

'Come along, skipper,' we cried, 'the boiler will blow up.'

'All the better!' he bitterly replied, and made no attempt to move.

'I'm not going to see the old man killed,' and the deckhand sprang on board again as the boat swung alongside; he was just on the rail, a dark blot against the fire, when down fell the heavy boom, pinning him like a rat! Unseen by us, the fire had burnt through the lift and leech of the mainsail. We forced the boat alongside, and—how I don't know—we dragged the heavy spar off him, and as gently as we could—but it was rough at 'that' with such a running sea—laid him in the bottom of the boat, crushed and moaning, the skipper coming last. Then we cast off, and tried to do the best we could for our crippled shipmate, but we could only lay him as easy as we knew how, and hope for the best, for what injuries he had received we were ignorant of.

Little do folks ashore reckon of sea hardships. If a man gets run over in the streets he can have the best doctors in a hospital at once, where everything is held in readiness; but here we were with an injured man—maybe dying—in a little boat on a pitiless night, miles and miles away from land, with no knowledge ourselves what to do to ease him, but only able to look at one another in helpless pity.

The smack was all ablaze now, the sails driving away to leeward in great flakes of fire; the seas running black as ink against the light, and as they fell, changed into great sheets of trembling light.

We gazed eagerly around for any sign of a ship, but if any light was near, we failed to see it, as the glare from the burning smack dimmed even the stars.

As the mainsail burnt away, she slowly payed off, and sailed away before the wind. There was a chance yet—if only one of those following seas would burst over the stern; but, no, on she went to her end, rising up to the crest stately and awful, then into the trough, and when we lost her shape—the black water running up between us and the fire—it seemed as though a volcano had sprung up from the deep. On she went, until at last we saw an upward rush of flame and steam, and as the burning wreckage fell, we caught the faint rumble of an explosion—the boiler had burst! Had it sunk her? At all events the fire was out, and all was black once more, with the stars gleaming coldly on us. We pulled away in the direction we saw her last, but if still afloat she must have outsailed us with the foresail and jib still drawing, for after a weary hour's pull we gained no sight of her, and at last we lay sullenly on our oars.

Our poor deck-hand lay half unconscious and moaning; the keen wind, as it nipped us to the bone, made us feel how he must suffer, lying in the leakage of the boat. We kept taking turns at the oars to keep our blood on the move, and pulling down the wind, as the skipper said the Norway land lay to leeward. Not a light broke the blackness at any point. Once or twice we were deceived by some star rising up, making us eager with hope of a ship heading for us.

Through all the weary night we pulled onward, taking turns of lying beside poor Charlie, with our arms under his head to give him a little comfort—it was all we could do for him, poor fellow; and when at length the dawn came graying up, we saw the blue cliffs of the Norway coast low down on the horizon, and nearer yet, to our great joy, there was a sail heading our way, and as the distance lessened, we made it out to be a Norwegian pilot boat. He saw us, for

the little cruising jib was run in, and a handsome big one took its place, and by the time the sun was showing he was hove to alongside us. When they saw our injured mate in the bottom, they had us in tow at once, as we thought it best not to shift him from under the thwarts until we could get a doctor.

By the time we ran into the fjord the pilot boat sailed from, Charlie was delirious, and lay in a little fisher cottage many a weary day before he saw his home again. And our old skipper had to follow up his work in his old age to earn a mere living. It took us some time, too, to pull round, and get another stock of clothes together, for we had lost our all.

So you see it is not only storms that a smacksman has to toil through to earn his daily bread, but fire and accidents come and lay us low; still, we look on hardships as part of our life, and happy are we when able to grasp the joyful fact that Christ in heaven cares for us, and moves the hearts of his followers on shore to think of us too.

### The Decent Folks' Sin.

(Published by a request from Guelph, Ont.)

John Grant was a Scotchman, leal-hearted and true,

A blacksmith to trade, good work he could do,

Obliging and steady, he ne'er tasted drink, And he smoked but an ounce in the week, I think.

