

Choice Literature.

Still and Deep.

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

CHAPTER XXXV.

When Bertrand Lisle, having removed all trace of his long dusty journey, walked down through the great room towards his uncle, with his handsome head erect, and his eyes bright with excitement, he looked in that worthy representative of the old de L'Isles, whose portraits, many of them bearing that strange resemblance to his own members of an ancient family, even with an interval of centuries between them. His appearance was in striking contrast to that of the actual possessor, who still sat in his great chair with a black velvet robe folded loosely round his wasted shrivelled form, and a rich crimson silk coverlet flung over his helpless limbs; he watched the young man admiringly as the servant drew forward an old-fashioned green velvet chair with a carved wooden back, in which he seated himself close to his uncle's side.

The old Comte stretched out one of his thin white hands, and laid it on Bertrand's, not less delicate and shapely, though tanned with exposure to the sun, and said, tenderly, "You are very like your father, Bertrand; no wonder that I forgot the lapse of years, and took you for him."

"Ah!" continued he, "life must have been greatly embittered for Louis before he could thus seek to bring you up as an alien from our country, and doubtless I had my heavy share in poisoning it; but Providence has overruled us both—in his nobleness and me in my unworthiness—and at the end of it all you stand in your rightful place, beneath the roof-tree of your ancestral home. You did well, Bertrand de L'Isle, to leave the stranger country that you might fight for France; and France opens her heart to you, and bids you rest on her soil for ever."

"I scarce understand you," said Bertrand, looking anxiously at the old man, who spoke with feverish excitement.

"No," he said, "how should you tell you know my history. But I will accomplish now the bitter task, and tell it you from first to last." He joined his hands for a moment as if in prayer, and then went on. "Your father was my nephew, the son of my eldest brother, but we were so nearly the same age that we were brought up together as children in this old home, where I, in my orphanhood, was sheltered by your grandfather, who was in possession of the estates. Louis, his only son, was of course, by the law of primogeniture, which was always observed in our family, the direct heir of the property and all its territorial rights and titles. He was generous to me after he became the head of our house, but we were never friends, we were too unlike; he was like one of the old cavaliers of the times of chivalry—loyal to his God and to his king, pure-minded and disinterested, holding principle more precious than gold, and truth dearer than life. As for me, I cared neither for religion nor for the throne, nor for my country; I desired only wealth and worldly honours and luxurious ease, and I was bitterly jealous of Louis because he held the position of lord of this castle and estate, which I coveted for myself. I rejoiced to see his enthusiastic devotion to the cause of the Bourbons, because I knew that their tenure of the throne was precarious, and I allied myself to those who were secretly labouring to undermine it, on purpose that if they fell I might stand well with the government inimical to them, and wrest the estates from Louis should he follow them in their fallen fortunes. I well knew that in doing so I should be false to the principles of our family as well as a treacherous usurper of that to which I had no real claim, but cared nothing for honour and justice so that I could gain my own ends. I had married by that time a woman of low birth, for whom I never pretended to have the slightest affection, but whose wealth had become necessary to me on account of my debts, and she was full of vulgar ambition to be made lady of the castle, and urged me on in all my unworthy plans. They succeeded but too well; Charles X. was driven from France, and Louis clung to him in his misfortunes. I seized on the estates at once, and succeeded in getting my possession of them, unjust as it was, recognised by the new dynasty, to whom I gave in my adhesion, till the Revolution of 1848 made me veer round to call myself first a Republican, and to court the imperial favour. During all these years I did my best to lose sight of Louis. I knew well that even if he chose to remain in exile, my plain duty would have been to ask him to let me care for the estates as his representative, and to have honestly transmitted to him every farthing of the revenue, but so far from that, I succeeded in getting a sentence of exile and deprivation passed upon him, through false representations which I made concerning him, to the reigning powers, and I established myself here as in my right. I forbade the mention of his name by any of our dependents, and after that one intimation of his marriage, and subsequently of your birth, which he sent through the family notary, I never heard of him from that day to this. But Bertrand, God is just, and not for one single hour did I find happiness in my usurped position. Nothing prospered with me. My wife was a woman of violent temper, coarse in language and in mind; she made enemies of all around her. Our neighbours, equal to the de L'Isles in birth, and long the friends of the family, refused to associate with her, and her violence and insolence to our tenants and household were such that I dared not leave her alone in the chateau. We lived, therefore, a lonely life when we were here, shut up together, without a spark of affection between us to render our position tolerable, and when we went to Paris she tortured me by her plebeian manners and reckless extravagance. We had children, but they died one after another. The greatest desire I had in the world was that a son of

