

MATHURINE'S TREASURE,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



NOT very far from the small Normandy town of Avranches is a cottage where, some years ago, an old woman lived, whose name was Mathurine. The cottage was very tiny, paved with stone, and with very little furniture in it. Everything bore the aspect of extreme poverty, though all was kept in perfect neatness and order.

One day Mathurine was going for water, for the well was some distance off. She had to cross the

road and a large field, now golden with buttercups and whose trees were in all the glory of spring; and she herself, though she did not know it, made rather a picturesque study of an old Normandy peasant set in the fair frame of her beautiful country.

She had on dark blue worsted stockings, heavy wooden shoes, and a dark jacket over her short woollen skirt; and under her white cap was a cheerful old face, with the smile upon it that it usually bore.