

## Choice Literature.

## Still and Deep.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED,"  
"ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

## CHAPTER I.

"Mary,"  
The voice was very low and feeble which spoke that single word, but it was instantly heard by her to whom it was addressed. "I am here dear; I was only gathering this lovely white rose for you—is it not beautiful? So pure and delicate!"

"Yes, it resembles you, my child, with your white dress and fair sweet face," said the old man who had first spoken, with the courtly gallantry of a generation that is rapidly passing away. "But come, now, and sit down beside me; there is much that I have wished to say to you for a long time past, and this hour seems well suited to the task—all is so still and tranquil."

It was in truth a peaceful scene on which the eyes of the speaker rested. His chair had been placed in front of the picturesque little villa, which he had inhabited for more than twenty years, and as the house had been built on the brow of a hill, it commanded an extensive view on either side, over one of the fairest counties in England—rich pastures, sweeping away in graceful undulating lines towards the far horizon, alternated with orchards and gardens and wooded knolls, where pretty country houses peeped out, half hidden by the clustering trees, and immediately below the sloping lawn where the old man sat, a little murmuring brook ran merrily along, its clear waters dividing the grounds of the villa from a soft green meadow which lay beyond; and over all the sylvan beauty of that smiling landscape, had fallen the calm and glory of the sunset hour, bathing it in the lovely light of the after-glow, which filled the western sky as with a sea of gold and hushing it into that indistinguishable peace which steals so gently on the living world after the death of day. Scarcely was there a sound or movement in all the tranquil scene; only faint sighs from the rising night wind rippled the long grass in the field, and swept the fragrance of the roses in the villa garden through the scented air, while, occasionally, soft musical murmurs told that the little sleepy birds were nestling down to rest, among the ivy leaves that clothed the sheltering walls around the fair domain. Overhead there was not a cloud or a stain in all the heavenly vault, but just where the limpid blue of the upper arch merged into the clear opal of the sun's forsaken shrine, one pale pure star had started into life, and hung, quivering in its silver radiance, over the darkening earth.

There is no period of the twenty-four hours when the subtle sympathy of nature with the human spirit hushes itself so deeply felt as in these moments of the unearthly twilight calm, and its influence had fallen, with manifest power, on the two persons who now sat together side by side on the upper part of the lawn, where no trees impeded their view of the far-spreading landscape all around. The elder of the two could, in truth, have nowhere found a more apt type of his own expiring life than the fading light of that summer evening. For not only was he in the evening of his days, but already the shadow of the great night, whose mystery no living eye has ever pierced, was stealing over his wan face and attenuated form. He was a man between sixty and seventy years of age, whose whole appearance and manner had the unmistakable stamp of high birth and breeding, while his refined and clear cut features still retained traces of the striking beauty for which he had been remarkable in the days of his youth and strength. For many months past he had been aware that a fatal malady was sapping his life, and he knew that now the end was very near. Yet, though his extreme emaciation and pallor were due to his physical sufferings, it was not any bodily ailment which had set on his forehead the seal of unspeakable pain—borne by him in impenetrable silence for all the years which made up the sum of her young life who now sat in her fair stillness by his side. There was not the slightest trace of a likeness between them, as indeed there could not be, for they were in no way related by the ties of blood; but Mary Trevelyan had never known any other father, and the house of Louis, Comte de L'Isle had been her home from the days of her earliest infancy.

We have given this man his true name and title by birth, but for more than thirty years he had renounced his nationality, and become naturalized in England, while never in all that time had he set foot on the shores of his native France, well as he loved her still. In his adopted country he was known as Mr. Lisle, and none but himself knew that an old French chateau, where his ancestors had dwelt for many generations, and a noble estate in his own fair land, had passed away from him because he would not compromise the principles which were to him more precious than wealth or position. All his life long he had been an ardent Legationist, following therein the traditions of his family; but in his devout and earnest mind the belief in the divine right of kings amounted to religion, so he did not hesitate to sacrifice it even name and country. In his youth he had held a confidential post in the service of Charles X.; and when that unhappy king was forced to fly from France, Louis de L'Isle not only insisted on sharing his fallen fortunes, but he took a solemn vow that he would never return to his native country till the day when the Bourbons should be called from exile, and the true heir of their princely race should be placed upon the throne of his fathers. That day had never come, as we know, but his loyal true-hearted man had adhered to his resolution, and he had, indeed, been greatly strengthened in it by that which he termed the apostasy of the only relative he had left in France. This was Armand de L'Isle, a brother of his father's, but so much younger that he was very little older than Louis himself. He was a cold, egotistical, narrow-minded man, whose master-passion was the desire to promote his own interests, and whose whole being was so completely given up to a miserable idleness of self,