mine should become lord of de L'Isle and head of our house, and again and again the hope was awakened only to perish. I had four sons, who passed from their cradles to their coffins. My wife and I were left alone face to face in our misery. Ago, except on special. Rather more than five years ago she died. It was too late then for me to marry again.

"It was about six months after my wife's death, when I had come down here to entertain some of my political friends who had agreed to meet at my house. They had spent a week with me, and had departed, leaving me alone; it was a beautiful summer evening, and I could not bear the solitude of these old halls; I went out, and roamed beyond the grounds, into a wood which lies at no very great distance from our domain. I did not feel well, but the fresh air seemed to revive me, and I had gone far into the recesses of the forest when suddenly a weakness seemed to take possession of me, a dimness passed over my eyes, then all became blank, and I remained unconscious. I know not how long; when I came to myself I was lying on the ground at the foot of the tree; darkness had fallen on the earth, save that one portion of the horizon was illuminated every now and then by sheet lightning, the thunder was growling in the distance, but in the wood itself all was absolute calm. I lay there for a few minutes, trying to understand what had happened to me, and I concluded I had fainted, but when I tried to raise myself to move my limbs I understood the fatal truth, I had had a paralytic stroke, and I had lost all power of movement excepting in my hands; I tried to cry out, but my dumb lips refused to make any sound: I have since regained my speech, though not the use of my limbs, but for the time even the power to ask help was taken from me, my head fell back upon the earth, and I said to myself in despair, 'I shall die here unaided and alone. No one knows where I was, no one ever ventured into the forest after dark, where the peasants believed that the spirit of a man who was murdered years ago within its shade still walked by night; there was not a chance that any one would seek me till the morning, for my servants believed I had retired to rest. In my faintness and helplessness I felt as if I could not possibly survive through the night, stretched on the damp earth, without succour; death then, death speedy and terrible was surely before me, and as I closed my eyes in helpless despair I seemed to hear a solemn voice within me saying, 'and after death the judgment!'"

"The dreadful night wore on, while my awakened conscience held me in its grasp like an accusing spectre. But still I lived; and with the dawning light a wood-cutter, passing near, through the mercy of my God, perceived me, and I was rescued. My servants were summoned. They carried me home. For days and months I lay dumb and helpless. Gradually the power of speech returned; but my limbs remain like those of a dead man."

"I believe that this much life was given me only that I might make restitution of all my unlawful gains. I sought Louis by every means in my power, but nowhere could I hear of him. I had a deep conviction that if only I were permitted to restore these estates to the rightful heir, I might take it as a token that the pardon and mercy of God would be extended even unto me, repentant, when in actual fact I am summoned before the judgment-seat. And now Bertrand de L'Isle," continued the old man, turning to him with a smile of ineffable contentment, "has not the good God been gracious to me indeed? He has tried the truth of my repentance by five years of anguish and almost hopeless waiting, and then he has brought you to me—you, the son and representative of Louis de L'Isle, legitimate heir, the true and rightful lord of all this fair estate. Already have I sent for the family notary, and to-morrow, in the presence of competent witnesses, I make over to you this chateau, and all that belongs to the inheritance of your father. As for me, the good cure of the village will give me a lodging with him for the brief remnant of my days."

"No, dear uncle, not so," said Bertrand, earnestly; "I will never consent to you leaving this place. After all that you have told me, I dare not grieve your will that it should belong to my father's son hereafter, if I should survive the war, which is very doubtful; but while you live it is yours, and I will never deprive you of it."

