

Choice Literature.

Still and Deep.

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

CHAPTER XV.

Charles Davenant walked on in silence for a few minutes, and then looked round at Mary with a quiet unshrinking gaze.

"You may trust me, certainly, Miss Trevelyan; my wish is to do you a service, and some day I may be able to explain it to you, but not now. I shall tell you nothing of Lurline which she has not herself made patent to all who know her, and which most persons inhabiting Chiverley Rectory could hardly fail to learn; but I do not think you will." He respected Mary too much to believe that indeed was his thought, that he allowed her to be too pure and high-minded to be able even to conceive such a character as Laura's.

"You have," he continued, "felt the Lorelei's fascination in some slight degree, but you have very little idea of the power she really possesses in that respect, or with what consummate and unscrupulous art she uses it. She is perfectly aware of her gifts and of the wonderful charms she can exercise over her fellow-creatures, and she is absolutely selfish in the manner in which she avails herself of it to gain her own ends. To minister to her own self-love is the sole object of all her actions; but she clothes her intense egotism and real coldness of heart with the alluring semblance of a disposition so loving and tender, that she deceives the most astute, and wins from them a sort of compassionate affection which she knows how to foster into an unquenchable passion. Lurline's proceedings are never the result of impulse or natural temperament, though they always appear to be so, because she is so exceedingly outspoken and free in her speech and manners. She establishes as a settled fact that she is thoroughly unconventional, and does not choose to be bound by the customs of society, and this, of course, gives her great facility in her dealings with men; but, as a matter of fact, all she does is done with perfect consciousness of its import and results. She has two very distinct motives, which, however, work admirably together in the exercise of her great gift of fascination. The first is the intense self-love which makes her wish to draw to herself and entirely engross the affection of every person she meets; and the second, which is by far the strongest, is her imperious desire to make some marriage which shall carry her away out of this dull life and bring her into a sphere where she can enjoy the world and its attractions."

"I have often wondered that she has not married already," said Mary. "She is, outwardly at least, so very charming that I should have thought many would have sought her long before this time."

"And so, more or less, they have," said Charlie; "but there have been many causes for this failure, the chief of which has undoubtedly been that she has so frequently overshot her mark. She has led men on to a certain point, and then, in her eagerness to secure them, she has made her purpose so plain, that she has completely disgusted them, and they have backed out as ignominiously for themselves as for her. Then—although I think now when she is verging on thirty, she would marry almost any one—in her earlier days she was disposed to fly too high, and aimed at those who could give her wealth and station. She has more than once come to grief, moreover, by trying to have too many strings to her bow, and has played off two or three individuals upon each other, till she has lost them all."

"How is that possible?" said Mary; "how could more than one stand on such ground of intimacy with her, at least at the same time as to lead to the probability of marriage?"

"Oh, Lurline has a capital device for holding them all on, a special footing of familiarity with her," answered Charlie, laughing; "she elects them to be her adopted brothers, and treats them with the familiar tenderness of an affectionate sister, till such time as she thinks a revolution may be made that their mutual affection has passed the fraternal limits, and ought to be otherwise consolidated."

"But she calls you and Mr. Pemberton her brothers," said Mary turning upon him a look of innocent bewilderment.

"Precisely," laughed Charlie; "and I think if I were simply to tell you the history of her proceedings with us two, you would better understand what the siren Lorelei of Chiverley is, than by any amount of general descriptions."

"But ought I to hear all this, Mr. Davenant?" said Mary, shrilly; "it is very painful to me"—and in truth her pure crystalline nature was cruelly jarred by these revelations of a scheming worldliness, which she had never before so much as dreamt of, and which was utterly distasteful to her.

"Oh Lurline is certain to tell you all about it herself some day she can spare time from more important matters to give you her confidence; there is nothing she likes so much as talking of her various adopted relationships; besides Miss Trevelyan, as I said before, I have a reason for speaking to you on this subject, and you have promised to trust me."

Gentle Mary said no more, and he went on.