that there remained no place for nobler aims or purer worship. Armand smiled contemptuously when he heard that Louis had abandoned wealth and position to follow his kingly master into exile, and he composedly entered into possession of the estates, which he declared, had been forfeited by his nephew. In this proceeding he was openly supported by the reigning powers; and so astute and worldly-wise did he prove himself to be, that with every succeeding change of government or dynasty which gained ascendancy in restless France, he managed always to be on the winning side, even while he never took the smallest active part in the service of his country. Such a character and such a career could not but fill a noble-minded man like Louis with ineffable disgust, and he resolutely repudiated all relationship with his uncle, and refused to hold the smallest communication with him. He never so much as mentioned his name; so that his own family were not aware of the existence of this undesirable relation, and, as years went by, he completely lost sight of him, and did not know whether he were alive or dead. Louis knew that Armand had married a very wealthy woman, of low birth—the first unequal alliance which any of their noble family had ever made—but while this step served to increase his indignation against his unworthy uncle, it prevented him from ever hoping to regain his lost estates, as he concluded that Armand would have children, to whom he would take very good care to secure the succession. Louis therefore turned his thoughts away determinately and for ever from the old home of his race, and caused himself to be naturalized in England, as we have said, in order that his son at least might not have the pain of feeling that he was living in exile. To himself the total severance from his native land was an unquestionable trial, but he found a compensation for it in the love of his young English wife, which drew the sting from that and every other sorrow. For well-nigh thirty years she was the very sweetness of life to him; and in her devoted faithful heart he had found a refuge for every care, till, a few months previously, she had preceded him to that yet much surer Home, where a love that cannot die makes sunshine evermore. And now he was following swiftly on the noiseless steps with which she had paced to that unseen country, the native land of souls that are loyal to the sinless King, and there were but two in the world he was leaving, over whom his thoughts lingered with a fond regret—Bertrand Lisle, his only child, and Mary Trevelyan, his adopted daughter. His son had been brought up entirely as an Englishman, and was now, at the age of twenty-six years, serving his adopted country as charge d'affaires to one of the principal Legations on the Continent; while Mary, who was five years younger, had, ever since the death of Mrs. Lisle, been a most devoted nurse and companion to her adopted father. Yet, she knew absolutely nothing of the causes which had linked her in such close bonds with a family to whom she was in no way related. She knew that her own parents had both died on the same day that she herself had been born into the world, and that from the very hour of her mother's departure, Mrs. Lisle had taken her to her heart as her own child; but no explanation had ever been given to her of the circumstances which had led to this arrangement, and when she became old enough to feel some wish to penetrate the mystery, Mr. Lisle drew from her a promise that she would never ask of any one a single question on the subject. She had obeyed, as was natural to her reserved character, without a word of expostulation; but an indefinable instinct taught her, from the first, that the hidden grief which had cast so deep a shadow over the life of Mr. Lisle ever since she could remember, had in some way had its origin on that mysterious day, when, out of the very shadow of death which had overtaken those to whom she owed her being, she herself had dawned into the light of the living world.

