

## MARY.

A Sketch from Life.

BY ELIZABETH ENGLISH.

IT was a cosy little house in the south-land where Mary lived,—a homey house with a vine-shaded porch and neat, sunny rooms. It stood on a hilltop and before it to the northward stretched acres of rolling pine land, with the fresh green of the young grass in the summer, the rich golden bronze of the wild oats in the fall, and always the ever-varying, never-changing pines. In the west the glorious sunsets burned behind the forest, and just at the foot of the hill ran the gleaming white ribbon of shell road straight to the town a mile away.

Mary's appearance did not indicate that she had anything in common with either the poetry of the woods and sky or the social life of the town. She was small for her fifteen years, with no graceful curve of form or outline, with a pale, plain face, and the fair hair of the Swedes. Neither homely nor beautiful she was,—just an ordinary, unassuming girl. Shy and retiring by nature, she was yet a faithful member of church and Sunday-school, and secretary of the Mission Band. So she lived her quiet, unobtrusive life.

And one morning her broken-hearted father brought word into town that Mary was dead. Only a week had she been ill. It was all so sudden. The family was terrified, bewildered, stunned with grief. The dear old deacon who hastened to the home found the house full of friends, lamenting noisily. He gathered the family in a room alone for prayer. "Why, where's Mary?" exclaimed the elder sister, so unreal did it seem that she was gone. The storm of grief that followed was hushed by the deacon's prayer, which brought to those distracted souls the peace they needed for those trying days.

After that, the beauty of the young life came to light. Never strong in body, unable to share in the harder tasks of the home, Mary had yet been its light, its beauty, its poetry. "We can't go into a room but we see something her little fingers made," said the mother, with her quaint accent. "She was always in a hurry, seems if, from the time she was a little baby,—always hurrying. Everything that nobody else found time to do, she did." That mat on the table, and this on the mantelpiece, Mary made. It was Mary who arranged the flowers in the vases, and the potted plants were Mary's too. It was Mary who doctored her brother's throat every night for a year. She and her brother had rarely congenial natures. Whatever he thought, she thought; whatever he liked, she liked; whatever new idea he had, she had just the same. He, poor fellow! missed her sorest of all. "There's only half of me here," he said.

Outside her home, unexpected glimpses of Mary's life were found. "Please take some of this asparagus fern for her," one lady said. "Cut it down to the ground; it came from her house." "Mary ——— was the one that first got me started comin' to church."

said a rough looking young man, now a church-member. And these are only glimpses, accidentally discovered. What may be the unknown influence of that quiet young life? There are words lovingly spoken of another Mary, which belong to her also,—“She hath done what she could.”

The new secretary of the mission band had been looking over the roll-book. “We each of us had a flower-name, you know,” she said, with a touch of reverence in her voice, “and Mary’s was Morning-glory.”

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## A CRY FROM THE CONGO.

BY G. P. TURNBULL.

The following lines were suggested by a story told by Rev. P. Cameron Scott, a missionary in the Congo Free State. One day, when Mr. Scott was preaching to a group of natives, an old chief approached him and said: “Why didn’t you tell this story sooner? Why didn’t you let us know?”

“Why didn’t you tell us sooner?”  
The words came sad and low;  
“O ye who knew the Gospel truths,  
Why didn’t you let us know?  
The Saviour died for all the world,  
He died to save from woe;  
But we never heard the story—  
Why didn’t you let us know?”

“You have had the Gospel message,  
You have known a Saviour’s love;  
Your dear ones passed from Christian homes  
To the blessed land above.  
Why did you let our fathers die,  
And into the silence go,  
With no thought of Christ to comfort.  
Why didn’t you let us know?”

“We appeal to you, O Christians,  
In lands beyond the sea,  
Why didn’t you tell us sooner,  
Christ died for you and me”  
Nineteen hundred years have passed  
Since disciples were told to go  
To the uttermost parts of the earth and teach:  
Why didn’t you let us know?”

“You say you are Christ’s disciples;  
That you try his work to do:  
And yet his very last command  
Is disobeyed by you.  
Tis indeed a wonderful story  
He loved the whole world so,  
That he came and died to save us.  
But you didn’t let us know!”

“O souls redeemed by Jesus,  
Think what your Lord hath done!  
He came to earth and suffered,  
And died for every one.  
He expected you to tell it,  
As on your way you go;  
But you kept the message from us!  
Why didn’t you let us know?”

“Hear this pathetic cry of ours,  
O dwellers in Christian lands!  
For Africa stands before you,  
With pleading, outstretched hands;  
You may not be able to come yourself,  
But some in your stead can go;  
Will you not send us teachers?  
Will you not let us know?”