

## Choice Literature.

## Still and Deep.

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

## CHAPTER XIII.

The moonlight gleamed on Laura's face, on the clear shining eyes, the red arched lips, the rippling curls tossed back, unbound and falling to her waist, while the fairness of her complexion was enhanced by the scarlet colour of the loose dressing-gown she had thrown around her shoulders.

"Well, Mary Trovelyan, I have come to tell you that I pity you very much," said Laura, leaning back in her chair with her arms folded.

"Why so?" asked Mary, half laughing at the quaint address.

"Because you have come to Chiverley, the most dull, hopeless, detestable place in the whole wide world. I wish I could sink it in the depths of the sea. I hate it, I hate it!"

She spoke with a vehemence which almost frightened gentle Mary.

"But is it not your home? you have lived here always, have you not? It seems a pretty country and a nice place," said Mary, "and you have got the poor people in the village to interest you, and schools, no doubt, for the children; if there are no other resident gentry near, you must have the entire care of them, and I should think it gave you plenty to do."

Laura made an expressive little grimace. "Bahl! that is not at all my line, if it is yours. There are but two things which I can ever feel that I like in this odious place—flowers and music, and there is not much good in cultivating flowers which no one sees, or in singing songs with nobody to admire them but John and Charlie, who who have heard all I know a hundred times already."

"I am glad you sing," said Mary. "Music is almost a passion with me; but I do not quite understand about the village; are you not obliged to visit the people as the clergyman's daughter?"

"Who is there to oblige me?" asked Laura. "Duty," thought Mary, as she looked at Laura with her soft dark eyes, but she did not say the word aloud, for she was much too meek and gentle ever to reprove others, or to feel that it could be her place to do so.

Laura went on. "Wait till you have tried the life a few weeks, and you will understand it; you are not so badly off as I am, you are only here for one year, I believe."

"Yes; dear Mr. Lisle only made arrangements for the first year after his death."

"And where are you to go when you leave us?"

"I have not the slightest idea; I have no relations, you know."

"But have you no one to help or advise you?" asked Laura.

"No one excepting—" Mary stopped, for an indefinable sensation of shrinking dread made it unspokeably repugnant to her to utter the one beloved name on Laur Wyndham.

"Excepting whom?" said Laura, impatiently.

"Thee in a low tremulous tone Mary answered, "Bertrand."

"Bertrand, Mr. Lisle's only son? I have heard that he has one; tell me about him, Mary," she continued, eagerly. "I want to know everything. Where is he? what is his profession?"

"He is travelling back to his post at this moment, after having attended his father's death-bed and funeral; he is *chargé d'affaires* in one of the Continental towns."

"In the diplomatic service? Oh, that is charming for him! Then he will always be in the way of the very best society, and the gayest, brightest life the world has to offer. How I envy him! How I should like to know him! Is there any chance of it, Mary? Could you not write and ask him to come and advise you about the future."

"He does intend to come here," said Mary.

"Oh, when?" exclaimed Laura, her eyes dancing with excitement; "soon?"

"In the spring when the violets come," she added, so slowly that Laura did not hear the last sentence.

"In the spring? that is a long time hence, six months at least; still the weeks will pass; it is something new to look forward to." Laura was silent for a few minutes, then she said looking keenly at Mary, "I suppose you are very fond of him?"

Even in the moonlight the vivid colour that mounted to Mary's temples could be distinguished.

"I have known him all my life, and he has always been kind to me," she answered.

"Yes, and you look upon him quite as a brother, of course," and the sparkling eyes bent with intense scrutiny on the pale girl's face.

"He is not my brother," said Mary, very quietly.

"No, not in blood, I know; but you were like a daughter to Mr. Lisle, and you lived in Bertrand's home. You must have adopted each other as brother and sister, I am sure?"

"I should never wish to enter into any real relationship with any one," said Mary. "I think that in such matters one must follow God's appointment, and that alone; any attempt to interfere with it I feel sure would be unwise and dangerous."

