled and emptied by pressure on the one or the other. But suppose that at the opposite end to the lead instead of a bag the tube be inserted into a small instrument somewhat similar to a barometer, and that any pressure from without upon the inflated bag be communicated through the tubular line to the surface of a small reservoir of mercury, which shall thereby be forced up a glass tube having a graduated index to it, showing the amount of pressure upon the surface of the mercury. The apparatus is in fact then complete. The leadsman throws his lead in the ordinary manner; as it sinks the pressure is increased on the bag and the mercury rises in the meter, showing every instant by the index the number of feet or fathoms that the lead has descended, and ceasing to rise the moment the latter has reached the bottom.

Having now explained as clearly as we are able the principle and mode of application of Mr. BERTHON'S invention, we will endeavour to show what we conceive to be its advantages as compared with the ordinary method of sounding. The disadvantages of the ordinary method are—

1st. The difficulty, when a vessel is going fast through the water, of getting a perpendicular sounding at all; either the lead will not reach the ground before it passes astern of the person heaving it, or he may not be able to gather in the slack line until it has done so. It is, however, immaterial whether Mr. BERTHON'S lead be perpendicular to the leadsman or not, and if it does not arrive at the ground until considerably astern of him, the index will still show the perpendicular depth of water. Accordingly, soundings may be obtained when going at the most

rapid rate through the water; and Mr. BERTHON has himself, with a very small lead, obtained them correctly in 5 or 6 fathoms water, from a steamer when going at the rate of 14 miles an hour.

2nd. By the ordinary method all correctness must depend on the skill of the leadsman, and how often do we see in a man-of-war one leadsman after another called from his post, and their places supplied by others, in the hope of at last finding one who should get the soundings quickly and correctly. Indeed, very few men, comparatively speaking, ever make really accurate and skilful leadsmen. But if this difficulty be experienced in a man-of-war, how much more likely is it to be so in an indifferently manned merchant vessel. The application of Mr. BERTHON'S method, however, requires no such skill, nothing more being required of the leadsman than to throw the lead forward into the water in the usual manner.

3rd. The obtaining correct soundings in the night-time, when objects on the land which would indicate the position of the ship are obscured or invisible, is even of more importance than by day; but as the marks on the ordinary lead-line which define the various depths are of different colours, they are liable to be mistaken the one for the other, in the dark. By Mr. BERTHON'S method, a continuation of the tubular line is conveyed on board to the meter, which may be put up in any convenient and conspicuous position, to which a light might be attached in the night-time, and the soundings called out, if necessary, by an officer or other person appointed to read them off the index, instead of their being sung, often very indistinctly, by the leadsman himself.

It is not proposed by the inventor that this sounding instrument should supersede the use of the ordinary lead and line, but be used in conjunction with it, so that one would be a check on the other, whilst soundings could be obtained by his method under circumstances when they could not be by the usual mode.

Amongst other advantages of BERTHON'S lead, besides that of *its instantaneously registering* the depth, are the following:—

At very slow speeds, as, for instance,

when a steamer feels her way into port in a fog, moving at the rate of two or three knots per hour, this lead, hove over from the bow or jib-boom, may be dragged along the bottom, actually under the ship's keel, and thus keep up a *continual* register of depth.

Again, in *Surveying*, the lead may be towed along the bottom by a boat going slowly, and the indicator being held in the hand, every undulation of the ground is correctly indicated at every instant, and a sunken rock or stone cannot escape detection.

As a correct and most convenient *tide-gauge* it is unrivalled. It is necessary only to heave over the lead from a vessel at anchor, and leave it with plenty of stray line on the bottom; and, as its indications come from the bottom, and not from the surface, it is as correct in a sea-way as in smooth water: the pressure upon any part of the bottom being quite independent of the undulations of the surface of the water.

There is a collateral application of this principle, with which we will conclude these remarks. It is one of considerable importance and utility. A tube-line with air-bag, such as we have described, is placed in a ship, so that the air-bag remaining in the lowest part of the hold, and the indicator fixed in some conspicuous place, as, for instance, the fore-side of the binnacle; by this arrangement a leak is instantly detected, and the quantity of water in the hold always correctly shown.

ADDITIONAL STATIONS AND NEW LIFE-BOATS.

DOVER.—In the autumn of 1853, a new life-boat was stationed at Dover by the Dover Humane Society to replace their old one. This boat was constructed by Mr. CLARKSON, of a material which he has patented, composed of alternate layers or laminae of canvass, cork, and wood, united to each other with marine glue.

