

Choice Literature.

Still and Deep.

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

CHAPTER XVI.

Mary Trevelyan made no answer, for she could not bear to prolong a conversation in which so much that was absolutely abhorrent to herself was attributed to one of whom personally she knew no evil; but could she have guessed what kind-hearted Charles Davenant's motive had really been for being so persistently determined to make those revelations to her, how would her serene spirit have been troubled, and her deep tender heart pierced with an anguish of terror!

The true state of the case was simply this: one morning, a day or two previously, Charlie Davenant had been sitting reading in the bow window of the drawing-room, where Mrs. Wyndham was also established in her easy chair, when Laura came in with a piece of embroidery in her hand, an art in which she had exquisite skill, in addition to her other accomplishments. She took a low chair, and sat down opposite to her step-mother, nodding to Charlie to show that she was cognisant of his presence, and said, "I have come to have a chat with you Mrs. Wyndham."

"Indeed!" said the lady. And to what am I indebted for so unusual a favour? There was never the smallest pretence of affection between these two; and it was one of the strange contradictions of Laura's very singular character, that with all her artfulness she was recklessly outspoken whenever it did not interfere with her schemes that she could be so; her answer was prompt, and to the point.

"Because I want you to tell me all about Mary Trevelyan."

"What is there to tell?" said Mrs. Wyndham, indolently; "you know her history as well as I do; she is a friendless orphan, and Mr. Lisle's adopted daughter."

"Yes; but I want to know what her history is in connection with Bertrand Lisle."

"Simply that in all probability she will become his wife."

"What ground have you for saying that?"

"Mr. Lisle's letter to myself," said Mrs. Wyndham, yawning. It was less trouble to answer her step-daughter's sharp questions with a direct reply, than to make any attempt at holding back what she saw no reason for concealing.

"What did he say? tell me exactly," said her imperious questioner.

"Oh dear me, Laura, how can I remember all he said; and I destroyed the letter."

"That was just as well perhaps; but tell me what was in it. You cannot have forgotten how you got the impression that Mary was to be Bertrand's wife."

"Mr. Lisle said he had reasons for wishing such a union above everything in the world, that he intended to make it his dying request to his son that he should marry her, and that he had not the slightest doubt it would be Bertrand's own desire, as he was convinced they were mutually attached to each other."

"Did he say if there was any engagement between them?" asked Laura, eagerly.

"He distinctly said there was not, and that he knew the subject had not then been approached by them."

"And they can scarcely have engaged themselves since, over the old man's new-made grave," said Laura.

"No; I can tell you they have not, for I wanted to know what was to become of Mary after her year with us was out, and I asked her in so many words if she was engaged to Bertrand, and she told me she was not."

"Yes, and she told me she had not the remotest idea where she was to go after she left us," said Laura. "That is all right, I quite understand the whole affair; it is one of these family arrangements that will never take place."

"Why should it never take place?" said Mrs. Wyndham, looking at her inquiringly, out of her sleepy eyes.

"I do not feel called upon to reveal all the mysteries of my prophetic soul," said Laura, laughing, as she rose, and folded up her work, having ascertained all she desired; "only I can tell you this, Mrs. Wyndham, that Bertrand Lisle will never engage himself to Mary Trevelyan," and she walked out of the room with the light of triumph in her gleaming eyes.

Charlie Davenant listened in perfect silence to this conversation; and now he said quietly to Mrs. Wyndham, "Do you expect Mr. Bertrand Lisle here at any time, Mrs. Wyndham?"

"Yes; he has written to tell me that he hopes to pay us a visit in the spring in order to see Mary Trevelyan. I think it is rather cool on his part, considering that I had not invited him; but he is my cousin of course."

"Then you have agreed to receive him?"

"Oh yes; I could not do otherwise. He will be here some weeks."

"And Laura knows it?"

"Of course!" and she turned round, apparently with the determined purpose of going to sleep in her chair.