"So Louis would have spoken," said his uncle, smiling. "But, Bertrand, we need scarce discuss the matter; it is but a question of a few months—the doctors have told me I cannot live longer. If you are good enough to let me linger out my days, in a corner of your house, I will accept your kindness with gratitude; but all shall be made over to you before the day is many hours old to-morrow, and if you leave me here you leave me as your guest."

Armand de L'Isle carried his point; and when Bertrand rode away from the chateau the next day, his title to the estate was set in the notary's hands.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Mary Trevelyan and her associates reached Paris (not without great difficulty, from the distracted state of the country) in the first week of September, 1870; and the events of that month so fatal to France, are matters of history with which our readers are well acquainted. The news of the terrible disaster of Sedan and the fall of the Empire, took place the day after their arrival, and within ten days from that time Paris was encircled with an iron ring by the irresistible force of the Prussian army, and the siege had commenced. Ingress and egress became alike impossible, and Mary knew that she, and all those who, like herself, were devoted to the relief of the sick and wounded, were finally shut in, and must needs go through all the hardship and horrors of the siege, however protracted it might be. She was well content with this fate, so far as she herself was concerned; she had come there to help the suffering, and was prepared herself to suffer in doing so, and a very few weeks passed in the capital (fifty called in those

days the "bleeding heart of France") sufficed to show her that there was more than work enough for hundreds like herself, could they have been found, to devote themselves to the never-ending task. Ambulances were at first established in connection with the hospitals, for the greater convenience of surgeons and nurses, who had thus everything that was required at hand, and into these, day after day, were poured the wounded soldiers from the ramparts, or those who had succumbed to fever from exposure and hardship, along with numbers of men women and children who were stricken down in the streets by the shot and shell of the ceaseless bombardment. Very soon, too, the want of provisions began to tell on the poor, and never in this world will it be known how fearful an amount of misery was endured within the wall of Paris during those awful winter months; soon the hospitals, even with their superabundant ambulance, no longer sufficed to hold all the sufferers, and different places were utilized for the purpose, until at last the very churches were put in requisition, and turned into receptacles for the sick and wounded.

In the first commencement of the long trying siege Mary Trevelyan was appointed chief nurse to the ambulance attached to the Hospital of Notre Dame de Pitie, whose wooden sheds and tents erected in the courtyard were filled with sufferers, after all the wards had been crowded to overflowing; but in agreeing to remain there, chiefly, she had stipulated that she was to be replaced by some other person, if at any time it happened that she found her services suddenly required elsewhere; for the one thought that lay over at her heart, and filled her with anxiety night and day, was the conviction she had that Bertrand Lisle was somewhere, even now, within the beleaguered city, wounded, it might be, or dying, and in some need of the succour which she longed beyond all words to give him; she had calculated, from what he had said as to his movement in the letter to Laura, of which Charles Davonant had spoken to her, that he must have arrived in Paris with his despatches the day, or two before she herself had reached the city, and she knew that if this had been the case, it must be impossible for him to leave Paris again—a French officer was the last person who would be allowed to pass the ranks of the Prussian army: where, then, was he? and how could she know whether, disabled as he already was, he might not be in some great suffering or danger? This was the question that seemed to wear her very heart out, as night and day she laboured among the sick and dying; but she spoke no word of her dreadful anxiety to Mrs. Parry, when she snatched a moment to go and see her. Poor nurse Parry had enough on her hands already, without having to share Mary's cruel suspense.

Madame Brunot, the wife of the colonel, was in the greatest distress; nothing had been heard of her husband, and it was certain that if he were alive at all he could not return to his family till the siege was over. She was herself in a very delicate state of health, entirely confined to bed, and she had no money with which to pay the exorbitant price to which provisions were already rising. Her seven children and herself depended entirely on the charity of others, and though Mary and Mrs. Parry gave all they had, it was far from sufficient for their wants.

