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**Title:** Grenfell: Knight-Errant of the North

**Author:** Fullerton L. Waldo

**Release Date:** April 19, 2010 [EBook #32052]

**Language:** English

**Credits:** Produced by Jeannie Howse, Roger Frank and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <https://www.pgdp.net>

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## Transcriber's Note:

Inconsistent hyphenation in the original document has been preserved.

This work has dialect and unusual spellings.

Obvious typographical errors have been corrected. For a complete list, please see the [end of this document](#).

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A FORD CAR CAN'T DO THIS

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**Grenfell:**  
**Knight-Errant of the North**

By

**FULLERTON WALDO**

*Author of "With Grenfell on the Labrador,"  
"Down the Mackenzie," etc.*



**PHILADELPHIA**  
**GEORGE W. JACOBS & COMPANY**  
**PUBLISHERS**

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*To*  
**MARY CASTLEMAN DAVIS**

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*December 15, 1923.*

DEAR WALDO:

You who have sampled the salt breezes of the North on board my boat, have, I know, imbibed the spirit that actuates the belief that in a world like ours we can all be knights. I know that like ourselves, you look upon the world as a field of honor, and its only durable prizes the things that we can accomplish in it. You see the fun in it all—the real joie de vivre.

Well, we are doing our best, and it is giving us a great return. We haven't lost the capacity to enjoy soft things, but we have learned the joys of trying to endure hardness as good soldiers. Would to God that every American boy would realize that the only real great prize of life is to be won by being willing to take blows and willing to suffer misunderstanding and opposition, so long as he may follow in the footsteps of that most Peerless Knight that ever lived; He who saw that the meaning of life was, that in it we might, wherever we are, be always trying to do good.

Ever your friend,  
WILFRED T. GRENFELL.

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The incidents of the first chapter are founded strictly on fact, but slight liberties have been taken with minor details here and elsewhere. For example, the Doctor is sometimes represented as talking with persons whose names stand for types rather than individuals; and it is the spirit rather than the letter of the conversations that is reported.

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[11]

# Grenfell: Knight-Errant of the North

## I

ToC

### A BOY AND THE SEA

"I wonder if Jim is ever going to get back! My, isn't it an awful storm!"

Wilfred Grenfell, then a small boy, stood at the window of his home in Cheshire, England, looking out across the sea-wall at the raging, seething waters of the Irish Sea.

The wind howled and the snowflakes beat against the window-panes as if they were tiny birds that wanted to get in.

"Mother," he pleaded, "can I put on my sweater and my rubber boots and go down on the beach and see if I can find Jim?"

"Yes," said his mother. "But wrap yourself up warmly, and don't stay long—and don't take any risks, will you, dear?"

Almost before the words were out of her mouth, Wilf was down the stairs and out in the roadway, where fishermen watched their little boats as they tossed at anchor riding out the storm.

[12]

Wilf stepped up to a big, grizzled mariner he knew, whom every one called Andy.

"Andy, have you seen Jim?"

"Jim who?"

"Jim Anderson."

"Was he the chap that went out in the *Daisy Bell* about four hours ago?"

"Yes," said Wilf, trying to control himself, "and he wanted me to go with him, but —"

His words were cut short by a great wave that hurled itself against the wall. The spray leapt high over the stones and drenched Andy and the boy.

"It's lucky ye didn't go, boy," said Andy, solemnly. "We're watchin' for the boat

now. My brother was on her, and two cousins o' my wife. She was a little craft, and a leaky one. We were goin' to patch her up an' make her fit. But we waited too long. An' now—" He drew his rough sleeve across his eyes.

The wind howled round their ears and the hail was smiting and stinging as though the storm had a devilish mind to drive them away.

"Why don't you go out in a boat and get them?" pleaded Wilf.

[13]

Andy shook his head. "It ain't that we're afraid," he said. "But there ain't a boat we have here that could ride those waves. The coast-guard tried—and now look!" He pointed to a heap of broken, white-painted timbers lying in the roadway, half-hidden from them by the whooping blizzard that threw its dizzying veils of snow before their eyes.

"That's the coast-guard's boat!" exclaimed Andy. "The sea picked her up, she did, and threw her right over the sea-wall as if she was an egg, an' mashed her flat. That shows how much of a chance there'd be for us to get through an' get back, supposin' we could find 'em. No, boy, we've got to wait."

"Look!" cried the lad, excitedly. "Please look, Andy. What's that bobbing up and down in the surf?"

The fisherman put to his eyes his worn and rusted spy-glass.

Then he gritted his teeth and bit his lip. "You stay up here on the road, boy. I got to climb down there and make sure."

Wilf stood at the sea-wall. He was barely tall enough to look over it.

[14]

He watched Andy clamber painfully down over the great rocks piled high against the outer face of the wall.

Every now and then a big wave would rise up, a green monster of hissing foam and fury, and throw itself on him like a wild animal trying to scare him back.

But men of that breed are not afraid. The stalwart figure, though often knocked down and half drowned, would struggle to his feet again and go on.

Wilf saw Andy pick up the—yes, it was a body—and put it on his shoulder, and come staggering toward the rocks. Then he clambered tediously over the stones, and Wilf saw whose body it was that Andy was carrying.

It was his boy friend Jim, who had gone out only a few hours before, with the sun on his fair hair, laughing and whistling and shouting his gay farewell. "Be back in a little while, Wilf! Bring you a nice big fish for your supper. You want to have a good hot fire ready to cook it Better change your mind and come along." Never again would he hear that cheery hail of invitation to adventure.

[15]

Andy laid the little half-frozen figure down, carefully, tenderly, beside the wall.

"Too bad!" he said, "too bad! But the sea can be terrible cruel to the sons o' men. I wonder we keep goin' back to her as we do. Now I got to take the poor boy to his mother."

He picked up the body, and trudged off into the storm, toward the fishing-huts.

Wilf went back to his own house, thinking about the sea and how cruel it had been.

"Mother," he said, as they sat together talking over the tragedy, "isn't it queer that you can have such fun with the sea sometimes, swimming in it and rowing on it, and then all of a sudden it gets mad and kills somebody you love? Just suppose I'd gone out in the boat with Jim!"

Wilf thought it fine fun to go swimming, with the strong salt breeze to dry him off like a towel afterwards. In his ears the crying of sea-birds against grey clouds was the sweetest of music. He loved to have the surf knock him about, and the sun burn him red, and he didn't mind if pink jellyfish stung him now and then or a crab got hold of his toes. The roar of the surf sang him to sleep at night like an old nurse.

[16]

One day when the spring came, Wilf went out on the salt marshes, his gun over his shoulder, to shoot wild ducks.

He was a regular water-baby.

Round about him all sorts of sea-birds were wheeling and crying. The swift tidal currents found their way up-stream through the marshes.

Wilf, hot and tired, threw the gun on the sand, took off his clothes, and plunged into the clear, cold water.

It carried him along like a boat, and he clambered out on a green island.

"It's just like Robinson Crusoe!" he told himself. "Here I am, all alone, and nobody in sight. I can do just as I please!"

He ran up and down in the sunlight, laughing and shouting in the wind and throwing his arms about.

How good it felt to be alive!

"Guess I'll go back and get the gun," he said, "and see if I can't shoot one of those wild ducks. I'll make mother a present of it for dinner to-night."

It wasn't so easy to swim back. He had to fight against the current that had carried him to the little green island. [17]

It was less effort to leave the stream and scramble through the reeds along the muddy bank.

Sometimes a stone or a shell hurt his foot, but he only laughed and went on.

"You just wait, you ducks," he said. "You'd better look out when I begin to shoot!"

He came to where the gun lay on his clothes, where he had been careful to place it so that no sand would get into the muzzle.

He loaded it and fired, and it kicked his bare shoulder like a mule.

But he had the satisfaction of seeing one of the ducks fall into the water, where the stream was at its widest, perhaps a hundred feet from the bank.

Here the water ran swift and deep, and it was going to be a hard fight to get that bird.

"I wish I had Rover with me now!" he told himself. Usually the dog went with him and was the best of company,—but this time he must be his own retriever.

He plunged into the stream again and swam with all his might toward the bird. [18]

If he had been getting it for himself, he would have been tempted to give up. But he couldn't bear to quit when he thought of what a treat it would be for the whole family—a nice, fat, juicy, wild duck.

The bird was being carried rapidly up-stream by the force of the waters.

"No, sir!" said Wilf to something inside him that wanted to go back. "We're going to get that bird if we have to swim half-way across England!"

It was almost as if the bird had come back to life. It seemed to be swimming away from him.

Painfully, inch by inch, he began to gain on it. At last, when his strength was all but gone, he caught up with it, and clutched the feathery prize. Then he swam with it to the shore.

Panting and happy, he lay down on the bank a moment to rest.

"The family won't have to go without dinner after all!" he laughed.

He grabbed the duck by the feet, flung it over his shoulder, and trotted back to his clothes and the gun. It was fun to go home with the bird that he had shot himself. But if there had been no bird, he would have been whistling or singing just as happily. [19]

On one of his birthdays he was out in the wide, lonely marshes five miles from home. It was more fun for him to go hunting, barefoot, than to have a party with a frosted cake and twinkling candles. So, as the nicest kind of birthday present, he had been given the whole day, to do just as he pleased.

To-day, as there was still on the ground the snow of early spring, he wore shoes, but it was cold work plashing about in those slimy pools and the slippery mud among the sedges.

The birds he was after especially were the black-and-white "oyster catchers," which when it was low tide would always be found making a great racket above the patches of mussels which formed their favorite food.

They were handsome birds, with gay red bills, and a bunch of them made a fine showing when the little hunter carried them home over his shoulder.

This time he had shot several of the birds, and then the problem was to get them and bring them in. [20]

There they lay—away off yonder, on a little tuft of, the coarse green meadow-grasses, but between the hunter and the game was a swirling inlet of salt water, and he couldn't tell by looking at it how deep it was.

So, gun over shoulder, he started cautiously to wade out toward that birthday dinner he meant to bring home.

First it was calf-deep—then knee-deep—then nearly waist-deep.

The cold water made his teeth chatter, but he didn't care about that. All he thought of was the precious gun. That was his chief treasure, and his first joy in life.

Deeper he went, and nearer he got—the gun now held in both hands high over his head, as he floundered along.

And just then a dreadful thing happened.

He stepped into a hole, and it suddenly let him down so that the water was over his head, and his up reached arms, and the precious gun too!

In the shock and the surprise, he let go of the weapon, and it sank out of sight. He [21]

had no fear of drowning, and he struck out manfully when he found himself in the deep water.

But he had to give up the idea of finding the gun, and the birds were left where they lay on the farther side of the treacherous channel.

It was a long, hard run home, over those five wet and freezing miles, and the boy's heart was heavy because of the loss of that pet gun.

All the while he was learning everything that outdoors could teach him, and he owes to that breezy, sun-shot, storm-swept gipsying during the summer vacations the beginning of the stock of good health that has made him such a strong, useful, happy man, able to do no end of hard work without getting tired, and always finding it fun to live.

[22]

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## II

ToC

### SCHOOL—AND AFTER

This Robin Hood kind of life in the open went on till Wilf was fourteen. Then he was sent away to Marlborough College—a boy's school which had 600 pupils. Marlborough is in the Chalk Hills of the Marlborough Downs, seventy-five miles west of London. The building, dating from 1843, is on the site of a castle of Henry I.

The first day Wilf landed there he looked about him and felt pretty forlorn.

"I wonder if I'll ever get to know all those boys?" he asked himself.

When he was at home, he had a room all his own or shared one with his brother. Here it was so different.

He counted the beds in his dormitory. There were twenty-five of them. "How can a fellow ever get to sleep in such a crowd?" he wondered. "Perhaps they'll toss me in a blanket, the way they did in 'Tom Brown at Rugby.' Well, if they try anything like that, they'll find I'm ready for them!"

[23]

He felt the mattress. "Pretty hard compared with the beds at home, but no matter. Let's see what the schoolroom is like."

So he went into the "Big School" as it was called. Three hundred boys were supposed to study there.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Wilf. "Don't see how a fellow ever gets his lessons in a place like this."

It was as busy and as noisy as a bear-garden. Here and there a boy with his hands over his ears was really looking at a book. But most of the boys were talking, laughing, singing as if there were no such thing as lessons.

Sometimes a master might look in, or a monitor would wander down the aisle. But most of the time there was nothing to keep a boy from following his own sweet will.

"I say, Smith!" one called out, "lend me a shilling, will you? I want to buy Grisby's white rat, and I haven't got enough." A fat boy who looked as if he thought mostly of meal-times was telling everybody in his neighborhood: "I've just got a box from home. Jam and fruitcake and gooseberry tarts. Come and see me to-night in the dormitory, you fellows."

[24]

Somebody else called out: "My knife's so dull I'll never get my name carved on this desk. Give me your knife, Willoughby: it's sharper."

There were boys having fencing-matches with rulers across the aisle. There were others who took no end of pains to make paper arrows, or spitballs that would stick to the ceiling. In the corners of their desks might be bird's eggs in need of fresh air. Some of the boys were reading adventure stories, covered up to look like school-books.

In the midst of this Babel, you were expected to get your lessons as well as you could.

When it came to meal-times, you went into what was called "Big Hall," where four hundred boys ate together.

The beef was tough enough to make a suitcase: the milk was like chalk and water: the potatoes would have done to plaster a ceiling or cement a wall. How different it

all was from the good though simple fare at home!

"Want to join a brewing company?" asked the boy across the table.

[25]

"What's a brewing company?" inquired Wilf.

"We buy sausages and cook 'em in saucepans over the fire—when we can find a fire."

"Yes, you can count me in," said Wilf. So it didn't make so much difference after that, if he couldn't eat what was set before him at the table.

But usually the boys brought robust appetites to their meals, for they went in heavily for all forms of athletics. The boys who didn't make the teams had to drill in the gymnasium or run round and round an open air track a mile and a half long. If you shirked, the boys themselves saw to it that you got punished.

When Wilf came home to Cheshire for the long vacations he found some poor little ragamuffins who had no fun in their lives, and started a club for them in his own house. There were no boy scouts in those days, when Sir Robert Baden-Powell and Ernest Thompson Seton were little boys themselves. It was just taken for granted that boys would be boys, and it was hoped that they would grow up to be good men, if after school hours they were allowed to run loose in the streets. But Grenfell had a different idea.

[26]

He turned the dining-room on Saturday evenings into a gymnasium.

He pushed aside the table and chucked the chairs out of the window.

"Now any of you fellows who want to can get busy on the parallel bars," he told them, "or if you like you can go out into the back yard and pitch quoits. I'll take on anybody who wants to box with me."

The boys thought it was heaps of fun. They could hardly wait for Saturday night to come, because it meant the rare sport of banging another boy in the nose, which was much more satisfactory than throwing stones at a policeman.

After he was big enough, he used to go to lodging-houses where men slept who were down and out. He knew that drink had brought them low, and he wanted to show them better things to do.

The saloon-keepers were against him from the start. He was depriving them of some of their best customers.

[27]

"You're spoiling our business," they grumbled.

At last they made up their minds they would "get" him.

They collected a "gang" and one night they locked the door, backed up against it, and shouted:

"Come on, young feller! We're goin' to fix you!"

They rolled up their sleeves, clenched their fists, and sailed into him full-tilt like a big, angry crowd of human bees.

Grenfell was ready for them. It was like a fight in the movies.

He had kept himself in fine condition, for he was in training to play football and he was known to be a first-rate boxer.

They flew at him, roaring to encourage one another. There were six or eight of them, but they were afraid of his fists.

"Come on, boys!"

"Hit 'im a good 'un, Bill! 'E's spoilin' our business, that's what 'e's doin'."

"Push in his face. 'Ammer 'im good 'n' proper!"

[28]

"We'll show 'im what's what!"

"'E's a noosance. Le's get rid of 'im. Lemme get at 'im once. I'll show 'im!"

So they came on, clumsy with drink, but their maudlin outcries didn't scare Grenfell a bit.

He was waiting for them,—cool, quiet, determined.

Their diet was mostly bad ale and beer, or whiskey: Grenfell was all muscle, from constant exercise and wholesome diet—the roast beef of old England, whole wheat bread, plenty of rich milk.

They were no match for him.

On they came, one after another. The first lunged out heavily; Grenfell parried the blow with his right hand and landed his left on the jaw. The ruffian fell to the floor like a log of wood and lay there. As he fell, he clutched at the corner of the table and overturned it with a mighty crash on top of him.

The second man got a blow on the nose that sent him over to the corner to wipe away the blood. The rest Grenfell laid out flat on the floor in one, two, three order.

[29]



They came at him again, those who were able to go on. They got their arms around him but he threw them off. They kicked him and he knocked them down again. They bit and clawed and scratched and used all the foul tactics that they knew.

They tried to get him from both sides—they rushed at him from the front and the rear at the same time.

Agile as a cat he turned and faced them whichever way they came, and those quick, hard fists of his shot out and hit them on the chin or on the nose till they bled like stuck pigs and bawled for mercy.

Grenfell stood there amid the wrecked furniture, his clothes torn, bleeding and triumphant. "Want any more?" he smiled.

When they saw that all combined they were no match for this wildcat they had roused to action, they said:

"Well, le's call it quits. Le's have peace."

They never tackled him again. They didn't know much, to be sure, but they knew when they had had enough of "a first-class fighting man."

[30]

Then Grenfell started camping-parties with poor boys who hadn't any money to spend for holidays. The first summer he had thirteen at the seashore.

A boy had to take a sea-bath before he got his breakfast. No one could go in a boat unless he could swim. The beds were hay-stuffed burlap bags. A lifeboat retired from service was more fun than Noah's Ark to keep the happy company afloat for a fishing-party or a picnic.

Next year there were thirty boys: then the number grew to a hundred, and more. Not one life was lost. How they loved it all! Especially when the boat, twelve boys at the oars, came plunging in, on the returning tide, with the boys all singing at the top of their voices:

"Here we come rejoicing,  
Pulling at the sweeps"

to the rhythmic tune of "Bringing in the Sheaves." Then, when the boat's keel slid into the sand, it was a mad rush for the best supper boys ever ate.

His school days over, instead of going to Oxford University, Grenfell chose to enter the London Hospital, so as to take his examinations at London University later, and become a doctor.

[31]

While Grenfell was in the hospital, murder was quite the fashion in London. Many a time his patients had a policeman sitting behind a screen at the foot of the bed, ready to nab them if they got up and tried to climb out of a window.

One day, Sir Frederick Treves said to him: "Go to the North Sea, where the deep-sea fishermen need a man like you. If you go in January, you will see some fine seascapes, anyway. Don't go in summer when all of the old ladies go for a rest."

Grenfell turned the idea over and over in his mind. He had always loved the sea and been the friend of sailors and fishermen. He liked the thought of the help he could be as a doctor among them. So he decided to cast in his lot with the fishermen who go from England's East Coast into the brawling North Sea.

Yarmouth, about 120 miles northeast of London, is the headquarters of the herring fisheries, which engage about 300 vessels and 3,000 men. A short distance off the shore are sandbanks, and between these and the mainland Yarmouth Roads provides a safe harbor and a good anchorage for ships drawing eighteen or nineteen feet of water.

[32]

So one pitch-black and rainy night Grenfell packed his bag and went to Yarmouth. At the railway-station he found a retired fisherman with a cab that threatened to fall apart if you looked at it too hard. They drove a couple of miles alongshore in the darkness, and found what looked like two posts sticking out of the sand.

"Where's the ship?" asked Grenfell.

"Those are her topmasts," answered the sea-dog. "Tide's low. The rest of her is hidden by the wharf."

Grenfell scrambled over a hillock and a dim anchor-lantern showed him the tiny craft that for many days and nights was to be his tossing home in the great waters.

In answer to his hail, a voice called back cheerily: "Mind the rigging; it's just tarred and greased."

But Grenfell was already sliding down it, nimble as a cat, though it was so sticky he had to wrench his hands and feet from it now and then.

[33]

The boat was engaged in peddling tobacco among the ships of the North Sea fishing-fleet, and for the next two months no land was seen, except two distant islands: and the decks were never free from ice and snow.

Aboard many of the boats to which they came the entire crew, skipper and all,

were 'prentices not more than twenty years old. These lads got no pay, except a little pocket-money. Many of the crew were hard characters, and the young skippers were harder still. Often they had been sent to sea from industrial schools and reformatories.

One awkward boy had cooked the "duff" for dinner and burned it. So the skipper made him take the ashes from the cook's galley to the fore-rigging, climb to the cross-tree with the cinders one by one, and throw them over the cross-tree into the sea, repeating the act till he had disposed of the contents of the scuttle.

A boy who had not cleaned the cabin as he should was given a bucketful of sea water, and was made to spend the whole night emptying it with a teaspoon into another bucket, and then putting it back the same way.

Most of the boys were lively and merry, and always ready for a lark.

Grenfell, who has never been able to forget that he was once a boy, got along famously with them, and was hail-fellow-well-met wherever he went.

Once, when he was aboard a little sailing-vessel, he was playing cricket on the deck, and the last ball went over the side.

He dived after it at once, telling the helmsman to "tack back." When the helmsman saw Grenfell struggling in the water, he got so rattled that it was a long time before he could bring the boat near him.

At last Grenfell managed to catch hold of the end of a rope that was thrown to him and climb aboard.

But the cricket ball was in his hand!

[34]

[35]

ToC

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### III

#### WESTWARD HO! FOR LABRADOR

"In eighteen hundred and ninety-two  
Grenfell sailed the ocean blue——"

from Yarmouth to Labrador in a ninety-ton ketch-rigged schooner.

This wasn't such an abrupt change of base as it sounds, for it meant that the Royal Mission to the Deep Sea Fishermen, which works in the North Sea, had decided to send a "Superintendent" to the coast of the North Atlantic, east of Canada and north of Newfoundland, where many ships each summer went in quest of the cod.

If you will look on the map, you will readily see how Labrador lies in a long, narrow strip along the coast from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to Cape Chidley. This strip belongs to the crown colony of Newfoundland, the big triangular island to the south of the Straits of Belle Isle, and Newfoundland is entirely independent of the Dominion of Canada. Fishermen when they go to this region always speak of going to "the Labrador," and they call it going "down," not "up," when it is a question of faring north.

[36]

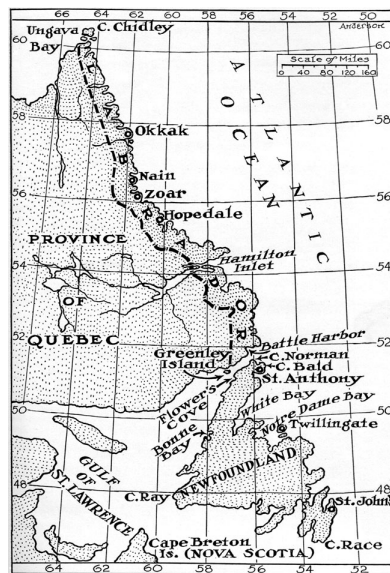
The tract that lies along the north shore of the St. Lawrence, west of the narrow strip, is also called Labrador—but it belongs to Canada. Generally "Labrador" is used for the part that belongs to Newfoundland.

"Labrador" itself is a queer word. It is Portuguese. It means a yeoman farmer. The name was given to Greenland in the first half of the sixteenth century by a farmer from the Azores who was first to see that lonesome, chilly country. Thence the name was moved over to the peninsula between Hudson Bay and the Atlantic.

Cabot sailed along the coast in 1498, but the interior remained unseen by white men till the Hudson's Bay Company began to plant their trading-stations and send their agents for furs in 1831.

Jacques Cartier said Labrador was "the land God gave to Cain," and that there was "not one cartload of earth on the whole of it." Along the coast are mountains rising to 7,000 or even 8,000 feet. There are many lakes inland, 50 to 100 miles in length. Hamilton Inlet is 150 miles long, and from two to 30 miles wide. The Hamilton River which empties into it, in twelve miles descends 760 feet, with a single drop of 350 feet at the Grand Falls, the greatest in North America, surpassing even Niagara.

[37]



LABRADOR

ToList

The population is about 14,500 in more than half a million square miles. There are some 3,500 Indians, 2,000 Eskimos, and 9,000 whites (along the coast and at the Hudson's Bay posts).

It was to such a "parish" that Grenfell came in 1892, that he might give the fishermen the benefit of his surgical knowledge and practical experience acquired not only on the land but aboard the tossing ships in the North Sea.

A ninety-ton boat is a tiny craft in which to make the voyage across the Atlantic. Grenfell must have known just how Columbus felt, four hundred years ago, when he said to the sailors of his tiny caravels "Sail on! sail on!"

First there were head winds for eleven days.

"Wonder if the wind's ever goin' to quit blowin' against us!" muttered a sailor, as he coiled a rope to make a bed for a dog in the stern. "I'm about fed up with this kind o' thing."

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The man to whom he spoke was in his bare feet, washing the deck with the hose. "What does anybody ever wanna go to Labrador for, anyhow?" he grumbled back. "It's a lot better in the North Sea. More sociable. You get letters from home an' tobacco regular. An' you can see somebody once in a while."

"Shore leave's no good to a fellow in Labrador," the first man went on, as he watched the dog turn round and round before lying down. "Ain't no place to go. No movies nor nuthin', just fish an' rocks an' people lookin' thin an' half-starved."

"You ever been there?"

"No, but I was talkin' with fellows that got shipwrecked there once. Gee whiz, what's that?"

"That? That's an iceberg. Didn't you ever see an iceberg before?"

"No. Looks like a ship under full sail, don't she?"

To the north out of the grey mist on the water loomed a mountain of ice.

"Glad we didn't run into the old thing," the dog's friend went on. "They say what you see stickin' out o' the water's only a small part of it."

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"Yes, that's right. 'Bout six-sevenths is under water. Lemme tell you, the fellers that sail a schooner like this up to the fishin' grounds have gotta know what they're about. Ever hear about the *Queen* an' how she got wrecked?"

"No."

"Well, it was a fog like it is over yonder, an' the *Queen* was off Gull Island, close to Cape St. John. She didn't know where she was. They didn't have no lighthouse in them days.

"Well sir, it was December, long toward Christmas an' the wind was howlin' like a pack o' wolves. The poor little ship—she wa'n't much bigger'n this here boat o' ours—drove plumb on the rocks.

"There was six passengers, one of 'em a lady. One of the men was a doctor—he was her brother.

"They got off the boat when she drove ashore an' they climbed up onto the top o' the island. They didn't have nothin' with 'em 'ceptin' only an old piece of a sail. What was that to feed on, all winter? They knew there wouldn't be anybody comin' that way till the nex' spring.

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"The crew, they stayed on board: they said they was goin' to get off some o' the stuff for 'em all to eat while they was cooped up on the island waitin' for spring.

"But the storm done 'em dirt. The wind came on to blow harder'n ever, an' pretty soon the sea she just picked up the ship an' hauled her off and—crickety-crack!—she went slam-bang to pieces on the Old Harry Shoals. Didn't have no more chance than a paper bag at a picnic. No sir, there weren't one man saved out o' the whole crowd.

"So there was them six people stuck up on top o' the rock."

"Did they have to stay there all winter?"

"Now you wait a minute. I'm a-tellin' you. Some time 'long in April there was a hunter come that way duck-shootin'.

"He shot a duck an' it dropped in the big waves runnin' and jumpin' on the beach.

"He got out o' the boat to get it—an' it weren't there!

"'Mercy on us!' says he. 'I shot that duck just as sure as I'm soaked clean through. It musta fell right here. What's become o' it? Where's it gone to?' [41]

"He looked round and looked round like Robinson Crusoe huntin' fer somebody. He looked up an' he looked down, an' it wa'n't no use. Wa'n't no duck there.

"'It musta been magic,' he says. 'Magic. Somethin' queer about this place!'

"Then he sees little pieces o' wood churnin' around in the foam.

"'What's happened here?' he says to himself. 'Musta been a ship went to pieces here some time.' 'Cause he found some o' the splinters had letters on 'em showin' they used to be parts o' boxes, an' pretty soon he finds a life-preserver that says on it '*The Queen*, St. John's.'

"'Guess I'll climb up to the top o' the rock an' take a look,' says he. So up he climbs, the birds flappin' round him an' screamin' 'cause they're afraid maybe he's goin' to hurt their eggs.

"Up an' up he clumb, an' he gets up to the top. The grass is long an' green an' the soft yellow buttercups is pretty—but what he sees lyin' there in the buttercups ain't pretty at all. [42]

"Six dead bodies lyin' there stretched out, with the piece o' the old torn sail over 'em. The bodies is fallin' to pieces, but in the fingers o' one is some flesh torn out o' the next one to it.

"Then he finds a little book with writin' in it where one of 'em had been writin' down as long as he could what happened.

"Well sir, what the writin' said was this. He couldn't hardly make it out it was so faint. It said by an' by they drew lots to see who was to be killed for the rest to eat."

Here the man with the dog drew a long sigh and said: "That's a fine kind of a country to be comin' to, ain't it, where things like that can happen? I'm glad I ain't in Doc Grenfell's rubber boots. He's goin' to stay. I thank my lucky stars I don't have to. I'll sure be glad to get back to Yarmouth once more. I used to think it was a hole in the ground, but it's heaven compared to what we're comin' to."

"Wait a minute, wait a minute!" said the other, "I ain't finished tellin' you. Lemme get through. I was sayin', they drew lots, an'—the lot fell to the lady." [43]

"They was goin' to eat the lady!" exclaimed his comrade, in horror.

"Yes, sir, that's what they would 'a' done. But her brother he said he'd take her place."

"An' then what happened?"

"They don't know no more after that. The writin' stops there."

"Say," said the dog-fancier, disgusted, "that's no place to have the story stop. Get a fellow all strung up and then dump him off that way without knowin' how it ended."

The man with the hose began to bind up a leak with a bit of tarpaulin. "I ain't made it up outa my head," he said. "I'm just tellin' you what happened. An' it seems to me the story did have an end, all right, 'cause there they were all lyin' stretched out cold the way the hunter found 'em."

The listener shivered. "Say, can't you tell us a more cheerful yarn?"

The story-teller shook his head. "Mos' Newfoundland an' Labrador stories is like that, Bill," he said. "Grey, like the fog an' the face o' the sea.—Guess I'll go an' put on some more clothes. This wind sure does bite clear into the middle o' your bones." [44]

"Yes," said the other, "an' the sea's gettin' colder every minute. Say, Jim, I hope the watch'll keep his eyes peeled to-night. I'd sure hate to run into any o' those there bergs. Don't like the looks o' that one we seen just now. One o' those'd be enough to send us all to Davy Jones's locker in a jiffy."

For five days more they ran on, all the time through dense fog. Then—the grey mist lifted, and the lovely green of the land appeared. At least, it looked beautiful after so

many days at sea.

But what was that? Over the evergreens a tall plume of black smoke rose.

"The place is burnin' up!" said Bill to Jim.

"I counted thirteen places where she's on fire. What is that anyway?"

"That's St. John's," answered Bill, a little proud of his knowledge. "Capital o' Newfoundland."

"Where're we gonna land, with this fire goin' on this way?"

"Dunno," said Bill. "We'll run in farther, 'n' then we can see."

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Grenfell was at the prow, looking at the burning city. Some of the ships had burned down to the water, right at the wharves. Chimneys were standing up out of the ruins like broken, blackened fingers pointing at the sky.

People came running down through the smoke and the flames.

"Got anything to eat?" they cried.

"Not much!" shouted back Grenfell. "But what we've got you're welcome to!"

"Is there a doctor on board?" was the next hail.

"I'm a doctor," called Grenfell.

"Glory be!" came the answer. "There'll be plenty for you to do ashore, Doctor!"

So instead of rest and comfort after the long sea-voyage Grenfell and those with him had to peel off their coats and plunge right in and help with both hands right and left.

It was with heavy hearts a few days later that they said good-by and started north for Labrador where there were people who needed them even more than the burned-out folk of St. John's.

They ran across the Straits of Belle Isle, through which the River St. Lawrence flows to the Atlantic, and the sun flashed on a hundred icebergs at once, in a glorious procession.

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The seabirds were fighting and crying over the fish.

The whales were leaping clean out of the sea, as if they were playing a game and having lots of fun.

Grenfell laughed aloud as he watched them. "I say, boys," he said to the sailors, "don't you wish you could jump out of the water like that?"

"I wish we had all the oil there is in all them whales!" said Bill, who had a very practical mind.

Into the very middle of the fishing-fleet they sailed.

Flags of welcome were run up to the mastheads of the schooners. There were about 30,000 Newfoundlanders in the whole fleet, on more than 100 schooners—and Grenfell's boat was a little bit of a thing compared with most of them.

