

My First Herring

I SHALL never forget my first experience of fishing. I was only a youngster at the time, and had recently come to Wellington, so was most enthusiastic when we planned to go to Paremata to fish for herrings. After days of planning we were ready, but at the last moment someone discovered that we did not have bait. Mother solved the problem by foisting on us a fry which had seen much better days, and I, being the novice had to carry the bag.

Throughout the journey I felt conscious that something was wrong inside the bag. We finally arrived at the beach after a gruelling ten minutes when we crossed the railway bridge stepping from sleeper to sleeper, and looking down at the deep river below, we prepared to fish. When I was told that I must learn to cut up bait my worst fears were realised.

However, my line was first out, and I was told by the professionals that we might have to wait half an hour for a bite. Imagine the comments coming up my way when I was seen hauling as fast as I could. Particularly voluble was our friend, who had to throw my line in again. An instinct told me there was a fish at the other end, and the greatest triumph of my fishing career eventuated when one glittering little herring fully four inches in length splashed through the wavelets that lap-



ped the shore. It was the first fish of the day, the first of my lined victims, and incidentally the last one I caught for the day.—"Gwendolyn."

Mrs. Hone's Request

MRS. HONE 'phoned my sister the other evening and asked if she would come over and attend to young Moko, as he was very cross.

"What good can I do?" my sister asked in surprise.

"Werra," the wahine explained, "I once hear you say t'at you make fret-work your hoppy (hobby), an' Moko peen fretting orra tay."—"O.W.," Waireki.

Primitive Instincts

MOTHER had severely lectured Miss Eight-year-old for twice upsetting

the sugar-bowl, and the youngster was tearfully protesting.

"I-I wish," she wound up, "I h-had a house of my own, w-where I could knock things over in peace."—"O.W.," Waireki.

Fisherman's Luck

GENERALLY speaking the "small" fisherman considers himself an unlucky fellow (not that that worries

him), and that good luck other than a good net now and again never comes his way. This no doubt is the foundation of the expression "Fisherman's luck." But one acquaintance of mine was a little out of the ordinary. By the water's edge one day he saw a lump of fatty tissue of a grey-black colour and out of curiosity picked it up. Taking it to a neighbouring whare he asked the opinion of the Italian fishermen as to its origin. Someone suggested ambergris, but this was laughed down, and many not too complimentary remarks were forthcoming to explain the mysterious lump. On the point of throwing it away, he sought one more counsel—that of an elderly Italian who had had many and varied experiences in the warmer seas. "Huh—that ambergris, Paddy; you send it England and get plenty money," and he weighed it in his hand. "Thirty poun"—thirty pounds worth, that was worth finding, for the spermaceti whale, itself a rare visitor to these waters, excretes very little of this precious substance.

Maids of Brittany

*The little Maids of Brittany
In white are going by,
To tell their beads, confess their needs
To Christ on high.*

*The chapel bells of Brittany
Are ringing on the air,
The kind folk wend their way to spend
An hour in prayer.*

*The simple folk of Brittany
Have simple hearts as well.
'Tis Heaven's own grace a little space
With them to dwell.*

*Good-bye! dear hearts of Brittany,
May God your kindness crown.
But sad am I to see the sky
Of London Town.*

—John Storm.

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