

LABRADOR'S HOSPITAL SHIP

Sufferings of the Fisher Folk In the Far North.

The hardest medical practice in the world is in operation again this month. While most people in this latitude are dreaming of hammocks and cool drinks, only a few days' sail to the northward a little steamer is rolling and tumbling through great seas and ice floes. And never castaway sailor saw delivering ship approach with prayers of deeper gratitude than rise from men's lips when the hospital ship Strathcona is sighted working her way along the coast of Labrador.

Scattered along more than one thousand miles of coast, fishing smacks, crowded with not only men, but also women, who are driven by need to fish for a living, hail the little ship as the only place of refuge for any who become ill or maimed in the hard calling.

There is no region where life is harder or serious accidents of all kinds are more frequent than along that stormy stretch of coast from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Cape Childey at the opening into Hudson Strait. The intense cold, far below zero for the greater part of the year, causes innumerable cases of frost bite, which, lacking surgical help, soon develop into gangrene. Every year there is a lack of food, and starvation weakens the people until they are easy prey to typhoid, consumption and intestinal diseases. The only methods of obtaining food are seal hunting, whaling and fishing. Generally, they are carried on in poor craft, and injuries ranging from broken bones to gunshot wounds are necessarily frequent. For nowhere is the pursuit of animals or fish so fraught with

DIFFICULTY AND PERIL.

Yet, although the barren land is inhabited by nearly twelve thousand persons, while from twenty to twenty-five thousand sail to it every year in June and July to fish for cod, there was not a single doctor to be found in all its thousand miles until ten years ago, when the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen sent a little 97-ton sailing vessel, the Albert, there under Dr. Wilfred Grenfell. And it was the most fortunate thing that ever happened to Labrador. For the misery that Dr. Grenfell encountered, the hopeless suffering he found, so cried out to him that he decided then and there to devote his life to bringing what alleviation he could to the inhabitants.

Month after month the little Albert worked her way through ice and snow and gale, through hundreds of miles of uncharted and unlighted waters, over reefs pounded by mountain seas, seeking out whom she might succor. When her sail was seen, men came in skin kayaks, in birch canoes, in all sorts of craft, crazy or stanch, bearing their sick and wounded to the visitors. Too often the visitors were too late to do more than ease the dying moments of some poor wretch. They found whole settlements that had been wiped out by diphtheria.

In one place they saw the rude graves, scooped in the hard Laurentian rocks, of twenty-nine persons who had died without any attempt at saving them. Wounds, no matter how severe, were treated by squirting tobacco juice into them and binding tightly with an old rag. But even tobacco and rags were wanting in many places, for the Albert found settlements where the children were almost naked.

They found one man whose little one had had both feet frozen. There was nothing in the whole settlement with which to help her, and before long both feet began to gangrene. And when the Albert returned to St. John's she carried back the story of how the father had been forced at last, being in utter despair and knowing that it was the only hope of saving the child from a death of torture, to take a hatchet and

CUT OFF THE LITTLE ONE'S FEET.

With such knowledge as this to sustain him, Dr. Grenfell and his band of doctors and nurses—Drs. A. O. Bobard and Eliot Curwen, Miss Cecilia Williams and Miss Ada Cardwaine—fought their way through the long seasons on the coast, and then, on their brief visits to civilization, fought to arouse men to help them in their efforts. Bit by bit they obtained assistance. First they got a rowboat. Then somebody else helped them to buy a steam launch. Finally another sailing vessel was added to their tiny fleet. But still they knew that all this was but scratching at the outside of a mountain of misery. And they fought on until now they have the little, but beautifully equipped steamship Strathcona, given largely through the efforts of Lord Strathcona, while two hospitals are established on the coast, and one is open in northern Newfoundland, where the conditions of life are almost as hard.

The Strathcona is a steel steamer of eighty-four tons, so built that she can haul her propeller up and proceed with sail alone. Her hospital is amidships, and it is fitted with electric light and an X-ray outfit. It is used almost constantly. In her first year more than one thousand persons sought help from her. And each hospital since then has treated

more than that number each year, making a total of more than three thousand, who, in the old days, had no recourse except to lie in their rude surroundings and go through torment until they died.