But they all knew that the small boat had sailed clear across the sea to help them, and they all wanted to show how glad and grateful they were that a real doctor had come to their help.

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Pretty soon the little boats coming from the schooners were flocking round them like ants about a sugar-bowl.

One man came after all the rest had gone.

His boat was little better than a bunch of boards with a dab of tar here and there.

For a long time the rower sat still, looking up at Dr. Grenfell, who leaned over the rail gazing down at him.

By and by the fisherman broke the silence.

"Be you a real doctor, sir?"

"That's what I call myself," answered Grenfell.

"What's your name?"

"Grenfell."

"Well, Dr. Greenpeel, us hasn't got no money, but——"

He stopped.

"I don't care about the money," Grenfell answered. "What's the trouble?"

"There's a man ashore wonderful sick, Doctor, if so be you'd come 'n' see him."

"Sure I'll come!"

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Dr. Grenfell was over the rail and in the fisherman's poor tub in a jiffy.

He was taken to a mean sod hut.

The only furniture was a stove that looked like a big tin can burst open.

The floor was of stones from the beach: the walls were mud. Six children were sitting in a corner, about as dirty as the mud walls, and just as quiet.

A woman in rags was giving spoonfuls of water to a man who lay on the one bed coughing till it seemed the poor fellow must cough himself to pieces.

"Well, well," said the Doctor. "We must fix him up." He didn't tell the woman that her husband had both consumption and pneumonia.

He left medicine and food and told the poor wife what to do. Then he had to go on to others who needed him.

It was two months before he could come back to this lonely spot—and then he found outside the hut a grave, covered with snow.

On that first voyage Dr. Grenfell had to see nine hundred people who needed his help!

One was an Eskimo, who had fired off a cannon to celebrate when the Moravian mission boat came in.

No wonder he felt like celebrating—for the boat only came once a year!

The gun blew up—and took off both of the poor fellow's arms.

He lay on his back for two weeks, the stumps covered with wet filthy rags. When Grenfell finally got there, it was too late to save him.

They do queer things on that coast when they have no doctor handy to tell them what to do.

For instance, a baby had pneumonia, and the mother dosed it with reindeer-moss and salt water, because that was all she had to give it!

A woman was done up in brown paper so the bugs wouldn't bite her.

One man set up in business as a doctor and gave his patients a bull's heart dried and powdered for medicine.

Another man said he knew how to get rid of boils. "I cut my nails on a Monday," was his cure.

They would take pulley-blocks and boil them in water and then drink the water.

To tell how the wind blew they would hang the head of a fox or wolf or a seal from the rafters and watch the way it swung. A wolf or fox would face the wind, they said, but a seal's head would turn away from it.

For rheumatism you must wear a haddock's fin-bone.

Green worsted tied round your wrist was a sure cure for hemorrhage.

If you had trouble with your eyes, you ought to get somebody to blow sugar into them.

Little sacks full of prayers tied round your neck were a great help in any sort of sickness.

A father tied a split herring round his boy's throat for diphtheria.

This shows what Dr. Grenfell was up against when he came to Labrador with his "scientific notions" about what ought to be done for sick people.

One day, just as the Doctor had cast anchor between two little islands far out at sea, a little rowboat came to him from a small Welsh brigantine.

"Doctor!" a man called out. "Would ye please be so good an' come ashore an' see a poor girl? She's dyin'!"

The Doctor didn't need to be urged. He went ashore in the rowboat. In a rough bunk in a dark corner of a fishing-hut lay a very pretty girl, about eighteen years old.

All summer long, poor thing—the only woman among many men—she had been cooking, mending, helping to clean and dry and salt the fish.

Nobody asked if she was tired. Nobody asked if she wanted a vacation. She had done her faithful best—and now, worn out, she was cast aside like an old shoe.

One look told the Doctor that she was dying.

The captain of the brigantine, who was tender-hearted, and really cared for her, had decided that this was a case of typhoid. He told the fishermen to keep away—for the germs might get into the fish they were preparing to send off to market.

So he had been the nurse. But all he could do was feed her. For two weeks—during part of which time she was unconscious—she had not been washed, and her bed had not been changed.

Outside it was a dark night, and the fog hung low and menacing over the water. The big trap-boat with six men, and the skipper's sons among them, had been missing since morning.

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The skipper had stayed home to take care of the poor little servant girl. While he sat beside her wretched bunk, his mind was divided between her plight and his anxiety for the six men out there in the angry, ugly sea.

"I wonder where the b'ys are now," he muttered.

Then he would go to the door and peer out under his hand into the night. Nothing there but the dark and the mystery.

"'Twas time they were back,—long, long ago!" he would say. "'Tis a wonderful bad night for the fog. I doubt they'll find their way in. I should 'a' gone out wi' them. But no, she needed me! Poor girl! The Lord, He gives, an' the Lord He takes away: blessed be the name o' the Lord!"

Wiping his eyes on his rough sleeve, the captain came back and helped the Doctor put clean linen on the bed and wash the poor girl's grimy face.

She was unconscious now: her life was ebbing fast.

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The captain went to the door again and again. Outside there was no sound but the low moaning of the night wind in the blackness. The fishermen, afraid of what the mysterious disease might do for them, were keeping their distance.

Suddenly as the captain glanced on the pale face of the girl, he gasped.

"She's dead, Doctor, she's dead!" The Doctor felt her heart. It was true. The spirit of the brave little maid had gone at last beyond the beck and call of men.

It was midnight, and over the dim and smoking lamp the captain and the Doctor decided that the best thing to do was to make a bonfire of the girl's few poor effects.

So they took her meagre clothes and miserable bedding out on the cliffs, piled them, soaked them in oil, and set them afire.

The flames leapt high and made a beacon to be seen afar.

Out there on the black face of the deep six hopeless, helpless men in a trap-boat, groping their way blindly, saw the flames and took heart again.

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"See!" they cried to one another. "Look there! Up yonder on the cliffs! They're givin' us a light to steer by!"

They drove their oars into the yeasty waves again with strength renewed. Little did they know what it was that had made the light for them.

When at last they dragged their boat ashore and hobbled to the hut, they saw the body of the girl, the lamp, and the captain and the Doctor making the body ready for the burial. They entered the hut, and were told what had happened.

"B'ys," said the foremost, "she's dead. Mary's dead. The last thing she did was to give us a light to show us the way home. Poor girl, poor little girl!"

Once when a small steamer Grenfell was using had broken down, he found shelter in a one room hut ashore.

The inmates had few clothes, almost no food, and neither tools nor proper furniture. There was nothing between them and the Aurora Borealis but ruin and famine. There were eight children. Five slept in one bed: three slept with the parents in the other bed: Grenfell in his sleeping-bag lay on the floor, his nose at the crack of the door to get fresh air.

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They all suffered from the cold, for there was not a blanket in the house.

"Where's the blanket I sent you last year?" asked the Doctor.

The mother raised her skinny arm and pointed about the room to patched trousers and coats.

Then she said, with a good deal of feeling, "If youse had five lads all trying to get under one covering to onct, Doctor, you'd soon know what would happen to that blanket."

First thing in the morning, Grenfell boiled some cocoa, and took the two elder boys out for a seal-hunt.

To a boy on the Labrador, a seal-hunt is the biggest kind of a lark. If it is winter, the seals may be caught near their blow-holes in the ice, and hit over the head with a stick called a gaff. In summer, they must be shot from a boat.

One of the boys, when he thought the Doctor was not looking, emptied the steaming fragrant cocoa from his mug and filled it with water instead.

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"I 'lows I'se not accustomed to no sweetness," was his excuse.

The boys proved the jolliest of comrades and the best of huntsmen. In the nipping wind they rowed the boat where the Doctor told them, so that he could shoot. He had on a lined leather coat: but they had only torn cotton shirts and thin jackets to face the raw dampness of the early morning.

But they laughed and joked and carried on, and didn't care whether any seals were found or not. The hunt was unsuccessful. When Grenfell left, however, he promised

the boys they should have a dozen fox traps for the winter.

Their eyes shone, and they grasped his hands. It was to them a princely, a magnificent gift.

"Doctor, Doctor!" was all they could say. "What can we do for ye?"

"Go out and catch foxes," said the Doctor. "We'll see what we can get for them when you catch them."

Next summer the Doctor, true to his word as always, came back and found the little house as bare and bleak as before. But the boys met him with the same old broad grins on their faces, cheerful as the sunrise. [57]

"See, Doctor!" They flourished the precious pelt of a silver fox. "We kep' it for youse, though us hadn't ne'er a bit in the house. We knowed you'd do better'n we with he."

So Dr. Grenfell said he would try. He went to an island where Captain Will Bartlett made his home. This Bartlett was the father of "Bob" Bartlett who captained Peary's ship, the *Roosevelt*, on the successful trip to the North Pole in 1909. Father Bartlett was famous round about for sealing and fishing, and he had not only a thriving summer trade of his own but a big heart for unfortunate neighbors.

"Do your best for me, Captain Will," said Grenfell, handing over the skin.

"That I will, Doctor!" answered Bartlett heartily. "Drop in on your way back."

The Doctor did so—and he found Captain Will had put aside a full boat-load of provisions of all sorts for the starving family.

Happy in the thought of the good it would do, Grenfell started back for the promontory at Big River where he had every reason to expect the family would be watching for him anxiously. [58]

As he neared the land—he saw no one moving. The boat was beached, and the Doctor went up to the house.

The door was locked: there was no one within hail, though he shouted again and again.

Grenfell knew this absence must mean that the whole family had gone to the distant islands for the fishing.

So he broke in the door, piled the things he had brought inside, and wrote a letter.

"This is the price of your pelt. Put all the fur you catch next winter in a barrel and sit on the top of the barrel till the spring, when we are coming back again. Be sure not to let anybody get it from you at a low price."

During the winter, accordingly, the family put by the furs that they got from the animals which the boys caught in their traps. In the summer, Grenfell took the pelts to the nearest cash buyer, and with the money supplies were bought in St. John's. The poor fisherman found that he had more food than he needed, so he sold the surplus, at a fair profit, to his neighbor.

Year after year this was kept up, and when the father died he left Grenfell \$200 in cash to be divided among the children. [59]

Thus the Doctor had the satisfaction of bringing this family up from a blanketless poverty, on the flat brink of starvation, to something like wealth in a land where a man with fire-wood, lettuce, dogs, codfish in the sea and a few dollars in hand thinks he is well off and piously thanks Heaven for his good fortune.

As for the sealers—the men who stand a chance to make anything are those who buy what they call a ticket to the ice—that is to say, a share in a sealing venture—and go out from St. John's in the steamers or sailing vessels at the beginning of March. The ship has sheathed wooden sides a foot and a half thick, and is bound with iron at the bow, to aid in battering the ice-pack. For the auxiliary engine 500 tons of coal are carried: and a crew of 300 men will use 500 gallons of water in a day—but the easy way to get more is to boil the ice, so nobody worries about that. Tragedies of the sealing fleet are without number. The worst have happened when blizzards caught the men out on the ice-floes far from their ship. One captain saved all his men by having them pile up their gaffs and lie down on them for cat-naps. Then he would make them get up and dance like mad for five minutes, while he crooned "chin-music" to them. Thus he saved them from freezing to death. In that storm the *Greenland* of Harbor Grace lost 52 of her 100 men. Grenfell tells of sixteen fishermen on Trinity Bay who, without fire or food or sufficient clothing, after thirty-six hours of suffering dragged their boats ten miles across the ice to the land. [60]

*The Southern Cross* in 1914 was coming from the banks with 174 men and a full load. She was lost with all hands, and her fate remains a mystery. A life-belt picked up on the Irish coast was all that was ever recovered from the doomed ship. In the same year the men of the *Newfoundland* were caught out on the ice and unable to get back to the ship. Of the company seventy-seven lost their lives and forty-two were crippled.



Two boys and two men were tending seal nets when a "divey" or snowstorm blew them helplessly to sea. They crashed on an island, but ere they could land they were blown off again. During the night and the morning that followed, both men and one of the boys died. The other boy dressed himself in the clothes of the three who died, and kept their bodies in the boat.

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They had caught an old harp seal, and he ate its flesh and drank its blood. On the third day he gaffed another seal as it floated past on a cake of ice. Then he had another drink of warm blood. Two days later he killed another seal.

By that time he began "seeing things." He thought he saw a ship in the distance. He clambered out of his boat and hobbled five miles over the ice, only to find that it was not a sail that he had seen, but a hummock of ice. The only thing to do was to make his way back over the weary miles to the boat he left.

On the seventh day, with despair gnawing at his heart, one of the sealing fleet, the *Flora*, came in sight.

It was dark, and this was his one chance of rescue. He shouted with all his might. But the boat immediately backed as if to leave him.

He screamed again, and the merciful wind caught up his voice and carried it to the vessel.

He shouted once more: "For God's sake, don't leave me with my dead father here!"

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Then the ship hove to, and when the brave boy was lifted aboard the watch explained to him:

"Ye see, lad, the first time we heard ye call we thought it was sperrits."

They picked up the boat as well as the boy, and finally put them aboard another vessel that was going toward the lad's fatherless home.

Grenfell went out with the sealing fleet and took his full share of all the hardships of the mariners who from boyhood look on sealing as life's great adventure. While they are still tiny tads, the boys of St. John's and the outposts practise leaping across rain-barrels and mud-puddles. They are looking forward to the time when a running jump from one cake of ice to another may be the means of saving their lives. To "copy" is to play the game of follow-my-leader: and so the boys use the phrase "a good big copy from pan to pan" when they mean it is a long leap between.

There is uncontrollable excitement aboard a sealer when the prize is in sight at last. Perhaps the ship has been buffeting the ice for many weary days, bucking the floes and backing away again with the lookout in the crow's nest scanning the horizon in vain with powerful spy-glasses.

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But at last the joyful cry is heard: "Whitecoats!" or "Dere'm de whitey jackets!" In less time than it takes to tell the men swarm over the bulwarks with their gaffs and knives and are deployed among the seals.

The "whitecoats" are the helpless young ones, mild and innocent as puppies, with great tears in their eyes and as pettable as woolly lambs if the sealers did not have to steel their hearts and think of their own young ones at home. Can you blame the man with the knife, any more than you blame the butcher who serves your household with lamb chops, if he goes to the red-handed slaughter with might and main? Those "whitey jackets" may spell to his family the difference between starvation and sufficiency if not plenty. He cannot afford to let sentiment interfere with his grim business.

The young seals are gaffed without trouble: the old ones are shot. The adult males are called "dogs"—and a "dog" hood seal, brought to bay and standing up on his flippers like a bear, is an ugly customer. It needs two men to tackle him, and if they are not careful he will bite off an arm or a leg in a jiffy. Yet the "dog" takes to the water, if he can get there, without paying the slightest heed to what becomes of the mother seal or the young one. He is generally a poor defender of his own family.

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For the hood seal family consists of but the three. Father—the "dog" hood—blows a big skin bag over his head when he is attacked, and the blows of the gaff rain upon it harmlessly. So terrific is his bite, when he gets a chance at his assailant, that the Newfoundlanders say the carcass itself can bite after the head has been cut off. A mature "dog" seal weighs from 600 to 900 pounds.

Bucking the ice to get at the main herd is a big part of the battle. Sometimes the skipper shouts: "Bombs out!" Then the blasting powder is produced, and the cry comes: "Hot poker for the blasts!" The fuse is then touched off with the red-hot implement. The bomb is thrust into an ice-crevice, whereupon all hands "beat it" as fast as ever they can—and a little bit faster.

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Then comes a deafening explosion that rocks the ship: and the ice rains on the deck in chunks, like bursting shells in an artillery bombardment.

With all the watchfulness, and the desperate risks the skipper takes as he drives the vessel into the pack ice, there is an excellent chance of missing the main herd entirely. An "Aerial Observation Company," started by a plucky Australian flyer at

Botswood, was successful in showing the sealers of 1922 where to go, by dropping letters on or near the ships—but they could not make their way through the ice to the place indicated. During 1923 the fog was so dense that the sealing-season was almost a failure.

On his first voyage to the sealing grounds Grenfell saw the seals like black dots by the thousands, all over the floes as far as the horizon. The ships butted and rammed their way into the thick of the herd, the men overjoyed at the prospect of plenty. As soon as the engines stopped they were over the side, booted and sweated, in a jiffy.

There was plenty of work for Dr. Grenfell. Many a man twisted his leg or his ankle as he slipped between the blocks of ice. Presently there were thirty or forty at a time surrounding him begging him to put some liniment in their eyes to cure the snow-blindness due to the fierce glare of the sun upon the ice-fields. [66]

The Eskimos, not having glasses, use spectacles of wooden discs with narrow slits, and do not suffer so much—but very few of the sealers from "the Old Rock," as Newfoundland is called, think to provide themselves with smoked glasses.

One day Grenfell was kept busy for a long time rubbing arms and legs and anointing smarting eyes. The men were nearly all scattered about on the ice, near and far, when he got through—so he thought he would drop over the side and watch them at their work. By this time it was late afternoon.

Till now, a strong wind had been blowing, and this had kept the ice packed together. The wind died down and the bits of ice began to "run abroad" as the sailors say. Grenfell and a dozen men with whom he found himself were far from the ship, and darkness was fast coming on. [67]

Of course they had no boat, and the only way they could get back to the ship was to float on one piece of ice to another. They had no oars with which to propel themselves—all they could do was to beat the water with the seal-gaffs.

This was so slow a process that by and by they gave it up, and decided to wait for the ship to come and find them. The ship by this time was out of sight.

It grew colder and colder after the red sun went down. They had a little sugar and oatmeal. This they mixed with snow and devoured. Then they took their "seal bats" and cut them up with their big knives. They dipped the pieces in the fat of the dead seals, and with these they made bonfires to let the ship know where they were.

In the light of the occasional blaze of their beacon fires they played games to keep from freezing. "Leap-frog" and "one old cat" were the favorites. Men not accustomed to the toughening Northern life might have been whimpering with the piercing cold and the fear of the sea's anger by this time. Not so with these men. [68]

The night wore on—and suddenly out of the darkness they heard the welcome sound of the little steamer crunching her way through the ice-pack.

The wrath of the skipper leaning over the bow was almost more terrible to face than any ice-storm would have been.

Did he respect the Doctor of the Deep Sea Mission? He did not. His tongue-lashing included them all.

"It was the worst blowing-up I ever received since my father spanked me," says Grenfell with a laugh, remembering that anxious night.

Later, the skipper came to him. "Doctor," he said, "the truth is I was that torn in my mind while ye were gone, and that relieved of worry when I came on ye in the ice-pack, that I do not know the words I may have used. If I was wicked or profane—the good God forgive me. It was my upside-down way of saying my gratitude to God for His salvation." [69]

The Doctor's day's work was not yet ended. He clambered down into the hold, a man ahead of him carrying a candle and matches. In his hand was a bottle of cocaine solution, for some of the men were suffering such agonies with the snow-blindness that they were all but out of their minds. They would moan and toss in frenzy, hardly knowing when the Doctor came to them.

"It hurts something wonderful!" they would cry, brave men as they were. "Can't ye give me something to stop it? 'Twere better dead than this!"

It was hard to get down into the hold at all, for the ladders were gone, and as the vessel rocked the seals and the coal were sloshing about below-decks where the men lay sprawled among them.

"Is anybody here?" the Doctor would call, as he poked into a dark angle.

No answer.

He would try again. "Any one in here?" There might be a fitful wail from a far corner. Then the Doctor would have to clamber over and round the casks and throw aside potato sacks and boxes. Sometimes his patients, in a sodden stupor, hidden away at the bottom of everything, could not be found at all. [70]

In these filthy, reeking holds, enduring all discomforts for the sake of perhaps a

hundred dollars payable weeks hence, the men somehow recovered from their ailments and throve and grew fat on pork and seal meat, fried with onions. Whenever the rats were especially noisy, the wise ones said it meant a gale: but sometimes the rats and the wise men were wrong. It was no place for a man with a weak stomach, that gallant little sealing-steamer!

On Sunday the men religiously refused to go out on the ice, though the seals tantalizingly frolicked all about them. The seals seemed to know how the pious Newfoundlander observes the Lord's Day. The animals stared at the ship and the ship stared back at them. Then in great glee the seals took to their perpetual water-sports, in which they are as adept as the penguins of the Antarctic.

"I have marveled greatly," Grenfell says, "how it is possible for any hot-blooded creature to enjoy so immensely this terribly cold water as do these old seals. They paddle about, throw themselves on their backs, float and puff out their breasts, flapping their flippers like paws over their chests."

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While they lay off Fogo Island, watching the seals, the great pans of ice, rising and falling with the heaving of the sea, beat on the stout sides of the *Neptune* as on a drum-head. Sometimes to avoid an awful drubbing the *Neptune* would steam a little ahead, very much as a swimmer dives into a breaker to cleave it before it combs over and carries him off his feet. Grenfell himself, loving a bout with "the bright eyes of danger," left the ship and went out on the ice and tried to climb one of the bergs, stranded in the midst of the ice-pack. It was like a living thing striving to fight its way out—something like a polar bear surrounded by "husky" dogs worrying him and trying to pull him down.

As a sky-scraper gives to the wind, the berg was rocked to and fro—eight feet or so with every wave that struck it. It fell on the pans like a great trip-hammer, backed away and came on again, the ice groaning as though it were a living creature in mortal agony. As pieces fell off into the sea the waves leapt up, the way wolves might leap about a running caribou. In such a battle of the ice with the ice, a man knows what a pigmy he is, measured against the mightiest natural forces.

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The *Neptune* escaped a ramming—but her neighbor, the *Wolf*, was not so lucky. The *Wolf* had rounded Fogo Island in an offshore wind that treacherously offered her a clear channel close to the land. As soon as she got round, the north wind, as though a demon impelled it, brought the ice crashing back and pinned her fast. An immense floe of ice, massing in upon the doomed ship, piled higher and higher above the bulwarks.

"Get the boats onto the pans!" Captain Kean shouted to his men. It is just what they have had to do on many an Arctic expedition when the ice has nipped them.

They took their food and clothes—but Captain Kean, the last to leave the ship, of course—saved nothing of his own except his life. And it was the closest possible call for him. Just after he jumped, the ice opened like the Red Sea parting for the hosts of Pharaoh. Down went the *Wolf* like a stone, and as she tossed and heaved and gurgled in her death-throes the ends of her spars caught on the edges of the ice and were broken off as if they were match-wood. The sea seems to dance above such a wreck with a personal, malicious vengeance.

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It was the old, sad story for the captain and his men. They would have to walk ashore, three hundred of them, over the miles of cruel ice. At home, their wives and children would be waiting and hoping for a grand success and a good time. Instead, after a forced and weary march of days,—going perhaps three hundred miles,—with much rowing and camping, father or brother would stagger in, his little pack of poor belongings on his sore shoulders, and throw it down, and say with a great sob: "'Tis all I've brought ye!"

It is a pitiful thing indeed for a man to have traveled hundreds of miles to board a ship, in the hope of a few dollars for the risk of his life, and then to have the sea swallow up his chance, and turn him loose to the ice and snow, a ruined man. When a captain loses his ship, whatever the reason, it is almost impossible for him to obtain a command again.

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#### IV

#### HAULED BY THE HUSKIES

ToC

There was great excitement at the little village of St. Anthony, on the far northern tip of Newfoundland.

Tom Bradley was coming back from a seal-hunt, and his big dogs Jim and Jack were helping him drag a flipper seal big enough to give a slice of the fat to every man, woman and child in the place.

Tom had a large family, and for nine days they had tasted nothing but a little roasted seal meat.

Finally Tom took his gun down from the nails over the door. It was a single-barrel muzzle-loader, meant for a boy, but he was a good shot, and had often wandered out alone over the frozen sea and come back with a nice fat bird or even a seal to show for it.

"Where be you goin', Tom?" asked his anxious wife.

"Out yonder." He jerked his thumb toward the wide white space of the ice-locked ocean.

She ran to get his warm cap and mittens. "When'll you be back?"

"I dunno. Not till I get a seal. Us has got to have somethin' to eat, an' have it soon."

She found an old flour-bag, and tied up in it a few crusts of bread.

"You'd ought to keep this here," said Tom.

"No, Tom. You can't hunt without nothin' to eat. We'll manage somehow. We'll borrow."

"Ain't nobody to borrow from," answered Tom. "Ain't nobody round here got nothin'. We uns is all starvin'. Hope Sandy Maule's letter gits to that there Dr. Grenfell."

"Who's Dr. Grenfell?"

"He's a doctor comin' out here from England. He's goin' to help us."

"Will he have anythin' to eat?"

"Yes—he'll have suthin'. But he's got lots o' friends in England an' America—an' he can get 'em to send things."

"What'd Sandy Maule write?"

Tom was poking a bit of greasy cloth through the gun with a ramrod. Everything depended on the way that gun worked. He mustn't miss a shot—there was no fun in that long, hard hunt on the ice that lay ahead of him.

"Sandy Maule wrote, 'Please, Doctor, come and start a station here for us if you can. My family and I are starvin'. All the folks around us are starvin' too. The fish hain't struck in and bit like they should. We're cuttin' pieces outa the sides o' our rubber boots an' tyin' 'em on for shoes.' Things like that, Sandy writ to the Doctor."

Mrs. Bradley drew the sleeve of her thin, worn calico dress across her eyes. She was a brave woman, but her strength was nearly gone. She did not want her husband to see her cry.

"It's all of it true," she said. "If I could only get a little fresh milk to give the baby! Might as well ask for the moon."

She did not speak bitterly. She would stay by her man and live for her children to the end.

"Well," said Tom, trying to sound matter-of-fact, "we'll go out with the ole gun an' see what we get." Not one of the little boys was old enough to go, but the dogs Jim and Jack leaped up, wagging their tails and fawning upon their master.

Tom had only part of a dog-team: when he or his neighbors made a long trip they borrowed from one another. What one had, they all had.

As Tom stood looking at the dogs, he couldn't help thinking: "One of those dogs would keep the family alive for a while. But I sure would hate to kill one of the poor brutes. They've been the best friends we ever had." His wife knew what he was thinking, though the dogs did not.

Then he spoke. "Gimme a kiss, wifey." He smiled at her brightly. "Cheer up. This little ole gun and me'll bring ye enough to eat for a long time."

She kissed him, and off he trudged, the dogs leaping beside him and trying to lick his mittened hands.

Away out yonder on the ice was a little black speck. He strained his eyes to see.

"There's one!" he muttered. "Now, how to get up near enough. If the dogs comes with me they'll sure scare it away—it'll go poppin' into its old blow-hole afore I kin git it."

Jim and Jack were sitting on the bushy plumage of their tails, their bright eyes fixed on their master, waiting for orders. They would have loved it had he told them

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to chase that black speck far out at sea. They would have gone on till they dropped, at his lightest word.

"No, boys, you wait here," he said. "You're goin' to help me haul it back—when I get it. But gettin' it is somethin' I gotta do all by my lonely. Now, you stay right here an' wait for me. Don't you dast to come no nearer!" He shook his finger at them solemnly.

They seemed to understand. They curled up and lay down in the thin powdery snow-blanket.

"Now then," muttered Tom, "I gotta creep an' creep an' crawl an' crawl till I get near, an' then I gotta lie down an' scrape along on my tummy same as if I was a seal myself. That's what I gotta do."

Suiting the action to the word, he started on, watching all the time that little dark spot on which all depended.

He could imagine the children waiting at home and asking their mother every little while: "When's Papa comin' back? Is he goin' to bring us somepin' to eat?"

"I wonder if that there Grenfell man is ever goin' to git this far north?" Tom asked himself as he crept toward the seal. "If us could only git a chance to sell our fish for better'n two cents a pound, after us gets 'em salted an' dried! Them traders, they bleeds the life outa us. They say Grenfell when he comes is a-goin' to fight them traders an' put 'em outa business!"

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The swift wind was throwing stinging bits of ice, sharp as needles, in his face. He drew his cap about his ears more closely and plodded on. The further he walked the further away the seal seemed to be. He was half crouching as he walked: he wished he might cover himself with a skin and crawl on all fours. But if he started to crawl now—he felt as though it would be a year before he could get near enough to shoot.

"Please, God"—he spoke to God as naturally as to his family—"bless this ole gun an' make her shoot straight and he'p me knock that seal over, the first shot. For it don't look like there's goin' to be more'n one shot, an' if I don't kill her there's my whole family's goin' to starve and mebbe a whole lot o' other people that's a-lookin' for what they think I'm a-goin' to bring back."

Now it was time to flatten himself down on the ice and scrape along, like another seal. It was hard work—try it yourself, if you don't think so!—and it took lots of patience.

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Now he could see the seal raise its head and look about. He mustn't give it a chance to ask questions of the wind, because the wind might say: "Look out, Mr. or Mrs. Seal! There's a man creeping and creeping toward you with a gun, and in a minute that man is going to shoot, and you'll be sorry you hung around here and didn't dive through the ice the very first second your nose told you you'd better!"

He raised his gun, and prayed again—this time a very short prayer: "O Lord, bless this gun!" And he fired.

The black spot had not vanished. It was motionless. "Did I hit him?" Tom asked himself. "Better try another shot an' make sure."

He was a long time sighting—and he imagined the spot moved a little as he did so.

Then he fired again.

There it was still. Now he dared to believe he had hit the seal. Dragging the gun he crawled nearer and nearer. Still the seal did not move.

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Now he could see the whole animal clearly.

The sight was joyful.

"Glory be!" he shouted. Then he jumped up and capered about madly on the ice. It was a nice, fat, luscious, flipper seal and dead as a door-nail. Enough for a banquet for all of the tiny village of St. Anthony. And if Dr. Grenfell should be there when he and the dogs got back with it, the Doctor should have the largest, tenderest, juiciest steak of all.

The wind was setting toward the dogs. He could barely see them there, far, far behind him—making a black spot where they slept, exactly as though they were another seal.

So he put two fingers to his lips and blew a long, shrill blast.

It was the signal for which they had been waiting. On they came like two wild young race-horses, each eager to be first to greet their master.

They must have known well enough that he had killed the seal. They had hunted with him so often that if they had been human the man and the dogs could hardly have spoken to each other and understood better.

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"Good old Jim! Good old Jack!" The dogs bounced round him like india rubber, mad with delight.

"Look what we gotta take back! Ain't that somethin' to make the old lady's eyes pop outa her head? First big seal's been caught off here for months! Enough to save the whole village from starvation. An' you dogs is to have some of it too, all o' you. Here's to begin with!"

He drew his clasp-knife and snicker-snacked two good-sized bits from the tail of the fallen monarch. He threw the meat to the dogs, who had it down in a gulp and a swallow and then stood with their ears up, like the Jack-in-the-pulpit, to know if there would be more.

"No, boys, that's enough to start back on!" He produced straps and ropes from the bread-bag and rigged up a harness so that the dogs might haul the seal, giving himself the end of a rope, to pull more than his share of the heavy carcass.

"Wisht we could git a coupla polar bears too!" he laughed. "But I don't know how we could pull to the shore any more'n what we got here. Well, when we've got this et we'll be comin' back fer more, won't we, boys?"

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And the dogs, tugging and wagging as they plodded shoreward, seemed to agree.

In spite of the weight of the seal, the trip back did not seem nearly so long. For you know how it is—when your heart is light any burden you carry doesn't count for nearly so much.

Tom Bradley in spite of pulling so hard was singing to himself like a kettle on a stove. And the dogs, too, would have spared breath to bark joyously, if huskies ever barked. But no well-bred husky makes remarks of that sort.

Tom stopped to rest, and sat on an ice-hummock, the dogs with their heads against his knee, their tongues lolling out.

"Member that time we chased the ole bear?" he laughed. "That was the time I couldn't do nothing with you! You was young dogs then, an' you got so excited you wouldn't listen to nothin'!"

"You just went a-racin' an' a-tearin' on from the time you seen 'im. O' course, as a driver don't have no reins, an' we only got a whip, we can't pull you up if you really wanta go. We can just holler 'left' an' 'right' an' 'stop' an' 'go ahead.' But my oh my! We sure did stack up against trouble that day.

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"You an' the rest o' the team, you waded right into that bear before I'd got you cut loose from the traces. The air was full o' bear-meat an' dog-fur flyin'. Guess the bear didn't know no difference between you an' wolves. There's many a man has made the same mistake.

"There was old Mr. Bear standin' up on his hind legs battin' away like he was wound up, handin' out punishment like it was a boxin' match, and you fellows hollerin' bloody murder.

"You done more'n wolves would 'a' done. Wolves wouldn't 'a' tackled a bear that way—unless it was a great big crowd o' wolves an' one lone, lorn, small bear.

