

THE CHILDREN'S HEROISM

By F. A. MITCHEL

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The Breton coast of France is a wild but very beautiful region. Artists go there to get subjects for their pictures, which they find not only in the scenery, but in the simple peasantry which lives there. On that coast are lighthouses such as really protect ships from going ashore in every civilized country.

One of these lighthouses was recently the scene of a story—a real story—such as few authors of fiction can invent, a story full of pathos, of heroism, of a great work in protecting the lives of many who were sailing or steaming over the ocean unconscious of what was going on under the light.

In the dwelling portion of this lighthouse the keeper lay dying. He had that morning been in his usual health, but was suddenly taken ill. Nevertheless he kept at his work of preparing the light against the evening. His wife knew nothing about the lamps or the machinery by which they were made to alternately shine and disappear. His children were a boy and a girl—the boy nine, the girl eleven years old. There was no one near the lighthouse to call upon to take up the lighthouse keeper's duties when the night came.

Nor was there any doctor that could administer to his physical ailments. The keeper grew worse. Still he kept at his work till the afternoon when he was obliged to give up and go to bed. He had cleaned the lamps, filled them with oil and in every way got them ready to be lighted, but either he had not had time or the strength to wind up the great weights that turned the machinery, causing the revolutions—revolutions by which the light was made to flash.

When night came on the keeper was drawing his last breath. His wife was praying by his bedside; his children were standing wondering at this their first sight of death—death that made their mother a widow and them fatherless. There were a few long breaths, the intervals between them growing greater, a rattle in the throat and the keeper was dead.

As soon as the widow could sufficiently recover from the death scene she thought of the lives that might be wrecked from her husband's being thus suddenly taken away from his work of protection. It was a dangerous coast. Skippers had been used to seeing the light and counting the seconds between its flashes, and then they knew where they were. If it failed to shine they would run out of their courses.

The widow roused herself, and, taking her children with her, went up into the lighthouse. She lighted the lamps, but she could not make the machinery revolve. A light that did not flash in the place where a flashlight should be would be as misleading to sailors as no light at all.

The little girl placed herself at the revolving apparatus and found that it turned easily. She pushed it around, making the circuit under her mother's direction in the time it was used to revolve, then she said to her mother—

"Mamma, go back to father. We children will turn the machinery and make the light flash."

So the mother, whose grief, more keen than that of childhood, sapped her powers, went back to the bedside of her dead husband to pray, leaving her children the only barrier between lives out on the ocean and the rocks that were ready to engulf them. The girl turned till she was tired, then her little brother took up the work. When he became tired she relieved him.

And so the children worked on while their father lay dead below and their mother prayed beside him. And the captain and the sailors on the vessels that passed, coming and going, looked at the light and wondered that it now lost, now gained, a few seconds. And persons in their berths below slept soundly, not dreaming that they owed their lives to a girl of eleven and a boy of nine.

Midnight passed, the small hours of the morning came, and the children, toiling on, began to think of the rest that day would bring them. How they, especially the boy, kept awake is a marvel. And now a faint but welcome gray streak appears in the east. A dim outline of the unseen land begins to be apparent. But the children work on, turning, ever turning. What though the interval between the flashes lengthen as their little legs grow hard to move and their steps shorter! The dawn lightens, the white breakers grow plain, then the black promontories against the sky, then both land and ocean.

"Mamma," called the girl, "may we not stop now?"

"Yes, my child; it is light. The sailors can see where they are without you children to tell them."

There come persons who have heard this story of heroism and ask to see the little hero and heroine. They find a family unconscious of having done anything remarkable. The children open their eyes and wonder what it means. They only turned the apparatus all night because without the light the sailors would be lost on the black ocean.

But they are not their own judges. Their work is heralded in foreign lands—is flashed across the waters and read by millions of people not only in America, but all over the world.

Verily, the human heart may still be touched.

Didn't Have to Ask.
Brown was in a terrible hurry to be at his club. He had been patiently sitting for a considerable time, and then, getting exasperated, he poked the conductor in the ribs with his umbrella, saying, "Hi, conductor, is this bus going on?"

"No, sir," replied the conductor. "It is standing perfectly still."—London Ideas.

Pinsidly Said.
Hewitt—Does the climate agree with your wife?
Jewell—That's more than I want to know about her.

HERE IT IS

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HERE IS THE PLAN: To the contestant in each district sending in the largest number of Subscriptions, new or old between now and 6 P. M. August 14 will be awarded one of these **GENUINE DIAMOND RINGS** purchased from and now on display at Burmeister and Andresen Oregon City Jewelers. Subscriptions for the Daily Enterprise will be counted as double those for the weekly. The winners will be announced and Prizes awarded Sept. 2 the closing night of the contest. Should the winners of the Capital Prizes; the \$400 Kimball Pianos be the ones who send in the most subscriptions under this offer they will be awarded to the next highest in each district. This will give each candidate an equal chance to win a prize, and surely these beautiful rings are worth making an extra effort to win. Under this offer each yearly subscription to the Daily Enterprise will count 2,000 votes and each yearly subscription to the Weekly Enterprise 1,000 votes. Now you who are at the bottom of the list get in and work if you can't win one of the Capital Prizes your chances are as good as the next to win one of these **GENUINE DIAMOND RINGS**.

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For further particulars address the **Morning Enterprise** OREGON CITY OREGON