

AN HEROIC MISSION.

BY FELIX J. KOCH.

It's a far, far cry, indeed, from the simple Moravian missions to the Eskimo on the coast of Labrador, a thousand miles north of St. John's, Newfoundland, and from the summer cod-fishing settlements on the fiords, or tickles, eating their way into this desolate coast; and, again from the trading posts of the Hudson Bay Company, to which trappers gravitate from untold miles of wild to the heart of American civilisation. Yet it is here that Dr. and Mrs. Grenfell, the latter a Bryn Mawr graduate, find the scene of their nursing endeavours.

Arrived here, the fishermen erect or repair their curious summer-homes. Wood is exceedingly scarce on this part of Labrador, the thickest tree-trunks are about the diameter of a fishing-pole, and these thin-trunked trees then are gathered in the mountains behind the shore and set up into homes. Usually a number of them rise, upright, from the rocks of the coast, to support a platform, this in order that the fish may be raised directly from the punts by bucket and windlass to the curing house. The weather is cold and miserable here even at best, and so the workers at the fish strive to shelter themselves to the utmost. Over this framework, this platform, an ark-shaped structure, is built, its walls chinked with earth, its roof covered with sod, to keep out the cold. Down the



GATHERING DRIED COD.

Dr. Grenfell's hospital work has indeed been a unique one. For a thousand miles and more, north of St. John's, Newfoundland, the Labrador coast is tenanted in the brief summer by some 30,000 odd ignorant fishermen, come up to take the cod that feeds the world. Most of these folk are financed by wealthy concerns of Newfoundland, who own the schooners, bringing them out and their stock of scanty food supplies to last the summer; fit them with cod traps and bait, and accessories for salting the fish and packing, and then carry them to appointed spots where fishing is good—so many at this point, and so many at that, so many at the other.

centre a rude passage runs; at either side there are tables on which the fish are cut and cured.

Behind this fore-room, which may extend on to shore, comes a second chamber. Usually, though, this "residence room"—for that is what it becomes—is a house to itself, a few yards back on the shore. Whatsoever, it, too, is quite as crude, built likewise to exclude all air when desired. Early each morning, weather permitting, men and boys at such colony go out to sink the heavy cod-trap or to raise other of these traps and take in the heavy catch of fish. Meantime "schooner girls," so called—summer substitutes for wives—tidy up the cabin—as a fishwife.

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