"He was a buster, he was, an' there was only six o' you. But you stood right up-ta him all right! You remember, don't you?"

Jim and Jack flopped their tails on the ice as if to say yes. Their mouths were wide open—it looked as if they were laughing in delight to be reminded of the battle.

"Say, you dogs certainly are the willin', hard-workin' fellers when you're fed up right. I believe you'd rather haul a sled than eat. You rascals! 'Member the time you et my gloves just as I was goin' to start? I had to larrup outa you that trick you had when you was young o' gobblin' your own harness when you wasn't watched. I sure do hate to hit you. One o' these whips 'll bite a hole in a door twenty feet off: I've seen ole Pop Rinker drive a nail in a board with one.

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"When we get back, if that ther Dr. Grenfell has come we'll get some other dogs an' take him out for a ride. He'll have to have a team o' dogs. Can't get along in this country without you dogs—not till they have reindeer. Heaven knows, the Doctor'll have miles and miles o' country to cover, to get round to all the people hereabouts that needs him. Ain't it a great an' mighty blessin' this country's now a-goin' to have a doctor all our own, all our very own?"

When they got back to the hamlet with their seal, there was a jollification.

Tom Bradley could have been Mayor, or King, or anything he wanted.

There was plenty of one thing in that place—and that was fire-wood, from the spruces and firs alongshore.

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So they built a monstrous pyramid, big enough to cook twenty seals, and round the community bonfire they collected, dogs and all, for a feast. The children shouted in glee and clapped their hands. The mothers were happier for themselves than for their babies. And their joy was the greater because word had come that Dr. Grenfell was finding his way in the little steamer, the *Julia Sheridan*, through a channel behind the islands and was likely to be in their midst at any hour of any day.

Next day, the Doctor came. Such hand-shaking and back-slapping and outcries of

honest pleasure as greeted him! And from the very first minute there were anxious appeals for his aid.

"Doctor, would ye please come to see my old woman?"

"What's the matter with her?"

"Oh, Doctor, she does be took wonderful bad. Sometimes the wind rises an' it goes all up an' down an' it settles in her teeth an' the pains shoots her in the stummick an' we has to take hold of her arms an' pull 'em out and she howls like a dog an' we dunno what's the matter. Would you please come an' see? She's askin' us to kill her she's in such punishment, but us didn't think us'd ought to do it without askin' you. Would you please come 'n' see?"

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In that first winter Grenfell was "at home" three Sundays only, and he had to cover fifteen hundred miles behind the dogs. Sometimes they were heart-breaking, bone-racking miles. Sometimes they were as smooth and easy as a skating-rink. But not very often.

One day he had a run of seventy miles to make across the frozen country.

The path was not broken out—it wasn't even cut and blazed.

Just once had the leading dog made the journey.

But because he had made it once—they left it all to him to choose the way to go.

Straight on the good dog went, never stopping to turn round and look in the face of the driver, the way dogs will.

The way—such as it was—took them over wide lakes, and through thick woods deep-hung with snow.

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"Halt!" called Grenfell. The driver gave the command to the dogs. They stopped and rested while the men explored.

Sure enough, the leading dog was right. A climb to the top of a high tree showed the "leads" and proved to the men that they were traveling in the right direction: and the compass said so too.

Again and again they stopped—and every time it proved that the dog was right.

On journey after journey of this kind, round about St. Anthony on that far northern peninsula of Newfoundland, Grenfell and the dogs he drove got to know and love one another better.

Grenfell has done seventy-five miles in a day easily: but how far one goes depends on the state of the ice and snow and the roughness of the trail: sometimes five miles a day is as much as the dogs, pulling their very hearts out, are able to cover. Six miles an hour is an average rate of speed when it is "good going." Once the Doctor made twenty-one miles in a little more than two hours, over level ice.

The building of the sled, or komatik, is a most important matter. The Doctor prefers one eleven feet long, of black spruce, with runners an inch thick, covered with spring steel. With such a sled, and a good team of dogs attached with proper traces, travel on firm and level snow is an exhilarating experience. But a thousand and one things may go wrong, the dogs when not running are forever picking bloody quarrels, and continual vigilance is the price of a swift, smooth passage.

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A member of Grenfell's staff had crossed a neck of land between two bays, and was "twenty miles from anywhere," when his dogs struck the fresh trail of deer.

At such times the dogs are likely to take leave of all their senses save the instinct of the chase. These plucky beasts were no exception to the rule.

As they were short of food, the two teams were hitched to one sled, and the other sled, laden, was left in charge of a boy, while the men gave chase to the caribou. Like Casabianca on the burning deck, the boy had been told not to stir from that chilly, lonesome spot.

But just as the men got under way, a terrible snowstorm sprang up from nowhere, and so enveloped and bewildered the hunters that for two days they wandered, till they lost all hope.

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Then, by great good luck, starving and worn out, they came to a little house many long and weary miles from where the boy was left with the komatiks.

They sent a relief team back to find him. There he was, standing by the sleds like a good, true soldier, just where they told him to remain. He was bound to be faithful unto death, even though he should freeze stiff for his obedience to orders.

Another time, the team was halted in a wood at nightfall, and Grenfell and his comrades started to walk on snowshoes to the village six miles distant.

They lost their way, and found themselves by nightfall at the foot of steep cliffs which they could not get round, though the village was hardly more than a mile away and its lights twinkled them a warm yellow welcome like friendly eyes.

The only thing to do was to fight their way up and over the rocks. As they came to

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the top, they found two tired men who knew the way, but were so weary they had made up their minds to flop down in the snow for the night.

But Grenfell started a fire, and served out some bits of sweet cake he carried: so that presently they took heart to go on. If they had not done so, they might all have frozen to death in the snow, for the night was bitterly cold and they were perspiring from their hard work, so that their clothes were turning as stiff as suits of armor with the ice. As it was, the whole party reached the village safely, and came back next day to find the dogs and the sleds and bring them in.

A lumber mill was started on a bay sixty miles below St. Anthony, and a boiler weighing three tons was landed and set in place with the whole neighborhood helping. After Christmas Grenfell decided to make the run thither with the dogs from St. Anthony.

There was no trail. Most of the way the journey was through virgin forest. There were windfalls and stumps and bushes with pointed rocks amid the snow—offering no end of pitfalls where a man might break his ankle and lie groaning and helpless as a wounded caribou till he died.

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Nobody they could find had ever made the trip. But they had to know without delay how the boiler worked and how the mill was going. So off they started, gay as a circus parade, telling themselves they would do the distance in two days.

Not so. At the end of two days they were still wrangling with mean little scrub bushes, fallen rotten logs and the pointed rocks treacherously sheeted with ice and snow.

If they struggled to the top of a snow-laden spruce for an outlook, all they saw was more of the same old thing—a scowling landscape of white-clad woods and lonesome ponds. The compass always seemed to lead them straight into the thick of the worst places.

They took the wrong turning to get round a big hill, and found a river which they thought would lead them to the head of the bay where the mill stood.

But the river was a raging torrent, which leapt among the rocks, made rapids and falls, and left gaping holes in the ice into which the dogs fell, snarling their traces and their tempers and many times risking a broken leg.

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Still the brave little beasts of burden strained and tugged forward, encouraged by the shouts of the men.

They couldn't get away from the river, for the banks were too steep. By and by they reached a ravine where the water boiled and churned and raced along in its great rocky trough too rapidly to be frozen, even by the intense cold that prevailed. It seemed as if they must be halted here—but that is not the way with men of Newfoundland and the Labrador.

The only thing to do was to chop a passage through the ice along the bank—like making a tow-path for a canal.

After they had fought their way through the narrows, they yearned for sleep. So they built a fire, and felled tree-trunks twenty feet long into it, till they had a "gorgeous blaze." Then they dug holes in the snow, deep as bear's dens, broke loose from their stiff, icy clothes, got into their sleeping bags, and slept the sleep of the just till the golden sun warmed them with its morning blessing.

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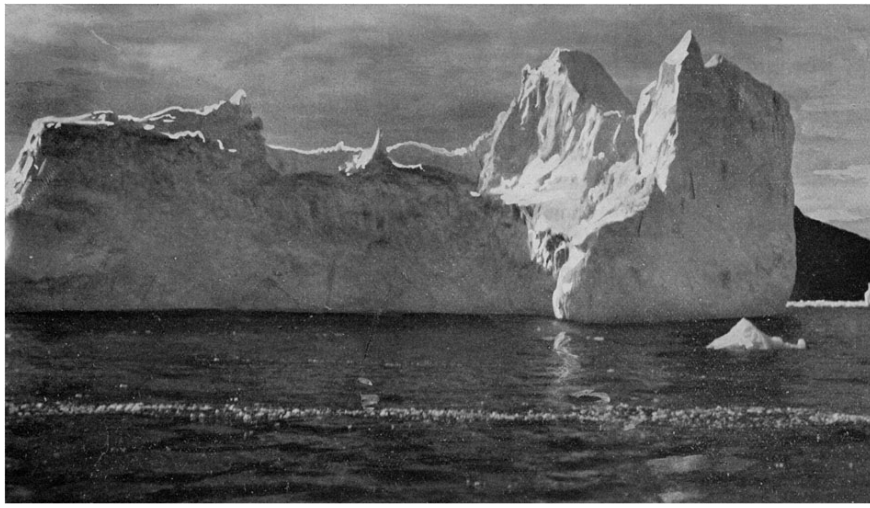
The rest of the way gave them no trouble. They got a royal welcome from the hands at the mill. It was such a great event, in fact, that a holiday was declared, and all hands went "rabbiting." At the end of the day they built another mighty fire of logs, gathered round it with steaming cocoa and pork buns, and decided all over again that life was worth living and that moving a lumber-mill on an Arctic fore-shore is sheer fun, if you only think so.

Not long after an experimental fox farm was begun. The farm part of it is not so hard as the foxes. All you need for the farm is a few poles and some wire netting.

They picked up a dozen couples of foxes—red, white, cross, and one silver pair. A Harvard professor describes moving day when foxes were being brought on the little steamer to St. Anthony. "Dr. Grenfell at one time had fifteen little foxes aboard.... Some of these little animals had been brought aboard in blubber casks, and their coats were very sticky. After a few days they were very tame and played with the dogs; they were all over the deck, fell down the companionway, were always having their tails and feet stepped on, and yelping for pain, when not yelling for food. The long-suffering seaman who took care of them said, 'I been cleaned out dat fox box. It do be shockin'. I been in a courageous turmoil my time, but dis be de head smell ever I witnessed.'"

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CASTLES AND CATHEDRALS OF ICE AFLOAT

ToList

Probably the fox farm suffered from too much publicity. A mother silver fox is one of the scariest of creatures, and is known to "kill her children to save their lives" when a thunderstorm comes on, or visitors are alarming. Most fox farms are therefore in the depths of the woods: and the path to them is kept a dark secret by the owners. But the farmers at St. Anthony's were green to the business, and they let the fishermen come in numbers to see the show, not realizing what the consequences would be. The red and the cross foxes seemed pleased to entertain guests; not so with the white foxes, and the precious silver foxes were the shyest of all. Not a pup lived to grow up. Many were born, but their parents killed them all. By and by, after a mortal plague broke out among the animals, the farm was converted into a garden with a glass frame for seeding vegetables.

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But others, with more science at their command, developed a profitable industry in Quebec, Labrador and in Prince Edward Island. In the year the war began a silver vixen and her brood were sold for ten thousand dollars. A wild fox, sold for twenty-five dollars, was resold for a thousand. There is money in the business, properly conducted. For those who want wild animals to have fair play, there is satisfaction in the thought that to get fox fur by way of breeding is infinitely more humane than to get it by way of the trap, whose cruel teeth may hold the animals through hours and days of suffering till the hunter comes.

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## V

ToC

### SOME REAL SEA-DOGS

"Get out o' there, youse!"

A big raw-boned fisherman with an oar in his hand came running up the stony beach at Hopedale.

The door of the little Moravian church was open. So were the windows. And so were the mouths of a pack of dogs who were yowling their heads off and trying to kill each other inside the church.

"That's just the way with them huskies!" panted Long Jim, as he stumbled up the slope. "Can't leave 'em be ten minutes without their gettin' into mischief. 'Tis a nice place they picked out for a fight this time! I'll soon have 'em out o' there! They'll find out the house o' God ain't no dog-house."

Swinging his oar right and left he dashed into the church.

Such a scene as met his eyes!

The dogs had been tearing the hymn-books apart as if they were slabs of raw seal-meat. For the Eskimos had been handling the books with their fingers fresh from cleaning fish and cutting up blubber. So that to a dog's nose each book smelt and tasted perfectly delicious. As fast as one dog closed his hungry jaws on a book,

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another dog, snarling and yowling, would try to snatch it from him.

Over and over in the aisles and between the pews they rolled, snapping and tearing at one another. For the sake of meat they would do murder any day—and the fact that it was in a church on Sunday meant nothing to Long Jim's idle, hungry pack.

"Go on, now! Git outa here!" Long Jim laid about him vigorously with the oar. Sharp yelps resounded as he thwacked their heads and legs. One dog took a header into the baptismal font, which was full of stale water.

Another tried to climb under the little cabinet organ. But there were two dogs there already, and one of them bit him in the chest. He backed away, slobbering and raging.

Another dog hid under the communion table, but Long Jim found him and kicked him away with his soft furry boots that did no damage to dog ribs.

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The leaders of the pack, Jock and Sandy, soared out of the window at the right. Jock landed on his head in the kitchen garden where the precious cabbages were growing behind high wooden palings. Sandy was more fortunate, and fell squarely on his feet. Both dogs began to gobble the soft green stuff just visible above the ground.

The other dogs came after them, biting and tearing at each other even while they were scrambling across the window-sill.

"Long Jim" ran out at the door, and had to tear down a lot of the stakes before he could drive the dogs out of the garden. When at last they went, most of the young and precious cabbages went with them. The garden looked like a mud-pile where children have been in a quarrel.

"Ain't that a shame!" exclaimed Long Jim. "Them poor Moravian brothers worked so hard to git that garden goin'! I s'pose I gotta pay for them hymn-books an' them cabbages. Where I'm a-gonna git the money t' pay f'r it all, I'm blessed if I know! I guess I'll have to see if I can git the money from Dr. Grenfell till I get paid for my fish."

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Dr. Grenfell was in a cottage near by, visiting a patient. The sick man couldn't stir from his bed.

A puff of wind blew the door open, just as the hungry pack of dogs came rushing up.

Instantly Jock and Sandy halted, and sniffed a mighty, soul-satisfying sniff.

Such a nice, sweet smell of dinner as was blown on the breeze from the door!

Their whiskers twitched and their mouths watered.

Then it was just as if Jock and Sandy said to the other dogs: "Well, what about it, boys? Shall we have some more fun? Are you hungry?"

For the whole pack as though pulled by a string made a dash for the door and swept in on the Doctor and the sick man lying there.

It was like an avalanche. Dr. Grenfell was swept off his legs, as if he had been bathing in the surf and a big wave rushed up and knocked him down.

The boldest jumped up on the stove, where the stewpot was, that sent out such a delicious smell.

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He pried off the cover, and then the pot rolled off the stove with a terrible clatter, and its steaming contents were dumped out on the floor.

You could fairly hear those beasts screaming "That's mine! Get out of there! That belongs to me!" Just like greedy, quarrelsome boys that forgot their manners long ago, if they ever had any.

They fought with added fury because—the hot stew burned their noses. They were in such a hurry they couldn't wait for it to cool. They snuffled and scuffled, they bit and snarled and snorted, as they had done in the church with the hymn-books and then with the cabbages in the vegetable garden.

One of the dogs thrust his head in the pot to get the last "lickings" and then he couldn't shake it loose again.

Round and round the room he banged and struggled, till the Doctor took pity on him and hauled it off his head.

Meanwhile the house filled with steam as if it were on fire.

The Eskimos came rushing from everywhere, with shouts in their own tongue that sounded almost like the cries of the dogs.

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They had long harpoon handles, and they pranced about the room, thwacking right and left.

The Doctor was entirely forgotten. So was the sick man. The room was filled with steam, stew, dogs, harpoons, and blue language.

At last the dogs were shoved out, and the door was slammed after them.

"How are you feeling?" said the Doctor to his patient.

"B-b-better, Doctor. It was a funny show while it lasted. But I guess they ain't much left o' that there stew, is there?"

The Doctor laughed. "No—our dinner is wrecked. A total loss!"

The door opened slowly. Long Jim stood there in the doorway, fumbling his hat in his hand. "Awful sorry about them dogs, Doctor," he muttered. "They just seem to ha' gone clean crazy. They ain't had nothin' to eat for so long, you see. They're good dogs when they ain't hungry. Would you—would you lend me the money to pay for them hymn-books an' cabbages an' the stew till I can pay ye back?"

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"Oh, that's all right, Jim!" answered the Doctor. "All told, the damage won't amount to much. I'll fix it up. Dogs will be dogs."

"Thank ye, Doctor," said Jim, simply. But he was deeply grateful. He went out after his dogs to make them quit rampaging and take their places in the team.

"Doctor," said the sick man, "I minds me o' the time one o' them missionaries put a young dog in the team ahead o' the old leader. Did ye ever hear tell o' that?"

"No. What happened?"

"Well, the big feller bit through the little feller's traces an' then must 'a' said 'you get out o' here!' the way one dog knows how to talk to another. 'Cause the pup he began to run away, before they'd got the sled started at all."

"And then what?" asked Grenfell.

"Why—Mr. Young harnessed up the pup three times an' each time the big dog he bites the pup loose an' the pup runs away."

"So what did Mr. Young do then?"

"He give the big dog a whipping."

"Did that do any good?"

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"Not the least little bit that ever was. It done a lot o' harm. The old dog's heart was bust. After that beatin' he weren't never the same again—he seemed to lose all taste for haulin' a sled. He might as well have lain down an' died in the traces, for all the use he was to the team after that. He wa'n't no good for a leader any more. He wa'n't no good for anything."

"Do you use moccasins for your dogs?" asked Grenfell.

"Sure us does. Makes 'em o' sealskin. Us ties 'em round the dog's ankles, cuttin' three little holes for the claws."

"I know," said Grenfell. "And the dog sometimes eats his own shoes, doesn't he?"

"Yes, sir. Till he gets to know what the shoes is for. I've had my dogs eat their own harness, many's the time. Don't seem as if dogs could ever git so tired they wouldn't rather fight than sleep. I'd just like to know what'd wear out a husky so he wouldn't be ready for a scrap. They likes fightin' next to eatin'!"

"I suppose you feed your dogs once a day?" said the Doctor.

"Yes, Doctor. Only—they puts down the two fish I gives 'em in about one swallow for both fish. I can't see that they gits much fun out o' their supper."

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Then the sick man began to laugh feebly. "It 'minds me o' the time I was out with the dogs in the deep snow. I was just goin' to build me a snow hut for the night. There was a herd o' caribou come by, goin' so fast I couldn't git my gun ready in time.

"But the dogs—they tears 'emselves loose from the traces, 'cause I hadn't taken 'em out yet, an' off they starts like the wind. They leaves behind one little mother dog. She was their leader—they was mostly from her litter.

"So off they goes like a shot from a gun, me runnin' an' yellin' after 'em.

"Pretty soon they finds a deer a hunter had shot an' must ha' left behind 'cause he had so much he couldn't carry any more.

"Anyway, they didn't ask no questions. They eats an' eats till you could see 'em bulgin' way out like they had swallowed a football.

"Well sir, would you believe it? All those dogs wa'n't such pigs. There was one hadn't forgot the poor little ole mother dog at home that was all tied up so she couldn't go with 'em. The biggest dog, he brought back a whole hunk out o' the leg o' that deer, an' he laid it down, within her reach, where she could grab it up an' give a gnaw to it when she felt like it."

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"That reminds me," said Grenfell. "A settler and his wife, in a lonely place, got the 'flu.' They were so weak they couldn't take care of each other. The poor woman could hardly crawl to the cupboard and get what little food there was, and she couldn't cook it when she got it.

"But she managed to write in pencil on a bit of paper, 'come over quickly.' She put

it in a piece of sealskin and tied it with a piece of deer-thong round a dog's neck.

"He ran with it to the nearest house, which was ten miles away. And soon men came and brought them aid, and their lives were saved.—Well, John, I'm coming back in a day or two to see how you are. And I'll call in on neighbor Martha Dennis, and she'll make you some nice broth to take the place of the stew the dogs got."

"Thank you, Doctor! I'll be glad to see you when you comes back. I don't know what us would do, if it wasn't for you, Doctor!"

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To the stories that the Doctor and his patient told each other might be added many more true tales of the intelligence of the "husky" dogs.

Sometimes a man at work in the forest, getting in his winter's supply of fire-wood, will send the dog home with no message at all.

Then the good wife looks about, to see what the dog's master has forgotten. It may be an axe-head, or his pipe, or his lunch of bread and potatoes.

Whatever it is, she ties it to the dog and back he trots to his master in the woods, a willing express-messenger.

But one of the finest deeds set down to the credit of a "husky" is what a plain, every-day "mutt" dog did at Martin's Point, on the west coast of Newfoundland near Bonne Bay, in December 1919.

The steamer *Ethie*, Captain English commanding, was making her last southward trip of the season. I knew the *Ethie* well, every inch of her, for I had made the up trip and the down trip aboard her only a few weeks before. Through no fault of her gallant captain, she had been carrying a great many more passengers than she ever was meant to carry. On a pinch, she had accommodations for fifty. But on one trip, by standing up the fishermen in the washroom as if they were bunches of asparagus, she had taken three hundred passengers. From a hundred to two hundred was a common number. I had been one of about twenty-five lucky enough to find a "berth" in the small dining-saloon. The berth was like a parcel-rack in a railway car. The people of the coast were signing a long petition to have the miserable old tub laid up and a larger, modern vessel substituted.

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When Captain English was nearing Martin's Point on the *Ethie's* last voyage, a high sea was running, and she sprang a leak. The water rushed into the fireroom. Captain English went below and made an appeal to "his boys" not to desert their fires and not to fail him.

"If you will stick till we get round the Point we can beach her," he said. The stokers manfully plied their shovels: with the snow whirling, and the wind blowing half a gale, the vessel struck, several hundred yards from the beach. In a little while the waves, sweeping furiously over the deck, would have swept the ninety-two persons aboard into the sea.

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They tried to fire a line ashore to the willing crowd that stood at the edge of the breakers.

But the line fell short, across an ugly reef of jagged rocks half-way to the land.

Then volunteers were asked to swim ashore with the rope. But none of the sailors knew how to swim. It is a rare accomplishment among sailors, especially in those bitter northern waters. So that plan was surrendered.

A boat was launched. Before it had fairly hit the tremendous waves, it was dashed to pieces against the *Ethie's* side.

The company on shipboard seemed at the end of their resources. But the people ashore had not been idle.

There was a fisherman of Martin's Point named Reuben Decker, who had a dog whom he had not taken the trouble to name at all. It was one of the young dogs in process of being broken to the sled, and in the meantime it was kicked and stoned and starved—not by the owner, but by strangers afraid of it, as is the general lot of dogs in this part of the world, after they have done their best by man.

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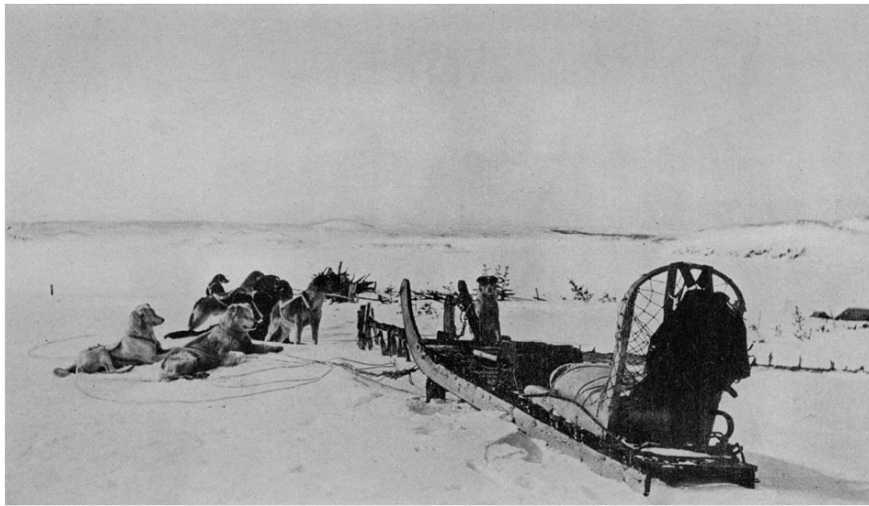
The dog happened to be down at the shore, forlornly searching for sculpins and caplin. There was still open water between the shore and the ship. Reuben Decker pointed to the rocks across which the rope had fallen. At his word of command, the dog jumped into the sea, swam to the rocks, and seized the rope in his mouth. Then, with the cries from the ship and the shore ringing in his ears, he turned and began to swim with it to the shore. It was not a heavy line. It was meant to be used to haul a thicker rope. But it was wet, of course, and partly frozen, and the miracle is how the animal managed to pull it through a sea where men did not dare to go.

The watchers ashore, standing waist and shoulder deep in the waves, anxious to launch a boat as soon as the heavy swell would let them, watched the dog and clapped their hands and yelled to him to come on.

"Look at un!"

"Swimmin' like a swile!"

"Kim alang, b'y, kim alang!"



LET'S GO!

ToList

"Man dear! My, my, my! Ain't dat wunnerful, now!"

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"Dat 'm de b'y!"

"By de powers!—Git y'r gaff, b'y! Help un in!"

"We'll have 'm all sove, soon's us lays han's on dat rope. Lord bless dat dog!"

At one moment his little brown head would rise on the crest of a streaked, yeasty wave, the rope still in the white teeth—and then as the wave curled and broke he would be plunged to the bottom of the trough and they would lose sight of him. Would he come up again?

"Yes—dere he be! My, my, my! Look at him a-comin' and a-comin'! I never did see a dog the beat o' un! By the livin' Jarge, he's got more sense 'n any o' us humans! I tell ye, thet's a miracle, thet's what it is. Nothin' short o' a gospel miracle!"

So the comment ran—for those who said anything. But many were too surprised and thrilled to speak—and if they cried out it was when they all cheered mightily together as the dog, hauled through the surf by as many as could get their eager hands on him, scrambled out on the beach and dropped the fag-end of the rope as if it were a stick, thrown into the water in sport, for him to retrieve.

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Now that communication was established, the next thing to do was to haul a heavier rope to the beach. On this a breeches-buoy was rigged without delay. In that breeches-buoy the ninety-two were hauled ashore. One of them was a baby, eighteen months old, who traveled in a mail-bag, "pleasantly sleeping and unaware." The last to leave was the captain.

The sea hammered the life out of the boat—but the human life was gone from it, and nobody cared. As for the dog—you can imagine how Reuben Decker's cottage door was kept a-swing till it was nearly torn from its hinges, by friends who dropped in to pat him on the back, and look with curiosity at the animal which a few hours ago they ignored or despised. And Reuben did not tire of telling them all what a dog it was. He could safely say there was no better on the coast. Perhaps in the world.

The rumbling echoes of the dog's brave deed traveled "over the hills and far away," to Curling, where lives from hand to mouth a little paper called *The Western Star*. It has a circulation of 675 in fair weather and 600 when it storms. The editor is a man named Barrett, who is a correspondent of the Associated Press. He put a brief dispatch on the wire for all America. Some people in Philadelphia read it, and sent the dog a silver collar, almost big enough to go three times round his neck. Since the dog had no name, the word "Hero" was engraved on the collar.

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The day of the presentation was a general holiday. All the way from St. John's, people came to see "Hero" rewarded. Father Brennan made a speech, the sheriff was in his glory, and Reuben Decker and his dog, dragged blinking into the limelight, were equally dumb with modesty, surprise and gratitude. The cheer that was raised when the silver clasp of the magnificent collar clicked round "Hero's" throat drowned out the loud music of the ocean.

Now "Hero," freed forever from bondage to the sled, may lie by the fire in his master's house, his head on his paws, his nose twitching, as he dreams of his great adventure.

## VI

## HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMO

When Dr. Grenfell first sailed his mission boat to the Eskimo settlements, the Eskimo swarmed aboard his little schooner, the *Albert*. They were singing a hymn the Moravian missionaries taught them.

"What do you know about that?" said Sailor Bill to Sailor Jim. "Them fellers certainly can sing!"

"Yes, an' they got a brass band," answered Jim. "Just hear 'em a-goin' it, over there on the shore when the wind sets our way. You'd sure think the circus was comin' to town! Hey there, where you goin', young feller?"

The "young feller" was an old Eskimo of about seventy, but Jim couldn't be expected to know that. For he was all done up like a figure from fairy-land—in snow-white jumper, peaked fur cap, and sealskin boots.

The Eskimo only grinned from ear to ear. He seemed ready to laugh at everything. His little bright eyes missed nothing.

"These husky-maws are so bloomin' curious," said Jim. "Just like them husky dogs. Hafta take the lid off 'n' look into everything. The cook says he dasn't turn his back to the stove. Don't you let 'em into the cabin!"

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"There's one of 'em in there now!" cried Bill. Out of a port-hole issued the notes of a hymn, which one of the Eskimo was pumping out of a melodeon.

"Come up outa there!" yelled Bill, thrusting his head in at the doorway.

The Eskimo didn't understand the words, but he knew what the tone meant, and meekly turned a smiling face toward the sailor.

Then he jumped up from his seat on the top of a keg and put out his hand. Bill took the pudgy, greasy little fingers. The Eskimo brought from somewhere in his blouse a piece of ivory carved in the likeness of a boat with rowers.

"How much d'ye want for that?" asked Bill.

The Eskimo shook his head.

"Are ye deaf?" cried Bill. "How much d'ye want for the boat?"

"Aw shucks!" exclaimed Jim. "Hollerin' so loud don't do no good. He dunno what you're sayin'. He can't talk English. Show him your clasp-knife. That'll talk to him better'n you can. He wants to swop with ye."

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Bill brought out the big knife. The little brown man nodded eagerly. Then he handed over the ivory boat. It was worth a great deal more than the knife. But not to the Eskimo. That knife would be a precious thing to help him carve meat and cut things out of sealskin and perhaps stab a polar bear.

"So everybody's happy?" laughed a clear and pleasant voice at Bill's shoulder. "You traded about even, did you?"

"Guess so, Doctor. He's got what he wants, and I'm goin' to send the boat to the kiddies in the old country."

That night as the men sat around the cabin lamp with their pipes and a big pail of steaming cocoa, Dr. Grenfell told them something about the strange people they had come among.

He had spent all day ashore among them, in various repairs to their bodies, and he had promised to come back to them in the morning.

"They're a nice, jolly, friendly lot," he said. "So different from the old days, before the Moravian missionaries came."

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"You know, they always called themselves 'Innuits.' That means 'the people.' They said God went on making human beings till He made the Eskimo. When He saw them, He was perfectly satisfied, and didn't make any more.

"But the early Norsemen came along, about a thousand years after the time of Christ, and called them 'skrellings.' That means 'weaklings.' It was the Indians who called them Eskimo. The word means 'eaters of raw meat.'"

"They've sure got some funny ideas about Hell 'n' the Devil, Doctor!" put in an old, wise sailor who was sitting deep in the shadows.

"Yes they have!" agreed the Doctor. "Their God, Tongarsuk, is a good spirit. He

rules a lot of lesser spirits, called tongaks, and they run and tell the priests, who are called angekok, what to do. The angekok are the medicine-men and the weather-prophets. The Devil isn't he, but she. And she is so dreadful that she hasn't any name, because you're not supposed to talk about her at all.

"The angekok are awfully busy fellows. They have to keep making journeys to the centre of the earth, the Eskimos believe. Because that's where Tongarsuk the good spirit is, and they have to go and ask him what to do when the little spirits get lazy and won't tell them.

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"Anybody who thinks the angekok has an easy time of it on his voyage is mistaken. The journey has to be in winter. It must be at midnight. The angekok's body is standing alone in the hut—his head tied between his legs, his arms bound behind his back. In the meantime his soul has left the body, and is on the way to heaven or hell.

"That's what an ordinary, every-day angekok has to do. But if you want to become an angekok poglit, which is a fat priest (meaning a chief priest), it hurts a lot more, and takes much more time and trouble. Then you have to let a white bear take your wandering soul and drag it down to the sea by one toe. They don't tell you how a soul comes to have a toe to drag it by.

