

Choice Literature.

Still and Deep.

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

CHAPTER XX.

Bertrand Lisle had come to England at this time with the firm intention of definitely asking Mary Trevelyan to be his wife; but he went to his room on the first night of his arrival at Chiverley with all sorts of conflicting feelings...

Bertrand lay awake for a long time pondering over all these considerations, and the final result at which he arrived was that which the Lorelei most desired: he would wait and watch all concerned, and then be guided by circumstances...

"I will have no half-hearted wife," he said to himself; "she must be mine altogether or not at all." It was not without a pang that he thus contemplated the possibility of losing her...

"She would not be false even to give peace to the dying," he murmured; and with this last reflection, Bertrand's handsome head sunk back on the pillow...

In his dreams however, there came to him another image as different from that of fair quiet Mary, as is the morning star blazing in the dim skies of early dawn from the white rose in whose heart the dewdrops lie like pearls.

All night he was haunted by a bright bewitching face, with flashing eyes and radiant smile, and arch looks, that came and went with the fitful fancies of sleep in a hundred changeful aspects.

When Bertrand awoke next morning, and gradually came to understand where he was and what the day was likely to bring forth, his first thought was, that he should see again the strange and lovely Lorelei; his second, that he should once more hear the low soft voice of gentle Mary.

We do not intend to trace out in detail all the arts by which Laura Wyndham laboured to separate Bertrand Lisle from his first love, and win him to herself. It is sad enough to know that there are in the world persons who will leave no stone unturned to compass their own ends...

Be it remembered that the heart of Laura Wyndham was untouched by that divine fire of the love of God, which can make the desert blossom as a rose, and turn even pain and suffering into sweetest joy if borne for the dear Redeemer's sake.

What wonder that she set herself to win him by fair means or by foul, and thought no more of Mary Trevelyan, whose happiness she might be crushing in the process, than she would of a tender flower trampled under her feet as she sped on some hasty errand.

So, from that first morning when Bertrand, coming out of his room, saw her dancing in through the open door into the hall, with her hands full of dewy flowers, fairer even than in his dreams, more radiant than the morning itself...

As it happened, there was nothing whatever to stay Lurline in her triumphant course. Charlie Davenant had left Chiverley two or three days after Bertrand's arrival; he just remained long enough to let the now-comer see clearly that he had neither eyes nor thoughts for any one but Mary, and the excessive annoyance and distress he manifested at having to leave the rectory at this juncture could only be attributed by Bertrand to that which Lurline told him was indeed the cause...

Laura was thoroughly mistress of the situation as soon as he was gone; for Mary never by word or look made the smallest attempt to stand between her and Bertrand, or to keep that place in his affections she had once believed to be her own. She, like Bertrand himself, had never forgotten the avowal she had made to Mr. Lisle on his death-bed, or the possibility that he might have repeated her words to his son...

And so it was that the month of his visit, to which Mary had looked forward with such unutterable longing, became to her a period of intense and silent suffering; for she understood at once by the power of her own deep affection, that he was being strongly attracted by Laura, and she felt that nothing was left to her but to stand aside and see all that was joy and hope and life itself to her pass swiftly away from her utterly and for ever.

(To be continued.)

Witchcraft and Priestcraft.

When strolling gipsies, greedy of a toe, Delude fond maids, and offer to foretell Their coming fortune, magistrates do well To take the spawwives into custody For superstitious swindling. Equally When cunning priests persuade bereaved friends That every costly mass more quickly sends A spirit forth from purgatory free, The hand of public justice ought to strike This swindle also. For in both alike There is pretence of knowing the unknown, And money taken on that false pretence, There is a cry of superstition thrown Before the weak, a villainous offence.

Lost in the Bush.

A story comes to us by the Australian mail which will fill many a mother's eyes with tears, and touch the sterner hearts of those true men who love little children and are tender to them. The colony was ringing with it when the steamer came away, to the temporal forgetfulness of gold fields and railways, general elections, and the fight between Victoria and New South Wales about the River Murray.