"To begin with myself. When I came here two years ago, I was but a boy. I believe you think I am not much more now, and any idea of marriage for me would have been preposterous, especially with a woman nearly ten years older than myself; moreover, I am the youngest son of a certain country gentleman who has a small property and a large family, so that he has often told me he can do no more for me than give me a good education, and then leave me to shift for myself and make a living as best I can. I have some thoughts of trying my luck in the Australian bush, if anybody can be found to pay my passage out, but as I am seldom possessed of any capital, an amount higher than three-and-sixpence; and I came to read with Mr. Wynham because he takes us on very low terms, and

my father could not afford to send me to the University; well, all this being made known to Lurline, she decided at once, of course, that I was not worth powder and shot so far as marriage was concerned, but at the same time it was quite impossible for her not to try to make me like her better than any one else in the world, and she succeeded. I was as much fascinated by her as every one else, and having arrived at a mutual explanation, she adopted me as her brother, and I adored her as a species of goddess. A few months after my advent, John Pemberton came. Now, his position was in all respects different from mine; he was the only child of a man who had been very extravagant, and who had mortgaged his property to such an extent that it was quite certain his son would inherit nothing at his death but heavy pecuniary obligations; he has, however, an immensely rich uncle, and it is generally supposed that he will succeed to his great wealth. Lurline was under the impression that this was certain when he first came, and she marked him at once as her own; her enchantments took effect on him with much greater power than on me; he is two or three years older than I am, and far deeper and more solid in his natural qualities. When John Pemberton, on whom Lurline put forth the utmost power of her fascination, finally delivered up his heart and soul to love her, he did it for his life, and he will never more love any one on earth but her, be the end what it may."

"I can understand that," said Mary, quietly.

"This being the case, you can see how fearfully hard upon him is his present position. Of course, when she had brought him to this pass he asked her to marry him; then the fact came out, which, poor fellow, had never any intention of concealing, that his chances of succeeding to his uncle's property were extremely problematical; the old gentleman was very eccentric, he distastefully told John not to count on his inheritance, and many persons thought he would build a church or a hospital with his great wealth. It became necessary, therefore, that Lurline should make an ignominious little arrangement, by which she could save herself from any risk of losing John if he ever should become wealthy, and yet which should enable her to escape from him if any better marriage was offered to her or if he remained poor. She persuaded him that she loved him as tenderly as he loved her, but that it was impossible that they could be united, at least not at present; they would adopt each other as brother and sister, only in a far deeper sense than in her similar arrangements with me. John and she would be all in all to each other; they would enjoy the fullest confidence and friendship in the meantime, and if ever marriage became possible for them their bliss would be supreme; at the same time it was best they should both consider themselves free, simply to continue the fraternal relation always, and to ally themselves matrimonially (otherwise, if it should be desirable. Poor John told me all this himself, and it was with the saddest smile that he spoke of his dearest Laura's generous thoughtfulness in having wished to leave him free, while he knew well, and never dreamt that she did too, that he had bound himself to her with an adamant chain which he would drag with him to the grave. Poor, dear, honest fellow! it is a most cruel fate for him in every way; ruin and destruction to all his hopes and prospects. He looks upon it simply as an engagement, and whether she married him or not, he could never give a thought to any other woman to the end of his days; while she is prepared to throw him over the very first moment she can meet with any person who will marry her, and can afford it!"

"Oh, impossible!" exclaimed Mary. "It is perfectly certain, Miss Trevelyan, for she says so herself. She would tell you that dearest John would wish her to be happy with some one else if she cannot be his wife, and that she will make it a condition with any one she marries that the fraternal attachment between John and herself is to be continued."

"But no one would marry her under the circumstances, on such conditions."

"No; and therefore she will drop all mention of it the moment there is any question of another marriage; in the meantime it satisfies poor John that in no case will he be altogether separated from her, and, as a matter of fact, he does not realise the possibility of her marrying any one but himself, or of her failing to be as faithful to him as he will be to her if their union is never possible. He believes that her affection for him is as true as his own; and how he is deceived—for his is the noble unchanging love of a loyal heart!"

"But there is a chance that they may be married some day," said Mary, "and if so, all will be well for him, no less than for her."