She is 28 ft. long, 7½ ft. wide, and 3 ft. 2 in. deep, with a water-tight deck, and having raised end air-boxes or tanks, as in

the boats of Mr. PEAKE and Mr. BEECHING, to give her self-righting power. Her ballast, the disposition, character, and amount of which in a life-boat is of much importance, is differently arranged from that in either of the descriptions of boats above alluded to; Mr. BEECHING's boats are ballasted with water in an enclosed tank; Mr. PEAKE's by an iron keel attached to the under part of the wooden one; but Mr. CLARKSON has left a longitudinal channel or opening in the deck of his boat amidships fore and aft above the keel, in which pigs or bars of iron are stowed up to the level of the deck, and so secured that they should not fall out in the event of the boat upsetting. Although the ballast placed in this raised position above the keel will not act with the same powerful leverage on the boat's heeling over, yet for flat and shallow beaches it would possess the advantage of making her draw less water, and would also render her motion more easy when rowing with a broadside sea on.

The durability of Mr. CLARKSON's material remains to be proved, but to all appearance it has all the solidity and strength of a wooden boat, if not more, has greater elasticity, and so would be less liable to injury from concussion against a rock or other hard substance, and from the nature of the material would not, like a wooden boat, become leaky after being long out of the water. Another peculiarity of this boat is lightness, her weight not being more than 27 cwt., which is about a quarter less than that of a wooden boat of the same dimensions and fitted in the same manner. Altogether Mr. CLARKSON, who is not a professional boat-builder, or at all acquainted with ordinary boat-building, has displayed great skill and ingenuity in the construction of this boat, which was in great part put together by his own hand. She is also very favourably spoken of by the coastguard, and others, who have taken her off on trial. The Lords of the Admiralty have given permission for her to be hoisted up to davits on the east side of the Royal Pier.

Wrecks are not of frequent occurrence at Dover, but the Humane Society at that place have shown an example in providing for any emergency that may occur, which is worthy

of emulation at places where they oftener happen.

DUNGENESS.—A life-boat station has, in the spring of the present year, been founded at Dungeness, at the sole expense of the National Shipwreck Institution, where a new boat on Mr. PEAKE's design has been placed, and a suitable house erected for her protection contiguous to the Coastguard Station, at No. 1 Battery, on the east side of Dungeness Point. A carriage will also be shortly provided to convey her over the vast beds of loose and heavy shingle which there form the promontory of Dungeness, to whatever part her services may be required.

This boat is 27 ft. long, and similar in all respects to those of the same length which have been furnished to Budehaven, Barmouth, and other places, and which have been described in this Journal. She is placed in the charge of the coastguard, and will be chiefly, if not altogether, manned by them, as there are no fishermen, or other seamen, residing in the locality. Her services will be chiefly required on the east side of the Ness, where a life-boat has been long required; on the west side the shore is so steep that stranded vessels run close to the beach, and are mostly saved by lines thrown to them by hand from the beach. A complete set of lines, life-buoys, and life-belts, have been also lately supplied by this Society to the coastguard at Dungeness for that particular kind of service. This boat was conveyed from London as far as Folkestone in January last, on board H. M. steam-tug *Monkey*, and subsequently passed on to her station by the coastguard.

ARDROSSAN.—A life-boat on Mr. PEAKE's design has been recently stationed at Ardrossan, on the west coast of Scotland, by means of funds locally collected for the purpose.

This boat is 27 ft. long and in all respects similar to the one above named as sent to Dungeness. She was constructed at Messrs. FORREST'S, at Limehouse, under the direction of this Institution, for the Ardrossan Life-boat Society, and completely fitted and furnished with stores, life-belts, &c., on the same scale as the boats of the Institution. She was forwarded to her station by steamer *via* Belfast, on the 16th February last.

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Thursday, 3rd Nov. 1853. THOMAS CHAPMAN, Esq., F.R.S., in the Chair.

Confirmed Minutes of the previous Meeting, and those of the Finance, Wreck and Reward, and Life-boat Sub-Committees.

Reported the deaths of Capt. A. ELLICE, R.N., late Comptroller-General of the Coast-Guard, and of Mr. GEORGE LYALL,* formerly M.P. for London—both Members of the Committee of Management.

Directed that an expression of the high sense the Committee entertained of the valuable services which Capt. ELLICE had, in his official capacity, rendered to the cause of humanity in promoting the objects of the Institution, be conveyed to his successor, Capt. W. H. HENDERSON, R.N., C.B.

Resolved—

That the thanks of the General Committee be conveyed to the Corporation of London, for their munificent donation of 210*l.*, in aid of the funds of the Institution; and also to Mr. Under-Sheriff ANDERTON, for presenting the Memorial of the Society to the Court of Common Council.