"When the soul reaches the seaboard, it must be swallowed by a sea-lion—and of course the soul may have to sit there in the cold for quite a while waiting for a sea-lion to come along. After the sea-lion has swallowed it, the same white bear must reappear and swallow it too. Then the white bear must give up the spirit, and let it return to the dark house where the body is waiting for it. All this time the neighbors keep up an infernal racket with a drum and any other musical instruments they may happen to have.

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"The Eskimo know very well that once there was a flood—but they cannot say exactly when. The trouble was that the world upset into the sea, and all were drowned except one man who climbed out on a cake of ice. They are sure of what they say, because although the oldest man alive only heard about it from the oldest man when he was a baby, they still find shells in the crannies of the rocks far beyond the maddest reach of the sea: and somebody once found the remains of a whale at the very top of a high mountain.

"You do not go up to heaven when you die: you go down,—way, way down, to the bottom of the sea, where the best of everything is. There it's summer all the time. To the Eskimo there is no hell in being hot—hell is terrible cold. Down there where it is summer all the time you don't have to chase reindeer if you want them to pull you about—they come running up to you, obliging as taxicabs, and ask you please to harness them and tell them where you would like to go. And your dinner is ready for you all the time: the seals are swimming about in a kettle of boiling water. The women don't have to spend their time chewing on the sealskins to make them pliable for shoes and garments. The skins come off, all by themselves, already chewed—so nice and soft as can be, fit to make a bed for an Eskimo baby.

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"His boat and his weapons go with the warrior to his grave, so that his spirit may have the use of them in the next world.

"Once, one of the sailors from Newfoundland took something from a grave and hid it in his bunk.

"That night the dead Eskimo came looking for his property.

"It was pitch dark—but one of the crew saw and felt the ghost prowling about in the cabin!

"He yelled, and they lit the lamp.

"The ghost went out at the hatchway instantly.

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"They put out the light, and the ghost came back. Then shouts were heard, 'There he is! He's a Eskimo! He's huntin' in Tom's bunk!'

"After that, they kept the lamp lit all night long: and the next day, Tom went back and with trembling fingers restored what he had stolen to the grave.

"There are wide chinks in the rocky roof of every properly made Eskimo grave. This is not so that prowling sailor-men may reach in: it is so the spirits will have no trouble going in and out.

"You may still find lying in a grave a modern high-powered rifle ready for business, and good steel knives ready to carve those cooked seals down there in Heaven. I've even found pipes all ready filled with tobacco, to save the spirits the trouble of using their fingers to cram the bowl.

"Nowadays sealskins are exchanged for European goods, especially guns, and the Labrador Eskimo have lost much of the art of using their kayaks, the canoes into which they used to bind themselves securely, so that when they turned over in the water it did no harm. They would 'bob up serenely' and go right on, and in contests one man would pass his boat right over that of a rival without risk of accident.

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"The Eskimo and the Indians were bitter enemies. The story of the last fight is, that

the Eskimo had their fishing-huts on an island off the mouth of a river.

"Down-stream by night crept the Indians in their war-canoes. These they dragged ashore and hid in the rocks. Next morning the Eskimo came upon their enemies and at once attacked them.

"The Eskimo are little people as compared with the Indians. The Indians, their squaws fighting like bears beside them, drove the Eskimo back and back toward the sea.

"Stubbornly the 'huskies' contested every inch of the ground. Now and again they would crawl into holes among the rocks—but the Indians would find them there and cut them down without mercy, like animals trapped in their burrows.

"The Eskimo had their choice between the Indians and the sea. They would carry their children and even their wives down to the boats on their backs, and sometimes the frail skin-boats would turn over, and all the people in them would be drowned. If they succeeded in putting out to sea, they had no place to go: the Indians waiting ashore would get them whenever and wherever they landed.

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"At last—there were only the Indians in their war-paint, dancing and howling on the beach—not an Eskimo was left to tell the tale."

A few days later, Dr. Grenfell came to Hopedale.

There, he found, the Eskimo believed that Queen Victoria, away off there on the other side of the ocean, was sitting on a rock waiting for the *Harmony* (the Moravian mission ship from Labrador) to come in sight.

They loaded him down with all sorts of messages they wanted him to give her.

Especially, they wanted him to say to her that they were very, very grateful to her for sending him over the seas to help them.

When they learned that England was at war in Egypt, and a brave general was holding the upper Nile against a crowd of savages, although they hadn't the slightest notion as to where Egypt was or who the Egyptians were, they got out everything they had in the way of firearms and began to drill up and down on the rocky beach.

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One old fellow had a policeman's coat split up the back and much too big for him, and he dragged the tail of it along the ground like a bedraggled water-fowl. He also had a single epaulet that had come in a box of cast-off clothing.

On the strength of that uniform they made him captain of the company.

Then they all marched up to the missionaries and said:

"We want to go to war and help the English!"

"It won't be any use," said the missionaries. "Egypt is a long, long way off—and the war will be over before you could get there!"

"Never mind!" insisted the "huskies." "We want to go!"

They kept on drilling and making warlike noises with their mouths till the ice melted and the cod came in. And after that, in the struggle with the cold sea and the barren land for a living they forgot all about war and the rumors of war.

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There were seals and bears and foxes to be hunted, instead of men.

Dr. Grenfell found one man who was lucky enough to catch a black fox in a trap of stones.

He was so happy over the catch that tears of joy ran down his face as he carried the precious skin to the store. He said God had heard his prayers and made his family suddenly rich.

The storekeeper paid him forty-five dollars. That seemed like a fortune. The price was not paid in cash, however, but in food.

Staggering under the load he came back to his hut, and when the stuff was put on the shelves it looked like such a lot he began to think he and his family never would be able to get it eaten before the end of the world came.

So he sent out for his friends and neighbors.

Be sure they came. An Eskimo can smell food cooking (or even merely rotting) for miles beyond the power of sight to detect it.

The invitation ran: "Come and eat and stay with me." And then the Eskimo ran too, the big ones tumbling over the little ones, and the dogs outstripping their masters, and all making loud noises according to their kind.

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Alas! in two days they had literally eaten their generous host out of house and home, and along with the dogs of the quarreling packs there was the wolf of hunger gnawing at the door.

One of the Newfoundland fishermen left an Eskimo in charge of his supplies for the winter. Of these provisions he had set aside plenty for the Eskimo—for he knew how much a "husky" can eat. The Eskimo seems to have a "bread-basket" quite as



extensible as any dog he drives.

Then all the other Eskimo came swarming: and he fed them all, so that in two days the whole crowd were starving together.

Grenfell found that the white man, green to the business of dog-driving or whale-hunting, had to win the respect of the Eskimo.

The Eskimo knows that most of his paleface brethren from the south are wholly unable to paddle their own canoes.

The white man, as a rule, cannot slay the seal, nor catch the cod, nor catch anything else except a cold.

He cannot stand up to a polar bear with a knife in fair fight.

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He cannot sit out on a rock in a rain-storm all day without an umbrella and seem to enjoy it.

He cannot stand hunger, thirst and frost, and he chokes when the fumes and the black smoke of oil lamps get into his throat.

Then he is so funny about food! He doesn't care for stinking fish: he doesn't like his meat crawling with maggots after it has been buried in the ground; he doesn't know how much better molasses tastes when mice have fallen into it and expired.

The white man washes. How silly! He takes a brush made of little white bristles and rubs his teeth with it. Well, if the white man's mouth, which is full of water, isn't clean, then what part of him can be clean? And why does he turn up his nose at the Eskimo for being dirty?

As for smells, what is a bad smell? The Eskimo doesn't seem to know. In Kipling's wonderful address on "Travel," before the Royal Geographical Society, he had much to say about smells, and how they suggest places. Eskimo taken to the World's Fair in Chicago were homesick for the smell of decaying blubber, rancid whale-meat, steaming bodies in the igloo, the rich perfume of the dogs, and all the other aromatic comforts of home. As smells are their special delight, so dirt is their peculiar glory. A bath in warm water would make them as unhappy as it makes a cat.

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Fond of eating as they are, they like a change of food, and if bear-meat is all they find to eat in a certain spot, they hitch up and hike on to a better meal at a distance. They always want to be on the go. They rarely stay in one place more than a year or two.

Even the rifle does not seem, in the long run, to be helping them much. When the sealer used a harpoon, he hardly ever missed the seal, for he always struck at close range. But with the rifle, shooting from afar, the sea often swallows up his prey ere he can reach it. The walrus has gone to the farthest North and the seal is becoming gun-shy very fast.

As a hunter, the Eskimo is not wanting in nerve. A mighty hunter north of Nain was out gunning for big birds—ptarmigan, guillemot and divers,—when he came on a robust and fierce polar bear, a monstrous specimen.

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The Eskimo had a shotgun, not a rifle. It takes a ball cartridge of large calibre to do for Mr. Bruin ordinarily—and he can "make his getaway" with a good deal of lead in him. But the "husky" calmly walked up close to the bear, and discharged his shotgun pointblank in the face of the astonished animal. If the hunter had been at a distance, the bear would have minded the dose about as much as a pinch of pepper. As it was, the animal was blinded, and turned in fury on the hunter.

The Eskimo tore off his sealskin tunic and threw it over the bear's head, the way a bull-fighter confuses a charging bull with a mantilla. The bear stopped to tear the garment in pieces before proceeding to kill and devour the owner.

But the delay was fatal to Mr. Bear. In jig-time the hunter had reloaded the gun. He put the second charge into the bear's head through the eye,—and the monster expired at his feet.

The boys have bows and arrows; they begin by practising on small birds and later become proficient with a gun, so that by the time they are twelve years old they are veteran hunters.

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The greatest joy in the life of the Eskimo is to spend a day in a seal-hunt.

Hours before dawn, the hunter climbs a rock and looks out to sea, anxious to learn if it will be a good day for his watery business.

Then he gets his breakfast. In the old days, it was a drink of water. Nowadays, if the Eskimo has learned to like the white man's hot drink, it may be a cup of coffee.

At any rate, he drinks his breakfast: he doesn't eat it. He says food in his stomach makes him unhappy in the kayak.

The only food he takes with him is a plug of tobacco. He carries the kayak to the water, puts his weapons where he can get his hands on them instantly, climbs into the hole amidship and fastens his jacket round the circular rim.

He may have to go a dozen miles out to sea. Now and then, to vary the paddling, he throws a bird-dart. Like the Eskimo harpoon, this dart and the stick that throws it are most ingenious contrivances, and beautifully wrought.

The hunter grabs the beak of a wounded bird in his teeth, and with a wrench breaks the creature's neck. He then ties his prey to the rear of the kayak and grins at the other hunters.

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At the hunting-ground, seals' heads are to be seen everywhere, like raisins in a pudding. This is not sealing on the ice, as along the coast of Newfoundland: it is hunting them in open water—a very different thing.

Papik (let us call him) spots the seal he wants and creeps up on it, paddling warily.

The seal, a wise creature where such hunting is concerned, sees him and dives.

Papik rests on his paddle, and gets his harpoon ready for the reappearance of the seal.

It is a waiting game. Whenever the seal bobs up, the kayak is a little nearer, for while the seal is under water a few strokes of the paddle have cut down the distance.

A seal can stay under water a long, long time.

But an Eskimo, for his part, can sit all day as still as a tombstone in a cemetery.

Woe be to the furry creature, if it waits a fraction of a second too long before it dives!

In the clear sunlight the shaft flashes whistling from the throwing stick, the barb strikes, and the seal goes down in a welter of blood-stained foam. At the end of the harpoon line is a bladder—and as the bladder dances away over the surface, sometimes bobbing out of sight, Papik is after it like a hound chasing a rabbit.

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The bladder is to the barbed harpoon what the fisherman's float is to the baited hook.

When the seal comes up, furious to attack and punish the hunter, it first tears the bladder in pieces—then it makes at the kayak.

But Papik is calmly ready. He has a lance with which he takes careful aim.

The seal comes on, bent double to hurl itself forward with all its might. It seems strange that a creature usually so gentle can show such ferocity.

The lance is flung. It goes through the seal's mouth and comes out at the back of the neck. The seal shakes its head violently, but it is doomed.

Papik's second lance strikes through a flipper into the lungs.

The seal is still alive as he comes close. Papik stabs it with his long knife, and it ceases to struggle at last. The seal is a creature that clings to life a long, long time. He ties the seal to the stern of the kayak, rearranges his apparatus, coils his rope, puts his lances in their place, and is ready for another. If he is in luck, he may paddle homeward with four seals, and even more, in his wake.

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If a storm comes before he gets to the shore, his watermanship is severely tested. He fights not only to bring his boat and himself through the tumult of the waters: he means to save every one of those carcasses wallowing along behind.

In the midst of his hard fighting with the waves, which turn him over and roll him about, as he stubbornly rights himself after each capsizing and hurls himself through the next curving green hillside of water, he comes upon a helpless comrade.

Ordinarily, the second man, Patuak, could bob up again and go on, like stalwart Papik.

But Patuak's jacket worked loose at the rim of the body-hole of the kayak. The water rushed in. Now he is water-logged. He will lose his boat, his seals, his life, unless Papik can save him.

Is Papik tempted to think only of himself and leave Patuak to his fate? If he is, it does not appear in what he does. He runs his kayak alongside that of his friend: he puts his paddle across both boats, and if he cannot bring in both kayaks, with such help as Patuak is able to give, he may even carry Patuak lying across the prow of his own boat.

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It is easier to drown a seal than to drown an Eskimo.

The women stand on the rocks, shielding their eyes with their hands as they gaze eagerly seaward—just as the women of Nantucket stood on the roofs of the houses in olden times watching and waiting for the whaling-fleet.

At the first sign of the approaching hunters a cry goes up: "They are coming!"

Then they begin to count.

They thank their own idea of Heaven when they find that—seals or no seals—their men are coming back in safety.

If a man is towing seals, they shout his name with joy—and after it put the word

"kaligpok," which means "towing."

The women haul in the boats, rub noses with their husbands to show their affection, and proceed to prepare the feast of raw blubber.

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After that feast the men tell the story of the day's work—without boasting, but with touches of humor that send the listeners off into ringing peals of laughter.

The story-telling is a part of the seal-hunt. The phrases are straight-flung as a seal-lance.

"When the time came for using the harpoon, I looked to it, I took it, I seized it, I gripped it, I had it fast in my hand, I balanced it"—and so on. The audience, mouths agape, misses no word. It is the nearest thing the Eskimos have to motion pictures—and what a motion picture the whole of the seal-hunt is! No wonder the hunter lolls back like a lord, and lets himself be waited on, a conquering hero.

The old men feel their youth renewed as they sit and listen to these wonder-tales. In their turn, they are moved to tell how they met the walrus in fair fight and overcame him. Perhaps the dreaded tusk went right through the side of the boat and wounded the hunter. But there are no friends like Eskimo friends for a man in such a plight. They killed the walrus—they dined off the meat—and the tusks are kept to this day to show for it. A skin canoe against a walrus—that is a battle indeed. The younger men know what it means: and the old man is comforted by the remembrance of what he used to be.

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They are patient people, the Eskimo, and they need all the patience they have. An Inspector sent a boat-load of Eskimo to a fiord to get some grass for his goats.

They were gone a long time, and he wondered what had become of them.

When at last they returned, he asked them why they remained away so long. They told him that when they got to the place where he told them to go, they found the grass was too short. So they had to sit down and wait until it grew. Their time was of no value. And they had their orders to obey!

The world owes it to these brave people not to take from them their birthright to their few possessions in the far places where they dwell.

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## VII

ToC

### LITTLE PRINCE POMIUK

There was an Eskimo boy named Pomiuk who lived in the far north of Labrador, at Nachoak Bay. Pomiuk had the regular sea-and-land training of the Eskimo boy. In summer his family lived in a skin tent, in winter they occupied an ice igloo. It is a fine art making one of those rounded domes—the curving blocks must be shaped and fitted exactly, so as to come out even at the top.

Blubber in a stone dish supplied light and heat. If the air got too thick, father could thrust the handle of his dog-whip through the roof. Nobody bothered about bathing on Saturday night, and nobody minded the smell of rotten whale-meat for the dogs. In an atmosphere that would stifle a white man, Pomiuk and his brothers and sisters thrived and laughed and had the time of their lives. Pomiuk had his own whip of braided walrus hide, and even when he was little the dogs respected him and ran forward when he shouted "oo-isht!" turned to the right at "ouk!" and stopped and sat down panting when he shouted "ah!"

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When Pomiuk was ten years old a ship came on a strange errand. Pomiuk's family and their friends were fishing for cod. But when the strange ship dropped anchor, they flocked to it shouting in their own tongue "Stranger! stranger!" When they learned why it came they were amazed.

An Eskimo interpreter who came with the white men from the south explained that what they wanted was to take the Eskimo to that far-off land called America, where at a place called Chicago most wonderful things were gathered together in huge igloos for all the world to see. They wanted the Eskimo to come themselves and to bring with them their boats and dogs, their sleds, their tools, their clothing, and the things with which they hunted whales and seals and polar bears. In fact the white men could not pretend to show the world anything very remarkable, unless such clever people as the Eskimo brought their things with them.

The men from the south urged and flattered and argued till a number of the Eskimo let themselves be persuaded. The Eskimo had no idea of the trouble and disaster they were letting themselves in for, or they never would have started. The beautiful fairy-tales told by the white men inflamed their imaginations. They had always been very well pleased with their own white, cold world of whales and seals and kayaks—those canoes in which they are as much at home as the fish in the sea. But here was a chance to travel, and see marvels, and come home and rouse the envy of those who had not dared. It was too good a chance to miss. They would return rich men, and have nothing to do but brag about their adventures for the rest of their lives.

Pomiuk's father didn't care to go. But he was broad-minded. It was a big sacrifice for him to part with his wife and son, for it is the teeth of the women that must chew the sealskins to make them pliable for shoes and clothes: it is the fingers of women that do all the sewing. But Pomiuk's mother could show the helpless white women how to make skin boots, and Pomiuk could teach the paleface men and children to use the dog whip as he used it every day. If the Eskimo brought back money enough to buy many things at the nearest trading-post, the time spent on the long southward trek would not be wasted. The Eskimo, unlike the northern Indian, is a good business man, counting his puppies after they are born and his fox-skins before he spends them.

So the Eskimo sailed away from their own coast, with a gnawing homesickness at heart, though their lips were silent about it: and when they got to Chicago the life was strange with hideous sight and sound, and altogether unbearable: and they longed to get away from it to the sea and the ice and behold again their northern lights, which to the Eskimo are the spirits of the dead at play.

But there they were cooped up behind a stockade, like creatures at the zoo, to amuse the crowd, and be giggled at and poked toward as if they were some newly imported breed of monkey. An Eskimo likes as little as any other human to have fun made of him.

Worst of all, they lived in the white man's houses, and found the four walls instead of the "wide and starry sky" intolerable. A snow house has its own kind of stuffiness—the smell of whale-blubber and seal-oil to Eskimo nostrils is a sweet perfume. To be cooped up in a bedroom, and expected to sleep on a mattress with pillows, is pure torture.

While they were on the exhibition stand, in the torrid heat, they had to wear those heavy clothes of furs and skins which the ladies said looked so picturesque. They knew how the polar bear felt in his cage away from his ice-blocks. The food the white man ate with relish was such queer stuff. They longed for that delicious tidbit, the flipper of a seal. How good the entrails of a gull, or a fox's stomach would have tasted! But the white men seemed to think that coffee, and watermelon and corn on the cob, and ham and eggs, and the pies their Eskimo mothers never used to make were good enough for them. Except for the warm blood of the seal, the Eskimo ordinarily has no use for a hot drink.

Several of the older Eskimo wilted away like flowers, and died. They were buried and forgotten; and when the dogs died they were buried and forgotten too: there was about the same lack of ceremony in the one case as in the other.

But little Pomiuk through thick and thin was the joyous life of the party. They worked him hard, because he amused the visitors. The visitors would throw nickels and dimes into the enclosure, and as the coins flickered in the air Pomiuk would lash out at them with his thirty-five foot whip. If he nicked the coin it was his. Then he would laugh—a very musical laugh, that could be heard a long way off. He was a jolly, friendly little soul, and he wore a smile that hardly came off even when he slept.

But there came a time when even happy little Pomiuk could not smile.

One day as he leapt high in the air, agile as a Russian dancer, to bring down one of those spinning coins with his whip, he fell on the boards, his hip striking a nail that stuck out.

His mother ran to pick him up. His face was twisted with agony.

He tried to stand, for her sake, but the effort was too much for him, and he sank back in her arms, weak as a baby. What was she to do? The men who ran the exhibit had not kept their promises. Pomiuk was the chief bread-winner for them all. The coins he had nicked with his whip were most of what they had to spend.

With this money they sent out and got a so-called "surgeon" who did not know his business, but took the money just the same. He patched up poor "Prince" Pomiuk so that the boy was worse off than before.

The Fair closed: the Eskimo were stranded. If that had happened on a sea-beach at home, they would have known what to do: they would have laughed—for they are merry people, like our southern negroes—and they would have killed sea-birds with stones and made their way alongshore. But to be stranded in Chicago is another story. God knows how a few survivors of the band found pity in men's hearts, and

straggled back to their home at Nachoak Bay.

Pomiuk's wound never healed—he could not run about, nor walk, nor even stand. His mother had to carry him everywhere. In Newfoundland the fishermen and the sealers, desperately poor as they were, took them into their bare cabins, and gave them bread and tea taken from the mouths of their own hungry children.

Dr. Frederick Cook, creation's champion liar, did a golden deed for which the Recording Angel should give him a good mark in the Book of Life. He made room for several of the Eskimo on his journey to the Labrador coast: and fishing-schooners took the rest of the survivors. [144]

Imagine how happy Pomiuk was, in spite of the pain in his hip, when he thought of crawling back into the mouth of his own snow house again, and rubbing noses with his father once more!

But when the mother and the child were put ashore at Nachoak Bay—they were told that the father's spirit was at play with the rest among the northern lights. In this world they would not see him again. He had been murdered while his wife and child were in Chicago.

It was at that dark hour that Dr. Grenfell came into his life.

Grenfell found the poor little boy, who had earned so much money, and brought so much glory to his tribe, lying naked on the rocks beside the hut. The mother had married again, and gone off "over the mountains" with the other children, leaving her crippled son to the tender mercy of the neighbors. It was indeed a "come-down" in the world for a "prince," whose father was a "king" among his fellows. It was deemed best to send Pomiuk south on the little hospital steamer with the Doctor. The Doctor could fix him up, if anybody could, and moreover—this was the clinching argument—he was "no good fishing." So the next day found Pomiuk bound south, clasping his only worldly possession—a letter from a clergyman of Andover, Massachusetts. There was a photograph with it. If you asked Pomiuk what he had there, he would turn on that magic smile and show you the picture, and say: "Me love even him." [145]

The minister who wrote the letter sent money for the care of the poor "Prince." Next summer Grenfell saw him again, and the child laughed as he said, "Me Gabriel Pomiuk now." A Moravian missionary had given him the name. They had made him as comfortable as possible at the Indian Harbor hospital: his own disposition made him happy. He had been moved from the hospital to a near-by home, and he hopped about on crutches as gayly as though he could run and play like the other children. [146]

But malignant disease in his hip was sapping his strength, just as the ants of Africa will eat away a leg of furniture till it is a hollow shell, and one day the whole table or chair falls crashing. His strength was ebbing fast. Suddenly he became very ill: he was put to bed, with high fever, and was often unconscious. In a week he was dead. But that little generous, courageous life was the foundation-stone of Dr. Grenfell's noble orphanage at St. Anthony, put up with the pennies of American children, where I had the pleasure of telling dog-stories to smiling Eskimo boys in the summer of 1919. Gabriel is the angel of comfort: and this small Gabriel has left behind him the comfort of fatherless homes in Labrador for ages yet to be.

Dr. Grenfell says that on the night of his passing the heavens were aflame with the aurora. It was as though little Prince Pomiuk's father had come to welcome him, and they were at play once more in the old games they knew.

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## VIII

### CAPTURED BY INDIANS

In the lonely interior of Labrador in midsummer an old man sat on the rocky ground with a ring of Indians about him.

He was "Labrador" Cabot of Boston. Year after year he had gone to Labrador to visit the Indian tribes and study their ways. He could talk the Indian language and understand what they said to him.

"What's the matter with your leg?" asked the Chief, a big, strong fellow with keen eyes. "Can't you walk? We must get started if we want to find the deer."

"I think I must have broken my leg when I slipped and fell on the rocks," answered

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Mr. Cabot.

He made an effort to rise and stand, but sank back helplessly.

A curious, evil grin spread across the red man's face.

"You're sure you can't walk?"

Mr. Cabot shook his head.

"What will you do?"

"One thing is sure," said Mr. Cabot, "I'll have to stay with you if I'm to get out of this place alive."

"We can't let you keep us back," answered the Indian. "We might leave you here with a fire and something to eat."

"And what would I do after the fire went out, and the food was gone?"

The Indian shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know."

"Can't some of your men make a litter of boughs and carry me?" pleaded Mr. Cabot.

"They could if they wanted to," answered the Indian, coldly. "But I don't think they want to."

"Haven't we always been friends?" urged Mr. Cabot.

"I suppose so."

"Haven't I been here summer after summer, and helped you, and given medicine to sick people?"

The Indian picked up handfuls of sand and threw them on the fire. "Yes, and you were always writing in a little book. Maybe when you went away from here you told lies to the world about us. Who knows?"

Mr. Cabot was puzzled. Was this the friendly, peaceful Chief he knew before he had the misfortune to fall and hurt his leg?

In spite of the pain he was suffering, he tried to talk calmly and not show that he was afraid of being left behind. "Why have you turned against me?"

"What do you mean?" the Indian chief answered.

"A little while ago you seemed like my friend. Now you are willing to leave me here where there are no fish, and the deer do not come, and the mosquitoes are worse than any wild animals. What is the meaning of all this?"

"I will tell you," the Indian answered, very slowly. "You must pay us for what a white man did to us."

"What do you mean?"

"Listen, and you shall hear.

"Last year, we had fox furs—very many and very fine. We had risked our lives: we had starved and frozen to get them. All over Ungava we had tracked and trapped in the wilderness.

"Then—see what happened. A trader came among us. He had much money. It was not like any money we had seen before, but he said it was a new kind of money. And he would give us more of it for our furs than any man had given us before.

"He gave us much to drink. We had a feast, and dancing. The trader gave handsome presents to our wives. Beads and bright cloth for dresses. He gave us tobacco, and whiskey.

"When we did not know what we were doing, he bought our furs. He bought them all. He gave us this new, strange money and much of it. Then he went away. We fired guns in the air to honor him. We shook hands with him. We thought he was our friend. We promised to be friends with him as long as sun and moon endured.

"He smiled, and waved, and went away—and we, we had nothing of him but the money. It was paper, all of it, very bright and new and green, with printed marks on it we could not read.

"Some shook their heads when he had gone, and said, 'No, no, brothers. We should not have taken this green paper and given him those furs.'

"But others said, 'Look what he has paid us! We are all rich men. The price is better than we ever had before!'

"The old, wise men said, 'How do you know that it is more, when you do not know how much it is?'

"So, night and day, there was talking to and fro—along the trail by day, around the camp-fire when the sun had set.

"It soon came time for us to send men down to Rigolet, on Hamilton Inlet, there to buy at the Hudson's Bay store the things that we would need in the winter time.

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"We sent twelve of the strong young men in their canoes to get the things and bring them home to our tents. We were happy when we thought of all the guns and tobacco, all the flour and the fine clothes so much money would buy.

"They went: and they were gone many days, while we waited in one fixed place for them, and in our minds spent the money many times over."

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Then the Indian paused. He was squatting on his haunches, and puffing at his pipe. Mr. Cabot's leg was giving him much pain, but he was too proud to ask the Indian to do anything for him.

The Indian's face grew very stern as he remembered. His tone became as hard as the expression of his face. He looked at Mr. Cabot and clenched his fist. "When our men came to the storekeeper, they walked all about the store. 'I'll take that fine dress,' said one. 'Give me that shotgun,' said another. 'I will have this bag of tobacco,' said a third. Some took flour, and some chose bright ornaments for their wives, and others took candy, and one man got a talking-machine. Some chose the best clothes in the store. They also took much food of every kind, and ammunition for the guns.

"They made great piles of the things on the floor, to take them to the canoes.

"Then they brought out their money to pay for all these things.

"What is that stuff?" said the storekeeper.

"That? It is our money. It is what a trader paid us for our furs."

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"What was his name?"

"That we do not know. We did not ask. We do not care who buys from us; all we care is that he buys. One man's money is as good as another's."

"Then the storekeeper laughed in their faces. And he said: 'You have been fooled. You have been fooled as easily as little children. Do you know what this "money" is that you have given me?'

"No," they said.

"It is not money at all," he told them. "It is nothing but labels from beer bottles. You cannot have those things you have piled up on the floor. I will take them back and keep them here until you bring me real money for them."

"Then they said to him, 'But it is all we have. We cannot go back to our people with nothing.'

"He said: 'I cannot help that. It is no fault of mine.'

"They wanted to fight—but it would do no good to kill the agent or drive him away. There would be no one from whom to get things another year.

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"You ought to have brought your furs to me. I would have given you real money for them," said the agent.

"They went away very sorrowful. After many days they came back to us again. We were very glad when we saw them coming—but we wondered that their canoes were not piled high with the things we had told them to buy.

"When we heard their story we were very sorrowful. We talked about it a great deal. We said, 'What shall we do?'

"Then we made up our minds. This is what we decided. We said: 'The next white man that comes among us we shall hold. We shall not let him go until he pays to us a sum of money, seven hundred dollars, equal to that which we have lost. Since he is a white man he or his friends must make up to us that which we have lost at the hands of a white man.'

"So now you see—you are the man. And it is you that must pay back to us the money."

"But I haven't seven hundred dollars."

"Then you must promise that you will pay it, or get your friends to pay it. These many years you have come here among us. We will trust you for that. It is much that we should trust you—when it is one of your own people who brought such suffering and loss upon us."

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"But this is an outrage!" said Mr. Cabot. "I never did anything to you but good. You know that."

"Yes, we know that," said the Indian, gravely. "But we shall leave you here unless you pay. You cannot find your way out alone—even if you could stand and walk upon your broken leg. We shall not carry you from here unless you pay the money. Is that not so?"

He turned to the others, who had not said one word all this while: they had been merely looking on and listening.

"Yes," they said. "He has spoken for us all. As he has said, we shall do. You shall be left here, if you do not pay."

"The Great Spirit has given you into our hands," the Chief declared. "When you came to us this summer again, we said among ourselves that he had sent you. We did not know that he would cause you to break your leg. We were going to keep you even if this had not happened. Now the Great Spirit has caused this hurt to happen to you. We see, by this, that we were not mistaken. He sent you to us as surely as he sends the fish or the deer when we have need of food. It is for you to choose, if you will pay, and go on with us to the coast—or refuse to pay and be left here in the wilderness to die."

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So Cabot had to sign a promise to pay them the \$700 for a great rascal whose name neither he nor those Indians will ever know.

They made a stretcher and put him on it, and carried him with them out to the coast.

If they had not done so—his white bones would now be bleaching beside the cold embers of a camp-fire in the desolate interior of Labrador.

Do you blame those Indians for wanting to "take it out" of the first member they met, of a race that bred such a rogue as the man who cheated them?

Dr. Grenfell tells us that for about two hundred years the Eskimo of the interior and the Indians of the coast were at war with one another. There was a battle, long, long ago, in which Indians killed a thousand Eskimo.

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But nowadays when the Eskimo and Indians come together they have no quarrel.

There was such a meeting at Nain in 1910. It was the first time the Eskimo had ever seen Indians in that tiny fishing-village, and they "ran about in circles" in their excitement.

It was on a Sunday afternoon when the Indians appeared. They had come down a stream from the interior, and when they rounded the bend in their boats—of a kind that was strange to the Eskimo—the latter set up a cackle like that of a barnyard when a hawk appears.

The Indians, with their bundles on their shoulders, filed ashore, made their way to a hut the kindly Moravian missionary let them use, and sat in muddy, weary silence round the walls.

The Eskimo crowded into the doorway, their tongues hanging out, staring at these queer folk as if they had dropped from the moon.

But other Eskimo, kind-hearted and hospitable, were moved to show the strangers what shore life was like.

They got busy at the stove, boiled water, and presently handed about large cups of tea, with sugar and biscuit.

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The Indians devoured the refreshments thankfully, for they were very hungry. The Northern Indians lead lives that are often sharpened with hunger for long periods together. You can see it in their lank frames and their gaunt faces. The southern Indians, nearer the flesh-pots, with kindly priests at work among them, look roly-poly, chubby and content.

