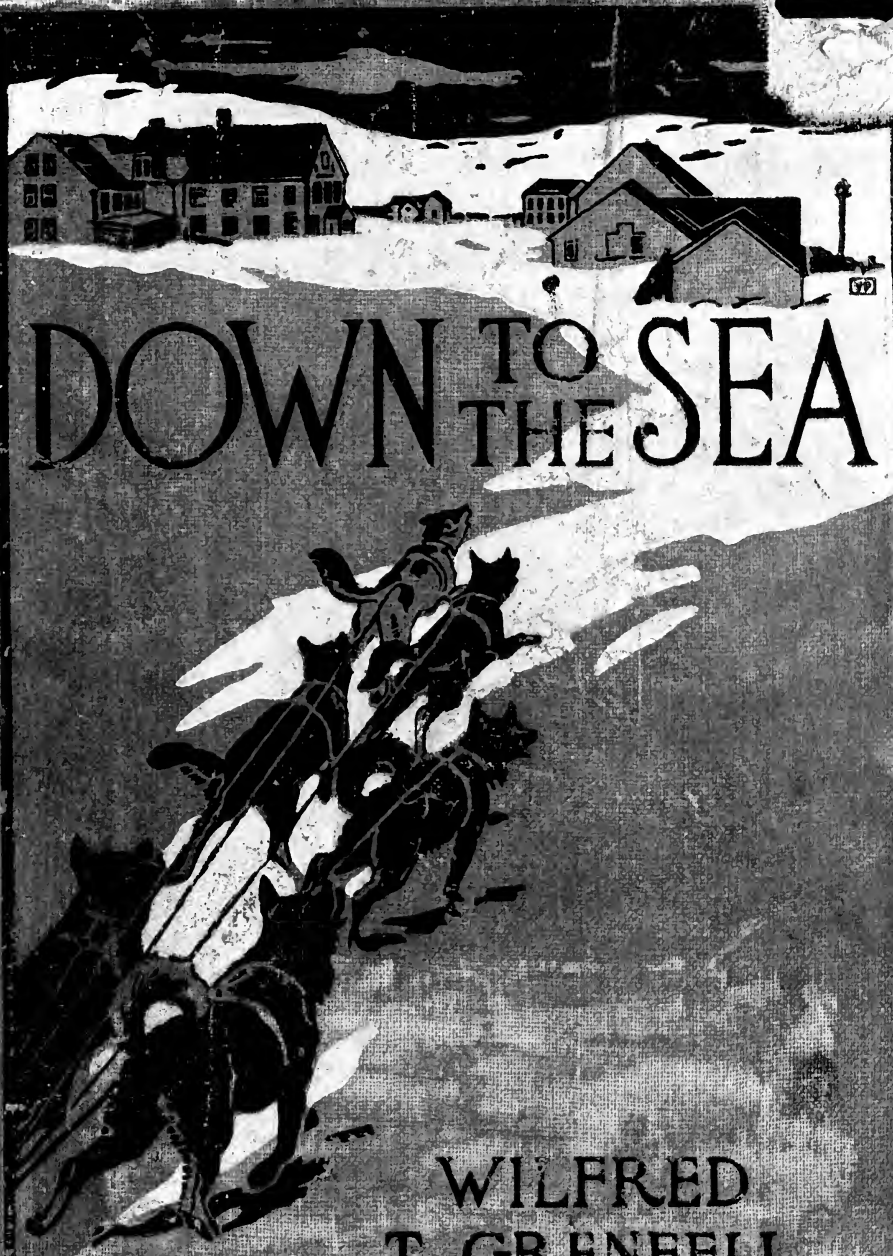
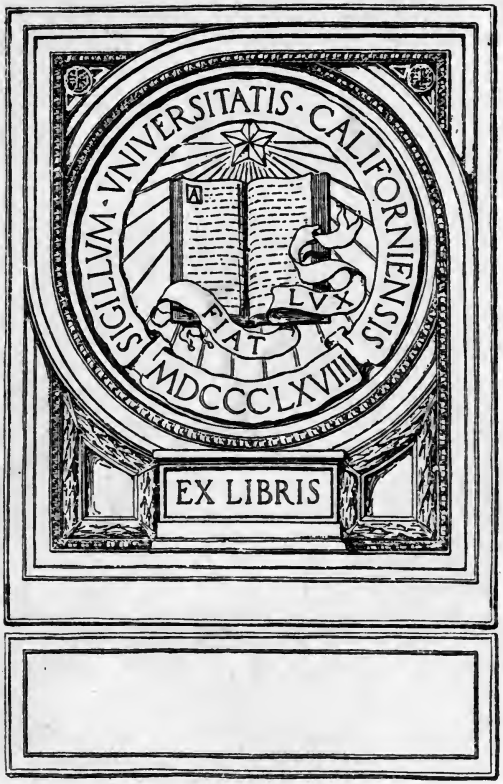


DOWN TO THE SEA

WILFRED T. GRENFELL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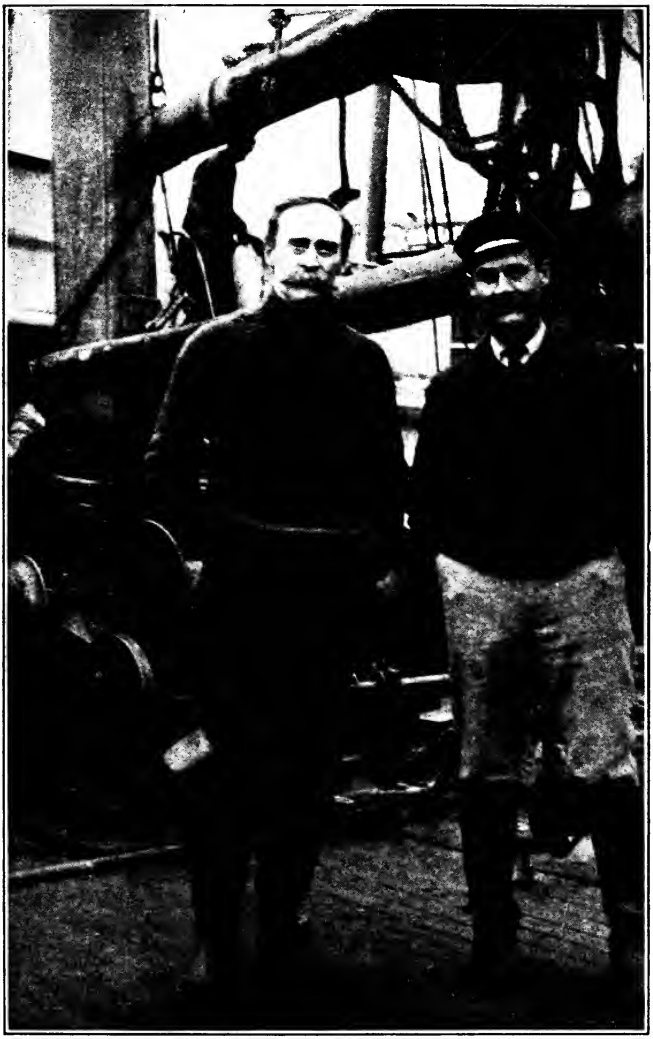

A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Commander Peary and Dr. Grenfell on the deck of the *Roosevelt* on the former's return from the Pole

Down to The Sea

YARNS FROM THE LABRADOR

By
Wilfred T. Grenfell
M.D., C.M.G.

ILLUSTRATED

London: Andrew Melrose
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The Northern Lights.

AS a country for summer holidays, Labrador has not yet been taken seriously. Yet it attracts many scientists who visit it for its unique opportunities for special work. In the summer of 1905, Elihu Root, Secretary of State, came in search of that absolute rest which is impossible in any country where telephones and the other appurtenances of civilization have intruded.

From several points of view, also, Labrador affords attractions offered by no other country so near at hand. The scenery of the southern coast is modified by the fact that in the glacial period the ice-cap smoothed and rounded the mountain peaks, while the cliffs are seldom five hundred feet in height. In the north, however, the mountain-tops apparently always reared their heads above the ice-stream, and

for its high cliffs and virgin peaks the coast-line is unrivaled anywhere in the world. The fact that the high land runs right out to the Atlantic seaboard does not prevent its affording most imposing fiords winding away among its fastnesses. For the thundering of the restless Atlantic, the grinding masses of the polar ice, which assail its bulwarks for eight months out of twelve, and the iron frost of its terrible winters, have proved to be workmen that even its adamantine rocks have been unable to withstand.

Thus there have been carved out fiords such as that of Nakvak, which runs inland for thirty miles. The cliffs on each side rise direct from the narrow gorge, which is itself only a mile in width, to an average of about two thousand feet, the deep blue water affording anchorage so close in under the cliffs that one would suppose it bottomless elsewhere. Though these rocks are the basal rocks of the earth's skeleton, and are entirely barren of trees and shrubs—or, indeed, of any fossil either,—their sternness is mitigated by the abundant carpet bedding of brilliant-colored lichens and the numerous small subarctic flora to be found up to their highest peaks. To the north of this inlet are still loftier mountains,

the heights of which have not yet been measured, and the summits of which have never yet yielded to the foot of man. A cluster known as the "Four Peaks" has been variously estimated up to six thousand feet in height.

There is no country in the world where the glories of the aurora borealis can so frequently be enjoyed. The weird "northern lights," called by the Eskimo "the spirits of the dead at play," are seen dancing in the sky on almost every clear night. The glorious red morning light, stealing over these rugged peaks, and steeping, in blood, as it were, the pinnacles of the loftiest icebergs in the world, forms a contrast with the deep blue of the ocean and the glistening white in a way that will hold the dullest spellbound. The endless stream of fantastic icebergs at all times enlivens the monotony of a boundless ocean.

Though cruising in north Labrador is at present made difficult by the poor survey of the coast, it is also made delightful to the amateur sailor by the countless natural harbors, never more than a few miles apart, and by the thousands of outlying islands, which permit almost one-fourth of the coast to be visited in perfectly smooth water, the great swell from the Atlantic being shouldered off by the

long fringe of them that runs seaward for twenty or thirty miles.

Clearly written in water-worn boulders on the mountain-sides of the now slowly rising land, and by the elevated sea-caves, with their wave-washed pillows, is the history of how the Labrador came here. These raise before the dullest mind visions of a paleocrystic sea that lapped these shores in the dim ages of the past. Hanging everywhere on almost imperceptible lodging-places on the crests and ridges of every mountain, the ice-carried erratics forever tempt one to climb up and try to dislodge them. But generally one finds they weigh many tons, and his puny strength cannot stir them the single inch necessary to send them crashing down into the valleys below.

Labrador has no towns, no roads, and no policemen. Scattered along its shores one meets, during the months of open water, only the venturous fishing-vessels from the far South, manned by their wholesome crews, the stout-hearted vikings of to-day, and, beside these, the native Eskimo, still almost prehistoric in their customs, and themselves alone of sufficient interest to merit a side-show at all the recent world's exhibitions. But for the fact that trade and the gospel have gone hand

THE NATIVE ESKIMO
Still almost prehistoric in their customs

in hand, this "flavor of the past" would have been blotted out long ago. Only around the stations of the brethren of the Moravian Church are there left any number of this interesting people. The good Moravian brethren have acted as traders as well as preachers and teachers. By tabooing liquor and cheap gewgaws, by fair dealing, by the inculcation of simple religion, and by a paternal surveillance of morals, they have almost prevented any decrease in the number of their people in the last fifty years, during which only they have kept a census. Meanwhile the Eskimo have everywhere else virtually vanished from the coast.

This is a tribute to the value of their mission especially unimpeachable, in view of the present-day strenuous efforts to prevent loss of life among children in our crowded cities.

It has not been easy to convey to the Eskimo mind the meaning of the Oriental similes of the Bible. Thus, the Lamb of God had to be translated *kotik,* or "young seal." This animal, with its perfect whiteness as it lies in its cradle of ice, its gentle, helpless nature, and its pathetic, innocent eyes, is probably as apt a substitute, however, as nature offers. Yet not long ago an elderly lady, who at other

times had almost a genius for what savored of idolatry, sent me in Labrador a box containing a stuffed lamb, "that the Eskimo," after all these years, "might learn better."

To the Eskimo mind, everything animate or inanimate possesses a soul. Thus, in their graves we found they invariably placed every cherished possession, that their spirits might serve the departed spirit in the same capacities in the life to come. There is little room for burial beneath the scanty earth in Labrador, even if the frost would permit it. So the grave consists of upright stones, with long, flat ones laid across. These not only serve to keep the wolves from the body, but wide chinks also afford the spirits free passage in and out.

I have found many graves perched upon some promontory jutting out into the sea, so that the spirit might be near its hunting-ground and again take toll from the spirits of departed seals. In a little cache at the foot of the grave are generally to be found the remnants of the man's property. Even since Christianity has come among them, I have seen a modern rifle and good steel snow-knives rusting in the grave; and I have found pipes filled with tobacco, that those who were denied the

pleasures of its enjoyment while on earth should at least have a chance given them to learn its use in the regions beyond the grave. No Puritanical forecasts of the joys of heaven trouble the Eskimo mind.

The stone age is only just passing in Labrador. But already the museums of the South are hungering for these witnesses to man's humble origin, and the most easily found graves have been ruthlessly rifled. Indeed, one man came and complained to me that an energetic collector, of unmentionable nationality, had positively carried off the bones of his grandmother! I wished on one occasion to obtain some specimens of stone kettles, axes, knives, and other relics from some ancient graves known to me on a certain island. We had not time, however, to leave our steamer to hunt for them. Out of gratitude for services rendered to them in my capacity as "Aniasuit," or "the man that has to do with pain," some of my little friends readily promised to seek them for me. They explained, however, that they should put something into the grave for each thing they took out. I referred them to the Moravian station, where they could purchase, at my expense, things likely to satisfy the departed spirits, as there

was nothing they would have found valuable in my floating drug store.

Once, when it was the mark of an anarchist to wear a beard, the German brethren had brought out a job-lot of razors, forgetful that nature had been merciful to the Eskimo and spared them superfluous hair. So the stock was still available, and I found on my return my friends had solemnly deposited these in the caches they had robbed. The idea of the hoary spirits of their ancestors shaving, in the night watches, on these awful headlands, with inferior razors, appealed to us. The Eskimo have a singular lack of humor.

As patients the main trouble with the Eskimo is that he has no resisting power for epidemic diseases, the usual simple infections, measles, influenza, whooping cough, and still less against pneumonia, typhoid and small-pox. On one occasion in the neighborhood of Cape Mugford soon after the beginning of the season when the southern fishermen were cruising from the South—into them came an epidemic of influenza, and before there was time to do anything many Eskimos were laid low with it. In our hospital steamers we spent day after day picking up the sick ones and carrying them into the station of the Moravians at

Okkak, where a little hospital had just been built. Never before had an Eskimo been in a hospital, and it was very difficult to reconcile them to the warm, comfortable wards. They pined for the open air, and each time I went into the wards I found these strange, dark-skinned, black-haired patients stark naked without even a sheet over them rolling about, a most odd contrast to the spotless, snow-white bedding. In one week thirty-six died—in ten days, forty-three. Our crew suffered nothing but a little rise of temperature, though we had carried these dying men in our own cabins. We have to be thankful that the germ-laden air of our towns trains the armies of corpuscles in our blood by slow stages to fight these invisible enemies. Never shall I forget the difficulty of finding ground to bury so many in. No less than ten had to go into one shallow grave. We had to tow the coffins heaped up in barges to the end of the bay to find a last resting-place for them.

There are in Labrador settlers and half-breeds who are ever increasing in number, while their pure-blooded brethren are vanishing away. These, too, are an interesting people. Among these a large part of my practice lies. I append a sample invi-

tation to pay a visit to one of them who was sick. It is an exact copy.

Mr. Docker Greand
Felle Battle Harbor
Labrador.

Please Docker i sen
you this to see if
you call in Sea
bight when you gose
down to see Mr. archbell
Chubbs he in nead
of you.

A letter like this, however, is a compromise with their own ideas, and to me is the emblem of a better era. For among my first patients, thirteen years ago, on a lonely island, was the father of a budding family. When I called, he was sitting up on his bed, perspiration from pain pouring down his face, and the red lines of a spreading infection running up his arm from a deep poisoned wound in the hand. I showed him that his life was at stake, and that I could painlessly open the deep wound. He absolutely refused, as he had already sent a messenger to an old lady up the bay who was given to "charming." Passing the island

again before I left next morning, I found he had not slept since I went away, and the old lady had not yet arrived. He again refused the knife. I did not call again at the island till the following spring, when I was not surprised to find his "tilt" deserted and the roof fallen in. The old lady had not arrived in time, and the neighbors, in their generous way, had shared his children among them.

Having no doctors of their own, they display no small ingenuity in devising remedies from the few resources they possess. Naturally, certain persons are looked upon as specially gifted. The claims of wise women vie with those of seventh sons, but no reasonable person would dispute the priority of the seventh son of a seventh son. "Why, bless yer, worms 'll perish in their open hands." Once, in stripping a fisherman to examine his chest, I perceived that he had a string, as of a scapular, around his neck. Knowing that he was not a Catholic, I asked him the meaning of it. "Sure, 't is a toothache-string, sir," he replied. "Sure, I never had the toothache sunce I worn un." So another, who on one occasion I found to be wearing a green ribbon round his left wrist, told me, "'T is against the bleedin', sir, if ever I be took."

There are more feet than shoes in many families in Labrador, and we are frequently called upon to amputate legs which have been frozen. Not only do the children suffer from this cause, but men and women as well. I recall a case which proves the unimportance of creed in religion. The wife of a Roman Catholic had a leg amputated, and I was called upon to supply an artificial leg. I had one in stock, and after I had given it to her I learned its history. The leg had been made for a Baptist soldier who lost a limb in the Civil War. When he died, his wife, who was a Presbyterian, kept it for a while and then gave it to an Episcopal cripple. It worked around to my mission in a devious way, and I gave it to the wife of the Roman Catholic.

On one occasion, the burly skipper of a fishing crew boarded the mission ship, his head swathed in red flannel, his cheek blistered with liniment, and his face puffed out like a blue-bag.

"Toothache, Skipper Joe?" I said; "you 'll soon be all right," and I pulled down a snaky instrument from the row in the chart-house.

"No, no, Doctor; I wants un charmed."

"But, you know, I don't charm people, Skip-

per. Nonsense, I tell you! Get out of the deck-house!"

But he only stood vociferating on the deck, "No, no, Doctor; 't is only charmin' her wants."

Time is precious when steam is in the boiler, so I merely replied, "Sit on that coaming, and open your mouth."

He waited to see that I had dropped the forceps, and then followed my directions. Waving my hands over his head, I touched the offending molar. His mind seemed greatly relieved, and he at once proffered twenty-five cents for the benefit of the mission. Three months later, on my way south, I saw this man again. Beaming with smiles, he volunteered, "Ne'er an ache nor a pain in 'er since you charmed her, Doctor." While he was showing me the molar, still in its place, to confirm his theory, I was wondering what faith-healing really meant.

On one of my winter journeys with dog team and komatik, we made a long detour to see a sick man. A snow-storm overtook us, and we arrived late at night, thoroughly tired out, at the rude tilt where our patient lay. After doing our best for the poor fellow, we stretched out our sleeping-bags on the floor

preparatory to turning in, as we are in the habit of doing whenever it is desirable to have a private apartment. It was customary for our host's dogs to burrow down through the snow and sleep under the house. For there they got shelter and warmth beneath that part of the floor where the stove stood. Our dogs, having discovered their burrows, desired to share their comforts, but they could not get down to give battle except by crawling down one at a time. The result was a constant growling and barking only a few inches from our heads. Sleep seemed impossible, yet no one wished the task of digging the dogs out.

It so happened that my host's seventh son was at home, and he promptly offered to charm the dogs into quietude. This he did by standing with his back to the wall and apparently twiddling the thumbs of his clasped hands in some peculiar way. He also muttered a few words which he would not tell me. For my part, I was so tired that I went to sleep watching him, and for me, at least, the charm worked. My driver also confessed he thought that it was we who were charmed; for the seventh son had faded from sight and memory while still twiddling his thumbs.

Much more rational than these efforts are some of those in use at sea. The astringent liquor from the boiled scrapings of the hard-wood sheave of an old block is no mean remedy when swallowed in quantity; and the boiled gelatinous skin of a flatfish, covered with a piece of an oilskin coat, forms a really rational poultice. "Why, 't will draw yous head to yous heels, if you puts her in the right place."

A salt herring, bandaged against the delicate skin of the throat, has much virtue as a counter-irritant; but, like most of these humble remedies, fails in diphtheria, nor saves in the hour of peril some loved child that skilled aid might have rescued.

It is often said that there is no law in Labrador, and I have heard men profane enough to add, "Thank God!" I do not know that the facilities for obtaining satisfactory settlements have evolved in proportion to our sense of justice and the intricacies of our methods of obtaining it. In the capacity of magistrate, I was called on once to settle the division of a property which should have left a small sum to a needy family. I found the cost of division by the usual channels would have left only a zero to divide. So we appealed to

equity, and forced one another to abide by it. Only last week a dispute arose about the ownership of a certain plot of land. It had been argued unsuccessfully with high words and with pike-handles. The weaker party applied for a summons. So, appointing the plot of land as the court, and daybreak as the hour, we settled the question between three disputants in exactly fifteen minutes. This included the making of landmarks, which I erected myself. Moreover, the court was able to be back over the hills in time for breakfast, with an excellent appetite and a satisfied mind as his only judicial fees.

There has been no law promulgated as yet in Labrador dealing with the infant mortality and cruelty to children. My first case of this kind involved insistence on a stepfather's assuming the responsibility for a little girl belonging to his new wife. Returning three months later to the same place, I found the man obdurate and the little girl living in a house by herself, where he merely allowed food to be sent to her. There could be no gain to the community by our deporting the man to a prison five hundred miles away in Newfoundland, nor gain to the child by forcing so unnatural a person to allow her to

live with him. So the court decided to add the little girl to the crew of his steamer, and steamed away with a new kind of fee. Good, however, came out of evil, for we have since ventured on a small orphanage near one of our hospitals, and I have had the supreme pleasure of taking to its shelter more than one delightful little derelict.

We cannot, however, always be Solomons, and the best-intentioned of decisions may sometimes be at fault. Thus, on one occasion a man's cow, feeding on the hillside, was found dead in the morning. It had obviously been killed by some one's dogs. As the owner went up to find the body, he saw two dogs coming away suspiciously licking their chops. These belonged to a poor neighbor of his, the guilt of whose team, I fear, was at no time in doubt. He expressed the greatest sorrow, and offered to shoot his dogs. But that would not bring the cow to life again. So, though he had no money, we decided that the cow should be cut in two, each man taking half, the offender to pay half the value of the cow to the owner, in money, as soon as he could. By the valuation of the coast, the cow was worth only twenty dollars. I was alarmed next day to hear that my steward had bought from the

aggressor six dollars' worth of meat, and that two other men had bought four dollars' worth, so that the offender was in pocket and distinctly encouraged to kill his neighbor's cow again, especially as his disposition of his half had left him with a fine meal of fresh beef into the bargain.

The uncertainty of a fisherman's calling, and the long winter of forced inaction, when Jack Frost has our hunting-grounds in his grip, made the need of some remunerative winter work as necessary to us as a safety-valve is to a boiler. We had an excellent belt of spruce and fir trees at the bottom of our long bays, and a number of us agreed to co-operate in a lumber-mill, that thus men might be helped to help themselves, rather than be forced to accept doles of free flour and molasses, and at the same time be robbed of their self-respect. So we purchased a boiler, engine, and saw-table, and the skipper of our coöperative vessel volunteered to bring these weighty impedimenta on his deck from St. John's. I myself was away in the North, beyond the reach of mails, when it suddenly occurred to me that the boiler weighed over three tons, and we had not chosen a spot or built a wharf on which to land it. We had

merely applied for an area on which to conduct operations.

But the genius of the sailor saved the situation. For the skipper had found a spot where he could warp his vessel alongside the rocks. He had then cut down some trees, which he had used as skids, and improvising a derrick out of his main and mizzen halyards, he had safely slipped the boiler to the beach. Others had dragged it up on another set of skids, and had built over it a massive mill-house, kneed like a capsized schooner, and calculated at a pinch to resist a bombardment. True, we had to bring fresh water a mile and a quarter without pipes, but they had sawed wood enough for this, dammed the river, and carried the troughs on eighteen-foot stakes; and now for several years the mill has been running successfully. We had to learn our trade, and it has cost us much unevenly sawed boarding and at least four fingers, but, beyond that, no serious accidents; and a little winter village has sprung up about this source of work, with a school and a mission room, and we can afford to pay for logs enough to give a winter's diet to one hundred separate families. We have built schooners at the mill, besides other boats, and a lot of building. I am not

sure in my own mind which does more to mitigate the many evils that follow in the wake of semi-starvation, our pills or our mill.

The economic conditions of all places largely cut off from communication are, I presume, hampered by the fact that the supplying of the necessaries of life falls into the hands of a monopoly; so that it often happens that the poorer the people are, the higher the prices they have to pay. It is the more galling to those who wish to preach a gospel of help when they discover that these same poor people find it difficult to get market value for their produce.

Here is an illustration of the cash value of independence which I took the other day from the lips of as fine a toiler of the sea as ever trod a quarter-deck. The man has three sons grown up enough to help him in the fishery. After long years as a poor hook-and-line fisherman, living from hand to mouth, the boys made enough money to induce a kindly merchant to build them a schooner on credit. The schooner, named the *Olinda,* cost, ready for sea, with "the bit of food aboard," as she left the narrows of their harbor for the fishery, exactly eighteen hundred dollars. "And us

didn't know where us was ever goin' to see it from; and us had three sharemen with us. But us come back, sir, in three months, and sold our catch for twenty-three hundred dollars; so that us had enough to pay our three sharemen, and pay for the schooner, and have one hundred dollars coming to us. Us still had time to go down North again and fetch the freighters us had carried down, and to catch another hundred quintals of fish. The second trip brought us in seven hundred and forty dollars. And now," he said triumphantly, "us is independent, and can buy our bit anywhere us likes; so it will come cheaper, you see, Doctor." It stands to reason every man cannot shake off quite so easily the shackles which bind him to a particular trader.