"I cannot think that; her conduct with regard to John Pemberton, whom I love and reverence with all my heart, has opened my eyes to what Lurline really is; she is in no sense worthy of him, and we have the proof of it in the fact that good and in some respects even saintly, as John still is, he has experienced a certain amount of spiritual deterioration by his intercourse with her. He has always been a man of strong religious principles, but the death of his mother, and other circumstances, so deepened his devotional feelings, that he determined to devote himself entirely to the service of God, and to take holy orders as soon as he was able to pass the necessary examinations; he has not abandoned this intention, because Lurline has not in so many words asked him to do so. But she said plainly that nothing would induce her to be a clergyman's wife, and he has agreed to postpone any step which would finally bind him to that profession. I much fear if it were a choice between Lurline and the holy calling to which he so ardently aspired, there is little doubt which would carry the day. Am I cruelly wrong in saying that she is fearfully cruel thus to drive him from a high and worthy aim, to lower his standard and weaken his principle, and then when it suits her to desert him, leave him stranded in a wretched existence?"

"But, Mr. Davenant," exclaimed Mary, earnestly, why should you blame her for what she may never deserve; surely, you

are especially hard judging to-night, you always seem to like her very much yourself."

"I like her society because she is in every way attractive, and very good—tempered in a general way, but she is essentially dangerous, Miss Trevelyan, and as you will find."

(To be continued.)

Russia, Prussia, Austria.

There is no love lost between Germany and Russia. Any one at all acquainted with the state of opinion in the reflecting circles of St. Petersburg knows well that the German Empire is there regarded with the most profound distrust. It is not for the purpose of carrying out ambitious designs upon the East that Russia, like France, is straining every nerve to complete her military organization; the embraces and kisses with which the German and Russian Emperors so frequently and so gushingly saluted each other had, it is to be feared, something of the Juntas in them, and the kisses may not be so much to be the preface to treachery and bites. If Germany choose to disarm France completely, how could Russia interfere? In a war with France in her present exhausted state, Germany could easily spare one hundred thousand soldiers and experienced officers to restore the temporary independence of Poland; and the occupation of the Baltic Provinces would be a feat by no means impossible to Motzke. Any intervention on the part of Austria is out of the question. The Austrian Empire exists only by sufferance, and a finger lifted in menace to united Germany would provoke a punishment which would amount to complete annihilation. Besides, Austria cannot forget that it was France that substantially assisted to drive her out of Italy, and that if France had been her friend she might have prevented the catastrophe of Sadova. Austria wants years of peace to recuperate her forces, she has absolutely nothing to gain from a war with the German Empire, and her statesmen can scarcely conceal from themselves the fact that her interests are really one with those of Prussia, however much national vanity may be wounded by the reflection.—*London Society.*

The High Sense of Honor.

The Duke of Wellington had a high sense of honor in all money dealings, and would suffer none of his agents to do a mean thing in his name. His steward once bought some land adjoining his country estate, and was boasting of having made a very fine bargain, from the seller being in straightened circumstances.

"What did you pay for it?" asked the Duke.

"Eight hundred pounds," was the answer.

"And how much was it worth?"

"Eleven hundred pounds," said the steward, rubbing his hands in glee at the thought of the good bargain.

"Then take three hundred pounds, and carry them to the seller, with my compliments, and don't ever venture to talk to me of cheap land again."

The Duke was again, and could scarcely credit his own ears. The idea that any one could refuse to profit by a sharp bargain, and throw money away in paying more than was agreed on, was hard for him to comprehend.

Care of Daughters.

Would you show yourself really good to your daughters? Then be generous to them in a truer sense than that of heaping trinkets on their necks. Train them for independence first, and then labor to give it to them. Let them as soon as ever they have grown have some little money, or means of making money, to be their own, and teach them how to deal with it without needing every moment somebody to help them. Calculate what you give them or will bequeath to them, not as is usually done, on the chances of their making a rich marriage, but on the probability of their remaining single, and according to the scale of living to which you have accustomed them. Suppress their luxury now, if need be, but do not leave them with scarcely bare necessities hereafter, in striking contrast to their present home. Above all, help them to help to themselves. Fit them to be able to add to their own means rather than to be forever pinching and economizing till their minds are narrowed and their hearts are sick. Give all the culture you can to every power which they may possess. If they should remain among the million of the unmarried, they will bless you in your grave, and say of you, what cannot be said of many a doting parent by his surviving child.

"My father cared that I should be happy after his death as well as while I was his pet and his toy."

Frankness.