"Well don't agree with you at all," said Laura; "I have acted on a totally different principle all my life, so you are hitting me pretty hard in saying that."

"I did not mean to do so; I beg your pardon," said gentle Mary.

"O I am not offended, neither am I converted; I shall go on just the same without respect. However, I hope you will heed Mr. Bertrand Lisle to his promise of coming; he will bring us a breath of life from the outside world, and I shall look forward to it immensely."

Mary did not speak, and after a minute's silence Laura rose.

"I suppose you are growing sleepy? Well, I will go and leave you to repose. I

advise you to sleep as late as you can in the morning; the days are decidedly too long at Chiverley."

Mary rose to bid her good night and Laura put her pretty bright face against hers, and kissed her.

"We had better be friends, anyhow, Mary Trovelyan, since we are thrown together in this forlorn place. Do you think you can like me?"

"I am sure I can," said Mary, warmly, as she returned the embrace; and it was true, that absolutely different as Laura was from herself in thought and feeling and manner, she had not yet escaped the fascination which this strange being had power to exercise over every one that approached her. And here we may briefly say that Laura Wyndham is not a fictitious character; and that if all we have to record of her in the future appears exaggerated or unnatural, we have simply to answer that herself, and her proceedings are drawn from the life.

She left the room at last, and closed the door. What was it that caused Mary Trovelyan, as soon as she was left alone, to sink on her knees and bury her face on her hands, while she cried out, almost with agony of fear, "Oh, my God, I am afraid—afraid!—take pity upon me! I am full of terror—save me—save me!"

We know a case in real life, of a human soul, on a fair summer morning, when the sunny world without was not brighter than the hopes it held within, when life seemed to be securely fixed in a haven of perfect peace and joy, when to the future had been given the promise, and, in a sense, the certainty of all that poor blind soul most ardently desired, and yet to whom in that calm bright hour, sudden as a black thunder-cloud swooping down upon a cloudless sky, there came an awful inexplicable terror of the very sources of its joy and hope, a terror so unendurable that for the moment the impulse to fly then and there away from all it most loved and valued, could scarcely be repressed, even by the very power of its passionate attachment to that which it seemed goaded by this mysterious dread to leave for ever. Well had it been for that soul if it had accepted the warning and obeyed the impulse; but it cast it off as a delusion, and a temptation, and went on gaily over the sunny path it might in that hour still have quitted if it would, and it was so, that long years after, the black terrible reality of which the shadow had been projected on it then—a reality which could never by any conceivable process, have foreseen, came down upon it with a fell power which crushed the very life well nigh out of it, and wrecked it fatally for time and almost for eternity.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Wyndham was a striking instance of the fatal power which adverse circumstances can have upon a weak and timid nature; he had a fair amount of intellectual capacity, and had pursued his studies in the days of his youth with a degree of plodding perseverance which had made him no mean scholar; he had always, however, been of a retiring disposition, and was absolutely deficient in moral courage or manliness; if, in the earlier stages of his career, he had been thrown with men of his own age, who would have shamed him out of his want of energy and spirit, his subsequent history might have been very different, but from the first the conditions of his existence were against him.

He was the only son of a widow, who had him educated at home under a private tutor, and who died soon after he came of age, leaving him with so small an amount of capital that it was necessary for him to adopt a profession. He decided at once to become a clergyman; but his choice was dictated by the hope that in his position he could lead a quiet and peaceful life, rather than by the zeal for religion, which alone can make a man fit to enter on that holy calling. Francis Wyndham was not insincere, however, though he was morally feeble, and his religious principles were perhaps the strongest element of motive power which he possessed; but they were not strong enough to withstand the opposing tide of external influences, which soon set in after a state of spiritual helplessness and inertness.

