

Another Fellow's Blacksmith*.

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith is a lazy man is he,
And idle are his hands;
His hand is rough, uncombed and long,
His face is brown as tan—
The least exertion makes him sweat,
He drinks when'er he can;
And he cannot look you in the face
For he pays not any man.

Week in and week out, from morn to night,
He'll to the ale-house go;
You can hear him coming home quite
"tight,"

With staggering step and slow,
With the errier who carries the village bell,
When the evening sun is low,
And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see him roll about,
They laugh to hear him roar,
And catch the stuttering words that fly
Like chaff from the threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to no church,
To sit among "the boys;"
He hears no parson pray or preach,
He loves no choir girl's voice,
Sitting in the public house—
A tankard cold as ice
In summer, and in winter hot—
Is his sole paradise.
He with the landlord has a row,
And tells him that he lies;
Then, with a hard rough hand, he gets
A punch between the eyes.

Drinking, quarrelling, sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees debauch begin,
'Tis night before its close;
One thing attempted, one thing done—
He's got a redder nose.

—Echo.

A Heroine of the North.

BY M. V. M.

NEAR the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, in Sweden, lived, some twenty years ago, a simple peasant couple known as Hans and Kirsten Mathson. Maria Magdalena was their loving and obedient daughter, and for her a life of toil began right early. As soon as she was old enough she led her father's reindeer to the hills in the spring to find pasture, remaining with them until the autumn, and then spent the long winter in spinning, and other simple household duties of the Lapp peasantry.

At that time most of the Lapps, living far from the great towns, knew little or nothing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hans and Kirsten Mathson, however, were Christians, and had a copy of the Bible in their humble home.

Maria was early taught to read and love the blessed Book; and her young heart went out in tender love not only to the Saviour of sinners, but to the sinners whom he died to redeem. During the summer days, when she sat among the silent hills, deep, sweet thoughts stirred the heart of the simple peasant girl. She knew little about the great world, but she did know that here—in her little corner—there were great darkness and pressing need. How she longed to have

the Gospel made known to her own dear people! And how impossible it seemed that such a thing could be brought about! But it must be! God planted the thought deep down in the girl's heart, and she pondered and prayed over it by day and by night.

At length, one day—like a swift flash of light—came the startling words spoken in the silence of the loving heart: "Go to the King of Sweden. Tell him the story of your people's need, and he will surely help."

Maria was terrified at the thought. Clearly that was impossible! But as the weeks and months went by, the message came again and again, until at last the brave girl accepted it as the very voice of the Lord, and set her face to do his bidding.

These were some of the lions in the way: Maria was only a poor, uneducated Lapp girl. She did not know the Swedish language. That must be learned. She must leave her parents, who could ill afford to lose her help. She must travel on foot six hundred miles, over an unknown road. She had little or no money with which to undertake the journey.

But God called her! That was enough. For three years she toiled, with such helps as she could obtain, in learning the Swedish language. Then she won the consent of her parents, fastened on her Lapland skates, and began her toilsome and lonely journey.

Think of it, girls! As young, timid, home-loving, as you are, this maiden—at the call of God—in the middle of a northern winter, crossed the icy plains of Lapland, seeking shelter by night among the peasants, a distance of six hundred miles, through a strange country! Was she not a true heroine?

At Gefle she found a public conveyance bound for Stockholm; and here, as soon as her errand became known, she was warmly welcomed. Kind Christian hearts were stirred by her story, and a large sum of money was subscribed to establish schools among the Lapps.

At length the peasant girl was permitted to see the king. So successfully did she plead the cause of her poor people—relying only upon God for wisdom—that the king became greatly interested, and promised his protection and support to the mission.

And now Maria was ready to return to her home. Nothing could induce her to remain longer, though the greatest kindness and attention were shown her. She had obeyed God! He had made her work successful, and now her duty lay in the direction of home.

It was not long before Maria had the delight of seeing schools in active operation among her people, and Swedish colporteurs carrying the message of life throughout the thinly populated regions. Maria was of great help in setting these schools going, and then, when all was in working

order, the simple, God-fearing maiden took up her home duties once more, and went out to the hills with her reindeer as before!