Their condition would have been almost desperate had it not been for John Pemberton; he had been appointed by the Relief Society to the onerous task of distributing food from the English stores to the famishing population in a large district of the city, and the work taxed his energies to the utmost, from the scenes of distress in every possible shape to which it introduced him, and which he never failed to strive most earnestly to relieve without confining himself at all to his special department. The Brunots lived in the quartier which had been assigned to him, but he would in any case have known of their distress from Mary Trevelyan, whom he often went to see, and he soon became interested in the family. Valerie, the eldest little girl, who was about ten years old, was one of those charming unselfish children to whom sorrow and trial had given wisdom beyond her years. Now that Madame Brunot was incapacitated she acted as the little mother of the younger children, and scarcely knew what it was to be without a baby in her arms continually; she it was who consulted with John Pemberton as to the wants of the family whilst nurse Parry was attending to the sick woman, and, as he spoke French only with great difficulty, he used to take her with him as his little interpreter, that Mrs. Parry was often left in charge of the household while Valerie went with him to help in succouring families as badly off as themselves. Hand in hand they would walk through the streets of unhappy Paris, or stand in the long line of purchasers waiting at the shops of the butchers and bakers till their turn came to be supplied; and the child showed wonderful calmness and courage with the ceaseless thunder of the bombardment sounding over her innocent head, and the lurid smoke of the cannon glaring before her eyes. She soon came to feel for John Pemberton that intense affection which an intelligent and warm-hearted child is so quick to cherish for the friend of mature years of whose kindness and wisdom she has had experience. She well knew that he was the benefactor of those who were dear to her, and she looked upon him as the embodiment of all that was good and noble; she would open her guileless heart to him as she trotted along by his side, and John Pemberton soon found that the services he had rendered to her family were more than repaid by the benefit he derived from his intercourse with her, and the insight he gained into her transparent nature and simplicity of mind; for she related to him that faith in his fellow-creatures which had been so cruelly destroyed by Lurline's artful intrigues. Valerie taught him that the world is not all evil, that God has many a holy shrine in pure unworldly hearts that seem through all their lives to retain the freshness and brightness with which they first came from His creative hand. The patience, too,

with which the child, in quiet submission to the will of the Heavenly Father in whom she trusted so implicitly, endured a life of joyless privation without a murmur, made the man of riper years feel ashamed of the gloom he had allowed to overshadow his whole existence, because the one love on which he had set all his hopes had failed him in such bitter fashion, and she taught him, above all, a lesson of disinterestedness in her thoughtful and observant care for others and complete forgetfulness of self.

One evening Mary was seated in the midst of Madame Brunot's children, when she was feeding with some rice, and she smiled gently on them, as they stood round her with open mouths, like so many hungry sparrows; but when the welcome repast was over, and they had all been carried off to bed under the guardianship of Valerie, Pemberton saw how instantaneously the transient brightness faded from her face, while a long shuddering sigh seemed to shake her whole frame. She went to the window, and stood there, looking out with a sad wistful gaze so full of yearning anxiety and pain, that he no longer doubted she had indeed some heavy secret trial that was blanching her wan face, and wasting her delicate frame with far more insidious power than all her labours on behalf of the suffering.

He was always in the habit of escorting her back through the dangerous streets to the hospital, when he happened to meet her at the Brunots'; and she was soon ready to go, for she never stayed away from her duties longer than the time necessary to do anything she could for the Brunots, and to comfort Mrs. Parry with the assurance that she was quite safe and well. So the two found themselves walking, by the quietest way they could, in the direction of the hospital. It was a bright moonlight night, clear and cold, and Pemberton could study his companion's face as they went along as well as if he had been high noon.

"Valerie Brunot is a very wise little woman," he said presently.

"She is indeed a singularly thoughtful, intelligent child," answered Mary.

"She has made a discovery which I was too blind or too stupid to make," said Pemberton, "and has told me she is certain you have some great grief or anxiety which you are bearing unaided and in silence. If this is true, Miss Trevelyan, I should be so thankful if you would let me try to help you."