They formed a striking picture, those two, as they sat there in the peaceful twilight. The dying man lay back in his easy chair, with the pallor of approaching dissolution on his finely moulded features, his thin hands stretched out upon his knees, his whole attitude betokening the utter exhaustion of his vital powers. The young girl, who sat by him in all the bloom and freshness of her life's early summer, clasping her little hands fondly round one of his, was, in truth, as he had said, fair and sweet like the white rose she had fastened in his breast. She was not by any means possessed of striking beauty, though her slight figure was singularly graceful, but there was an indefinable charm in her pale calm face, which made itself gradually felt by all who approached her. Her dark hair, which was very soft and abundant, contrasted almost too strongly with the marble whiteness of her colorless complexion, but it harmonised well with the deep grey eyes, fringed with black lashes, which were so marked a feature in her countenance, that the absence of warmer tints was scarcely noticed. Her most striking peculiarity, however, both in manner and appearance, was the extreme stillness and quietude which at all times characterized her. No ripple of agitation seemed ever to disturb the pure calm of her pale face, which was always like the surface of a placid lake, perfectly motionless and untroubled, and although a sweet smile would often curve the delicately formed lips, they were never seen to open for the heart laugh or unrestrained merriment natural to her age.

Yet her expression was not in the slightest degree sorrowful or anxious, and she bore no trace of the lines of care, which in truth she had never known in any shape, while a glance at her refined thoughtful face was sufficient to show that it was no lack of mental power which gave her a look of changeless calm, such as is not often seen in this restless world. This perfect stillness seemed to pervade her whole being—her step was entirely noiseless, her voice so low and soft that it could scarcely be heard, where louder tones were sounding; even her movements were so full of repose that her entrance seemed only like the passing of a gentle breeze through the room. Many persons declared that Mary Trevelyan's extraordinary quietness was the result of

an absolute want of feeling, but any one who had noticed on this evening the expression of Mr. Lisle's mournful eyes, as he turned them upon her, would have seen that this was at least not his opinion.

"My darling," he murmured, "as I told you, I have much to say to you, and this soft air cannot hurt me—do not be afraid to let me stay out while I finish all I have to tell. I shall speak to you best while the shadows are gathering around us." Gently she stooped, and lifting up the old man's clock, which had fallen down, she wrapped it tenderly round him, and said, in a tone low as the sighing night wind, "Say what you will; dear, be sure that I am listening."

## To be Continued.

## The Days of the Week and the Planets.

One of the cardinal principles of astrology was this: That every hour and every day is ruled by its proper planets. Now, in the ancient Egyptian astronomy there were seven planets—two, the sun and moon, circling round the earth, the rest circling round the sun. The period of circulations was apparently taken as the measure of each planet's dignity, probably because it was judged that the distance corresponded to the period. We know that some harmonious relation between the distances and the periods was supposed to exist. When Kepler discovered the actual law, he conceived that he had in reality found out the mystery of Egyptian astronomy, or, as he expressed it, that he had "stolen the golden vases of the Egyptians." Whether they had clear ideas as to the nature of this relation or not, it is certain that they arranged the planets in order (beginning with the planet of longest period) as follows: 1. Saturn. 2. Jupiter. 3. Mars. 4. The Sun. 5. Venus. 6. Mercury. 7. The Moon. The hours were devoted in continuous succession to these bodies; and as there were twenty-four hours in each Chaldean or Egyptian day, it follows that with whatever day the planet began, the cycle of seven planets (beginning with that one) was repeated three times, making twenty-one hours, and then the first three planets of the cycle completed the twenty-four hours, so that the fourth planet of the cycle (so begun) ruled the first hour of the next day. Suppose, for instance, the first hour of any day was ruled by the Sun—the cycle for the day would therefore be the Sun, Venus, Mercury, the Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, which, repeated three times, would give twenty-one hours; the twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth hours would be ruled respectively by the Sun, Venus, and Mercury, and the first hour of the next day would be ruled by the Moon. Proceeding in the same way through this second day, we find that the first hour of the third day would be ruled by Mars. The first hour of the fourth day would be ruled by Mercury; the first hour of the fifth day by Jupiter; of the sixth by Venus, and of the seventh by Saturn. The seven days in order, being assigned to the planet ruling their first hour, would therefore be—

1. The Sun's day (Sunday).
2. The Moon's day (Monday, Lundi).
3. Mars' day (Tuesday, Mardi).
4. Mercury's day (Wednesday, Mercredi).
5. Jupiter's day (Thursday, Jeudi).
6. Venus' day (Friday, Veneris dies Vendredi).
7. Saturn's day (Saturday, Ital, *Il Sabbato*).