It was a very silent party. The Indians who had been so bold as to come this far to the sea were probably homesick for the flat stones, the dwarf birches, the far-lying ponds and cold swirling streams, the hordes of mosquitoes and the caribou of their lone spaces at Indian House Lake. The cluster of houses at Nain looked to them as New York would seem to one who had always dwelt in the heart of the Maine woods.

By morning, after a sound sleep on the floor, they were eager to begin trading.

A southern Indian translated.

They had brought deerskins chiefly. There are few valuable furs in their part of Labrador, but they did their best to make a brave showing with the few they were able to find.

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You can imagine their people at home at Indian House Lake saying before the start of the expedition: "Oh, if we only had some beaver or marten skins! Wouldn't it be nice, now, if we could get a silver or a cross fox? Those people down there at the coast know such a lot, and are so rich, and so particular! Nothing but the very best we have will do."

They held up a bearskin with great pride. They had a wolverine,—the only sort of fur on which snow will not freeze,—several wolf-skins, and moccasins, embroidered. The translator would point to what they wanted on the shelves. Then they would take the object in their hands and weigh it very carefully, thinking of all those portages on the homeward trail—probably twenty at least—over which every ounce must be carried on a man's shoulders.

They bought lots of tea—one man getting as much as sixteen pounds. They wanted gay prints. Other things to which they took a fancy were tobacco, cartridges, fish-hooks, matches, needles, and pearl buttons. First they handed over the skins, and received money in return: then they spent the money. Mouth-organs were much in

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demand, and they looked longingly at an accordeon and tried to play on it and were enchanted with the squawks that came out: but they were not rich enough to buy it. One boy bought a clay pipe, and spent all his time licking it. They were not allowed to smoke in the store, but they spat wherever they pleased.

Doctor and Mrs. Grenfell are out on the war-path against this disgusting custom, and they have had very hard work to persuade even the "liveyeres" that there is danger concealed in germs that cannot be seen, when saliva dries and the wind blows it about. In all this glorious fresh air it is mournful to think of the many who die of consumption, pneumonia and all sorts of lung-trouble, because of stifling houses and unclean habits.

The Indians at first were extremely shy. Then they waxed merry, and as they bought they laughed and chatted. In the party were three women. One of them was young and good-looking, and she was showered with presents—kettles, cups and saucers, perfumed soap and cologne! A young man bought for her anything she wanted—and every time he made a purchase for the fair one the others laughed aloud. And each time he bestowed a gift, one of the other women turned to her husband and made him buy the same thing for her. Human nature is the same on the Labrador as on Coney Island.

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It took two days for them to do their buying, and wrap up their purchases, and say farewell.

By this time Indians and Eskimo were sworn friends.

The Eskimo crowded to the end of the little pier, and knelt down to reach over and grasp the hands of the parting guests. There were shouts of "Yomai!" from the Indians, and various cries in answer from the Eskimo. Then, crouching on their heels, the Indians trimmed their sails to the breeze and were borne swiftly round the point to be seen no more.

How different is all this from the days of old, when the Eskimo were called "the most savage people in the world!"

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## IX

ToC

### ALONE ON THE ICE

In April, 1908, Dr. Grenfell had the closest call of his life. Of course in April the ice and snow are still deep over the bays and forelands of Labrador and northern Newfoundland. There is not the slightest sign that spring with its flowers and mosquitoes is coming. All travel save by dog-team is at a standstill, and only a life-and-death message—such as Dr. Grenfell is constantly getting—is a reason for facing the howling winds and the driving snows of the blizzards that the bravest seamen and the mightiest hunters have good reason to fear.

On Easter Sunday morning at his St. Anthony home Dr. Grenfell was walking back from the little church to his house after the morning service, thinking of the sermon, and of his mother in England.

Suddenly a boy came running after him from the hospital near by.

"Oh, Doctor, Doctor!"

The Doctor turned in his deep, floundering steps to see who it was that called him.

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"Doctor," panted the small messenger, "I came to the hospital to fetch ye. There's a man with dogs, from sixty mile away down to the south, and he says they must have a doctor come to 'em, right off, or the boy'll die."

The Doctor put his kind hand on the little fellow's shoulder. "Who is it that is sick?"

"I dunno, Doctor, but he's wonderful sick. He'll die unless ye come."

The Doctor thought a moment—then he remembered. It was a young man on whom he had operated two weeks before, for a bone disease that was eating away his thigh.

Those who had tried to help him had closed up the wound—the worst thing to do. The poison had collected, and probably the leg would have to be taken off.

The Doctor knew that every minute counted. He went to his kennels in the snow and picked out his sturdiest dog-team. They whined and pawed and jumped up and

down, eager to be chosen. The real "husky" hates to loaf, except when he has come in from a long, hard run late at night and has had his meal of fish. He wants to be at work all the time, and when the sled is loaded the dogs must be tied up tight or they will dart away at breakneck speed and perhaps upset everything. This sleigh was heavy-laden with instruments, drugs and dressings. A second team was to follow, with the messengers.

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Dr. Grenfell loved, as with a personal affection, every one of the five beasts that were taking him on this long haul to save a boy's life.

First came "Brin," by common consent the surest leader anywhere on the coast. The strongest dog of the team—big and affectionate and playful—was "Doc." A black and white dog whose muscles were like small wire ropes, was "Spy," and "Moody," now in his third year, was a black-and-tan named for Dr. Grenfell's friend Will Moody, son of the evangelist. "Moody" had the reputation of never looking behind him: he was eager to go on to the bitter end.

The youngest dog of the team, named "Watch," had beautiful soft eyes, a Gordon setter coat, and long legs capable of carrying him over the frozen crust at a tremendous rate of speed. Then there was "Sue," the most wolf-like of the lot—black as jet, her pointed ears the standing question-marks for further orders. "Jerry" was a perfect lady, quick on her feet as a dancer, and so fond of play and so demonstrative that she often tipped the Doctor over when he had a boxing-bout with her, and sent him sprawling on his back in the snow.

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"Jack," a black dog with the looks and the ways of a retriever, had "Moody's" good habit of going straight on without turning to see who followed, and he was put in the position of trust nearest the sledge. He liked to run with his nose close to the ground, and nothing that the trail or the snow-crust could tell any wise "husky" dog was a secret to the busy nose of this gentle-natured fellow.

Do you wonder that Dr. Grenfell was proud and fond of these four-legged helpers, and that he gave them the tender care one bestows on children? It would have grieved him to the heart to think of any accident happening to any of them. He looked on them just as a Captain Scott or a Sir Ernest Shackleton regarded his mates on a Polar expedition. They were his friends and helpers. Some of them had stood by him in many a hard tussle with the cold and the stinging hail, with the rotten ice threatening to let them down into the river or the sea. With their bushy tails thrown over them like fur wraps, they had slept in the snow-drift round his camp-fires. They seemed to him like human beings, his little brothers. As he is fond of saying, "Dogs are much nicer than a Ford car. A Ford car can't come and kiss you good-night."

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Since it was late April, and the melting ice might mean a soaking any moment, Grenfell carried a spare outfit—a change of clothes, an oilskin suit, snowshoes, an axe, a rifle, a compass. He knew there was no place to stop and get any of these things if he should lose them. The most daring skipper of a boat or driver of a sled along the coast, the Doctor takes no chances when it comes to his equipment.

Though the messengers had broken the trail on the up journey, they preferred to fall in behind the Doctor on the down trip. They knew that he would want to travel like the wind. They felt a certain security and comfort in letting him take the lead. It relieved them of a lot of responsibility for setting the course. There are always people traveling in Grenfell's wake who are willing to let him make the hard choices and take the daring chances. But a good reason for Grenfell's going first this time was that his picked team of young, strong, spry dogs were hustlers, whom it would be impossible to hold back, and the other dogs were heavier and slower.

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Although Grenfell in the twenty miles before nightfall twice called a halt, the slower team behind him was unable to catch up. He reached a small hamlet and had given his eager dogs their supper of two fish apiece, and was gathering the people together for prayers when the second team overtook him.

In the night the weather changed. The wind began to blow from the northeast; a fog set in, with rain. The snow became mushy, to make hard going, and out in the bay the sea was ugly, with the water heaving the ice-pans about. The plan for the coming day was to make a run of forty miles, the first ten miles a short cut across a bay, over the salt-water ice.

Grenfell did not want to get too far from his convoy, and so he let the second team start on ahead, with a lead of two hours.

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He told them just where to call a halt and wait for him. There was a log hut, or "tilt," at the half-way point. Since there was no one living on that part of the very lonely coast-line, this hut was a refuge fitted out with anything that a shipwrecked mariner or a benighted traveler by land might need—dry clothes, food, and medicines.

"You go to the hut and wait there till I come," were the Doctor's final orders.

The rain began to fall, and when Grenfell got under way it was such treacherous going that he couldn't cut straight across the bay as he wished, but had to keep closer to the land. The sea had risen in its wrath and thrown the pans of ice about, so

that there were wide spaces between, and half a mile out from the shore it was clear water.

But far out from the shore there was an island, and by a daring series of jumps across the cracks,—the dogs as buoyant as their master, hauling the sled as though it were a load of feathers,—Grenfell reached the island, and made the dogs rest—a hard thing to do—while he looked about him to see where the next lap of the journey would take him and them. [169]

It was four miles, he knew, to a rocky headland over yonder, if he ventured out on that uncertain field of ice. That would save several miles over the more prudent course alongshore.

As far as he could see, the ice looked as though it would hold up the sled. It was rough—but a hardened voyager with a dog-team is accustomed to a hummocky road. It looked as if the sea had torn it up, as men tear up the paving blocks in a city street, and then thrown the bits together to make a hard, cohesive mass that men and dogs could surely trust. The strong wind seemed to have packed it in and the intense cold of the night, he supposed, had frozen it solid.

The wind died down, and Grenfell found that he was deep in what is known as "sish"—soft ice as mushy as the name sounds. He compares it to oatmeal, and it must have been many feet deep. There was a thin coating of new ice on top of it, through which the whip-handle easily pierced.

The "sish" ice is composed of the small fragments chipped off the floes after the pounding and grinding between the millstones of the great winds and the heavy seas. The changing breeze now blew from offshore, and instead of packing the ice together it was driving it apart. The packed "slob" was "running abroad," as the fisher-folk say. The ice-pans were so small that there was hardly one as large as a table-top. [170]

By this time the team had come to a halt on one of these tiny pans, and with the other pans floating about as the entire sheet was breaking up the peril was evident. It was not possible to go back—the way was cut off by the widening spaces between the pans. Only about a quarter of a mile was left between their pan and the shore.

Grenfell threw off his oilskins, knelt by the side of the komatik, and ordered the dogs to make for the shore.

It takes a great deal to "rattle" a husky. But the dogs, after about twenty yards of half-wading, half-swimming, were thoroughly frightened. They stopped, and the sled sank into the ice. With the sled in the freezing water, it was necessary for the dogs to pull hard, and now they too began to sink. [171]

Not long before, the father of the boy to whom the Doctor was going was drowned by being tangled in the dog's traces in just such a place as this. To avoid that danger, Grenfell got out his knife, and cut the traces in the water.

But he still kept hold of the leader's trace, which he wound about his wrist.

In the water there was not a piece of ice to be seen in which dogs or driver could put their trust. The dogs were as eager as their master to find something to cling to. Care-free and jolly as they had been hitherto, they knew as well as he that death by drowning stared their little caravan in the face.

About twenty-five yards away there was a big lump of snow, such as children put up when they mean to make a snow-man. The leading dog, "Brin," as he wallowed about managed to reach it, at the end of his long trace of about sixty feet. "Brin" had black marks on his face, which made it look as though he were laughing all the time, like one who finds this world a grand, good joke. When he clambered out on the hummock he shook his coat and turned round and gazed calmly at his master. [172]

"He seemed to be grinning at me," says the Doctor.

But it was no laughing matter for the other dogs, floundering about.

Grenfell hauled himself along toward "Brin" by means of the trace still attached to his wrist. But suddenly "Brin" stepped out of his harness, and then the Doctor found himself sprawling and struggling in the water, with no means of getting to the place where "Brin" had found temporary safety.

Grenfell thought this time it was all over. He had looked Death in the eyes before, but Death had decided to go by. This time, it did not seem possible to escape. He did not feel any great alarm—in fact, he became drowsy, and thought how easy it would be just to fall asleep and forget everything, as the icy water chilled and numbed his senses. He was like the weary traveler who drops into the snow-bank, on whom the torpor steals by slow degrees.

Suddenly Grenfell caught sight of a big dog that had gone through the ice and was pulling the trace after him, in a desperate effort to reach the hummock on which "Brin" was sitting. Grenfell grabbed the trace, and hauled himself along after the animal. He calls this "using the dog as a bow anchor." [173]

But the other dogs were following this poor beast's example, and they crowded and jostled the Doctor so that it was hard for him to hold on. One of them, in fact, got on

his shoulder, very much as a drowning man in his desperation will throw his arms round the neck of someone who tries to rescue him, and drag him under. This pushed Grenfell still deeper into the ice, and it was a question whether his energy would hold out in that frigid water.

As they say on the football field, he now had only three yards to gain, and by a mighty effort he drew himself past his living anchor and climbed up on the piece of slob ice. He rested a moment to draw breath, and then began to haul his beloved dogs one after another up to a place beside him. They swam and panted through the lane in the ice that he had broken, and seemed to understand perfectly that their master was trying to save them, even though they had lost their heads and had almost drowned him.

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It would not do for them all to remain on that small, treacherous lump of ice. It might break in two at any moment with the combined weight of dogs and driver. It was slowly drifting with the tidal current out to the open sea, where all hope would be lost. Grenfell knew that if he were to save his team and himself—they were always first in his thoughts—he must act instantly.

He stood up to survey the scene. About twenty yards away there was a good-sized pan floating about in the "sish" like a raft, such as that on which Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer floated down the Mississippi. To reach that raft would at any rate be to postpone death for a little while. But it was taking too much of a risk, to try to get from the little cake to the big one without a life line. How was he to make such a line, and then how was he to get it across the wide space between?

Fortunately when the Doctor cut the dogs away from the sled he had not lost his knife: he had tied it to the back of one of the dogs. There it was still. It was the work of a joyful moment to untie it, and he fell to work cutting from the dogs' harness the sealskin traces that remained and stringing those together to make two long lines. His overalls, coat, hat and gloves were gone, but he still had his sealskin hip-boots. He took these off, shook them free from ice and water, and tied them on the backs of "Brin" and another dog. Then he fastened the lines to the two animals, tying the near ends round his wrists.

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"Hist!" he shouted—the signal to go on: but the dogs refused to budge. They were setting their own wits against their master's. Such dogs believe they know their business. They saw no proper place to go to. Why should they dash into the icy water for the sake of reaching another pan not much bigger than their own? If it were land—that would be another story. So they must have reasoned, in their doggish fashion. They had been devoted and obedient—but there were limits even to their faith.

Grenfell three times threw the dogs off the Pan. Each time they struggled back upon it: and their master could not blame them.

"This is really the end!" Grenfell told himself. "We never shall get out of this!"

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Just as a boy sometimes comes up to the scratch where a man has failed, a small dog may play the hero when a big one quits. That was the case here. The smallest dog of the lot, "Jack," came to the rescue. He was so small that he was not taken very seriously for his hauling power—but when it came to hunting, he was there with all four paws, and he was used as retriever when Dr. Grenfell went out with a gun. Here was a chance for him to show the stuff that was in his black, rough hide.

"Jack!" said the Doctor. "Hist! Hist!" And he pointed to the other pan, and threw a piece of ice in that direction.

"Jack" understood and instantly obeyed. In little more time than it takes to tell of it, his furry paws had taken his small body through and over the rotten mush. Since he was the lightest of the lot, he scarcely sank below the surface as he went. "His frame was little but his soul was large."

When he got there he turned about, wagging his tail as a flag-signal, his tongue lolling out, his whole attitude seeming to say, "Well, aren't you pleased with me?"

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"Lie down!" shouted Grenfell, and the dog at once obeyed—"a little black fuzz ball on the white setting."

That was an object lesson to "Brin" and the other dog. The next time he threw them off they made directly for the other pan. It was a hard fight to get there, but they must have said to themselves: "What dog has done, dog can do. If that little fellow can turn the trick, so can we." So they plashed and floundered through, their heads barely above the waves, and the salt spray in their eyes, till they had carried the lines across. The traces had been knotted securely under their bellies, so they could not come off when the Doctor pulled with the weight of his body against the lines.

He took as much of a run as he could get in the few feet from side to side of the pan, and dived headlong into the "slob." It was a long, hard pull, but the lines held, and the dogs too, so that presently he found himself scrambling up beside them on the other pan where they were waiting with little "Jack."

To his crushing disappointment, Dr. Grenfell found that the place where he now clung was if anything worse than the spot he had left. By this time all the other dogs

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but one poor fellow had made the distance, and were beside him, their eyes asking the piteous questions their tongues could not utter.

"What does this mean, master? What are you going to do with us now? Which is the way home? Why don't we start? How soon are we going to have our suppers?"

The pan was sinking: it could not hold them all. They must get off it at the earliest possible moment. This pan was nearer the shore than the one they had left, but all the time an offshore wind was shoving the entire ice-pack steadily out toward the open sea, so that, like the frog in the well, for every foot they gained they were losing two or three. All this time, Grenfell was longing for a chance to swim ashore—and the dogs would have followed him in that. Grenfell doesn't in the least mind a bath in icy waters. I remember one nipping day on the *Strathcona* I came out on deck to find that he had just been taking his bath in the open by emptying the bucket over himself in the biting wind. "You could have had one too," he said, "but I've just lost the bucket overboard." I wonder that he didn't dive for it, as he dived for the cricket-ball on that earlier occasion.

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It was impossible to swim ashore from the pan—because there was that slushy "sish" filling all the gaps. The tiny table-top on which they were now crowded together measured about ten by twelve feet. It was not even solid ice—it was more like a great snowball loosely packed by the cold wind—and at any moment under the extra strain of the weight of men and dogs it might break up and let them all down into a watery grave. As the wind became more brisk and the sea grew rougher, the pan rocked about and bent and swayed, and the risk of its parting in the middle increased.

The pan headed toward a rocky point, where heavy surf was breaking: and a hope sprang up in Grenfell's heart that he might get near enough to swim ashore after all. But then the worst possible thing happened, short of an utter break-up. The pan hit a rock, and a large piece of it broke off. Then the rest of it swung round and the wind took hold of it, like a fiend alive, and started to push it steadily out to sea again.

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The sea has been compared to a cat, which in calm weather purrs at your feet and in a storm will reveal its true nature and crack your bones and eat you. Now it was cruelly teasing Grenfell and his four-footed comrades as a cat tortures a mouse before it kills. The last hope seemed to have gone—unless someone by a miracle should pass along the shore and spy that tiny object on the horizon, and summon others to help him launch a boat to the rescue.

But no one lives on the shore of that huge bay. The other sled by now was so far ahead that it would be a long time before those with it could come back to make a search, even after they felt sufficiently alarmed to do so.

Cold and keen and marrow-searching, the brutal west wind—the worst of all in the spring of the year—moaned and whistled over the ice to the benumbed Doctor, and an additional exasperation was the fact that the komatik, from which he had been compelled to cut the dogs loose, had bobbed up to the surface again, and could now be seen not fifty yards away, but just as un-get-atable as if it were a mile off. There it stood to tantalize him, in the slush, and he knew that it had aboard everything he now wanted so acutely. There were dry clothes, wood and matches to make a signal fire, food and even a thermos bottle with hot tea!

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The slender hope of being seen from the shore diminished as Grenfell thought of how inconspicuous he was, nearly naked, his dogs about him. Crusoe alone on his isle of solid ground was a king of space by comparison. Should he escape it would be the first time that a man adrift on the offshore ice had come ashore to tell the tale. Nearly anybody gazing seaward—even if anybody saw—would say: "Oh, that's just a piece of kelp or a bush!" The wisecracks refuse to be fooled by such sights. They are like the Arabs of the desert, who refuse to get excited over a mirage.

That he might not freeze to death before he drowned, Grenfell cut off those long top boots down to their moccasin feet, split the legs, and managed to tie them together into a makeshift for a jacket which at least protected his back from the fiercest biting of the wind.

Presently as Grenfell watched the widening interval between himself and the island he had left so comfortably a few hours before, he saw the komatik with its load up-end and vanish through the ice, as though it grew tired of waiting for him to make a try for it. The disappearance was one more sign of the general break-up of the ice on all sides of him, as his frail ice-pan neared the wide-open mouth of the bay. The white plain over which he had trudged from the island with the dogs had almost disappeared. The island was evidently surrounded on all sides by water and "sish," so that even if he could get back to it he would be cut off from the shore.

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There were eight dogs on the pan. Slowly, slowly he was making up his mind to the hardest of all decisions. It was a choice between his own life and the lives of some of the animals he loved so well.

## X

## A FIGHT WITH THE SEA

No boat could come out from the shore through the sort of sea that was now running. The great pans of ice, rising and falling on the waves, were crashing and charging into the cliffs alongshore "like medieval battering-rams," and the white spray dashed high against the rocks with a sullen roar as of artillery. It would be necessary to skin some of the dogs and use their pelts for blankets, in order to escape freezing in the terrible cold of the oncoming night. Imagine how hard it was for their master to choose which should be slain!

He had the sealskin traces wound about his waist, to keep the hungry animals from devouring them. He now undid them, and made a hangman's noose. This he slipped over the head of one of the dogs. Then he threw the animal on his back, put his foot on his neck, and stabbed him to the heart. The struggling creature bit his master—a deep gash—in the leg, but Grenfell kept the knife in the dog till the poor beast lay still, that the blood might not spurt out and freeze on the skin. Two more animals were put to death in the same fashion, and one of them bit him again in the death throes. So violent was the battle that the Doctor fully expected the pan to break up as they fought, and let them all into the sea.

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With the strange indifference that "huskies" generally show to the fate of their fellows, the other dogs were licking their coats and trying to dry themselves. The Doctor had done his best to stifle the cries of the slain animals, for these would have roused them to a frenzy and led them to fall upon the under dog, and upon one another as well, and a general fight at such close quarters would have been disastrous.

He found himself envying the dead dogs, and wondering whether, when they came to the open sea, it would not be better to use his knife on himself than to die, inch by agonizing inch, in the freezing water.

When the dogs were skinned, and the harness had been used to lash the skins together, it was nearly dark, and they were fully ten miles out at sea.

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To the north he spied a solitary light, twinkling from the village he had left in the morning. He thought of the fishermen sitting down to their tea: and he knew they would not think of him as in danger, for he had told them he would not be back for three days. And all the "liveyeres" think of Grenfell as a man who knows the coast so well, and the ways of getting about, that he is far more likely to give help than to ask it of them.

He had unraveled a small piece of rope, and soaked this in fat from the entrails of a dog, thinking he might make a torch of it. But his match-box, which he wore on a chain, had leaked. Fishermen will tell you how hard it is to find a match-box that will not let in water: I prize one I have carried a great many years, which seems to be waterproof. I wish Grenfell had had it then. The matches were a pulp. Nevertheless Grenfell kept them, thinking that they might be dried and usable by morning. Every now and then, by a sort of mechanical instinct, the Doctor would rise to his full height and wave his hands toward the land, in the forlorn hope of being seen through a powerful glass.

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There was nothing but his hands to wave. He dared not let his shirt fly as a flag: it would not do to take it off too long at any time, because of the piercing cold.

Nor would it be safe to pile up snow from the pan to break the force of the wind, for the pan might give way if it were thinned out anywhere. So he placed the dog-skins in a pile, sat on them, and changed his clothes, wringing them out, and flapping them in the wind, then putting them by turns against his body. The exercise at least postponed the coming of the last hour of all.

The moccasins let the water through so easily that it was impossible for him to dry his feet. Then he remembered a trick of the Lapps, who had been brought over to care for the reindeer which Grenfell was striving to introduce at St. Anthony in place of the dogs. The Lapps have a way of tying grass in pads about their feet. On the harness of the dogs there was flannel, to make it soft where it rubbed against the flanks. The Doctor cut off the flannel, raveled out the rest of the rope, stuffed his shoes with the fragments of rope, and wound the flannel about his legs like puttees. If the situation were not so serious, he might have laughed at the outfit in which he faced the night wind, for the Oxford University running trunks and the Richmond Football Club red, yellow and black stockings were garments he had worn twenty

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years before and had recently found in a box of old clothes.

What was left over of the rope was stuffed inside the flannel shirt and the trunks, which with the stockings and sweater vest made up the Doctor's complete costume. Then he made "Doc," his biggest dog, lie down, so that he might curl up beside him and use him as a kind of fireless stove. He wrapped the three skins round his body, and—strange to say—fell asleep. One hand kept warm against "Doc's" hide, but the other froze,—since the Doctor had lost his gloves. Even so, Edward Whymper camping out on the volcano Cotopaxi in Ecuador found his tent too hot on the side next the volcano and too cold on the other side.

Grenfell awoke, his teeth chattering and his body shivering. He thought for an instant he was looking at the sunrise, but it was the moon, and he guessed it must be about half an hour after midnight. "Doc" didn't at all relish having his slumber disturbed. He was warm and comfortable, and he growled his remonstrance, deep down in his throat, till he discovered that it was his master and not another dog against his cushioned ribs.

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For a great mercy, the wind died down, and stopped pushing the ice-pan out into the dreaded North Atlantic. Just out yonder, not sixty feet away, was a cake of ice much bigger than his own. It would have made a fine raft for them all: and if only they could have reached it, Grenfell was sure he could have held out for two or three days. He could have killed off the dogs one by one, eaten the flesh, and drunk the warm blood. The Eskimo would think such a meal luxury. On his little pan, the effort to kill each dog would mean the risk of drowning every time.

At daybreak, Grenfell remembered, men would be starting from Goose Cove with their sleds to go twenty miles to a parade of Orangemen. With this thought in his mind he fell asleep again. Then he woke with a sharp realization of the fact that he must have some kind of flag with which to signal them. He made up his mind that as soon as it was daylight he would use his shirt for a flag—but the pole was lacking. So in the dark he wrenched the bodies of the dead dogs apart—an extremely difficult task with the tough, frozen muscles and fibres. But he made what he says was "the heaviest and crookedest flagpole it has ever been my lot to see," lashing the bones together with his bits of rope and the remains of the seal traces.

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By this time he was almost starving, since he had not yet been able to bring himself to the point of devouring his comrades. His last meal had been porridge and bread and butter, nearly twenty-four hours before. Round one leg was a rubber band which had replaced a broken garter. He chewed on this constantly, and somehow it seemed to help him from being overcome with hunger and thirst.

No more welcome sight—except that of men to the rescue—could there have been than the face of the rising sun. When he took off his shirt to run it up as a flag, he found that it was not so cold as it had been. His skeleton flagpole as he tried to wave it bent and buckled—but he found that by means of it he could raise his shirt-flag three or four feet over his head, and the least additional height meant much to his slim chance of being spied from the shore.

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The wind, too, had been carrying him back toward the shore, at a rugged point called Ireland Head. Unhappily for the man at sea, the little fishing-village there was deserted in winter: the people had shifted, bag and baggage, to another settlement where they could get teaching for their children and see more of other people.

Now it settled down to a severe endurance test. If Grenfell had been fresh with comfortable sleep, and well-fed, it might not have been so serious a business to keep that gruesome "flag" of his waving aloft to attract the keen eye of someone ashore. But as it was, he must keep the terribly heavy banner of dog-pelts swinging to and fro with his strength at a low ebb, and hope barely alive in his heart. Again, his imagination began to play cruel tricks with him. He thought he saw men moving: but they were trees blown by the wind. Then to his joy it seemed that a boat was approaching: he thought he saw it rising and falling on the waves, as the oars drove it onward. He wanted the boat to come so much that the wish was father to the thought. Instead—it was only the glitter of the sun on a block of ice bobbing up and down.

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Whenever the Doctor sat down to rest, faithful old "Doc" would lick his face, and then roam about the ice-pan, coming back again and again to where the Doctor sat, his eyes and his ears asking: "Well, why aren't we starting? What is the matter? Isn't it time to be under way?" On a sunny day on the trail amid ice and snow the "husky" seeks some good reason for not being in the traces, tugging and hauling with his mates. The other dogs, following his example, were roaming about, and sometimes they would bite at the bodies of the slain dogs, wondering, no doubt, how soon their master would hand out to them the square meal of fish or seal-meat to which they were accustomed.

For his own midday meal, Grenfell had begun to plan another killing—that of one of the bigger dogs, whose blood he would drink. Nansen had to do the same thing, according to the story told in his book "Farthest North," which Grenfell had been reading only a few days before. It might be a hard battle to conquer one of the big

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dogs, as he himself grew weaker. But fear had not once entered the Doctor's mind. His uppermost sensation now was a desire to sleep—and if death came after that, it would only be the answer to a question he had many times asked himself.

He looked at the precious matches, to see if they were dry. The heads were a paste, except the blue tips of three or four wax matches. If the latter could be dried, they might be used. Once I gave Dr. Grenfell a bottle of the same kind of matches, and he said: "I'd rather have those than a five-dollar bill." If no air is stirring they will burn with a tall, strong flame for a minute or more, clean down to the bottom.

He laid the matches out to dry, and looked about for a piece of transparent ice which would do for a burning glass. With the tow he had stuffed into his leggings, and the fat from the slain dogs, he thought he could produce a plume of smoke to be seen from the land, if he could get a light. He found a piece of ice which he thought would serve his purpose, and was just about to wave his "flag" again when he saw something that made his heart stand still for an instant.

Was it—could it be—the glitter of an oar-blade rising and falling?

But no—it could not be. It was not clear water, but the "slob ice," probably too heavy for a rowboat to pierce, which lay between the pan and the beach. There had been no smoke-signal from the land, no gun discharged, no fire kindled: one of these things would be sure to happen, had anybody caught sight of him or of the unwieldy banner that he had raised aloft so many times.

By this time Grenfell was partly snow-blind, for he had lost his dark glasses. As he raised his "flag" again, however, it seemed to him that the glitter was more distinct. It seemed to be coming nearer. With his hopes now mounting, he lifted the skins as high as he could, and waved with all his might. Now he could see not only a white oar-blade, but a black hull. If the pan would hold together an hour more, his rescue was assured.

Queer tricks the mind of a man will play at such a time. Our boys in the war thought so much of saving helmets, pistols and belt-buckles from the battlefields that it has been said the war was fought for souvenirs. Even in the hospital where they lay suffering with the most dreadful wounds, they were more anxious for those precious relics than they were for their own recovery.

And so, coming back out of the jaws of icy death, Grenfell was thinking: "I wonder what trophies I can save, to take home and put up in my study." He had a picture in his mind's eye of the dog-bone flagstaff, hanging over the big fireplace in the living-room at St. Anthony. (Later, the dogs "beat him to it," and devoured the bones with relish, as a child would eat candy.) Then he thought how picturesque those queer puttees would look, hanging on the wall with snowshoes and lynx-skins. The "burning-glass" was forgotten where it lay. As a reception-committee of one, rehearsing the speech of welcome, Grenfell roamed to and fro, with the restlessness of a caged leopard in the Zoo at feeding-time. They couldn't very well miss him now—but he could remember harrowing tales he had read when he was a boy, of a man on a desert island who scanned the horizon many days for a sail. Then a ship came along, missed the frantic watcher, and sailed away, leaving him to utter despair. He did not intend that this should happen to him now. To his delight, he could see that the rescuers by this time were waving back, in answer to his signals. Presently he could hear them shouting: "Don't get excited! Keep on the pan where you are!"

They were far more excited than he was: for it now seemed as natural to Grenfell to be saved as, a little while before, it had seemed to perish where so many good men had been swallowed up before him as they went to their business in great waters. Nearer and nearer they came, plying the oars valiantly, till the snub nose of the boat was thrust into the soft edge of the pan, as a dog's muzzle is thrust into a man's hand.

The man in the bow jumped from the boat and took both of the Doctor's hands. Neither said a word. At such moments men do not care much to speak. You remember how Stanley hunted Africa for Livingstone, and in the thrilling moment when at last the two men came together Stanley simply walked up to the missionary, put out his hand, and said: "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

But the tears rolled down the cheeks of the honest fisherman, despite his silence.

The boatmen had brought a bottle of warm tea, and one can imagine how much good it did Grenfell after going without food and drink so long a time. The dogs were put in the boat, and strong arms drove the vessel shoreward. Five big, stalwart Newfoundlanders were at the oars,—all of them devoted to the Doctor, and rejoicing that they had come in time to save him. How often, in a dark hour, he had proved himself their friend! He had turned out in the dead of night to help them and their families: they knew he was on his way to aid one of their number now. There was nothing they would not do for him: it would be a small return for all he had done to earn their gratitude already.

