

COURAGEOUS CONDUCT OF TWO YOUNG MEN FROM DENTON AND LIVERPOOL.

The following appears in the *Melbourne Argus* of January 20th:—

To the Editor of the Argus.

166, Londale-street East, Jan. 15, 1853.

Sir,—The following is an account of an incident which occurred to me on-board the ship *Ben Nevis*, from Liverpool to this port, 7th December, 1852, in south latitude 37 deg. 30 min. 30 deg. 10 min. east longitude, and perhaps you would be kind enough to publish it in your extensive paper, to show the bravery of two young men, passengers by that ship. The courage was the more undaunted, as two sharks had been seen that morning. There was £12 gathered for and given to them. One is James Walker, of Denton, Lancashire, and the other is Thomas Molloy, of Liverpool. Hoping that at your convenience you will find space for it, I am, sir, your obedient servant,
MARTIN GRADY, of Dublin.

MY OWN ACCOUNT.

December 7, 1852.—Two sharks were seen at six o'clock this morning; one was about fourteen feet long, and the other shorter. My cousin and I were sitting taking dinner at half-past twelve on the larboard rail, near the anchor, when, just as I was in the act of talking to him, the boom brace was slackened all at once, caught me under the right ear, and knocked me headlong into the water; so there I was with my heavy coat and waistcoat on, and could not swim a stroke. I was drifting away to the stern, and Ned (the cook) and Walker were throwing ropes to me, but I missed them. One of the sailors (Jem Cassidy) threw an oar to me, but I could not get hold of it. So I was just sinking when James Walker jumped overboard, and they threw two life-buoys to him, and he swam to me with one of the life-buoys, as the water was coming in at my mouth and ears, and I held it, and we both hung on to the same buoy. My blue pilot coat was quite saturated, and the weight of it kept my head backwards. In the meantime, Thomas Molloy jumped over too, but when he saw that Walker and I had got the life-buoy, and were all right, he swam about. Previous to this, the captain sang out to Molloy, "Swim strong, and keep a good heart," and Molloy answered, "Ay, ay, sir." We were about half a mile astern, when the chief mate (Mr. Johnston) and five men came out in one of the lifeboats, and picked up Molloy, on their way to Walker and me. Then Mr. Johnston pulled me into the boat with the assistance of one of the men, but I would not let the life-buoy go, in case of falling in again, but kept it in my left arm till I was fairly in the boat; but when Walker brought me the life-buoy he said, "Keep up your spirits, I'll save you." So when we came to the side there was great cheering; the poop and quarter-deck were crowded with people. When we came on board, the captain took Walker by the hand, and said, "Walker, I shall always respect you for your courageous conduct." It being dinner time, almost all the passengers were down stairs, and the sailors were up on the yards. At the time the ship was going about four knots an hour, and in a quarter of an hour after a breeze sprung up, and we were going eight knots. There was £12 collected for them, and the captain gave a sovereign. They got the money, and a letter signed by the captain, describing the case. The boat was scarcely pulled up when a shark was seen dashing against the ship's side.

One of the passengers, Mr. Reynolds, formerly a reporter, gives the following account of it: "Throughout the whole extent of the voyage, not a single accident had occurred. One day (7th of December, 1852), our quiet, or, more proper, monotony, was disturbed by the repeated cries of 'a man overboard!' Each one on deck simultaneously ran to the side from which he fell, and all appeared at the moment panic-struck, the poor fellow rolling and bawling with the waves. When all hope was seemingly lost for the drowning man, one bold spirited youth, named James Walker, from ~~De~~ton, sprang from the bulwarks and wrestled with the waves manfully, in order, if possible, to lend a hand to his fellow mortal. A life-buoy was immediately afforded him, and by dint of great labour and exertion he reached the almost lifeless sufferer. He pushed the life-buoy from him, and I am happy to state the young man had just sufficient strength left to catch it and hold on until a lifeboat was lowered. By the time the boat got to them, I can safely say they were half a mile distant from the ship. It was a very interesting sight when we saw the gallant youth had succeeded in wresting the sufferer, Martin Grady, of Dublin, from a watery grave. It was the happiest moment in my life, after watching in anxious expectation, Walker still swimming nearer, and the drowning man becoming weaker, in fact so exhausted that two moments more would have terminated his existence upon this earth, to witness him catch the life-buoy, and the two heads every now and again rising in strong defiance above the swelling sea. Every heart panted with gladness. A few seconds were passed, and scarcely a whisper broke the silence that had reigned through the whole extent of the ship, all gazing with extreme delight upon the fortunate deliverer. So soon as they approached within hearing, all as it were with one voice, and at the same moment, praised the bravery of James Walker. Each one vied with the other who should welcome him first to take his hand. The captain took his hand and invited him down into the saloon, to partake of the best which his stores afforded. Equal credit is also due to another young man, named Thomas Molloy, of Liverpool, who jumped overboard a few seconds after Walker, and who might have been the means of saving the two, he being a powerful swimmer; seeing that Walker had succeeded, he gave up the struggle, and made for the boat. The lifeboat was scarcely hoisted, when the passengers saw a large shark dashing against the side; probably it was one of the sharks seen in the morning. A few days after a testimonial was got up in remembrance of the circumstance. The captain and passengers volunteered a subscription, and upwards of £12 was collected. It was intended to buy two medals or watches, with a suitable inscription, and present them to them, but the majority of the subscribers thought it better to give the money and a letter from the captain, stating the matter, so that they can buy what they choose, and put on the inscription when they wish."