"Just so!" said Charlie to himself, as he left the room. "I see it all. Bertrand Lisle, the diplomatist, living in gay Italy, a man in the first society, is the very beau ideal of a husband for Lurline. She has made up her mind to win him, and she will succeed, I fear; and if Mary Trevelyan loves him, as no doubt she does, it will go far to crush the life out of her, for she is not one to love lightly or to change, I am very sure. Poor, sweet Mary? so still, so pure, so white! She always reminds me of the sculptured angels in the cathedral at home. I cannot bear to think of her being made to suffer, perhaps to the death, by our unscrupulous syren. I will try to warn her. Perhaps, if she knew what Lurline really is, she could put her lover on his guard, or prevent him coming here at all, which

would be wisest. At least, I will try what I can do."

And Charlie did his best, as we have seen. He was exceedingly shrewd and observant, and he had been very much struck by the beauty of Mary Trevelyan's character, even during the short time he had known her. He had penetrated to the depths which lay beneath her stillness of manner, and had recognized the noble self-devotion, the pure truthfulness, the sweetness of charity which were hidden there; and although she seemed too far above himself for him to dream of falling in love with her, he was yet rapidly drifting into a feeling of most deep and sincere friendship for her, which made him intensely anxious to save her from future suffering.

Nevertheless, his well-intentioned effort had not proved very successful: one of Mary Trevelyan's most amiable qualities was her complete possession of that special element of heavenly charity which "thinketh no evil." It was almost impossible for her to harbour an uncharitable thought of any one. She had the most generous trust in the goodness of her fellow-creatures, and it was unendurable to her to believe that Laura could really be such a character as Charlie represented her.

Charlie Davenant made one more attempt to show her that at least there was deep design hidden under most of Laura's notions. He had noticed, with his usual shrewdness, that, for some reason or other, Laura persistently resisted all Miss Trevelyan's entreaties that she would let her hear her sing. Mary herself sang charmingly, with a low contralto voice, singularly touching and pathetic in its tone, and it had been one of her chief attractions to Bertrand, who was passionately fond of music—a fact which Laura had succeeded in drawing from her on one of the many occasions when she questioned her guest as to Mr. Lisle's tastes and fancies.

But it was quite in vain that Mary asked for the pleasure of hearing her, which John Pemberton owned to her was often bestowed on him when she was out of the way. Laura had always some convenient excuse for putting it off to another day which never came.

One evening, when it was dusk, Mary was coming home from the village, where she had soon made her way both into the hearts and homes of the neglected people, when she found Charlie Davenant waiting for her at the gate.

"Come round with me this way, if you are not in a hurry, Miss Trevelyan," he said, pointing to the gravel path which led round to the back of the house. "I have a pleasure in store for you, and I have been waiting to waylay you before you got into the house."

She followed him at once with a smile, thinking that in his good-nature he had prepared some pleasant surprise for her. He led her round to a part of the shrubbery near the open window of a little room which was used by Pemberton and himself as a study. As they drew near it there suddenly fell on Mary Trevelyan's ears a sound which she could scarce believe belonged to this gross lower earth at all. It was a voice of melody so wildly sweet, so exquisitely soft and thrilling, that a tremor ran through all her frame as the celestial harmony rose and fell on the dying night breeze like the harmonious echoes of heavenly strains. Never in her life had Mary Trevelyan heard or imagined anything equal to the beauty of this wondrous singing. It seemed hardly possible it could come from a human voice, and it was unlike any style of music she had ever known. There was no accompaniment of an instrument; yet it seemed almost impossible that a single voice could produce all the marvellous effects which floated on the air—now sounding like the sweetest wail of sorrow, now like a joyous bird carolling among the trees, now like an echo giving back the perfect notes with the most ethereal delicacy of tone.

"What is it? where does it come from?" asked Mary, quite bewildered.

Charlie drew her to the open window, and there within the room sat Laura, looking more like the lovely witch of the Rhine than ever, with her gleaming eyes and flowing hair, while John Pemberton, lying on the ground at her feet, was gazing up into her beautiful face with enraptured eyes.