Its heroes are three little people—two brothers and one sister—of whom the eldest one was nine, and the youngest five, the girl being seven years of age. They were the children of a carpenter named Duff, who worked at a sheep station near a place called Horsesham. In Australia small hands can help; so these three babes used to be sent after brush-wood for brooms and fires. They had gone dozens of times and come back safely; but this once, when their mother sent them, they wandered into the bush, and missed their way, and at night there were their little cots empty, and their little plates of supper getting cold, but no children. "Lost in the bush!" Think what that means for an Australian mother—when vigorous men have sometimes wandered but a hundred yards from the track in those labyrinths of gumtrees and wattles, and gone hopelessly forward and backward, and backward and forward, till they have laid themselves down to die.

At last they did what ought to have been done before—they called the instinct of the savage to help them to find at least the corpses of the wanderers. Nobody can explain that instinct; everybody who has hunted or tramped with wild tribes have witnessed it. The face of the ground to them, is like the leaf of a book to us—they read it. One of the Australian blacks will tell you if a kangaroo has crossed a creek, by the displacement of a pebble; blindfold him, and bring him into the thick of the eucalyptuses, he will point to his "gunya" (miles away); it is the sixth sense of races brought up in a life that could not exist on five. The blacks soon found the trail of the poor little three; and to find one end, for they would be sure of the other. "They would be dead, alas!" but it was something to have their pretty bodies away from the crows, the buzzards and the dingoes. So father and mother and friends, on the eighth day after the loss, followed the native trackers step by step. "Here little one tread—look sit down!" says one black blood-hound; and presently another grunts—"Big one carry—see, travel in dark—tumble into the bush." Farther on still, the keenest of the pack finds the mark where "little one put down too tired"—and thus they search every nook, corner, bush, and thicket, until at last they are rewarded. The little ones are found lying asleep in each others arms, not with the robins covering them with leaves, but in the hut of a bushman who had kindly cared for them.—Canadian Illustrated News.

The Feet's Mind and Mood.

We were lately trying to discover the qualities which made a literary work a part of literature, and sincerity was named as perhaps the most important quality. Sincerity is a great matter, but is it the principal thing? Is not the principal thing after all, the mind and mood of the writer? At first this will seem a trite enough statement, but every good argument can be made for every style.

We have all been struck at this phenomenon: we are profoundly impressed by a passage we have read, and, after some time, we turn back to read it once more, when, instead of finding at least half a page of print, as we had expected, we find only two or three lines. There is another allied phenomenon—a single line, or passage, in a poem, or an entire poem of but a few lines, obtains great currency, and is constantly praised for its charm. You cannot tell what gives it such fascination; what keeps it so fresh in your own mind, and in the minds of all cultivated people. You have seen other passages and poems by obscure writers, which appeared at first to have more thought and originality. You would read them in moments of constance, read to you his "Ode to the Insatiable." Some of the lines were really Wordsworthian, not to say Miltonic! Nothing, indeed is more common in amateur verse-making, of a certain kind, than lines which remind you of Shakespeare, when read aloud by their authors. But, somehow, when the verses get into print, the world is not moved by them, and you confess that type has a queer effect upon poetry, and that it is never safe to commit yourself critically with you "get the poem into your own hands."

So it happens that the simple phrase which the great poet himself set little value upon, and which seemed to him a miserable inadequate statement of his thought—the phrase, the poem, comes, with light in its garments, from a high and pure mind, from a golden and immortal mood.—The Old Cabinet. Scribner for May.

An Ancient Literature.

For twenty-five years students of the Assyrian and Babylonian remains have been working hardest to develop the history of those empires. They have been spurred on to their work by their brilliant success in discovering long and full records of various monarchs mentioned in the Scriptures, and by the invaders' accounts of the victories recorded in the Old Testament over the various kings of Judah and Israel. These wonderful confirmations of the sacred history have been carefully developed, and a new and very important chapter of the world's history has been recovered, including tolerably complete annals of successive kings, beginning nearly 2,000 years before the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus. But it is only within a very few years that we have begun to learn what was the real literature of these people, what their books, what their inner life and feelings, what their Iliad or Kal-vain, what their omens and exorcisms and star-gazers' prodigies. To these subjects the labor of Assyrian students is now directed, and already a rich store of information has been secured, as important as it is curious. The public attention directed to this subject through the discovery by Mr. George Smith, of the Babylonian story of the Flood, resulted in the commission given to Mr. Smith, first by the publishers of the London Telegraph, and afterwards by the British Museum, to carry on further explorations in Nimrod, with the object of completing the story of the Flood, and of securing other records. He was successful in discovering the other missing fragment of that story, and in adding other mythological and historical tablets of great value, translations of which, as of inscriptions previously in the British Museum, he has given in his important work just published, entitled "Assyrian Discoveries,"—Dr. IV. II. Ward; Scribner for May.

