

**A LIFE'S HAZARD, OR, THE
OUTLAW OF
WENTWORTH WASTE. IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. III**

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A Life's Hazard, or, the Outlaw of Wentworth Waste. In Three Volumes, Vol. III by Henry Esmond

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HENRY ESMOND

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VOL. III.

A LIFE'S HAZARD;

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THE OUTLAW OF WENTWORTH WASTE.

BY HENRY ESMOND.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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A LIFE'S HAZARD;
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THE OUTLAW OF WENTWORTH WASTE.

CHAPTER I.

“ I CAN'T fathom it,” said the captain of the good ship the “ Amber Wave,” bound from Liverpool to New York; “ these Irish baffle me. First we are told to look out for suspicious craft, and especially two men who have escaped from prison; these we fail to fall in with, but instead we tackle a pair of somebodies, taking them on board, when they immediately run foul of all our reckonings, one dying, the other offering any money to get away and leave us to bury the dead.”

The foregoing remarks were addressed to the first officer, who, with the captain, was doing a regulation stroll along the poop before turning in for the night.

“They are evidently of the well-to-do class, and must have suffered terribly before we took them in tow,” suggested the subordinate to his superior.

“Yes, I pity her ; but why does he drag astern, while although unable to run many more knots this side of the channel, she keeps every sail set to get spliced before slipping her cable ? ”

“You think she won't live, sir ? ”

“Not much longer,” was decisively answered.

“It is strange to hail a pilot when running into the last port,” musingly observed the younger man.

“Yes,” replied the captain, “but she seems to be a fair sailer after all, and, as

she says, they were to be mainbraced at once; why does he turn away now, leaving her to lurch out of her scupper alone? Upon my word," he vehemently added, "in the morning I will jam him close in the wind until I know more of the land-shark," whereupon both sought the repose of their respective cabins.

The "Amber Wave" was a full-rigged ship, having a large cargo of merchandise, and very few passengers. She was now several days out, but with head winds, shortened sails, and battened holds, made little way, rolling about amid the giddy waves like a massive, huge tub.

All the outward vessels of the day were charged to watch the seashore of Ireland for suspicious craft, which signified treason or smuggling, and to permit of no passengers being taken on board who could not satisfactorily account for them-

selves, it often happening that these slow sailing-ships were accosted by a small boat, and a stranger sent on deck, who, on payment of the passage-money, was gladly welcomed, although the person might have been a fugitive from justice.

While off the dangerous Carnsore Point at Wexford, the "Amber Wave" being hove to in a raging tempest, the three masts and gaff topsail of a water-logged barque came in sight, hoisting signals of distress, which were immediately responded to by Captain Nicholson, a fearless old salt.

"Man the boat," he ordered resolutely, "and pull away, my lads."

"Ay, ay, sir," rose up cheerily from the willing Jack-tar, and already the pinnace went ploughing through the ruthless waves on the dangerous enterprise.

The sea was dashing tumultuously

around the derelict, driving lifelessly through the watery element.

That brave crew, however, would not forsake her, but pointed out to their intended rescuers the forms of a young man and a woman, who, in hopeless wretchedness and despondency, looked on at what was passing, powerless to interfere.

“Heigho! bad cargo,” muttered the boatswain, adding aloud, “where do they hail from?”

“Don’t know, mate, some days ago saved them from drowning. She can’t live, take them on board, pay you well,” answered from stentorian lungs.

“Make fast the hawser and move forward if you can,” was replied, the pinnace being impelled alongside the floating wreck. The process of getting the castaways into the boat was long and dangerous, one of them having to be slung almost roughly