It wasn't all plain rowing, by any means. Now and then the boat would get jammed in the ice-pack so that they all must clamber out and lift the stout vessel over the pans. Sometimes men had to stand in the bows and force the pans apart, using their



oars after the fashion of crowbars. For a long time as they fought onward very little was said. They were saving their breath for their work. But as they rested on their oars and mopped their brows with their tattered sleeves, Grenfell asked: "How under the sun did you happen to be out in the ice in this boat?"

They said that on the night before four men had gone out on a headland to get some harp seals which they had left to freeze there during the winter. As they were starting home, one of them thought he saw an ice-pan with something on it, drifting out to sea. When they got back to the village, and told their neighbors, the latter said it must be just the top of a tree. There was one man in the village who had a good spy-glass.

He left his supper instantly, and ran out to the edge of the cliffs. Yes, he said, there was a man out yonder on the ice. He could see him wave his arms—and he declared it must be the Doctor, who had started out that morning.

Even though night was falling, and the wind was coming on, they wanted to launch a boat, but it would have been no use: and they decided to wait until morning. The sea was taking up the blocks of ice and hurling them on the beach, just as it used to throw the little fishing-smacks over the sea-wall at Grenfell's boyhood home.

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Messengers went up and down the coast: look-outs were stationed: many were watching, and some were weeping, all the while that Grenfell thought nobody saw him and that he was waving in vain.

Before daybreak, these five volunteers had manned the boat. They took an awful risk in such seething waters. Just a little while before, a fisherman's wife said good-bye to her husband and three sons when they started to row out toward a ship that was signaling with flags for a pilot. All four were drowned in spite of their cool and skilful seamanship.

The people had come from far and near to see the landing. They rushed into the surf to be the first to shake the Doctor's hands. They seized them and shook them so heartily that he did not find out till later that they had been badly frost-bitten. It was not a pretty object the villagers greeted. Says the Doctor: "I must have been a weird sight as I stepped ashore, tied up in rags, stuffed out with oakum, wrapped in the bloody skins of dogs, with no hat, coat, or gloves besides, and only a pair of short knickers. It must have seemed to some as if it were the old man of the sea coming ashore."

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WHO SAID "HALT"?

ToList

Copious draughts of hot tea, and almost equally liquid Irish stew went to the right spot. Grenfell as a veteran was wise enough not to eat too much all at once. That is the danger, after one has been without food so long.

They dressed Grenfell in the warm clothes fishermen wear, and hauled him back to the St. Anthony hospital. That ride was no fun at all. The jolting racked his weary bones and his feet were so frozen that he could not walk. There, two days later, they brought to him the boy on whom he was to have operated at his own home. The operation was a complete success.

The other dogs lived long and pulled the Doctor many leagues on errands of mercy: but he mourned the loss of the three who perished that he might survive. I have seen on the glass-enclosed veranda of the Doctor's home at St. Anthony the brass tablet with its inscription:

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*TO THE MEMORY OF  
Three Noble Dogs  
MOODY*

WATCH  
SPY  
*Whose Lives Were Given  
For Mine on the Ice  
April 21st, 1908  
Wilfred Grenfell  
St. Anthony*

The men who came to the rescue wanted no reward. To have the Doctor back in their midst again was all they desired. But the Doctor insisted on giving them tokens of his gratitude. As George Andrews said:

"'E sent us watches, an' spy-glasses, an' pictures o' himself made large an' in a frame. George Read an' me 'ad th' watches an' th' others 'ad th' spy-glasses. 'Eere's th' watch. It 'as 'In memory o' April 21st' on it, but us don't need th' things to make we remember it, though we're wonderful glad t' 'ave 'em from th' Doctor."

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XI

ToC

THE KIDNAPPERS

One day, as Grenfell was about to leave northern Labrador in his little steamer the *Strathcona*, a man came aboard with trouble in his eyes. It was the good-hearted Hudson's Bay agent.

"Doctor," he pleaded, "old Tommy Mitchell's been comin' in every Saturday for two months, tryin' to get somethin' for his family. I've been givin' him twenty pounds of flour a week for himself and wife and six children. That's every shred they've got to live on. He hasn't a salmon or a codfish to give me, and he was in debt when I came here. What'll we do?"

The *Strathcona* had steam up and was whistling to the Doctor to come aboard. On the Labrador coast you must leave promptly or the sea may punish you for the delay.

"See if you can't stop at the island off Napaktok Point, Doctor. They're livin' out there with nothin' but their own hats to cover 'em—if they've got any."

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"I will," the Doctor promised, and was off.

When they came near the island, the dory was lowered, and Grenfell and his mate rowed toward the rocks.

"Can you see anything that looks like a house, Bill? You have better eyes than mine."

"No, Doctor. I been a-lookin'. I sees—nothing."

"I didn't expect you to do as well as that," said the Doctor. "But keep on looking. And call out when you see anything."

They rowed almost round the island, against a stiff head wind.

Each time they passed cove or headland they thought, "Well now, surely it must be just around the next point."

"There's a smoke, sir!" cried the sharp-eyed Bill.

Sure enough—there was a tiny wisp of smoke, trickling up the face of the rocks.

But no hut was to be seen.

They landed, and pulled the boat out on the beach.

Then they went toward the smoke. The fire was built among flat stones out in the open.

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A hollow-cheeked woman sat with a poor, scrawny scrap of a baby on her arm. In her other hand she held what looked like an old paint can, and she was stirring some thin sort of gruel in it, in spite of the weight of the baby on her arm. It was not heavy, poor little creature!

"Good-morning. Where's your tent?" Grenfell asked, cheerily.

"There she is."

The woman pointed with the gruel stick to a mass of canvas and matting, plastered in patches with mud against the face of the cliff.

"Why do you cook in the open?"

"'Cos us hasn't got no stove."

"Where's Tom?"

"He's away. He's gone off wid Johnnie, tryin' to shoot a gull. Here, Bill, run an' fetch yer dad, an' tell him Dr. Grenfell wants 'un."

A half-naked little boy about nine years old darted off into the scrub bushes.

"What's the matter with baby?" Dr. Grenfell inquired kindly, as the infant clasped his finger and looked up into his mild face. [204]

"Hungry," was the mother's sufficient answer. "I ain't got nothin' to give him." Her lip trembled, and she turned her head away.

The baby kept up a constant whimpering, like a lamb very badly scared.

"It's half-starved," said the Doctor. "What do you give it?"

"Flour, and berries," was the response. "I chews the loaf first—or else it ain't no good for him."

Then a little girl, of perhaps five, and a boy of—maybe—seven, shyly came from behind the tent, where they had fled wild-eyed and hid when the strangers came. They had nothing on: but they were brown as chestnuts and fat as butter.

It was snowing, and the snow had driven them toward the poor, mean fire where mother sat with the baby.

"Glad to see the other children are fat," said the Doctor.

"They bees eatin' berries all the time," was the mother's answer. Then suddenly the full force of their plight swept all other thoughts out of her mind. [205]

"What's t' good of t' government?" she cried. "Here is we all starvin'. And it's ne'er a crust they gives yer. There bees a sight o' pork an' butter in t' company's store. But it's ne'er a sight of 'im us ever gets. What are them doin'? T' agent he says he can't give Tom no more'n dry flour, an' us can't live on dat."

Then a bent and weary figure shuffled on the scene. It was Tom, the poor husband and father. He had an old and rusty, single-barreled muzzle-loading gun, and he was carrying a dead sea-gull by the tip of one of its wings. Two small boys trudged along after him, their faces old before their time. They stood looking at the Doctor in wonderment.

"Well, Tom, you've had luck!" was Grenfell's greeting. He explains that he meant Tom was very lucky not to have the gun open at the wrong end and discharge its contents into his face!

"It's only a kitty," the hunter answered, sadly. "An' I been sittin' out yonder on the p'int all day." A kitty is a little gull.

"Your gun isn't heavy enough to kill the big gulls, I suppose." [206]

"No, Doctor. I hain't much powder—and ne'er a bit o' shot. I has to load her up most times with a handful o' they round stones. T' hammer don't always set her off, neither. Her springs bees too old, I reckon." He fumbled with the trigger in a way that led Grenfell to ask him to let him hold the gun instead. Tom passed it over, and Grenfell held it till their talk was over.

Tom, who was part Eskimo, was a very poor business man. He had been a slave of the "truck system" by which a man brings his furs or his fish to a trader, exchanges them for supplies, and is always in debt to the storekeeper who takes pains to see that it shall be so.

"Tom," the Doctor told him, "I want to help you. Winter is coming on, and here you are with a handful of flour and a sea-gull, and no proper shelter from the cold. You have too many children to keep. I think you'd better pass over to me for a while your two little boys, 'Billy' and 'Jimmy,' and the little girl. I'll feed them and clothe them and have them taught till they are big enough to come back and help you. All the time they are with me I'll do all I can to help you along. If you have them here—they'll certainly starve. The snow is beginning to cover up the berries already. And that's about all you've got to feed them." [207]

Poor Tom couldn't think.

He merely stood there, looking first at the sea, then at the sky, then at the Doctor, his mouth wide open.

His wife broke the silence. "D'ye hear, man? T' Doctor wants to take t' children. I says 'tis the gover'ment should feed 'em here. I wouldn't let no children o' mine go, I wouldn't." Saying which, she held her sickly infant tighter.

The talk to and fro went on for a long time. It didn't get much of anywhere. On the part of the fond parents it consisted largely of what the government ought to do.

Grenfell patiently explained that the government was a long way off, and couldn't answer before Christmas if it answered at all.

All this time Father Tom stood there, dumb as a stalled ox, trying to see daylight by which to make up his mind. Evidently his wife was the real man of the family.

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"Why doesn't youse say something?" she broke out at last. "Bees you a-goin' to let t' Doctor have youse childer?"

Tom looked more distracted than ever, and it didn't help much when he took off his hat and let cold air blow on his heated brain as he rummaged with his finger in the dense thatch on his head.

Then Tom said: "I suppose he knows."

"Yes," Dr. Grenfell said. "I think you'd better let me have Billy and Jimmy for a while."

There was more talk, and finally the wife gave way. "Well, youse can take Billy, I suppose, if you wants un."

All this time the mate had said nothing. Big and burly as he was, there were tears in his eyes; he had a kind heart, for there were many little ones to feed and clothe in his own household. He thought it was time to settle the dispute.

For he heard the *Strathcona's* whistle blowing impatiently, warning the men ashore that the sea was rising and the rocks in the uncertain weather meant danger. The little steamer, while the palaver went on, had been following alongshore as they went round the island. The snow was getting thicker, and the wind was tipping the waves with whitecaps. They must be off without further parley.

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So the mate, not wasting words, suddenly grabbed Billy under one long, strong arm.

Billy kicked and howled and struggled. Billy had no idea of that delightful home for the children at St. Anthony. He would have cried to go there, if he had known what playmates he would have, what diverting games to play.

Billy was captured "for good and all." But Dr. Grenfell knew that it wouldn't do for Billy to be toted off alone.

He was bound he'd get another child,—for he knew he was right, not merely because of the good he could do the children, but because of the hopeless situation of the whole family if they all remained on this miserable shelf of rock in the open Atlantic.

"Now, Mrs. Mitchell," he coaxed, "you're going to let Jimmy come too, to keep Billy company."

She shook her head in defiance. Her mind was made up. Billy could go—but he was the only one. That was flat and final.

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Then Tom broke his silence once more: "I says he knows what's for t' best."

The *Strathcona's* whistle was petulantly crying: "Come on! We really must be starting! If you don't come aboard right away, we may be wrecked. Really, you must think of your crew. It isn't fair to let us run this risk, with the barometer falling, and the wind like this."

Dr. Grenfell made every tempting promise he could think of.

"If you'll let me have Jimmy, I'll give your husband a fine gun."

"No," said Mrs. Mitchell. "Ye can't have un."

"I'll send him plenty of powder and shot."

She shook her head.

"I'll give him a letter to the agent so he can get work."

She made an impatient gesture of rejection with her free hand.

The Doctor played a trump card. "You shall have nice dresses for yourself and clothes for all the children."

Mrs. Mitchell yielded. "Well then, ye can have Jimmy. But that's all. That's the very last one."

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"Now, Mrs. Mitchell, be reasonable. Let me have the baby girl, too."

"No."

"Look at your tent. We'll put the little girl in a fine house with a roof on it, and a door that opens and shuts."

"No."

"We'll give her pretty clothes, and teach her from the picture books. She'll come back so you won't know her."

"But I want to know her."

"We'll feed her well, and fill her up till she's as fat as a seal."

"No. That's all. Jimmy and Billy can go. She shall stay here with me."

This time the father kept his face tight closed. There was no help at all from him. He looked the other way, stiff as a seal-gaff.

The mate was already on his way to the beach, with the two naked little boys wriggling under his arms. They were red and blue all over with the stains of the berries—a beautiful sight.

"All right, Mrs. Mitchell. We must go on board now. Come with us, and we'll give you the things." [212]

Then there was joy for that poor, hungry family.

They were all clad in stout clothing that would keep out the wind. A gun was lent to the father, and his shattered fowling-piece was fixed up by the clever engineer, till it was "most as good as new." The eldest boy, John, would be big enough to use it.

The powder and shot were dug out of the lockers: tins of condensed milk were found for the poor little shrimp of a baby. The second axe—a gorgeous prize—went into the growing pile of gifts: soap, needles and thread, shoes and stockings, potatoes, some flour, a package of tea, sugar, and other precious things went into two oilskin bags, and then over the rail into the Mitchells' leaky, tossing boat.

Meanwhile an astonishing change was taking place in the two boys. They were getting a bath on the deck, in the wind and snow, with a bucket and a scrubbing-brush, and after they were dressed they had their hair cut. Their mother stared and stared as the boat rowed away. She could hardly believe they were hers. [213]

"Good-by, Doctor. Thank you."

"Good-by, Mrs. Mitchell. We'll take good care of them."

Father said nothing. He was rowing the boat. But no doubt he was thinking very grateful thoughts.

The boys wept a little, silently as they looked their last on their patched and tattered home. The family they left behind them would make a journey of a hundred miles in that rotten boat to a winter hut on the mainland.

But they looked at each other, washed and dressed, with all that wild hair pruned away—and then they began to laugh at each other as the biggest joke in their short lives.

After they reached St. Anthony and were installed in the Orphanage, they were two of the happiest and most popular lads in the place.

They purred like pleased kittens and lost no chance to show how much they liked the people who were doing so much for them. They studied hard, and put the same driving spirit into play. It could be seen that the little "heathen" of the island were in a fair way to become in time the leaders of men who are needed in all walks of life. Dr. Grenfell felt well rewarded for all the trouble he had taken for Jimmy and Billy and all their family. [214]

The "liveyerers," as those who "live here" are called, may lead rough, hard lives. But for that very reason they welcome books, and music, and all such things.

One day as the *Strathcona* was scudding southward, her sails swelling with a stiff breeze, and the Doctor in a great hurry to reach a distant coast-line and get to work on some patients who had been waiting a long time for him, a little boat came and planted herself directly in the *Strathcona's* path.

The *Strathcona* was a small craft herself, but she seemed a monster compared with this impudent sailboat. The smaller boat had a funny-looking flag, hoisted as a signal to stop. It was almost as if a harbor tug should attempt to hold up the *Leviathan*.

Dr. Grenfell thought it must be some very serious surgical case.

He gave the order at once: "Down sail and heave her to." [215]

Then an old, white-haired man, the only passenger in the small boat, climbed stiffly over the rail, fairly creaking in his joints.

"Good-day," said Grenfell. "What can we do for you? We're in a hurry."

The old man took off his cap, and held it in his hand as he looked down at the deck. Then he mustered up courage to make his request.

"Please, Doctor," he said slowly, "I wanted to ask you if you had any books you could lend me. We haven't anything to read here."

Dr. Grenfell confesses with shame that his first impulse was to return a sharp, vexed answer, and to ask, "What do you mean by holding up my mission boat for such a reason?" But then he realized his mistake. In a way, it would be as good a deed to put a prop under the old man's spirit with a good book as to take off his leg with a knife.

"Haven't you got any books?"

"Yes, Doctor. I've got two, but I've read 'em through, over and over again, long ago."

"What were they?"

"One is the Works of Josephus, sir, and the other is Plutarch's Lives."

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The old fellow was overjoyed when the Doctor put aboard his bobbing skiff a box of fifty books—a mixture of everything from Henty's stories to sermons.

Dr. Grenfell never could tell what a day—or a night—would bring forth. If variety is the spice of life, his life in the north has been one long diet of paprika.

Once late in the fall he was creeping along the Straits of Belle Isle in a motor-boat—the only one in those waters at that time.

It broke down, as the best of motor-boats sometimes will, and the tidal current, with that brutal habit which tidal currents have, began to pull the boat on the rocks as with an unseen hand.

They tied all the lines they had together, attached the anchor, and put it overboard.

The water was so deep they could not reach the bottom.

Darkness was shutting down—and it was an awful place to pass the night.

Then a schooner's lights flashed out. "Hurrah!" cried Grenfell's men. "We're all right now!"

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They lashed the hurricane light on their boat-hook and waved it to and fro like mad. They MUST make those fellows on the schooner take notice and stop for them. The sea would probably get them if they failed.

The water was so rough, the night so dark, that even their precious motor-boat was nothing, if only they could clamber aboard that schooner. At almost any time, those Straits offer stretches of the most perilous sailing-water in the world. Sailors who have rounded Cape Horn would say yes to that.

But just then—to their horror, the schooner which had been close to them put about and hurried off like a startled caribou. Soon the powerless motor-boat was left far, far behind, wallowing in the trough of waves much too big for her size.

They shouted with all their might, but the whistling wind threw away their outcry instead of carrying it across the tossing waves, which threatened to swamp the boat at any instant.

They shot off their guns.

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They yelled again.

They lit flares such as are used in the navy for signal lights.

But it was all in vain.

They almost began to believe they had dreamed of rescue—that a phantom ship had come to them in a nightmare.

They waved their hurricane light again and again, as high as they could hold it.

The engineer, a willing amateur, all this while had been toiling away till his hands bled, at his motor, drenched with the spray. He had torn the machinery limb from limb, and patiently refitted the parts. Suddenly one cylinder gave a weak kick, and then came a spasmodic succession of sputters, with long waits between. But with the aid of the oars the boat was now able to make slow and tedious progress in the schooner's wake.

At last—at last—along toward midnight they crept into the harbor where the schooner had also taken refuge.

Tired as they were, they wouldn't turn in at a fisherman's cottage without boarding the ship to rebuke the sailors for their unhandsome behavior.

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How could they leave men in a tiny boat in distress, perhaps to be swamped and to drown in those cruel waters out yonder in the blind dark?

The skipper made solemn reply. "Them cliffs is haunted," he announced. "More'n one light's been seen there than ever any man lit. When us saw youse light flashing round right in on the cliffs, us knowed it was no place for Christian men that time o' night. Us guessed it was just fairies or devils tryin' to toll us in."

Many of the little boats on the Labrador are not fit to spend a night at sea, and often it is an anxious business to get into a safe harbor before sundown. Dr. Grenfell has a reputation as a daredevil skipper, because so often, on an errand of mercy, he has steamed right out in the teeth of the storm when hardened, ancient mariners shook their heads and hugged the land. But the Doctor does not take chances for the sake of the risk itself—his daring always has behind it the good reason that he wants to go somewhere in a great hurry in time of need.

A hundred miles north of Indian Tickle, where there was no light, Grenfell was caught one night when he was coming south with the fishing fleet.

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All of a sudden the fog fell on the whole group of ships like a thick wet blanket, before they could make the harbor. There were many reefs between their position and the open sea: the only thing to do was to anchor then and there. When a rift came in the fog, Dr. Grenfell saw the riding-lights of eleven vessels round about him. A northeaster grew in violence as night came swiftly on, and a heavy sea arose. The ships tugged at their anchors. The great waves swept the decks from end to end.

In the hold of the *Strathcona* were patients lying in the cots, on their way to Battle Harbor Hospital. As the Doctor would say, there was less than an inch of iron between them and eternity.

They were dressed, and the boats were prepared to take them ashore.

One after another in the mad waters the neighbor lights went out. All night the *Strathcona* fought the sea. When day came, only one of the other boats was left—a ship much bigger than the *Strathcona*, named the *Yosemite*. [221]

The *Yosemite* was drifting down upon the smaller vessel, and it seemed as if in a moment more there must be a collision.

But just then the *Yosemite* struck a reef. She turned over on her side. In that position the sea drove the vessel ashore, through the breakers, with the crew clinging to the bridge.

The fact that the *Strathcona* kept steam up and was "steaming to her anchors" all night long had saved her, the only survivor of the entire fleet. Every vessel that went ashore was smashed to kindling.

As they were about to weigh anchor, the main steam pipe began to leak. It was necessary to "blow down" the boilers.

For the whole of that short day the engineers tinkered at the damage, knowing that the lives of all on board might depend on their success ere nightfall.

Suddenly, to the inexpressible relief of everyone, the engineer shouted:

"Right for'ard!"

Then came the sweet music of the engine-room bell, and presently they were under way again, so nightfall found them safe at last in the harbor, with those eleven wrecks pounding on the rocks outside. [222]

Sometimes the fishermen expected miracles of healing. One day a big "husk" of a fisherman clambered aboard, saying that his teeth hurt him.

"Sit down on that wood-pile," said the Doctor.

The man obeyed. The Doctor pried his mouth open, and saw the tooth that was making the trouble. Then he fetched the forceps.

Up started the patient in wide-eyed alarm.

"Bees you a-goin' to haul it, Doctor?"

"Of course I'm going to pull it out. What did you want me to do?"

"I wouldn't have you touch it! Not for all the fish in the sea!"

"Well then, why did you come to me? You're just wasting my time."

"I wanted you to charm her, Doctor."

"But my dear fellow, I'm not an Eskimo medicine-man. I don't know how, and I don't believe in it anyway."

Mr. Fisherman looked very much put out. "I knows why youse won't charm un. It's because I'm a Roman Catholic." [223]

"Nonsense. That wouldn't make the slightest difference. But if you really think it would do any good,—come on, I'll try. Only—you'll have to pay twenty-five cents, just as though I had 'hailed' it."

"That I will, Doctor, and glad to do it. Go ahead!"

He perched on the rail like a great sea-bird. The Doctor to carry out the farce put his finger in the gaping mouth and touched the tooth. While he kept his finger in place he uttered the solemn words:

"Abracadabra Tiddlywinkum Umslopoga."

That last word must have come from a hazy memory of the name of the wonderful big black man in H. Rider Haggard's "Alan Quatermain," who after a long, hard run beside a horse that carries his master, defends a stairway against their enemies and splits a magic stone with an axe and so brings the foe to grief.

At any rate, the combination worked. Grenfell pulled out his finger quickly so that his patient wouldn't bite him. [224]

The fisherman got up in silence. Then he slowly made the circuit of the deck. In the course of the brief journey, he thrust his hand deep into his jeans and pulled out a quarter.

"Thank you, Doctor. Many thanks." He solemnly handed the coin to his benefactor. "All the pain has gone."

Dr. Grenfell stood holding the coin in his hand, wondering how he came to make such a fool of himself, while the fisherman's broad back bent to the oars of the little boat that took him ashore.

A month later, in the same harbor, the same man swung his leg over the rail with a hearty greeting.

"Had any more trouble?" asked the Doctor.

"No—sir! Not an ache out of her since!" came the jovial answer.

The Doctor had much trouble with patients who wanted to drink at one draught all the medicine he gave them. They thought that if a teaspoonful of the remedy was good for you, the whole bottle must be ever so much better.

A haddock's fin-bone was a "liveyere's" charm against rheumatism—but you must get hold of the haddock and cut off the fin before he touches the boat. So you don't often get a fin that is good for anything. [225]

If you want to avoid a hemorrhage, the best plan is to tie a bit of green worsted round your wrist.

Both Protestants and Catholics write prayers on pieces of paper and wear them in little bags about their necks to drive off evil things.

The constant battle against wind and wave develops heroes and heroines, and the tales told of golden deeds such as might earn a Carnegie medal or pension are beyond number.

One man started south for the winter in his fishing-boat, with his fishing partner, his wife, four children and a servant girl. A gale of wind came up. On the Labrador a gale is a gale: they do not use the word lightly. Grenfell tells of a new church that was blown into the sea with its pulpit, pews and communion-table. In a storm like that, the mainsail, jib and mast of this luckless smack went over the side. The boat was driven helplessly before the wind, for three days and nights. Then the wind changed, and they could put up a small foresail, which in two more awful days brought them to the land. But they were running ashore with such violence that they would have been lost beyond a doubt, if six brave "liveyeres" had not put out to rescue them. Their boat was smashed to flinders. [226]

Then they found that all this time they had been going due north, for a hundred and fifty miles. They had to stay till the next summer. Their friends, when they got back to Newfoundland, had given them up for dead.

A fisherman said to Grenfell, in explaining why he couldn't swim: "You see, we has enough o' the water without goin' to bother wi' it when we are ashore." This man had barely escaped drowning on no less than four occasions. Once he saved himself by clinging to a rope with his teeth, after his hands were too numb to serve him, till they hauled him aboard.

The shore of one of the Labrador bays had a total adult population of just one man. As the ice was breaking up in the spring, he had sent his two young sons out on the ice-pans in pursuit of seals.

But the treacherous flooring gave way, and the father from the shore saw his boys struggling in the water. [227]

He tied a long fishing-line round his body, and gave the other end to his daughter. While she held it he crawled out over the pans. Then he jumped into the bitter water, like a deep-sea diver going down to examine a wreck, and stayed between and below the pans till he had recovered both bodies—but the last spark of life was extinct.

Almost under the windows of Dr. Grenfell's hospital at Battle Harbor two men started with sled and dogs to get fire-wood. They were rounding a headland, when the sled went into the water, taking not merely the dogs but the drivers with it. One man got under the ice, and was seen no more. The other clung to the edge of the ice, too weak to crawl out.

His sister saw what happened, and came running over the ice. Men further away who were bringing a boat shouted to her: "For God's sake, don't go near the hole." She did not heed their warning. Instead, she threw herself flat, so as to distribute her weight, and dragged herself along till she was close enough to reach her brother's hand. [228]

She could not quite pull him out. He was so benumbed that he could not help in the rescue. She lifted his body part way over the edge of the ice-sheet and held on.

Nearer and nearer the boat came with the rescuers shouting encouragement. "We're a-comin', girl.' Don't let go!" Her strength was almost gone. But she was bound to be faithful unto death—if the sea claimed her brother it must take her too.

She did not cry out. She wasted no energy in words upon the frosty air. The boat seemed ages in coming, though the rowers plied the oars with might and main.



One of her legs had broken through the ice. At any instant she might find herself struggling in the sea, and her agony of effort would have been in vain.

At what seemed the last second of the last moment for the pair, the brawny arms of the fishermen hauled them over the gunwale.

She told the story simply, and as though it were all in the day's work.

"What made you go on?" Grenfell asked her.

"I couldn't see him drown, could I?" was all her reply.

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## XII

ToC

### WHEN THE BIG FISH "STRIKE IN"

"Doctor, how do you catch the codfish? Do you use a hook and line, the same as father and I do when we go fishing in Long Island Sound?"

The speaker was a New York boy who hadn't been north of Boston, until one summer his father let him go to St. John's for the sea-trip. There by great good luck he ran into the Doctor, who had come from St. Anthony in his little steamer the *Strathcona*.

"You can catch codfish with a hook and line," explained the Doctor, "but it would take too long for the fishermen who have to get their living from the sea.

"Most of the time they use a great big net, called a 'cod-trap.'

"It's like a room of network without a roof. It has a door, and the cod are steered in at the door by another net which reaches from the cod-trap to the rocks."

"I should think the whole business would float away out to sea the minute it got the least bit rough," said Harry.

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"It might," the Doctor admitted. "But you see they have heavy anchors, or they tie big stones to the net at the bottom to hold it down."

"I'd love to see those cod coming in!" exclaimed Harry. "They must push and shove like anything. But what do they want to go in for? I s'pose o' course they must use some kind of bait."

"They use the squid, or octopus," said the Doctor.

"Are those the funny things that wave their arms around and throw out ink when they get mad?" asked Harry.

"Yes."

"Are they very big?"

"They come in all sizes. There's even such a thing as a giant squid. For a long time people laughed at the idea that there was any such monster. They thought he was a myth, like the sea-serpent.

"But one day two fishermen were plying their trade when two great arms rose out of the sea and clasped their boat and tried to drag it under.

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"Luckily, they had a big knife, and they hacked away at the arms till they cut them off.

"The cuttlefish—that's another name for it—made the sea about them as black as tar. But it did not try again.

"They took the arms ashore, and sold them to a man named Dr. Harvey. Everybody had been making fun of Dr. Harvey because he said there was such a thing as the giant squid.

"The Doctor hated strong drink, and so the clerks at the store of Job Brothers here in St. John's were very much surprised when Dr. Harvey rushed in and shouted: 'I want a barrel of rum!'

"Then he told them what he wanted it for—he wanted to send the giant squid to the Royal Society in London. The parts of the arms cut off were nineteen feet long.

"Later on, somebody who heard about it brought him an octopus that was lying dead on the water, whose reach was forty feet from tip to tip."

"How do they catch the octopus for bait?" asked Harry.

"It's exciting work. You see, besides having arms like a windmill, with curious sucking saucers on them, the octopus has a beak like a parrot, with awful teeth, and it can bite like anything.

"You'll see a cluster of rowboats anchored close together, and the fishermen are jiggling up and down a little bright red leaden weight, bristling with spikes.

"Suddenly there's a stir. The squids have come rushing in, and they bite at those jiggers like a terrier after a rat.

"When the squids get those spiked weights in their mouths and are being hauled aboard—look out!

"All of a sudden—just the way people squirt things in the movies—they shoot out jets of ink at the fishermen.

"It stings like anything if it gets into your eyes and it ruins your clothes."

"How much do the squid cost when you buy them for bait?" asked Harry, who had a practical mind.

"Fifteen or twenty cents a hundred for the little ones."

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"That isn't much for all that work," said Harry.

Dr. Grenfell smiled. "You'll find that the fishermen do lots of hard work for very little pay, Harry," he answered.

"What other kind of bait do they use for the cod?"

"Caplin—a small fish like a sardine—and herring. Sand eels and white-fish sometimes. Bits of sea-gulls, and even rubber fish with hooks. Mussels don't hold well on the hooks."

Harry looked thoughtful. "I suppose it makes a lot o' difference, having just the right kind o' bait."

"All the difference in the world," the Doctor agreed. "If a man can't please the fish, he might as well burn his nets and boats and leave the sea.—But I was telling you about the cod-traps.

"While the fish are following their leader, like so many sheep, in at the door of the trap, along comes the man they call the trap-master. He has a tube with plain glass in the bottom, and he puts it down over the side of the boat and looks through it to see if the trap is full.

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"When he thinks it's full enough, the door is pulled up so the fish can't get out, and the floor of the trap is hauled to the surface.

"As it is lifted, a big dipper is put in, and the fish are ladled into the boat.

"When the boat is full, the rest of the fish are put into big net bags. These are tied to buoys, so the fishermen may come back later and get them."

"I suppose the fishermen like to pick out the best places," said Harry.

"Yes—there's a mad race on the day the season opens. You've got to get your cod-trap anchored in four days, with the net that leads from the shore put in place: and it's a big job to do it in that time.

"Then there's what they call the cod-seine. That's worked by seven men. The seine-master, fish-glass in hand, stands in the bow: and the minute he sights the school of fish he gives orders for the nets to be dropped.

"The men row in a circle and return to a buoy, paying out the net as they go.

"The bottom rope is weighted, and they gather it round a central anchor into a bag as they row. It's not so easy as it sounds, but 'practice makes perfect.' When they've got the fish bagged in this way they may scoop them up whenever they like.

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"Other kinds of nets, as well as lines, are used.

"While those who use the lines generally take great pains to put on them the bait they think Mr. and Mrs. Cod will like, some fishermen make the others very angry by 'jiggling' with unbaited hooks.

"This means that two hooks, joined back to back with a bit of lead that sinks them, are dropped where the fish are most thickly crowded.

"Then the line is jerked up and down. Half a dozen fish may be hurt for one that is hooked."

"What becomes of the one that gets hurt?" asked Harry.

"Oh, the rest of the cod rush at the poor fellow and eat him up!"