Immediately after his ordination, he had the misfortune to marry ill, frivolous, very beautiful girl, whose sole desire was to enjoy society and amusement wherever she could find it. She swayed her husband so completely, that he was indeed a "reed shaken by the wind," and as he had no settled home when they first married, she compelled him practically to ignore his sacred calling, while she dragged him about from one watering place to another—chiefly on the Continent—till she finally succeeded in quite exhausting their pecuniary resources. It then became a necessity for him to take a curacy, and to the supreme discontent of his wife, he found himself relegated to that of Chiverley in the Yorkshire wolds. Undoubtedly it was an unenviable place, very much cut off from the outer world, but the clergyman to whose care its humble poverty-stricken inhabitants were committed might have found ample occupation and interest in watching over their spiritual and temporal welfare, had he been reasonably determined in the performance of his duties.

Although Mr. Wyndham was only curate in charge, he had full authority in the parish, as the real rector was a paralytic invalid, who lived at a distance, and took no further interest in the living than was involved in the appropriation of the income.

The stipend allowed to Mr. Wyndham was very small, and his wife absorbed the whole of it, so that he felt ashamed to go amongst the poor people without being able to help them at all in their great necessities, and his wife did her best to hold him back from all but the barest performance of absolutely imperative obligations. She was utterly without sense of duty, and thoroughly discontented with her position.

When she was at Chiverley her husband was her only companion, and she grudged every moment he spent away from her, but she had an outlet from the dullness of her home, as her sister was married to a wealthy merchant in London, and the

Wyndhams could go to stay with her whenever they pleased. So as often as she could manage, by the payment of some guinea, spared with difficulty, to get a stray clergyman to take the Sunday duty at Chiverley, they started off for London, and remained there as long as they could.

Gradually the feeble remonstrances of Francis Wyndham's conscience succumbed to the mighty power of habit, and when his wife died, leaving him with his only child, Laura, at the age of sixteen, he found that her influence was not only quite as systematically a leech to his profession as her mother's had been, but greatly stronger, inasmuch as she was a far more powerful character.

For her, too, the only outlet from the dreary monotony of Chiverley was the London home of her rich aunt, and she made her father take her there as often as possible, until the death of this desirable relation consigned Laura finally to the narrow sphere where she felt like a bird in a cage.

Her expensive tastes so far outran her father's means that he found himself constrained to take pupils, in order to supplement them; and it was chiefly to make his house a suitable home for them that he married the second Mrs. Wyndham. It was almost as unfortunate a choice as his first, although she did not crave for amusement in the same way as her predecessor; she was indolent and selfish; good-humoured, when to be so did not interfere with her own interests, but with a mind as restricted and commonplace that she seemed incapable of rising above the consideration of her personal ease and comfort from day to day.

Of course such a helpmeet did but confirm Mr. Wyndham in his hopeless apathy and listlessness, and the only change which her advent made in the household was the excitement of the combat which straightway set in between her step-daughter and herself, but which had not resulted in many passages of arms before Laura established her position so triumphantly as the conqueror, that there never was again a question of interference with her perfect independence of action on the part of either her father or his wife. In fact, perfect freedom of action was the rule for all the inmates at Chiverley Rectory; and Mary Trovelyan soon found that whatever she might have lost by becoming one of this peculiar household, she had at least attained her most entire liberty. She was left completely to her own resources; every one went their own way, and left her to take hers, according as it might please her; and as her natural instincts led her strongly to the wish that she might in some manner be useful to her fellow creatures, it was not long before she made her way into the village, and began to cultivate the acquaintance of the neglected little children, and, as a sure result, of the parents also.

Up to the late dinner-hour, Mary was invariably spent the day taking her ease in her arm-chair, diversified by instructions to Sally as to the cooking of various dainties which she afterwards consumed in solitary enjoyment. Laura was generally occupied in her own room with a most voluminous correspondence, which seemed to form the chief interest of her life; and the young men were out of doors or at their studies. But in the evening the heterogeneous elements of which the family was composed seemed to be driven together by the force of circumstances, and the young people would take long walks, or roam about the garden in each other's company. On these occasions John Pemberton always followed Laura like her shadow, so that Mary generally fell to the lot of frank boyish Charlie Davenant, and by the time she had been a week or so at Chiverley he seemed to be the one of the whole party with whom she felt herself least a stranger.