CHAPTER XVII.

There was nothing poor John Pemberton liked so much as to talk of what seemed to him the transcendental qualities of the syren to whom his whole honest heart was so loyally devoted, and Mary let him talk to her about Laura's voice as much as he liked, while her own thoughts had flown to that one from whom they were never long absent.

"How charmed Bertrand will be with her," she innocently reflected, little dreaming how for Bertrand alone the Lorelei had striven to hide her gifts that they might burst upon him with a stranger, sweeter charm.

The days and weeks were speeding onward, now counted by Mary night after night as she laid down to rest, with the joyous thought that there was one term less of four-and-twenty hours to be passed, before she could see again the bright blue eyes that even in absence seemed ever shining in upon her life with a light that nothing else could give. He wrote to her often, charming tender letters, full of everything that was interesting to himself, as if he did not doubt her entire sympathy and oneness with him, and she answered, speaking ever of his concerns rather than her own, and when she had occasion to allude to those with whom she sojourned, talking of them always kindly and gently, with no hint of evil in connection with any one of them; she heard, too, often from nurse Parry, who was very dismal and unhappy away from her darling.

Autumn came and went, and winter certainly was dreary on... at Chivorley, but when the frost set in Laura found amusement and excitement in skating with Pemberton and Charlie on a little lake near the rectory, where the perfect grace of her lithe supple form showed to wonderful advantage, as she skimmed along like a bird with her pretty hands extended,

and her long hair floating out upon the breeze.

Meanwhile, Mary left alone, went stealing silently into the miserable cottages, where the poor were forgotten in their want and suffering; all she had, and it was little enough, was expended in trying to relieve their grinding poverty to some extent, and even when her wardrobe required renewal she denied herself the tasteful dresses which a young girl naturally likes to wear, in order that she might have more to give away. Her self-denial in this respect placed her at a great disadvantage by the side of Laura, who was always dressed to perfection, as her father knew to his cost; for, poor as they were, the necessary sum for Laura's toilette was never allowed to be stinted in the smallest degree. But if Mary, in her plain black dress, looked unattractive beside Laura's lovely radiant figure, she seemed as an angel clad in shining garments to the poor people shivering with cold and pinched with hunger, to whom she brought comforts of every kind.

One morning, when all the frost had disappeared, and the air was moist and fragrant, Laura was standing at the drawing-room window looking out towards the shrubbery which bordered the green rectory lawn. She was watching Mary Trevelyan, who was outside, at some little distance, with the greatest curiosity as to what could possibly be the meaning of her proceedings, and of the unusual animation she was displaying. She had seen her first walking very slowly along the foot of a mossy bank which shelved upward to a group of fine old trees, evidently searching for some object which she was eagerly desirous to find, and for a time apparently her search was without avail; but suddenly Laura saw her bound forward, and kneel down upon the moss, while, with the utmost care, she took her treasure, whatever it might be, from the ground. Then Laura saw her rise, and stand holding it with both her hands, the one below the other, while she gazed down upon it with such a look of radiant joy on her pale calm face, as never certainly had shone upon it during all the time she had been at Chivorley.

The Lorelei's curiosity was too strongly excited not to be gratified at once, and in a moment she had opened the French window at which she was standing, and ran, fleet and graceful as a deer, to the spot where Mary's dark-robed figure stood within the shade of the trees.

"What have you found, Mary?—what is it?" exclaimed imperious Laura; and at the first sound of her voice Mary started, and made a movement to conceal her treasure, but as Laura came close to her, with the bright piercing eyes scanning her face, her perfect stillness of manner returned, and without a word she opened her half-closed hand, and let her companion see what lay there. A simple treasure indeed it seemed—only a little dewy violet laid on its own green leaf, with a faint exquisite fragrance issuing from it, like the breath of the infant spring. "A violet!" exclaimed Laura, much surprised. She was silent for a few moments evidently pondering over the matter; then she looked Mary full in the face. "There is something under this, Mary Trevelyan, I am certain. The sight of a violet alone would not have animated you suddenly as much as if you had received a new soul, like Undine in the story. Tell me, what does it mean?"

