

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### THE HEROINE OF A FISHING VILLAGE.

Until she was nineteen years old, Dorothy lived a very uneventful life; for one week was much the same as another in the placid existence of the village. On Sabbath morning, when the church bells began to ring, you would meet her walking over the moor with a springy step. Her shawl was gray, and her dress was of the most pronounced colour that could be bought in the market town. Her brown hair was gathered in a net, and her calm eyes looked from under an old-fashioned bonnet of straw. Her feet were always bare, but she carried her shoes and stockings slung over her shoulder. When she got near the church she sat down in the shade of a hedge and put them on; then she walked the rest of the distance with a cramped and civilized gait. On the Monday mornings early she carried the water from the well. Her great "skeel" was poised easily on her head; and, as she strode along singing lightly without shaking a drop of water over the edge of her pail, you could see how she had come by her erect carriage. When the boat came in, she went to the beach and helped to carry the baskets of fish to the cart. She was then dressed in a sort of thick flannel blouse and a singular quantity of brief petticoats. Her head was bare, and she looked far better than in her Sabbath clothes. If the morning was fine she sat out in the sun and baited the lines, all the while lilting old country songs in her guttural dialect. In the evenings she would spend some time chatting with other lasses in the Row; but she never had a very long spell of that pastime, for she had to be at work winter and summer by about five or six in the morning. The fisher-folk do not waste many candles by keeping late hours. She was very healthy and powerful, very ignorant, and very modest. Had she lived by one of the big harbours, where fleets of boats come in, she might have been as rough and brazen as the girls often are in those places. But in her secluded little village the ways of the people were old-fashioned and decorous, and girls were very restrained in their manners. No one would have taken her to be anything more than an ordinary country girl, had not a chance enabled her to show herself full of bravery and resource.

Every boat in the village went away north one evening, and not a man remained in the Row excepting three very old fellows, who were long past work of any kind. When a fisherman grows helpless with age he is kept by his own people, and his days are passed in quietly smoking on the kitchen settle, or in looking dimly out over the sea from the bench at the door. But a man must be sorely "failed" before he is reduced to idleness, and able to do nothing that needs strength. A southerly gale, with a southerly sea, came away in the night, and the boats could not beat down from northward. By daylight they were all safe in a harbour about eighteen miles north of the village. The sea grew worse and worse, till the usual clouds of foam

flew against the houses or skimmed away into the fields beyond. When the wind reached its height the sounds it made in the hollows were like distant firing of small arms, and the waves in the hollow rocks seemed to shake the ground over the cliffs. A little schooner came around the point, running before the sea. She might have got clear away, because it was easy enough for her, had she clawed a short way out, risking the beam sea, to have made the harbour where the fishers were. But the skipper kept her close in, and presently she struck on a long tongue of rocks that trended far out eastward. The tops of her masts seemed nearly to meet, so it appeared as if she had broken her back. The sea flew sheer over her, and the men had to climb into the rigging. All the women were watching and waiting to see her go to pieces. There was no chance of getting a boat out, so the helpless villagers waited to see the men drown; and the women cried in their shrill, piteous manner. Dorothy said, "Will she break up in an hour? If I thowt she could hing there I would be away for the life-boat." But the old men said, "You can never cross the burn." Four miles south, behind the point, there was a village where a life-boat was kept; but just half way a stream ran into the sea, and across this stream there was only a plank bridge. Half a mile below the bridge the water spread far over the broad sand and became very shallow and wide. Dorothy spoke no more, except to say, "I'll away." She ran across the moor for a mile, and then scrambled down to the sand so that the tearing wind might not impede her. It was dangerous work for the next mile. Every yard of the way she had to splash through the foam, because the great waves were rolling up very nearly to the foot of the cliffs. An extra strong sea might have caught her off her feet, but she did not think of that; she only thought of saving her breath by escaping the direct onslaught of the wind. When she came to the mouth of the burn her heart failed her for a little. There were three quarters of a mile of water covered with creamy foam, and she did not know but that she might be taken out of her depth. Yet she determined to risk, and plunged in at a run. The sand was hard under foot, but, as she said, when the piled foam came softly up to her waist she "felt gey funny." Half way across she stumbled into a hole caused by a swirling eddy, and she thought all was over; but her nerve never failed her, and she struggled till she got a footing again. When she reached the hard ground she was wet to the neck. Her clothes troubled her with their weight in crossing the moor, so she put off all she did not need and pressed forward again. Presently she reached the house where the coxswain of the life-boat lived. She gasped out, "The schooner! On the Letch! Norrad."

The coxswain, who had seen the schooner go past, knew what was the matter. He said "Here, wife, look after the lass," and ran out. The "lass" needed looking after, for she had fainted. But her work was well done; the life-boat went round the point, ran north, and took six men ashore from the schooner. The captain had been washed overboard, but the

others were saved by Dorothy's daring and endurance. The girl is as simple as ever, and she knows nothing whatever about Grace Darling. If she were offered any reward she would probably wonder why she should receive one.

### FAITH.

Willie was a little boy about seven years old. His father was a drunkard, and his mother had a very hard time to get along.

One day in winter Willie said:

"Mother, can't I have a pair of new boots? My toes are all out of these. The snow gets in, and I feel awful cold."

The tears came into his mother's eyes as she said:

"Well, Willie, my dear boy I hope soon to be able to get you a new pair."

After waiting for some days Willie said:

"O mother, it's too bad! Can't I get some boots somehow?" He stood thinking a moment and then said: "O, I know what to do. I'll ask God to get them for me. Why didn't I think of that before?" Then he went up to his own little room, and knelt down by his bed, and covering his face with his hands he said: "O God, father drinks; mother has no money; my feet get cold and wet; I want some new boots. Please, Lord, get me a pair. For Jesus' sake. Amen."

Then he went down stairs and waited for an answer.

Shortly after this a kind Christian lady, who lived near them, called in, and asked Willie to take a walk with her. Willie went. Pretty soon the lady saw Willie's toes coming out of his boots.

Then she said:

"Why, Willie dear, look at your feet. They'll freeze. Why didn't you put on a better pair of boots?"

"These are all I have, ma'am."

"But why don't you get a new pair?"

"Mother has no money to get them with. But I've asked God to get me a new pair, and I'm waiting till He sends them."

Tears filled the lady's eyes when she heard this; and leading Willie into a shoemaker's shop, she had him fitted with a nice pair of new boots.

This made him very happy, and he thanked the good lady for her kindness. As soon as he returned home he went up to his mother, and showing her his new boots, said:

"Look, mother; God has heard my prayer, and sent me the boots. Mrs. Gray's money bought them; but God heard me ask for them, and I suppose He told Mrs. Gray to get them for me." Then he knelt down by his mother's side and said: "O God, I thank Thee for these nice new boots. Make me a good boy, and take care of dear mother. For Jesus' sake. Amen."

Willie had just the same kind of faith that Abraham had. We can think of him as an example of prayer and an example of faith. And we need not have better illustration of how we are to pray and how we are to have faith in God than this story of Willie gives us.

NEVER present a gift saying it is of no use to yourself.