

dren. The ordinance was given a large and conspicuous place in the administration of the church, but the main use of that day was a sermon bearing upon some aspect of family life. At first, the pastor was fearful he should find a lack of themes, but as time went on, he found a superabundance of them. An ideal family life, the duties of the father, the duties of the mother, the duties of the children, the duties of the brother, the duties of the sister, the intellectual atmosphere to be maintained, the social relationships to be formed, the educational plans, the determining of life plans, family worship, home teaching, the ordering of amusements, the kind of reading, the outside relations of the family, the training of children unto obedience, in economy, —all these things furnish no end of matter for preaching and for consideration, and in the experience of this pastor, nothing was more satisfactory, nothing more generally interesting to the people than the family sermon. It came close to life, it dealt with practical exigencies, it entered into the midst of the most tender relationships of human experience, and very numerous were the expressions on the part of parents and of young people, of high appreciation of the help which they had received in their lives and in the conducting of other lives. —Selected.

### Hope.

Hope is the anchor of the soul,  
A sure and steadfast stay,  
When billows wildly tossing, roll,  
And spars are snapped away.

Though near the reefs our bark is cast,  
And frowning rocks appear,  
Let but the anchor, Hope, hold fast,  
And vain is every fear.

But Hope in what? An anchor cast  
Upon the ship's own deck,  
And tossed by every gale that blows,  
She soon must float a wreck.

But cast it into waters deep,  
Where, fastened to the rock,  
It firmly holds; though tempests sweep,  
It still will bear the shock.

The Soul whose hopes are anchored fast  
On Christ, the Rock above,  
Need fear no gale, need dread no blast,  
For that great Rock is Love.

—'Onward.'

### A Labrador Letter.

OF ICEBERGS AND OTHER MATTERS.

North Labrador, SS. 'Strathcona.'

Dear Editor,—For nearly a month we have had easterly winds and an unmovable wet blanket in actual fact. We have, however, been able to muddle along 'Down North,' though we had a squeak one day which afforded a new sensation to our American friends on board. We were running along at full speed in very thick fog, framing a course to just clear some nasty shoals on our port hand before we could change our course round a certain cape. There was nothing outside of us and we had seen no ice of late, being just merged from the Gulf. So we went below to dinner, telling our reliable man Bill to report land as soon as he saw anything, and instructed the man at the wheel if he heard a shout, to 'port' his helm hard. The soup was still on the table when a loud shouting above made us leap on deck to see the ship going full tilt into an enormous iceberg which seemed right at the end of the bowsprit. This unexpected monster was on our starboard bow, and the order left to avoid the shoal was putting us head first into it. Our only chance was full speed and a starboard helm, and as we grazed along the side of it we felt we didn't know everything about navigation down here yet. The business we had in hand next was such an absolute antithesis to this experience. It seemed almost ludicrous a few hours later to pick up a large island and run into a harbor with grassy sloping sides, out of which the fog bank was shut like a wall, and then to go ashore and bargain over the buying of

a couple of cows, which were being sold as the settler was moving to the mainland. Cows are poor shipmates in small row boats such as we only had to row them off in, and even though we made belly-bands out of canvas and tried to haul them over the rail by the main throat halyard, we found them the awkwardest things imaginable, and all hands stood from underneath till each poor cow was far enough up to fall inboard, if any of the improvised tackle gave way. There was the usual sick to see, a question of how to go about getting a school to settle, and then our cows began to enjoy a sensation new to them of rolling along under the same old dark blanket.

While we were taking wharf sticks aboard at our next port of call, a large iceberg which had drifted into the cove, collapsed with the rear of a cannon, scattering the ice into morsels all around our ship. There are only three families living here, all unmistakably Irish, in name, vivacity and hospitality. One had nine children and one six. A steamer had called in this place early in the season and had dropped a family for the fishing, who were carrying the infection of scarlet fever. The result had been disastrous, and we had a peck of trouble before leaving. Moreover, I had to carry off the father of the nine with commencing spinal curvature and inability to walk. I noticed on the end of a spare crutch he had been using, a large flat board, which puzzled me at first. 'Begorra that's its snow shoe, Dochter,' it keeps herself from sinking in.' 'How on earth have you fed that lot, Pat, in winter?' 'Well, it's been hard work indeed. Only flour and a drop of water inside, and sure we wouldn't 'a had that but for Doctor—from t'hospital. 'Tis the hunger what's the worst.' As my eyes ranged over the blue-eyed, curly-headed children—a melee of true little Celts, apparently absolutely happy, and certainly supremely naked, sentiment swayed in my mind enough to impel me to venture on a 'few old clothes.' Though of course some would say that was pauperising them. Perhaps it was. I should, however, plead not guilty.