"It means spring," said Mary's low voice; and a soft happy smile played on her lips.

"Spring?" said Laura, slowly, while her subtle unscrupulous spirit laboured to probe her friend's secret. Suddenly she clapped her little hands triumphantly.

"Spring! I have it! I know what it means. Your brother Bertrand comes in the spring."

"Laura, he is not my brother," said Mary, turning, and looking at her calmly, though her lips were quivering.

"Oh, I always forgot he is not so actually; it seems to me so like it, you know. His parents were quite a father and mother to you."

"They were my kindest friends—no more. My father and mother lie beneath the great Atlantic, and I have no brother or sister in the world."

"I will be your sister, if you like, just as I think Mr. Lisle ought to be your brother."

"Laura, I believe I have explained to you before that I cannot think it right to try to establish false relationships, which are not of God's appointment."

"Oh, very well," said Laura, with her light laugh. "It will come all to the same thing in the end," and she darted back across the lawn. Mary followed more slowly, bearing her little fragrant prize carefully in her hand, while she murmured, "He said he would come with the violets—with the violets; and this is the first!"

Any one less intensely reserved and delicate in her feelings would have enclosed this violet to Bertrand in her next letter; but she would not even thus remind him how the hope of his coming was the rainbow of promise on the horizon of her thoughts; she laid her tender floweret close to the precious white rose, which had felt the beating of her true heart night and day since Bertrand gave it to her, and waited for the fulfilment of the dear hope of which it was the harbinger.

And he came with the violets. A few mornings later, while the family were at breakfast, the letters were brought, and Laura's keen eyes quickly spied out one in Bertrand's handwriting, which she had learned to know, for Mary, and another, also from him for Mrs. Wyndham; on this last she pronounced at once, saying, "Here is a letter for you, Mrs. Wyndham, from Mr. Lisle; shall I read it for you, and tell you what is in it, as you are having your breakfast?"

"People generally like to read their own letters, Laura, but it would be more trouble to fight with you for it than to let you have your will," said her stepmother, languidly; and the Lorelei had torn the letter open before she had done speaking.

Mrs. Wyndham, while she sat thinking so deeply, that poor John Pemberton could not win another glance from her all through the breakfast hour. Charlie Davenant's good-tempered laughing face mercurially clouded over in a manner most unusual to him. During the months that had elapsed since Mary Trevelyan came to the rectory, the young man had watched her quiet silent course with a thoughtful scrutiny, which had in it an element almost of reverence, for she had impressed him as no one else had ever done with the heavenly beauty of that charity of which so lovely a picture is drawn in the Scriptures, and which seemed to him completely to represent in all its manifold yet harmonious qualities, the charity that suffereth long and is kind, vaunting not itself, seeking not its own, enduring all things, hoping all things, believing all things, walking ever in the more excellent way. He noted, with keen interest, the contrast between her and the brilliant woman who had so fascinated him for a short time. Laura had been to him like a dazzling meteor flashing through the air, and shedding round a thousand sparks of brightness; but Mary was like the silver moonlight, white and still, shining steadfast in its pure serenity over the wild waves of the troubled sea.

Had Charlie Davenant been a few years older, with an assured income and a post which could give some confidence for his future and his career, he would probably have allowed himself to think of Mary Trevelyan as one whom he might at least dream of winning to himself one day; but as it was, he felt her to be so far removed from him in every way, that he never thought of regarding her but as a "bright particular star," appearing for a time above his earthly path, to lure his eyes and heart heavenward far beyond even herself.

And there was another reason why he never permitted his enthusiastic admiration to express itself, outwardly in more than honest friendship; he felt certain that Mary had already given to Bertrand Lisle the rich undivided treasure of her whole heart's affection; he had watched her when his letters came, he had scanned her face when his name was casually mentioned, and he had seen the light that stole into the soft dark eyes, the tremor of the sweet lips, the faint flush on the pale cheeks.