Dion Cassius, who wrote in the third century of our era, gives this explanation of the nature of the Egyptian week, and of the method in which the arrangement was derived from their system of astronomy. It is a noteworthy point that neither the Greeks nor Romans in his time used the week, which was a period of strictly Oriental origin. The Romans only adopted the week in the time of Theodosius, towards the close of the fourth century, and the Greeks divided the months into periods of ten days; so that, for the origin of the arrangement connecting the days of the week with the planets, we must look to the source indicated by Dion Cassius.

That the Egyptians dedicated the seventh day of the week to the outermost or highest planet, Saturn, is certain; and it is presumable that this day was a day of rest in Egypt. It is not known, however, whether this was ordained in honor of the chief planet—that is their supreme deity, or because it was held unlucky to work on that day. It by no means follows from the fact that Nroch, or his Egyptian representative, was the chief deity, that he was therefore regarded as a beneficent ruler.

And, indeed, the little we know of Egyptian mythology suggests that the beneficent Gods were those corresponding to the sun and moon—later represented by Osiris and Isis (deities, however, which had no other interpretations). Saturn, though superior to the sun and moon, not only in the sense in which modern astronomers use the term superior, but also in the power attributed to him, was probably a maleficent, if not a malignant deity. We may infer this from the qualities attributed to him by astrologers. "If Saturn be predominant in any man's nativity, and cause melancholy in his temperance," says Burton in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," "then he shall be very austere, sullen, churlish, black of color, profound in cogitations, full of cares, miseries, and discontent, sad and fearful, always silent and solitary."

We may, not unreasonably, conclude, therefore, that either rest was enjoined on Saturn's day as a religious observance to propitiate this powerful but gloomy god, or else because bad fortune was expected to attend any enterprise begun on that day over which Saturn bore the sway.—*Contemporary Review*.

## Concerning Sneezing.

The nose can boast one prerogative entirely its own—that of bringing a blessing upon its owner's head. How it comes by this honorable distinction is a mystery, none the easier of solution by reason of the custom of blessing a sneezer being well nigh universal. According to one tradition, the practice arose in the pontificate of Gregory the Great, when Rome was scourged by a plague peculiar for instant death following upon a sneeze, "whereof it

grew into a custom that they who were present, when any man sneezed, should say, 'God bless you!' This story must have been a pious invention to disguise the heathenish origin of the odd custom, which was familiar to Romans long before they had any acquaintance with Popes. They, in all likelihood, merely imitated the Greeks. Ross, taking the cue from Aristotle, says the Greeks worshipped the head in stertoration, as being a divine part, the seat of the senses and cogitation. He assures us "Prometheus was the first that wished well to the sneezer, when the man, which he had made of clay, fell into a fit of stertoration upon the approach of that celestial fire, which he stole from the sun." But if the rabbins are to be believed, sneezing heralded death rather than life; for they taught that men in the old, old days only sneezed once in their lives, and then died of the shock to the system; until Jacob, by his prayers, obtained a more merciful dispensation, conditionally upon the act of sneezing being followed by a "God bless!" whereupon all the princes of the earth commended their subjects to let a benediction ever wait upon a sneeze.