Still the service can only reach a percentage of those who need it. For through the winter months the Strathcona cannot force her way through the ice that girdles the coasts as with an iron ring. Then the doctors must sally out in dog sledges to pay their sick calls, and often they go for a hundred miles to find their patient. What such medical practice means is told well by the report of one of the doctors at the hospital, Mr. Simpson. He says:

"A man from Ha-Ha arrived and requested me to go at once to attend his wife. It was exceedingly cold, with a dead head wind, but on we went, over hill and dale, across frozen ponds and lakes and bays, along frozen brooks and streams, until at last Pistolet Bay was reached. Now came our hardest work. A light drift of snow was blowing up with the wind, and once out on the bay no sheltering land was near, more than once we had to warn each other of small patches of frostbite on nose, ears and cheek. Vigorous treatment, however, soon restored the circulation.

THE POOR DOGS

had hard work against the cutting wind, but eventually we arrived safely at our destination, and although our patient had been twelve hours in distress, and her friends in much anxiety, we were able very quickly to relieve her, and set at rest the fears entertained for her safety."

From Nov. 14 to March 29 Dr. Macpherson, of the Battle Harbor Hospital, travelled 1,833 miles, by sledge, snowshoes and boat, and paid 680 visits. He missed scarcely a hut or a tent on the whole coast, from Paul's River, above the Straits of Belle Isle, to Rigolet, under latitude 55. He found twenty-six persons in danger of dying, some of whom he saved, while he made the last hours at least easier for the rest. He found a woman who had been walking around for two weeks with a broken and unset arm. He stitched up the forearm of a fisherman who had been in agony from a great gash made weeks before. Scurvy was found in many places. One case had gone so far that it required an extensive operation. A crippled girl was found and sent by dog team to the hospital, where she was cured sufficiently to enable her to move around freely. A woman was treated who was dying from cancer. She had never been seen by a doctor, or indeed, by any one except poor, ignorant persons like herself, who had not tried to do anything to relieve her agony. In one day alone the surgeons opened five badly poisoned wounds—for not only do the implements used in fishing poison the cuts they make, but the cold climate makes it almost impossible for the fishermen to wash their injuries properly with warm water, as even firewood is scarce on many hundreds of miles of shore and almost entirely wanting in the northern parts of the land.

A year ago this July the Strathcona had just completed a voyage of more than 1,100 miles, during which she visited fifty-six harbors. Among major operations, they had one amputation of the foot, one amputation through the knee joint, one of laparotomy and one of gastrostomy. What the condition of those patients would have been in previous years may be imagined from one case that Dr. Grenfell found in a hut far from other human beings. As he entered the dark, foul little place he saw a man who, moaning piteously, held up the stumps of his arms. He had shot them off below the elbows while hunting seals two weeks before, and from that time he had been lying on his back with nothing over the wounds except an oily rag that a fellow hunter had laid over them. The necessary operation had to be performed, with few instruments and hardly enough chloroform to do more than ease the poor fellow's worst pangs.

HE BORE IT MANFULLY.

Despite all, it was too late, and he died that night. They found an old woman who had a tumor on her leg. They told her they could put her to sleep while they operated, but she would not have it. The next day Dr. Grenfell found five strong men awaiting him. The woman had asked them to come and hold her, and all she asked was if she "might bawl." She did, indeed, bawl, but within a few minutes after the operation was over she was laughing over it, and in ten days she was well. From this time on until the winter again sets in, beginning with the September gales, the hospital ship will be kept on the go steadily. She will have to face daily not only danger from unknown waters and treacherous seas, but the ever-present menace of the ice. For, as the fishing fleets begin to stream northward the icebergs begin to drift southward in ghostly columns. Many times has the Strathcona been in imminent peril. Once she was so locked in with ice and floes that she

was invisible among the encompassing blocks and piles of it. Masses began to topple over on her decks. Tons of it squeezed her keel.