"It is true," she said, in her soft pathetic voice.

"Then do I entreat of you, tell me what it is—if at least it is at all possible for me to be of use to you with regard to it."

She held up her head, and did not speak.

They were crossing one of the bridges over the Seine, and Pemberton resolutely stopped, and looked at her while he repeated, "Miss Trevelyan, can I help you? You must tell me. These are not days for conventionalities."

"I think you could," she answered; "but I fear that it might lead you into danger."

"As to that, I cannot be in greater danger than I am every day and every hour. My duties oblige me to be under fire half my time, near the ramparts. You may be perfectly certain nothing can make any difference to me in that respect. I shall not move from this spot till you tell me what I can do for you."

Then she raised her face into the full moonlight, and Pemberton saw that over it was passing a wave of emotion which made her lips tremble and her eyes shine with tears.

"Oh, how kind you are," she said; "it will indeed ease my heart to tell you. Think—think what it must be to me to spend every hour, night and day, attending to the sick and wounded who are strangers to me, and all the while to know that he, who is my first and dearest friend on earth, is most likely lying somewhere within those walls ill, dying perhaps, with none to tend or care for him."

She could not go on, but, bending her face on her hands sobbed unrestrainedly. John Pemberton looked at her with infinite compassion.

"You mean Bertrand Lisle?" he said very gently.

"Yes," she answered, in a broken voice. "I know that he came into Paris at the same time we did. He cannot have escaped from it, as you know; and in no possible way have I been able to hear anything of him. But I have an instinctive conviction that he is ill somewhere, and in need of help. I have visited every ambulance to which I could gain access, and looked in the faces of hundreds of wounded men; but never, never have I seen him."

"Then, Miss Trevelyan, from this moment leave the search to me; and I promise you that I will never rest till I have found him. I can go where you cannot, and I do not doubt I shall succeed."

She put both her hands into his. She looked up into his face, with eyes radiant with gratitude.

"I cannot thank you," she said, "for I know no words which could express what I feel; but our Father in heaven will bless you, Mr. Pemberton, with a great blessing for your mercy and goodness to me."

He pressed her hand in silence, and they walked on to the hospital.

"I ought not to wonder at man's folly," thought Pemberton, as he turned away from seeing Mary within the gate, "after my own insane weakness at Ohivorey; but certainly there never was madness like that of Bertrand Lisle, when he flung aside such a heart as Mary Trevelyan's for the sake of the syren Lurline!"

(To be continued.)

A HENRY restaurant, it is said, is to be opened on the exhibition grounds at Philadelphia, where food will be prepared for the hungry children of Israel in strict accordance with the laws of Moses.

THE ice trade of New York yearly amounts to nearly 1,800,000 tons. The average value in store is \$1 per ton. In 1870 from the mild winter and the long summer it reached the price of \$20 per ton.

Scientific and Useful.

QUICK PUDDING.

Split a few crackers, lay the surface over with raisins, and place the halves together again, tie them closely in a cloth and boil fifteen minutes in milk and water. With rich sauce it is excellent.

TOMATOES FOR THE TABLE.

A delicate dish is made by taking tomatoes, cutting them in halves, putting them in a buttered dish with bread crumbs, butter, pepper and salt, and then baking till slightly browned on the top.

LIQUID BLUE.

Take a half pound of best double oil of vitrol, mix one ounce of Spanish indigo, pounded very fine, and scrape into a little chalk; have an iron pot half full of sand, set this on the fire; when the sand is hot, put the bottle in, and let the vitrol, etc., boil gently for a quarter of an hour; take the whole off the fire, and let it stand twenty-four hours, and then bottle for use.

STUFFING FOR FOWL OR MEATS.

To a quart of finely-chopped bread add two spoonfuls of powdered sage, a teaspoonful of black pepper, two spoonfuls of chopped salt pork, or three spoonfuls of pork gravy, and two eggs, mix thoroughly, stuff the fowl full—or if for meat, press it tightly down and bring the meat up firmly, either by sewing or tying up with a string—and you will have a most appetizing dressing.

