

sprinkled with the drops of the baptismal water they are themselves as pure as the clearest of babbling streams. But presently, as the stream of life runs on, there comes the knowledge of sin; some fault is committed; the life becomes clouded and, like the river, murky, dank and foul. So much for the knowledge of good and evil. But a soul is not necessarily lost because of sin. Sin brings misery and misery sometimes drives the soul to God, and then are heard the words of peace. As soon as repentance is sought through Christ, the Son of God, a voice is heard speaking that beautiful word "forgiveness," and now nothing can stop the hopes of the immortal soul, as it sees eternity before it. It is once more the strong and pure river, making its way to the eternity of rest.

"Strong and free!
The flood gates are open away to the sea.
Free and strong!
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along
To the golden sands and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar,
As I lose myself in the infinite main
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again!"

TWO SMALL FISHES.

PETER OHLSEN was a small, yellow haired Norwegian boy, who took his first fishing-trip with many bright expectations. His father and other fishermen of the village set out for the northern fishing place in their strong little boat, the *Freia*, and were well prepared for storms, or for a big catch of fish, or for a little catch, even, so well contented and merry were they all. But they were not prepared for what came to them; that is usually the way, it is the unexpected thing that happens.

When they were near the island of Kvaloe, on the coast of Norway, far north of the Arctic Circle, a strange fever broke out among the men. During the first few days they did not think much of it, but when all the four men began to complain of headache and pains in their limbs, so that they could hardly stand, they gave up fishing, and hastened to land on the nearest approachable place, which proved to be a desolate little island, separated from the main island by some very rough water that dashed constantly against the high rocks.

The sick men anchored their boat and then went to bed too sick to give any orders to Peter, who was perfectly well but terribly frightened. The weather was cold and the sky grey, and a storm might come at any time, and dash the boat against the rocks, in spite of the anchor. The men lay in their berths, tossing about, and muttering senseless talk, and there was nothing for the boy to do but to keep up

the fire in the stove, and get himself something to eat when he wanted it.

But he was too uneasy to have much appetite, and for the greater part of one day he sat and looked at his father and uncles, and wondered what he could do. He could not sail the boat back home, for he was only eleven years old, and small for his age, and had never been much on boats. His older brother, Carl, was the boatman of the children; Peter had been attending school, and Klas Ohlsen intended to make a merchant of him. In all practical matters the family would say, "Oh, Peter is no good! Peter is a book-boy, he has no sense for common things."

Now this was not correct, but Peter supposed it was, and his modesty kept him from boasting about the praise he won at school. His favorite expression was, "Maybe I can't but I'll try," and he always did try to make himself useful, and to learn everything that seemed to be needed in the simple life at the fishing village. But he could not sail a boat.

"What can I do?" he asked himself over and over again. Suddenly he remembered that, when Olaf Jensen had a fever, his grandmother gave him bits of ice. He hurried out to the island, and found there was ice in the pools of rain-water among the rocks, for this was in the autumn. He filled a pail with the broken pieces, and gave each of the men some, waiting carefully till each piece had dissolved in the patient's mouth, before giving another.

He did this several times, during the day and evening, and at last he fell asleep and slept till morning. Then he found the men still asleep. They had a mild form of typhoid fever, caused by their having drunk some water from a keg that had not been cleaned. The keg was now empty, and Peter's healthy body had resisted the fever, so there was no more danger for him; but he saw that it would not do for the men to have no better nursing than he could give.

"If they are going to sleep like this for days," he thought—and Olaf did that, "I think I could get down to the fish hut on the south side of the bay over there on Kvaloe."

There was a large party of men at that hut, and he knew that they would help to sail the boat home. But how to get there was a puzzle. Peter wondered if he could get the row-boat launched, and if he could row it across the rough channel.

"Maybe I can't; but I'll try," said the little boy. But first he made a great pot of weak tea, and put it on the stove, so that if any of the sick men were able to sit up while he was gone, they could have a refreshing drink. He slacked down the fire, and put a pail of water beside the stove, and took every care that there should be no danger from fire. He filled his pockets with biscuits and sausage, and then worked at the row-boat until he got it into the water.