It was to help others to do what this man was able to do for himself that thirteen years ago we started a series of small coöperative stores. In many cases these have had the effect that we desired.

The reality of a spiritual world is no stumbling-block to our people, and indeed all are more or less superstitious as to its relations to the world we now inhabit. Four winters ago an excellent trapper, Joe Michelin, living about twenty-five miles up the magnificent

river on which the Grand Falls of Labrador are situated, was in much trouble. His children informed him that they had seen a weird, large, hairy man crossing the little bit of open country between the alders on the river-bank and a *drogue* of woods on the other side of his house. A practical-minded man, he put no credence in the story until one day they ran in and told him it had just crossed the open, and they had seen it waving its hands at them from the willows. Rifle in hand, he went out, and to his intense surprise found fresh, strange tracks in the direction in which the children had told him the creature had gone. These marks sank into the ground at least six inches, where the horses that work at the mill would only have sunk two inches. The mark of the hoof was distinctly cloven, and the strides were at times no less than eight feet apart.

Knowing that he would not be credited if he told this story even to his nearest neighbor, who lived some miles away, he boarded over some of the tracks to preserve them from the weather. At night-time his dogs would often be growling and uneasy, and several times he found they had all been driven into the river during the night. He himself heard

the monster walking around the house in the dark, and twice distinctly heard it tapping on the down-stairs shutter. He and his family were so thoroughly frightened that they always slept in the top loft of their house, with loaded revolvers and rifles beside them.

The tracks became more numerous as the spring opened, and one day his boy of fourteen told him that he, too, had seen the creature vanishing into the trees. A French-Canadian trapper, hearing of his trouble, came over to see the tracks, and was so impressed that he hauled over four bear-traps and set them in the paths. Michelin himself would sit day after day at the window, his repeating-rifle in his hand, and not leaving his position even for meals, on the off chance of a shot at his unearthly visitor. The chief wood-ranger from the big mill told me he had seen the tracks but what to say of them he did not know. No new tracks appeared for some weeks, however, and Michelin quite recovered his equanimity.

The insistence on dogma has found little place on the program of the workers of our Labrador Mission. Our efforts to interpret the message we would convey are aimed rather in the direction of endeavoring to do for

our fellow-men on this coast, in every relation of life, those things which we should like them to do for us in similar circumstances.

As I sit writing in the chart-house, I can read across the front of the little hospital off which we are anchored the words of a text thirty-six feet long. It was carved in solid wood by a boys' class in Boston. It reads: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

I have most faith in unwritten sermons. Still, the essential elements of our faith are preached orally at times by all of us. And in this relation it has been my good fortune at times to have a cook or a deckhand equally able with myself to gather a crowd on a Sunday morning to seek God's blessing on these barren rocks. We can also believe that the noble amphitheaters that these mighty cliffs afford us are as likely to prove "Bethels" as were ever the more stately erections of the genius of man. I have seen new men made out of old ones on this very coast, new hopes engendered in the wrecks of humanity. So that once, when whispering into the ear of a dying man on board a tiny schooner, and asking him if the years since the change took place in him

I HAVE MOST FAITH IN UNWRITTEN SERMONS

had been testified to by his life, in the most natural way in the world he was able to answer, "I wish you'd ask my skipper, Doctor."

We have seen in our tiny hospitals the blind made to see, the lame made to walk, and the weak and fearful strengthened to face the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But the object of the Labrador Mission is to help men to live, and not to die; and so to live as not merely to cumber this earth for a few more years, but to live as worthier sons of that great Father whose face we all expect one day to see.

II.

" Tis Dogged As Does It."

THE good fore-and-aft schooner *Rippling Wave* had made a most successful run to her market, which happened this year to be in the Mediterranean. The fact that she had not left the Labrador coast till late in October was no fault of hers or the skipper's; for if there was one ocean-going skipper on the coast known to be more of a "snapper" than the rest, that man was Elijah Anderson. When the fish-planter saw Old 'Lige clewing down his hatches, and trimming the *Rippling Wave* for the "tri-across," he felt satisfied that if his catch lost in value by being late, it would not be the fault of a craft whose record "couldn't be beat," or of a master who was afraid to drive her. If all the tales were true, Old 'Lige had been known to clap on his topsails when other men were lacing their reef-earrings, and so he would give them the

"go-by." Many a time, by pressing her, he had got clear of one of those cyclonic storms which are the bane of the "roaring forties" in the late fall of the year.

But this year easterly winds and the foggy blanket they fling over the coast had hidden the sunshine that the fishermen need to dry their catches of fish, and 'Lige had been jammed in and kept waiting for his load, long after he had hoped to be under the sunny skies of the Mediterranean.

But to the *Rippling Wave,* as to everything else that waits, the great day had come at last. The cargo was all stowed—hatches sealed down—moorings cast off—the parting jollifications held. She had not even to delay for a tow through the narrow gulch between two islands that had served her for a harbor, in order to wait in the roadstead for a wind that would give her slant enough to clear the offlying shoals and reefs before dark. A spanking nor'wester had sprung up just as Old 'Lige was ready, and, with flags flying and farewell guns banging, she had cleared with a leading wind through the narrow eastern tickle and was hull down long before dark, leaving good sea-room between her and the outermost shoals.

Day after day, without exception, the wind held abaft the beam, and the miles rolled off like water from a duck's back. Had she been contesting an ocean race instead of carrying a cargo of dry cod, her record would have vied with that of the sauciest racing-machine that has ever attempted the passage from Sandy Hook to the Lizard.

When in due time she hove to under the rock of Gibraltar for orders, her log showed an average of nearly ten knots an hour all through—and she had passed the 300-miles limit in one twenty-four hours, which would have shown a clean pair of heels to the average tramp-steamer.

Ordered to Patras in Greece, she again eclipsed even her own record. She had outdistanced several rivals who started before her from Labrador, and had "caught the market on the hop"—*i. e.,* fish was scarce and therefore in such demand that her cargo fetched splendid prices.

When at last she started on the return journey to her Newfoundland home, after calling at Cadiz for a cargo of salt, no lighter-hearted, happier bunch of men ever trod a good ship's deck. To most of us, in these degenerate days of luxurious floating cities, the prospect of a

passage out across the Western Ocean in the month of December, in a 99-ton schooner, would not be dangerously exhilarating. But the viking stock is preserved in the North lands still, and these men were all Newfoundland fishermen, with the genius for the sea inborn, with minds and bodies inured from childhood to every mood and whim of the mysterious deep; even their baby hands had been taught to hold a tiller and to pull an oar. On the dangerous banks they had served their apprenticeship, till they had learned to fear the perils that beset them no more than we landlubbers fear the dangers of our modern streets. Their finishing course had been in butting into the everlasting ice-floes from the Polar Sea in search of seals, and running home a loaded schooner among the endless reefs of the uncharted, fog-ridden, ice-frequented coast of Labrador. They graduated when, adrift in a dory in thick fog in open ocean, without food or water, they had run for days, "Westward ho!" for the land, some one hundred and fifty miles under their lee; or had wandered in darkness over loose ice astray from their vessels, away out seal-hunting on the Atlantic, till half-frozen and half-stupefied they had been picked up, only to return cheerfully to the

same work again, as soon as they were thawed out.

So when once again the *Rippling Wave* dropped the tug and braved the rollers of the wintry ocean, the fact that it was the first day of December didn't cause them even to look at the weather glass, or think of anything but the stories they would be telling of their great good fortune alongside their own firesides by Christmas Day.

But man proposes and God disposes, and there was that in the womb of the future for the crew of the *Rippling Wave* which at that time they little reckoned of. There were lessons to be learned that will have served some of them well when they come to pass the last bar, and "meet their Pilot face to face" on the shore of the great ocean of Eternity.

It is always harder to get to the westward in the North Atlantic than to "run east," for the prevailing winds are ever from southwest to west and northwest. But the *Rippling Wave* was a weatherly vessel, and the fact that by the middle of the month they were only in 40 west longitude and 40 north latitude did not distress her skipper—though if he would make sure now of being at home by Christ-

mas Day, he could not afford to ease the ship down for a trifle.

The third Friday was a dirty day. The barometer was unaccountably low, and the heavy head sea made pressing even the *Rippling Wave* to windward in the dark somewhat dangerous to the hands on deck, owing to the low freeboard that their heavy cargo of salt allowed them. Old 'Lige was in a generous mood—the success of the voyage had made him more soft-hearted over such details than these men of the sea are apt to be; and, anyhow, Friday is not an auspicious day to take chances. As the Mate went on deck for the night watch, even though an occasional star did show up in the heavens, the Skipper remarked half apologetically to him as he was putting on his oilskins, "You can heave her to till daylight, Jim, if you thinks well."

After one or two seas, more curly than usual, had rolled on deck, Jim did "think well," and till midnight the hands below enjoyed the leisurely motion that these handy vessels assume when jogging "head to it" in a long sea.

Skipper 'Lige had just turned in, and was peacefully enjoying his well-earned beauty sleep, when he felt something touch him on

the arm, from which his relaxed grip had but just dropped his favorite pipe on the locker. He started up, to find a figure in dripping oil-skins bending over him.

As soon as he grasped the fact that he was back in the world of realities, he realized that the Mate wanted him on deck to give an opinion as to a strange darkness that seemed to be crossing the ship's path low down over the water. Half a second was enough for him to get his head out of the hatchway, following the Mate who had scurried up before him, and his experience at once told him the truth. "Jump for your life, Jim!" he yelled; "it's a water-spout." The two men had hardly time to fall in a heap down the companion ladder, when something struck the good ship like a mighty explosion.

Over she went—shook—trembled—rose again; and then up—up—up went the cabin floor, both men being hurled against the for-'ard bulkhead, which temporarily assumed the position the floor had occupied the moment before. The *Rippling Wave* was standing literally on her head, and it was a question which way she would come down.

But there wasn't time to get anxious about it. Another mighty heave or two, a sudden

sickening feeling, and the two men were rolling about in the water on the cabin floor. But the ship was evidently the right way up. "On deck!" roared the Captain, and both men were up in time to know that the crew, who had been literally drowned out for'ard, were also scrambling aft in the darkness to learn what to do next. All lights were out, and everything was awash, for the scuppers could scarcely drain off the water quick enough to clear the waterlogged ship of the seas that rolled over her counter, as she wallowed broadside to it in the trough of the sea.

Knowledge, to be of any value, must be intuitive on these occasions. Instinctively the Captain had rushed to the tiller. The lanyards had broken adrift, and the helm was apparently hard up. Frantically the Skipper tried to force it over to get the ship's head, if possible, to the sea. Alas! the rudder was unshipped and fast jammed. The lower gudgeon was off the pintail, and the trusty *Rippling Wave* found herself free to put her head in just whatever direction she liked best.

Somehow, it seemed that she was endowed with sense, and that she meant to stand by her Skipper. For hazily, but surely, she rounded up in time to prevent herself from filling. The

men, meanwhile, had seized the axes, and, almost before 'Lige Anderson had issued his orders, they had ventured for'ard again, to try and clear away the wreckage.

They soon realized that virtually everything for'ard had gone by the board; for the solid spout water had hit the foremast about half way up, and had then broken, falling in countless tons on the devoted deck. For'ard of the middle line nothing was left. The mast, boom, gaff and sails were missing, with rigging, ropes and everything attached. The bowsprit, jibboom, winch and paulbitts, anchors, chains, fore-companion, fore-hatch and galley were nowhere to be seen. The decks were torn open so widely that one man fell through to his thigh between two strips of planking. Much of the bulwarks and stanchions were gone, as were also both the life-boats and jolly-boat, and every drop of water that came aboard poured into the hull, threatening to engulf the ship in a few minutes. Probably what saved her was the fact that some of the torn remnants of canvas were still on deck, or rather in it, for the last of the fore-staysail was so hard driven through the open seams above the foc'sle, that the men were unable to start a rag of it, much as they

needed it to cover up some of the other yawning gaps.

With the doggedness that characterizes such men, they had succeeded before daylight in getting out of the waterlogged cabins some nails and spare canvas, and with these they had covered over every large opening. Below the water line the almost solid-timbered vessel was still apparently sound, though the stump of the foremast was unstepped, with the result that its foot, rolling round in the deck gammon, was so thumping the bilge inside that it threatened every moment to smash through the sides. There was enough left of it, however, above decks, to make it valuable for a "jury-mast," and the Mate with two volunteers climbed down into the hold and succeeded in jamming it into an upright position.

In that dark, rolling box, soaked through with the water swashing about in it, not knowing but that at any moment they might go down like rats in a barrel, their task required no ordinary skill and courage. But they managed to accomplish it, fixing the foot of the mast in place with wooden stays captured from the broken rails. The rest of the crew stood to the pumps. Daylight, struggling

through the murky sky, revealed a situation that looked hopeless enough.

For forty-eight hours every man was at work helping to jettison the salt and every other available ounce of weight that could be dispensed with, or taking his trick at the pumps, under the stern eye and unflinching example of Skipper 'Lige.

Hour after hour, without a wink of sleep or any refreshment but pieces of hard biscuit that once had been dry, they fought on with sullen strength and energy.

When the galley went, every pot, pan and cooking utensil had gone by the board with it. Not a bite of food could be cooked, nor a sup of drink be heated. There was one thing, however, that these men brought to their aid. Like most Newfoundland fishermen, they were praying men. They knew that praying at such a time is no substitute for work, but they knew also that attitude counts for nothing in the sight of the Almighty, and not one of them had forgotten to "call upon the Lord in their trouble, that He would deliver them out of their distress."

But at last the instinct of self-preservation began to lose its energy, as there came time to think, and they began to realize the appar-

ent futility of continuing the unequal struggle.

It must be remembered that it was the dead of winter. They were in the middle of the North Atlantic. The water was bitterly cold, and they were bruised, wet and exhausted. They were, too, far out of the winter route of trans-Atlantic liners. The chance of being picked up seemed infinitesimal, and it was obvious that with no boat left it was impossible to escape from the wreck. Small wonder that faith and hope began at last to fail!

But all hands worked on incessantly at the pumps, and at the cargo. Hour after hour, watch relieved watch, and the *clank, clank, clank* of the pumps, that alone broke the monotony of silence, was almost enough to drive men mad.

They were apparently making no headway in raising the ship out of the water. They were merely keeping her afloat. But if 'Lige Anderson were to abandon hope it meant abandoning himself, and he was still sane. In the hours between the spells of the pumping, which he shared with his men—hours which he ought to have devoted to rest,—the Skipper had by no means been idle, and he was now

able to hearten the rest with three discoveries he had made.

First, the after half of the ship was absolutely sound; so were her mainmast and sails. Moreover, he had been able to rig a "jury"-rudder, which more or less guided the ship. He had set to work with these as a basis to rig a jury-foremast that would carry a small sail. He had dried out the after cabin, and fortified and caulked as far as possible the fore bulkhead, to give a water-tight division from the hold. In this it was possible to get some rest.

Secondly, he had found his logbook and sextant, and though the latter proved useless owing to the sun being continually invisible, it certainly was a source of hope. The last entry in the logbook on the day before the accident led him to the conclusion that he was about fifty miles south of the track of the ocean liners.

Thirdly, from his almanac he found that there was still a forlorn chance that some steamers might still be running by the northern route.

It was difficult to make sure which way the wreck was really moving. But he could now keep her heading somehow to the west'ard,

and it was possible that she might still be worked to a position where they could expect to be sighted if such was the case. A more trivial discovery, but one that counted not a little in the hearts of his Newfoundland crew, was an old tin paintpot, with a sound bottom. This Captain 'Lige had managed to clean up, and over the tiny stove in his cabin he had been able to brew enough hot tea to serve out a drink all round. These facts he now thought good to announce to the crew; and, heartened by the warm tea, they stood to the pumps again, as night came on, with fresh faith and energy. Slowly they edged, and worked, and drifted, as they hoped, northwards! If only they could make a hundred miles of northing their lives might yet be spared.

A week had now gone by since the accident, and a settled gloom, close akin to despair, had settled upon the men. As is often the case, however, just in the nick of time a thing happened which, trivial as it may seem to us, meant very much to them. The sun for the first time suddenly shot out thro' the drift about mid-day, and the Skipper was able to get his bearings and tell them that, though they were farther to the westward, they had

made at least thirty miles to the nor'ard also. Moreover, he was wise enough, seeing that they were rather more than holding their own, to tell off one man from each watch to keep a look-out from the mainmast head. Though nothing was seen to encourage them, yet the fact that the Skipper believed it was now likely that they would sight something, acted as a fresh charm, and for yet another four days the *clank, clank, clank* of the pumps maintained its even tenor.

The salt was now all out of the boat, and this halved the time that each man had to work pumping. But as day after day passed and no sail was seen, and the ship ceaselessly battled with the angry waters running between a northwest and southwest gale, flesh and blood began to give way; nerve and muscle had been strained to the breaking point.

By the fifteenth morning all faith in the possibility of salvation had so departed from some of the men, that they formally proposed to give up striving, and that all hands should go to the bottom together. Skipper 'Lige was at his wits' end. Violence was out of the question. No man aboard would have minded even death at his hands. His only subterfuge

was in continually pointing his sextant at the lowering clouds, in inscribing endless successions of figures in his book, and at last in announcing that he had discovered they had reached their desired goal. Having called them together, he pointed out to them on his well-thumbed chart, that they now lay exactly on the 49th parallel of latitude. A great cross that he had made on it signified the position of the ship. Exactly through this point ran many lines stretching from the Fastnet to New York, intersecting in his picture the spot that represented the ship. "Them there lines," he announced, "be the tracks o' them big steamers. They always races across, and this be the shortest way for 'em to go."

It would not have required much acumen on the part of the audience to detect the fact that the lines on the paper were not as old as the discourse suggested. But men in the condition of these poor fellows are not inclined to be critical. All that was required of them was to move a handle up and down, and the Skipper had staked his all on their not questioning what he told them. They scanned his face narrowly, and saw that he seemed so hopeful that once again the poor fellows returned to their duty at the pumps. "Now we

be in the track of steamers, boys," the Skipper said, "us'll wait right here, sink or swim. Let's keep at it so long as us can stand. They sha'n't call us cowards anyhow." In all this the Mate bravely backed him up. And so again, though the response was feebler than before, the *clank, clank, clank* of the pumps kept on, as the plucky fellows doggedly set their hands to the work.

The morning of the seventeenth day broke with a clear horizon under an oily, sullen sky. The remnant of a ship still tossed up and down, up and down, on the troubled waters. Forward the *Rippling Wave* looked now only like a bunch of weather-beaten boards. Hour by hour, the weary clank of the pumps alone announced that there was any life aboard, and that she was more than a mere derelict on that dreary expanse of waters. Though dispirited and half dead, not one man yet gave in. Now and again one could no longer stand to do his work, yet as soon as he had rested, the faith of the others roused him to action, and he struggled back, even if it were only to fall down at his place at the handles.

It was just 10 A. M. when the watch at the masthead called the Skipper. "Smoke on the horizon to the east-northeast," he shouted. So

far gone were some of the men that they took no notice of the announcement; even if they heard, it seemed too wonderful to be true. But in two seconds the Skipper was aloft by the side of the watch, and shouting "Steamer coming, boys; keep her going!"

Little by little the cloud, at first no larger than a man's hand, grew bigger and bigger, till the hull of a vessel was visible like a tiny speck beneath it. There was no need now to cheer on the men. The watch below was turned out to "wear" the ship, that they might, as far as possible, drive across the head of the approaching vessel. The improvised flags, long ago made ready out of bed clothing, were hoisted to the tops, and a pile of matchwood was prepared in a tar barrel on deck to make a good smoke.

The excitement on board can better be imagined than described. But though their eyes were strained to the utmost, they could not make out that the stranger got the least bit nearer, and it wasn't long before 'Lige realized that no help could be expected from that quarter. For the speck grew no larger, and eventually disappeared again behind the wilderness of waters.

The reaction was proportionate to the ex-

hilaration, and an awful despondency fell upon all hands when their hope of safety had again sunk out of sight.

The Skipper's resourcefulness was not exhausted, however, and he spoke to the crew as if he were in the greatest spirits. "You see we'll be all right now, boys," he said. "Our reckoning be just as I told you. Us'll work a mile or two more to the nor'ard, and be home by the New Year if we aren't by Christmas." He took care to emphasize his faith by serving out an extra and earlier dinner, so that, in spite of themselves, not a man slackened at the pumps, and the everlasting clank droned monotonously on.

The afternoon was wearing away, when suddenly once again the eagle eye at the masthead spied smoke. This time it was in the western sky and 'Lige took a bigger risk. Twice as much inside planking as before was torn from the sides of the hold to enlarge the bonfire. So big grew the pile that it could scarcely be kindled without endangering the vessel. As the speck grew bigger, hope grew proportionately large, and without any word from the Skipper, the pulse rate of the pump reached a fever speed. Closer and closer came the stranger. It seemed impossible that she

should pass now without seeing them. Evidently she was a small cargo tramp in ballast, and no doubt lightly manned. She was now almost abeam, but still she showed no signs of recognition. Possibly the only man on watch was in the wheelhouse, there being apparently no reason for a special watch. Or possibly the outlook man was smoking his pipe under some shelter from the weather. 'Lige, through his glasses, had long ago learned that there was no one on the upper bridge. That she was an endless time approaching seemed to him their best chance of being seen. For surely *some one* would be on deck to sight them before it was too late. But she passed them by like a phantom ship with a crew of dead men on board; and to this day no one on board knows why.

It was getting dark, and the wind was rising again, with a sea making from the nor'-west. The dumb despair that had all along been a kind of opiate, allaying any fear of death, had been rudely removed by the awakened thoughts of home, rest and safety, and by the apparent certainty of at last being rescued. The suspense as the steamer passed by had made the enfeebled men conscious of the bitterness of death, and aroused in

them an emotion that was perilously near to fear.

There could be no disguising the fact that the end was very near at hand. The mere pretense of work that they were now able to make was at last permitting the water to gain on the pumps; and finally the relief watch failed to stand to their work. No one was in a mood for speaking now. The Skipper himself silently strode to one of the handles the men had dropped, and commenced mechanically to heave it up and down.

Only a minute, however, did he labor alone. Without breaking the silence, the gallant Mate, whose turn it was to rest, placed himself at the other handle again, and the play at "pumping the ship" went on. There seemed to be no hope. The night promised to be their last on earth. But they were men, and they would at least die fighting, for no man can tell what may be wrested from the fates by a dauntless faith.

The horizon had already faded into the lowering sky overhead, and before the sun rose again, the long-drawn agony would be over, and the bitterness of death passed.

* * * * * * *

But it was not to be. Suddenly a loud cry from for'ard for the last time stopped the pumps. Sure enough, there was a bright light away to the eastward, now and again bobbing up over the waters. It has always seemed right to Skipper 'Lige that their salvation should have come out of the East. In his own mind, so he says, he hadn't the slightest doubt, then, that all would be well.

It was plain to him that the usefulness of the pumps was at an end, and that his last move in the game of life must now be played. He was always known as a silent man, but on this occasion a corpse would have heard him. The half-dead crew were on their legs in less time than it takes to write it. He had himself but recently come down from the mainmast-head, where he had been fixing fast to the crosstrees a barrel full of combustibles. Now, forcing an unlighted flare into the hands of the Mate, "To the masthead," he roared, "and light up when I do! Up the foremast!" he screamed into the ear of his third hand, above the roaring of the wind and sea, "and take this old can o' tar with yer." For'ard and aft he led the rest with their axes. All were working like madmen, with a strength that was like the final flare-up of a flickering lamp. Soon

large pieces of wood had been torn off from the hatches, lockers, rails, bulwarks, and even the decking. They hacked it from anywhere, so long only as the pile on deck should grow in size. But even as they worked the water was steadily increasing in the hold, and every man was conscious that the *Rippling Wave* was sinking under them.

Sometimes—it seemed for ages—the approaching light disappeared from view; yet the axes kept going, and the pile of wood steadily grew. To restrain the crew from setting fire to it during these apparently interminable intervals required a nerve on the part of the Skipper that they themselves no longer possessed. But even at that moment, with death standing at their very side, they were held to an absolute obedience. Their reverence for their indomitable Captain had long since grown into a superstitious fear. As it was, the sound of axe and lever, as once on the walls of ancient Rome, alone broke the death-like silence every man maintained.

Suddenly, without a moment's warning, a huge black mass rose up out of the water, towering far overhead like some fabulous monster of the sea. The right moment had arrived. So 'Lige Anderson fired his last

shot, and lit his flare. In an instant the vessel was ablaze. Fore and aft, aloft, and on the water-line, the ship seemed one roaring mass of flames, which shot high into the heavens above her each time the waterlogged hull rolled heavily to windward. A moment later a brilliant search-light still further blinded the men on her deck, and afforded the pleasure-seekers who were crowding to the rail of that floating palace (for it proved to be a steamer on a trip round the world) such a scene as in their lives they are never likely to look on again. It was a scene well able to bear all the light that could be thrown upon it. For these fishermen had fought a fight worthy of the traditions of the best days of viking seamanship.

The huge steamer turned to wind'ard and stopped short close to them. A loud voice called through a megaphone, "Can you hold on till morning?" There was no hesitation in giving, and no possibility of doubting, the answer. So close were the vessels that every man heard the question, and every throat shouted back the same answer as from one man, "No, we are sinking!" The swash of the fast-gaining water, surging loudly to and fro in the hold, lent emphasis to the reply.

Only the voice of Skipper 'Lige once more broke the silence. "We are played out; we can't last till daylight."

Words are poor things at best, but the words that came back this time thrilled them all as words had never thrilled before. "Then stand by; we'll try for you now." The Captain on the bridge had no need to ask for volunteers, though the night was black as pitch by now, and the danger of launching a boat in that rolling sea was a terrible one indeed.

The steamer was a German liner from Hamburg. The perishing men were only common British fishermen. But there is a touch of nature that makes the whole world kin, and the gold-laced Captain bore a true sailor's heart beneath his dapper uniform. Had he listened to the dictates of his own emotions, he would himself have been the first man in the boat. In spite of his brilliant searchlight, the wreck to him looked but the after half of a vessel, as if a ship had been cut in two. Pride in the sheer brotherhood of the sea, that there still lived men that could do the things these men had done, almost led him to throw discretion to the winds, and share in person the welcome danger of the rescue.