"They're not good sports!" was the boy's comment. "Neither are the fishermen that hurt the fish without catching them. That's like hunters that shoot more animals than they can use for food. But I suppose fishing just for fun is a very different thing from fishing to make a living."

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Dr. Grenfell's blue eyes were very serious. "It is," he said. "You have to go out with the fishermen to understand the difference."

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### XIII

ToC

#### BIRDS OF MANY A FEATHER

Harry had seen and heard many kinds of birds alongshore, of all sizes and colors, some flying in curious ways and some making very queer sounds, so he asked the Doctor to tell him about them.

"The Labrador coast is one of the finest bird-nurseries anywhere," said the Doctor. "You can find about two hundred different kinds—if your eyes are sharp enough and your patience—and your shoes—hold out!

"Of course they don't all live there the year round. Some of them are just summer boarders.

"Maybe in a very lonely spot you'll hear a bird all by himself, with a very sweet song—the hermit thrush.

"Perhaps there will be a chorus of pipits, fox and white-throated sparrows, robins, warblers and buntings.

"You might even come upon a Nashville warbler or a Maryland yellow-throat!

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"If eggs are collected in Labrador, the contents aren't wasted.

"You bore a hole in the side of the egg, put in a blowpipe with a rubber bulb, and force the contents into a frying-pan. You can make fine omelet from the eggs of eiders, gulls, puffins and cormorants. Or you can mix flour with the eggs, add salt and butter, and make a nice pancake browned on both sides.

"It tastes rather fishy, of course, but it's very filling, and when you come in after a long, hard run behind the dogs, or soaked to the skin from a boat-ride, it certainly is fine to fill up on cormorant omelet while you pleasantly roast yourself before the leaping flames of a driftwood bonfire.

"A Labrador baby thinks that a gull's egg is as good as a stick of candy.

"Puffins are lots of fun. You've read about the penguins in the Antarctic, where they have almost no other animals—how the penguins dive and swim and carry stones about, looking like solemn old gentlemen at a club in their dress suits. Well, the puffins are to Labrador what penguins are to the South Pole country.

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"Their burrows are two or three feet long, and the mother sits on a single dirty white egg in a straw nest. The birds have red, parrot-like bills, and they have pale grey faces with markings that make them look as if they were wearing spectacles.

"Their bodies are chunky, and they shuffle about very clumsily. They don't like it a bit when people come where they have their nests.

"But the razor-billed auk doesn't make any nest—it just lays its egg on the bare rock in the biting cold. There are very few auks left to-day, but there were lots of them when Audubon the naturalist visited Labrador ninety years ago. Audubon tells how a band of 'egggers' started out just like pirates.

"All they cared about was to plunder every nest.

"They went sneaking along from cove to cove, turning in sometimes at the little caves or finding shelter in an angle of the rocks when the sea ran too high.

"While they were waiting they would fight and swear and drink. It's a wonder that the egggers didn't get drowned oftener, for their boats would be mended with strips of sealskin and the sails were patched like an old suit, and it looked as if a puff of wind would blow them over.

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"These egggers got out of their sailing ship into a rowboat they towed, so as to go to an island of sea-pigeons, or guillemots—because they couldn't get near enough in the larger vessel.

"As they came to the rocks, the birds rose up in a screaming white cloud. The air was full of them, just as you've seen the gulls creaking and crying about the hull of an ocean steamer, hoping to pick up food thrown overboard.

"But the mother birds stuck faithfully to the nests. It was the fathers and brothers that rose up in the air and made the noisy fuss.

"All of a sudden—bang! the eggers discharged their guns in a volley right into the middle of the wheeling, screaming cloud of feathers overhead.

"Some fell into the water, and the rest in terror flew about not knowing where to go or what to do. [242]

"The eggers picked up the birds that lay in ruffled, bloody heaps on the water. They made toothsome pies, and what they couldn't eat they left behind. They didn't care how many birds they killed, because there were plenty left.

"They weren't shooting just for food—they were shooting mostly for fun. As they trampled about the island they crushed with their heavy boots more eggs than they picked up.

"No one would have blamed hungry men for killing enough birds and taking enough eggs to supply their families. But the eggers saw red, and just went on shooting and trampling without excuse.

"Years of that kind of thing turned many an island into a graveyard.

"Well, when they had gathered some eggs and smashed the rest, they picked up the dead birds they wanted and carried them back to the boat.

"They jerked off the feathers and broiled the sea-pigeons. Then they brought out big, black bottles of rum to take away the oily, fishy flavor, and filled themselves with strong drink and bird-flesh. [243]



OFF DUTY

ToList

"They fell asleep, snoring drunk, and dawn found them piled about the deck helplessly.

"But when they got back to the island from which they started on their journey, they found that rivals had landed there, and were killing birds which they looked on as their own.

"There was a fight at once.

"The men who were coming back home fired a volley and then took their guns as if they were clubs and rushed toward their enemies.

"Then, man to man, they fought like wild beasts. One man was carried to the boat with his skull fractured: another limped off with a bullet in his leg: a third was feeling his jaw to learn how many of his teeth had been driven through a hole in his cheek.

"So they fought till they tired of it, and then they pulled out the rum-bottles, and drank themselves into forgetfulness of their fierce battle.

"With the next morning came a hundred honest fishermen who wanted nothing more from the islands than the birds and the eggs they actually needed for their hungry wives and little ones at home. [244]

"They had been eating salt meat for months: scurvy had broken out, and they wanted a change of diet.

"But the pirate eggers were bound they shouldn't have it. The fishermen brought no guns: they weren't looking for trouble: they were taken by surprise when the eggers rushed down on them like tigers roused from their lairs.

"One of the eggers, who had not slept off the effects of the carousal of the night before, shot one of the fishermen. Then the fishermen, who outnumbered the eggers about ten to one, gave the latter the beating of their lives. Fortunately, the fisherman who had been shot was not killed.

"That was the sort of thing that happened again and again in the bad old days.

"No wonder Audubon, as a great lover of birds, was very angry at these men who were making it impossible for birds to make their homes and lay their eggs and raise their families on the Labrador. They could have had all they wanted to eat without exterminating the birds, and never giving a thought to anybody who might come after them. [245]

"The fishermen still, in many places, out of sight and reach of any law, take all the eggs and kill all the birds they can.

"But it's not so bad as it was in Audubon's time, when men from Halifax took about 40,000 eggs which they sold for twenty-five cents a dozen. Near Cape Whittle he found two men gathering murre's eggs. They were proud of the fact that they had collected 800 dozen and they didn't intend to stop till they had taken 2,000 dozen. The broken eggs made such a dreadful smell that it almost made him sick.

"The ivory gull, known as the 'ice partridge,' is sometimes caught by pouring seal's blood on the ice. The birds swoop down to get it, and are shot. Some actually kill themselves by striking the ice too hard when they land, for they are so eager to get the blood.

"Labrador is a good place to study the diving birds, which are of two kinds.

"There are those that use their feet alone under the water—and then there are those that use only their wings.

"The feet-users clap their wings close to their sides when they dive. [246]

"The wing-users spread out their pinions before they strike the water. The puffin uses its wings under the water, and so do the other members of the auk family.

"In the duck family, there are both wing-swimmers and foot-swimmers. The ducks of the sorts known as old squaws, scoters and eiders fly under water. But the redheads and canvas-back ducks use only their feet under water. Mergansers dive with their wings against their sides, like a folded umbrella. The cormorants are famous swimmers, and use their feet alone. You know how the Chinese use cormorants as fish-catchers, putting rings about their necks to keep them from swallowing their prey.

"Among the birds classed as game-birds, the willow grouse are so easy to kill that a true sportsman doesn't take much pleasure in going after them.

"They are often caught with nooses on the end of a stick, while they roost in the trees, and a group in this position may be killed all at once, if shot from the bottom, so that the falling bird doesn't disturb the others. [247]

"Cartwright, an early explorer, tells how he came upon a covey of six grouse and knocked off all their heads with his rifle.

"In winter, the willow grouse bury themselves in the snow, and the 'cock of the roost' is sentinel, keeping his head above the snow to watch for an enemy.

"The Canada goose, breeding about the lakes and ponds, is a grass-eater, and so tastes better than the fishy, oily gulls and divers. You can tame the goose and use it as a decoy. When a number are shot at a time, those that can't be used right away are hung outside the house. There they freeze, and are kept fresh all winter long.

"There couldn't be a better retriever for a duck-hunt than the Eskimo dog. I've watched them dash into the waves after a bird, only to be thrown back, bruised and winded, high up on the ledges of the rock.

"Then the return wave would drag them off, and pound them against the rocks. But the dogs would hang on for dear life, till their nails were torn away and their paws were bleeding. [248]

"Even that wouldn't make them quit. They would return to the charge, and waiting for their chance they would jump right over the breaking crest and get clear of the surf.

"When they've once got hold of a duck, nothing will make them let go. I've often been tempted to jump in and give the brave fellows a hand, when it seemed as if they couldn't keep up the struggle any longer.

"They'd sink out of sight in a bigger wave than usual—and then, sure enough, you'd see the duck again, and the dog's head after it, still true to duty even in the jaws of death. For sometimes, in spite of all his pluck and cleverness, the dog is drowned."

## BEASTS BIG AND LITTLE

Both on sea and land, Labrador animals have to be as tough as Labrador people to stand the hard life they must lead.

Dr. Grenfell tells of a seal family he saw killed on an ice-pan about half the size of a tennis-court.

They were surprised by four sealers, with wooden bats. Before they gave up their lives they put up a tremendous struggle. The father seal actually caught a club in his mouth and swung it from side to side with such violence that the sealers had to get off the pan.

But at last he was dealt such a blow on the head that it was supposed he was killed.

Instead of stripping off the pelt as the fallen monster lay on the pan, the sealers hoisted him aboard the steamer "unscalped." As he was being lifted over the rail—two thousand pounds of him—the strap broke, and back into the sea the huge carcass splashed.

The cold water revived him. [250]

He swam back to the pan, which was marked by the blood stains of his slaughtered family—the mate with her young which he had fought so desperately to protect.

The pan stood about six feet out of the water. Yet the great animal managed to fling himself upon it.

The men, who had bread and tea to win for their families, could not afford to let him go.

They went back after him, and this time they did not trust to their wooden bats. They used a few of their precious cartridges and shot him. And then they "scalped" him on the spot, and hauled the skin over the rail.

It is painful to think of such a fate for the brave old warrior.

Just as the cod-traps are put out from the shore, frame nets are set for the seals along the beach where they are fairly sure to pass at certain times of the year. There is a capstan from which the doorway of the seal-trap may be closed with a few turns. The Doctor tells of one "liveyere" family that took nine hundred seals in this way: and three to four hundred is nothing unusual. One trapper named Jones was so successful at this business of trapping seals with the net that he became "purse-proud." From his land where there are no roads, he sent to Quebec for a carriage and horses, and then he had a road built on which he might parade them up and down to show his neighbors how rich he was. Then, for his dances o' winter nights, no local fiddler would serve, scraping and patting his foot on the floor. He hired a real musician from Canada, who remained all winter playing jigs and reels to a continuous round of feasts and merry-making. But, as the familiar saying goes, it is often only one generation from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves. In his case, the grandchildren finally found themselves with less than the shirt-sleeves. They appealed to Dr. Grenfell, and he found some old clothes on the boat to save them from freezing. [251]

The whale is really a land animal, which finally found the sea more amusing, and so took to "a roving, nautical life."

Since the legs were no longer useful, in the course of time they became wee things, and were enclosed in the thick, tough skin.

The "arms" were left outside, but they are nothing to boast of. They are not useful for swimming, but they help to balance the huge bulk, and mother whale seizes her baby with them when she takes alarm. [252]

The eyes are tiny, for when a whale eats he is not particular.

It takes so many millions of little bits of creatures to give a whale a square meal, that if he misses a hundred thousand or so out of the side of his huge jaws, at the top of his narrow gullet, he need not worry. The whale never starves until he is stranded. Out of water he may continue to breathe for an hour or two—but he cannot eat.

"On a fine morning on the Labrador Coast," Dr. Grenfell tells us, "I have counted a dozen whales in a single school. Now and again a huge tail would emerge from the water and lash the surface with its full breadth, making a sound like the firing of a cannon, while the silence was otherwise broken only by the noise of their blowing, as they rolled lazily along on the surface."

The thresher whale is only about twenty feet long, but he is a fierce fellow—the pirate of the whale family, terrorizing the rest, and ready to tackle anything in sight. [253]

He has a fin which shows where he is as he cruises along close to the surface. He readily eats other whales. Three threshers went after a big cow sperm whale and her enormous infant, in shallow water. First they killed the "calf." Then they chased the

mother away, and came back and ate the young one.

In 1892 a huge sperm whale rammed the rocks near Battle Harbor, where Dr. Grenfell now has one of his hospitals.

The whale evidently wondered why the rocks didn't give way—for nearly everything else he encountered had collapsed when he butted into it. He lunged once too often, and was left high, if not dry, on the beach.

They towed him into the harbor, a prize eighty feet in length, and proceeded to pump the oil out of him. From the head one hundred and forty gallons were taken. This oil in the whale's head, which may be a third as big as his body, helps to float the great jawbones.

Of course the "blowing" of the whale is one of its most remarkable performances. A whale can stay below an hour, because he puts air into his blood by spouting about sixty times, the operation taking him about ten minutes. [254]

Grenfell helped take to pieces a "sulphur-bottom" whale ninety-five feet long, supposed to weigh nearly 300,000 pounds. A boat could row into the mouth. The jawbone was nearly eighteen feet long. "It took four of us a whole afternoon, with axes and swords mounted on pike handles, to cut out one bone and carry it to our steamer." And in order to get back far enough to start cutting at the end, where the joint came, they "had to walk almost in the footsteps of Jonah."

The whale is the one animal that lives to a great age—and it is said whales have lived to be a thousand years old. A wolf is aged at twenty, a caribou or fox at fifteen. A personal acquaintance of the Doctor was a black-backed gull which had been in captivity for thirty-two years.

The timber-wolf, which elsewhere is so fierce an animal, is comparatively mild-mannered in Labrador, and Grenfell has found no record of these wolves attacking men, though in packs they have often followed the settlers to the doors of their houses. [255]

There is nothing good to be said of the Labrador timber-wolf. Like the eggers of Audubon's time, he seems to kill very often not for hunger's sake but for the sheer love of killing animals that cannot fight back. Often the bodies of deer are found with only the tongues and the windpipe torn out by the mean and cowardly slayer.

Sometimes the wolf bites the deer in the small of the back: or several wolves will stalk a caribou, some circling about to distract the attention of their prey while others creep up on it from behind.

The caribou are amiable and affectionate, and it is easy to tame them if they are taken in hand when they are young. They make very satisfactory pets.

Grenfell had one which went with him on his mission boat, like a dog or a cat.

If not taken ashore, it would stand crying at the rail.

It would follow him about while on land, and swim after its master when Grenfell was in a rowboat. [256]

In the field it would come running to be petted, and if left behind within the palings would stand up on its hind legs and try desperately to butt its way out and follow the Doctor.

Sometimes the caribou has been successfully used to haul a sled.

The Labrador black bear is almost as harmless as the caribou.

Grenfell bought a cub, and in the winter-time gave him a barrel, to see if he would know what to do, having no mother to guide him.

The bear knew by instinct how to make himself a warm and cosy nest for his long winter sleep.

He found grass and moss, put them in the barrel, and trampled them down to make a padded lining such as a human being could hardly have bettered.

We all know the story of General Israel Putnam,—how he crawled into the wolf-den at Pomfret and shot a wolf "by the light of its own eyes." A trapper in Labrador, instead of crawling into a den where an animal lay, entered an empty lair, under a cliff. It seemed to have been made on purpose for campers. [257]

He lit his small lantern, ate his supper, and then curled up as tidily as any four-footed tenant and fell asleep.

Like the bears in the fairy tale, who came back to find Goldilocks in the chair and then in the bed of one of them, the real owners of the cave appeared in the night.

The hunter was awakened suddenly by a noise like rolling thunder in the narrow entrance. He turned up his lamp, and the flare showed him a bear, so huge that it blocked the passage-way.

Nimble the hunter reached for his gun, and before the animal could do anything more than growl and threaten, a shot had tumbled him flat.

Shoving aside the body, the trapper went out into the cold starlight, for he knew that the mate of the slain beast might appear at any moment.

Sure enough, presently over the brow of the hill there shambled in black silhouette two more bears.

He took careful aim and fired and brought them both down.

The next time he makes a tour of his traps he probably will not choose a bear's den for his night's lodging. A bear that is harmless in the open may be excused for getting violent if he finds a man asleep in the very bed he fixed for himself. [258]

Grenfell's experience with bears for pets—he has tried to tame nearly everything animate from gulls to whales—was not so happy as with the caribou. He found that if "pigs is pigs," bears "remain bears, and are not to be trusted." He had two bear playmates for a long time, but when they hit out with their paws they dealt some "very nasty scratches," and what was fun for them was more serious for the tender pelt of a human being.

The wolverine lives by his wits.

He will turn over a trap and set it off before it can nip him.

He is the pest of the man who has fur traps, for he will go from trap to trap and grab whatever he finds therein.

He can climb trees and get meat which the owner thought was secure.

Sometimes when he is caught he will get away with the trap and chain still attached to his leg. He will even carry the trap in his mouth, to relieve the strain. Like Kipling's Fuzzy Wuzzy in the Sudan, he has a great way of shamming dead. He may jump up and bite the hunter, or he may make a sudden dash for freedom. Can you blame him? [259]

One of the most satisfactory creatures of all is the beaver. I remember a pair in a pond on the west coast of Newfoundland, at Curling, where a beaver colony had a fine big house they had built in a lake with a dam of their making at one end. I didn't go into the house, which was mainly under water, but the male beaver evidently feared I would, and just as he dived he smartly slapped the water with his tail to give the danger signal to the lady who was placidly nosing about and grubbing for the roots of water-plants at the other side of the pond.

"Walking one day through thick wood," says Grenfell, "we came across a regular 'pathway,' the trees having been felled to make traveling easy. A glance at the stumps showed that it was a road cut by beavers, to enable them to drag their boughs of birch along more easily.

"The pathway led to a large house on the edge of a lake, and, fortunately for us, the beaver was at home. There were other houses on an island in the lake, and below them all a large, strong dam, some thirty yards long, and below this two more complete dams across the river that flowed out. The dams were made of large tree-trunks, with quantities of lesser boughs, and were many feet thick, and very difficult to break down. The houses were built half on land, half in the water. The sitting-room is up-stairs on the bank, and so is the 'crew's' bedroom, and the front door is made at least three feet below the surface to prevent being 'frozen out' in winter, or, worse still, 'frozen in.' [260]

"The whole house was neatly rounded off, and so plastered with mud as to be warm and weather-proof. This is done by means of their trowel-like tails, which are also of great use in swimming. The house was so strong that even with an axe we could not get in without very considerable delay.

"In the deep pond they had dammed up, we found a quantity of birch poles pegged out. The bark of these forms their winter food, and is called 'browse.' The beaver cuts off enough for dinner, and takes it into his house. Sitting up, he takes the stem in his fore paws, and rolls it round and round against his chisel-shaped incisor teeth, swallowing the long ribands of bark thus stripped off.... When surprised they retreat to holes in the bank, of which the entrances are hidden under water. These are called 'hovels.' [261]

"Beavers always work up wind when felling trees, and cut them on the water side, so that they fall into the pond if possible, and the wind helps to blow them home. This beaver we caught proved to be a hermit—at least he was living alone. He may have been a widower of unusual constancy. They do not destroy fish, their food in summer being preferably the stems of the water-lilies. Otters occasionally kill and eat beavers. When they call, the beaver has to try and be 'not at home.'"

While the beaver evidently has strong feelings on the subject of the otter, who seems to be a burglar and a murderer, he apparently does not mind the lowly muskrat as a summer boarder, even though the latter does not pay for his lodging. [262]

Of course the lord of the animate creation on land in the north—as the sperm whale is monarch of the sea—is the polar bear. Grenfell gives a most interesting account of this white king of beasts whom we properly pity on warm days as he lolls



and pants by the soup-like water of his tank in one of our southern Zoos. The Doctor once saw a polar bear swimming three miles out at sea, headed, by a marvelous instinct, straight for the north. There was no convenient ice-pan floating near on which he might clamber for a snooze. This bear had been shot, and he floated high in the water, so that evidently his fat was a great help to him, enabling him to stay at sea as long as he pleased.

The polar bears wander from their native shores: they seem to enjoy travel, and when they sail south on pans of ice they are looking for that toothsome morsel, the seal.

If they cannot get seals, these bears devour the eggs of sea-birds on the islands.

When they swim after ducks, they hide under water, all but the nose: and since that nose is black, and therefore a telltale, they have been seen to bury it in the snow when creeping toward a seal-herd.

The polar bear stands a poor chance against a pack of lively and determined dogs.

They have reason to fear his huge paws and tearing claws until he tires, but he cannot face all ways at once, and if there are enough dogs the struggle soon becomes hopeless.

They are not fast enough to get away from the fleet smaller animals.

In the water, where they swim slowly and dive expertly, the fishermen may easily "do for them" with a blow from an axe or an oar. Though the polar bear has a fishy taste, the Eskimos relish the meat, and the prospect of a successful bear-hunt delights the savage breast.

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## XV

ToC

### THE KEEPER OF THE LIGHT

Once I asked Dr. Grenfell if he was tired. His blue eyes lit up as if I had thrown salt into a fire. He threw his head back and said: "Tired? I was never tired in my life!"

But I thought he was weary that September evening in 1919 when he sat with his legs uninked to the cheerful blaze, in the big living-room of his comfortable house at St. Anthony.

The wind can go whooping around that house all it likes and it never will get in unless it is invited. That house was nailed and shingled, doored and windowed, to stand up against the stiffest blast that ever came howling across the rocks and bergs from the Humboldt Glacier or even the North Pole.

Part of the time a blind piano-tuner was at work groping for lost chords among the strings of Mrs. Grenfell's piano. The piano didn't seem to need tuning so much. But the man needed the work. You can imagine there is not much for a blind piano-tuner to do in Newfoundland. Most of the music is the canned variety of the Victrola. Or, if there is a dance, someone may squat obligingly in a corner and hum very loudly what is called by its true name—"chin-music."

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Mrs. Grenfell, happy to have her husband back from the gales and fogs for a little while, was sitting in the puffy armchair with her knitting-needles, and the boys, Pascoe and Wilfred, were up-stairs with their teacher, making out jig-saw puzzles in arithmetic or knocking the tar out of the French Grammar, with various loud sounds.

What the telephone is to busy men in America, giving them no peace even in the bathtub, the telegraph is to the Doctor in Newfoundland. If it isn't a man on the doorstep with a bleeding cut or a hacking cough, then it is a boy with a message which comes from a point twenty to sixty miles off. Most of the time your doctor or mine has a few blocks to go: and we think it hard, and he thinks so too, if a patient clamors for him in the middle of the night. But the middle of the night is the heart of Grenfell's office hours. Once after conducting a late evening service in the church at Battle Harbor he had to doctor forty patients in the room off the chancel before he could get away.

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So it was no surprise to him, in the midst of a tale of the old days at Oxford on the football-field, to have a rat-tat like Poe's raven at the door, and a respectful "young visitor" doffing his sou'wester.

"Please, sir, a telegram."

Grenfell tore it open.

It read: "Doctor would you please come. My throat is full up and I can't eat or sleep."

It was signed "J.N. Coté."

"That," said Grenfell, "is the lighthouse-keeper at Greenley Island, just west of the line that divides Canadian Labrador from Newfoundland Labrador. He has a big job on his hands. He has two fog-horns, each with a twelve horse-power Fairbanks gasoline engine, so that if one's put out of business he can use the other. He's had fog all summer—and a sub-tonsillar abscess, too. The big Canadian Pacific ships go by his place. It's a bad spot. The light-keeper at Forteau tried to bring out his wife and five children—and lost all but one child on the rocks. Another keeper at Belle Isle tried to bring out a family of about the same size—and they all were lost. A doctor stopped in on Captain Coté on the down trip from Battle Harbor, on his way back to Baltimore. Evidently whatever he did wasn't enough. Looks as if I must go and finish the job."

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As if to settle the question, even while he spoke there came another messenger—like the first, a volunteer—bringing another telegram.

This time, as in those messages sent from Cape Norman about the woman, the tone was sharper, more imperative and anxious.

"Please come as fast as you can to operate me in the throat and save my life."

The shade of concern in the Doctor's grave face deepened.

"Coté doesn't cry out for nothing," he said. "He's a real man. We must go. Would you rather stay here and rest a few days, or will you go with me?" Who would care to toast his toes and dally with a book, while Grenfell was abroad on such a mission? I had a quick vision of the gallant run the *Strathcona* would be called on to make—squirming through the rocks and bucking the headwinds and the heavy seas, to save that lighthouse-keeper and keep the big, proud ships from Montreal and Quebec from running blind in the dark. Not far from that spot a British man-of-war ran aground in 1922 and was a total loss, though happily her men were saved. I have been in the wireless cabin on the topmost crags of Belle Isle when the Straits all round about, fog-bound, were clamorous with the ships, anchor-down, calling to one another and whimpering like little lost children trying to clasp hands and afraid in the dark together.

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It would be a run of a hundred miles from St. Anthony to Captain Coté's strangling throat—and what miles they were! Not until the middle of June had the mail-boat—that poor, doomed *Ethie* of the dog's rescue—been able to pierce the ice. Where those ice-pans met at Cape Bauld the grinding, rending and heaving of their battle was worse to hear and see than all the polar bears or the tusked walruses that ever rose up and fought together.

Dr. Grenfell could be perfectly sure that he would have to run a gauntlet all the way—picking and choosing between crags on the one hand and bergs on the other: just such a risky, "chancy" course as he most relishes. While he crumpled the telegram in his hand I could see his eyes light up again with that flash they showed when I asked him if he was ever tired.

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His pockets at that moment were full of pleading, piteous letters from White Bay, meant to pull him to the other side of the island. One of them, from a desperate woman, after saying her husband had caught but eleven dollars' worth of fish all season, wound up with an appeal for oddments of clothes to put on the children, for "We are all as naked as birds."

It was hard to say no to the heart-throbs of those begging letters in his pocket. But Captain Coté's life was not one life. It was the lives of thousands—men, women and children—going down to the sea in ships, faring through the St. Lawrence, and the Gulf, and then those terrible Straits of Belle Isle, to the Old Country.

So we started. But was Mrs. Grenfell going to stay home with the piano, and French verbs, and her fancy-work, while the *Strathcona* nosed the seething waters? Not on your life! Wilfred and Pascoe had a perfectly good governess, and while it was hard on them to remain behind with their books, their turn with Father was coming.

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The big black dog, named Fritz, had no French verbs to study, and no measly sums in arithmetic to do, so—at one running jump—he was added to the passenger-list. His berth was chiefly out on the end of the bowsprit—he was more ambitious than a figurehead. There he could sniff the breeze, and see the shore, even when there wasn't any, and bark defiance at all the dogs and the sea-pusses.

The *Strathcona* used both steam and sail. She was ketch-rigged, with six sails—mainsail, foresail, two jibs, two topsails. One of those topsails was a fancy, oblong thing which Dr. Grenfell's crew mistrusted as though it were witchcraft. He had brought it from the North Sea; they had never seen the likes of it before, and their minds are likely to be sternly set against anything new. But the Doctor, who is

restless on shipboard, climbed to the crow's nest now and then to adjust the strange contraption, and make sure that it was using the wind in such a way as to develop the last ounce of pulling power. This was no pleasure cruise. It was a run for life.

The sea was a vast blue smile as we swaggered out of St. Anthony Harbor. What a fickle creature is that northern ocean! This was the first clear day in ever so long—and now the sun and the water were in conspiracy to pretend it had always been this gay, fair weather.

The only blemish on the seascape was a troop of bergs, six in number, out yonder to starboard. But they were dim and distant as we bore in toward the headland at Quirpon Tickle. Quirpon is called "Carpoon" by the fishermen because that isn't the way to pronounce it. And Tickle has nothing to do with making you laugh. Quite the contrary. It means a very serious business of creeping and twisting snakewise through a channel that winds among the rocks. You are perfectly sure you are about to ram the face of a wall—and then, lo and behold! there is a way out at the last minute, and it leads you to another wall and another rift that suddenly and impossibly opens to let you through. You have to think of the pirates who used to run and hide in places like that, and give the slip to honest sailor men from France and England who were trying to run them down. If they didn't meet the pirates they met and fought each other, which was vastly diverting to the pirates and perhaps just as satisfying to themselves.

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There were fishermen's dories bouncing about like happy children in the shallower waters near the shore. I happened to be at the wheel, and my one idea was not to hit those sharp and cruel rocks, not to strike a fisherman, and to give the widest berth I could to the distant menace of those icebergs.

Grenfell, red-booted and brown-sweatered, put his head in at the wheel-house door, and the wind ruffled his silver hair as he cried: "Run her so close to those rocks that you all but skin her!"

You see, his mind was only on Captain Coté, with the choke in his throat, strangling and struggling, but going on with his duty as the keeper of the light with the beams outflashing to the long, far bellow of his mighty horn.

In our race against time, we were burning coal, that precious commodity, then twenty-four dollars a ton,—and much more costly to-day. Spruce and fir and juniper were piled on deck—some of the wood across the barrels of whale-meat, in a vain attempt to shut off the rotten smell of the food so loved by the dogs. But, hasten as we might, the night closed down like a lid on a box as we sounded our gingerly way through the perilous twistings of the Tickle. The wind was rising, and as we looked back we saw the waves, running white and high at a mad dance in cold moonlight. If we went on, and came out into the Straits, the wind would hold us there without an inch of gain, though we had the full power of the engines going and all sails set. The *Strathcona*, a tiny steamer of less than fifty tons, was no match for the sea aroused in opposition. It is a miracle that this small boat, the *Strathcona*, lived so long, with so many attempts of ice and rock to punch the life out of her wherever she went.

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Dr. Grenfell, as his habit is on shipboard, rose at two, at three and at four to study his charts and lay out his course, and at twenty minutes to five his strong hands were at the wheel, on which are the words "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

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The dog Fritz had been sleeping all night on a thick blue woolen blanket in the bunk below mine. He had no business there, and he knew it, but as regularly as I turned him out into the nipping air and the frosty starlight he would return indignantly. "What's the matter with you?" his wrinkled face seemed to say. "You're just a visitor on this boat, and I belong here. What right have you to keep me out of a nice warm bed? You don't need this whole cabin, you selfish man." Finally my patience gave out and I let him have his way.

Under the red edges of the dawn, a fresh breeze blowing, we came within hail of that ugly rock named the Onion. "In that bay over there," laughed Grenfell, "we were blown across the ice—sled and dogs and all—when we were trying to round up the reindeer herd. We had the time of our lives!

"You see, we had brought a bunch of reindeer all the way from Lapland, and Lapp herders came with them, to keep off the dogs and prevent the natives from shooting them as if they were caribou. On one occasion we had a real 'Night before Christmas' celebration, and St. Nick delighted the children at the Orphanage where he came with his gifts on a big sled behind a real team of reindeer.

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"But the reindeer spread all over the peninsula, and the Lapps couldn't keep track of their charges. The hunters and the dogs were hard on the trail of the herd. You couldn't blame hungry men and famished animals.

"I meant in time to persuade the people to give up their dogs and use reindeer instead. The reindeer could draw sleds, and would give milk, and meat too, if necessary, and their furs would be valuable. There wouldn't be any risk of their hurting children, or strangers, or sick people, and they wouldn't make night hideous with their howling.

"But at last, in order to save the remnant, it was necessary to move them, and I decided to load them on a fishing-vessel and take them across the Straits to the St. Augustine River country, where they could increase in peace, and the dogs would not bother them, and the Canadian Government could protect them from any Indian hunters who might come along.

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"It was a fine plan, on paper. But it was like the old recipe for making a rabbit pie—'first catch your hare.' The reindeer having had the run of the open spaces so long saw no reason why they should be caught and put on a boat and carried off.

"So they gave us a run for it, I can tell you! All over the place we rushed, shouting and trying to lasso or corner the terrified animals. I never laughed so hard in my life. The wind was blowing great guns, and you simply couldn't stand up against it. We caught a great many of the reindeer. But a lot of them romped off into the woods and took to the hills and we never saw them again. Since they were moved to Canada they have done well—and some day, when the people are ready to have them, I want to move them back and see if we can't replace the dog-teams with them."