DEATH AND SLEEP.—A PARABLE FROM THE GERMAN OF KRUMMACHER.—Death and Sleep, messengers of slumber and the grave, went forth like brothers, arm in arm, on a journey through the earth. They laid themselves down to rest not far from the dwelling places of men. A mournful silence prevailed round them and the curfews of the distant hamlet tolled no longer on their listening ears. Good genii to mankind, they both stretched themselves on the ground. Night was drawing on apace. Up rose the angel of sleep from his moss grown couch, and with gentle hands scattered far and wide the unscen slumber seeds of the poppy. The evening zephyrs bore them to the peaceful homes of the weary peasants. Sweet sleep overcomes the inmates of every rustic cottage, from the grey-haired sire, leaning on his staff, to the babe in the cradle. The mourner forgets his grief, the sick man his pain, the pauper his sorrow. All eyes are closed. His work was done, the good angel Sleep lay down by the side of his graver brother. "When the day dawns," said he, "the world will hail me as a benefactor. Ah, what joy there is in doing good secretly, unseen of all save the eye of God!" Thus spoke the cheerful Angel of Sleep. The sombre angel of Death watched him in silent grief; and a tear—such a tear as immortals only weep—filled his large, dark, melancholy eyes. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "that I, too, might be gladdened with the music of heartfelt thanks ringing in my ears! But the world loves not Death, its enemy and its curse." "And yet, my brother," replied the angel of Sleep, "shall not the good man, waking from the slumber of the grave, find thee a friend, and with a heart full of gratitude will he not call down blessings on your head? Are we not brothers both, and the servants of a common Father?" When the angel of Death had thus spoken, the eyes of the Angel of Death brightened, and the twin spirits fell upon one another's necks in a tender embrace.

The barracks in St. Helen's Island, Montreal, were visited with a fire on Christmas eve, the origin of which is unknown. In an hour the extensive buildings were a mass of ruins. The officers' quarters were saved by great exertions; but the armory, with a full complement of cannon and other arms were totally destroyed. The powder and cartridges were removed without accident. A message for help was sent to the chief of the Fire Brigade, but owing to the weak state of the ice, it was found impossible to send over a fire engine. The loss is estimated at \$30,000.

A BOILING LAKE just discovered in the Island of Dominica has excited much scientific interest; and it is said that investigations of the remarkable phenomena it presents are to be made by geologists. A company was formed to explore the steep mountain behind the lake, and which was covered with forest, and situated behind the town of Roseau. In the course of their investigations they came upon a boiling lake, about 2,500 feet above the sea level, and two miles in circumference. The lake was covered with wreath upon wreath of sulphurous steam; and when it cleared away a mound of water caused by ebullition was seen ten feet higher than the general level of the surface. Beds of sulphur are formed in abundance on the margin of the lake; and what added as much as anything to the picturesque beauty of the scene, a magnificent waterfall was discovered in the neighborhood, which formed an outlet for the lake.

THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT is to meet Feb. 8th.

Scientific and Useful.

FATATABLE GRAHAM FLOUR.

I never have yet found a way to cook it that I really found palatable, except in griddle cakes, to be eaten with maple syrup while hot. It is nice this way, provided the griddle is not too greasy. I wipe it over with brown paper and use just as little lard as possible, not to have the cakes stick to the frier.

THE CHILDREN'S TRACILE CAKE.

Stir a small teaspoonful of carbonate of soda into three good teaspoonfuls of flour, and add a little spice, and rub well into two ounces of butter. Stir three tablespoonfuls of treacle into a teaspoonful and a-half of hot water, and then mix it in with the rest. Put in a buttered tin, and bake in a brisk oven.

CHICKEN CHEESE.