But wiser counsels prevailed, and the well-

trained life-saving crew that such vessels always carry had already arranged themselves in position by the side of the steel life-boat.

There was no lack of skill, no undue haste, no shortage of tackle. But long ere the boat had reached the water, a heavy sea had swung her into the iron wall of the ship's side and smashed her to fragments. Those on the wreck had witnessed the attempt, and also the failure, and the ominous swash of the water in the hold seemed louder and more threatening than a few minutes ago. Faster the water gained on them as deeper the wreck wallowed in the seas; yet to man the pumps now was not even thought of. The last die had been cast, and, without making any conscious resolution, they simply stood by to watch the issue.

The big ship had forged ahead. By the time she had regained her position, a wooden life-boat was already on its way down from the davits with the men in it. Close to wind-'ard of the wreck the Captain manœuvered the steamer to shorten the distance to row, if by any means he could get a boat launched and safely away. Again every movement was visible from the *Rippling Wave*. The life-boat reached the water. The port oars were out,

but before the for'ard tackle was free, a great sea drove her into the vessel's side again. The rescuing party were themselves with difficulty rescued, and their boat was a bundle of match-wood.

All eyes were fixed on the steamer. Could it be possible that they would be discouraged and give up? Even Skipper 'Lige expected to be hailed again, and warned that he *must* keep afloat till daylight. But the men on the liner were real sailors, and not the faintest idea of abandoning the attempt ever entered their heads. At sea, a thing to be done must be done—and that is the end of it. Cost is a factor that a sailor's mind doesn't trouble itself about, so long as material remains. Anxiety about what loss may be involved is a thing to be left for the minds of landsmen, and harries Jack less than it does a Wall Street millionaire.

The only question with the Captain was, which boat next; as if it were a simple question of which tool would best serve to complete a job that had to be done. A light, collapsible life-boat seemed to promise most. While the ship was again getting into position, this was made ready. The men took their places in her and were almost literally dropped

over the side, as the monstrous ship lurched heavily to wind'ard. There was just one moment of doubt, and then arms and shoulders that knew no denial shot their frail craft clear of the ponderous iron wall. Scarcely a moment too soon did they reach the *Rippling Wave*. Her decks were little better than awash, when Skipper 'Lige, the last man to leave, tumbled over the rail into the life-boat. Even his dog had preceded him.

Nor was the wreck left to be a possible water-logged derelict, to the danger of other ships. What was left of the kerosene oil was poured over her as a parting unction and then fired. Before the last man was safe aboard the steamer, however, the *Rippling Wave,* mantled like Elijah's chariot in "flames of fire," had paid her last tribute to the powers she had so long successfully withstood.

A line fastened to a keg having been thrown over from the steamer's side, was picked up without approaching too near. With that absence of hurry that characterizes real courage, the life-boat kept off (with her stern to the dangerous side of iron) until each of the rescued men had been safely hauled aboard in breeches of cloth, secured to a running tackle. Even the dog would have been saved in the

same way, had he not with vain struggling worked loose from the breeches and fallen into the sea; as it was, before getting the life-boat aboard, the Captain was humane enough to peer round everywhere with his searchlight, in the hope of finding it. The rescued were stripped, bathed and fed, and snugly stowed in beds such as they had seldom even seen before.

From the kindly passengers, more new and warm clothing poured in upon them, next day, than they had ever dreamed of possessing, and the journey to land was as remarkable to them for its luxuries as had been the past fortnight for its privations.

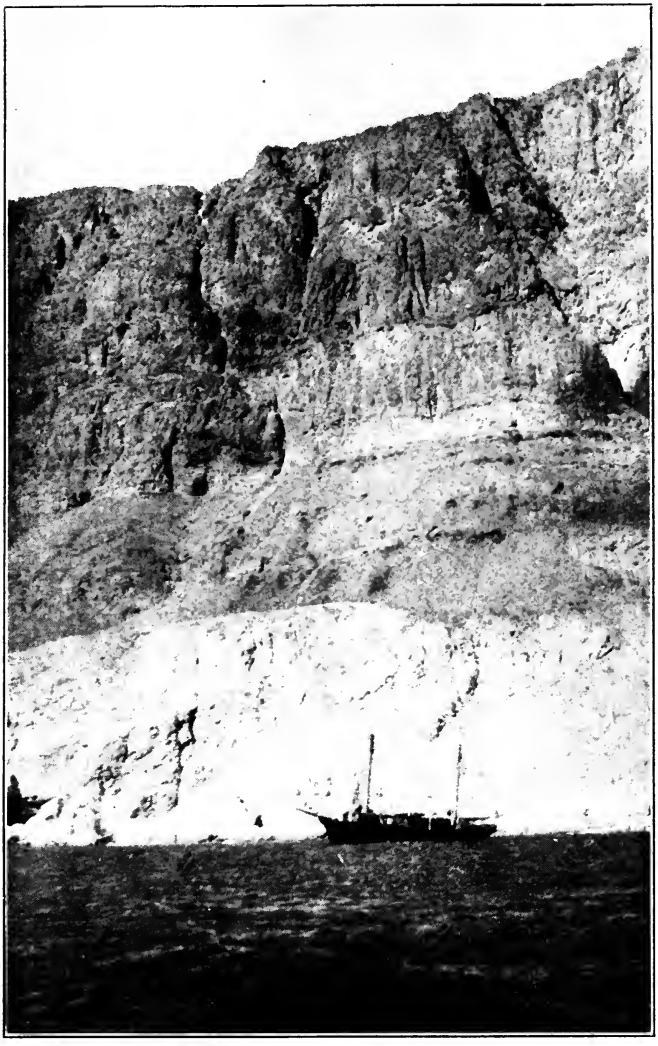
Though Christmas Day had after all been spent on the *Rippling Wave,* New Year's Eve found them in the lap of luxury. At dinner in the grand saloon, to which every man was invited, Skipper 'Lige occupied the seat of honor next the Captain. There was a general feeling that it was a great occasion. Never before had the close of an old year spoken so forcibly of the fickleness of life to many of the others present. After a few seasonable and brief speeches had been made by some of the guests, the climax was reached when the Captain—who, at his own expense, had or-

dered some dozens of champagne to be served out all 'round—in terse sailor language proposed the toast of the evening. There were few dry eyes among those who drank "To the wives and children of the brave men it has been our good fortune to save."

III.

Danny's Deliverance.

THE long winter was again approaching. The short summer season was over. Ice was forming in all the inlets and coves. The great fleets of fishermen had started for their southern homes once more, and day by day the stream of white-winged schooners flitting south had been gradually getting thinner, until the very last of the stragglers had passed by. Out there in the offing, even at the distance they pass from the harbor heads, they afford us a little company. The deepening mantle of snow had been along, hiding on the land every vestige of the life of summer. Only the gloomy faces of great beetling cliffs tower above the snow, as if to taunt us with the reminder that we can look for little company from their bleakness. Already our tiny scattered houses are scarcely more than white hummocks rising above the



THE GLOOMY FACES OF GREAT BEETLING CLIFFS

steadily deepening snow, and to the careless eye, even they would fail altogether to suggest the presence of the human life with its hopes and fears within them. The long months of the approaching winter seemed to be hovering over us like a great cloud, hostile to every form of life. The rapidly shortening days and the boisterous winter storms seemed to be robbing us of all stir and bustle that at other times help to save from melancholy.

True, the great masses of ice, borne ever southward on the ocean current, were day by day increasing in size, and in resemblance in shape to the vessels that have gone, as if they were trying their best to fill the void. They only seem, however, to deepen the feeling of utter desolation that has overtaken us beside our fast closing highway; for they bear them but a grim resemblance, like the spectres of departed friends.

It was close to Christmas, and our little mail steamer, paying us her last visit for the winter, was lying far out in the ice. Her crew was slinging out, onto the standing edge, for want of a better landing stage, such poor freight as our people's slender stock of money could buy for the winter. The rattle of her derrick, and the throb of her deck-winch,

seemed, like some unpitying bell, to be tolling out the death knell of the last tie that bound us to the living world outside.

The little vessel was in a hurry. Already Arctic icefloes outside were threatening to cut off her retreat to the south, so that as the chain-fall rattled out over the pulleys, heavy clouds of smoke rising from her funnel warned us she was silently gathering power to snap even this our last poor link with civilization.

Still loath to be absent, as it were, from even the obsequies of a valued friend, or like the curious crowd that gathers when a funeral is in process, we, too, had driven our dogs out alongside her, and were standing looking at her iron sides rising perpendicularly from the ice. Forlorn-looking dog teams were standing by, and here a few men were half heartedly groping with a long sealing gaff in the crack between the ice and the steamer, for a truant box of cheese that in the hurry had fallen into the water and kept bobbing up and disappearing again in the slob.

Suddenly a voice from the deck above called out "Hello, Doctor? There is a patient for the hospital on board?"

"Is there?" I answered. "You had better throw him down or he will escape us."

"Can't you come up on deck?" came back the reply. "The companion ladder is on the other side."

As I followed the steward aft into the steerage cabin I could hear the first sounds of the propellor rotating, making the ship vibrate. Hurriedly we entered the cabin with its large open space filled with tiers of iron cots, like bookshelves in some model library. It seemed at first like one vast empty grid-iron. But guided by the steward, I came at last on a lump at one end of a cot, hidden from sight in a tangle of bed-clothes. Pulling back the blankets we found a wizened looking boy, small for his fourteen years. His legs were drawn up under his chin, and his one object seemed to be to hide himself from view. He would not speak to us and we had to rely entirely on the steward for his story. He had been brought aboard during the flying visit of the mail-boat to an absolutely out-of-the-world harbor some sixty miles away. They had carried him aboard, manifestly against his will, and he had lain ever since just as his bearers had deposited him, without stirring, like some terrified rabbit fascinated by a serpent. They called him "Danny."

A cursory examination revealed that his

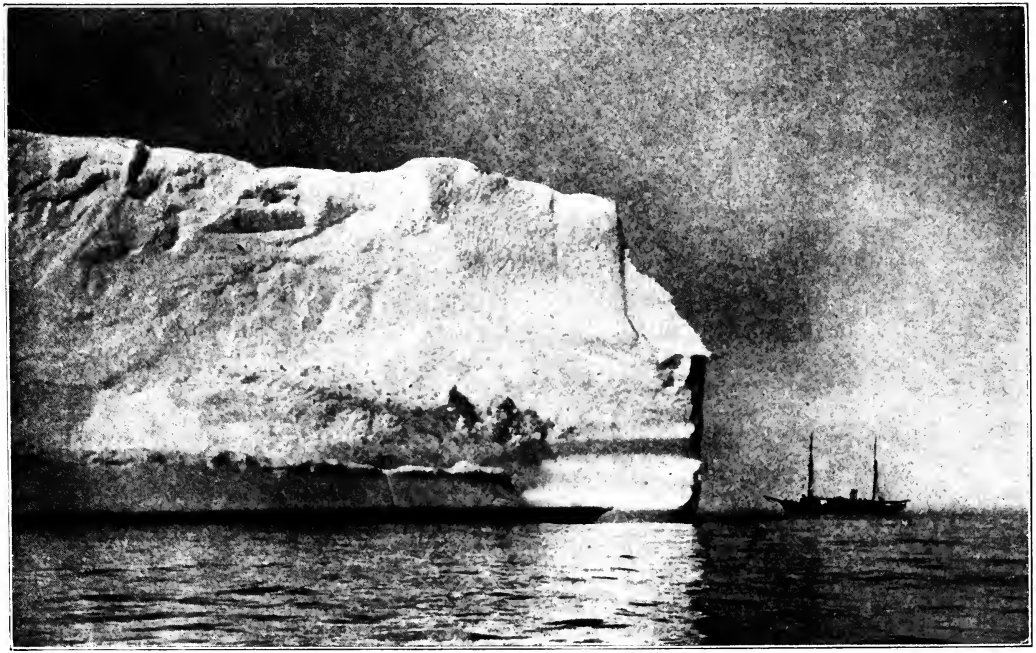
legs were paralyzed and rigidly fixed in a bent position. It was obvious he could neither walk nor stand. There could be no question of not accepting him.

"How shall we get him ashore, sir?" the steward asked.

"We'll carry him," I answered; "he can't be but a featherweight."

And so it proved. For it was the easiest of tasks even to descend the companion ladder over the ship's side with him in my arms rolled up in his blanket like a ball. The crowd on the ice displayed at once that generous sympathy which characterizes all strong men. These fishermen of the North Atlantic are nothing, if not generous and brave in their strength. Ready arms received him. Not a coat on a man's back but would instantly have been given, if needed, to make easier the passage on our waiting komatik to the hospital.

Even as we called the dogs to stretch out for the journey, the mail-boat backed slowly from her cutting in the ice, and before we had climbed the bank that rises to the hospital gate, nothing was to be seen of her but a vague black cloud over the hills to the south of us.



GREAT MASSES OF ICE WERE DAY BY DAY INCREASING IN SIZE

"Danny" was a Christmas present for which we had not looked.

If the experiences of the mail-steamer had been new to "Danny," those in the hospital were a revelation. A snow-white bed, a snow-white nightgown, and in the morning a large bath—these were only a few of the many wonderful new things that served to fascinate the little patient. They were just as strange to him as we were, and he was as shy of them as he was of us. It was only a *very* rosy picture indeed of the chance that immersion in hot water would give him of once more becoming "like other boys" that induced him to submit unresistingly to this strange innovation.

The sequel justified it. The second night, though he had twenty pounds of shot fastened by stirrups to both legs, he slept in his strange surroundings soundly and happily. His cot was placed in the southeast corner of the ward, and the glorious sunshine both from above and from the white hillside fell full upon him all the day long. After only a few days it became a sort of hospital side-show to go upstairs and see a laughing boy trying to drag heavy weights on his legs up and down over pulleys. It was "Danny" endeavoring

to bring back strength into his paralyzed limbs.

At first massage, and still more the electric battery, evoked frightened floods of tears. Yet after a day or two the boy could have been seen laughing to himself, as he sat pounding his own wasted apologies for legs with one of the clever hardwood rolling balls, used by the Japanese soldiers for hardening the muscles.

Days lengthened into weeks. But at last he greeted me one morning excitedly with, "The left leg is quite straight, Doctor." And soon after, "I can make the right one touch the bed as I lies on my back now."

"Now is the time to try walking, then," I told him. "It's a fortnight since we first got you up into the wheel-chair."

Alas, the thighs were still completely powerless; the knees gave way at once and Danny rolled laughing onto the floor. Before we could venture to permit him to try his crutches again, we must by means of keyed splints lock those joints. But self-confidence had now given way to timidity, so that when at last he was balanced on the crutches, it was almost impossible to persuade him to let go of the bed-post. It took two of us, encouraging and

supporting him, to get him to try even a first step.

At last, however, he got about quite speedily by himself, and "went visiting," as he called it, among the other patients. It is true that his thigh muscles were still powerless. Without the help of his splints and crutches he could still do nothing.

So more than once a sudden crash overhead has brought some of us running unstairs to see what was broken, only to find that Danny, grown over confident, had been careless in placing his foot, and had had an immediate and ignominious fall. More than once he was lying helpless on the floor, ruefully recognizing he could not rise again by himself, but he acquired courage and wisdom from his very troubles, and he performed prodigies with the little strength that he possessed.

The winter has passed away. The migratory birds have already returned. A schooner has been sighted in the offing. Two polar bears have passed north across our harbor, returning, as they always do, from their long hunt on the icefloes after the young seals. Though our harbor is still closed with heavy ice, everything is indicating that in reality winter has gone. We are once again expect-

ing a visit from our little mail steamer, and anxiously awaiting the messages and many good things we expect her to bring. The crowd that will go out to meet her when next she forces her way into the ice, are already joyfully anticipating the renewing of the bonds that bind us to our brethren in the world outside.

With the lapse of months, and with careful, constant effort, Danny's legs, though far from being what they were intended to be, have yet grown to be useful limbs. The scanty clothing that came with him is all long since outgrown. I should be sorry now to have to carry him up the companion ladder in my arms. He can almost walk by himself, and we anticipate the joy of seeing the boy that came under our influence helpless, able to take up his bed. It is a compensation that no dollars can buy to be able to feel that in some measure we have been permitted to assist in this wonderful change.

We have learned more than one lesson from our little patient. He had lain at home many months powerless, refusing to venture forth for help, and every day losing more of the capacity for ever being able to walk. Though every day was making it more unlikely that

he would ever recover, yet it was only at length his utter misery that forced him to a decision that he would accept the remedy. It involved the effort of leaving home; of leaving all that he had ever known in life, and of venturing out into an utterly strange place among absolute strangers. Yet, once again, when the steamer came at last, and the moment arrived for setting out, faith failed, and but for those who loved him truly, he would still be paralyzed and useless.

But with the effort has come its reward. Though still he cannot walk without outside help, yet when he falls he doesn't remain lying down now. He knows well enough that the Doctor will not say angrily, "Now that you've let yourself fall down, you just lie where you are; in future I'll have nothing more to do with you!" On the contrary, he knows that we are glad to see him trying. Taking warning from the fall, he gets up again, like the "man after God's own heart," and tries to do better another time.

Driving last month along a frozen river, our path took us through thick forests of spruce and fir. My little pet spaniel, joyful in the glorious weather, was all day gleefully jumping around the komatik. Suddenly I heard

his loud cry of pain, evidently from the woods on the right of us. Hitching the dogs to a stump, we started off in the direction of the sound, and soon found the dog. He had wandered off on his own account, leaving the right road for the pleasure of hunting rabbits. A delicious scent issuing from a cave covered with boughs attracted him in. Even as he crossed the doorway there was a loud snap, and he was fast caught in the cruel teeth of an iron trap. It was a lynx house of a neighboring trapper. The pain, the reward of his own wrong doing, served only to make him wild with anger and fear. Viciously he drove his teeth through the hand of my good driver who had arrived before me, and had good-naturedly tried to relieve him. It was the hardest thing to get him to allow us to set him free at all, and when at last he was freed, he immediately fled and disappeared from sight.

Following his track, I found him outside the wood on the ice. I called him to come that I might perhaps bathe the leg and relieve the suffering. But he fled from me as he had never done before. Could it be possible that he attributed the pain, which he had so foolishly brought on himself, to us? Truly he did.

He misinterpreted the love which had had to hurt him in trying to set him free, and acted as if he thought it would give us pleasure to make him suffer more. Instead of coming to us he fled away. For many days he wandered in the woods. At last, when almost given up as lost, emaciated and forlorn, he reached home just in time to save his life.

Are these not parables from life? What does God want but "willingness" and "trust." Willingness to put ourselves in His hands, then He will make us "able to walk." Absolute trust in all His dealings with us—then He can teach us to interpret even apparent adversity aright.

IV.

The Optimist.

IT was the depth of winter. Everywhere all was frozen, and the snow lay deep on the ground. I was fifteen miles from our little hospital and it was necessary that I should be back before night. The wards were so crowded that we had been obliged to even trespass on the nurse's little sitting-room at our diminutive Orphanage to accommodate two little lads with tubercular joints. The strength of our one trained nurse was taxed to the utmost: she had four patients recovering from abdominal operations, one young fellow with a knee-joint we had been forced to open, and enough to do for the rest to keep half-a-dozen nurses busy, if we lived in civilized parts.

I had left the hospital that morning only at the very earnest request of a deputation from the most northern harbor in the country, to

see a woman who appeared to be dying of hemorrhage. Before starting I had insisted on a promise to bring me back the same evening with a dog team, for my own dogs were away to the south with my colleague.

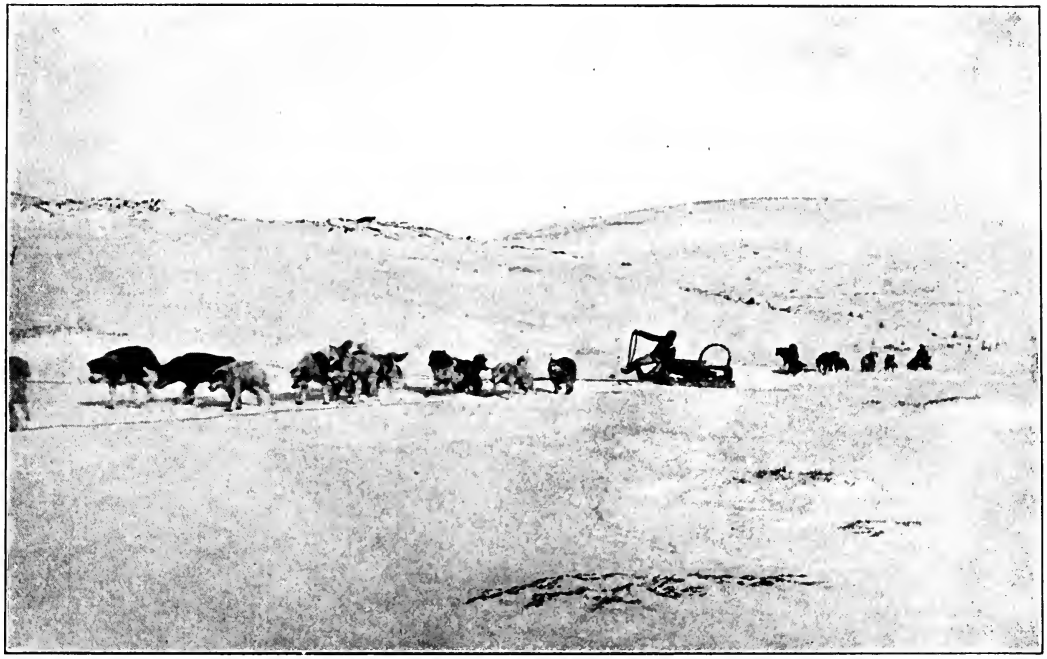
We had not covered half the distance before I realized the prospects were very small of the poor half-fed beasts that were hauling me being able to cover the ground again that day. They were doubly handicapped by having to haul two men besides myself, for the nine dogs belonged to different owners, and they would not travel without the guidance of the particular voices they knew to stimulate them. They had a good six hundred pounds to haul over hills and valleys and rivers and bays, a heavy burden and a hard road at the best of times. And the dogs were enfeebled by poor feeding, for there had been a scarcity of offal, saved from the fish, and caplin, usually preserved for dog food. Corn meal, too, was expensive, and even at best, it is a poor substitute for fats and meat for the food of working dogs. It was partly an errand of mercy.

The harbor is a deep, narrow ravine between the mainland and a large island, from the northern point of which the towering headland projects into the polar current. During

the summer a furious tide rushes through this weird cleft, or tickle, in the cliffs, and in spring and fall huge pans of northern floe ice are swept to and fro jostling and smashing one another against the unyielding ice-worn walls on either side. The shoal ground outside, where the fish swarm, causes a thundering surf, ceaselessly smashing into the cliff faces. The whole is a very battle of Titans.

The land around has long since been denuded of trees and bushes for firewood for the many fishermen who frequent the harbor in summer. For the choice of a home by a codfish is not made by carpet-knight standards, nor is a Newfoundland fisherman, seeking a living, to be deterred by trifles. Many a splendid voyage of fish has been killed among these jagged rocks and dangerous waters. The harvest of the sea here, as elsewhere, has to be wrested from a reluctant environment.

Naked and forbidden this spot is in the summer months; but in winter all is different. Ocean, straits and tickle are alike held in the resistless grip of the silvery King of Winter. The boiling cleft is silent as death, and its broken waters are a fine hard road for ourselves and our carriages. The precipitous faces of the cliffs are hung with the most ex-



THEY HAD A GOOD SIX HUNDRED POUNDS TO HAUL

quisite ice candles forty feet in length, and the enormous banks of pure white snow round off all such inequalities as might hurt or impede our progress. A jump in the dark over a thirty-foot cliff face only delays us, while we extricate ourselves from a bed of fine white feathers. And the sun, reflected from the spotless surface, dazzles us like the face of another Moses, and demanded snow-glasses to reduce its radiance to the level of the average human eye.

The last mile called for little energy on the part of our steeds as far as hauling went, the road trending steadily down toward the final jump. But the speed gathered by the heavily weighted slide took such breath as was left out of the best of them as they endeavored to escape being over-run. The poorer dogs either wisely jumped aside and slipped their harness as quickly as they could, or, submitting to their fate, were run over and trailed behind, till slackening speed should allow them to get their feet again. The events of the sick-room took a large slice out of a short winter day. But we should still have expected to make "across t' bay 'fore dark" with our sorry steeds. But we had not counted on the impromptu clinic which is always afforded the doctor on his rare visits in these parts by the

sisters, the cousins, the aunts and uncles of the patient. On this occasion rather a larger crowd than usual of sorrowing friends had gathered. There seems to be something specially attractive to the lay mind in a case attended with hemorrhage. Here as they sat talking in whispers on the benches placed against the walls there seemed a melancholy satisfaction in seeing bowls carried to and fro, and in listening to the tread of many feet. Typhoid and tuberculosis appear to offer no such charms.

I stood between a night out with the dogs, and one with a restless, uneasy mind in my sleeping bag on the floor. The bag is an old friend and a good one. I have no fault to find with it. But the need for my presence was over and my mind back at the hospital. If only it could materialize there, or find a temporary, effective medium for communication in the dormant unused bodies of one of the sleeping patients, my body left behind would not have cared. But without telephone or telegraph I felt myself badly stranded.

With commendable zeal, however, my drivers planned to fulfill their share of the contract. They would take me back at all cost. This meant, however, that we tramped till we came

to a decline where we sat on and "randied." The progress was slow, as there was much sea ice to cross, and we were just deciding to abandon the march when a man hailed us from the hillside, and came running out over the ice to intercept us. "It's Ken, Doctor," said one of my companions. "I reckon his little chap is sick." The surmise was correct. And a contract was soon arranged. I was to transfer, examine and treat his little boy, and he was to harness up and carry me on to the hospital. My own share of this compact was soon discharged, though it involved a further re-examination of the poor man's wife, who lay dying of consumption. But, alas, his dogs were away in the bay, and his man had sent to say that they would not be back before nightfall.

