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**A THRILLING SKETCH.**—The *Philadelphia City Item* gives the following conclusion of a story, a true one, entitled “The Helmsman of Lake Erie,” in which is recorded the loss of the steamer *Jersey* by fire and storm, at night, without a boat. The fact should be often recorded, for the memory of “honest John Maynard” should never be lost. He was the Helmsman and was cut off from the ship’s crew. The steamer was seven miles from shore, and on him depended the lives of all: —

“John Maynard!” cried the captain.

“Ay, ay, sir,” said John.

“**[1] Can** you hold on five minutes longer?”

“**[2] I can try.**”

And he did try; the flames came nearer and nearer; a sheet of smoke would sometimes almost suffocate him, **[3] and** his hair was singed—his blood seemed on fire with the great heat. Crouching as far back as he could, he held the wheel firmly in the left hand till the flesh shrivelled, and the muscles **[4] cracked** in the flames; and then he stretched forth his right, and bore the agony without a scream or groan. It was enough for him that he heard the cheer of the sailors to the approaching boats; the cry of the captain, “The women first, and then every man for himself and God for us all!” And they were the last sounds that he heard. How he perished was not known; whether dizzied by the smoke, he lost his footing and fell overboard, or whether he was suffocated by the dense smoke, his comrades could not tell. At the moment the vessel struck, the boats were at her side: **[5] [no “the” ]** passengers, sailors, and captain leaped into them; all save he to whom they owed everything escaped.

He died the death of a christian hero—I had almost said a martyr; his spirit was commended into his Father’s hands, and his body sleeps in peace by the green side of Lake Erie.

(**Textual Variation B:** **1)** “can,” not “could;” **2)** invented response/not future tense; **3)** conjunction “and” added; **4)** “cracked,” not “creaked;” & **5)** no definite article before “passengers.”)