She escaped this and many other similar dangers and went out to brave new ones unflinchingly. For these are brave men indeed that go out on the deep for the Labrador Medical Mission. And brave men are they whom she goes out to help. Ground by poverty, the Newfoundland fishermen have no other means of finding even the most miserable of livings than this of hunting the cod on the worst coast in the world.

As soon as the ice is blown from the coast by westerly winds they sail eagerly north in every variety of vessel. Dr. Grenfell, in his "Vikings of To-day," describes this annual voyage thus:

"They come in every variety of vessel, small and large, good, bad and indifferent, mostly of the schooner type. Besides the crew, which varies from five to ten men with one or two women, most Newfoundland vessels bring a number of people called freighters. These are landed at various harbors where they have left mud huts and boats the previous year and where they

WILL FISH ALL SUMMER.

These persons cure their fish on the spot. Meanwhile, the vessel goes on farther north to seek fish for herself. When they come south again they call for the freighters, who pay 25 cents for each hundred-weight of fish for their passage. Besides the cargo of fish, casks of oil, nets, boats and general goods, thirty, forty or fifty men and women will be crowded into these small vessels, at times with only room to lie down in the hold between deck and the cargo. On one small schooner of nineteen tons we counted thirty-four men and sixteen women.

"The women, many of whom have children with them, often are very bad sailors. As a rule, they are not allowed on deck except in port, and this voyage is a nightmare to most of them. They are pillars of pluck, many of these women. They can handle an oar and sail a small boat with the best, and among them are Grace Darlings only wanting an opportunity. They work chiefly at cleaning fish and keeping the huts for the men, though some form parts of the fishing smack crews."

Dr. Grenfell examined many of these schooners and found such instances of crowding as this: A 44-ton schooner, nineteen men and sixteen women in one hold on a twenty-three-day voyage; a 19-ton schooner carrying twenty-eight men and fifteen women, a 50-ton schooner with seventy-five men and fifteen women, making the measured cubic space allotted to a man, his wife, two other men and a boy and a girl, eight feet by six feet.

There never has been a year when a number of these vessels were not lost, and shocking stories are told on the coast of the sufferings of women and children while drifting in the icy waters, sometimes being afloat on bits of wreckage for days among the ice floes before being rescued or finally drowned. Pitiful stories, too, are told of the sufferings of the freighters when illness or other misfortune incapacitates them from catching their fish or getting food by hunting. Rarely do they have money enough when leaving Newfoundland to buy provisions sufficient to last till the schooners call for them again.

LATE IN THE SEASON.

A suggestion of the hardships that the freighters must face is given in this description of what is the staple delicacy of the menu along shore: "Powder dried cod fine, rub it up with fresh seal oil and add cranberries if you have any." This delicate dish is called "pipey."

What plights the fishermen may find themselves in is shown by the case of one Oliver, who, with his wife and five children, had just managed to exist through the winter, finding himself utterly destitute when spring came. He had no dogs left to travel with and no ammunition to hunt. All that he possessed in the world was an old jack plane and a trout net. He travelled for many miles over snow and ice afoot till he reached the house of a Norwegian settler. He begged him to let them have food, but the settler, a good-hearted man, was entirely unable to give up any. The next settler, too, said that he would have to starve himself if he shared what little he had. This was not selfishness, but stern necessity. The poor father went on twelve miles farther, faint with hunger, but spurred on by the thought of the starving ones at home. Again he received the same reply. All were as destitute as he was himself. He dragged his way home again, sent his wife and the two older children away, and then killed all the rest with an axe, after which he blew his own brains out with the last charge left in the gun.

This is the misery that the little Strathcona is helping to relieve this summer.

Of blind people 11 are men to every 9 women.

France has one soldier to every 59 inhabitants; Germany one to 89; Russia one to 134; while Britain's proportion is one to every 100.

The hottest day ever known in Europe was Wednesday, July 13th, 1783.

