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JOHN MAYNARD,
THE HERO OF LAKE ERIE.

A bright May morning lit the face
Of Erie's lake with smiles serene,
And wavelets clasp'd in sweet embrace
The Jersey's bows, lake Erie's queen.
A joyous band, on pleasure bent,
Impatient grew to steam away
'Neath flutt'ring flags, which clearly meant
It was a glorious holiday.

At mainmast head the signal flies ;
The anchor's heaved ; the paddles turn ;
A track of foam behind her lies ;
Adieus are wafted from her stern.
A bluff and weather-beaten tar,
By name John Maynard, true as steel,
A godly man, a guiding star,
Brave "Honest John" was at the wheel.

Time quickly flies when hearts are gay ;
No thought of danger checked their glee ;
The Jersey onward sped her way
Unconscious all of misery.
What whisper that of import dire ?
Why does the Captain's face grow pale ?
The secret's out : "The ship's on fire !"
And stoutest hearts begin to quail.

"Each man aboard," the Captain cried,
"A helping hand must render now."
A hundred voices soon replied,
"To your commands we all will bow."
Right well they battled with the foe ;
Yet, fann'd by fresh'ning breeze that blew,
Each moment but increased their woe,
For hissing sounds no fainter grew.

The Captain said, "The ship I'll strand.
John Maynard, head her sou'-sou'-west ;
Steer for the nearest point of land."
"Ay, ay, sir ! Ay ! I'll do my best."
Then down to engine-room he cried,
"Put on the utmost steam, I pray."
And, "Mate, reverse the flag, our pride,
To show distress without delay."

And thus the Jersey, Erie's queen,
Sped on, and clearer grew the shore ;
And boats, well mann'd, were plainly seen
Advancing fast with practised oar.
John Maynard, dauntless, stood alone ;
With blistered skin and singed hair
He grasped the wheel without a groan
While soared aloft his soul in prayer.

And then, above the fire's roar,
He heard the Captain's anxious cry,
"Hold on, brave heart, five minutes more."
The answer came, "Ay, ay ! I'll try."
Still fiercer, fiercer grew the heat ;
The stifling smoke o'erpowering grew ;
He still held on, would not retreat,
That faithful heart, so good and true.

Once more the Captain's voice was heard,
"Steer on, brave heart, two minutes still."
And faintly came John Maynard's word,
"Ay, ay ! God helping me, I will."
A moment more, his duty done,
The burning vessel reached the strand,
And all were saved except the one
Whom angels took to the better land.

F. COLE.

Swansea.