

With Dr. Grenfell.

Hunger and Cold, and Sorrows Even Harder,
to Bear.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Amongst other additions to our ship's complement accumulated during a particularly trying stretch of our last northern tour, we had one poor fellow on board suffering greatly from an incurable internal disease, and a mother and baby also needing hospital treatment. Thus it was with considerable satisfaction that we saw the wind veer off the land and give us a chance of an easier journey to our northern hospital at Indian Harbor. On arriving there was still time before dusk to see the patients at the hospital and get ready for operation before breakfast next morning those that needed it. This left us good time to visit a number of the small places on the long inlet of 150 miles up which we were now bound. On the outside, poorer settlers dwell. Here they do not do so well trapping in winter, and in the struggle for existence, being isolated from their fellows, they have mostly fallen behind. A solitary settler on Blue Island Head had been engaged to look after and obtain some wood fuel for our steamer during the spring, so that we might ensure the scattered folk round some remunerative work to do, as they were short of food. On heaving to off the Head we sighted the wood pile with our glasses. On going ashore we found the man away—three bare-footed children and the wife were alone in a very empty house. It was beautifully clean, but very threadbare. 'Where's Jim? Is he out fishing?' we asked. 'He be to Twisty Bight trying to shoot a seal to eat, Doctor.' 'Are you very short, then?' 'There be only dry flour and a bit o' Oleo in the house,' she replied. 'No molasses?' 'Not a sup these three weeks.' 'Have you anything to purchase any?' 'Jim have three Ranger skins here.' These I purchased, adding, 'Don't you want to take part of it in some molasses from the ship?' 'Us owes all that money to — for flour in the spring.' She left me in no doubt that she intended keeping it for him. I wondered if the hungry children were mine whether I should have done the same. From here we ran over to a 'Bight' on the south side of the bay. With half a gale of wind behind us, and a swinging tide, we made 110 knots down the bay in ten hours—almost a record for our little ship. In this bay a good deal of wood is cut for us by poor families, in return for various forms of help, chiefly clothing. Clothing in Labrador is expensive, and the wool as a rule is not of the woolliest. It therefore is a very great help to a family if they can in any way earn some good material, and so all such placed in our care for this purpose proves every bit useful. The supply available from all his attainable sources had not, however, enabled one of our friends to stock the whole family. It was dead low water spring tide when we anchored off Blue Island Point. The spot where he lived is closed off by a barrier reef of ice-borne boulders, and the wood had to be 'spelled' down over half a mile of rocks outside, on which we hauled our dories up. The family turned out to help, and it would have made a great picture could we have reproduced it—the various sized workers and their various loads, crawling over the foreshore in a sort of endless chain. The smallest was a tiny, thin, barefooted, and I might almost say naked little boy, just able to crawl along with one fair sized billet at a time. His determination to play the rôle of wage-earner, and the solemn dignity with which he set out each time on his long trip, added just that comic touch to the undertaking which helps to make a wearisome task light. Before we left I was able to fit the child out with some warmer garments, and to purchase in exchange his inimitable nether garment, the first texture of which was an actual fact only discoverable, on the supposition that the solitary pocket left was in the original patch. Washed and ironed, they form an admirable set upon domestic economy in Labrador. Their only extant rival was oddly enough procured the same day at Indian Hospital by the matron—the garment being presumably from the position it occupied on a little scrap of a girl, an omnium gatherum of all the normal coverings of that section of the human frame. Another unfortunate family came for help this day. Two winters

in succession their house has been burned down together with everything in it. The young mother's story is one of the saddest I know. Left an orphan in a large family, she had married at twelve years of age a Scotch cooper in the employ of the great Fur Trading Company, and the same year returned with him to the North of Scotland. At first he was kind to her. He proved a hard drinker, however, and so illused her that the police persuaded her to return to Labrador. Seven years later, hearing no news, she married again. It was just one of those cases one felt privileged to assist in.

There are sorrows, however, harder to bear even than hunger and cold. A young skipper who last week went from home here, left his curly-haired three-year-old boy playing about the house while he was away in the boat. It was his only child. It apparently ran out to play on the wharf with a little playmate, and then fell over. Only the poor, cold clay greeted the skipper's home-coming.

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

A Prayer.

Grant, God of Love, thy help this day.
That I, thy child, may walk the way
Of truth, and understand what thou
Wouldst have me do to serve thee now.