Read letter from Mr. T. R. FORWARD, Commander of the Revenue Cruiser, *Sylvia*, transmitted by Capt. OMMANNEY, R.N., giving an account of the trials which had been made, agreeably to the request of the Committee, with four descriptions of life-belts.—To be thanked.

The Life-boat Inspector reported that he had conveyed the Barmouth new life-boat, from Carnarvon, by land and sea, to her destination. He also placed before the Committee his report and plan of the Liverpool life-boat carriage.—Instructed to make further inquiries respecting the life-boat carriages in use at different places.

Granted, as a special vote, the silver medal, to Wm. H. TREGIDGO, coastguard chief-boatman at Bude, and 8*l.* 5*s.* (being double pay) to be divided between himself and his crew of 10 men, for going off in the new life-boat, placed by the Institution at Budehaven, to the rescue of the crew, consisting of 2 men, of the sloop *Margaret*, of

* A brief memoir of the late Mr. Lyall will be found in No. 10 of the *Life-Boat Journal*, p. 54.

Bideford, which sank near the entrance of Bude harbour, during a strong wind and a heavy ground sea, on the 9th October last.

The Committee also voted their thanks to Sir THOMAS DYKE ACLAND, Bart., M.P., for his valuable services and encouragement on the occasion.

Also 1*l.* 10*s.* to 2 men, for their assistance to 3 men belonging to the brig *Mary and Anns* of Blyth, which was wrecked during a heavy storm, on Cefn Sidan Sands, near Carmarthen Bar, on the 4th October, when 4 of the brig's crew perished.

Also 5*l.* to the crew of the smack *Seagull* of Harwich, for their services in rescuing from the rigging the crew, consisting of 5 persons, of the schooner *Tino*, of Sunderland, which sank on the Longsand, on the morning of the 3rd Oct. last, when the wind blew strong from N.N.E., with a heavy sea on.

Also the silver medal to GEORGE BONNER and RICHARD RIOCH, coastguardmen at Collieston Station, on the coast of Aberdeen, for saving, in a small skiff, at much risk, 4 men belonging to the Russian schooner *Elizé*, which was wrecked near the River Ythan, on the evening of the 29th Oct. last. Also the thanks of the Committee to Lieut. LODDER, R.N., Chief Officer of the station, for his attempt to save the men.

Read letter from the Corporation for Preserving and Improving the Port of Dublin; requesting to be furnished with information relative to the life-boats now building by the Institution.

Directed that a drawing of a life-boat on Mr. PEAKE'S design, and the usual information relating thereto, be transmitted to the Corporation, and that the offer be made to transfer to them a 30-ft. life-boat, now building for the Institution, by the Messrs. FORRESTT of Limehouse.

Reported that the life-boat built under the directions of the Institution, for the Prussian Government, had been forwarded to her station, Stettin, during the past month.

Thursday, 1st. Dec. 1853. Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, M.P., in the Chair.

Confirmed Minutes of the previous Meet-

ing, and those of the Finance, Wreck and Reward, and Life-boat Sub-Committees.

Elected Capt. W. H. HENDERSON, R.N., C.B., Comptroller-General of the Coast-guard, a Member of the Committee of Management.

Read and approved the Life-boat Inspector's Report of the following life-boat stations which he had visited during the preceding month :—Broadstairs, Ramsgate, Dover, Dungeness, Rye, Eastbourne, Brighton, Worthing, and Shoreham.

After the receipt of a further explanation of trial of the life-belts, by Mr. FORWARD, Commander of the Revenue Cruiser, *Sylvia*, it was

Resolved—

That Capt. WARD's cork life-belts be supplied to the crews of the life-boats, in connexion with the Shipwreck Institution.

Reported that the new life-boat placed at Boulmer, by His Grace the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND, K.G., and presented by him to the Institution, had saved the crew, consisting of 7 men, of the brig *Robert Nicol*, of Perth, which was wrecked near that place on the 25th Nov. last.

Voted 3*l.* to 4 men, for their services in saving, with a shore-boat, 2 out of 3 men, who had been capsized from a boat which was returning from a ship, anchored in the Mumbles Road, near Swansea, on the 23rd Nov. last.

January 5, 1854. Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, M.P., in the Chair.

Read and confirmed Minutes of the previous Meeting, and those of the Finance, Wreck and Reward, and the Life-Boat Sub-Committees.

Elected Col. TULLOH, R.A., Director of the Carriage Department at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, Member of the Committee of Management of the Institution.

Read communication from Mr. GODFREY SINCLAIR, respecting his plan for a "Light of all Nations" on the Goodwin Sands.