Be frank with the world. Frankness is the child of honesty and courage. Say just what you mean to do on every occasion, and take it for granted that you do just what is right. If a friend asks you a favor you should grant it if reasonable; if it is not tell him plainly why you cannot. You will wrong him

and wrong yourself by equivocation of any kind.

Never do a wrong thing to make a friend or keep one; the man who requires you to do so, is dearly purchased, and at a sacrifice. Deal kindly and firmly with all men, and you will find it the policy which wears the best. Above all, do not appear to others what you are not. If you have any fault to find with any one, tell him, not others, of what you complain. There is no more dangerous experiment than that of undertaking to do one thing to a man's face and another behind his back. We should live, act, and speak out of doors, as the phrase is, and say and do what we are willing should be known and read by all men. It is not only best as a matter of principle, but as a matter of policy.

No such thing as stand still.

Moss grown plodders are dreadful thorns in the side of achievement. They never believe it possible for a new idea to become practicable and a universal success. They attach themselves to old customs, old usages, old habits of life, old weapons of warfare, old machinery and old clothes, forgetting that the old was once new. Innovations upon common ideas they pronounce folly, nonsense, too fast for the peace of virtue and honesty. Yet despite their daily protests, the new is continually thrust in their faces, and they are obliged to grow out of their bound antiquarianism even at a snail's pace.

People who at first decide to come to a stand still ought not to have children. Boys and girls coming up inch by inch to manhood and womanhood, are sure to oppose many of the old-fashioned ways of father and mother. They may fret and scold as much as they will, and hold the reins in their own hands as tenaciously as possible, there comes a time when age admonishes them to relinquish the plough and the churning-dasher, and they must sit down and allow the young ones to endure the heat and carry the burden.

There is no such thing as stand-still. When one ceases to improve and to advance toward that perfection which is the ultimate result of all, one degenerates and loses much that has been gained. While there is wisdom in content and stability to hold to one idea long enough to test its possibilities, a successful man or woman must be equal to the changes that are constantly transpiring, and capable of grasping and utilizing a good thing even though it be new.

Historical Items.

Gough gets \$150 for a lecture, Wendell Phillips \$100, Henry Ward Beecher \$200—how small the compensation when compared to the platform men of antiquity? Herodotus, for example, when an old man, read his history to an Athenian audience at the Panathenæan festival, and so enchanted them that they gave him ten talents, or \$12,500, as a recompense. Isocrates received a sum equivalent to \$19,375 for one oration, and Virgil for his famous lines on Marcellus was rewarded by a gift of \$8,500; and according to Suetonius, Tiberius presented to Asellus Sabinus 100,000 sesterces (about \$18,700) for a dialogue he wrote about a mushroom, a cabbage, an oyster, and a thrush, in which they disputed among themselves.

The mark which persons who are unable to write are required to make instead of their signatures, is in the form of a cross; but this signature is not invariably a proof of such ignorance. Anciently, the use of the mark was not confined to illiterate persons. Among the Saxons the mark of the cross, as an attestation of the good faith of the person signing, was required to be attached to the signature of those who could write, as well as to those in the place of the signature of those who could not write. It was, indeed, the symbol of an oath, from its sacred associations, as well as the mark generally adopted. Hence the origin of the expression, "God save the mark," as a form of exclamation approaching the character of an oath.

The construction of the great Chinese Wall only occupied ten years, but during that time millions of men were employed upon it. The wall is 1,500 miles long, from 20 to 25 feet high, and so thick that six horsemen can ride upon it abreast. It is in many parts built in the most substantial manner, especially at the eastern extremity, where it extends by a massive levee into the sea. In this portion, it is said, the workmen were required, on pain of death, to fit the stones so exactly that a nail could not be driven between them. In some parts the wall is of earth only. This wall does not surround the empire, but is built on its north and north-east boundary. It was built to keep out the Tartar. Subsequently by the accession to the throne of an emperor of Tartar descent, the wall became useless. It is now, in many places, a ruin. It has been said that the materials used in building this would construct a wall six feet high and two feet thick twice around the world.

The Home of Cowper.