O, God, be near me every hour;
Defend me by thy mighty power—
My heart is faint, my will is weak;
Unworthy, I thy blessing seek.

Kind Father, help me, that I may
Avoid the sins of yesterday;
Grant strength to do and grace to see,
And show thy mercy, Lord, on me.
—George H. Nelson, in the 'North-Western
Christian Advocate.'

A Civil Engineer's Experience.

It has always been our resolve, in connection with engineering works, to have no labor employed on Sunday, if it could in any way be avoided; of course, in cases of emergency or danger, it would be necessary, but, as far as possible, nothing else justified it.

We once carried out an important tunnel, two miles in length, the contract being executed by a well-known firm, and it was completed in a record short time. When finished, the contractor said to me: 'This absence of Sunday work has saved considerable time; we have just finished another important tunnel, elsewhere, in which not only was Sunday work allowed, but it was ordered by the Company, and was found that both loss of time and unnecessary expense resulted. The men came back worn out on Monday, instead of being refreshed by a Sunday's rest; the boys, the horses, the very engines and boilers, need their Sunday!'

Sunday is known as the Lord's Day, and it is the duty of all to observe it as such in memory of our Lord, and not to devote it to travelling or pleasure, which generally entails labor on the part of others for our convenience, and which robs them of opportunities for worship and rest. Let us make the Day as bright and cheery as possible, using it for mental and spiritual growth, for acts of kindness and mercy, and for the relief of sickness and distress. Sir Matthew Hale's verses are still very much to the point:—

A Sunday well spent, brings a week of content,
And strength for the toils of the morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned, whatever may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow.

France and some other Continental countries have to a great extent lost their Sundays, and are now endeavoring to regain them; let us not, as Britishers, do anything to break them down.—From a deeply interesting work, entitled, 'River, Road, and Rail,' by Francis Fox, Memb. Inst. Civil Engineers.

A collector at Bombay has among his curiosities a Chinese god marked 'Heathen Idol,' and next to it a gold piece marked 'Christian Idol.'

Religious Notes.

Under the leadership of that valiant Christian statesman, Mr. S. Shimada, M.P., an association has been formed in Tobio to fight corruption in political circles. The nation is certainly aroused to its needs of a better code of morals, or rather to the purpose and power to realize its highest ideals. And there is a growing feeling that Christianity alone can accomplish this work.

Mrs. W. E. H. Hipwedd, of Shiu-hing, has lately placed a Bible-woman at Hok-shaan (Shell Hills), a town about a day and a half's journey from Shiu-hing. Of this woman, Mrs. Hipwell wrote on December 2:

'She was trained in the Shiu-hing women's school. Baptized seven years ago, she had small opportunity of learning the Gospel, as no Bible-woman or missionary lived nearer than 100 miles away. She was determined to learn more of the Gospel, and travelled for two days, walking over hills for over 20 miles, and then by boat up the river to the Shiu-hing women's school, where she studied for two years. Then she went back to her village to teach others what she heard of the Gospel. She is now a C. M. S. Bible-woman, the first witness to the Hakka tribe there.—'Missionary Review of Reviews.'

In German Southwest Africa lives the powerful tribe of the Ovambos. The missionaries of the Rhenish and the Finnish missionary societies have been proclaiming the Gospel unto these fetish worshippers faithfully and prayerfully for many years. Now reports come that at last the power of the Gospel is becoming manifest and these heathen are beginning to seek Christ. Mr. Tönjes, one of the faithful missionaries, writes that he now has under instruction twenty Ovambos who desire to be baptized. Among these is a very old man who had applied for baptism several times before, but had been turned back by the missionary. This time he came with tears, begging to be received. A great change has taken place in him. He is quiet and peaceable, and, in spite of his age, walks regularly the distance of several hours from his home to the mission station. One heathen came to the missionary and said: 'Teacher, thy words are commencing to burn in my heart.' Another heathen, one of the highest aids of the chief, came to the home of the missionary who began to speak to him concerning the resurrection of the dead and the judgment. He listened attentively for some time, then he said: 'Teacher, I will gladly listen to all thy sayings, but do not speak of those things. They cause me to tremble and make me afraid.' Thus the Word of God proves itself 'quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.—'Missionary Review of the World.'

Acknowledgments.

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Address all subscriptions for Dr. Grenfell's work to 'Witness' Labrador Fund, John Dougall and Son, 'Witness' Office, Montreal, stating with the gift whether it is for launch, komatik, or cots.