"She loves him," he said to himself that morning, as he had many a time before; "and she will love him even to the death, yet the Lorelei, who does not know what it means to be true to any one but herself, will lure him from her to gratify her worldly ambition, and my star will be left to fade away alone in a long dark night of anguish! What can I do—what can I do to save her!"

The matter seemed the more difficult to poor Charlie because his father wished him to come home for a few weeks at Enstour, which would prevent his being at Chivorley during most of Bertrand's visit.

(To be continued.)

A Woman's Warning Against Fashion.

Fashion is a much more subtle temptation, because the eye and taste get gradually demoralized. Some periods are worse than others in this respect; but there will always be tendencies to be guarded against—either those that are actually indecent, or merely to indecorum; e. g., the quietest bonnet of the fashion of 1876 would have been most indecorous in 1830, and could have been worn by no respectable person, though now the "cottage bonnet" would be an enormity. But when, in the beginning of the century, ladies, trying to be classical, wore hardly two petticoats, and backed out of the room like nixies for fear their fathers and aunts should be horrified by the statue-like outline of their torsos, fashion went a good way beyond the simple indecorous. And the same may be said of the height of the corsage, and probably always will be; for some women will always unfortunately be found, who are sufficiently lost to modesty, to be willing to attract by display of themselves; and there are others who thoughtlessly imitate them, because they will not be outdone; and thus a public fashion is formed, which absorbs the thoughtless, and makes others afraid of the suspicion of prudery. Once for all, exposure is always wrong; whatever be the fashion, it is a Christian woman's duty to perceive when indecorum comes in, and to protest against it by her own example and influence, though not by censoriousness. Relative indecorum should also be guarded against. The first entrance of a fashion that tends to a bold appearance ought to be resisted. Mannish dresses are undesirable on this account; and it is well to cultivate the shading of the face as much as possible—no wearing such hats as are largely durable because others have them. Exposure of the face is one of the great tendencies of the time; and, though it is not exactly indecorous in itself, yet the bold confronting of notice that is involved in going out with a totally unprotected countenance, thrown into prominence by the head-dress, cannot be modified in itself; nor does a veil coming close over the nose materially alter the matter. Crinolines were only absurd, not indecorous, therefore it was not worth while to go against the stream; but the low corsage and tight skirt and some kinds of head-gear, should be avoided at any cost of singularity. Colors likewise are involved in the matter of modesty. What is obtrusive is never fit to put on, for it brings eyes upon the wearer. There is no need to give instances. Most of us understand that there is a difference between brightness and gaudiness; and if, unfortunately, we are born without the eye to see what is appropriate, observation from others will generally teach it. To be conspicuous is the special thing to be avoided. Glaring contrasts, hasty adoption of fresh modes—all that challenges observation—are inconsistent with the soberness and "shamefacedness" which form part of the Christian woman's adorning.—Charlotte M. Yonge.

When our work becomes a pleasure, it is we that make it so; we are a sunshine upon it, receiving the reflection in return.

Scientific and Useful.

BAKED APPLE DUMPLINGS.

These are much better than boiled; the crust is made the same way, but with less shortening.

SCRAMBLED EGGS.

Into a frying-pan pour a cup of cream; when this is hot, pour in a dozen eggs, previously broken into a dish. Cook slowly, stirring constantly, so that the eggs will be evenly done, and serve immediately.

DELMONICO PUDDING.

One quart of scalding milk, eight table-spoonfuls of corn-starch wet in cold milk; stir into the milk with the yolk of three eggs beaten well, a little salt and four table-spoonfuls of sugar. Take off the fire, flavor to taste, froth the eggs, and put in the oven and brown.

SALT FOR CATTLE.

Salt should be furnished to all animals regularly. A cow, an ox or a horse needs two to four ounces daily. Salt increases the butter in the milk, helps the digestive and nutritive processes, and gives a good appetite. The people of interior Europe have a saying that a pound of salt makes ten pounds of flesh. Of course, salt only assists in assimilating the food; it does not make flesh, nor bone, nor muscle.