Suddenly, in our dilemma, our thoughts flew to "Bill." "Likely Bill will take you, Doctor. I seed him pass down t' cove an hour ago." And without further comment my host disappeared to find the delinquent Bill.

On the very top of the divide between the village that nestled under the shelter of the cliffs and the western branch of the harbor, isolated from the rest of the villages, is a rude shack. By courtesy it is called a house. It is

some sixteen feet long by twelve wide, and its single story is less than six feet to the beams. Fortunately there is no ceiling and the lofting of the rafters adds to the capacity and saves at once the space for stairs and the trouble of climbing them. You can get at all the household property by the simple process of raising your hand, there being no cupboard. The dogs, which sleep with the family, are thus freed from temptation to steal, an arrangement that tends generally toward domestic peace. This mansion was the property of my deliverer, and as it was "on the way," I bade good-bye to my patients, and followed in pursuit of "Bill."

Bill is a strange figure to look at, limping on the left leg, and with the corresponding hand "scrammed" or partly paralyzed. He shuffles along as if he had, from long acquaintance, acquired some of the habits and characteristics of the familiar crab. An attack of "the paralyze" in his boyhood had left him a hard struggle. His father had long ago died. There remained a younger brother, an imbecile sister, and a mother scarcely better gifted. Bill has never married, and the brothers, mother and imbecile sister live together in their poor home.

Everything on this coast is against such a man. With no time to read, or write, or to devote to the acquisition of that knowledge which would enable him to hold his own in a bargain, and without the remotest idea about the great world outside, his lot has been one of uninterrupted poverty and struggle. He has supported the family year in and year out with such codfish as fastened themselves on to the end of his line, never able to pay others to do work for him, handicapped as "the paralyze" left him. He has only too many times known hunger and want and cold. His face, though he is still a young man, already shows plainly enough the marks of hard effort.

It might be supposed that such would be the last man to whom one would appeal, late on a winter evening, to turn out and carry an unbidden guest a long, weary distance over frozen hills.

Yet it is not so, there is no one along these shores so much imposed upon for hauling priests, parsons, doctors, and strangers generally; no one that carries one half the messages along the coast that this crippled man does. It is the custom of the coast to make no charge for these kindly offices. They are

done freely and for cause or not at all. There are those with whom it is the custom to make excuses. But Bill is not of that kind. No sight is more familiar along the winter tracks than his rude komatik, and diminutive dog team and shuffling figure.

We are so accustomed in civilization to look upon every act performed by us for others as purchasable, that one's mind at once concludes it pays him well somehow. After all that is a correct conclusion. But not in gold that perishes. For it is the one joy of poor Bill's life to render services to others. But the sweetness of it is that he never accepts any return from any human beneficiary. A dollar is not less than a dollar, as one can well understand, to a man in Bill's circumstances. But large as a dollar must loom in his estimate of the value of material things, there is only one opinion among all who know this man; he puts a value beyond money on the opportunity to render a service which goes unrequited.

The familiar words of the fisherman disciples of long ago are never read in my hearing, but my thoughts fly to this humble twentieth century disciple, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give in the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Bill's theology is not

gathered from reading or even hearing the Scripture; yet his faith is great enough to remove many mountains.

"T' dogs has just been fed, Doctor. If I'd only ha' knowd this 'fore. I bet they wouldn't ha' had a sup this night," for dogs cannot do themselves justice running on a full stomach, and that they had been fed they clearly testified by an undoubted bulge on that part of their anatomy which is devoted to these purposes. "My, Doctor, 'tis too bad. They'se bein in the bay for wood all day, and them's only just out." If Bill starved himself he would not see his dogs go hungry. Yet I should have gathered from their ribs that his idea of the amount of food necessary is based on the diet he himself lives on. "It's hard t' keep dogs fat when them's workin' right 'long."

During the constant succession of mild grumbles in the same strain, he was jumping about "getting things t' rights," having invited me, meanwhile, to see a guest in his house who "had taken a kink in his back." Knowing the man, I was not at all surprised to find a sick visitor living on him. The gaunt, forlorn, threadbare stranger, helping to fill still further the already inadequate available space,

seemed only a natural circumstance. For of all the generous people in the world commend me to the poorest poor.

Many a times has the story of the widow's mite carried me in thought back to these humblest of humble cottages, where not only have I myself shared the hospitality which keeps a few ounces of "sugar" and the single tin of milk—things their own diet seldom, if ever, aspires to, for "any one special who may happen along," but also many times have I seen the still more Christlike charity which shares its poverty freely with a still more unfortunate neighbor, with all of whose faults and foibles they are familiar.

Soon the team was harnessed in, and the path being good and level, I acted on his repeated injunction to "bide on," while he trotted on beside, his good hand on the upturned nose of the komatik.

"Your guest is in a poor way, Bill," I suggested. "How long do you intend to keep him?" "Well, you sees, Doctor," he answered, "he's getting old now, and his woman's dead three years." "But you can't afford to feed him, Bill, you know you can't." "Not exactly, Doctor. You sees, he's a bit scrammed just now, and he can't cut up his firewood."

"I think he'd best let me get him to the poor-house, Bill, he is past work now." "I suppose he must, Doctor," he answered, a tone of sorrow in his voice. "I sends him down some dry wood on times, but it seems he can't make a do of it of late."

We were crossing a large arm of the sea, and the salt water ice being a bit sticky I attempted to get off and walk. We had, all-told, two dogs, two pups, and one-half pup, a little white animal with beady black eyes and the most willing of spirits, which reminded me all the while of a white rabbit in a hurry. Only one of the dogs seemed to be really able to haul to any extent, and it was imposing on good nature for a healthy, heavy Doctor to sit on while his lame driver poured perspiration as he limped with uncouth gait. "Here," I said, "you sit on a bit, Bill, my feet are cold sitting on." "They've hauled fifty sticks to the land-wash, and one load home to-day," he replied, as if apologizing for the dogs. "No, sir, I never whips them. Come Caesar, Jumbo, haul up." And he trotted along faster than ever.

The dogs responded for a minute and even Jumbo, which proved to be the diminutive white rabbit, felt for a while he was doing the work of a traction engine. I persuaded Bill at last

to "sit on" while I saved my toes from sharing the fate of Captain Peary's. But he only consented for a moment while he took off his gloves and hat, and carefully hung them on the top of the uprights, thus completing his preparations for a fresh burst of energy. "Bide on, Doctor, bide on, Doctor. 'Tain't my fashion to give a man a lift and then sit on myself." There was no withstanding the repeated appeal, and our regal procession continued thus till we reached the steep hillside across the bay.

As we walked slowly up the hill I ventured to suggest he spent too much time on the road doing other people's work. "No, no, Doctor," he answered, " 'tis my fashion. I fair loves to oblige anyone, especially the sick. Leastways, I nearly lives on the road." "You should be paid something, Bill, for the many messages you carry to and fro. It's worth a dollar a day surely?" "I thinks God will reward me sometimes, Doctor." "You're right enough there," I answered; "yours might be called the faith that saves."

Immediately he changed the subject, saying, "That's as good a leader, Doctor, as there is on the coast, but she be terrible thin. It's sick she is, Doctor. I knows she is." "Is there

nothing I can do for her?" I said. I often treat dogs, for my thoughts flew to the scaffold at the hospital on which the best part of a ton of whale meat still reposed, for the prominent symptoms of this disease seemed manifest even at the distance of the long trace at the outer end of which she labored so faithfully. "There's an Indian cure for it, I hears 'em say," he answered. "You gives um nine buckshot to eat on a Friday." "Have you tried it yet?" "Why, yes Doctor, I gived them to her just before we left."

We were now racing down a series of steep hillsides, so steep that in spite of the "drugs" or drags, it took all our attention to keep from running over the dogs. Indeed, a little later on the poor white rabbit disappeared with a squeak under the sledge to re-appear as a fish on the end of a line hauled along by the neck till his trace gave way. He was no sooner loose, however, than he was after us again at his full speed, merely shaking his ruffled white coat as he came along. As for our thin leader, even he was panting heavily at the last decline, and one could almost hear the rattle of the Indian cure inside her as she swung down the hill with her mouth open.

The downhill path had given my friend a

short "spell" on the sledge, and skilfully balancing himself I noticed he had spent much time searching again and again in his pockets. "It's the very first time I ever," he said, when at last he spoke. "Ever what," I asked. "Why left her all at home. Pipe 'n 'backer 'nd lights and all the whole kit. What is I to do now?" At first, as from the oysters in the song of the Walrus and Carpenter, "answer came there none." But then the bright thought of the co-operative store a mile out of our way flashed into my mind. "You know I've got to call at Ned Spencer's on the way, I suppose," I asked. "Has you?" he asked. "Well, it will be more than dark before we gets off the salt water ice. But no matter, I suppose."

The lights of the store were greeting us when he suddenly extracted from the depth of some inside pocket a small cube the size of a hazelnut. Holding it up high for me to see, before he put the whole of it in his mouth, he exclaimed triumphantly, "There, I knowed I feeled her all the time." It was the last of a much cherished plug of tobacco. "I shall leave you here, Bill, and then you can get back in good time for to-morrow in the woods. Ned's team will carry me the rest of the way."

"I'll finish it now, Doctor, if you'se is agree-

able. That parcel is a bit o' venison Mrs. Brailey is sending up to her daughter at Snag Cove, and I promised I'd leave un for her." Bill had a way of speaking of these matters in a tone which somehow conveyed the idea of finality, and one felt argument with a pan of ice would have been as successful.

Ned happened to be out when we drew up, but I purchased the necessary fumigating apparatus which Bill as promptly refused to accept. An excuse was necessary. "But I did not send you that Christmas present I promised two years ago, Bill," I said. "It will be a terrible load off my mind. Besides, I like the smell of Ned's tobacco. It helps the Copper store along." "Well, I be real proud to have un, and I gives you thanks."

Bill is not a metaphysician nor is his memory good. Logic is not his strong point, and the argument appealed to his weak side, and our fisherfolk aren't yet superhuman. On the contrary, a very human person is Bill, though without the varnish and veneer of modern civilization, the kind of Christian man the Master needs in the Twentieth century, a man of few words, but of kind deeds many. A man always at peace with the world and himself, possessing the elixir vitae that looks

only on the silver lining of the clouds, a veritable optimist.

I happened this morning to cut up a gaudily painted pen-holder that was lying on my desk. Off came the colored shellac, and underneath stood revealed a piece of our own common wood from the forest. It seemed finer with its gay coat, but it served every bit as useful a purpose bereft of the frippery. We are so apt to think that things are necessarily better because puny man has added conventional adornments to the wonderful productions of the Creator. Could we but have eyes capable of seeing as with a microscope the ducts and fibres of that humble piece of wood, should we have thought an adventitious covering of paint made it really more valuable, gauged by the standards of either its usefulness or actual beauty? Perhaps this is the case with our humble friends like Bill. He is best as he is. The veneer of civilization could not improve him.

When we finally drew up opposite the door of the hospital, I told him to go down and give his dogs a good dose of whale meat off my scaffold, and then to come up and spend the night in the hospital. Bill shuffled and stood on one foot. "I thinks I won't come

back. I give you thanks, Doctor." "Why not," I replied. "Surely you aren't going to try and go back to-night?" "This here," he said, touching a parcel in some sacking firmly lashed on the bars and on which I had been sitting, "this here parcel is for Goose Cove, Doctor. You sees 'tis only eight miles now, and I'se can be back easy by breakfast." "Why, what on earth have you got there?" " 'Tis just a bit of mutton what old Aunt Simmonds asked me to carry up to Skipper Alfred. He's sick, they tells me in the cove."

I slammed the door and went in to a good tea, feeling very small. Bill's case is incurable. He is an optimist.

V.

The Mate of the Wildflower.

HARRY LEE was six and twenty and only a mate still. He was married, and had two young hostages to fortune. It seemed to him as if he were six and fifty, for there was not another man in the port of his age and position who had not yet gone master of his own craft. In reality, he was an open-faced, handsome young fisherman, with tan enough in his black eyes and hair to give one the impression of a touch of Spanish in his blood, his appearance certainly suggesting a devil-may-care spirit, and other folks thought that it was this, combined with the memories of some of the mad-cap pranks of his youth, that kept the owners from entrusting their property into his hands.

Harry Lee was not a native of the sea port, but his taking to sea had been like that of a

duck to water. He only knew of his parents that they had "moved to London," where he, for one of his wild adventures, had been pounced on by the authorities, sent to an industrial school and apprenticed thence to the fisheries.

Here there had been a long-drawn fight between the group of boys he was thrown among and a sordid, money-grubbing master, who, instead of giving employment as captain to those boys coming out of their indentures to him, succeeded in saving wages by sending his vessels to sea with even "skippers" who were still "serving their time."

But one factor which strangely enough still further militated against Harry getting a command had come upon him without his seeking. One time while home he had been induced by some of his more serious minded shipmates to join them at an evening service at their small house near the pier end, which they called the "Bethel." There and then that which was hardly even hoped for happened—the man who had been so strenuous for evil proved to have a warm heart underneath. Harry, mad-cap Harry, decided right then and there to serve God. So sudden a change in such a man was naturally soon noised abroad.

Indeed, Harry himself had no desire to hide his light under a bushel. Whatever he did, he did with a will, and let any one who liked take exception to it.

Now, it so happened that a fight had just begun between the owners and their crews, about Sunday fishing. The owners argued that as the vessels were on the fishing grounds anyhow, and were not in sight of land, or in reach of churches, the men ought to work their big nets on Sunday, just as they did every other day of the week. They said the men could just as well pray, if they wanted to, while their net was out; and as the vessel cost money on Sunday as well as Monday, and as there were many stormy days when men must lay by anyhow, any man who refused to fish on Sunday should lose his charge of a craft. Some of the stouter hearted Christians had taken no notice, and had, on coming home from sea, been greeted with a curt dismissal. Lee's position in this, as in other matters, was unequivocal. He would not work on Sunday, and this, together with his well-known uncompromising spirit, made it seem even less likely that he would ever get a vessel of his own to command—for he certainly would not accept one on those terms.

His little wife, however, was an optimist, and though it seemed hard that her husband should have just as much to do with the making of good voyages, and just as much work to do as the skipper, and yet should only get half the poundage money, and so be unable to buy his boys things like some other people's, yet her smile was unfailing, and she argued it would all come right some day.

And come right it had to. His day came at last. The fleet had been fishing almost on the "Holland coast" early in their voyage, when the skipper of the *Wildflower,* of which he was mate, met with an accident, breaking his thigh, and having to be sent home in the fish carrier to London. The vessels were doing well at this time, and to take the vessel home, as most men would, and break the voyage, would mean a heavy loss to the owner. So Harry, in his capacity of mate, called the boys together, and offered to take command of the vessel and go on with the voyage. They agreed; at least until their owner should send them their recall. There was a mission vessel in the fleet at the time, which always carried a spare hand, who could be lent to help out with a vessel that was short-handed for a time, and this the mission boat now agreed to do for Lee.

So the "fish-notes" from the *Wildflower* kept coming regularly in to the owners, and not for weeks did they learn that the injured skipper had died in the hospital, and that the good catches the *Wildflower* was making were the result of the pluck and energy of the new captain.

So word went out to stay in command till the vessel's time for return was up, and a fresh hand was sent out to replace the second mate, who had taken Lee's place as first.

Sailors are apt to be fatalists, and to think little of death. The prevailing idea over the whole incident in the new skipper's mind was simply that God had so ordained it that this should be the chance of his life. He no more questioned that it was the good hand of God upon him than he questioned that such a token of love called specially for every ounce of energy and skill he could put into it, in order that he might prove himself worthy of the trust. So it fell out that however hard it blew, when other men shortened canvas, the *Wildflower* shook out her topsails, so that she might drag her net the faster. When others "hove-to," fearing to risk the towing of their gear, Harry would show his lights for

"shooting the net," and though buried in seas, would still succeed in hauling safely. In this way he was able to have catches to send to empty markets, clamoring for fish. Thus the earnings of the *Wildflower* stood ahead of the rest of the fleet.

The weeks went swiftly by. At last the eighth week end marked the time for home. Provisions were short—for the crew was nothing if not hearty. So he bade the Admiral and skipper good-bye in the morning, that he might be ready to leave with the first fair wind. Even in so short a time as had elapsed he had made great favor with the men, who love a hard worker and admire a dash of daring with it. There was a great demonstration of rockets and flags, and salvos of guns, when the *Wildflower* put her helm up and bore away for home.

It was now early in November, and the long, dark nights made it dangerous work making the east coast of England for a small sailing vessel, ten times more so than weathering the breezes in deep water with plenty of sea room. Two long stretches of sand lie off for many miles parallel with the land, and the channels of safety between them are hard enough to

find at the best of times, being but poorly marked; while a single mistake is enough to cost all hands their lives.

To make matters worse, it was dense with fog, just when the skipper was expecting to pick up the marked buoys on the outermost sands. Together with the fog and sea, the barometer still held threateningly low. By dead reckoning the *Wildflower* had run her distance by mid-day, and the safety and comfort of home was only now some forty miles distant. To cap it all, there would be the credit of a fine finish to a record voyage, if he could drive her right in before the storm broke.

As Harry thought of what that would mean to his "bit of frock," as he called his wife, he felt compelled to take every chance and "let her rip." It was the mate's opinion, too, that, though they had not seen the mark-boat, it would be best to risk it and go ahead. No sooner said than done. At sea the man who hesitates is lost. The born sailor acts intuitively while the land lubber is philosophising. It is, however, just as necessary to be cautious at times, and the skipper made concessions so far as to now and again head the weather and take a sounding. To Harry the sand that came

up on the lead, "armed," as we call it, with a lump of tallow in the hollow end, spoke almost as plainly as so many sign posts to a driver on the land.

By sundown, though without having seen them, they could tell by the lead that they were on the inside of the outer belt of sands. Often near the land the sky clears up so as to render it visible; but this time it deceived them. The heavy wind failed to dispel the darkness, so that nothing, not a wink, could yet be seen of the land, which they had last viewed two months before. Unless they could get a glimpse of something, they would be obliged to lay out the gale without sea room and in shoal water. They were now hemmed in between the land and the breakers, running at best great risk. As night settled in, the crew were talking in low whispers of the folly of not having kept outside the sand, and the skipper himself was anxious and depressed. At eight bells the vessel was "hove to" to await issues.

Suddenly there came as a flash upon Harry's mind the thought, "Now I can do nothing for myself, and surely God will stand by me." This, he told me himself, seemed like a voice speaking to him, so that he felt as we always

imagine Paul did, when "There stood by me this night, One, Whose I am and Whom I serve." Hurriedly the skipper went down into the cabin, got out the chart and fixed it on the table, just exactly as if he could already see land. He "fixed" the small swinging lamp, and laid out the compass and dividers before calling out to the mate on deck to take another sounding.

While this was being done, he flung himself on his knees on the cabin floor, and asked "Him Who was with them in the boat" for just one sight of the pier-head light. The whole thing took but a minute, and then, climbing the gangway ladder, he walked to the compass, ready to take a bearing of the light he felt certain he was going to see.

I have only his word for it, but it happened exactly as he expected. Away over the lee quarter the fog suddenly thinned out, a patch of clear space almost the size of a man's hand opened up, and then the familiar home harbor light shone out clearly and brilliantly for a brief moment. Carefully he took his bearings, and then—just as suddenly—the fog shut in again, and the darkness reigned supreme.

But one glimpse of the home harbor light

was enough for Lee at any time, and in an instant the foresail sheet was loosed and the *Wildflower* was paying off for home.

The skipper had just gone below to lay off the course, and had just pencilled the line he would take, when the mate called down the companion, and in a voice evidencing no little alarm, shouted: "Skipper, there's some one calling; I heard it as plain as I heard you just now." "Calling out here? Nonsense," the captain answered. "Put her S. W. southerly for twenty minutes, then take another sounding."

"Skipper," said the mate, "it was a voice I heard. I swear it, so help me God. Come up and listen."

The mate was evidently frightened. So the skipper once more climbed on deck to satisfy him, angry, however, that a single moment should be lost which might make his bearing of the light less valuable. There was so much noise going on on deck, with the water lashing the sides and the gale shrieking through the cordage, that it was easy enough to mistake a creaking gooseneck, or a speaking block for a human voice. But even as they listened, faintly, but clearly enough to ears trained as were these men's, a human voice came out of

the raging blackness from the direction of the breakers on the sands outside them.

It seemed sheer folly to try and do anything. If it were any one alive, nothing could be done till morning now, and no one could live out a night like this on the Scroby sands in winter. Some of the crew, and even the mate, superstitious, were inclined to think it something supernatural; and while they listened and wondered, the *Wildflower* was still scudding before the wind on her new course. Home lay but half an hour distant now. To the young skipper, thinking of his wife and bairns waiting for him, it meant everything to make the harbor while still he could.

It was with no little surprise, therefore, they suddenly heard him shout out in no uncertain tones, "All hands stand by to 'bout ship." With a lurch and a heavy yaw, and not without shipping a nasty bulk of water, the staunch little craft once more came head to sea. "Foresail amidship," "lash her along," "hard down with the helm," "every man below but the watch," were the skipper's rapid orders. He was determined to claw as carefully to windward as he could, without inviting destruction. "The Lord had stood by me that night," he

told us afterwards, "and I was bound to stand by Him if I lost the ship for it."

A whole hour must have passed before the *Wildflower* had regained the ground lost in a few minutes. To the skipper taking a hundred chances of being swept overboard, as his little vessel worked to windward in that sea, it must have seemed a life-time. But he got his reward at last. Once more the weird sound came over the noise of the waters, and less acute ears than his needed no confirmation that it was the wail of a human voice that was calling for help from the sands.

"Foresail a-weather; let her lie dead," he shouted. "Get a sounding and see if we can get near enough to make anything out."

"Ten fathoms," was the answer. "If it's a wreck on the bank, she must be nearer us than that would make the bank. We must head off till morning, unless the fog clears."

It was a cruel night for the little vessel, and of incessant watchfulness for her crew, as they headed on and off the bank all night long, trying to keep about the same spot by watching the soundings. Several times during the night great angry combers found their way aboard, any one of which, had they been able to hit the

little *Wildflower* fair and squarely, would have sent all aboard to death in five minutes.

When daylight at length broke, nothing was to be seen over that watery waste, nor, peer into that exasperating fog as they might, could they see a thing; while the voice had not been heard since midnight.

Precious hours of daylight once more were going by, and even the skipper began to think it something supernatural; when suddenly, as the *Wildflower* ventured once more as for a last effort nearer to the edge of the bank, there seemed to spring up out of the water, almost alongside of the vessel, looming enormous in that fog, what appeared to be a huge cross, and lashed to it was the body of a young man. The illusion was only momentary. The men recognised it at once as the royal mast and yard of a large ship. The other spars had probably been washed away. There was no trace of anything else but this gigantic cross. The vision closed as quickly as it opened, and already again there was nothing but dense fog and the waste of raging waters.

And now a still greater difficulty presented itself. How in such a sea-way could they ever hope to save this man? A little of that manoeuvering, that it takes a sailor to accom-

plish, and then once more the great spar came into sight. Carefully working to windward, the boat was thrown over the side. Three volunteers at once jumped into her, and dropped her slowly down towards the spar. The man had evidently observed the manoeuvre, for he had changed his position on the cross, and had begun to unwrap the lashings that held him. But, as carried on a big sea, the boat drove by, it became quite obvious that by no possible means could they stop to get the perishing man into it. With the intuitive resourcefulness of sailors, however, they sang out to him as they drove by: "Drop into the water as we pass next time. Be ready to drop—to drop."

The *Wildflower* had now paid off and run to leeward of the boat, where she now lay waiting to pick her up. For Harry had grasped the situation and was ready to execute it long before the men told him their arrangements. After slowly beating to windward, towing by a long line the small boat, it was once more allowed to drift down towards the spar. It was a moment of intense excitement to all who were actors in this weird drama. But—sure enough—as if he were inspired of God—the poor fellow dropped from his perch

into the boiling sea, just as the boat approached. There was just one chance in a thousand for his life, and that one he took. Surely it must have been ordained that that life should be saved, for even as he sank beneath water the boat flew by on a big sea. Even those iron-nerved men held their breath —and then a great shout—for the iron grip of the mate had grasped him, and held him as in a vice. One heave of that brawny arm, and a lad of nineteen lay in the bottom of the *Wildflower's* boat, itself now half full of water.

While the little *Wildflower* headed for home, those mere fishermen, tender as women, nursed back to life before the cabin fire, with blankets, massage, and warm tea, the man they had saved. Eagerly they chafed his limbs. Joyfully they saw signs of life returning. Even before the pier heads were turned, they had learned it was a large barque that had driven right across the Scroby sands, beaten in her bottom, and sunk in deep water. All hands had perished, as the other spars to which they were clinging had one by one "gone by board." This poor fellow had seen nothing of the *Wildflower* when he called. He had just cried out in his agony, and it had "pleased God

to hear him and deliver him out of his distress."

When Harry Lee was asked why he "hove-to" all that dark, dirty night, on so small a chance, he replied: "Hadn't the Lord just showed He was standing by me. I heard Him plainly say: 'Stand by, Harry; stand by.' So I just stood by."

Harry was Admiral of the fleet when last I saw his cheery face. Many a "good bag of fish" he has had to thank the Lord for since that successful voyage. Many a stormy sea has he been brought safely through. But he tells me that never did God seem so near to him—so almost visible—as on that occasion.

"I suppose it was just when the opening in the fog came. He seemed nearest?" I said. "No, Doctor; no, not then. It was while we stood there 'purring' over that poor lad in the cabin, whose life we'd saved. To think that the Lord needs a man like me, Doctor, to help Him in them simple ways, too. That does make the Master seem very near, doesn't it, now?"

"You are right, Harry," I replied. "To serve one another is the road that always leads us closest to Him."

VI.

"Cui Bono."

IT was a veritable day of sick calls. From the Straits to the northwest of us two calls had come; from the bay to the south two calls had come; from the extreme point of land to the northeast, close to where the land's end projects into the Atlantic, two more had come. My colleague had left only two days previously for the west coast, and had that morning managed to send back a line to me saying a still more urgent call had switched him off to the little community that gathered round our lumber mill, where he would have to cross the country over some 70 miles of uninhabited wilderness if he wished to reach his original destination by the shortest route.

