

# Northern Messenger

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## The Fisherman's Orphans.

Down on the old stone steps,  
Worn by the wash of the waves,  
A rough and rugged seat enough,  
Whose base the water laves,  
Whispering tales of distant sails,  
And of deep sea caves—

The fisherman's boy and girl  
Look over the gleaming bay.  
One cloud is scudding with the breeze  
To dim the gladsome day;  
Its shadow lies in their young eyes,  
They have no heart to pray.

The boats are all at sea;  
How merrily they go!  
Oh! it were brave to ride a while  
Where yonder ripples glow,  
Purple and green, their varied sheen,  
Capped daintily with snow.

The boats are all at sea;  
Nay, all at sea save one,  
That on the shore lies high and dry,

And idle in the sun;  
And father's boat would be afloat,  
But father's work is done.

His honest heart is still,  
Her tawny sail is slack,  
Another and a stranger hand  
Must guide her on her track;  
Yet every day the children say,  
'Will father soon be back?'

And every day they come,  
Taking fresh heart of grace,  
And patient stand, or sit them down,  
Upon the landing place;  
They used to meet him here, and greet  
So joyfully his face!

The fisherman's boy and girl  
Look over the gleaming bay;  
The fisherman's soul has gone to God—  
No father on earth have they.  
Father on high, be never nigh,  
To guard their lonely way!

—S. E. G., in 'Cottager and Artisan.'

## The Labrador Mission.

### WHO WILL HELP AT ONCE?

Some weeks ago we made an appeal for funds for this excellent work, but, for some reason or other, our readers have not responded as quickly as we had hoped. Perhaps they did not realize that the appeal is for funds to be sent in now—at once! The mission has been carried on for years at heavy outlay by the Royal National Mission for Deep Sea Fishermen, and though generous contributions have gone from good friends in Canada and the United States, the great bulk of the money has been given by helpers in the British Isles. Now, the M.D.S.F. has an extensive work to do, one that ever calls for expansion, among the fishing fleets in the North Sea and round the coasts of England, Ireland and Scotland, and is particularly anxious that the funds for its Labrador work should be raised, if possible, on this side the Atlantic.

This seems entirely reasonable, for the call comes from our own doors, as it were. Part of Labrador, in fact, belongs to Canada; and though the main part of the coast belongs to Newfoundland, on the northern shores of which the mission carries on some of its work, we can recognize no territorial distinction in such a need as this. These fisherfolk are our brothers and sisters; their lot is cast in a bleak, desolate country, which, though they love it as their native land, yet demands of them the most strenuous effort to make even a scanty living. These are the men who from boyhood to old age are ever 'in peril on the sea,' and who never shrink from the wildest storm when a brother's need calls them to face it; these are the men to whom, and others like them, we are indebted for some of the food we most enjoy. Shall we not try to enter a little into their lives, and, realizing something of their privations, give of our means, much or little, to minister to them?

What sort of comforts could be had in this country, if \$250 or \$300 were counted a fair income for a family of father and mother and perhaps five or six children, the earnings of even half-grown lads being included in that? What kind of a wardrobe would that supply to withstand our winter's cold? How far will it go, then, in clothing, as they ought to be clothed, a family who live where the winter is much longer and more severe than our own, and where, probably, half the family must be both wet and cold a great deal of the time? How would we like to face even a short winter with no more in the larder than a barrel of flour and a few pounds of tea.

Under circumstances like this, it is little wonder that half-starved, half-clad people should be an easy prey to disease. Without medical aid, and not knowing at all how to help themselves, parents have stood by and seen one child after another carried off by diphtheria, pneumonia, measles or the like, when timely assistance might have saved them. Simple injuries have developed into life-long maladies for lack of treatment, and everywhere you go you find someone who is terribly crippled through frostbites or other accidents, where, perhaps, the heroic treatment of ama-