Katie, his wife, had a face fresh and fair, And to John, no woman with her could compare,

A true-loving couple, not the least of their joys

Was that they had been blessed with two sturdy boys!

But in fairest of 'Edens' a serpent may lurk; And John comin' in one night from his work, Was confounded to find Katie's face bathed in tears;

He stood quite amazed, with a mind full of fears.

Then strode forward, and gently lifting her head,

'What ails ye, my lass,' he anxiously said, Kate lifted her apron, her wet cheeks to wipe, And out fell tobacco, some matches, a pipe.

'John, oot oor Rob's pocket a' got they the night,

An' I'm fear'd he'll gang wrang, for he's no daen' richt.'

'Whesht, Katie, ma woman, nae greetin', hoot, toot,

About the young scoundrel ne'er pit yersel' oot.'

'An' besides,' John went on with a smile on his face,

'That's no sic a sin, or a deedly disgrace, "Baccy's weel patronized by maist decent folks,

No to gang very far—Oor Minister smokes.'

As John uttered these words Katie sprang to her feet,

'Ye ca' it "nae sin!" and ye wonder a' greet; It's a decent folk's sin! an' ye're gaun wi' the lave,

Nor seekin' frae evils yer laddie to save.

'Oor minister smokes! o' that there's nae doot,

Puir Bob telled me that, juist afore he ran oot,

But it's off to the manse this night a' will gang,

It's no be ma faut if ma laddie gangs wrang!'

Dumfounded was John, he had ne'er seen his wife

In such an excitement in their married life. He went round the corner, and there he did wait.

Till he saw Katie enter the minister's gate.

Then he went to his 'study' and there stopped to think,

'Katie's no that far wrang, smokin' leads aft to drink;

"A decent folk's sin," that's a hard nut to nae joke;

Smokers disna aye drink, drinkers maistly aye smoke!'

"A decent folk's sin," that's a hard nut to crack;

Sic a tift she was in; a' wush she was back; A've a gude mind ta fallow her strau'nt the brae,

A'm wonderin'—'what will the minister say?'

As Katie was shown to the minister's room, She nearly grew sick by the heavy perfume Coming in from the garden, the window ajar, Where the minister smoked his evening cigar.

With a frank smile he entered poor Katie to greet,

'How are you to-night, Mrs. Grant? Take this seat,'

But the moment his eyes on Katie's face fell, He said 'What's the matter? I hope you're all well!'

'We're a' weel, sir! thank ye! but a'm sair put about,

This nicht John an' me, hae fairly cast oot.' So Katie began—no time did she waste,

But plunged into her story with desperate haste;

Telling what she had found in Rob's pocket that nicht,

And she said 'A' told John, ye're no daen' richt,

In smokin' yersel; and maitters tae mend.' There Kate's heart beat as her story did end.

He said, 'Baccy's patronized by most decent folks,

No to gang very far, oor minister smokes.'

Mr. Martin's face flushed, hesitating he said, 'Your moral is plain, and easily read;

And I think you're quite right every means to employ,

For keeping temptation away from your boy.

But as for him smoking, 'tis but a boy's trick,

He'll soon give it up, whene'er he turns sick; It's true smoking often has led on to drink;

But it cannot do that with abstainers, I think.

John and I are abstainers; there's no need for alarm,

And all that I smoke, can do nobody harm; A small, mild cigar in the evening just serves

To give rest to my brain, and to soothe all my nerves,

And fits me for study, or sermons to write; For you see, Mrs. Grant, my work is not

light.'

With the air of a queen, Katie rose from her chair

And she said, 'Mr. Martin, these words a' can't bear,'

And she stretched forth her hand, her eyes flashing with light,

'At this moment a picture appears in ma sight,

Of the time when oor Saviour's blessed feet trode

This earl, when He entered the temple of God,