MARGARET FARNINGHAM thus writes to the *London Christian World* of a visit to the home of the poet Cowper:
Olney is a small quiet town, with one long street. The houses are mostly wedged closely together. Cowper's house is still standing in the market-place; so is the little room at the bottom of the garden where many of his poems were composed. "I wrote in a nook I call 'boudoir,'" he said in one of his letters; "it is a summer-house, not bigger than a sedan-chair; the door of it opens into the garden, that is now crowded with pick roses, and honeysuckles, and the window into my neighbor's orchard. It formerly served an apothecary as a smoking-room at present, however, it is dedicated to a simpler use; here I write all that I write in the summer time, whether to my friends or the public. It is secure from all noise and a refuge from all intrusion. The summer-house is shown to visitors by Mr. T. Osborne, who is proud of his place and pleased to welcome most kindly his friends and admirers. Little tokens of visitors past some of the connoisseurs of which Cowper's eye often rested. At the doors are almost certainly seated women with lace pillows in their laps; we see the picture which he described:

"You cottager who dwelt at her door
Pillow and bobbins all her little store."

The "boudoir," so sacred to the memory of Cowper, is looked and protected; but no sooner is the door unlocked for us to enter, than we feel a thrill of interest. Here he sat and beguiled the hours away. At our feet, in the floor, is a little place where, when suddenly interrupted, he hastily deposited and jealously guarded his papers. The walls are so covered with visitors' notes that there is scarcely space for another; Lord Macaulay, Lord Norman Macleod, Baptist Noel, Eliza Burritt, and other celebrities, having pencilled their names with the rest. Still we are at liberty to write another over what may be termed the graves of other names; and not only that, but the obliging owner will give us a sprig of ivy from Cowper's summer-house, to plant in our own garden. He also shows us "Guinea Field," so called because the poet and Mr. Newton paid a guinea a year for the privilege of passing through it, so as to get to each other's house without going into the street. From Olney we must pass to Weston Underwood, where relics of the poet are numerous. His house is shown to visitors, and in the room said to be his bedroom is a pencilled couplet on the window shutter, carefully preserved which, we are told, remains as it was written by Cowper's own hand. From this house it is not far to walk to the Alceve and the Rustle Bridge, so well described in the "Task." The visitors are informed that if they write or deface the building they will be prosecuted, but names are written just the same as they used to be in the poet's time.

One of the present wants of the Church is a few less in religious speakers. We have not half enough of men and women who have something useful to say. But speaking bores have become an affliction in some of our Eastern churches. They are our Eastern every green thing. They are a grass hopper devastation. Many of them prefer Sunday-schools for regular beverage, and the way they hop about whenever there is a chance to annoy the little ones is amazing. They are dying for a chance to make a speech. Others of these rhetorical nuisances prefer a diet of prayer-meetings. While you are to hold the meeting tightly in your grasp, they crawl in with something they think must be said. All the time they are speaking, we are studying the most Christian way of looking them off.—*Christian at Work.*

DRESSING FOR CATHAR.—There was a time when good taste demanded the use of the plainest clothes in the sanctuary when the wealthiest were distinguished for the conspicuous absence of personal adornment, and sartorial display was a mark of vulgarity, at such times and places. But now it would almost appear as if, whatever might be thought of as modest garb in other places, the proper costume for the house of God, where, theoretically, we all go to be reminded of our common origin and destiny, were an agglomeration of all the jewelry and the chignons, of all the panniers, and all the feathers and furbelows in one's wardrobe. The wearer is to carry all this piled agony to the sanctuary as to a fair—as if her errand were not so much to praise as to be appraised—and there employ the sacred time in envious comparison of her own mountain of millinery with two Himalayan triumphs of her neighbor.

Wretchedness is a scandal's twin sister—yet it is a fault easily committed. We begin by a gentle deprecatory reference to somebody's infirmity of temper, and we find ourselves specifying a particular time and scene, which straightaway the one who hears tells again to some one else with additions, slight, perhaps, but material. Before we know it we have stirred up a hornet's nest. This may be done without any more potent motive than a mere love of fun—and half the gossip of the world is of the unthinking kind, indulged in merely from a spirit of drollery. Far worse is that other sort of talk which ends in slander and begins in malice, and which separates friends and sunder the ties of years of intercourse with its sharp and jarring discords. The only way to avoid the evil is to refrain from making the affairs of friends a household article of conversation in the home-hold. There are plenty of subjects at hand—let us avoid personalities.