I now moved down to the next house, where were only six little ones, and having finished swabbing out throats and dressing swollen necks, and lecturing on future disinfection, I offered the suggestion—'Would you like me to help you out of this to America?' 'Why,' replied the father at once: 'Tis only two years we've come here, and we like it better than Boston anyhow.' He added: 'Please God, we shall be well off in a year or two.' Support to this contention was afforded us yesterday at another group of islands 150 miles north of the Straits of Belle Isle, well out in the Polar Atlantic. We had been holding evening service in a settler's house. He was the father of twelve children, ten alive and well—eight big boys. Some years ago he moved to Nova Scotia and tried all sorts of work, but could make no headway, and having a little money left, after 18 months he came back to Labrador. He has now a fine winter house in the Bay, a good schooner, two large fish traps and two fine American-built fishing boats. He 'tails,' with his son over four hundred traps in the winter, and at his summer house his grandchildren sit on his knee. His ever-smiling, well tanned face, his broad, deep chest, and his powerful build speaking volumes for what Labrador can do when taken rightly. 'His man's brother, with seven grown girls and two sons, is a 'great neighbor' in these 'lonely' parts.

The already heavy sea bounding up against the cliffs, increased unpleasantly, before we made out our next headland, and suddenly the heavy fog shut down and nothing was visible. We might have 'heaved to' all right and waited, but as the least objectionable alternative, we decided to haul in and try to make out the land—never too easy to recognize for want of land marks. It is no easier when only the mere bases of the cliffs are visible, and even that when there is but one 'sea' left between you and these bases. We made it, however, safely, and were running placidly along, when an unexpected cape rose on our weather bow. It proved to be a large berg aground, with only just room left to pass between it and the shore. A stranger would have felt uncomfortable, but the huge mass above water meant plenty of depth all round, and being aground it couldn't reach us against the cliff unless it

broke up at the exact moment we passed between them. So our tight little ship shot safely through between these chained black and white lions.

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### Religious Notes.

A visitor to Mexico recently reported, on returning to the United States, that the Christian Church was losing more Americans in Mexico than it was saving Mexicans. There is the same leakage in other lands. No greater problem confronts the Christian Church than the problem of saving its own people who go out on commercial and political errands to the mission fields. The number who go on such errands is steadily increasing, and there are in many cities on the mission fields now communities of English-speaking people ranging from one to ten thousand population.

From Santiago, Chili, Doctor Lester, the pastor of the Union Church, writes in an appeal for the provision of facilities for reaching young men: 'The number of unmarried men, American as well as English and Scotch, is increasing. Without home influences and surrounded by peculiar temptations, so many of them go to the bad. The saddest feature of my ministerial experience is the shipwreck of so many fine young fellows.'

The foreign mission boards of the United States and Canada, realizing that in any such work they must act together, have appointed a committee to look after the religious needs of these communities to co-operate with the Christian men and women in these communities in the building and maintenance of union churches.

William T. Stead said, 'South Africa is the product of three forces—conquest, trade and missions—and of the three, the first counts for the least, and the last for the greatest factor in the expansion of civilization in Africa.'

On the 23rd of October, 1876, a party of missionaries encamped for the night under a fig-tree amid the ruins of a native village among the Shire hills of Central Africa. They had been sent out by the Church of Scotland to found a mission to the tribes of that region as the Church's best and most lasting memorial of the great missionary and traveller, David Livingstone. They had come to stay, and they named the place 'Blantyre,' after the little town on the Clyde where Livingstone was born. The fig-tree grows there still, but the village ruins are gone long ago. In their place stands the oldest missionary establishment in all that country, with its church and schools, its hospital and workshops, its fields and gardens.

Out of the ruins of the old native village where the first mission party camped thirty years ago, there has risen a mission with 4 European stations, 8 native stations, 9 native churches with a communion roll of 1,013 communicants, and a catechumens' roll of 831 members. Blantyre is now the chief centre of trade and commerce in Central Africa, and the residence of a European community numbering over 150. The country is under the protection of the British flag, and the old days of raiding and slavery are over, and gone. Peace and security of life and property are assured to the native peoples all over the country. Everywhere the door stands wide open to the messengers of the Gospel of Peace.—'Uganda Notes.'

The April issue of the Tamil Literature 'Bulletin,' under the editorial charge of the Rev. A. C. Clayton, shows that a real effort is being made among the missionaries of many societies to combine for the production of more and more satisfactory Christian literature in the vernacular. The 'Bulletin' contains what is quite a long list of books in preparation. Several of these are Biblical works. In future all the MSS. of the Madras Religious Tract Society are to be submitted to the Tamil Literature sub-committee, which is one of the fruits of the Decennial Conference. This is a step in the direction of unity and simplicity of organization; for the MSS. of the Christian Literature Society have been passed through this sub-committee for some time.