Voted the gold medallion to Capt. ISAAC LUDLOW, of the American whaling ship *Monmouth*, in testimony of his noble and gallant services to the crew and passengers of the emigrant ship *Meridian*, which was

wrecked on the Island of Amsterdam on the 24th August last, as detailed in No. 11 of the *Life-Boat Journal*.

Also the silver medal to BENJAMIN HARRINGTON and WILLIAM WATERS, first and second coxswains of the Southwold life-boats, who had severally been off in them to save life ten and nine times, and who had respectively been present at the saving of 40 and 38 persons.

Also the special thanks of the Committee on vellum to Capt. G. W. HEDERSTEDT, in the service of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, in testimony of his prompt and humane conduct in rescuing, with one of the boats of the Company's ship *Madras*, six men from drowning in the Red Sea, who had been capsized from their boat on the 11th October last.

Voted also two sovereigns to two men who had saved two fishermen, whose boat during a gale of wind was disabled in the Solway Frith, on the 8th November last.

Also 4*l.* 18*s.* to the crew of the Boulmer life-boat for rescuing nine men belonging to the brig *Robert Nicol*, of Perth, which was wrecked on the Boulmer rocks, coast of Northumberland, on the 23rd November last.

The thanks of the Committee were voted to the Rev. OWEN LLOYD WILLIAMS, of Llanfairynghornwy, Anglesea, for his services in the Cemlyn life-boat while assisting to save the crew of the schooner *Compeer*, of Salcombe, on the 3rd November last.

Voted also the silver medal of the Institution to HENRY A. HAMILTON, Esq., and the special thanks of the Committee on vellum to Mr. WM. CARVIN, master of the *William*, for going off with 4 others (who were handsomely rewarded locally for their services) in a small life-boat, brought by rail from Dublin, to the rescue of 3 out of 7 persons from the brig *Agnes*, of Whitehaven, which was wrecked during a heavy gale of wind, near Benhead, Balbriggan, on the 19th December last. In reporting this melancholy wreck, the Inspecting Commander of Coastguard said, "Had there been a life-boat on the spot, I have no doubt the survivors, and a boy that died in the rigging, might have been rescued

at low water." Aided by the liberal contributions of the residents, and others, the Royal National Shipwreck Institution purposes placing a life-boat forthwith in this dangerous locality.

Resolved—

1. That a new life-boat, from a design by Mr. PEAKE, be supplied to Southwold, upon condition that the Life-boat Society of that place pay half the expense of the new boat.

2. That a new life-boat, on Mr. PEAKE'S design, be built for Boulmer in lieu of the one recently placed there by the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND, President of the Institution.

3. The thanks of the Committee be given to the British and Irish Steam-packet Company, for their liberality in conveying a life-boat belonging to the Institution from Dublin to London.

4. Also to Capt. ROBERTSON, R.N., in charge of the Aldborough Coast-guard District, for the effective services he had rendered as Honorary Secretary to that branch of the Institution.

5. Also to Mr. HARTLEY, Superintendent of the Trustees' Dockyard, Liverpool, for his courtesy in supplying to the Institution a drawing of the life-boat carriage in use at that place.

6. That the life-boat of the Institution, stationed at Rye, Sussex, be transferred to Camber, and that she be replaced at an early opportunity by one on Mr. PEAKE'S design.

7. That an offer be made to build a life-boat for Brighton, provided that the Local Committee connect themselves with the National Shipwreck Institution.

8. That letters be addressed to the mayors of the principal seaport towns in Ireland, offering them the assistance of the Institution to place the usual means of saving life from shipwreck on the coasts in their respective localities.

9. That 30*l.* be voted for erecting the Thorpness Life-boat House, and that the boat be supplied with a new set of gear.

2nd February. THOMAS CHAPMAN, Esq., F.R.S., in the Chair.

Read the Minutes of the previous Meeting,

and those of the Finance, Wreck and Reward, and Life-boat Sub-Committees.

Elected Rear-Admiral BERTIE C. CATOR and MONTAGUE GORE, Esq., Members of the Committee of Management of the Institution.

Read letter from H. RICHARDSON, Esq. (inventor of the Tubular Life-boat), stating the services rendered by the Barmouth new life-boat, on the 29th January, to a steamer on the outside bar; and adding, that his opinion had been favourably changed in respect of the qualities of the life-boat.

Voted the thanks of the Committee to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for their prompt and courteous consent to allow the Dungeness life-boat to be conveyed to her station by one of Her Majesty's ships.

