

BOYS AND GIRLS

A Plea for the Children.

We plead for the little children,
Who have opened their baby eyes
In the far-off lands of darkness,
Where the shadow of death yet lies.
But not to be nurtured for heaven,
Not to be taught in the way,
Not to be watched o'er and guided,
Lest their tiny feet should stray.
Ah, no! It is idol-worship
Their stammering lips are taught;
To cruel false gods only
Are their gifts and offerings brought
And what can we children offer,
Who dwell in this Christian land?
Is there no work for the Master
In reach of each little hand?
Oh, surely a hundred tapers,
Which even small fingers can clasp,
May lighten as much of the darkness
As a lamp in a stronger grasp.
And then as the line grows longer
So many tapers, though small,
May kindle a brighter shining
Than a lamp would, after all.
Small hands may gather rich treasures,
And e'en infant lips can pray;
Employ, then, the little fingers
Let the children learn the way.
So the lights shall be quicker kindled,
And darkness the sooner shall flee;
Many 'little ones' learn of the Saviour
Both here and 'far over the sea.'
—'Mission Dayspring.'

A Letter From Dr. Grenfell.

[The following letter, written last year at just this time to 'Toilers of the Deep,' is full of most interesting details that lost nothing by re-reading at this date. Dr. Grenfell has not long since left St. John's for St. Anthony's Hospital, in the 'Strathcona,' and is by now probably in much the same surroundings as when he wrote this letter.—Ed.]

(Concluded.)

July 23.—Since my last we have been as far west as Old Fort, in Canadian Labrador. The fishery there is picking up considerably, and from Forteau it shows signs of a good catch. Some of the smaller places, like Lanse au Claire, where the people were so very badly off last winter, having done unusually well. It is the same story, however, all the way. The fish, on the whole, having kept out in deeper water, and thus favoring the line and trawl men. Practically no fish is dried on the coast yet. There has been, of course, great temptation to overload the dories, as a good season for linemen is not to be played with. We saw a dory coming in almost level with the water yesterday. Even then the man had taken off the fishes' heads, to enable the boat to carry more. Two dories have upset, and sunk, near Greenly Island. The two men in one were drowned, though boats hastening to the rescue were already near. The sea was rough on the shallow point of the island, and the breakers washed off the last man as he was almost ashore. He was evidently too beaten out to fight any longer for life, for he had one boot off for swimming. The dories have one good arrangement for enabling a man to hold on to a capsized boat. A rope, with a bight, is drawn through the plug, this enabling a man to get his arm through, and so have a chance

for his life. Even then a man should, of course, be able to swim.

I have always been under the impression that not more than one in a hundred of the Newfoundland fishermen could swim, owing to the coldness of the sea, and the flies on the land. But I was glad to find, from an analysis kept by the Lieutenant of the 'Charybdis,' that the proportion is very much larger. There is, however, much room for improvement in that line still, and every effort encouraging the art is as worthy of support as is the definite training in rendering first aid to the wounded. It might well be a plank in the platform in a party seeking election—some measures taken to foster these two things. If there were regularly appointed medical men as teachers and examiners in first aid in the districts where the fishermen reside, and a bonus was given to every man passing an examination, such as the St. John Ambulance Society affords at home in England, much suffering, many lives, and much money would be saved to merchant and planter every year. The money now wasted on quack remedies, electric belts, and on, if possible, even more irrational and foolish methods, is not only a very considerable item, but is also extremely detrimental in its effects.

