

security, as the vessel hung by the anchors, which were planted in a large floe. The ice continued to close in rapidly upon them, grinding, crushing, and carrying away the fenders; and the wind, that had changed to seaward, rose with appearances that foreboded bad weather.

At 10<sup>h</sup> 30<sup>m</sup> this security was at an end; for the anchors, in spite of the exertions of the officers and men who were near them, broke loose, and the ship was again at the mercy of huge floating masses. A rapid stern-board was the consequence; and a contact with an ice-island, vast, perpendicular, and as high as the mastheads, appeared inevitable.

Every possible preparation was made to meet the expected shock. There was no noise or confusion, and the self-possession and admirable conduct of the commander inspired courage and confidence in all. Preparations were made to cockbill the yards, and spars were got out.

While these preparations were going forward, the imminence of the danger lessened for a while: the anchors again held, and there was a hope that they might bring the vessel up before she struck. This hope, however, endured but for a moment; for the anchors, with the whole body of ice to which they were attached, came in, and the ship going astern, struck quartering upon a piece of ice which lay between her and the great ice-island. This afforded the last hope of preventing her from coming in contact with it; and this hope failed also; for, grinding along the ice, she went nearly stern foremost, and struck with her larboard quarter upon the ice-island with a tremendous crash.

The first effect of this blow was to carry away the spanker-boom, the larboard stern-davit, and to crush the stern-boat. The starboard stern-davit was the next to receive the shock, and as this is connected with the spar-deck bulwarks, the whole of them were started; the knee, a rotten one, which bound the davit to the taffrail, was broken off, and with it all the stanchions to the plank-sheer, as far as the gangway.

Severe as was this shock, it happened fortunately that it was followed by as great a rebound. This gave the vessel a cant to starboard, and by the timely aid of the jib and other sails, carried her clear of the ice-island, and forced her into a small opening. While doing this, and before the vessel had moved half her length, an impending mass of ice and snow fell in her wake. Had this fallen only a few seconds earlier, it must have crushed the vessel to atoms.

It was also fortunate that the place where she struck the ice-island was near its southern end, so that there was but a short distance to be