Voted 2 second service clasps, 2 thanks on vellum, and 81*l.* 12*s.* as follows:—

The second service clasp to Mr. MIDDLETON H. DAND, the thanks of the Committee on vellum to Capt. HIPPLEWHITE, and 21*l.* to the crew of the life-boat of the Institution, stationed at Hauxley, on the coast of Northumberland, which, in the space of five days, during the heavy gale of January last, had saved the crews, consisting of 20 persons, of three wrecks; the crew of a fourth wreck having perished before the life-boat could reach them.

The second service clasp and 2*l.* to PHILIP JEFFERSON, coxswain of the Newbiggin life-boat, and double pay, amounting to 6*l.* 6*s.*, to 4 others of her crew, and 5 boys, in acknowledgment of their exertions in attempting to save the crew of the brig *Embla*, which was wrecked during a heavy gale of wind, near Newbiggin, on the 12th January last, when all hands perished. The life-boat on the occasion not being fully manned, failed to fetch the wreck; a portion of her crew having, at the entreaties of their wives, hung back to the last moment from taking their places in her.

Approved of the reward of 4*l.* 18*s.*, granted by the Boulmer Local Committee to the crew of the life-boat for attempting to save the crew of the schooner *Montezuma*, which was wrecked on the Boulmer rocks on the 9th January last.

Also of 4*l.* 10*s.*, voted by the Bridlington

Life-boat Committee to the crew of the life-boat for saving the crew, consisting of 8 men, of the brig *Ranger*, of Jersey, which, during a gale of wind, was wrecked near the former place on the 4th January last.

Voted double pay, amounting to 7*l.* 14*s.*, to the crew of the Lyme Regis life-boat, for saving the crew, consisting of 6 men, of the brigantine *La Jeune Rose*, which was wrecked during a heavy storm, near Lyme Cobb, on the 7th January last. Also a grant of 20*l.* to the widow of coastguard boatman JOHN MARTYN, who was unfortunately lost on the occasion. Some further particulars of the services of the life-boat will be found at page 124 of the present Number of the Journal.

Voted also 2*l.* to 4 fishermen for saving the crew of 3 men of the smack *Success*, which during a heavy S.E. gale was stranded on Kilgorman Strand, coast of Wexford, on the 18th December last.

Approved also of 4*l.* 18*s.*, voted by the Local Committee to the crew of the Aldborough life-boat for having saved the crew, consisting of 9 men, of the brig *Canadian*, of South Shields, which, during very foggy weather and dead low water, became a total wreck, near Aldborough, on the 24th January last.

Granted 4*l.* 3*s.*, and approved of the like moiety voted by the Local Committee to the crew of the Filey life-boat, for attempting to save the crew of the schooner *Margaret*, of Newcastle, which during a N.N.E. gale of wind foundered at sea, on the 27th December last.

Instructed the Inspector of Life-Boats to put himself, after seeing Col. TULLOCH, R.A., on the subject, in communication with Messrs. RANSOME and SIMS, of Ipswich, respecting the construction by them of a life-boat carriage for the Institution.

SHIP'S LIFE-BOATS.

LOSS OF THE EUROPA.

ALAS! How many wholesale shipwrecks have the last few months witnessed! How many human beings, who might otherwise,

like ourselves, have been now enjoying the many and varied blessings which life affords, have been cut off by these sad, sad catastrophes; which not only have deprived them of life, but have plunged the dagger of affliction into many a bosom that now unavailingly mourns its loss! Husband and wife, brother and sister, parent and child, torn asunder to meet no more, until the sea give up its dead!

Amongst the most striking cases are the following:—

The *Tayleur*, with its 349 victims; the *Annie Jane*, 326; the *Dalhousie*, 60; the *Marshall*, 150, on our own coasts alone. And taking a wider range, the *Powhattan*, 250, on the coast of New Jersey; the *Staffordshire*, 180, off Nova Scotia; the *Negree*, 300, off Bombay; the *Fazl Kareem*, 180, in the Indian Ocean: and now, yet another is added to this melancholy catalogue, which, from the peculiar circumstances of the case, appeals as strongly to the national sympathy as any of them, though its victims have not been so numerous.

The *Europa*, hired transport, sailed on the 29th of May last from Plymouth, having on board a detachment of the 6th Dragoon regiment, amounting to 64 officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, and with a total on board, including the crew of the vessel, of 106 persons, the former being on their way to the scene of war in the East; when suddenly, on the 31st of May, a fire burst forth on board, which destroyed the ship, and deprived the country of the services of 18 gallant soldiers, including the colonel of the regiment, who, together with 2 seamen and 1 woman, all perished in the flames or were drowned.

The details of this calamity are no doubt already familiar to most of our readers, we will therefore narrate them as concisely as possible, in the words of the master of the *Europa*, in his report to her owners.

