



FROM PRAYER TO PRAISE.

THE speaker was a little shrewd old man, well known to every body, and not generally supposed to be remarkable for amiable qualities...

"Friends," began the old man, in a weak cracked voice. "Friends, I didn't expect that to see myself standing up here with you to-day, and it's only because I'd be a downright traitor if I held my tongue to-night, that I ask you to listen to me a minute or two."

"When our leader there said what he did last week about our forefathers of yore, I said to myself, I want to be in the crowd for praising just then, at all, I were much too hurried and nervous. All on you know my Tom's a lovely old man, and more too well off, and now my little house, where I've lived forty years odd, wants to be so on any longer. Since the new station's opened it's worth more, I suppose, and Genes would let me have it without a cent, if I could get a better offer. Course I'd joyed about it, prayed about it, had down a plan, all plans and square how the Almighty were to help me, but I were careless and at the thought of how I'd have, perhaps, to go after all, for the days went by, and Genes didn't change his mind, and no unexpected bit of money came to me all on a sudden, like the raven to Eliah. Certainly it didn't seem at all a time for praying, and when the 31st Psalm came for my evening reading, it didn't seem the right one at all. How could I bless the Lord of all times? and as for praise being occasionally in my mouth, it was out of the question; occasional might be, or nervous supplication, but not praise. But that were haunted me. 'At all times - at all times,' came to me over and over again. The Lord sang it, and the words caught it, till I began to think that possibly Timothy Crump, church member for nigh fifty years, might be making a terrible mistake. And so he was, friends, and he wanted it, and he went down on his knees and gave thanks to God, because all that was-a-goon to happen was just right, though he, maybe, couldn't see it, for it was true, come what will, that 'they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.'"

"Mr. Crump opened a window; then he went on slowly, and in a lower voice: 'Maybe some of you is a-skeeter,' said he, 'as how the Lord here answered Timothy Crump's prayer by now, and he ain't a-goon to leave his old home. Nay, friends, but I am going, and, more me that, the day I moves out from under the old roof - and it's to-morrow - that'll be the happiest day I've known this many a long and year. My boy, and the old man a voice trembled - 'my boy what rained away twenty year ago, and forty nigh broke my heart, he comes back again when I'd long given him up for dead. And nothing will do but his old father must come and live with him, and be treated like a prince, most of a poor old shrewdster, and end his days in comfort and joy.'"

Here Timothy Crump came diagonally near to breaking down altogether; but, by an effort, he mastered his voice and faltered, 'So, friends, I feel as if I could do nothing but give thanks the rest of my life; not just now and then when I kneel in prayer, but seven times a day do I praise Thee because of Thy righteousness-judgments.' 'O surely the Lord with me, and let an oxen lift its name together.'"

As the little old man sat down, it was whistled that his

simple but heartfelt testimony had made a profound impression on the meeting, and even Deacon Rust suddenly fumbled in an odd manner for his handkerchief; hearts touched with sympathetic emotion soon protracted ready lips to a genuine song of praise, and Deacon Dayley thought he had never heard "Children of the Heavenly King" sung with so much fervor, or had himself caught so quickly its cheerful spirit of thanksgiving and hope. - (From Deacon Dayley's Praise-Meeting. S. W. Partridge and Co., 1d)

THE TOILERS ON THE DEEP.

BY J. M. HENKINS.

"Tiptoe's the carrier, Jen." "Whither away?" "Starboard bow."

And true enough, in the early dawn, a rash of rockets cut the dusky sky with a blaze of light - the signal that the steamer had arrived.

The birds on the wing, the fishing fleet gathers around the new comer, and as the light grows, stout row-boats put forth from the various smacks to ferry the fish to the carrier.

It is a ticklish business. The big waves heave and toss, and the fish carrier swings up and down like a lightome cork, while the men in the boats have to put aboard heavy trunks of fish. Now her iron sides boom high aloft, now they sink low beneath, and anon they yaw far away. In this tempestuous sea there seems no moment favorable for hoisting the boxes aboard.

But the men manage it wonderfully well. Pivoting a box on his hands, one will stand on a thwart and watch the waves. Now there is one coming; but before it comes, the steamer's side sinks low.

In with box! Now is the time! The man has swung it on the carrier, and when the wave swirls along the next second or so, and lifts the steamer high, or swells the boat away, the transfer has been made, and the steamer carrier has the heavy box of fish safe and sound.

In such risky swinging business the men must seize the very nick of time, and be most bolder himself well. He gets an ugly fall, a sickening bruise, or a plunge in the foaming water.

Weather varies of course in the North Sea; there are pleasant days of sun, and there are the fierce snow-storms and blizzards of winter; but, indeed, the wind seems always in the east or north, and the sea has generally a jolting heave roll, as many landmen know to their cost when they venture too far on its tossing waters. In winter everything on deck gets frozen, the sea spray freezes as it blows aboard, the ropes become icy and hard as iron, and the blocks must be thawed by pouring hot water on them before the ropes will run. The fish just aboard the carrier, the various boat's depot; the steamer turns her head for home, and the fishing, which is usually by trawling, is resumed.

There are in the North Sea a number of fishing fleets, varying from about twelve to about twenty, and cruising hither and thither to catch their fishery. They haul from such ports as Yarmouth, Grimsby, and Wally, and rejoice in such names as the "Short Blue" fleet, "Red Crew," "Great Northern," "Durman," etc. Each fleet has an "admiral," who exercises a general control over its movements.