GRAZED BY TOBACCO.

The Pulaski (Tenn.) Citizen says: "We are extremely sorry to announce that the friends of Mr. Claude J. Woodring have been forced to take steps to deprive him of his liberty for a time, on account of the prevalent opinion among our people that his mind is unbalanced. His aberration is announced by physicians to be due to the excessive use of tobacco, and it was determined to confine him, so that he could be effectually cured from it. An inquisition was held at the County Court room Tuesday morning, and a verdict as above was reached."

BEST DISINFECTANT.

After an exhaustive series of practical tests of the various disinfectants sold in this city embracing over fifty kinds, Professor Elwin Waller, Columbia College, concludes that the best disinfectant is carbolic acid. About one per cent of the mixture should consist of pure carbolic acid. For prompt disinfection which is only temporary, strong oxidizing agents, as chlorine, potash permanganate, nitric acid, etc., should be used. Of these the cheapest and most available is chloride of lime.

DRINK DEEP.

An "old-fashioned" housekeeper sends the Germania Telegraph a capital recipe for drying beef: Pint of salt, teaspoon of brown sugar, teaspoon saltpeper, mixed well together, for every twenty pounds of beef. Divide the mixture into four equal parts, lay the meat on a board and rub one of the parts in every consecutive morning for four mornings. On the fifth or sixth day it will be ready to hang up. If the mixture is done in cold water, and the mixture well rubbed in it will keep during the hottest weather, or until used. We like it best without being smoked; is nice boiled while new, or fried with cream; equally so clipped and eaten raw.

A CAR-LOAD.

Readers of newspapers often meet with the term "car-load," but few of them know just what or how much it is. The St. Louis Times has taken the trouble to learn, and says, as a general rule, 20,000 pounds or seventy barrels of salt, seventy of lime, ninety of flour, sixty of whiskey, 200 sacks of flour, six cords of soft wood, eighteen to twenty head of cattle, fifty or eighty head of hogs, eighty to 100 head of sheep, 9,000 feet of solid boards, 17,000 feet of siding, 18,000 feet of flooring, 4,000 shingles, one half less of hard lumber, one-fourth less of green lumber, one-tenth of joists, scantling, and all other large timber, 340 bushels of wheat, 300 of corn, 680 of oats, 400 of barley, 360 of flax seed, 370 of apples, 480 of Irish potatoes, 360 of sweet potatoes, 1,000 bushels of bran.—Selected.

TO DETECT THE PRESENCE OF LEAD.

Mr. Fordas recently communicated to the French Academy of Sciences the following simple method of determining the presence of lead in tin vessels employed for packing articles of food. The metal to be tested is first touched with nitric acid, and then heated, when the acid evaporates. If lead be contained, stannic acid and nitrate of lead remain. Iodide of potassium is then applied, forming yellow iodide of lead; while the stannic acid is white. The yellow stain, therefore, indicates lead, the white, tin.

LIVE JEWELS.

It is not generally known that the Mexican women of the wealthier classes use as ornaments, on extraordinary occasions, live fire flies, which, in the dark, emit a bright, phosphorescent light. They belong to the family of leaping or springing beetles, and are called by the Spanish *cucujos*. In order to catch these bugs, the Indians fasten a live coal to a stick, and move it to and fro in the dark. The *cucujos* think this bright point a rival, and in his anger dart towards it, and find the grave of his liberty in the hands of the Indian. The Indians find a ready sale for them in the large cities, where they are bought by the wealthy ladies at about two reals (twenty-five cents) a dozen. They are kept in elegant little cages, and fed on slices of sugar-cane, and bathed twice a day, either by the ladies themselves or by their maids. In the evening they are put into little sacks, shaped like roses, and attached to the ladies' dresses. The light these little bugs emit surpasses in brilliancy the reflection of the purest diamonds. The daily bath they receive is absolutely necessary, as without it they would emit no light, which is sometimes strong enough, it is said, to read by.