“ Her Majesty’s Ship *Tribune* at sea,
“ June 7, 1854.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ It is my painful duty to communicate the total loss by fire of the *Europa*, on the night of the 31st of May, and, what is more distressing, the melancholy deaths

of no fewer than 21 who were on board, namely, the lieutenant-colonel of the regiment, the regimental veterinary-surgeon, 16 of the troops, 1 woman, and 2 seamen.

"I will only state in this report, that on the day in question, viz., the 31st of May, the military officers were all suffering from sea-sickness, with the exception of Lieut.-Colonel Moore, who, with myself, had visited the 'tween decks and lower hold several times that day, and at 9 P.M. we went and inspected every portion that could be examined in the lower hold. There was no appearance of fire, and we returned to the cabin with the conviction on our minds that the ship was perfectly safe, but scarcely an hour had elapsed before we were startled by the alarm of fire. I immediately ran below, and discovered the fire burning fiercely in the fore peak, where we had stowed a quantity of hawsers, rope, tar, pitch, oakum, varnish, and sails. The officers, seamen, and soldiers were on the spot almost simultaneously with myself, and every one exerted every effort in his power to extinguish the fire. The pumps, which had been fitted by orders of the Government, to supply the troops with water from the tanks and butts, and the hold, had hose attached to them, and, with those belonging to the ship's pumps, were taken below, and the jets directed in and upon the burning mass. The troops also worked vigorously in passing buckets of water to those below to check the progress of the flames, but to no purpose. The tar, pitch, and other combustibles on igniting sent forth an overwhelming blaze into the fore hold, and firing the bulk of tow which was on board for padding the horse-stalls. The heat and smoke now became so great that all hands were forced to quit the lower hold; many were almost suffocated. On reaching between decks we found flames ascending the fore hatchway in huge volumes, cutting off all communication with the fore part of the ship.

"As hopes of saving the *Europa* from destruction were then past, and this at the furthest was at half-past ten o'clock, just half an hour from the moment that the alarm of fire was raised—this will show the rapidity the fire gained. The volumes of smoke

that rolled up the main and after hatchway overhung the main deck like a cloud; it was most suffocating, and the flames from both hatches chased us on to the poop. I have omitted to inform you that on my first coming on deck I ran the ship away before the wind, in order to near a bark and a brig that were to the leeward of us. The boats were lowered and filled with men. All were got clear, except the longboat, which from the beginning I saw it was impossible to get out. The last boat was taken off the skidde on to the poop, from where we were compelled to launch it to save it from being burnt. It was then about half-past eleven o'clock. The main deck was then in an ignited state, and the masts and rigging aloft were in flames. I still kept the ship before the wind to near the vessels to leeward, and to keep the fire forward.

"Nearly all on board had left the vessel by this time. Among them were all the officers of the ship, the adjutant, surgeon, and cornet of the troop, leaving Lieut.-Colonel MOORE, with the veterinary surgeon, and about 26 soldiers on board, besides myself, carpenter, one ordinary seaman, and the cook, on the burning wreck.

"Mr. BLACK, the Admiralty agent, and the second mate, were in the last boat which quitted the ship. She was pulled away at half-past eleven o'clock. The mainmast went at two o'clock, then the foremast, and the ship rounded immediately afterwards; it was blowing very hard at the time, with a very heavy short sea on, raining heavily. I will not further dwell upon this painful moment than to add, that as the ship rounded with head to wind, the fire spread over to where we were, and burnt us out, compelling us to seek shelter in any way we could. A number of men took to the wreck of the mainmast; some were lost in attempting to make it. I, with the carpenter, got over to leeward, and found very great difficulty in getting under the weather channel and making along the bands to see if there was more unburnt wood to hold on by, but we were driven into the forechains, the half of which were still unburnt. Suffice it to say, that at three o'clock the boat of the brig *Clemante*, Captain PIKE, came up and took

us out of the forechains. The boat also picked up 10 men from off the spars of the wreck. One man died in the boat. The noble old lieutenant-colonel, I regret to say, perished in the wreck. Several troopers implored him to leave the ship in the boat, but he would not leave his men, and shared their terrible fate.

"The men in the boats were picked up by the bark *Maranan*, of Dundee, and a Prussian schooner. Her Majesty's steamer *Tribune* took us off the brig on Sunday, the 4th instant, and, on the circumstances being reported that the remainder of the survivors were on board another vessel, she overhauled the bark and schooner and took all hands on board.