The climax was reached, when, just as I had decided which route to start on, a herder was brought in from our deer camp with a bad

axe cut in his foot. It so happened my second team of dogs was also away, this time with two men specially appointed constables, for we keep no regulars in stock. They were seeking a couple of troublesome fellows whom we wanted for trial the following afternoon. Procurable teams are as scarce here at this season of the year as vegetable food will be by the end of March. But, as Providence would have it, just as I got through the essential work at hospital next morning, a good friend of mine with a fine smart team passed near enough to be commandeered, and an hour later we were whisking off to the northward over a good hard snow trail. Our path led us over high barrens, whence as we swept down through a notch in the hills the still standing foremast of an old wreck caught my driver's eye, and he suddenly broke the silence. "Is you'se going to give Harry a call, Doctor?" It was a reflex from the stimulus of the old wreck. For all the shore knew Harry had speculated in her and hadn't yet in two years succeeded in tearing a single plank off her *solis sida.*

"A spell would do the dogs good," I replied. "I'm for going." A reply our knowing little leader seemed to have anticipated,

for she needed but a single shout of "Kp orf" —which is dog lingo for "keep off"—and our komatik, swinging to the right, was flying down the decline, and a moment later the dogs brought up abruptly at Harry's wood pile. Every dog on the shore knows the one and only place dogs go to in this village while their masters halt half an hour for some mysterious purpose. So accustomed on this account are all the inhabitants in this isolated village to seeing visitors, that our arrival aroused no interest. Even Harry's own dogs scarcely troubled to get up and enjoy the customary fight with strangers.

As we sat round with our cups of tea we ventured on the usual apology for billeting ourselves freely upon our friend. For the first time in his whole life he was *hors de combat*—stretched out on the humble wood settle with that trouble of so many sailor men, a "kink in the back." His is that inimitable smile that never comes off. But this time it really was mixed with an irrepressible comical twinge, as now and again the enemy in the back called for recognition. "In spite of the poor fishery, Harry, I see the old mast still points to your free hotel." He laughed and said: "Oh, you'se only the fourth lot to-day,

IT WAS A VERITABLE DAY OF SICK CALLS

Doctor, and you're more than welcome this time. I didn't like to trouble you, but now you is here, you might have a pill or a plaster of something to do my back good." "If we were only the fourth to visit you to-day, how many do you expect to make tea for on an ordinary day?"

"Well," said his wife from the stove, where she was putting a further polish on the already spotless tea-pot, "I gets fairly tired of making tea sometimes, there's enough drunken in this house to float that old schooner long ago. I counted forty-eight that came one day to us this fall." Her remarks seemed greatly to amuse our host. "You has to do it or get out," he interrupted. "You can't see a fellow sitting looking on and doing nothing like an owl on hill top. I minds one week I hauled a whole bag o' hard bread on a Monday. It ought to have lasted us three months. But come Saturday night there weren't enough left for 'brew's' for Sunday morning breakfast, and that was beyond all the loaf the old woman could bake in six days. It's mighty hard to last out alongside the komatik track."

Time only permitted altogether a few minutes delay, and while the dogs were being reharnessed, I hurried down to see one or two

sick folks in the little cottages, around whose inmates had suddenly taken to the fortuitous presence of a doctor. The sunshiny optimism of our host, however, had itself been well worth the doctor, and it sent us on our way feeling kinder toward the world in general. A few more miles covered, a frozen arm of the sea crossed, a long shoot down a steep hillside onto a pretty harbor under steep cliffs, and the loud shouts of a man running out after us over the moor, indicated the direction of our first patient's house. It was the usual poor house of a young man with a large family, not yet old enough to help him. The little outer room literally crowded (as is the custom of the countryside) with all the neighbors sympathizing. 'Twas scarcely divided from the inside room by a crazy single board partition. In contrast to the religious silence that always reigns outside at these times came the sudden sharp cries of a patient delirious from brain trouble due to tuberculosis.

It is no easy matter to make a diagnosis that satisfies one's own mind under circumstances of this kind, which to one conscious of the increasing exactness rendered possible by up-to-date science, distresses one, quite as much as it perplexes. But when it come to treatment,

and one felt the terrible issues at stake, for the little children who looked for food to this man fighting for his life, one felt increasingly miserable. The poor fellow was too ill to carry to hospital, with the snow and ice as rotten as it is now becoming. There could be no nurse or skilled assistant to carry out one's orders here, and anyhow, none of the little requisites for such a case was procurable. As I return to my dogs and sledge to run away, as it were, and leave this weight of sorrow behind me, I craved eagerly for the cause of the optimism of our friend of the morning, rather than for the forgetfulness of the sorrows of others which serves to solace some folk. For that cause I know to be the simple natural trust of a child in a Father above who loves him and over-rules all for good.

But a new kind of sorrow was to engage our attention next, and it came as a sharp contrast to this, for it was all of man's making. For many years a feud had existed between two of the larger families of this northern peninsula. These are rare troubles in this cold climate. But here, like those elsewhere, once they get started, they do not fail to grow till misunderstanding led to misrepresentation, mistrust, and reprisal had been met by reprisal,

and now two actions for damages, the first we knew of anywhere around here, were awaiting settlement.

For my part, it had been with great reluctance I had ever assumed the function of judge over men. But if might is not to mean right, then service of no mean importance can be rendered at times, even among our people, services which they could have no means of obtaining were some one not willing to voluntarily fill that office. We are far too scattered to maintain a paid judge of our own, and too busy to quarrel, or even worry with settling old strifes when communication is open in summer and when it would be possible for a judge to come to us. It was too late to begin a trial this day, so gathering all hands from far and near we tried to inculcate with the magic lantern that we had carried along with us some sorely needed lessons in public health, emphasized by just such sorrowful instances as that in the house we had last visited.

The excitement of a real trial is here sufficiently novel as yet to afford trees and even traps a day's rest, if news is carried round in time. Our evening's assembly coming from every direction took good care such a titbit of news should not be allowed to escape for want

of telling. The result was evident when next morning in the school house, commandeered for the occasion, I found myself facing practically all the worthies of the countryside, arrayed in their Sunday best, filling every spare inch of space in our impromptu court house.

The problems were none of them easy of solution to us. Neither plaintiff nor defendant having had any previous experience of this kind, it was necessary to permit several informal adjournments of each case, while some important but forgotten witness was summoned. While our special constables journeyed hither and thither one of the other cases was proceeded with, so that I found afterwards some of our local oracles even had got mixed up as to which case was actually being tried. We are not, alas, a studious people, and as the process of cross-questioning droned on, the "public," accustomed to come rapidly to conclusions by intuitive processes, began to show the usual local signs of failing interest. I was forced to call the attention of the court to their method of betraying this fact, and that just over their heads, in large, plain letters, was printed the trite aphorism, "Don't spit," because the ravages of tuberculosis on even so healthy a coast

as this are very considerable, and had been only too vividly impressed upon me again at the bedside of the friend we had just left. So unconscious do the offenders become of their habit of spitting that I have been forced to arrest and prosecute a friend for spitting in the church of which he was a most devoted adherent, and to reprimand a visitor who had scarcely finished chiding his own son for spitting, on my complaining of the offense, before in his own excitement he was himself guilty of the same act.

To maintain the interest and impress on as large an audience as possible the lessons I hoped the cases would teach them, when the hour came for dinner I told them the judgments in all the cases would be given at the end of the proceeding in the afternoon—like prizes at a race meeting—a device which acted well, for I found every man had his mind made up, and was really only waiting to hear the punishments meted out.

At length when everything that ought to be said, or could be said, had been said by everyone that could contribute, or thought he could contribute, to make things either clearer or more muddled, we summed up exactly as if making a diagnosis. One of the defendants,

a local trader, and another local trader's wife, were found guilty of malicious slander; the third defendant won his case. The local importance of the two convicted, and the long-deferred end of this unusual occurrence, had worked up an excitement, which was very evident as I scanned the faces of the crowd. It was just what I had hoped might be the result; or if our people are not interested, it would be just as well to waste wisdom on so many codfish, for they possess an unique capacity for absenting their minds when their bodies are present, almost as some have in church when "sitting under" a sermon. The law regarding the fine or imprisonment which the magistrate might inflict was first read—then explained—then re-read and re-explained, in order to impress on all present the serious view the law of man takes of the act of speaking evil. The Bible view, the sin of the thing as among God's children, was then pointed out—a view on which our people lay much more stress than even fear of man's law inspires—and lastly, the crime against the obligations which had been solemnly accepted by these two men as brothers in the same lodge of a great society was also referred to. This, judging from the time and energy devoted to it,

only ranks second in importance in their minds to the Mosaic law. To the court, the defendant and plaintiff, it was then explained, that the judge got no fees for his work, so silver and gold had not induced him to devote so long a time to the trial. As a judge's decision is always without exception torn to pieces by local wiseacres, it could not be a desire for popularity either that actuated him. It was reasonable to suppose, therefore, it was undertaken with a desire to do some good.

My nearest colleague on the bench is a schoolmaster, living some sixty miles away, and it was explained quite clearly that he might look on the law as a retributive agent to metaphorically flog evildoers, while a doctor must be pardoned for regarding it as a remedial agent and intended to cure the wrong it is applied to. It was then suggested to the crowd that each one should for one minute consider what would be his own verdict if it were intended to prove a benefit for the community.

It was pointed out that the best result that could accrue from this trial would obviously be a lasting friendship between the hostile families, so that once more people who worshipped side by side might say the Lord's Prayer with somewhat less compunction. The plaintiff, it

was said, had expressed his sentiments by saying that the best day in his life would be if he could see the defendant fined fifty dollars, while the court was very well aware that such a fine would be a very serious matter to the defendant's family. Nor would the law be justifying its existence and evincing its prestige by making the quarrel ten times greater and in addition injuring innocent persons. Could the seizing of fifty paltry dollars be a testimonial to the law's efficiency as a remedial agent? In the second case it was practically a family affair, and in this small isolated community even brothers and sisters were letting years of life slip by without so much as speaking to one another. What satisfaction would it be if the result of the work done was to make this quarrel still more bitter, and probably, seeing the age of the parties, effectually prevent any possibility of reconciliation during the remainder of their stay on earth?

The plaintiff was asked if he would be satisfied with a frank and free apology made before the assembled court and a promise in each case that henceforth they would all endeavor to live as those who call God their Father ought to do—in peace and harmony. He was told it was probably the one chance of his life to

show that there dwelt in his own heart, anyhow, the spirit, which in his case he complained so bitterly had not been exhibited towards himself. The excitement of the court rose to fever pitch, as the plaintiff, under considerable excitement, now took council of the judge. When at length he suddenly rose, walked across the floor and shook hands with his enemy, the court couldn't longer contain its feelings. In spite of the vigorous suppression of all conversation or comment during the trial, a very new experience to most of these men, every one burst into loud applause, and in less than two minutes the majority of my audience were lighting innumerable pipes outside in the dusk with their heads all in a bunch.

I have never found it easy to speak harshly to a woman. But the second defendant needed it, and I did my best. She is a really kind-hearted woman and already gray-haired—but with the unfortunate affliction of a tongue that is too long. The circumstances under which advice is given has a good deal to do with its effectiveness, and the psychical effect of the presence of all one's neighbors in one large crowd is not to be overlooked. It was some little trouble to collect my court again. But

our cool atmosphere outside came to my assistance, and it was easy to tell their presence, and it helped in no small degree to carry home the lesson. The troublesome symptoms of long tongues were referred to, the danger to a community of that trouble getting into it was emphasized. The expense to purse and personality of long tongues was not merely stated, but reiterated. The plaintiff this time only refused to be the first to cross the floor. This caused some little trouble, for the old lady, in her sudden contrition, forgot she had to get pardon, and commenced by freely forgiving the plaintiff. However, after a fresh start matters were satisfactorily adjusted, and for the first time in many years these two relatives and neighbors went home together. Part of the sentence was that they were to have tea together in the plaintiff's house the next night, but as I had to leave for my distant little hospital by daylight, I was not able to be a guest at this feast.

It was a chill and bitter morning and dawn was only just breaking as I once more drove off to the forlorn little house of the sick man I had been called to. On my arrival, I guessed that matters were no better. It didn't take long to convince me that the victory here lay

with the enemy, and that the end was not far off. The poor wife and children couldn't fully realize yet all that this would mean to them down here. It would mean, at any rate, all that the most irreparable loss could mean to mortals anywhere. As I drove over the high barrens behind the swinging team of dogs, the exhilarating stimulus of the exquisite air made one feel what a glorious thing life is. It made it seem doubly sad that this father of a young family should be called thus suddenly to leave it in the prime of life. And yet, the very beauty of life made it sure that God on high ruled wisely. It was good to think that at least death's real sting, which I still believe to be conscious wrong doing, was absent from this case. Meanwhile the very pathos of the thing made the other cases seem doubly piteous. Here we are allowed at best but a brief sojourn on earth—the making that stay hideous by acts of our own folly has nothing whatever to plead for itself. I was returning with the consciousness of failure in the first case. It was a little comfort to be able to hope that a lesson had been taught in the second that through "only the law" might possibly prove a real measure of grace in some one's life.

VII.

Queer Problems for a Missionary.

MY little hospital steamer, the Strathcona, was pouring out a cloud of black smoke as she still lay at anchor off the Fur Trading Company's post in North Labrador—she was getting steam to carry us once more down the bay, not to come north again till the long months of winter had rolled away, and the ice, which was already strong on the fresh water ponds, should have yielded to the June sun.

The agent, who had recently come to the post, was watching the weighing-in and calling of a boat-load of salmon that a belated dealer had brought in over night.

"Morning," he shouted cheerily, as I tied up the dingey and started up the ladder. "You aren't going to leave us yet, are you?" he asked, looking at the smoke issuing in a steady stream from our funnel.

"It looks like it," I answered. "Why do you ask? Is there anything more I can do for you?" "Well, I can't break a limb to have an excuse for keeping a sawbones around," he laughed, "and I haven't any more appendices to offer, but I wanted to talk to you about Tommy Mitchell and his family."

"If you'll come along and give that poor fellow a chance to get one salmon through as 'No. 1,' I'll be all ears." He laughed good-humoredly, and we started arm in arm to walk up and down the big raised wood platform.

"Full speed ahead, old friend—I'll have to make tracks when the whistle goes—you know we've no fuel to throw away." "It's this way, Doctor, Old Tom has been at the post every Saturday now for two months. He's dead broke. I've allowed him twenty pounds of dry flour a week for himself and his five children. He hasn't a salmon or a codfish to turn in, and he owed more than he can ever pay when I came here. My wife was down to see the family last week, and I'm bothered if Mrs. Tom hadn't flown in the face of Providence with a sixth baby. A woman can't nurse babies on dry flour, and Tom hasn't a farm at his disposal. We offered to take the baby

and nurse it here for her for a couple of months, but she wouldn't part with it, and there isn't tinned milk here for her to feed it with."

Just at that moment a jet of steam shot up from the Strathcona, and almost immediately her shrill whistle, echoing and re-echoing from the cliffs, warned us to come to the point. "What can I do to help out?" I asked. "Why, call in and see them on your way, can't you?" "Where are they now?" "Somewhere on the island off Napaktok Point." "Have they a house there?" "No, nor a tent either—they are camping under their own hats, if they have any, it seems."

"Well, good-bye till we meet again—thanks for Tom's address. The island is a large one, but we'll try and find him and send you word what we do. There's the whistle again—I shall be in trouble—good-bye again." "Good-bye," he shouted, and the kindly little agent started off to haul down the famous "Pro Pelle Cutem" flag to salute our departure. After only an hour's steaming we were opposite the north end of Tom's island, so I gave the engine room "stand by," and, telling my skipper to "heave to," and keep a good offing till I returned, we lowered away our dory, and with

"Bill," my stalwart mate, I rowed in to the land.

"Do you see anything like a house anywhere, Bill? Your eyes are better than mine, I know." "No, sir, I sees nothing," Bill said. "I didn't expect you to do as well as that. However, let me know when you see something like a house. I want to find the residence of Thomas Mitchell and his family."

We started to row almost round the island—for there was a stiff head wind, and dories are light on the water. Cove after cove went by—headland succeeded headland—and only the certainty: "Well, it must really be round the next corner," kept us toiling at it.

"There's a smoke, sir," said Bill at last, staring into a rather larger cove than usual. "Come on, Bill. If you can see nothing, I can't—where is it?"

Bill was right, however—there was a feeble smoke fighting its way up the side of a precipice face, but no sign of any residence could we see.

However, we landed, hauled up our boat, and went on a voyage of discovery, till at last we ran down a little fire-place in the open, by which sat a gaunt woman with a wizened baby on one arm, and stirring a sorry looking

gruel in what appeared to be an old paint can with the other hand. "Good morning. Where's the tent?" I asked. "There she is," replied the woman, pointing with the gruel stick to a sorry roofing of matting and patches of canvas, which was stretched over some well-trodden mud against the cliff face. "Why do you cook in the open?" "'Cos we hasn't got no stove." "Where's Tom?" "He's away wid Johnnie trying to shoot a gull—here, Bill, run and fetch yer dad, and tell him Doctor wants 'un"—whereupon a half-naked urchin of about nine years promptly disappeared into the bushes. "What's the matter with the baby?" I asked. "Hungry," she replied. "I hasn't no milk to give him." She proceeded to show me the baby, which kept whimpering continually, like a little lamb bleating. "It's half-starved," I said. "What do you give it?" "Flour and berries," was her answer. "I chews the loaf first, or it ain't no good for him"—thus showing she had discovered a physiological truth.

A little girl of about five and a boy of seven now emerged from behind the tent, where they had fled upon our arrival. Both were, to all intents and purposes stark naked, and yet as brown and fat as Rubens' cherubs. It

was snowing a little, and the cold had overcome their shyness and driven them to seek the warmth of the fire. "I'm glad to see the other children are fat," I said. "They bees eatin' berries all the time," she replied. "What's t' good of t' gover'ment," she suddenly demanded. "Here is we all's starvin', and it's ne'er a crust they gives yer—there bees a sight o' pork and butter in t' company's store—but it's ne'er a sight of 'im us ever gets —what are them doin'? T' agent, he says he can't give Tom no mor'n dry flour—and folks can't live on dat." I was beginning to unfold to her the functions of a government, when a shuffling figure, with a very old, rusty, single-barrel, muzzle-loading gun, followed by two boys, appeared on the scene. He was somewhat shame-faced, I thought, carrying a dead sea-gull by one wing.

"You've had some luck, Tom," I remarked, inwardly referring to the fact that he had safely discharged the antique weapon without doing destruction at the wrong end. "It's only a kitty," he replied, "and I've been a-sittin' out on t' point all day." A "kitty" is only a small gull, and Tom's tone of contempt was actuated entirely by the size of the victim. Tom's standard of values was graded solely

by bulk, and involved no reflection whatever on the variegated assortment of flavors that these scavengers succeed in combining in one carcase.

"The gun isn't heavy enough to kill the big gulls, I suppose." "I hasn't much powder," he replied, "and ne'er a bit o' shot. I mostly puts a handful o' they round stones in her—t' hammer don't always set her off, neither. Her springs bees too old, I reckon," he said, playing with that extremely loosely attached appendage in a way that made me ask him to let me hold the weapon for a minute while I looked at it. Needless to say, I took good care to keep it in my hands till our business was through.

The truth is, Tom was reared on a truck system of trade, and had been all his life a dependent of others. He had never had the incentive to really look out for himself, for he had never been able to get clear of debt. This, and his Eskimo blood, left him bereft of all initiative, and so incapable, except when under orders from others, of earning a livelihood.

"Tom," I said, "I want to help you—winter is coming on, and you have nothing whatever to face it with. The only thing I can think of is for you to let me take charge of your two

little boys, 'Billy' and 'Jimmy,' and the little girl. I'll feed them and clothe them, and send them to school till they can come back and help you along—and so long as they are with me I'll do my best to help you along also. They will certainly starve here during the winter—the snow is covering up the berries already, and you have nothing else." But poor Tom made no answer. He simply stood, his mouth wide open, and stared into space. "T' Doctor wants to take t' children," broke in the sharp-tongued wife. "Don't youse hear what un says? T'is the gover'ment that ought to feed 'em here, I says. I wouldn't let no children o' mine go, I wouldn't"—and she cuddled the wizened babe up closer, as if I had been about to pounce on that bag of bones and fly off with it like an eagle.

It took quite a long while to convince her that what a government "ought to do" would not feed six children—especially as that government was so far away that we couldn't expect an answer before Christmas if we wrote to them. As for Tom, the intricacies of the problem had entirely failed to penetrate his dullard cranium, and yet, perplexed as he was, he showed the great wisdom of saying nothing.

"Why doesn't youse say something?" his irate spouse at last insisted. "Bees you a-goin' to let t' Doctor have youse childer?" But Tom only looked more and more puzzled, and merely reflected by taking off his hat and scratching his head.

Matters seemed to have come to a deadlock, when Tom, with a burst of eloquence suddenly ejaculated, "I suppose he knows." Backed by this moral support, I again advanced to the attack, and at length succeeded in extracting from Mrs. Tom: "Well, youse can take Billy, I suppose, if you wants un."

During this prolonged debate my excellent mate had not ventured on a single word, though he was, in spite of his athletic dimensions, a most tender hearted father of many children. At this juncture, however, he cast propriety to the winds, and butted full into the debate by simply seizing the struggling Billy and putting him, kicking, under one arm, for he had in his mind the cheerful little Children's Home we had built near our southern hospital, and was familiar with the wonderful transformations that had been enacted there in other children that had been entrusted to us. But I had yet a hope of saving more of the children, and profiting by the evident resentment

of Billy to be isolated from those he was familiar with, I pressed home on the mother how terribly lonely one child alone would be. I soon perceived that my logic was having its effect on her defenses, and with fresh vigor proceeded to show her the advisability of sending a bunch together for company's sake. But I seemed somehow to make no headway till Tom, whose eyes had been glued to his struggling offspring, once more came to my rescue with his philosophy.

What it was impressed him so strongly, I can't yet say, but he broke in most opportunely once more with his "I says *he* knows what's for t' best," and then as promptly relapsed into the impregnable position of a deaf mute. I had already occupied much time—the snowstorm was all the while growing heavier, and white horses were capping the sea, to match the fast growing whiteness of the land. The "Strathcona," which had followed us round the island, was evidently very uneasy, and already had blown her whistle several times to hurry us up. A final promise of a better gun for Tom, with a stock of powder and shot, of some spare old clothes for all the rest of the family, and of a note to the agent to give work, if the worst came to the worst,

induced Mrs. Tom to consent at last to my having "Jimmy" as well as "Billy."

The subtlest argument I could advance seemed to make no impression on the enemy. I compared the tent with our fine house—I pointed to the mere semblance of a boat that was all they had to convey their family over a hundred miles in up to their winter station. I spoke of fine clothes, the schooling, etc., that we would give the baby girl if only she was allowed to come with us, and did my best to save her from the seeming starvation ahead of her. But all my blandishments fell on deaf ears—nothing I could say would tempt Tom to emerge again from his impenetrable silence, and I had at length to acknowledge discomfiture. My faithful mate, Bill, however, who had halted half way to the beach with his first prize, had no intention of risking the acquisition of a second, and long before I was through with the arrangements he was climbing into our dory with Billy under one arm and Jimmy under the other, their protesting lower extremities that stuck out behind notwithstanding.

We did not, however, fail to make good the rest of our bargain. The entire remnant of the family were conducted on board the

"Strathcona". They were fitted out with suitable clothing from the stock sent me by friends, and part of which is always in the strong box on the mission steamer's deck; besides which, some of my generous seamen contributed from their kits. A gun was loaned to Tom—his own old relic was overhauled and repaired by our engineer, to be given to John, the eldest boy, who was big enough to help with the hunt. Powder and shot were produced, tins of condensed milk were extracted from the ship's stock for the baby, our second axe was donated to their impoverished equipment, and indeed, a heterogeneous collection, which included some needles and thread, soap, and other trifles in a couple of oil bags that had been sent us for sailors' use, all found their way into the Mitchell family's dilapidated houseboat. Before they left the paternal mate had Billy and Jimmy on shore in so well advanced a state of scrubbing and hair cutting, that Tom and his wife would have less difficulty in recognizing them when they shall return in the days to come. For this last impression of them, scrubbed and in clean clothes, formed a very marked contrast with that which they presented in their rags on the island.

The boys soon got over a very, very short

attack of homesickness, and neither of them was in the least affected by the tossing and the tumble of the sea.

Already Jimmy and Billy are numbered among the best scholars we have in our home. They are bright, affectionate, laughing boys—Billy a veritable Saxon, with his light hair and blue eyes. Jimmy takes after his mother, having the black hair and deep brown eyes of his Eskimo extraction. As they rush down to greet us now, and "purr" out their affection like pleased kittens, we shudder to think of what might have happened if we hadn't "happened along" at the beginning of the winter.

But, after all, do things just happen by chance? Or does the love of our Father above us watch over the least of these little ones; and is it to His love we owe these unequaled opportunities of tasting the real joys of life. Christ the Master said of all such, "Let the little ones come unto me"—and it is one of the profoundest joys of those who believe that in their own lives can live again the spirit of the Master, who was the word or message of God's love to his children, to believe also that He considers love shown to the least of these, His little ones, as really shown to Himself. Faith that man really has opportunity to

achieve things for God is the real incentive that the twentieth century world needs to attract every man into His service—that is, to follow him.

VIII.

"Every Little Helps."

WE had been invited to dine in one of the best houses in the city just before leaving once again for our northern district. Winter was already as far advanced as we dare let it be before sailing. Even now the time had already passed when it had been last year any longer possible for the plucky little mail boat to force her way as far as our northern port, owing to the rapidly forming ice, and it was only the telegraphic advice from Newfoundland of the exceptionally mild fall that permitted us to linger so late.

Naturally our thoughts were much on the conditions that awaited us, and while the superb ornate furnishings pleased the eye, and course following course of the menu furnished the most subtle and inviting satisfaction to the

palate, and the cultured conversation was of those at whose feet one might at any time be glad to sit and listen, still none of these furnished bonds strong enough to check our minds from roaming to far different scenes, where homes are furnished only with things essential, where the most important question concerning food is, can sufficient be obtained to nourish, and where culture necessarily is that of a life schooled close to nature, and talk is limited by the simple mental evolution rendered possible by a life in the woods and on the sea, with often no opportunity of acquiring the three "R's."