Did you, reader, ever eat any? We like it. Boil two chickens till tender; take out all the bones, and chop the meat fine; season to taste with salt, pepper, and butter; pour in enough of the liquor they are boiled in to make moist. Mold it in any shape you choose, and when cold, turn out, and cut into slices. It is an excellent travelling lunch.

TO PRESERVE LEMONS FRESH.

Slice them as thin as possible, and put into a nice sweet jar with alternate layers of sugar and lemons, remove all the seeds, have each layer of lemon entirely covered with sugar; tie a thick cloth over the jar before putting the cover on, so as to exclude all the air. I have kept them perfectly fresh for a year in this way.

SINGING MILKMAIDS.

Very music hath charms for many a dull ear, and is even profitable to those least expected. In Switzerland a milkmaid who is a good singer gets more salary than others, because under the influence of music the cows "give down" better and give more milk.

EYES OF INSECTS.

The compound eyes of insects are among the most wonderful objects in nature. In the common house-fly, the two compound eyes appear as large convexities on either side of the head. These convexities, examined with a microscope, are seen to be an immense number of hexagonal facets, or six-sided eyes, each being a distinct eye in itself, furnished with an iris, pupil and perfect nervous apparatus. As the eyes of insects are immovable, their want of mobility is made up for by their immense number, some or other of them being turned to every point, so that the insect can see all around as readily as with a moveable eye. The house-fly has 4,000 of these lenses; the dragon-fly, 12,000; the butter-fly, 17,000; and beetles, 25,000.

TEA DRUNKARDS.

Dr. Arlidge, one of the Pottery Inspectors of Staffordshire, has put forth a very sensible protest against a very pernicious custom, which rarely receives sufficient attention either from the medical profession or the general public. He says the women of the working classes make tea a principal diet instead of an occasional beverage. They drink it several times a day, and the result is a lamentable amount of sickness. Tea in anything beyond moderate quantities is as distinctly a narcotic poison as is opium or alcohol. It is capable of turning the digestion, of enfeebling and disordering the heart's actions, and of generally abating the nerves. And it must be remembered that not merely is it a question of narcotic excess, but the enormous amount of hot water which tea bibbers necessarily drink is exceedingly prejudicial both to digestion and nutrition. In short, pretending to place this evil on a par as to general effect with those caused by alcoholic drinks, one may well insist that our teotal reformers have overlooked, and even to a small extent encouraged, a form of animal indulgence which is as distinctly social, extravagant and pernicious as any beer-drinking or gin-swilling in the world.

DEALING WITH HOUSEHOLD PESTS.

Mr. Charles Thompson says in the Scientific American: "I have not seen a bedbug or a flea in my house this many years. If any army of them were to be brought in, mercury would speedily exterminate them; but I think cleanliness is the best and perhaps the only preventive. The common house-fly I do not molest, believing that it more than compensates for its trouble by clearing the atmosphere of effluvia and the animalcules which always arise from putrefaction of decaying substances during the warm weather. So, also, with the birds, which are quite numerous in the summer; instead of shooting them or setting up scare-crows to frighten them away, I throw out every possible inducement for them to build their nests in my fruit trees. The birds capture a large share of the insects in the larval state, and thus the millers are prevented from depositing eggs for a future crop of worms. As to the loss of fruit by the birds, the latter are always sure to be on hand in the season of ripe fruit, whether they come early to take the worms or not. For the residue of insects which infest my vegetable garden, I find that the laboratory of the chemist furnishes materials fatal to them all, among which white hellebore and cayenne pepper are of the most utility; the bug or worm which cannot find vegetation unflavoured with these articles will seek its breakfast elsewhere, and leave my garden unmolested. A few drops of carbolic acid in a pint of water will clean house plants from lice in a short time. If mosquitoes or bloodsuckers infest our sleeping rooms at night, we uncork a bottle of the oil of pennyroyal, and these insects leave in great haste, nor will they return while the air in the room is loaded with the fumes of that aromatic herb. If rats enter the cellar, a little powdered potash thrown into their holes or mixed with meal or scattered in their runways, never fails to drive them away. Cayenne pepper will keep the butery and storeroom free from ants and cock-roaches."