Familiarity with drugs may, however, breed a dangerous contempt. Two men were in the country here last winter for fur. The elder man was also collecting skins for the Smithsonian Museum. For this purpose he had taken in a tin filled with white arsenic in powder enough to kill a regiment. When in the country he told the younger to make some buns of bread for breakfast, as he was not feeling well after eating a portion of one he was baking. The young fellow made a couple, and proceeded to eat them. He noticed that his baking powder was very heavy, so, thinking that it must be damp, he had put in a double allowance. The young man was taken sick also as soon as he eat a piece of the bread. To the horror of the elder, he found that by mistake they had put in arsenic instead of baking powder. They did their best to wash it out with warm water, and then at once started for home. They were soon too weak to proceed, and had to wait. Fortunately, however, they were again sick, and then strength came back a little. This was repeated over and over again the younger man being only just dragged out alive. It was a very close squeak with both. The late ice on the east coast is, up to date, sadly hindering the fishery. The fact that ice kept the first mail boat from Battle even made a good deal of difference to some poor souls. One poor woman, with five young children, had her husband on board, going to the hospital at Battle. He only reached as far as Chateau, and had to be carried back to die, untreated, a few days later, and leave a family with no one to look after them. It seemed especially hard to the poor wife and mother that he should have got so near to help, and yet have failed to reach it. Alas! the 'nearly won' spells 'altogether lost,' a lesson many sadly need to learn, where failure is their own fault. The means of communication in Labrador are, I am glad to say, being very rapidly improved. I was delighted at Battle, the other day, to actually receive a Marconigram message from a schooner near Venison Islands, on which the assistant of Mr. Marconi was travelling. We eagerly look forward to the installation on the French shore. It is very, very much to be hoped that it will not be necessary to place the station on the Groais Islands, for, as far as the residents are concerned, it might almost as well be in Jeri-

cho, or some equally unattainable place. While in the winter the one great drawback to the settlement of the coast, the impossibility of outside communication, will be no way solved by a station on an island in the Atlantic, utterly out of reach by boat or otherwise. The mountain outside St. Anthony is very high, compared with any land about. It juts well out into the sea, and it is to be hoped that its claims to selection as the next point after Cape Bauld will not be overlooked. From there to Krause Head, and thence to St. John's Cape, would be of infinite service to the whole shore.

There have appeared on the coast this year a new series of factories for manufacturing cod oil. They are supplied with a new method, and by the side of it the Norwegian boilers even seem antediluvian. The oil is made by passing steam directly into the livers under pressure from a small boiler. The whole outfit is inexpensive; takes infinitely less time; is said to make much better oil; and seems bound to replace the old and tedious method of having men to stir the cooking livers for five hours on a stretch.

We have just been called to treat a most queer accident. An unfortunate cook girl had put her large pot of boiling water on the floor, and as she came back, looking the other way, walked right into it, with lamentable results to her feet, a large extensive superficial burn being always an exceedingly painful thing. We have several other patients, and are taking them down the straits to carry them to the hospital.

As I have been writing you this letter, Mr. Editor, we have been at anchor among a large fleet of bankers, off an island in the straits. These men fish with long lines and dories. There is a heavy swell running, and the fog is as thick as soup, one cannot see one hundred yards, in fact, so thick is it that in coming in to our moorings we struck, with our boat in davits, the bowsprit of a schooner also at anchor, and had, in consequence, an anxious few minutes. Now all around are the groans and hoots of numberless foghorns, all calling out their notes of warning and welcome to their small boats and men. What a parable again it does seem from life. Every one busy on their own little business, and yet unable to see their way, often enough the call sounding into empty space, and no ear heeding it. At last someone catches the call, draws on the right direction, then loses it again; then wandering around till a fresh call comes upon their ears; then, at last, a glimpse of the home, the home it is, though it may be on the sea, and after that the side is reached, and the workers are welcomed, and receive the warm welcome that they are, they feel, entitled to—if they have done their best. But what if they have been idle? What if they haven't one trophy as the result of their diminutive voyage? And what, especially if they are conscious that failure is their own fault? Surely heaven is not for such. Time, time, time, the foghorns seem to be sounding out. Make the most of it. It is passing. Soon the night, when no man can work. Oh, my readers, if you are wasting the precious time allotted to you, and doing nothing for the Master, how will you face him hereafter? For 'He sees through the fog.'

Yours heartily, in the Master's service,
WILFRED GRENFELL.

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