Once again, some years later, Maria made the long journey to Stockholm, to beg for the protection of her people from the unjust encroachments of colonists. The people knew whom they could trust with their interests, and the peasant girl was again their successful advocate at court.

As before, she met a cordial welcome at Stockholm, but nothing could keep her in the capital after her mission was accomplished. Maria knew that to truly serve and please God, is to be faithful to the work he gives, be it great or small.

Brave, tender, faithful heart! Loving much, and, therefore, daring much. Truly, the lowest place becomes the highest, where love and obedience walk hand in hand with duty!

The Drunkard's Wife.

IN Ohio, I was passing from one town to another, and on going to the station I saw a vacant seat in the cars. They were very much crowded.

"May I sit by you?" I said to a gentleman.

"Yes, Mr. Gough, you may. I am very glad to have you for a fellow traveller."

"Thank you for your courtesy."

"I heard you speak last night. I'm a pretty hard drinker. I look like it, don't I?"

"Somewhat."

"I am worth some property; but I might be worth thousands where I am only worth ten to day. I'm a pretty rough character, but I have always considered myself a man of my word. When I left after your lecture, I went home and said to my wife: 'I will never drink another drop of liquor as long as I live.' I thought she would be tickled at it, but she burst out crying, and dropped on her knees. I didn't like it. I'm not that sort. I have not been on my knees since I was eight years old; and as for the inside of a church, I hardly know what it is. I didn't like it; and I said, 'What in thunder are you on your knees for?' I went to bed sulky; got up this morning, and I wanted whiskey. I had never promised any one before that I would not drink; but I had done so now, and I'm a man of my word."

"I'm going to see about a piece of property I bought when drunk. I'm going right among the drink and into temptation; but I would rather be carried home dead to-night than carried home drunk. I want whiskey now, but I don't mean to have it. I tried to take my breakfast this morning. I couldn't get it down. The more I strove to eat, the more I loathed the food. I wanted whiskey—I felt as if I must have whiskey; and I knew where I was going."

Then the tears came, and the lip quivered as he said:

"Well, Mr. Gough, you may think it very queer of me, but I have been on my knees this morning for over an hour."

"Have you?"

"Yes."

"Then," I said, "keep there, and you will go home sober. No man ever drank a glass of liquor in this world while he was honestly praying God to keep him from it."

There is safety *there*, but all the rest is risk.—*J. B. Gough.*

Macaulay's Tribute to His Mother.

"CHILDREN, look in those eyes, listen to that dear voice, notice the feeling of even a single touch that is bestowed upon you by that hand! Make much of it while yet you have that most precious of all good gifts—a loving mother. Read the unfathomable love of those eyes—the kind anxiety of that tone and look, however slight your pain.

"In after-life you may have friends; but never will you have again the inexpressible love and gentleness lavished upon you which none but a mother bestows. Often do I sigh in the struggle with the hard, uncaring world, for the sweet, deep security I felt when, of an evening, nestling in her bosom, I listened to some quiet tale suitable to my age, read in her untiring voice. Never can I forget her sweet glances cast upon me when I appeared asleep—never her kiss of peace at night. Years have passed away since we laid her beside my father in the old churchyard; yet still her voice whispers from the grave, and her eye watches over me, as I visit spots long since hallowed to the memory of my mother."

Our Neighbours at the Bottom.

AT a meeting of the Chinese Union in Philadelphia the following incident was related: A distinguished clergyman once asked a gentleman to contribute some money for foreign missions, and received the reply,

"I don't believe in foreign missions; I won't give anything except to home missions. I want to give to benefit my neighbours."

"Well," coolly responded the doctor, "whom do you regard as your neighbours?"

"Why, those around me."

"Do you mean those whose land joins yours?"

"Yes."

"Well," said Dr. Skinner, "how much land do you own?"

"About five hundred acres," was the reply.

"How far down do you own it?" inquired Dr. Skinner.

"Why, I never thought of it before, but I suppose I own halfway through."

"Exactly," said the doctor, "I suppose you do; and I want this money for the Chinese—the men whose land joins yours on the bottom."

*See Longfellow's poem.