One evening that they gone rather further than usual, Laura, and her companion had turned unperceived into a different path from that by which they had come, and Mary found herself under the necessity of walking home alone with Mr. Davenant.

"This an excellent opportunity!" exclaimed Charlie, when they had realized that they were really left alone. "I have been wishing so much, Miss Trovelyan, to know what you think of us all. Now do tell me, in confidence!"

"I think you are all very kind," she answered, with her quiet smile.

"Do you, indeed? It is more than I do! There may be some of the outward semblance of kindness at Chiverley, but there is not so much of the actual reality. However, what I want to know above all is your opinion of Lurline. I am most curious to know the impression she has made upon you."

"Tell me first why you call her Lurline."

"Do you not know what it means?" he asked.

"Not at all," answered Mary.

"Lurline or Lorelei is the syren watch on the Rhine, who allure men to their death by the entrancing sweetness of her songs. The name is exactly appropriate to Laura Wyndham, and she knows it. I have made no secret of my reason for giving it to her."

"I suppose you mean that she exercises a singular fascination on all who come in contact with her. I have felt it myself."

"Yes; but it is not only an involuntary fascination, though she has that too in her appearance and manner. The witch of the Rhine does not set herself more deliberately to entrance her victim than does our Lurline."

"Victims; that is a strong word!" said Mary.

"Not too strong for the occasion. I know what I am saying very well. Miss Trovelyan, I will tell you frankly that I have a reason for wishing you to understand Lurline which I do not like to explain to you, at least at present; you must let me give you some insight into her character and history."

"If it does not involve my being told anything which I ought not hear of a lady whose guest I am," said Mary gently.

"You are hardly her guest," said Char-

lie, with a boyish laugh. "She did not want you to come here I can tell you, though she is rather glad of it now, when she sees what it is likely to involve. However, I do not want to enter into all those mysterious under-currents at present. I simply desire that you should know the truth about Lurline as much as any human being can know it, which is probably not to any very great extent, after all."

Mary turned and looked at the open face and the truthful eyes that met her own so frankly. The boy was speaking with a serious earnestness, which was very unusual with him. He was about the same age as herself, and therefore not really any longer a boy, but he was so young-looking, so almost child-like sometimes in his gaiety, that she instinctively thought of him as one much younger than herself.

Mary had discovered that with all Charles Davenant's mirth and boyishness, he was both shrewd and right-minded, so she said, gravely, at last, "If there is anything you think I ought to know, Mr. Davenant, you can tell it to me, but I trust you not to bid me listen to anything which it would not be right for me to hear."

(To be Continued.)

## Early Ballooning in England.

The Sallers, father and son, were renowned for their courage in making balloon ascensions. James, the father, made an ascent from Oxford as early as 1784; and on the 1st of October, 1812, he attempted to cross the Irish Channel from Dublin to Liverpool. But he met with adverse winds, and after much buffeting about he was obliged to drop into the sea, and was picked up by a boat that fortunately was near, the captain being obliged to run his bowsprit through the balloon to free him. His son, Windham Saller, accomplished the passage from Dublin to Holyhead, on the 22nd of July, 1817. On one of his ascents the net broke and the car began to slip away, when he saved himself by tying the neck of the balloon round his body. He was unhappily killed on the 20th of September, 1824, while descending in a gale, by striking against a house near Blackburn, in Lancashire.