Our distinguished host happened to be an authority on scientific dietetics, and conversation having turned to an attempt we are making to secure a milk supply by importing and herding Lapland reindeer, the methods of sterilizing and preserving milk for children was discussed. Our host spoke in the very highest terms of the great success of the method known as the "Hatmaker process," of which we had no practical experience. The most eloquent tribute he paid it, however, was next day when I found in my office a large box bearing the appropriate title of "Mammala," and containing many tins of the dried and ster-

ilized milk, which had been sent as a gift by him towards our baby-food problem.

We had reached our destination some time. It was now in the very depths of winter, snow lay six feet on the ground, and with us days are short and nights long. Owing to driving snow, it had been gloomy outside all day. I had been on a long round of visits among our people, and had just got home. Indeed, I could still hear the angry conversation of my sledge dogs, who were having difficulties over the seal carcass that had been thrown into their pen for supper, like the modern Daniel into a den of lions.

Personally, I hate to confess to being tired, even to myself. But after a winter's journey here, even if it is only of one day's duration, a log fire on an open hearth, and a comfortable pair of shoes, have, I admit, begun to have attractions peculiarly their own, especially tonight with the contrast outside.

There were still the day's medicines to make up and the "little things" accumulated during the day to see to, and the hospital rounds to make, as my colleague had been away some three weeks with his dogs; so I did not positively welcome the information that a man from a village to the north of us was waiting

to see me. Here, however, is just where to-day real Christ-following finds its test and its triumphs. I did my best to at least look as if I were glad to see him. He was an old friend, of our sturdiest and best type. He still had keen eyes, under shaggy eyebrows, long since adapted in their color to this northern environment, while his plentiful crop of crisp curly hair would hardly any longer pass for a "silver gray"; the color of all others our trappers are glad to see when a fox is snared in their traps. "Uncle Ephriam! Well, whatever is it brings you out here to-night?" "To see you, Doctor," he replied. "To tell the truth, me and the old woman's in trouble." "No sickness, I hope—well, isn't she?" "Yes, Mary is well, Doctor, and yet—no she isn't. 'Deed I can't hardly tell you, Doctor, for I don't know how to say it. But, Doctor, Mary will be a mother this week—and us knowed nothing about it."

A week or more later a pale, forlorn-looking girl followed Uncle Ephriam into my study. "I've brought her over to see you herself, Doctor; I didn't know no other way," he said, and there was an inexpressible sadness in his voice. There is no need to narrate this interview. It was the old, old story, where duty to self and to loved ones, and to God is forgotten in the

yielding to one great passion. It was only the same tragedy that the moth at evening enacts around the open light. Everything is forgotten or unheeded till suddenly the singed wings no longer support the weight they have carried. The hollow sham of it all is of a sudden hideously revealed, and downfall and disaster faces us, and that, alas, before the steps of folly can be retraced.

The baby was *not* wanted. Poor little mite, it was just a speck of wailing humanity, and "Aunt Eliza, and all who'd seed it, said it couldn't live anyhow." But though natural instincts may not always insure proper care being taken of helpless infants, our law is still sufficiently potent to provide for that emergency. The father was traced and summoned. His whole visible punishment being to have to find the pittance the law considers essential for maintaining the life of the child. The poor baby was still, however, *not* wanted. It thus became one function of the court to suitably dispose of it. It seemed an odd perquisite for an amateur judge to be called on to administer such a property. Of older children, found derelict, I had annexed already quite a number, but what could I do with this helpless burden? Volunteers, however, were found in a young

couple who were qualified by the position they had obtained through successful fishing, and who, being themselves childless, were moved to desire in their home the child, life that God, in his good Providence, had till now withheld from them. So the problem seemed solved, and there was every likelihood of our settling down into the usual routine of work again.

Christmas trees on our coast don't always bear their fruits by Christmas Day. For though Santa Claus is presumably a past master in ice and snow problems, there are difficulties connected with winter travel on this coast that we find every winter makes him late at some of the smaller villages. Thus it happened just a week later that this welcome stranger whose visits were angelic, as well in their rarity as in the joy they bring, came to Uncle Ephriam's village. It also happened that I was called to meet him there once more. As we finished dressing the tree, and were looking round for a free hotel for supper before the children came, I noticed a man waiting patiently outside the door.

"Good evening, Doctor."

"Good evening, friend. Where do you come from?"

"You knows me, Doctor. It is Andrew.

Jess wants you to come and see your baby. It's going to die, I'm a-feared, after all."

"Why, Andrew, I didn't know you in the dark. I'll come right over now, and Jessie shall get me a cup o' tea."

"That's right, Doctor, she'll be ever so glad to see you."

It is only a little cottage, but ever so neat and tidy. When I entered a bright fire was burning in the grate, and a steaming kettle singing its joyful anthem in defiance of the cold outside in general, and of Santa Claus in particular. He, for private reasons, was solemnly endeavoring to hide a large bag of duck's feathers under the somewhat dilapidated old hospital dressing gown, which allowed room even for his broad shoulders, but clearly called elsewhere for more rotundity than his anatomy was designed to supply.

"What is the trouble with the baby, Jessie? I heard you thought the world of it. Surely you can't be wanting me to tell you which is the right end of it?" "The baby is all right, I thinks, Doctor, but we has no cow, and nothing to give it—except pork and molasses and loaf, and that don't seem to suit it." "Well, that's odd. I'm quite sure Arctic babies could have insides made specially for the country, if you

had the planning of them, Jessie. It does seem a shame they can't live on ice and snow, when there's such a terrible lot of it around." "Uncle Ephriam sends us round a drop of milk for the evening, but he hain't got none worth while, and you knows there's none to be got here." While she talked she had lifted the child out of the clever little cradle, made out of half a flour barrel sawed lengthwise, which stood on rockers, cleverly made out of the heads, near the fire, and which looked more homely and comfortable than many a more ornate one I've seen in palaces elsewhere.

There was a sense of comfort sitting by that tidy fireplace added to by Andrew, who was laying the table for his wife. And the jingle of the tea things and the warmth of the fire made one "kind of drowsy." Yet the sense of human kinship so strongly stirred one's mind to think what I should feel if I were in their great dilemma that it caused a sense of sadness to pervade the little home, which even the now rotund and resplendent Santa Claus sitting in the settle opposite us failed to banish. No, Drummond is right; struggle for the life of others is a passion more deeply rooted in the human heart than that for our own existence.

The baby which she had brought over for me to examine, and which, poor little creature, showed no uncertain signs of lack of nourishment, was now back in its cradle, and Jessie was crooning over it, as she rocked it eagerly to and fro to try and soothe its crying for that which the claims of wise Mother Nature had made even it realize in its waking moments.

I sat gazing at the scene, and pondering how we could meet the emergency, and my eyes rested on the cradle, and slowly it began to captivate my attention. How obviously new it was. The cut edges of the wood were still white from the saw, and yet there was a harmony about it that synchronized with the surroundings. It was just as one would liked to have had it. And after all, what a clever cradle it was: The old barrel had been of plain cedar, and the cradle was without the gaudiness of paint. It had none of the specious trappings I have so often resented about the cradles of the wealthy. Its plain, uncurtained top collected no dust, and allowed a free play of air about the baby's face which pleased me greatly. A bright wool blanket, rising up above the sides, was all the adornment it possessed, or needed.

Cradles! How many I had seen of them, yet this was the first of its kind I had ever seen, and for utility and for dignity, well in the first rank of its clan anywhere. And so my mind went roaming off to cradles that I had seen from London to Land's End, from New York to San Francisco. But, no. As my spirit on its journey reached New York, it got switched off sharply, and there I saw myself once again sitting in evening dress in a modern palace, among a crowd of the city's wealthiest, and once more noticed that I was listening to some one telling of babies' food. He was evidently speaking of what he knew.

"Baby food," he said, "has almost been perfected now. You can carry so much in such a little space. It should be a great help surely to you in the Labrador, Doctor." "What food are you referring to?" I could hear myself say. "To milk dried on hot drums by the new process. Statistics show it to be better and softer for babies than the average cow's milk supplied in the cities. You certainly should try it among your northern people." And again my spirit had journeyed on, and now stood gazing at a large case on the floor of our city office, labelled in large black letters, "Mammala."

A LABRADOR FOUR-IN-HAND

Surely this very case was in my store-room now.

"Jessie," I said, so suddenly that had the baby been in her lap even she might have dropped it. "Jessie," I said, "Andrew will come home with me to-night, and in a fortnight we will have your baby a match even for Santa Claus here. I'm sure of it!" "Thank God if you is, Doctor. For us would dearly love to keep the baby."

The Christmas tree seemed to shine doubly bright that night, and the many excited shouts of the children seemed doubly sweet—all because there was just one more chance of success in the struggle for the life of others. Andrew came back with me, just to see me home; and left next morning early with some mysterious long tins safely stowed away in the "nonny" bag of sealskin that slung over his shoulders. As I saw him trudging away on his racquets, and felt sure of what such humble things could mean to these two lives on this lonely coast, I thanked God I was permitted by Him to enjoy a lot in life where the value of little things is emphasized; and where the sweetest joys on earth are in the reach of every man, even if he possess but one talent.

"Oh, yes, the baby is all right, Doctor. I'm going to haul it and Jess over with my dogs to show it you one of these days," Andrew shouted back to me a little later, as hurrying across the country with my trusty team I greeted a man whom we passed, working at a large load of firewood near the pathway, and who turned out to be our good friend with the baby.

Ten weeks later a letter bearing the official stamp of the Department of Justice was delivered by our belated mail from a small sailing boat. The early onset of warm weather had made it dangerous for the long series of dog teams that ordinarily carry our communications to venture with the last batch of letters of the winter. The long-hoped-for endorsement of the judgment had arrived. The baby's fate was finally sealed, and its prospects for the future fully justified energy voluntarily expended, affording a satisfaction which is considered sufficient remuneration for the amateur dispensation of justice in these wilds.

IX.

Kindly Hearts on Unkindly Shores.

SUMMER had nearly come to a close on the Labrador coast, and the hilltops and barrens were flecked with snow. In my little mission steamer I had already come four hundred miles south from the village on the edge of Hudson Bay Straits, which forms my turning post every season. I had left the sick and injured fishermen whom we had picked up on our northern trip in the little hospital on the group of islands at the mouth of Eskimo Bay, which stretches away for one hundred and thirty miles into the very heart of Labrador, and is the home of many scattered trappers and salmon fishers.

At this time of year most of the families are gathering towards the trading post, to settle up with the trader for the summer's catch. Whatever is owing to them, after they have turned in their salted salmon and codfish, is

taken up in food and other necessary supplies for the winter. This season has been a very hard one. Foxes and other fur-bearing animals had been scarce in winter, and few of the trappers had done more than pay for their advances of last fall. This failure had been allowed by a poor salmon fishery in the Bay, and to wind up with, a rough, stormy summer had not only caused the loss of many large schooners outside the Bay in the heavier waters of the North Atlantic, but had continued so rough that the small boats belonging to the baymen had had little chance to retrieve their fortunes with the codfish by going to the outside islands in pursuit of them.

The outlook for the long winter that was already looming ahead was gloomy, and I found my good friend, the trading agent, in a restless mood. "It's all very well being stationed here, Doctor," he said, "when there is enough to eat, and even a *little* pinch from the wolf won't hurt some of the grown-up men, but I tell you it's hard to see the children going hungry." "It seems to me," I replied, "that it will be more than an ordinary pinch some of them will get this time if something isn't done, for I met even so good a man as Fred Stewart going up to his winter trapping

grounds with not enough to last his big family till halfway to Christmas, and he certainly won't get much fur before then to help him out."

It so happened that very morning I had been standing in the store also while Willie Malcolm had been laying out the meager advance allowed him—for he had no balance coming to him, and his only assets were his debts. I had watched him hesitating between a warm pair of socks for the bare legs of his little girl "Dollie" and another pound or two of oleomargarine—he hadn't anything like enough for winter—and of course there isn't any other shop where you can buy anything.

It just went to my heart even to think of that sweet little face being pinched with hunger (and I'm not her father)—I could not bear to see her shivering with cold while I went spending money on things I didn't need—besides, how could you ask God to bless and take care of the child and then leave her naked while you ate candies. Poor Willie, he had kept taking up the stockings and putting them down again, and then he would look at the open tub of oleo—of course Dollie *need* not go out all winter—she *could* sit behind, or even under the stove, as I have seen other poor

children doing. But then his little girl would get weak and pale, and no one can tell what might happen then, for that is the forerunner so often of swellings and running sores and of death even—all strange to them, but we know to be due to tubercle.

But then if her father took the stockings he couldn't have the oleo, and the winter is so long and cold that if they had no fat food they might even not live through it all, and anyhow he himself would not be fit to hunt properly and face the exposures involved. I have known Willie Malcolm ever since he brought home his young wife, and as his little family came along I have been so glad to see the plucky fight he has made to keep independent. This morning he was so long making up his mind the storekeeper went off to look after another settler who had come in to trade. I knew quite well Willie wouldn't hesitate a minute if it was only a question of a luxury for himself and stockings for his little girl, because he had recently given up his pipe, the one and only companion of his long, lonely trails, so that he might throw in the few cents he saved by doing so. So I couldn't help feeling a kind of additional pity for him—indeed, I had to look out of the window and rub my

eyes at the sun, or the thick-headed storekeeper might have thought I was going to cry.

Wasn't it just worth living to be able to turn round again, when I'd got the dazzle out of my eyes, and ask Willie if he'd mind helping me choose a Christmas present for his "little girl," and when he said he "thought Dollie would like a pair of stockings," wasn't it grand to have "just enough" money to buy the two pairs. "Because you know Dollie would just love to have a pair to give Harry." This is one of those sermons any one can preach. Sermons aren't hard things to make, you know, if we really do love one another.

But when the storekeeper said to Willie, "You can take the whole of that tub along, Willie—I guess some one will pay some day," I believe I saw Willie trying to swallow something. But somehow I couldn't see very clearly either just then—people are silly, aren't they? But I think it was better far than buying heaps of candies. Don't you? And I know I felt as if I could easily walk ten miles when I got outside the store. Everybody loves preaching that kind of sermons.

Then again, there was Allan Wolfrey, also —with no less than eight children. He had been fishing outside the Bay, and he had done

fairly well. I had seen his bright little wife a week ago, and she had said: "Yes, Doctor, us'll have all *us* needs;" but then she had added, "still, you know, Doctor, there be them as has scarcely a bite now, and what'll become of ours, if they has to come to us to feed 'em as well as ours, I don't know. Jerry Deane has had to move his house the winter," she had chatted on. "He was so close to the winter road they fair ate him out o' house and home last winter. He's just *had* to move up the Bay or starve this time." This is because in Labrador, of course, no one pays anything for hospitality. All you do is to say, "Where am I going to sleep?" Then they know you are going to stay the night, and of course they say, "Wouldn't you like to take a cup o' tea?" No, I know a cup of tea isn't much to give you—just bread and butter and tea. But when it's all they've got, it's wonderful how it satisfies you, because they do give it so freely.

One time I had been staying with some fishermen for two or three days because a big snowstorm had made it impossible for my dogs to take me along on our route—I was visiting from place to place on a winter round. The morning I was to leave I found Tim O'Reilly, my host, had gone on ahead of me.

"What made Tim go ahead this morning?" I asked his wife. "Well, you know," she said, "he thought he would break a path for your dogs—'tis only twenty miles, anyhow, and the way's somewhat hard to find, and he thought maybe you might miss the road, there being no tracks left after the storm. And, indeed, he just wanted the fun of a drive, Doctor."

But I found afterwards that he had carried on a tin of condensed milk and some real sugar to give to John Samson, whose house he knew I was going to stay at, and who had done badly with fish. And as I just made him own up later, "Well, sure, you know, I didn't want John to feel a bit ashamed, and that's all about it."

Well, it did seem a terrible shame. Here was Allan's boat alongside the wharf as I walked along, and the poor fellow looking as if he were in trouble. I called out to his wife, who was climbing out of the boat with a bundle in her arms with baby No. 8 in it. "Good day, Susie, I thought you would be away up the Bay by now; what's brought you back?" "Allan had an accident, Doctor. He upset his boat and lost his gun and a lot of things—it might have been worse, thank God! for it was very rough, and he was holding onto the bot-

tom o' the boat for nigh an hour before they got him. Molly Davis saw the boat upset. There were only Allan in it, and she called her boys, and they got a boat out and went and got him, thank God!" she added, and a tear trickled down her cheek.

Poor Allan! he hadn't a word to say at first when I turned to him for his account of the accident. "If it wasn't just the hunting season coming, Doctor, it wouldn't matter so much," he said at last. "What else did you lose beside the gun, Allan?" "Only our winter fish and some flour," he said.

In the boat by the wharfside lay all the supplies they were carrying up the Bay for winter. I tried to peep in and see if there was enough left, but the seven youngsters left in the boat were spread out in old blankets, which so tightly closed up the chinks that all I could tell was that a good deal more than the gun was really gone.

"Allan's a good hunter," my friend the agent told me when I went up to his house to take tea. "It means everything to him to lose his new gun. It cost him thirty-five dollars only two months ago, and he had been saving up for years. He wouldn't have spent so much on it even then, only he ordered it last year

when times were better, and of course he had to stand by his order. Of course he lost his ammunition, too. If he could get a gun by hook or crook—if it was only an old muzzle loader—I'd give him ammunition on my own account, for Allan's a straight fellow—and—I've got a lot of children myself," he added, turning away.

After tea I thought I'd go down to the men's cook house and have a talk with the boys. I was much pleased to find Allan there cheerfully taking his part with the rest. How our folks with such terrible troubles threatening can keep so cheery has always been a puzzle to me. But Allan seemed to have forgotten temporarily his great loss.

It so happened last spring I was called south from the hospital with my dog sledge to visit a dying lad some sixty miles to the southeast. By some mishap I had fallen through into the sea and drifted off many miles on a pan of ice. I had been rescued next day, having lost everything except my life. My friends in America had heard of the incident and had sent me back more things than I really lost. After a little general conversation I edged up alongside Allan and asked him how he came to be upset.

"Well," he said, "I was called to go south across the Bay to see old Sandy Farlan before us left for the winter. He's getting old, you know, Doctor, and there's no one to fend for him but that little fellow of his. We was all ready to start, but Susie wanted me to take the old man something towards his winter. We was in a hurry to be up the Bay, and though it was blowing fresh the wind was fair —so I ballasted the small boat down with a bit o' fish and some flour for Sandy, and started to run across. Well, it got nastier and nastier as I got over, but of course I couldn't face back in the small boat, so I just had to make the best of it. As I got near the other side and could just make the house out, a steep sea broke under the boat's quarter and threw her clear over—heels over head. I can't swim a yard, Doctor, as you knows, but the Lord let me get hold of the gunwale when I came up, and I climbed on the bottom and lay flat on the keel, gripping the edges of the plank with my fingers—she is clinker built, fortunately, and I could just hold by the overlapping edges o' the planks. Somehow the boat didn't roll over with me, though we wallowed along in the trough of the seas, every wave making a clean break over me—I suppose it must ha' been the

Lord that ruled it for that mast and sail to stay in her. I never hoped to be able to hold on long enough to drive ashore, for it was terrible cold, as you know.

"Yes, I thought a good bit of Susan and the young uns, but I wasn't afraid. Was you, Doctor, on that icefloe last spring?" he interrogated. "I suppose all you remember, Allan, after that, was being taken off by Molly Davis's lads." "I don't remember much about that at all," he replied. "Well, yes, we did take old Sandy a wee bit more on our way up."

There was a long pause. "Allan," I said, "it's a lucky thing it was a gun you lost—why, I happen to have a gun right in my cabin." "I can't take your gun, Doctor," he said, "you will want that yourself." "It's only the loan of it, Allan—you can always give it me back. I'm going out of the country anyhow this winter, and *I* haven't any 'kids' to feed with it." There was another long pause and then, "Thank you, Doctor"—that was all he was able to say, and he found quite a difficulty in getting that out. But he squeezed my hand till I started to whistle, and we went out—to see what the evening was like.

Oh, those sermons! How sweet it is that Christ tells us we can all be made fishers of

men, even if we are not able to make speeches or teach in schools! Shan't we ask Him to give us all chances and teach us to do what he —the Master—would do in our place?

Allan came up a moment or two later as I was trying to make out Aldebaran among the magnificently brilliant stars overhead. "Where are you off, Allan?" I said. "I thought I'd just go around and tell some of them about the gun," he answered vaguely. "Well, you tell her the agent has something for her in the morning, will you, if she hasn't time to go up to-night." The agent was smoking on the platform in front of his house when at last I went up to say good night. He just finished up that hand Allan had already tried to put out of business when we shook hands. "I reckon I'll be able to stand to that ammunition O. K. when the accounts are settled," he said quietly. "Good-night, sleep well, good-night."

X.

The Skipper's Yarn.

"NO," said the elderly skipper by whose side I was sitting on the cabin locker, "no, *zur,* I don't know how us did in them days o' schooners at all. You see, zur, if us got caught in the floe at all, there were nothing for it but to drift about wherever it liked to take un. If it drove her agin the land, or the standing ice, it was little chance enough there was for her. Why, zur, you minds well the year Skipper Blake lost his steamer less'n twenty-four hours out from his own home. It were all done in five minutes, zur. She were driven back by a huge pan more'n a mile long, which went rafting along over the standing edge. T' mate tried to pop her into a kind o' bite there were in the edge, and had nearly got round the point, when t' ole man comes on deck. The water seemed somehow sort er clear to the sou'east, so the

skipper he twists 'er round and puts 'er at it. Well, zur, it seemed as if it were for to be. For the big pan just caught her, and pinned 'er like a rat in a trap—us could hear her ribs a-crackin' like nuts, and the deck beams come up just like a arch, and bust, and you could 'a' fallen through the seams. We tried pumping, but bless you! it weren't no good. So us landed the canvas and t' grub on the ice before it slacken again about twelve hours after. Then she just throwed up her head and goes down starn first, and we was left a-looking for her. Thank God, it weren't far from land, and every man got ashore."

There was a pause, and then he added sententiously, as he sucked his pipe, "If t' ole man had only stayed below five minute to take a cup o' tea, I thinks it wouldn't 'a' happened at all.

"It was in the year o' Green Bay," he went on, "when the winds hung so long in t' nor'-east, and so many vessels was lost—I was in the Hesperus wi' my boys. We was drove in by the pack along wi' the rest of 'em. But the old Hesperus was one to rise easy, and when the ice started rafting, it just lifted her up, zur—like a baby, zur—and left her lying there. It carried away her port stanchions, an'

about thirty foot o' rails an' bulwarks. But, bless you! beyond that she weren't even so much as scratched. Eight o' the men were that scairt they went an' left her, but my boys, they stood by me, zur, they did! Us started in to get some food an' canvas off of her, in case her might fall in t' wrong way; and there we bides till the wind showed signs o' slacking. Well, then, zur, us gets all the powder us had, and blasted away at them pans to try and let her keel down easy. But ne'er a bit would she budge, till there were only a twelve-pound keg o' powder left, and not a single inch of fuse. There were nothing to be done but put it right under her—so us sewed the stabber round wi' tarry spun-yarn, and worked a bit o' powder in wi' it, and then we just lets her rip. Well—zur—if you'd seed that old ship get up on end and look at us that solemn like, zur, you'd a laughed till you cried, as all o' us done. What did us do then? Why, we all gets aboard—stows her grub an' stuff down below again. An' us got twenty-one hundred seals afore us wet an anchor or saw home again.

"The closest call I's had, it is you wants, is it? Well, zur, I thinks it were one time I was out in that same old Hesperus. We was away

off the Funk Islands, and the swiles was away again to the nor'ard; at least so it seemed to us. But the wind held to the nor'ard day after day, and we was losing ground that fast in the running ice that there was nothing for it but to hitch her on to a iceberg.

"There was one about sixty feet or more high as we was driving by, and there were two grand pinnacles on it. So a dozen of us landed on the floe, and got alongside as best us could. Wi' our axes we cut steps up the side of un, till us got safely on 'is shoulder, and then passes our bight line round one pinnacle, an' hauls the big hawser home, and made fast. Meanwhile the ice has been wheeling pretty fast wi' the breeze, and all of a suddent the berg got clear and was floating in open water. There was a heavy swell running, and as soon as ever she shook free, down she started to go. Our schooner were away to leeward the whole length o' the line, and there were ne'er a boat afloat. Well, zur, t' berg went down that slow and that steady, us didn't notice it till us was almost down to the water, so that I had hardly time to sing out, 'Hang on the line, boys!' when the first sea broke right over us. Only one man had let go, and, luckily enough for him, the sea jammed him in against a sharp

ledge of ice wi' the hawser taut against his legs. She didn't stay down a minute, however; indeed, she must ha' gone level wi' the surface, I supposes, and then up she starts to come again, just as she went down, that solemn and that slow, as if the whole world belonged to her. When we had found out where we was again, we were well up in the air and a boat was pulling towards us for all she was worth. One o' our fellows somehow got frightened, and when we was good sixty feet up again, he rushes to t' edge shoutin', 'My God, I ain't goin' to stay on this thing no longer!' And, zur, youse mayn't believe me, but if I hadn't 'a' catched him by the collar, jump he would have, sure enough. No one else said nothing, 'cept Old Uncle Pete, and he just said in his slow old way, 'It don't seem as if us is going to be lost this time after all, do it, skipper?' He said it that droll I had to stop and laugh in spite o' having to tie the small line to the hawser and let all hands swing into the boat. We was soaked through, and cold, too, and there weren't no time to waste anyhow—leastways it seem' so—for the ole berg were on 'er way down again ahead. As it were, howsomever, the hawser held on to the pinnacles, and us had just time to get clear

before another sea broke over her. Yes, o' course she might ha' tipped over; many on 'em does, as you says, but then you see she didn't, and that's all about it. Well, o' course, when the loose ice wheeled back, it steadied her up again, and us held on just as long as us wanted. No, I didn't *care* about goin' up on her again to let go, but what o' that?"