"Your obedient servant,

"WILLIAM GARDINER,

"*Late Captain of the Europa.*

"*To Messrs. Somes, Brothers.*"

We have stated that from the peculiar circumstances attending it, the destruction of this ship is calculated in an especial manner to awaken the sympathies of the nation. And is it not so? In the abstract, indeed, one human life is as valuable as another, at least to its possessor; and the poor emigrant, or other wayfarer of the sea, may leave as long a train of sorrowing relatives and friends to mourn his loss as any other individual. So also the responsibility rests on the government of his country to afford him that protection, which it only can provide by compelling the vessel in which he sails to be supplied with everything that human agency can devise to ensure his safety amidst the perils of the deep. But when we consider the exigences of the present time; when the liberties of our country and of Europe are at stake; when we are upholding a cause on which the destinies and future welfare of mankind are seriously involved; those brave men who have sailed from our ports, not on their own pleasure or for their own profit, but at risk of life and limb in defence of the honour and interests of their country, are, we consider, or ought to be, the especial objects of that country's solicitude, and are

doubly entitled to that protection which, as stated above, we would gladly see extended to all.

If, indeed, we could think that all which can be done to afford such protection has already been so, useless should we deem it to allude to the subject, but we do so because we believe all has not been done that might be, and because we think that the present moment is a favourable one for mooted the question; when the nation is perhaps temporarily aroused from its proverbial torpor in such matters by so sad an incident as the sudden destruction of these *brave men, and the touching spectacle of their noble-hearted commander, seeking death, not midst the excitement of battle "at the cannon's mouth," but coolly, deliberately, and resolutely offering himself a self-sacrifice at the shrines of discipline and humanity—an example of devotedness and nobleness of soul which could not be surpassed.*

There are two points in the loss of the *Europa* which chiefly demand attention. The cause of the fire. And the insufficient number of available boats to convey all on board away from the burning mass. As regards the first, there appears to be no direct proof of its cause; but, as in the case of the *Amazon*, it will have been noticed that it was first discovered where a quantity of "rope, tar, pitch, oakum, varnish, and sails" were stowed, and it may therefore indicate the expediency of making some experiments on the subject, and of adopting in future some precautions in the stowage of such inflammable materials, and especially not to place them in immediate contiguity with each other. As, however, accidents arising from spontaneous combustion are of comparatively rare occurrence, and we are only imperfectly informed on the subject, we will pass to the other point, the "insufficient supply of boats;" an evil of a much more extensive character, since it applies to all, or nearly all, passenger ships.

The fact that emigrant and other passenger vessels do not carry a sufficient number of available boats to carry all on board them is so generally known that we need hardly repeat it. We have likewise already so

often expressed the opinion, that it is the duty of the Government of any maritime nation to ascertain, and to compel the adoption of, all practicable measures for ensuring or contributing to the safety of its subjects whose occasions oblige them to traverse the sea, that we need not now reiterate the same, but will at once point to what have been hitherto the difficulties of the subject and to their proposed remedy. Now, the one great practical difficulty has been to provide stowage-room on board passenger-ships for a sufficient supply of boats to receive into them all those on board, amounting often to several hundreds of persons. There have, no doubt, been other minor difficulties; thus, taking the world as it is, and mankind as they are, it cannot but be expected that expense would have its influence with the shipowner. And again, there has doubtless been an indisposition on the part of the Government to interfere more than was absolutely necessary with matters of private enterprise. But we are inclined to believe that, if the great practical difficulty of stowage-room had been got over, all minor ones would have vanished, and that we should not now have our feelings shocked by the spectacle of a number of our countrymen drowned and burned to death for want of boats to take them on board.

Not only, however, is it necessary that a ship should be supplied with boats capable of embarking all on board her, but, when the suddenness of many of these catastrophes is considered, and the difficulty or impossibility of then hoisting out boats from within board, it is important that she should carry as many of them outside her bulwarks as possible; yet here again the chief difficulty that presents itself is size. For, as within board, the capacious, powerful, trustworthy boat, occupies necessarily much space on the deck; so, when hoisted up to davits outside, she exposes so large a surface to the wind as to impede the vessel's speed, and is herself liable to be carried away by a heavy sea, or to be crushed by collision with another craft. How then can this obstacle of size be got over? We know of but one mode, viz., by the adoption of collapsible

boats, which can be stowed away in a comparatively small compass when not in actual use. The difficulty hitherto felt has been to discover a boat which should possess all the qualities of an ordinary one of the best description, and should at the same time collapse into a small compass. We believe, however, that the difficulty has been overcome, and that the collapsible life-boat invented by the Rev. E. L. BERTHON, and described in No. 10, page 70 of this Journal, is admirably adapted to fulfil all the requirements of such boats. As a full description of it is there given, we refer our readers to the same, and will merely now observe, that it has met with the unqualified approval of many naval officers who have seen it; and that a most favourable official report on it has been made by the master shipwrights of Her Majesty's Dockyard at Portsmouth, which report has been ordered to be printed and placed on the table of the House of Commons.