Mr. Green, another of our most celebrated aeronauts, was born the year after the invention of balloons, and died only a few years ago. He made nearly one thousand four hundred ascents; he crossed the sea three times, and twice fell into it. He took up seven hundred persons, among whom were one hundred and twenty ladies and many persons of high rank. On one occasion he ascended sitting on a favorite pony, suspended to the hoop in place of the car; the animal, who had been trained at Astley's, did not manifest the least uneasiness, but ate freely during the excursion some beans given him by his rider.

For a long time Montgolfier's system of heated air and Charles' system of light gas were in rivalry. The former was much the simpler; but the hydrogen was difficult and costly to prepare, and the filling of a balloon with it took many days. About 1814 coal gas came into use for lighting towns, and this settled the question by providing an excellent filling material, always to be had at gasworks at a moderate charge. Although six or seven times heavier than pure hydrogen, it was still less than half the weight of air, and therefore would give, with moderate-sized balloons, a fair ascending power; moreover, being less subtle, it was less liable to leak through the stuff of the envelope. Mr. Green was the first to take advantage of this gas, and it has since been almost universally used. The Montgolfier system is quite abandoned, and pure hydrogen is only resorted to in special cases where great power is used.

The ascending force is determined, according to well known hydrostatic laws, by the difference in weight between the gas and an equal volume of air. An example will make this clear. The standard balloon used in the siege of Paris was about fifty feet diameter, containing 70,600 cubic feet. The weight of this volume of air would be about 5,000 pounds, and the weight of the gas (assuming a specific gravity of 0.40) would be 3,000 pounds. Hence the gross ascending force would be 3,000 pounds. The weight of the balloon, net and car was about 1,000 pounds, thus leaving 2,000 pounds available for passengers, dispatches, ballast and anchoring apparatus. If the same balloon were filled with hydrogen, the weight of the gas would be only 350 pounds, and the disposable ascending force would be 3,650 pounds.

## Tricks of Speech.

Nothing is easier to acquire, nothing more difficult to lose, than a trick of speech and manner; and nothing is more universal. If we look round among our friends and acquaintances, we shall find scarcely one who has not his favorite word, his peculiar formula, his automatic action, his unmeaning gesture—all tricks caught probably when young, and, by not being corrected in time, next to impossible to abolish now. Who does not know the familiar "I say" as the preface to every remark?—and the still more familiar "You know" as the middle term of every sentence? Who too, in these later times, has not suffered from the infliction of "awful" and "jolly"—misplaced in the path of speech, interposed with even uglier and more obtrusive signs of folly and corrupt diction—milestones that are forever turning up, showing the successive distances to which good taste and true refinement have receded in this hideous race after slang to which our youth is given. Then there are the people who perpetuate ejaculations; who say "Goodness!" as a mark of surprise, and "Good gracious!" when surprise is a little mixed with reprobation; lower in the social scale it is "My word!" "Patience!" "Did I ever!" and indifferently to all station, "You don't say so!" or in a voice of deprecation, "No! and Surely not!" To judge by voice and word, these ejaculatory people are always in a state of surprise. They go through the world in unending astonishment; and their appeals to their goodness and that indeterminate quantity called good gracious are incessant. In the generation

that died with the fourth George, the favorite ejaculations were "By Jove!" and "By George!" with excursions into the regions of "Gad!" and "By Jingo!"

Again, a trick by no means unusual; your friend is telling you of some event, or making you the participator in some feeling. He invariably rounds off his narration with "in all my life." "I never saw such a thing in all my life," he says, if he is telling you how his cab-horse slipped on the asphalt and fell—exactly as all cab-horses always fall. "I never remember such a sultry day in all my life," he cries, mopping his flushed face. But the thermometer is only at 80 degs.; and he said the same thing yesterday when it was 86 degs., and the same thing the day before when it was 74 degs. Whatever happens to him is the supreme of that order of events, and nothing equal to it has been experienced by him in all his life before. He never had such a cold in all his life as this not very formidable catarrh—never enjoyed himself so much in all his life as at this not very joyous afternoon tea; his life is perpetually at its highest point, and by his trick of speech you might imagine him forever at the zenith of human experience. It is nothing of the kind. He is a good common-place moderate kind of person, whose path lies in an equable, not to say humble level, both of fact and feeling; but he has sufficed his speech to be pitted with this peculiarity, to be stamped by this trick of exaggeration, and the false registering of a fancy zenith means nothing in the world but the simplest affirmation of the most ordinary circumstances.—*The Queen.*