Ancient Hindu etiquette prescribed an interchange of blessings. Mr. Childers, in "Notes and Queries," thus translates a passage in the Buddhist Scriptures: "One day, Buddha, while seated in the midst of a large congregation of disciples, to whom he was preaching the law, chanced to sneeze. Thereupon the priests exclaiming, 'May the Blessed Lord live! May the Welcome One live,' made a loud noise, and seriously interrupted the discourse. Accordingly, Buddha addressed them as follows: Tell me priests, when a person sneezes, if the bystanders say, 'May you live, will he live the longer or die the sooner for it? Certainly not, Lord. Then, priests, if any one sneezes you are not to say to him, 'May you live; and if any of you say it, let him be guilty of a transgression. From that time forth, when the priests sneezed, and the bystanders exclaimed, 'May you live, sire; the priests, fearful of transgressing, held their peace. People took offence at this. What, said they, do these priestly sons of Sakya mean by not uttering a word when we say, 'May you live, sire? The matter came to Buddha's ears. Priests, said he, the laymen are the corner-stone of the church; when laymen say, 'May you live, sire! I give my sanction to your replying, 'Long live to you! Buddha was not disposed to lose disciples by running counter to their superstition; so the believing Hindu still looks upon a sneeze as something portentous, and will pause in his devotions if he chanced to sneeze, and after touching his forehead, nose, chin, and cheeks with the tips of his fingers, begin his prayers again. In the land of the Caciques, sneezers used to be saluted with, 'May the sun guard you! May the sun protect you! and whenever the custom prevailed the formula observed was almost identical, and plainly originated in some fancied connection of sneezing and death."

Superstition never yet was consistent. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Greeks welcomed a sneeze as a lucky omen when it made itself heard between midnight and morn; and the Romans hailed one with joy, provided it was a sneeze to the right. But if the notions of some good folks be correct, a sneeze in any direction ought to be acceptable, since it proves the sneezer is in full possession of his wits, for no idiot can, they say, sneeze under any provocation.—*All the Year Round*.

## How to make Rag Carpets.

If you want something for your kitchen floor, firm, warm, and durable, from which spots can be easily removed, which can be shaken, turned, and be as good as new again for several years, use rag carpets. They can generally be obtained of carpet dealers at from sixty cents to one dollar a yard; but often a smoother article can be made at home, at least ready for the loom. For this purpose save the old clothes—old flannel, sheets, and undergarments, old dresses—in fact, everything which will make long strips. Old clothes of good colors are doubly valuable. Calicoes not too much worn are excellent material. Cut into strips about an inch wide, sew end to end, and wind smoothly into balls of about one-pound weight. Allow from one and one-fourth to one and one-half pounds of rags to a square yard of carpeting. Collect all odd pieces of any color for the mosaic or hit-and-miss strips. Out and mix these thoroughly before sewing, so as to make this strip as uniform as possible. A few pounds of remnants from a woolen factory or soft listings, of any needed color, make a nice strip, and require little sewing. Do not put too much black into a kitchen carpet, as it is not a strong color and shows the dust more than other colors. A strip of several shades of red brightens up a carpet wonderfully—and who objects to a little brightness in the kitchen? White woolen rags take a nice colonial red, white cotton a durable green from fustic and logwood set with blue vital. A cinnamon color may be dyed with copper. Select a coarse strong warp of some dark color—brown and slate colors are good—allowing one pound of warp for every three and one-fourth yards of carpeting. Keep the exact weight of rags and warp to compare with weight of carpet when returned, and employ a good weaver. Many prefer a kitchen carpet put down with rugs, as it can thus be easily taken up and shaken.—*Scribner for September*.

## The Wonders of a Hen's Egg

The following interesting observations on the changes that occur from hour to hour during the incubation of a hen's egg are from Stann's Reflections: "The hen has scarcely sat in her eggs twelve hours before some lineaments of the head and body of the chicken appear. The heart may be seen to beat at the end of the second day; it has at that time somewhat the form of a horse shoe, but no blood yet appears. At the end of two days two vessels of blood are to be distinguished, the pulsation of which is visible; one of these is the left ventricle, and the other the root of the great artery. At the fifth hour one

auricle of the heart appears, resembling a noose folded down upon itself. The beating of the heart is first observed in the auricle, and afterwards in the ventricle. At the end of seventy hours the wings are distinguishable, and on the head two bubbles are seen for the brain, one for the bill, and two for the fore and hind part of the head. Toward the end of the fourth day the two auricles already visible draw nearer to the heart than before. The liver appears toward the fifth day. At the end of seven hours more the lungs and the stomach become visible, and four hours afterward the intestines and loins and the upper jaw. At the fourteenth hour two ventricles are visible, and two drops of blood, instead of the single one which was seen before. The seventh day the brain begins to have some consistency. At the two hundred and nineteenth hour of incubation the bill opens and the flesh appears in the breast.