APPLE DUMPLINGS.

The old way to make these is to make dough same as for cream tartar biscuits. Take a piece of the dough, either roll or pull it with the hands till it is about half an inch thick. Take of corod and par. I apple, a half or quarter, according to its size, put it in the centre of the dough, make it up into a round ball, pinching the dough together; if too thick when it is closed, cut off a piece of the dough. When all are made drop them into boiling water and boil them half an hour. I use sauce made with a cup of sugar and a cup of water boiled together for a few minutes; thicken with a little corn starch; add a small piece of butter and a little nutmeg.

EAT SLOWLY.

Many a man has been choked to death in attempting to swallow his food before he chewed it long enough. Food in the stomach, surrounded with its juices, is like pieces of ice in a glass of water; for as the ice melts from without inwards, so the stomach juices dissolve the bits of food from without inward; and, as the smaller the pieces of ice, the sooner they are melted, so the smaller the bits of food, the sooner they are dissolved, and pass out of the stomach to be distributed to the system, giving it life and warmth and vigor. But if the pieces of food are large, they begin to rot before they are melted, causing heaviness, belching, nausea, or other discomforts. These make bad blood, contaminating the breath, sending dullness to the head, depression to the spirits and a universal feeling of unwellness, lasting sometimes for a half a day or a whole night. Therefore, eat slowly, with deliberation; talk a great deal at meals; cultivate cheerful conversation, and let any man or woman be considered a domestic enemy and pest who says or does anything at the table calculated to cause a single unpleasant sensation in any one present.—Hall's Journal of Health.

COMMON SENSE VENTILATION.

Colonel Waring says, in *The Atlantic Monthly*: "The best practical statement I have met about ventilation was contained in the remark of a mining engineer in Pennsylvania: 'Air is like a rope; you can pull it better than you can push it.' All mechanical appliances for pushing air into a room or a house are disappointing, what we need to do is to pull out the vitiated air already in the room; the fresh supply will take care of itself, if means for its admission are provided. It has been usual to withdraw the air through openings near the ceiling, that is, to carry off the warmer and therefore lighter portions, leaving the colder strata at the bottom of the room, with their gradual accumulation of cooled carbonic acid undisturbed. Much the better plan would be to draw this lower air out from a point near the floor, allowing the upper and warmer portions to take its place. An open fire with a large chimney throat, is the best ventilator for any room; the one half or two-thirds of the heat carried up the chimney is the price paid for immunity from disease; and large though this seems from its daily draft on the wood pile or coal-bin, it is trifling when compared with doctors' bills, and with the loss of strength and efficiency that invariably result from living in unventilated apartments."

FEEDING THE SICK.

Sad mistakes are made by hundreds of well-meaning folks in their method of administering nourishment to invalids. It is the custom to keep the delicacies intended to tempt their appetites constantly within their reach. The result is, that instead of feeling any desire for the jellies, broths, etc., thus obtruded upon their notice, the sight of them creates loathing and disgust. Sick people should never be haunted with food in this way. Even persons in health would lose their relish for choice dishes, if condemned to live in a larder, surrounded night and day with all the dainties of the season. If you have anything rare and delicious for your patient, surprise him with it. A pleasant surprise is a good tonic, and you may excite the palate by springing a refreshing rarity upon him unexpectedly. Never hand a sick man a pile of eatables, telling him that you expect him to devour the whole of it. Feed him on the infinitesimal plan, with fairy morsels; and as soon as he has taken what he requires, remove the remainder. In visiting sick rooms, how often one finds bowls of arrowroot and sago, daubs of jolly, cups of beef tea, fragments of dry toast, slices of oranges, and the like, mixed in among black draughts, boxes of pills, plasters, leeches, and other abominations of the "healing art." No wonder the pale and languid inmates have no appetite.

Let us who profess to be Christians, bear with those who do not. We should recollect that we have the light, and that as God was to us, we ought to be good to others.