A fishing smack cruises for right weeks at a time, returning at the end of that period for a week's rest ashore. She usually fishes by means of the trawler, hence the name, "trawler" generally applied to these craft. The trawler is fitted with a big beam, at each end of which is an iron "rubber," like the runner of a sledge, and which lift the beam a yard or so off the ground.

The net itself is like a big bag of mesh work, as long as the beam in front, but narrowing behind. The upper part of its mouth is fastened firmly to the beam - which, it will be remembered, is kept about a yard above the sea bottom by means of the runners - while the lower lip of the net is linked to a strong rope or cable with lead.

Then the trawler is fitted with a gaping mouth, perhaps a yard open, and several yards in width, and as it is dragged over the ocean bed it sweeps up all kinds of fish as its wide entrance. All is fish and shell, that comes to the net.

When the smack has returned, she goes Grimsby to her fishing ground and repairs the net as it is about. The vessel soon feels the drag of the net, and as it is pulled it is reduced to about one-half. Moreover, it runs from side to side, and the hoppers swing from left to right, and right to left constantly. The net has to be worked for a couple of days, as it does over the uneven surface of the sea-floor, it is liable to encounter unknown difficulties. The net may even have to be stopped if the net catch something, such as a rock or wreck, which holds it fast; otherwise the vessel might lose its trawl altogether.

gether. The depth to which the net sinks is some thirty or forty fathoms off the Dogger Bank - that is, from 150 to 250 feet.

"Reeve up, there!" "Up trawl, ah!" sings out the watch in the early morning, when the time has come to haul the net. The tired men turn out of their berths to bear their part in pulling up the great net. On many vessels this is now accomplished by steam power; otherwise by the men turning steadily at the capstan as they tramp around it.

At last, up comes the beam, and the net lag floats on the surface of the water. What is the catch? Poor or plentiful? It is a moment of some excitement even for the oldest hand, as the men bend down and pull and haul the net aboard. It is quickly unladen, and the fish fall out, wriggling and jumping about the deck.

Many kinds are here - flat fish in plenty, cod with their innards, star, haddock, skate, ling and herring. Sometimes a shark appears, or his cousin the dogfish, kind of fisherman, and not without cause, on account of its voracity among food fishes and the injury it works to lines and nets. Occasionally a big halibut may appear, and occasionally, also, a salmon.

But whatever the catch, over goes the net again, when the fish are taken out and the various kinds are sorted according to sizes and classes, and packed in the boxes ready for the steam carrier. Then the vessel forges ahead, and the trawl line swings from side to side, while some of the crew snatch a little sleep and rest, and the wind and wave boom along with their wild melody and roar.

Steam has invaded the fishing province, as it has so many other industries, and steam trawlers have made their appearance on the rough North Sea. The General Steam Fishing Company, Limited, owns a fleet of nice steam trawlers, boats of about a hundred tons, shaped and built to stand rough weather, and of strong steaming power.

Another change, and one greatly for the better, is the appearance of the hospital ships of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. It is easy to see that in the exercise of such a calling, accidents and injuries are likely to be sadly frequent; and yet in these populous floating villages, established altogether by perhaps some 20,000 men, there was no one to attend to such hurts except the men themselves. Then there are sea-sickness, or seasickness produced by the chafing of the cold-air caps, or poisoned fingers caused by injuries from boxes when preparing the fish for conveyance on the boxes to the steam carrier. In short, there was an ample need for medical work. And so, ever since the Mission was established, about 1872, the captains of the Mission vessels have always endeavored to render medical assistance. They have carried drugs and surgical appliances, and have been instructed by a physician in their elementary use. But later on, special hospital ships were put afloat, with sick berths aboard, and several of the Mission vessels, of which there are now eleven, have hospital accommodations and a qualified surgeon. The size of the vessels varies from 60 tons to 125.

The North Sea surgeon finds that he has to work under considerable difficulties. A man breaks a limb or injures his skull in rough weather. Farth goes the boat for the doctor. Then comes his first delicacy - how to reach his mortal "bosom." There is no sailing breeze and careful conclusion. The long-boat is the rowing boat which has come to fetch him, and it is tossed furiously up and down by the pitching waves. The hospital ship itself rolls terribly. How is he to keep from sea to the other? Unless he secure the exact moment, he may be seriously hurt himself.

But getting aboard safely and the rough passage made, the surgeon may have to tend a broken leg or arm to a dingy little cabin, which rocks and bounces about worse than the machinery on the sea top. One fisherman may grip the surgeon hard by the waist to hold him steady, and another - or two or three more - will grasp the patient for the same purpose. And then he may have to be pulled into a kind of cradle berth, or stretcher, to convey him aboard the hospital ship, or to send him home by the steam carrier. Some patients are even brought round to the London Hospital.

The men generally bear pain with the most brave fortitude - perhaps because they have only too frequent opportunities of proving that great fortitude - and they are very obedient to the doctor. The Mission supports the doctor, that is, it allows them the use of a room and grants them a small fee, which they do not take, and it appears that sometimes they attend over 2,000 patients yearly. These Mission vessels, which arrive at night on hospital ships do not engage in fishing, but on the North Sea coast do so, although having hospital accommodations on board, and the proceeds of the crew's services sold, amounting to about £2,500 a year, must in defraying the £21,000 annual cost of the Mission.