In four hours more the breastbone is seen. In six hours after this the ribs appear, forming from the back, and the bill is visible as well as the gall bladder. The gall becomes green at the end of 230 hours; and if the chicken be taken out of its covering it evidently moves itself. At the 246th hour the eyes appear. At the 289th the ribs are perfect. At the 331st the spleen draws near the stomach, and the lungs to the chest. At the end of 355 hours the bill frequently opens and shuts, and at the end of the eighteenth day the first cry of the chicken is heard. It afterwards gets more strength and grows continually, till at length it is enabled to set itself free from its confinement.

## About Gardening.

A home should have a garden of some kind attached to it. However poor the house may be, a little plot of garden in front of it, where something pretty is growing, where green vines are climbing upward into the sunlight, where birds, and bees, and children love to gather, and the passer by pauses to look with interest and pleasure, gives it a far more home-like and attractive aspect than it can otherwise have. Many an ordinary house, with a well kept and tastefully arranged garden, presents a far more pleasing and attractive appearance than a much costlier mansion whose bare walls have no variegated setting of natural beauty to give completeness to the picture. It is surprising how much a few flowers set in the window add to the cheerfulness of the room they adorn, and the home-likeness of the house as seen from the street. A few honeysuckles or woadbines trailing over an arbor or along a house wall, alter the aspect of the place at once, and create an impression favorable to its inmates. This is the time of the year for making preparations for the summer garden; and we advise our friends in particular to spare no pains in having such a plot of some kind, in which they can work an hour or two every day, for the health that comes from the exercise, and the invigoration such contact with nature always gives. Every child wants a garden, and whenever it is possible, even the smallest child should have the pleasure of planting a few seeds and seeing them grow, week by week, until he feels something of the beauty and mystery there is in nature, and falls in love with her methods and law. The garden is the best of nurseries, and it needs only the fine tact and mastery of nature's art to make it the best of schools. It would be well could it be arranged that in the summer time the table could be sometimes spread upon the lawn, exchanging the woolen carpet for one of green grass, and the accustomed pictures of the dining-room for the fine landscapes visible from almost every country home. The garden is merely the frame in which a home is set, and the more that is done to make the setting beautiful the more shall we prize and enjoy the jewel it contains.—*Exchange*.

## The Modern House.

The nineteenth century house, however, has no special provision for the admission of fresh air, and except in warm weather, its entrance is jealousy prevented. Ventilation is change of air, and unless scientifically arranged, and especially warmed in cold weather, such change of atmosphere means cold currents, with their attendant train of rheums, catarrhs, brouchitis, neuralgia, rheumatism, and the evils that spring from them. Again, perfect ventilation means the realization, in a great measure, of the condition of air out-of-doors; and few persons, probably, have estimated the enormous flow of air requisite to effect this. The ordinary notion is, that the proper renewal of the air in a room ought to be measured by the quantity passed through the lungs of an individual in any given time. But an ounce of poison may vitiate a gallon of water; and nothing short of the removal and renovation of the whole of the tainted portion, as fast as it becomes tainted, can insure perfect salubrity. Dr. Dalton estimated the average respiration of a man to be 24 cubic inches, and the average number per minute to be 20; consequently 400 cubic feet pass through the lungs of an ordinary man in twenty-four hours; while the fallacy to which we have alluded assumes that a supply of 400 cubic feet in the room, in twenty-four hours, insures sufficient ventilation. Certainly, if any one would draw breath out of one bag, and discharge the tainted air from his lungs into another, he would always breathe good air. But it is calculated that a man will titillate 17,500 cubic feet of air in the twenty-four hours; for every respiration not only robs the imbued 24 cubic inches of a certain portion of its oxygen, but it has mixed with it a quantity of carbonic-acid gas and some vapor; and theoretically, at least, the second respiration, drawn from a room in which the air is stagnant, begins the process of blood-poisoning."—"House Ventilation," in *Popular Science Monthly*.

The receipts from the Hospital Sunday collections in London exceeded £10,000, and included a cheque for £182 2s. 6d. from Messrs. Moody and Sankey.