The inquiry into unnecessary details seemed to worry the old fellow, so I quietly passed him my tobacco-pouch and went up to look at the weather, while he pulled himself together for another yarn.

XI.

"There His Servants Serve Him."

THE winter's ice is breaking up, and spring in the sub-arctic is commencing. In the phraseology of my blue-guernseyed friends, I am "bound for the Labrador," whither they are also making their way in thousands in their annual endeavor to reap the rich harvest of the sea, which for a hundred years that apparently barren coast has yielded to their skill and courage.

Already most of their adventurous barks are "down north," picking their somewhat hazardous paths through the pack-ice, which this year has lain terribly late along the Atlantic seaboard of this grim continent.

The last land our vessel touched at was Sydney in Cape Breton, where we put in to escape a thick fog in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The weather had been moderate till near sundown, but then a steadily rising wind had

given most of us a very broken night. For the rough water caused by the strong current going south against the breeze had rolled up a nasty sea, and incidentally rolled us so ungenerously that sleep under the conditions, when one had come straight from a long period among "the landlubbers," was in our small vessel out of the question.

Moreover, we needed fresh water, one of those few commodities that these cliffs and valleys supply freely and without stint; so the master had decided to run into a harbor as soon as the sea and the darkness should make an approach to the land possible.

Now it is Sunday morning, and the rattle of the anchor-chain in the hawse-pipe had scarcely died away. The surface of the harbor is as placid as a duck-pond, being sheltered from the stormy breeze that is blowing outside by mighty, overhanging hills, exquisitely covered with dark green evergreen spruces and pines.

Along the partly cleared foreshore peep out the scattered houses of a little hamlet, and as yet, except for the smoke rising from a single chimney, no signs of life are visible.

The morning sun has risen above the high peaks of a mountain range some half-dozen

miles inland, and the long rays streaming through the gaps in the sides of the winding fiord are striking here and there the mirror of the smooth water, and, repeated thence, are dancing like sprites on the cliff faces of the opposite side of the inlet. Our own vessel is swathed in sunshine from above and below as she lies lazily lolling on the azure water of this northern sea.

It has been my lot for many years to be trying to solve the problem of how best to contend with sickness and suffering along this long coast-line. Here the distances between the homes of the settlers, and their inability to pay large fees, render impossible the methods that obtain in large communities, with the result that for hundreds of miles no medical or skilled assistance of any kind is available in times of trouble. Thus a vague terror of things unknown hovers over these little families, and a wake of lives and capacities needlessly lost ever lies behind them.

"'Tis a powerful healthy coast, Doctor," an optimistic skipper said to me the other day,—while his own daughter of eighteen lay dying of tuberculosis in his parlor, owing mainly to their lamentable lack of knowledge of the very first rudiments of sanitary science.

Years of experience have taught me that it requires service in varied forms to relieve troubles which are so patiently and uncomplainingly borne that the very fatalism that is the outcome makes it almost impossible to introduce what seem to be "newfangled" methods. It is, with but little knowledge, possible to do much with the remedies nature furnishes on the spot.

"Doctor, I wants you to look at my Johnny," said a young mother this morning. "His legs be all snarled up."

It was only an ordinary case of rickets, but unnecessary, for the remedy was right at hand.

"Take some of those light bluish stones off the beach and burn them thoroughly; then throw some hot water on them. Get the white powder and put a lot of it in a jug. Shake it up well, and let it settle. Pour off the clear water, and give Johnny a tablespoonful three times a day."

"Can you'se come to see my 'ooman, Doctor?" said the father of a family to me a little while ago, soon after we had come to an anchor. "She be terrible bad, and be turning black all over."

A short walk through a grove of spruce trees along a beach abounding in wild parsley,

and across a greensward yellow with dandelions, brought us to a tiny log house. Here lay the mother of a young family, the fetid bleeding mouth, the swollen black patches, and the painful, discolored legs proclaiming it to be a case of sailors' scurvey. She was suffering untold agonies, while strewn all the way from the landing-place to the very house door lay the only remedies needed.

The white plague, however, which works so secretly that our people have never yet recognized its malignity, exacts the most appalling tribute from us. Sitting here in the sunshine on an old sea-chest is a boy of fifteen. His pallid and sunken cheeks, and his occasional hollow cough, proclaim their own story. We have just dragged him out of a dark cabin of wood and mud, where no window opened, where the door closed almost air-tight, where there is no open chimney, but only a large stove with an iron smoke-funnel, and where this boy lay weighted down with all the heavy garments the efforts of misdirected love could pile upon him.

Scenes so harrowing and homes so saddened "just for the want of a little knowledge" have not been without their effect on our policy.

Indeed, right here in this tiny village off

which we have so incontinently come to anchor, somewhere among these scattered cottages is working at this very moment a trained nurse for the first time in history. Hither she has come in response to our appeal for help. She has come at her own private cost and charges all the long distance between this place and New York,—just to spend the six months of summer, trying, for the great Master's sake, to "do what she can" for these His brethren. The skill acquired so patiently and at such cost at a large New York hospital is not the least of her contributions.

From letters she has already sent me, I most shrewdly guess that the solitary column of ascending smoke marks a cottage where she is tending some sick child, or possibly one of those so common cases where just the loving, skilful service she alone in this place is able to render may now be standing the only barrier betwixt life and death.

As my eye wanders around the shore I can distinguish here the cross-surmounted spire of a Catholic church, and close to it the little home of the missionary priest. Further away to the side I can see a building which in spite of its rude architecture I can readily distinguish as an Episcopal church, while away to-

ward the rocky headland which we rounded as we came in is obviously the building in which the Methodists of this scattered district gather for divine worship.

These buildings demand the services of at least three men's lives,—men no doubt devoted, earnest, and unselfish. For the material return that a minister of the gospel can expect for the services he is called on to render must yet be meagre, down here, in comparison with that which a commercial life could return to him.

These more pretentious houses with real bow windows and bravely ornamented porches are not the residences that the men who serve the churches can expect, but are undoubtedly the homes of the owners of these trading wharves I see projecting into the harbor. The minister of religion can expect, along this coast, at least, so far to share the measure meted out to the Master. If he seeks here for the joys of life in a coin different from that which the Christ found His in, he is doomed only to disappointment.

On the other hand, to these men belongs the high privilege of speaking for their Master. They can gather crowds around them, and can expect to enjoy the real reward of service in

seeing many men listen to their spoken message and answer to it in their lives. To many there seems a special dignity at first in this form of service,—a special value to life that the man of commerce, the man with the hook and line, the nurse with her bag of comforts and only her own two hands, have no right to expect to realize so fully.

It is evening now, and the sun is setting. I have been ashore all day, following the tripping footsteps of the nurse as she wended her way now over the hills from house to house, now independently paddling in her own canoe from point to point in the inlet, much to the anxiety of these men of the sea, who "be unacquainted with the like."

I have been following her at her own request, that she might obtain some advice, some help, some encouragement, for "her family," —a family so *very* dependent on her efforts. Indeed, as she waved me good-bye this evening as I left the shore for my ship, she assured me that even she herself was glad of the encouragement. For alas! it is true, nineteen hundred years later, that the bearer of the message of God's love, and the carrying of the Christ into men's homes, however undeniable be the form of service that we would commend

Him by, still find their detractors; and ever the good of "those who do good" causes the tongue of the unprofitable to wag in malice, with a view to discredit and discourage the effort of any who would interpret love by work.

First among our visits to-day was one to a woman with a huge swelling, which proved to be a tumor needing immediate removal. Next came a young girl with intermittent appendicitis, who should be at once operated on. This mother, too, lying here in bed so patiently, should, with but trifling medical skill, be able to go about her household duties again. This young fisherman and father, incapacitated by an injury caused by a heavy strain at his work, could be so easily made a new man. Here is a woman crippled for years by a loose body in her knee-joint, an injury comparatively quite simple to repair, yet one which makes "getting about" both a misery and danger.

As we passed along, word evidently kept travelling ahead of us that we were on our rounds. For nearly every little door or garden-gate was ajar; and as we came by a shy invitation, "just to come in a minute" and see some member of the household, kept us so long at work that the evening services at the churches were over long ere we reached the

side of the fiord we had left in the morning, where our ship lay, and where the little churches stood.

As I bade good-night to my indefatigable companion, I said, "You must be tired to death, nurse."

"Not a bit," she replied; "I'm just as fresh as paint still."

"Well, be sure to catch the next mail steamer bound for the hospital at Battle Harbor, and bring with you at least those five out of your little family." Odd as it may seem, I believed firmly that the message of love would come to them, at any rate, most truly through the surgeon's knife.

And now it is time to "turn in." The ship is already silent; there is no need to keep an anchor-watch, and all hands are sleeping but myself. On shore also once again I can make out no signs of the stir of human life. The last twinkling light in a cottage window has just gone out.

But I am still lingering under God's beautiful curtain overhead, watching the brilliant worlds above peeping through at us below; and my mind goes a-wandering, as it were, 'twixt the practicalities of the brief day of human life and the eternity that surrounds it.

How infinitely small seems our utmost opportunity for making our poor life worth while! And yet there is in my heart, and in every right-thinking child of man's, the confidence that we, departing, *can* "leave behind us footprints on the sands of time" that we should not be ashamed of.

The events of the day just gone forever once more repeat themselves in my memory; and there is a longing now that He who made, and rules on high, all this great universe, and whose eye is now upon me as, alone on this deck, I look up into His heavens—a longing that He may find something among all the things we have considered worth while at the time—something—that He can commend.

What would I commend? Which is the "service" that seems undeniable,—a worthy service for the King of kings?

Possibly we grade wrongly what "service" means, and, in giving to the various forms of worship the term of "service," have lost sight of the fact that in singing and praying and talking, or in correct intellectual assent merely, we are conferring no favor on the King. Rather are we at these times merely coming near to Him, that He may confer on us fresh favors of His courage, His wisdom, and His

strength; that we may go out to render better the real service He calls for.

I was glad that He had given me time to join the others in their simple form of worship when the day began; but I saw no reason to regret—though selfishly I would have liked it otherwise—that the humble services to His brethren, such as with the nurse I had been rendering, had prevented me from again joining the congregation in their evening hymns of faith and praise.

For there sang in my heart a voiceless hymn that shall echo on when the strains of the service rendered by voice only shall have died away,—a very song of heaven that once sang even on His cross in our Master's heart, such a hymn as I know must sing, even at the darkest hours, in the hearts of all those whom He blesses with the faith that in serving our brethren we render the highest service we are capable of rendering, with our poor talents, to Him.

XII.

A Physician In the Arctic.

A GREAT good fortune it is to live among deep sea fishermen on this or the other side of the Atlantic. Splendid material they are, none better. Their simple, hard lives and their constant business on great waters develop all that is good and virile in them, and indeed, who ever knew a mean deep sea man? Their self-reliance and simple courage are sermons needing no words. Their many deeds of self-sacrificing bravery are still done where there can be no doubt about the motive, for they neither expect nor receive reward in gold and silver, or in the praise of men.

The constant perils and great hardships of their lives and the lives of the fisher folk along the coast are brought home to us every year by new tales of suffering and bravery. The experience of one fisherman we knew is typical

of what happens only too frequently in that country. This man, wishing to go South for the winter, started in his small fishing boat, with his wife, four children, a servant girl and his fishing partner. Scarcely had they left when a furious gale of wind sprang up. The mainsail and jib, with the mast, were all blown over the side, and the boat was driven before the wind. Three days and three nights they drove off into the Atlantic. On the third day the wind veered, and they were able to put up a small foresail they had saved and drag in the direction of the land. Two more terrible days, and at last, when the boat was quite unmanageable, they found the land close under their lee. Their condition was seen just before they drove ashore and a rescue attempted, but too late to save their boat. All their lives, however, were saved by the indomitable perseverance of the half dozen settlers. Instead of being south of where they left, they were a hundred and fifty miles north, and indeed were in Labrador. There was no chance to leave so late in the season, and there they had to stay till the following summer, fed by the kindness of their poor neighbors and dead to all their friends for at least six months. A similar accident to one of

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our English fishing vessels left the crew of ten men on the south coast of Iceland all one winter. When they came back in the following spring by the first possible boat, not only had the insurance on all their lives been paid and mostly spent, but one man's wife had married again.

Gales in these regions in winter are often terribly severe. The little new church built here where I am wintering now was a few years ago blown clean away. Even the pews, the pulpit and the communion table were all blown into the sea.

Few fishermen can swim. "You see we has enough o' the water without goin' to bother wi' it when we *are* ashore," a man said to me only the other day. Yet this very man had fallen overboard in the open sea no less than four times, and had only been saved on one occasion by catching the line thrown him in his teeth and holding on till he was hauled aboard. His hands were too numbed to be of any use. Still this fact does not deter them from facing the water. In an open bay in Labrador lives one solitary settler. In the spring of the year, when the ice was just breaking up, the man's two lads were out on the bay ice after seals, when all of a sudden it

gave way and the lads fell through. The father, seeing it from the shore, did not hesitate, but seizing a fishing line hastily fastened one end round his body, and giving the other end to his daughter to hold, he ran out to the hole through which they had fallen. He jumped into the water, actually went down and fetched up the bodies, too late, alas, however, to restore life to them after that cold water. These tales could be multiplied indefinitely. And there are many heroic tales of women. Early in the fall the arm of the sea just north of our little hospital was frozen over enough to allow dog trains to travel over it. In the early morning two men started off to cross it on a komatik, to cut firewood on the far side. As they rounded a headland the whole of the team fell in through the ice, where an eddying tide had kept it open. The komatik followed into the water, carrying the men with it. One disappeared under the ice and was drowned. The other got free and held on to the ice edge, though he was unable to crawl out on top of it. From the shore his sister saw the accident and at once started to run over the ice to his aid. As she drew near she heard men shouting, and saw they were pulling a boat down to the ice some dist-

ance away. They shouted to her, "For God's sake, don't go near the hole." Instead of stopping she had the presence of mind to throw herself full length on the ice and glide along till she got near enough with outstretched arms to reach her brother's hand. Already he was half frozen to death. But she managed to get him up enough to rest on the ice near her, and then to lie perfectly still till the boat came, when she was at length taken off. One of her own legs was through the ice. The tough, salt water ice fortunately does not split as the brittle, fresh water ice does. Her brother's life was saved, and there the incident ended.

"What made you go on?" I asked her.

"I couldn't see him drown, could I?" was her simple reply.

Besides sailors and the Eskimos, my clientele includes some four to five thousand white settlers, scattered all along the coast of Labrador from Cape Chidley to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and along the north shores of Newfoundland. They are a most heterogeneous class, drafted from almost everywhere and descended from Scotch, south of England, and French parentage. They have become fishermen and trappers and live under circumstances as adverse as it is possible to conceive

of, quite cut off from civilization. In many respects they may be said to bear the flavor of prehistoric times and this often affects my practice in curious ways. They have a firm belief in the healing power of charms, the efficacy of which of course lies in faith.

The call for education in matters sanitary was emphasized at one house I visited. The man had lost from tuberculosis three daughters, two of them married, in thirteen months, his eldest son was badly affected, and another house had every child rickety. This, of course, is far more emphasized in the case of animals. I found one poor fellow in sore trouble over his sick cow. He had already, with a long gimlet, bored holes into its head through to the root of its horns, as he was told it was "horn-bound," by much the same reasoning process that some of our people attribute the squalling of their babies to being "tongue-tied." The animal, however, had not improved, and I was called in, though I realized at once my limitations in the "cow-doctor line." The poor beast seemed feverish and too weak to stand, and eventually died.

Late one evening a fisherman came off to our vessel, a shy sort of fellow. He had tied his boat and seated himself on the taffrail

where he had apparently been waiting a full hour or more before I happened to go up on deck to see what kind of a night it was and stumbled against him.

"Are you the doctor, sir?" he asked. "I want bleeding, please sir." To ease his mind I called him below to examine him. Finding, however, it was only a case of impure blood without any symptoms and having no patience to spend time on nihilitis, I dismissed him unbled and turned in.

At daylight, when we rose to get under way, he was on board again, very dejected and coming up to me offered me a dollar to bleed him. A dollar cash on this coast is a thing a man so seldom gets he never parts with it if he can help it. Evidently it was best to bleed him for his mind's sake. So I did it. "You see, sir," he said, while the operation was going on, "an old Indian squaw, she bleed my feet a good spell ago and I haven't had ne'er a pain since. So when they told me there was a doctor aboard, I thought it was a good chance." But he added half regretfully, "it didn't feel quite the same. She bored the holes with a kind o' corkscrew."

The most satisfactory part of our work perhaps, is the ability to save by simple sur-

gical means the loss of functions that stand for the difference between a wretched existence and a life of comparative enjoyment, and between plenty and want. Even a failure does not distress us as it would in a city, for we are at least the best surgeons here and there is no other man round the corner who would have done the thing much better. We took in once a patient, stone blind for two years, who had long since abandoned all hope of being able to see again. He was only a little over forty years old and the prospect on a coast like this was dreary indeed. The operation for double cataract was completely successful and was quite as miraculous to the neighbors as the restoring of sight to the blind in Our Saviour's time.

One of the main difficulties in operative work is often the soft-heartedness of my assistants, who are necessarily pressed in from anywhere, and the anxiety of watching both the anæsthetic and the operation. This does not matter so much when dealing with Eskimo patients, for they are sometimes so indifferent to pain one can dispense with the anæsthetics, and now excellent local anæsthetics often actually permit the patients themselves to help one in the operation. On one occasion, when

I was visiting an Eskimo fishing station, the head man announced that I would see the patients in his hut. I seated myself in the middle of the tiny hut with a butter tub for a throne, while every inch of spare room around the tiny space reserved for the patient of the moment was crowded with all the adult Eskimos that could get in. Curiosity is as marked in these little people as it is in monkeys. It came at last to the turn of a girl with an intractable frost bite of the toe, for which the only cure was amputation. Apparently it was a proud moment in her life. Having explained as best I could the treatment her case involved, I was not a little surprised when she sat right down and held up the toe which gave her a claim to so much attention, indicating that she wished me to proceed at once. She showed the greatest interest from start to finish and I left her a marked person in that settlement. Eskimos almost always heal well. No one wishes to earn the title of romancer, yet I have been so surprised myself at the way people can get well on this coast that I am inclined to advise my readers to come down here and try its tonic qualities.

Ritual of all kind is at a discount among those who go down to the sea in ships, and

I am afraid that in surgery as well as in religion we are apt to be iconoclasts. Late one fall when I was hastening south in a small launch—the hospital sailing vessel in which we came from England had already gone,—I anchored at dark one day under the shelter of a group of islands in a roadstead quaintly named "Rogue's Roost." Just as I was turning in, for being my own skipper with only one man beside the engineer I had a watch to stand and was therefore tired, a boat bumped alongside and a voice sang out to know if there was a doctor on board.

"What do you want with a doctor?"

"There's a woman very sick ashore, sir. Could you come and see her?"

How could I say that I wasn't at home, seeing he had guessed my identity from my voice. I went ashore and found the mother of a small family actually sick unto death. She had what is known as a psoas abscess. In this case the treatment involved an opening through the muscles in the back. To me it seemed an issue in either case of death, the difference being the lessening of her sufferings. She insisted on taking the chance and enduring the pain. My only assets were a scalpel and the rubber tube of my stethescope. The

A DOCTOR IS UNABLE TO SPECIALIZE ON THIS COAST

operation went off all right. The tube was strongly sewn in and the bed having been literally cut in half, drainage was established and the person directed to lie on her back there until I came back in the spring. I was a little shy when next July we approached this same group of islands. But among those who came down to greet me was an unusually healthy looking woman whom I entirely failed to recognize. At last I ventured to approach the painful subject of the operation. The person in rude health explained without any surprise, "that's me."

Being unable to specialize on this coast, one has perhaps as many medical troubles as one has surgical. On one occasion I brought with me from the north a jolly little fellow who had been exhibited at the World's Fair as Prince Pomiuk. I had picked him up in an advanced state of hip-joint disease, lying naked on the pebble beach in a skin "tubik" or tent at the head of a deep fjord near Cape Chidley. The foster parents, for his father, the chief, had been murdered, readily gave me what remained of the lad, and having twice operated on him under chloroform, I had landed him at our most northern hospital at the mouth of Hamilton inlet. The

sister in charge was ordered to keep him for a few days in a hot bath. We had no hot water supply, however, and the stove was only large enough to keep hot the food and water that was wanted for every day's work. The question was solved by our fishermen friends around. They appeared in the afternoon with a large iron pot in which they bark their nets. Under the shelter of a virgin rock they built a stone fire place, on which they not only placed the cauldron, but there in the open near the hospital kept the fire going the requisite time and did a great deal towards hastening the little fellow's recovery. The bath, holding a large quantity of water, and being well wrapped round with layers of blankets was not hard to maintain at an even temperature.

A flag half-masted or almost any unusual evolution answers as a call to our little hospital ship as she patrols the coast in summer. One morning, just as we had got our anchor up and were ready for sea, we saw signals from an approaching boat that they wanted to come aboard. No sooner alongside than a man was lifted over the rail with his right arm under cover. It appeared that owing to an accident it had been dislocated some weeks previously, and was not only the cause of great pain but

threatened to permanently cripple him. As we were then almost at our most extreme northern limit, and in the latitude that no medical man reaches, it was doubly pleasing to stop and put the poor fellow right, though we were blowing off steam and wasting precious fuel all the time. I had supposed that the incident ended there, but two years later, being again in the same neighborhood, my former patient came aboard tendering me a splendid pair of skin boots. Having forgotten the man I asked him what he wanted for them. "For you," he replied, and promptly retired. I was only told on inquiry that he had been waiting all this time to demonstrate in some way that he was not without gratitude. Gratitude, as rare still in the world as in Scriptural times, goes a long way to render even arduous services a pleasure, and fortunately this is a characteristic feature also in men of the sea.

A letter from an Eskimo bears the same note. "My dear friend. You are our friend, although you do not know us. We show you our thanks, both my wife and I, because you have so kindly attended our children this summer. First you cared for Jeremias, while he was suffering. He is his mother's only son.

Afterwards my only son Nathaniel, the one that was shot, you are attending to, and we wish to show you our thanks. Although we are unable to pay with things that are seen, may He on whom you believe help you in your work, and may you afterwards receive that for which you wish, that which is precious and desirable, that which is above. Jeremias told us of your kindness which you show to all. Please accept this little present, which is to show you our thanks. We are unable to do more. Good-bye." How could it have been better worded?

The pitiable straits to which one or two bad seasons sometimes reduces these families, especially the more isolated ones, is the side of the picture that is perhaps most pathetic. I went one day up a bay, to visit a settler's family. It was dark when we arrived and hauled our boat up near the house. The father and one boy were away. The mother and seven others were home. The youngest was four months old. The house consisted of one large room, a central cracked stove, and a porch in which the inevitable dogs slept.

Our hostess remarked at once: "I am very sorry, sir, I cannot offer you any tea. We have had none in the house for over a month.

Richard is away selling some seals." They had for their summer twelve quintals of fish at two dollars thirty a quintal, two bear skins, and six seals. The "seven" were to all intents and purposes naked. Two threadbare cotton coverlets were the sole furnishings of the two beds. The semi-religious light of an exceedingly small lamp in some measure obscured the rest of the meager surroundings. "Soft loaf and water" had been their supper for many a day. Not even a drop of molasses was in the house. Two children slept with the mother, four on the other bed, two on the floor. Where the other two stowed away was a mystery. All turned in with even their remnants of boots on. We wrapped up in our blankets and slept on the floor.

"I don't see the blanket I sent you last fall," I ventured on as we were stowing away. "Did you receive it?"

"Yes, sir. But five children sleeping under it soon wore it out."

The enforced idleness of winter is one of the greatest causes of this extreme poverty. To counteract this we have several efforts under way. To help them to get cash for their produce we started a series of small co-operative stores, where the fish is sold to the people

for cash, and where they can get goods at cash prices. These stores have now a large schooner for freighting called the *Co-operator*. They have had quite a measure of success. To increase as far as we can the wage-earning capacity we have several small schemes, the best being a lumber mill, on which sixty-five families were supported last winter quite independently. Those who are good trappers can make plenty by catching foxes, otters, beaver, marten, minks, lynx, ermine and musquash. Deer also are still plentiful in most parts of the country, and of late years rabbits. Ducks also are common all along the coast, and there are some geese and other wild fowl. We also get bears, both black and white, and some years great quantities of willow grouse and some ptarmigan, spruce partridge and Arctic hares. The dog driving, ski traveling, skating and winter pleasures are unrivaled. There is plenty of free salmon fishing, and unlimited trout fishing. Cruising can be carried on in perfect safety, and one can cover hundreds of miles without ever seeing the open water at all, as the outlying islands are so numerous. There is much exploration to be done, much ethnological work, to say nothing of prospecting. The fog is not at all trouble-

some, the air is clear and bracing. Practically the only trouble is the mosquito, and he never confers ague on his victims.

The absence of all conventionalities and restrictions is also very refreshing. A peripatetic minister was called on at a place known as Spotted Islands to marry a couple. The bridegroom was an elderly man who was a kind of king in the place. When the minister arrived at the island he found all the islanders assembled in the little school-room awaiting him. It was not till he actually entered the building that he discovered the bride was the deceased wife's sister. This being a forbidden relationship, he refused to proceed, whereupon the intending bridegroom quietly remarked, "Never mind, Mister. One of these others will do." So, turning to the expectant crowd, he selected a suitable partner, and she being willing, "all went as gaily as a marriage bell."

All our winter work is done over the snow with large dog teams and komatiks or sledges. One old lady of sixty has just arrived at one of the hospitals, after being hauled nearly seventy miles by her two lads and their dog team. She came to have her leg amputated, and already we are trying to solve the problem—where is the artificial leg to come from?

Here, then, is a life which offers facilities for the employment and development of every faculty a man possesses.

Nothing need be wasted in Labrador.

XIII.

Friends and Foes of the Labrador.

I WAS lying at anchor under the shelter of a group of rocky islands well down the East Labrador coast. We had just been doctoring among the numbers of fishermen that make this their headquarters for the summer fishery. As we landed, a thin column of smoke over the southern horizon heralded the approach of the fortnightly mail, which was overdue. I was away visiting a sick woman, whom we had to send to the hospital, when the mail steamer sounded her syren off the harbour. Before I got aboard the Hospital steamer, the mail-boat had again departed. My arrival over the rail was greeted by a square-shouldered, keen-faced young fellow of twenty-five.