We have seen a boat of large dimensions thus constructed by Mr. BERTHON, and it more than realizes the anticipations we had formed from the examination of a model only. We are quite aware that a feeling is generally entertained of the inadequacy and unfitness of all collapsible or inflated boats for general service, and we quite agree with the justness of the conclusion, as a general rule, nor do we know of any other than the one we are now advocating which forms an exception to it; but Mr. BERTHON's boat may be made of the same form as any ordinary one, it has greater strength, and whilst qualified for general use, it is at all times an insubmersible boat.

In conclusion, we will venture to express a hope that some of our great Steam Companies, and even individual Shipowners, who cannot but be alive to the urgency of the demand for greater boat accommodation on board their ships, will have the public spirit to have some of these boats constructed and placed on board their ships, with a view to meet these terrible emergencies, which so long as it exists must be considered a reflection on the country which can find no remedy to prevent or mitigate them.

Royal National Institution

FOR THE

PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK.

ESTABLISHED IN 1824.

SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTARY SUBSCRIPTIONS.

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HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

PRESIDENT.

REAR-ADMIRAL HIS GRACE ALGERNON DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, K.G., F.R.S

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SECRETARY—Mr. RICHARD LEWIS.

LIFE-BOAT INSPECTOR—Commander J. R. WARD, R.N.

The COMMITTEE have to state that, in consequence of the recent lamented death of Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, M.P., late Chairman of the Institution, and of the absence from England of the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND, K.G., the Festival of the Institution has been postponed till the early part of next year.

The COMMITTEE would earnestly call the attention of the public to the fact, that during the past year 800 wrecks took place on the Coasts of the United Kingdom, accompanied by the fearful loss of 870 lives. They have, however, the satisfaction to state, that during the same period they voted, in addition to 1 gold medallion, 14 silver medals, and 10 other honorary rewards, a sum of nearly 200*l.*, to persons who had assisted in the saving of 678 lives, many of whom were rescued by the use of the Life-Boats of the Institution.

Additional Life-Boats have recently been placed by the Society at Dungeness, Ardrossan, Newcastle, Dundrum Bay; others will shortly be ready to be sent to their stations. Several of the old Life-Boats of the Institution also require to be replaced by new ones.

The cost of each of these boats, including carriage and boat-house, cannot be reckoned at less than 300*l.*, in addition to a permanent annual outlay for the pay of the coxswain and exercise of the crew of each boat, towards meeting which the Committee earnestly invite the co-operation of the Public.

The Committee gratefully acknowledge the following additional contributions:—

| | £. | s. | d. | | £. | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|
| Baring, Thomas, Esq., M.P., Chairman (2nd don.) | 52 | 10 | 0 | Lyell, Miss F., Drumkilbo | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Ditto ditto (Annual) | 5 | 0 | 0 | Page, Thomas, Esq., C.E. (Annual) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| A. B. (Fourth donation) | 30 | 0 | 0 | Pasley, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Chas. W., K.C.B. (Annual) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Bonus and Son, Messrs. John (Annual) | 1 | 1 | 0 | Seyern, J. C., Esq. (Annual) | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Brooks, Robert, Esq. | 10 | 10 | 0 | Seymour, Vice-Admiral Sir George F., K.C.B. (Second donation) | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Cochrane, Admiral Sir Thomas, K.C.B. (2nd don.) | 5 | 0 | 0 | Sutherland, The Duke of, K.G. | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Colchester, Captain Lord, R.N. | 5 | 0 | 0 | Templeton, The Viscount | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Grant, Capt. Sir Richard, R.N. | 5 | 5 | 0 | Townshend, Capt. J., R.N., M.P. (Annual) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Ditto ditto (Annual) | 2 | 2 | 0 | Warden, Capt., R.N. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Horsfall, T. B., Esq., M.P., Liverpool | 10 | 10 | 0 | Watson, Joshua, Esq. (Second donation) | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| Hulse, Sir Charles, Bart. | 5 | 0 | 0 | Wingrove, Mrs., Walmer (Annual) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Jackson, Jabez, Esq. | 10 | 10 | 0 | Wood, Mrs., per Capt. Hargood, R.N. | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Jackson, Ralph Ward, Esq., Hartlepool | 10 | 10 | 0 | | | | |
| Lyall, George, Esq. (Annual) | 2 | 2 | 0 | | | | |

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