## On the Fly.

It was Hamlet who expressed a preference for the "fly to illa vobis know not of," or words to that effect, and Hamlet either was or pretended to be insane. The idea that there is any more annoying torment possible than the frequent fly affords is an unsonnet notion, a sign of a very thick skin or a very thick head. But setting aside for the time the direct discomfort that the creature works for man, it is interesting, and instructive too, to see the seriously injurious effect that its indirect influence seems to have upon the world's industry. There are in round numbers 33,000,000 cows, oxen, horses and the like in this country, which for about ten hours a day during fly-time keep their tails in almost constant motion. It is no exaggeration to estimate that they swing them at least ten times a minute, with a force equal at each swing to raising one pound a foot. That is, their tail force is ten foot-pounds a minute. One-horse power is thirty-three thousand foot pounds in a minute, so thirty-three hundred cattle would exert with their tails one-horse power, and all these creatures in the country would put forth upon the fly the aggregate force of ten thousand horse power. Now the entire force of all the steam engines and water wheels in the country used in the manufacture of steam engines and boilers is less than twelve thousand horse power. That is, the force wasted by our domestic animals in waving tails to keep the fly away is almost sufficient, if rightly applied, to make all the motive machinery in the land.

It is an enormous power to throw away upon so small a thing as the fly; but so it happens, and until somebody invents a machine for catching and transferring this force it will continue through the daylight of the fly season, Sabbaths and all, to be so wasted. Could the fly be abolished or trained and the thirty-three million tails kept quiet, the theory of the correlation of forces will show us how vast the saving of food and consequent relative extension of our pasture lands would be. Each flourish consumes so much force which must be made up by food, and to stop the flourish would be to stop that particular demand for food.

What especial good the fly does remains to be found out, and the utilitarian will hardly consider the creature worth the sacrifice of ten thousand horse power of energy every moment of two months of each year. To the moralist rather than the utilitarian to whom the insect's virtues are revealed. The bald head is its favorite race course, and the face of the sleeper is its frequent resting place. It is perpetually tumbling into food, and every dish in summer terms with the remains of the fallen. In milk, in water, in molasses, in soup and in gravy—in everything, the dead fly takes up with the regularity of meal-time. It is an unmeasurable annoyance, and in its vexations are the virtues of its being. It is also a lesson and a warning. Every misfortune of the fly, every disagreeable and annoying feat that it performs comes from its folly. It was not made to insult the bald or to overturn the sleeper; it was made to vex the lives of thirty million cattle. These should be only the side issues of its career, but the creature is cursed by nature. It is born grown up, all flies are the same size, and there are no young or old, and being thus created the thing is a fool. It has no childhood, no experience, no parental instruction. It does not know what to do, and so it always wrong. It is a moving monument of the need of intelligence; it all calls for wire screened windows and netted doors.—*Hartford Courant.*

God used consecrated lips. Consecration is the secret of power with God. This is not for the few. All the Lord's people may be prophets. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. God sets high estimate on the speaking of his truth. It has pleased Him that men shall be saved by the foolishness of preaching. Power waits to be claimed.

I will always account myself happy in the favour of God, although I should have no earthly thing to give me satisfaction. I will reckon any opportunities for being brought into converse with God as treasures to be preferred above all riches. I will never be in any other than in a restless disquiet of soul, until I find all my ends to be entirely swallowed up in the glory of God. I will relish all my enjoyments, even to my very meat and drink, chiefly, and if I can, merely under the notion of my being by them assisted in the knowledges of service of God.—*Colton Mather*