Clothing of civilization! Who can this be? I suppose I looked it. For he volunteered the information:

"I'm the man you wired for."

"Wired!"

"Yes. Don't you remember? To Montreal."

"What's your line?"

"I'm an electrical engineer."

"And your name?"

"X———."

"Right. Excuse me half a minute." Diving into the chart-room, I seized the letter file, and soon hunted up his letter, dated January 6th, marked "Received, July 10th." Present date is August 6th.

Briefly, what he had to say was, what I would every man could say: "My object in life is to make it tell as much as I can."

Apparently he was just free of any personal ties, and so able to stand his own expense. So he thought an engineer would find a place down here where there would not be a man in the next street able to do things better than himself. Preferring another guerdon to dollars, he had written his letter, and my wire had filtered back in the course of time, saying, "Come right along."

Now it is often charged to Christian missions that men go into them because they cannot get anywhere else, or for what they can

get out of it. I think the latter is the commonest accusation, because the weakness of intellect idea has been abandoned more or less of late, as the truth gets known about the type of men who are out in the foreign fields.

On the *Strathcona* we have an electrical apparatus and X-ray installation for our medical work, and the other electrical fittings helping us to make our work more effective and up-to-date. It was out of order, and none of us knew how to put it right.

Friend X——— has just emerged from the engine-room rather hot and dirty, because the dynamo has been stuffed up in a corner above the condenser. But he has put that electrical apparatus right, and I think he is just as satisfied as if he had an extra dollar or two, and, perhaps, he has just as much right to be thought sane, in spite of it. We have laid before him the work we can give him to do, and which we cannot get done, if he doesn't do it, because we cannot afford it. He has decided as soon as our sea freezes us out (which it does not do before December) to run up to Montreal and get some more tools. It appears to us all that he is going to make himself tell somewhat in our little corner of the earth during the next twelve months.

What enables me to give the time to write this letter to you is, that there is a Harvard medical down in our surgery, interviewing the fishermen, who have been coming aboard since morning for various ailments. He is a volunteer for exactly the same reason.

When I left the little hospital on Caribou Island there were two young fellows from Bowdoin University staying there, recommended to us by President Hyde as two of "the strongest men he knows in the University." They are not engineers, and they are not doctors. You might say they are just "digging," or doing anything else that comes along. As a matter of fact, the day I left they were actually digging out the foundation for an open-air shelter, which has since been completed. It is a very cute arrangement, and serves both for our convalescents and our tubercular patients—beds and all. It is going to be an uncommonly forceful sermon to a very large number of people on the benefit of the fresh air, sunshine, and the simple life. I ought to have said that these men seemed to me to be the kind of men the world wants more of.

They are not making any dollars either. Not that I am against making dollars. They

have got to be made, and God bless every one who makes them.

After the winter on the north Newfoundland shore, when this hospital boat came out of winter quarters, I would have had to close the hospital there, as we did last summer, for the want of a man to carry on the work while we were afloat. But we were able to hold on till, at last in June, another medical volunteer stepped ashore from our tardy mail-boat.

We were rather hard put to it at the time for a nurse, and the new volunteer began by thirty-six hours without sleep, taking a night-watch by an unconscious fisherman landed from a schooner the same day.

When last I saw him, he had just been there six weeks. We had been in twice to empty the hospital, by carrying the patients to the next northern hospital, as he only had one nurse, and she a volunteer from England. The daylight was already coming over the hills, and the doctor was standing by the bed of a child of about eight years with acute osteomyelitis. He had opened abscesses in eight places, both arms, both legs, both thighs, his back and head. The child was too ill to move, and our volunteer was bound on saving him. Certainly he was only a fisherman's boy, and

the doctor won't get the fee that Lorenz received from Armour; but he will get a fee that will satisfy him all right if he pulls that child through. Because that child should have died otherwise. He told me he belonged to a Christian Endeavor band. I don't know which ecclesiastical denomination. But it seems to us down here to breed the right kind of Christian.

There is an orphanage on the hill above the hospital, and in this we have got a small collection of waifs and strays. They are getting education, and they are getting food and clothing instead of semi-starvation and the liability to consequent tubercular trouble so common, alas! among our poorer brethren, even in this wonderfully healthy climate. These are in charge of a lady of education and means from England—a lady of social standing—who has come out to live amongst us because she thinks she can make her life tell more here than where she was at home. Those orphans seem mighty fond of her, too.

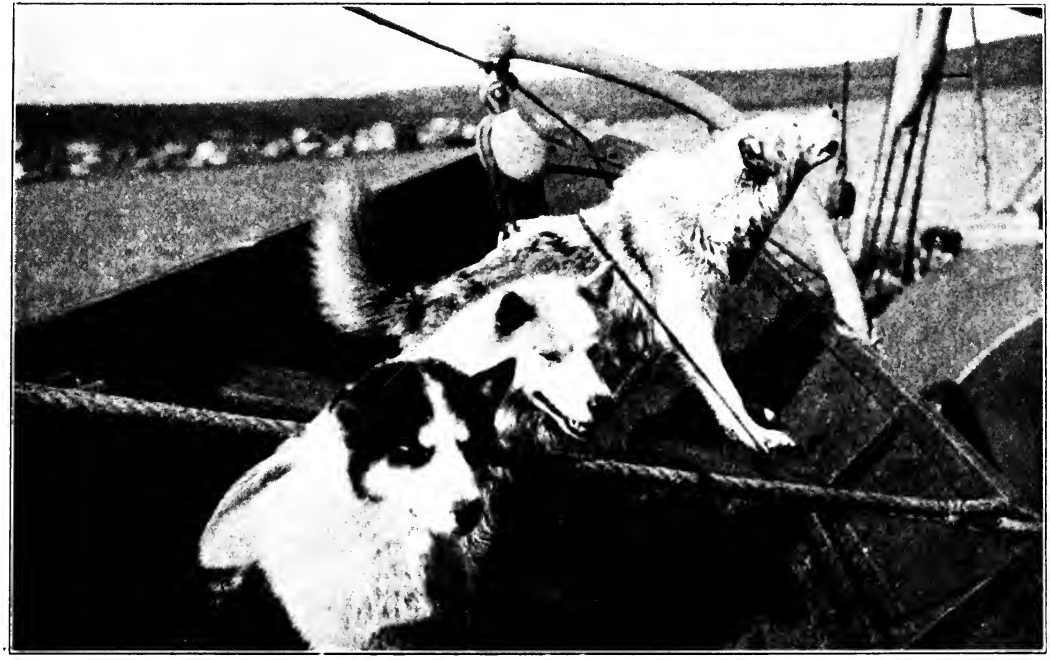
I am not going to multiply instances. My contention is that the missionary life is a sane life, whichever way we look at it. It does not really need the story of a social degenerate of the extreme type to convince reasonable

minds that man can better serve the purposes he was made for by living for other ideals than those, alas! which are "normally" considered sufficient.

Of course, we can enjoy the spirit of games. Three of us have carried our university colours for athletics. Any of us can do our share with a rifle when a good shot means venison for dinner, or sealskin for a new pair of boots. We landed as many fine salmon the other evening, fishing in one of our rivers, while our steamer was loading wood near by, as did a man of wealth whom we found from England fishing in the same pool, and we did not require any stronger tackle than he did. He is fishing there yet, and heaven only knows what he is going to do with his salmon. We had good use for ours. He was out fishing last year, and the year before. And it does not seem, as one gets older in life, that any sport, however manly, should assume the nature of a recurring decimal. One reason why I can recommend the missionary life to any man is because in most of the fields he will find an ample scope for any and every talent he possesses. I used once to picture to myself that it would have been great to have been the modern Yankee at the Court of King Arthur.

You can sample that pleasure in most of the mission fields. Indeed, they call for the very best that the very best men can give them, and in return they give men, who may have everything else in the world, things better than they can get in any other way, and make them into that, perhaps, nothing else can make them into. We have now on this coast four small hospitals, one hospital steamer, and two motor-boats, besides our industrial work.

The basis of altruistic work, to say nothing of the primal reason for all Christian effort to help others, is the fact that we hold that God seeks, nay needs, our co-operation and our help in the deadly struggle with the forces of evil. The time, the energy, the unpaid-for devotion shown by many in their endeavour to improve our laws, our public health, our national safety, and to further our advance in civilization, mean that men recognize that the problem of human life involves work for the general welfare and not merely for self-advancement. Personally, I believe that our best thinking men who give their lives to these matters are not actuated merely by the desire for office, for remuneration, or for praise, but they are in the work because they wish to confess thereby that every man is bound, so



TRUSTED FRIENDS OF THE LABRADOR

far as he is able, to co-operate with his fellows and with his Creator in abolishing the things that directly degrade and destroy his brethren.

It is for this very primal reason that I hate most of all the traffic in intoxicating liquors, and for this reason that we have no use for it among those who "go down to the sea in ships," or among men who need, for the physical emergencies of their lives, every ounce of vitality they possess. That is why we not only decry its use, but we dread its appearance among our trappers as well as our fishermen. These men, often alone, face in the bitter cold of our winter endless miles of barren wastes, and live for weeks tramping the woods in the ordinary routine of their calling. They leave wives and children behind them, and it would be nothing short of disastrous if they carried alcohol with them, or enfeebled their vital powers by its use in any way.

I remember a doctor even who "took a glass occasionally." I know it hardly does to suggest that a man of that rank of life is in danger of getting drunk, yet he is by no means the only man of my profession whom I have known living in a hell on earth through alcohol. This man was found drunk on the snow one night. He had been having "a good

time" with some "friends." Both his feet were so badly frozen that they had to be cut off, and he had to make the rounds of his patients in a country practice for the rest of his life on artificial legs. I knew this poor victim personally.

The worst of alcohol as a poison is that it does not kill at once, and death when it comes is a mere detail compared with the weary years of misery, struggle, failure, and remorse. It leaves all the while the consciousness of the awful evil it is making the man to his little world; it makes him suffer with the suffering he himself is inflicting on his loved ones, till often enough he seeks in self-murder an escape from his hell on earth into—what, beyond?

Yet another poor victim in my own profession—a brilliant student and accomplished gentleman. Surely he ran no risk. Yet after years of disgrace and shame—a ruined family and a blasted life—I saw him lying with a fractured skull, dying. He had fallen drunk down the steps of the government mail vessel on which he was then credited Medical Officer of the crown.

Labrador is, from a health standpoint, an exceptionally good country. We have no endemic diseases; our dogs do not suffer from

rabies; our mosquitoes carry no malaria; the leprous bacillus has never reached our shores. The specific fevers that visit us come with the arrival of our summer visitors. When we are isolated in winter we are safe from the assaults of cholera, smallpox, and scarlet fever. Our very isolation is our salvation.

A short while ago, a schooner flying in hot haste before the breeze brought up close to one of our little hospitals. No sooner was she anchored than the skipper came hurrying up to the doctor in charge.

"What is the matter, skipper, that you are in such a hurry?"

"Well, Doctor, there is smallpox in our harbour, and you are wanted at once."

"Smallpox! How did that get there?"

"Oh, it comed in a schooner from Quebec, and now my Johnny is down with it, and they says as two men on schooners has got it from her also."

Any sane person would admit it was worth while going down to that harbour, seizing that schooner, towing her away into a deserted bay, where she could do no harm, and throwing the infection, as far as possible, into the sea, because we were dealing with an organic poison. No one would suggest leaving such

a vessel to scatter her deadly influence and then content oneself with trying to convert "back to health" the victims. The damage and loss was so obvious and the cause of the damage was so traceable that when we had finally burned everything that we suspected as dangerous, we considered that our treatment was strictly scientific, and it received universal commendation. And had we been able to prove that the owner of that vessel knew of the poison he was sending down to us on board it we would have gone for him for murder, for seventy-one fishermen died of it.

A few weeks later, a quiet, elderly, white-haired fisherman, who had an invalid wife dependent on him, was suddenly landed at the same hospital from a vessel.

"What's the matter with John? It must be something very bad that has brought him here on a stretcher in the middle of the fishing season."

"Well, Doctor, he has broken his leg."

"Broke his leg! How on earth did he come to do that?"

"Well, you see, a schooner comed in, Doctor, with a drop of the drink aboard, and Pat Grady got taking some, and he knocked the

old man over the stage-head. No, he ain't a fighting man, but the liquor made a very devil of him."

This meant, in a man of over seventy years, nearly twelve months before he would walk again, and cost him the loss of at least one fishing season. I knew what it meant to his wife.

Was it fanatical and unscientific to hasten, as we did, to the harbour, to seize on the supply of alcohol in the schooner, to carry it to a place where no man dwelt, and tip the infection into the ocean? In this case, the poison was a chemical one.

In the first case, we had no wish to punish the dangerous vessel, for the harm was done in ignorance; in the second case, our blood was boiling, for the beast that was doing it was doing it for dollars only, blood-stained dollars, and, moreover, he had not the humanity to say he was sorry.

The dangerous subtlety of the thing makes one hate it the more, for it comes ever in the guise of a good friend. The tempter, with the idiotic laugh of the stale joker, calls it "a drop of the good craythur," glibly plagiarising the old lie, "It does no one any harm." And so it makes it hard for the modest, retiring

nature of a simple young fisherman to appear ostentatious and unfriendly by refusing "just a little drop." Thus I have seen them buy it, and, alas, also learn to want it—at any price.

Night was closing in as I lay at anchor one November evening in the harbour of one of these charming little fishing villages. I was just going below to turn in when I heard the bump of a boat alongside, and I saw a woman alone climbing up the companion ladder.

"Can I go below, Doctor? I want to speak to you alone."

"Why, certainl,y come along down. What is the trouble?"

"It's my Willie what's brought me here to see you. You knows him. The men says as some one is stealing their fish what is drying on their 'flakes,' and they be threatening to do dreadful things if they catches un."

"What has that got to do with your Willie? I am sure he would never steal a pin's head."

"No, no, t'ank God. My boy never give me a day's trouble in his life. There never was no tievin' here. But, Doctor," and she leaned over to whisper in my ear, for fear the very walls should hear, "my Willie have come home with liquor on him on times of late. I knows he have nothing to pay for it. I comed

alone, Doctor, and in the night, for fear the men should suspicion me. You will help me, won't you, Doctor?" and she broke down and cried bitterly.

I comforted her as well as I could and then sent her ashore.

While I listened to the plash of her oars, as that gentle mother rowed ashore alone in the darkness, I felt as I felt before, that this liquor is ten times more dangerous even than small-pox, for it damns the body and the soul as well.

Last year I seized from an illicit saloon quite a large consignment. In it was a large barrel of rum which I had rolled out on the end of our wharf. There was a group of fishermen standing there, and all were wondering what I was going to do. I wished to preach a sermon to them on what I considered the fitting and most sensible disposal of this chemical poison. It was impossible for me to suggest as a scientist, or, let me say, as a physiologist, or as a rational human being, much less as a follower of Christ, that this stuff should be poured down the throats of men. No, no, we knew better than that. We borrowed an axe from one of the group, and smashing in the head of the barrel, let it run

out into the ocean. Was that unscientific or fanatical, in view of what we knew about it? Wasn't that the best way of regulating the liquor traffic among us where all knew it was a matter of life and death to many of us?

XIV.

The Close of Open Water.

ONCE more we are landsmen. Once more our six short months afloat is over and the little *Strathcona* is once again safely tied alongside the wharf, the planking of which is already covered with the snow of approaching winter.

As we passed into this, our last harbor between the two great towering cliffs overhanging the narrow entrance, and as the Capital City opened out all round us, leaving us right in its busy midst, we seemed suddenly shut off as it were by closed gates from the restless life beyond, from the field of activities which till a moment ago had been absorbing all our interests. We seemed to have suddenly reached the horizon, and passed directly into a new life, for into this fair harbor no rough seas can reach. There are no rocks to fear—no shoals to shun—the anchor once down in

this harbor we no longer fear that our little vessel will drift from her moorings in the hours of darkness and sleep. Once lowered it will hold where you left it, till you weigh it again yourself on the way to some new field of labor.

A sense of tension relieved comes over one, and for a brief while thankfulness for rest. But almost at once a new feeling chases this away and one's mind flies back in review over the experiences of the past. What a new light seems to be thrown on the relative importance of things outside "the narrows." There gradually creeps into one's reverie the shadow of a desire, in spite of the rest and peace, that some of the opportunities might come back just once more.

But the iron mooring chains are fast to the great gump heads of the wharf—the sails are already unreeved—the ship dismantled—the very funnel covered in. The last mile stone is passed—the last chapter closed. What now is the live issue?

It has been suggested that we should ask His Excellency the Governor, viceroy of the King, to inspect the little ship. But when at length I put it to our good skipper, he protested, as I had half expected. "She looks too

much as if she had been through a mill, Doctor. She will look better after we have painted her in the spring."

In truth there was no denying it, for she looked as if she had just come out of battle. The topmasts had been struck for the late gale, and the dainty rigging we sailed out with had been stripped off and stowed. Our ragged remnant of a flag fluttered now from an impromptu staff, which, lashed into the large topgallant iron, looked lost and forlorn. The masts were grimy with smoke, and weathered and salted with the sea spray. For the continuance of heavy easterly weather had given the men no chance to scrape down during the voyage home. As for her deck houses, the varnish, where any was left, had assumed the color of skimmed milk from the continued driving sleet and spume. Up to two feet above the level of the rails most of it had been scraped off bodily by the heavy deck loads of pine wood which we had been carrying out of the bays to the hospitals, as our last contribution toward their winter comfort. The paint on her sides and bulwarks had paid such tribute to the sterns of countless fishing boats alongside that the once shiny black surface was mottled like a pane of frosted glass—

while below the water line—well, even there we would like to go over her on dock ourselves before others saw her. For we had struck twice on a nasty day in the late fall when we tried to navigate a part of the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the way to the new Canadian hospital, a piece of coast that was new to all of us. She had, in fact, entered her last port like a man cut off without a moment's warning: thus she certainly was not, as some would say, ready for inspection.

But as I stood on the wharf, running my eye over her familiar lines, to me endeared by so many happy days together, there was a sort of feeling that I would not have it otherwise. For she looked like a workman right from his field of labor. Her very toil-worn features spoke of things accomplished, and afforded some scant solace for the regrets that opportunities had gone by.

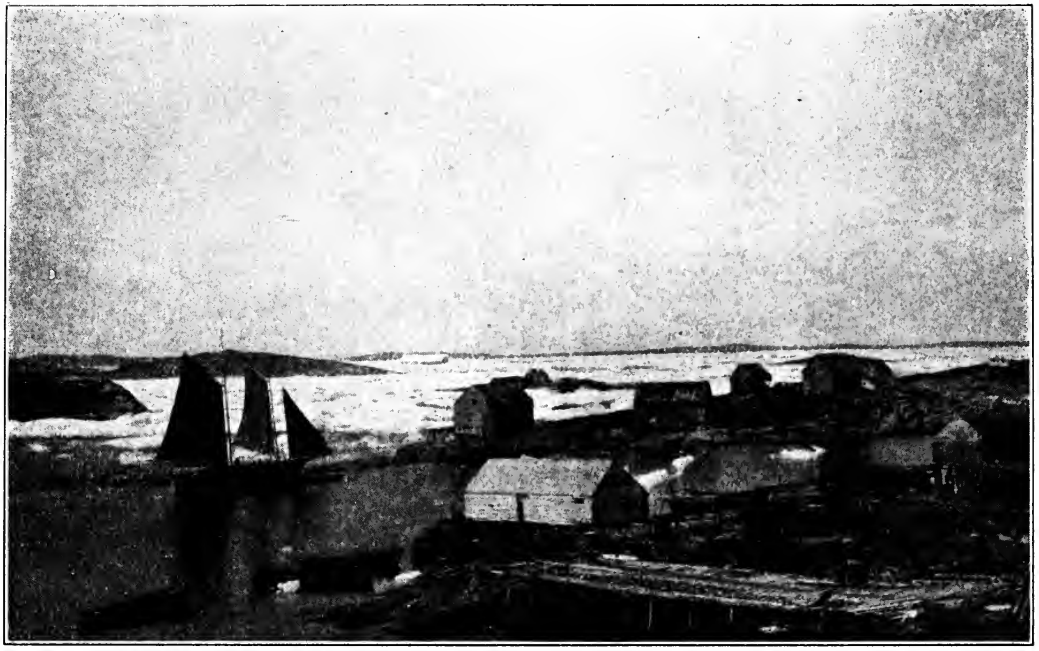
I could see again as I looked at her the thousands of miles of coast she had carried us along—the record of over a thousand folk that had sought and found help aboard her this summer—the score of poor souls for whom we could do nothing but carry them, sheltered in her snug cabin, to the larger hospitals where they could be better attended

than by us at sea. I remembered visitors and helpers whom she had faithfully carried, and who were now scattered where they could tell of the needs of our folks, and bring them better help in years to come. I remembered the ministers and travelers that had been lent a hand as they pushed their way up and down our coast—the women and children and aged persons that she had carried up the long bays to their winter home, and to whom she had saved the suffering of the long exposure in small and open boats. One remembered the libraries she had distributed all along this bookless coast line, the children picked up and carried to the shelter of the Orphanage, the casks of food and drugs for men and dogs, placed at known rendezvous along the line of water travel, making the long dog journeys possible. How often had her now boarded-up windows lighted up her cabin for a floating Court of Justice in lonely places where, even if the judgments arrived at had been rather equitable than legal, yet disputes had been ended, wrong-doing punished, and the weak had been time and again helped to get right done them.

One remembered how she had been a terror to certain evil-doers and more especially to

those wretches whose greed for sordid gain leads them to defy the laws of God and man, as they sell illicitly the poisonous drinks with which they lure brave men and true to their ruin. On a truck on the wharf beside me, even now, on its way to the police station, lay a consignment that our little ship on one of her raiding expeditions had saved from doing the damage it was capable of. How like a confiscated bomb-shell it looked. And one remembered pleasantly the comment of a fisherman friend on this, one of the most vital of her missionary efforts, at one specially troublesome settlement: "Bedad, if the mission ship goes on like this long we won't be able to kape an ould bottle in the house to put a drop of ile in."

Again I could see her saving from destruction a helpless schooner abandoned by her crew and fast beating to pieces on a lee shore. I could see her cabin loaded with sacks of warm clothing for use in districts where dire poverty from failure in the fishing, or possible accident in their perilous work had left defenseless women and children to face the coming cold of winter unprotected, and among those who had benefited in this way were the crews of half a dozen unfortunate schooners,



DOESN'T LOOK EXACTLY LIKE A PLEASURE YACHT

wrecked in the heavy equinoctial gale of last September.

And beyond all the physical aid that had been rendered, one remembered the many sorrowful hearts to which she had carried messages of comfort and cheer. To some dying she had brought the joyful view of the realities of life beyond, and to some stricken hearts bereft of the hand they looked to for protection, she had brought with material help the ray of hope which God permits the hand of a brother to carry as possibly its most precious burden.

The skipper, who had come to the rail to insert a fender between the streak of the wharf shores, noticed that I was still examining the ship, and interrupted my reverie.

"Doesn't look exactly like a pleasure yacht, Doctor, does she?"

"Indeed she doesn't, skipper," and I almost added, "thank God." For it is some years since I have had time to seek pleasure in that way. Somehow the idea of the mission steamer being a "pleasure yacht" grated on one's nerves. A "mere pleasure yacht" was in my mind, and rose to my lips too. For though some might not think of it, the true following of the Master makes men utilitarian.

His servants must "hustle" in this busy world, as do the servants of His enemy, a truth the middle ages did not appear to know. The Master's followers must have strong reasons to give themselves when they can afford to seek their pleasure as others do.

Out of this very port she had sailed just six months ago, not knowing what she might be called upon to do or to face, before she could hope to get back to her haven of rest again. She had started with a high purpose, anxious to serve God by serving His brethren, seeking the joy which can only be won in one way. The same joy which the Lord has promised that His faithful children shall share with Him hereafter. The joy of toil here, and toil-worn rest hereafter. "The blessing of heaven is perfect rest, but the blessing of earth is toil."

Our ship had stood forth a tiny speck in the great ocean, a thing that man's mind might well despise as ill calculated to achieve service of any value to the King of Kings. Presumptuous it had often seemed even to us, as we thought of the great work to be done—of the uncharted shore, the countless delays, the thousands of scattered craft, the short season, the strong passions and the great temptations of the men that we purposed to try and win.

Moreover now, as the incidents of the summer flitted in review before my mind, I could not but remember that twice we had struck rocks, once had been all but overwhelmed in a storm, several times had been astray in fogs, twice had broken down and for want of power had been ourselves forced to seek help and to lose time undergoing repairs. It seemed a poor record.

Just at this moment the wake of a ferry tug rocked the *Strathcona,* and the bump she gave the wharf called me back to the world of realities abruptly. After all she still lay there. A stout little steamer full of capabilities, ready and waiting for fresh responsibilities. The very bump called to remembrance the familiar saying of an old friend:

"Look up, not down,
Look forward, not back,
Look out, not in.
Lend a hand."

The sluggish schooner in which we first sailed with one doctor, only enabling us to spend three months out of the twelve on the coast, had vanished, till now even in winter, in their distant stations in far off Labrador, at the time when all possible help from outside is cut off, are three doctors and three

trained nurses, and many other agencies, all proclaiming with splints and bandages, with remunerative work, and cheaper flour, with good books and with simple toys, and in other ways, what God can do in spite of the blundering workmen.

I fancied I could see written round the now silenced funnel the words of a familiar hymn:

> "Only an armour bearer, yet may I stand,
> Ready to follow at the King's command."

God grant that when I come up for inspection, when my voyage is over, I may not fear the verdict. May the log-book record many a brother helped, and saved. For though He will see—as see He will—the dints in the planking and the scratches on the paint and spars—yes, even if they speak to Him while they remind us of the sorry contact with rock and shoal—still we have confidence to believe that there will be nothing to dread from Him.

"Yes, Yes, Skipper: God bless the old ship. Let her be inspected, I say, just as she is."

THE END.