The Argentine Republic is the strongest in artillery of any South American State. She has 346 field guns, 246 mountain guns, 36 siege guns, and 42 howitzers.

WHAT IGNORANCE WILL DO

IT HAS CAUSED THE LOSS OF MILLIONS OF MONEY.

Lives Have Been Sacrificed, Too, Through People Not Knowing Enough.

It never seems, until quite lately, to have occurred to gold diggers that sea sand might be as rich in the precious metal as river sand. For a long time past, the New South Wales Public Works have been engaged in dredging out the harbors at the mouths of the Moruya and Shoalhaven Rivers. Incidentally, they have also been employed in the expensive operation of dumping thousands of pounds' worth of gold into the sea. The workmen have made the discovery that the sand they are dredging up was rich in gold, so rich, indeed, that by running the stuff through an automatic gold-saver, it is certain that the gold recovered will more than pay all the expenses of the harbor-making operations.

Ignorance is always expensive, sometimes enormously so. Here is a case in point. Hitherto, very many cases of magnetic compasses have been constructed of nickel, under the impression that this metal was non-magnetic, and would, therefore, not affect the needle. As a matter of fact, nickel has strongly magnetic qualities, and does undoubtedly increase considerably the error of the compass. How many wrecks have been caused by this error he would be a bold man who would attempt to compute.

One of the most expensive blunders of recent years has been made on the Trans-Siberian Railway, and appears to be due to the military engineers employed being ignorant of the fact that thirty-six pound rails will not carry sixty-ton locomotives. The whole seven thousand miles of line has been laid with thirty-six instead of seventy-two pound rails, and wooden bridges have been built. The result is that not more than twenty miles an hour is possible on a level with safety.

AN ERROR COSTING \$30,000,000.

On the Trans-Balkal end of the line matters are still worse, for the heavy engines used cannot be braked to a lower speed than thirty-five miles an hour on the steep gradients, a pace which is most unsafe under existing circumstances. It will, it is calculated, cost thirty million dollars to rectify these errors.

It might be supposed that the manager of an estate would know where the boundary lines of that property lay. Yet no less a person than our late gracious Queen Victoria was put to considerable expense by ignorance of this kind on the part of a Commissioner of hers. He erected a lodge on what he believed to be the boundary line of the Balmoral property. When the building was finished, Colonel Gordon's factor called and thanked him for his kindness. He pointed out that the lodge was built, not on Balmoral land, but on the Aberfeldie property, and, therefore, belonged to Colonel Gordon.

When we evacuated the Soudan after the killing of Gordon and the fall of Khartoum, enormous quantities of stores, which lay at Shendi, on the Nile, had to be destroyed for fear of their falling into the hands of the enemy, there not being sufficient means of transport for their removal. Among these stores were nearly a million rounds of rifle ammunition, and the military authorities thought the best thing to do with these was to throw them into the Nile.

THREW MONEY OVERBOARD.

To Kitchener, then a captain, fell this duty, and a detail under his command promptly hurled the big boxes into the deepest part of the river. It was not until the whole thing was over, and their destruction formally certified, that it was discovered that two chests of gold, for the payment of the troops, had got mixed with the ammunition, and shared its fate. In each chest was \$50,000, so somebody's ignorance was responsible for the loss of \$100,000 of the British taxpayer's money. Even though we now own the country, it is unlikely that the thick Nile mud will ever be induced to give up the treasure.

It is believed that France was beaten by Germany in 1870, purely through the inexcusable ignorance of Marshal Bazaine. When that general was shut up in Metz with an enormous army, the Prussians left the east side of the town almost unguarded. Had Bazaine known of this, as he should have done, he could have made a sortie any time between August 25th and September 2nd with 100,000 picked men, and joined the raw French levies at Epinal. Metz would have had food to hold out almost indefinitely, and the provincial troops, well backed, would not have yielded so easily as they did. The whole fate of France might have been changed, and the nation spared the loss of two provinces, and the payment of

A RECORD INDEMNITY.