Meanwhile the little ship had turned her head away from the unsavory Onion, and was running on, over a long diagonal, to cross the straits in the bared teeth of the green and yeasty waves. That she was top-heavy was plainly to be seen, with her barrels of whale-meat and her high-piled fire-wood on deck, and almost no ballast or cargo below.

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As we stood out into the middle of the channel, I thought of the great boats that must feel their way through the dense fog in evil weather. They would have to be honking like wild geese, even though the straits at their narrowest between Flower's Cove and Greenley Island are ten miles wide. Fog is a terrible deceiver. I remember coming up the East Coast on the mail-steamer *Invermore* in 1913. In a day after leaving Twillingate we were nearly wrecked three times. First, when we thought we were ten miles offshore, we found a tiny skiff, with two persons aboard, in our path—we nearly ran it down. Father and small son, fourteen, were fishing for cod, and had their meagre catch in a tin pail. Captain Kane had stopped our boat—we were going at quarter speed—and he had the man come up on the bridge to show us where the land lay. "Out yonder!" The ancient mariner pointed to the northwest. A rowboat was manned: in a few minutes its crew came back and reported that the rocks were not more than two hundred yards away. So we backed off, and steamed hard in the opposite direction. But only an hour or so later,—pulled steadily on and on toward the shore, by the strong, inseting tide,—we saw the grey edge of the fog lifting like a table-cloth, and there were those cruel rocks again, dragons in a lair, waiting to receive us, crush our bones and drink our blood. Again we backed away—and before long the fierce jangle of the bell in the engine room and the captain's sharp accent of command from the bridge once more halted us suddenly. There, directly before our prow, was a great white wall of ice, which had taken almost the color of the mist. It was an iceberg that barred our path, and if we had been speeding like the *Titanic* instead of creeping like a snail, it would doubtless have been the end of the *Invermore*. Only one more tragedy of a missing ship.

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At four in the afternoon, when the great rock bastion of Belle Isle loomed across our bows, we gave up for the night: and next morning, between seven and eight, no fewer than eight enormous icebergs crossed our bows in a glittering processional.

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But to-day, mid-stream, there was no fog, and despite the roughness of the water the cool air and clear sunlight were cause for rejoicing. "Isn't it fun to live?" exclaimed the Doctor, as he swung the wheel; and the *Strathcona*, feeling her master's hand, trembled and obeyed.

Fritz, out yonder on the prow, was staring toward the bleak Labrador coast. Was he thinking of dogs to fight, and fish to eat, and a snooze on the beach, after the run was over and the anchor was down? No—he was looking at something near at hand—and his ears were even quicker than ours to catch over the voice of waves or wind the cry of men in a power-boat off the starboard bow.

There were three of them. Two of them held up the third man, whose bare head flopped over on his chest. The collar of his overcoat was turned up to shelter that agonizing throat. Yes, it was Captain Coté, the man we came so far to seek.

"Doctor!" they called. "He couldn't wait! We've brought him out to ye!"

A moment more and hands as tender as they were willing were lifting him over the rail. A wee baby would have had no gentler handling.

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Captain Coté's face was the greenish white of a boiled potato. It was seamed with deep lines of pain and sleepless nights. He was carried to the brass rungs of the ladder and lowered.

"Easy! easy!" those who let him down were saying to each other. They seemed to fear he would break if they dropped him.

By the light of a battered tin lamp Grenfell ran a needle into his throat with the novocaine that would destroy the pain of the operation.

Then he took his thin scissors a foot long and thrust them into the abscess under the tonsils.

Five minutes later, Captain Coté had found the use of his tongue again, and, waving both hands round his ears as he talked, he was thanking God and Dr. Grenfell, and giving us the full history of the dreadful months he spent before help came.

Next day we landed on his island—Greenley Island. From the small wharf where women were cleaning fish there were two lines of planking laid, on cinders, for perhaps a thousand feet through the long green grass to the red brick lighthouse tower. On these wooden rails was the chassis of a Ford car, and we rode in state. But you had to stick closely to the track, or you came to grief on the rough, shelly soil alongside.

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"It's the first automobile ride I ever had in Labrador!" the Doctor gleefully exclaimed.

In the lighthouse was a living-room with a talking-machine, a violin, a typewriter and other things to add to the comfort of a home and make a family happy.

The patient was brought into the room by his beaming wife and two of his children.

"How are you this morning, Captain?" asked Grenfell.

"Feeling fine, Doctor."

"Did you sleep?"

"Slept like a baby. First time in three months."

"And can you eat?"

"I can eat rocks, Doctor."

Then the Captain brought out a pocketbook stuffed with greenbacks. Twelve hundred dollars a year, with nothing to spend it for, since he gets his living, seems a fortune to a man in that part of the world.

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"How much do I owe you?" He pulled out three ten-dollar bills.

"One of those will do," said the Doctor, quietly.

It was right for him to take the money. Self-respect on Captain Coté's part demanded that he should pay. Grenfell lets his patients pay in wood or fish or whatever they have, a value merely nominal compared with what they receive. But he wants them to feel—and they, too, wish to feel—that they are not beggars, living on the dole of his charity.

"Now then, Doctor, how about the coal you burned getting here? How much does that come to? The Canadian Government'll give it back to you. We've got some down on the wharf. We can take it out now and put it on your boat."

The emergency run of the *Strathcona* had used five tons and a quarter. At twenty-four dollars a ton, this would be worth one hundred and twenty-six dollars.

We went down to the wharf, and tried to put the coal, which was soft coal, like dust, on a skiff, to take it two hundred yards in a half-gale to the *Strathcona*.

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But the mighty wind blew the coal out of the boat as fast as it was shoveled aboard.

Then Captain Coté said, "We'll send it, when calm weather comes, to Sister Bailey at Forteau." She was a wonderful trained nurse,—a friend of Edith Cavell,—who lived in the near-by village, and had a cow that fought off the dogs and gave milk to the sick babies.

So Captain Coté's life was saved and the great boats from Montreal and Quebec with their hundreds of passengers could enter and traverse the Straits in any weather, because the keeper of the light was at his post once more.

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## XVI

### THROUGH THE BLIZZARD

ToC

Another trip was to the north, in January, over the thirty miles from St. Anthony to Cape Norman, to save a woman's life. It all looks so easy when you get out the map

and measure it across white space.

But when that white space is snow instead of paper, and there are thirty miles of it to flog through, instead of three inches under your hand—that, as Kipling would say, is another story.

Over the telegraph line from Cape Norman to St. Anthony came a piteous message from a young fisherman. It said his wife was dying. Grenfell telegraphed back, the message running something like this: "My assistant has gone off with the dogs to answer another call. Cannot leave my patients at the hospital and cannot get any dogs till he comes back."

Then another message came from the distracted husband: "Doctor, my wife is dying. For God's sake find another team somewhere and come."

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The night, as the island saying is, was as dark as the inside of a cow. Grenfell stumbled out into the blackness to hunt for dogs. The trail to Cape Norman is very rough, and the January snow was deep. The wind blowing over it threw the snow, biting and blinding, in the face of anyone who attempted the trail.

But Grenfell did not hesitate. From house to house he went, to rouse the occupants like another Paul Revere, and beg for dogs that he might use on the desperate journey.

One man let him take four. Another, for pay, gave him a fifth animal. A boy named Walter said he would get four more dogs and would drive the ill-assorted team. By that time it was midnight.

"We'll start at 4:30," said the Doctor. At 4:30 it would still be pitch-black.

Grenfell went back to the hospital, roused the head nurse, and went to every patient to make sure that while he was gone no accident would happen that he could possibly prevent.

At 4:30 he was ready to start. Few men are his match for staying up all night and looking as fresh as a mountain daisy after the vigil.

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He opened the door and a blizzard swept in and tried to rush him off his feet. Through the whirling drift staggered Walter, dogless.

"Where are those dogs?" asked the Doctor. He expects men to keep agreements made with him. He couldn't get through the length and breadth of his big day's work if they didn't.

Walter shook his snow-covered head. "I ain't brought 'em, sir. It's too bad a night to be startin' before sun-up. The dogs don't know each other: they comes from here, there an' all over. They'll be fightin' in the traces an' eatin' each other up in the dark. Us must be able to see 'em in order to drive 'em. You know what dogs is like, sir."

"Yes, I do," said Grenfell. "But you're the driver, and I leave it to you. We must get off as soon as we can."

Dr. Grenfell went to his room to snatch a catnap before the start. Another telegram woke him as he was drowsing off.

"Come along soon. Wife worse."

The storm instead of going down was more violent than ever when the grey day came. The sun was not seen at all. On the contrary, the air was filled with a mad whirl of pelting, stinging flakes almost as hard as Indian arrow-heads. The dogs would be no good in the teeth of such a storm—for the team-mates who work with a will are those that are best acquainted, and with an unknown driver this team suddenly thrown together would have pulled as many different ways as there were fierce and headstrong dogs. They would be at each other's throats before they were out of sight of the houses.

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As he waited, walking restlessly up and down, in his brown sweater and thick leggins, Grenfell was plagued with the picture of the woman fighting for her life till help should come from the one man who could give it.

Still another of those telegrams! This time the message read: "Come immediately if you can. Wife still holding out."

Just as he read the words, there were voices, and battering hands at the door.

Two men, white as Santa Claus from head to foot, staggered into the room, with the wind whooping at their backs as if in a wild anger that they escaped its clutches.

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Grenfell, accustomed as he was to the brave men of a hard country, fairly gasped when he saw them.

"Where did you come from?"

"We comes to fetch you, sir, for the sick woman at Cape Norman."

"Do you think dogs can get me there now?" the Doctor asked, anxiously.

"No, sir. We was blown here most o' the way, wi' the wind at our backs. The wind drove us. The dogs can't make head against it, not till the wind shifts clean round the

other way, sir."

Ten miles of their journey had been in the fairly sheltered lee of the land. Twenty miles had been before the pitiless sweep of the wind over the unprotected sea-ice. If the snow had not drifted so heavily, they would have been borne along at a pace so rapid that their sled would have been wrecked.

"When was it you left Cape Norman?" was the Doctor's next question.

"Eight o'clock last night, sir."

So they had been coming on all through the night, without rest or food. Yet the first thing they had done when the sled stopped at last before Grenfell's door was to get something for their dogs to eat. Already, the animals lay snug and tranquil in a drift, as if it were a feather-bed—sleeping the sleep of good dogs who have done their work and earned their daily fish-heads and know of nothing more to want in this life or the next.

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The Doctor patted the broad shoulders of the gaunt, shy spokesman. "Go into the hospital and get a good, big, hot dinner," he said. "Then go to bed. We'll wake you when it's time to start."

But after dark—and the darkness came on very early—the two troubled men were at Grenfell's door again. "Us couldn't sleep, sir, for thinkin' of the woman. Us have got another telegram sayin' please to hurry. The storm is not so bad as it was, sir. If you think fitten to start, we're ready."

"Call Walter," said the Doctor.

"Us has called he, sir. He's gettin' the dogs. He'll be here in a minute."

Grenfell and his comrades knew that the lull in the storm did not mean the end of it. It was gathering strength, and might at any moment break loose again with redoubled fury. But he—and they—couldn't stand waiting any longer. They must go. It was as if out of the black distances they heard the thin, far, pleading voice of the sufferer calling to them, to come and save her.

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Their first task was to get across the harbor of St. Anthony in the dark and the eddying snow. They had their snowshoes, but in spite of these they sank to their knees in slush, and the two dog-teams floundered and half-swam. The team from Cape Norman went first, to encourage the others. A man stumbled ahead of them all, to break out a footway. Walter trudged in advance of the rear team, with Grenfell driving an assortment of beasts he had never handled before. Only a dog-driver knows what that means.

Ascending the flank of the hill across the harbor, they found themselves almost overwhelmed by the deep snow, with more piling down from above, as they fought their way foot by foot up the hill. They had to take hold of the sleds and lift them to help the dogs, and the sweat rolled off them in spite of the keen bite of the cold. When they topped the rise at last, the wind struck them full force, so that their loudest shouts could not be heard in the roaring onrush of the wind. The slope was a steep glaze of ice, and down it they coasted, running into tree-trunks and rocks that threatened to wrench the sleds and injure the dogs and men. It was hardly better when they reached the bottom. Here the Bartlett River became their necessary roadway, and twice Grenfell and others broke through into the swirling current and were almost carried away to be drowned under the ice.

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WHERE FOUR FEET ARE BETTER THAN TWO

ToList

Down-stream they battled their course—no wonder "Battle Harbor" is the name of the Labrador inlet not far away. It is a battle to get anywhere in winter on this coast. At half-past one in the morning they came to where the twenty-mile stretch of sea-ice

began.

After that experience of a few years before on the ice-pan, Grenfell would not have been to blame if he had called a halt and said, "No, not out there! Let us take the longest way round, by the shore, and be safe."

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But that has never been his way. When duty calls, he takes the air line to the scene of action. So it was on this awful night. It had taken six hours to do ten miles. The sea was throwing the ice about with a mighty booming and crashing like the firing of cannon. The blizzard stung their faces and lashed their bodies. Grenfell was ready to dare the passage. But the men who came for him would not have it so. His life was precious in their sight: and they knew what its preservation meant to all that helpless lonesomeness of the winter coast.

It lacked six hours to daylight. If they waited, the dogs would not freeze, but men might suffer, and perhaps lose their lives.

But the rugged pair from Cape Norman said that in the preceding fall someone had put up a "tilt"—a log refuge—in the woods near by. They roved about until to their exceeding joy they found it.

There was not merely a shack of spruce-logs. In the shelter there was a stove, and beside the stove was a pile of wood. It is the habit of the men of the North to think of those who come after them. They who have been through a winter understand what it means to depend on others and have others depend on them. Those who do not play the game that generous, open-handed, far-sighted way have no friends and are despised by their neighbors.

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The dogs fell asleep in the snow. One of the Cape Norman men "bust open" the river with his axe and filled the kettle for tea. But even while Grenfell was fussing with the knots of the dunnage bag to get out the tea and the sugar, he heard his comrade's pipe fall to the floor.

Grenfell looked up. The good soul, standing erect, was fast asleep. It had been sixty hours since he had slept, and forty-eight of these had been spent on that terrible trail where there was no trail. Flesh and blood rebelled at last. Even the records of ambulance-drivers in the war have seldom equalled such endurance. The sleeper was roused and put on the bench. He tried again to stuff his pipe with his frightful rubbish called tobacco. But the pipe clattered to the floor again: he was dead to the world: his snoring shook the peace of dreamland, and would have broken the glass in the tilt if there had been any glass to break.

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What might be called dawn came at last, but with it the snow returned fast and thick as the flies and mosquitoes of a Labrador spring.

The snow cut off their view of the sea, but they heard it roaring as though possessed of all the devils.

Over that roaring there seemed to come to their ears again the still small voice of the woman in misery—hopeful, waiting for them, trusting the Doctor who had never failed her yet.

They were not the sort who would say sea-ice was impassable, if humans and dogs could traverse it.

But examination showed that there was no way over the partly frozen sea.

Greatly against their will, they must take the roundabout route overland. By two in the afternoon the ice held sufficiently to let them cross to Crow Island, and there they tried to boil water and make tea. The blizzard defeated them. In the blinding snow, they set their course by the compass, and the dogs plunged on. They said nothing to the dogs after that, but let them follow their own cold noses. The wonderful beasts took them straight to a tiny shore village. A short dash from the village, and the long run was over. In a jiffy, Grenfell had out the surgical instruments and put the patient under ether. To-day the woman is not merely alive but in the best of health, and she thinks of Dr. Grenfell as the Greeks used to think of a god.

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## XVII

ToC

### WHY THE DOCTOR WAS LATE



We have seen by this time that Grenfell does not rush slam-bang into danger for the mere sake of "the tumult and the shouting," like a soldier of fortune.

Once he said to me: "I'm like these dogs. Every time they hear a fight going on at the other end of the village they feel that they have to get into it, and off they go, pell-mell. Whenever I hear of a good scrap in progress anywhere in the world, my first impulse is to drop everything else and get into the struggle. Then I realize that I'm serving my fellow-man as truly by staying just where I am, and trying to do my duty in my place."

He is fearlessly willing to spend his life in heroic deeds: but he always has a definite purpose in view: he is not posing for the motion-pictures. So when he harnesses his dogs to go on a journey we may be pretty sure that at the other end of the run there is some man, woman or child who needs the Doctor, and who takes the medicine of hope just from seeing him at the bedside, before he has done anything with a knife or a needle. [297]

In the spring of 1919 the Doctor had to go to New York. It wasn't a sick person this time: it was a board of directors that wanted to hear his report on his work, and was to discuss with him big plans to raise \$1,500,000 for an endowment fund to carry it on. A Seamen's Institute, a string of hospitals, several mission steamers, an industrial school and a number of dispensaries take a lot of money to run, even with many volunteer helpers.

Most of us, if we find it inconvenient to attend a meeting, telephone or write politely to say we have the laryngitis or the shingles or some other good excuse, and are very, very sorry that we cannot come.

But Grenfell, having said he would be in New York at the end of May, was bound to be there in spite of fog and bog, sea and snow and berg, if it was humanly possible. I remember his story of what happened as vividly as though it were yesterday, for I also had an appointment with him at that time—and he was only a month late in keeping it. [298]

He had written me:

"I am in a terrible state about my boat: she is still in the blockade of ice, after two months fighting it. It is harder to beat than the Huns, but I am very anxious you should come with me, even if we have to canoe down the coast."

The story behind his finally successful attempt to reach New York on that occasion is as follows:

He set apart a month to make the journey, which in open summer weather would require only a week. He meant to go round the northern tip of Newfoundland, from his headquarters on the east coast at St. Anthony.

He planned, therefore, to go by dog-team northward to the Straits of Belle Isle, and then alongshore rounding Cape Bauld and Cape Norman, and on down the west coast to the railroad at Curling which would take him to Port aux Basques. At the latter place, the southwestern corner of Newfoundland, an ice-breaking steamer would carry him over Cabot Straits to North Sydney, and there he could get a train which would make connections for New York. [299]

There is what dogs would consider a fair route alongshore on the western coast. And the dogs' opinion is worth considering.

But there sprang up a continuing gale, with a blizzard in its teeth. It rocked and hammered and broke the ice with the fury of great guns round about the headlands. As the trail for much of the way lay along the sea-ice, it would have been as impossible for the dogs to go by it as it was to make that short-cut across the bay when Doctor and dogs had that terrible experience on the ice-pan.

"Very well then," said Grenfell, "we'll try a motor-boat."

Motor-boating is fun enough in summer on the placid reaches of the Delaware or the Hudson, but it is a very different matter on the coast of Newfoundland, in a narrow lane between great chunks that have broken off a Greenland glacier and lean brown crags with the sea crashing white and high upon them. If he went in a motor-boat, Grenfell would have to be on the lookout day and night for ice-pans and bergs, lest they close in and crush his boat as an elephant's tread would squash a peanut. [300]

When the blizzard that had spoiled the ice eased off, Grenfell had his boat ready. After two or three days of creeping in the lee of the rocks and trying to keep out of the clutch of the breakers, he would find himself at a point where he could begin a lonely trek overland, a hundred miles to the railroad, with his pack of food and clothing on his stalwart shoulders.

Just such a lonely walk as that many a sealer, fisherman or clergyman has made. If night overtakes a man, and he is far from a hut, he kicks a hole in a drift, lines it with fir boughs, makes his fire and crawls in snugly. He finds snow-water will not hurt him if he mixes it with tea or sugar. Grenfell, accustomed to hiking with the dog-team, felt no dread of a night with a snow-bank for his feather-bed.

The start was made auspiciously. The ice kept well out of the way till Grenfell, who had one man with him, cleared the harbor. As they went on, however, the east wind spied the bold little craft, and came on like an evil thing, to play cat-and-mouse with it.

It brought in the ice, and the ice was constantly pushing the boat toward the shore, toward which the current was pulling like a remorseless unseen hand.

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"Keep her off the rocks, Bill!" warned the Doctor, poling vigorously at the stern.

"I'm tryin' to, sir. But the wind is wonderful strong, and I'm thinkin'—"

Whatever Bill was thinking, he was rudely interrupted by a rock that did not show above the surface. They were in a most perilous position. The boat, caught on the tidal reef, tossed to and fro, and the propeller, lifted high out of water, whirled like an electric fan. Through a hole in the prow the water rushed in. The two men sprang to the leak and stuffed it with their hats and coats and anything on which they could lay their hands.

Fortunately the hole was not large, and as they had hammer and nails and pieces of board for such an emergency they managed to shut out the water with rude patchwork. They bailed the boat and shoved it off again, and crept onward. But the thermometer dropped fast, and in the intense cold the circulating pipes froze and burst. That damage, too, was laboriously repaired, and they went ashore and spent the night under the glittering starlight with no coverlid but juniper boughs, beside a roaring fire. The next day they saw that the ice had so closed in to the southward that their little boat could not possibly go forward.

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They must, therefore, retreat to St. Anthony, and try to get round the Cape and into the Straits of Belle Isle.

But they found they were now shut off even from their home port of St. Anthony!

Leaving the motor-boat at a tiny fishing-hamlet, they borrowed a small rowboat, and went out to "buck the ice."

The ice "made mock of their mad little craft." While they were hunting to and fro for crevices through which they might work their way, their old enemy the east wind was narrowing the channels till they saw that the tiny cockle-shell must soon be caught in the grip of the ice-pack and crushed to flinders.

"Jump out, Bill!" commanded the Doctor, setting the example. "We've got to lift her onto the pan!"

They seized the prow and hauled with might and main.

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But the boat was doomed. They could not pull the stern free in time. The ice came on, ramming and jamming—and in an instant the stern was cut off, and was crushed to kindling-wood. The ice chewed the splinters savagely, as a husky gnaws a bone.

This time there was no question of repairs. They had half a boat, and the gaunt cliffs of the shore were far away, with bits of ice dotting the black water between.

They had their guns, and they fired at intervals to signal to the shore.

"Evidently there ain't nobody at home," Bill remarked grimly. The pan was taking them out to the sea, just as it did with Grenfell and the dogs on that earlier memorable occasion.

Bill was a venturesome soul. "I'm going to copy," he announced briefly.

That meant, as I have explained, that he would jump from one cake of ice to the next. Eliza crossing the river-ice in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was nothing to the feat he set himself in that perilous, pitiless northern sea. There was no causeway to the land. He would have to do as a lumberman does in a log-jam, jumping before the object he has stepped on has time to sink with him. There would be no chance to think. He would have to keep on the move every instant, and death might be the penalty of a misstep.

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"Mebbe," said Bill, as coolly as though it were a question of running bases at a ball-game, "mebbe I'll git close enough to the land so some o' the boys 'll see me. Lend me your boat-hook, will you, Doctor?"

The Doctor, who would rather have taken the water-hazard himself, passed over the boat-hook.

Bill jumped from pan to pan, nimble as a goat. Fortune seemed to be favoring the brave. His leaps would have broken records at a track-meet. Sometimes he put out the boat-hook after the manner of a pole-vaulter, and flung himself with its aid across a terrifying chasm.

But as Grenfell watched and waited in suspense, all of a sudden, to his acute dismay, he saw the pole slip from his comrade's grasp.

Bill staggered on the edge of a pan, and gave a desperate wrench of the body to save himself from falling. In vain. In another instant he was struggling in the waves. In a moment more the pans might crush him, or he might be so benumbed that he

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could make no further effort to help himself.

While the Doctor stood there in mental anguish because he could do nothing to help his comrade, he saw Bill with a desperate effort throw a burly leg over the edge of the pan and scramble out, seemingly none the worse for the ducking.

All Bill could do now was to stand on his pan and let the wind and the sea take him where they would.

Grenfell kept on shooting, but there was no response from the shore.

Bill's pan crept nearer and nearer to the Doctor's—but not near enough to let Bill get back.

At last the shooting was answered.

They saw the flash of an oar—always the first signal of rescue under these conditions—and a boat hove in sight.

The two men on the ice shouted excited encouragement to each other at the same instant.

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The rescuers were not less joyful than the rescued. Such events as this have led some of the fishermen to believe that Grenfell leads a charmed life, and that the winds and the seas are aware that he is their master.

He had now spent a precious month in trying to break the ice-blockade. Since the ice had backed away a short distance from the coast, Grenfell now thought he might use the mission steamer herself, the brave *Strathcona*, to get round the northern end of the peninsula and so follow his original plan of a journey down the west coast. Compared with the *Strathcona*, the mail steamer was palatial luxury.

All went well enough till they came to the Straits. There it was the old story. The ice was piled mountainously, in a barricade that meant a long siege to penetrate. What was still worse, it closed in suddenly about the ship, just as it has so often embraced Arctic explorers. The *Strathcona* might not be able to rid herself of the encumbrance for many days, perhaps for several weeks.

One way was left—to walk. The distance was ninety miles—and what miles they were!

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Like the snail, he had to carry all his baggage on his back. It included a frying-pan, blankets, food, and a suit of clothes fit to wear at the meeting of the board of directors,—a sufficient burden for two human shoulder-blades. Mrs. Grenfell remained aboard the *Strathcona*. It was to take her down the east coast to the railroad at Lewisporte, when the ice released its hold on the ship. In time, if all went well, she would join her husband in New York.

It was a hard and lonely journey for Grenfell for the next three days. Thirty miles a day was as much as he could do over a beach piled high with gnarled, weather-worn rocks and ice carved by the sea into strange forms, and flung into rough sugar-bowl heaps. When night came, for want of soft snow-banks into which he might dig for a snug bed, he scraped himself a place in the wet sand and built a fire and dried his clothes to the tune of a raving wind. He knew the mail boat was expected at any time at Flower's Cove, and if he missed it he would have to wait a fortnight, at least, for its next southward journey. In spite of the discomfort of sleeping on the ground, and the fear that he might reach the Cove just too late to catch the steamer, his rest was sound and sweet, while it lasted. But he let himself have very little of it, because of the need of forcing the pace, and we can easily imagine that it was a man thoroughly ready for a night in bed who rapped at Parson Richard's door at Flower Cove when the three days' hike was over.

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"Well, well, Doctor!" Parson Richard's face was a warm and beaming lamp of welcome. "Come right in! Why didn't you telegraph? You know there's nobody I'd rather see than you.—Mary!" he called. "Get the Doctor a cup of tea—and let him have a piece of that caribou steak we've been keeping. It sure is good to see you, Doctor! Now we'll have a fine chance to talk, when you're rested. The mail-boat won't be along till to-morrow morning. There are so many things I want to tell you about and ask your advice."

Grenfell had tugged off his rubber boots and sat in a cushioned chair with his feet luxuriously outstretched to the stove. Now that the hard pull afoot from cove to cove was over, it would be comparatively luxurious travel the rest of the way. He could probably have the full length of the table to sleep on, in the dining-saloon of the *Ethie* when the dishes were cleared away. Since it was the beginning of the season, and southward-bound travel was slack, he might even get a berth to himself.

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But a frowsy-polled messenger just at that delicious moment of warmth and reverie threw open the front door without the ceremony of knocking, and a blast of wind swirled after him.

Parson Richards in his thin, worn coat clasped himself like a cabman and shivered. "Shut the door, Tom! What is it?"

The pale and agitated messenger could hardly stammer out the words.

"It's—it's Abe Gould, sir!"

"What has Abe Gould done now?"

"He's shot himself in the leg!"

"Well, well, is it as bad as all that?" asked the good man, his brow furrowing with anxiety. "We must come right off and see what we can do."

"He's bleeding to death!"

Parson Richards turned to Grenfell. "Now you stay right here, Doctor!"

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The Doctor was already hauling on his wet, stiff boots.

"No, no," protested Grenfell, as if somebody had suggested a joy-ride and he didn't want to miss it. He turned to the boy. "Take me to him, Tom. How far is it?"

"Five miles, sir," said the trembling lad. "Oh, do come, please, sir, and hurry up. He's bleeding to death."

"Have you dogs?"

"No, sir."

"Can you get any?"

"No, sir. All the good dogs is away."

"Then we'll walk—or run," Grenfell smiled.

He left the tea with the spoon in it, and did not even stop to thrust a bit of bread into his pocket.

"How did it happen?" he said, as they started the jog-trot from the door.

"He was cleanin' a gun, sir, and it went off and shot him in the leg."

Not much more was said. Man and boy needed all the breath they had for that five-mile marathon over rocks and stumps and snow in the biting wind. Grenfell remembered the cross-country runs of the "harriers" at Oxford. Then, it was smooth going through fields and meadows and down the winding rural lanes. Then, he ran after nights of comfortable sleep, and with good fuel for the human machine. Now he had to make speed when he was hungry and after three broken nights of lying on damp sand. What a difference!

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But the old zest of life and youth came flooding back to him—the thought of the good he could do was a spur to keep him going at top speed. Of old he ran for a ribbon, a medal or a cup. Now he was running for a life. So often his errands, afoot or behind the dogs, had that guerdon before them—and what prize of victory was more valuable than that?

The boy had hard work keeping up with the man—the man who always had kept himself in the pink of condition, whose frame never failed to serve him when he called on it for a sudden, extra strain.

Grenfell remembered the war service of the young fellow he ran to help. Abe Gould was but twenty. As a member of the First Regiment of Newfoundland, 5,000 young men picked from the 250,000 islanders, he had given four years of his life to the world war, in France and Flanders. Then he had come home, and with his honors, and the tales of his bravery on all tongues and in all ears, he had gone back quietly to scraping the fish and mending the nets as though he never knew another life or another country.

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As they ran on with hearts pounding, the one big question that kept asking itself in the Doctor's mind was, "Am I too late?" He forgot everything else—the battle with the ice-pack, the possible fate of the *Strathcona*, the weary trudging round the northern promontory. Nothing mattered except the brave young soldier, whose blood was ebbing away clock-tick by clock-tick, as they hastened to his side. That five miles seemed longer than the ninety miles he had covered in the three preceding days.

He was no longer stiff and lame—the need of him seemed to have put wings on his heels as if he were Mercury.

There was the little grey house at last. The panting boy at his side gasped out, "My brother's there!"

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Grenfell fairly fell against the door. It was flung open instantly. The room was crowded with people who sobbed and sniffled and wrung their hands: and none could do anything to help.

"The Doctor!" they cried. It was almost as if Christ Himself had come.

The young soldier lay on a hard table, flat on his back. Imagine his conscious agony. What was left of his leg had been laid on a feather pillow and to stop the flow of blood his foot was strung up to the ceiling. Blood and salt water soaked his garments and dripped to the floor, as if he were a slab of seal-meat.

Men and women alike were weeping, and telling each other how fond they were of Abe, and what a good, brave lad he was, and how they would hate to lose him now.

Trouble in this part of the world makes people singularly neighborly, and often in their need they are as children. They think that any stranger from outside, with better clothes than they wear, must know enough to doctor them.

Most of the people had to be sent from the room, for the sake of air and space and the poor boy's comfort. Dr. Grenfell had no instruments for an operation. He had no medicines. But messengers went hither and yon, and picked up things he had left in the neighborhood for use in such a crisis. They came back with a knife or two, rusty and in need of sharpening, a precious thimbleful of ether, shreds of silk to tie the arteries, a small supply of opium.

[314]

By the time they came back from their house-to-house search, Dr. Grenfell had wound a towel round the patient's thigh, and twisted it with a stick in a "tourniquet" that stopped the deadly ebbing of the blood.

There wasn't ether enough, but what he had was used. A man stood on each side and held the patient to the table. Grenfell had to pick out piece after piece of bone from the shattered leg with his fingers. It didn't help at all when one of his helpers fainted at the gory sight, and fell across the body of the wounded man. The leg had to be cut off, eventually, but Abe's life was saved. During the night that followed Grenfell's ministrations, the Doctor sat by the table-bed, feeding the patient a sleeping-draught of opium now and then, to dull the awful agony. Not a wink of sleep did the great physician get, the long night through. But as he sat there, he was happy to think—that he had come in time to save Abe Gould. This more than made up for the fact that he was a month late for the meeting with those New York gentlemen. And when he finally reached them and told them why he was late—they forgave him.

[315]

No wonder the fisher-folk of the Labrador swear by "the Doctor" and turn a deaf ear and a curling lip of contempt toward any who dares to talk against him. They have seen him on the firing-line of his work: he is their friend: they know what he did for them and theirs, and—men of few words as they are—they would in their turn do anything for him.

## THE END

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Typographical errors corrected in text:

Page 36: 'Ie means' replaced with 'It means'  
Page 235: 'the next to be dropped' replaced with 'the  
nets to be dropped'

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\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GRENFELL: KNIGHT-ERRANT OF  
THE NORTH \*\*\*

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