

“NOR’ARD OF THE DOGGER.”*

MISSION WORK IN THE NORTH SEA.

A FRIEND who was passing through the streets of Gorleston one Sunday afternoon observed a large crowd collected near the pier, and watching intently some vessel outside the harbour. On closer examination it proved to be a smack which had just arrived from the fishing-ground, and was standing off and on, waiting to get into the port. This in itself was nothing unusual, but at her masthead was flying a flag which some of the crowd thought to be a mission-flag; yet as it was well known that her skipper was a godless man, it was hardly possible that he would come into port flying such a flag. Just then a fisherman, who had lately come home from the fleet, informed the watchers that the skipper had been converted to God at one of the services held at sea, and that he was really flying a mission flag, which he had obtained from the *Cholmondeley*.

The next day an opportunity occurred for speaking to the new convert, and with a joyous smile he said: “I thought I’d better hoist my new colours before coming into harbour, as I didn’t want to be ashamed to let my old companions see that I had come over to the Lord’s side.”

Such results as this were calculated to call forth fervent thanksgiving for the genuine character of the work hitherto accomplished, and to fill our hearts with encouragement and hope. One striking feature of the efforts was (and has since continued to be) the constant habit of waiting in prayer at the throne of heavenly grace; and, as is ever the case, this practice received its own reward in very remarkable answers, or, as an aged Christian expressed it: “Remarkably like God.”

For example, two vessels in the “Short Blue” fleet, known as the *D*— and the *C*—, were so exactly alike that their own skippers scarcely knew them apart. The main difference lay in the skippers themselves. *R*—, of the *D*—, might well have born the same name as his vessel—a bright, happy, open-hearted Christian, while the master of the *C*—, though what was called “a jolly good fellow,” was a great friend of the *coper*, or liquor-selling boat. One sultry summer’s afternoon the smacks had their gear down for a day’s haul, but as the wind completely died away, it was quite practicable to hold a prayer-meeting on board the mission-smack *Cholmondeley*, then stationed with the “Short Blues,” and having a special missionary on board from London. The flag was accordingly struck as a signal to the fleet that service was about to be held. Upon the deck of the *Cholmondeley* stood, amongst others, the admiral of the fleet, himself but recently

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