No one could possibly estimate how many million tons of that ill-smelling, but most valuable substance, coal tar, were poured away and lost during the half century before aniline dyes were discovered. We no longer waste coal tar, but our ignorance of the value of other by-products is causing extravagance just as reckless to-day. Millions of tons of culm and pit refuse blacken

the face of the coal counties. All this will be of the greatest value when the Mond gas process is in full working order; each ton of it will produce fourteen times as much gas as a ton of the best coal does to-day under present processes.

Again, in every cotton-growing country, although the cotton seed is now made use of, an oil being extracted from it, yet the hulls lie waste in huge mounds, because we have hitherto been too ignorant to utilize them. All the years past we have been chopping down mill upon mill of beautiful and valuable forest purely for the sake of making paper out of the pulped trunks, when we might have been employing, instead, this inexhaustible store of waste material. It is encouraging to observe that at last a great company has been formed, with a capital of five million dollars, which will work up cotton seed hulls into a perfect white paper, which will never turn yellow like the pulp from wood, and which will cost but \$25 a ton against \$75 for wood pulp.—Pearson's Weekly.

THE KING IS KING INDEED

Coronation Not Required to Make Edward VII. the King.

Numbers of people enquire whether the postponement of the coronation makes any difference in the King's position. Of course, it does not. There is no real need of the coronation ceremony being performed. Royalty is so hedged in by constitutional precautions that the oath has become more or less an emphasizing of what is obvious.

The King is King. There is no break in the continuity of sovereignty. The moment Queen Victoria died King Edward became the reigning monarch of the Realm.

The impression that the crowning is an essential part of the endowment of regality is quite erroneous. When the King went to London after the death of Queen Victoria he there and then took the oath of allegiance to his people. This oath was taken in the presence of the Privy Councillors, and was followed by the proclamation of the King in every place in his dominions.

The coronation is more of a picturesque historical ceremony than a vital essential of kingship. In olden times this pageant had a very distinct importance as proving to all that a new monarch had ascended the throne. This was in days when news traveled slowly and without certainty.

The actual oath is a "solemn promise" to do three things:

(I.) To govern the people of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and their Dominions according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective laws and customs of the same.

(II.) To cause law and justice, in mercy, to be executed.

(III.) To the utmost of his power to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed religion as established by the law.

These things the King already does without the binding power of oath or solemn promise.

Another question that has been raised is the necessity for appointing a regent.

It may be pointed out that unless the King is likely to be incapacitated from any of his State duties for a considerable period there is no necessity for a regent.

The Sovereign frequently leaves Great Britain for long periods. Queen Victoria's sojourns on the Riviera may be quoted as an instance; and had His Majesty not been stricken with this illness it was his intention to take a holiday abroad immediately after the coronation ceremonies.

LOST POWER RECOVERED.

The advance of mechanical science is aided by the recognition of leakages of power, before overlooked or neglected. Experiments with rail road trams have shown that a great deal of energy is thrown away in driving unnecessary projections at the ends and sides of cars through the resisting air. Something is gained by making car-wheels in the form of continuous disks instead of with spokes, which encounter greater atmospheric resistance. Recent experiments with large fly-wheels have demonstrated the importance of carefully adjusting the shape of the wheel to the air resistance. In Nu remberg it was noticed that a very heavy fly-wheel, having arms of a channel section, created a strong draft. The wheel was cased with sheet iron, and the resulting diminution of air resistance saved nearly six horse-power in driving energy. The total power of the engines being 450 horse-power. In one instance a fly-wheel wasted 30 horse-power through unnecessary air resistance. The aggregate energy of the engine being 630 horse-power.

President Loubet is known to be devotedly attached to his venerable mother, who, albeit her son is now the first citizen of France, continues as before her simple habits of a farmer's wife. When the President visited the venerable King of Denmark recently His Majesty, in speaking after dinner, felicitously said: "And you, President, have an age mother very dear to you. Allow me to propose a toast and greet in her honor." The President was gratified and touched.