

Choice Literature.

One Life Only.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Una Dysart had led the whole and soul of her generous sympathetic nature on the mission which had been imposed upon her by Wilhelmus Northcote. The very fact that she had resigned all hope of happiness for herself, made her the more anxious to promote that of her friend, and she felt deeply also for the poor old squire, who seemed completely broken down by the painful estrangement from his beloved son; the only person to whom he had ever spoken on the subject was Mr. Trafford, whose wonderful power of winning confidence had not been exercised in vain, even on the stout-hearted country gentleman, and Una was therefore aware that the clergyman knew all the circumstances of Rupert's fault. This being the case, she felt very anxious to have his powerful help in the difficult task she had undertaken, and with Wil. a complete concurrence, she determined to take her letter to him, and ask him to enquire it to Rupert in one from himself, which would add weight to her earnest entreaties that he would return to his home, and gladden the hearts of those to whom he was still unchangeably dear.

Una sat up late into the night after she saw Wil. writing her letter, in which she gave a detailed account of the circumstances of Lilith's death, and of all that the young girl had said to her before she passed away; and the next morning she set out at an early hour, when she knew she would find Mr. Trafford at the parish school, to ask him to forward it to Rupert Northcote.

The cool sweet air refreshed Una's tired eyes, and the sunshine streamed upon her in all its summer radiance as she walked along. But she looked on the bright landscape with very different feelings from those with which, one year before, she would have gazed on such a scene, for the last few weeks had taught her to look beyond this world for the fulfilment of that ardent desire of happiness which she had once so confidently fixed on the love that seemed to have failed her utterly. She felt, however, as if the fair beauty of the calm clear morning impressed itself upon her mind with that sense of mysterious sympathy in Nature, of which we are all sometimes conscious, when the spirit, the breath of God within us, asserts its power over our lower being. It seemed to offer her a faint reflection and foretaste of the eternal loveliness of the true Home, where the aching regret that lay so heavy on her heart could never enter, and as she lifted her eyes to the blue limpid sky, where the snowy clouds seemed like the white angel wings that had borne Lilith to her blissful rest, Una almost hoped that the happy ransomed soul could look down through those lucid depths, to see with joy the fruit her bright example had already borne.

The school-house was near the church, and the door stood wide open, to admit the fresh air, so that Una's entrance was not perceived as she stood for a moment looking, with a smile, at the scene. Mr. Trafford sat at the end of the room, surrounded by an eager group of the smallest children, who were crowding about him with fearless confidence; a chubby little one sat on his knee, and two or three others clung to his disengaged hand, while the rest listened with upturned animated looks to the low kind voice, that was telling them how the Good Shepherd loved His little lambs, and watched over them day by day. Una could hardly believe that this was the stern preacher who could denounce with such scathing words the pleasant vices of the world, and of whom she had been so much afraid. He detected her presence before she was aware of it, but he made no movement to come to her till he had finished all he wished to tell the children; his keen eye noted, however, the charming picture she made as she stood there framed in by the doorway, with the soft light of her sunny smile brightening the sweet face that had acquired a new spiritual beauty since the pure winds of heaven had blown in suffering upon her soul. Presently he rose; at a gentle sign from his hand the children melted away from around him, and coming forward to Miss Dysart, he asked her in his frank cordial manner if he could be of any use to her. When she answered that she was anxious for a few minutes' conversation with him, he led the way into the garden attached to the school-house, where there was a seat under a shady tree.

"This will be more agreeable than the atmosphere of the school-room," he said, "and no one will disturb us here. Now, what can I do for you?"

Then Una told him all that had passed at Lilith's death-scene, and the conversation that had taken place between herself and Wil. Northcote the previous day; finally she gave him the letter she had written to Rupert, and begged of him to read it, and if he approved of it, to send it with one from himself. Trafford went slowly and carefully over the clearly-written pages, with a joyful light stealing into his eyes, as if he were receiving the assurance of some unexpected good fortune to himself, and when he had finished it, he turned with a bright smile to Una, saying, "I hardly think it possible that so beautiful and pathetic a history can fail of its effect on this young man, especially as the blessed death of this pure-hearted girl touches him in every way so nearly, and I am most thankful that an effort will be made at last to win him back. I never saw him, but his case has lain very heavy on my heart for the father's sake, as well as his own. If I had not feared that he would resent the interference of a stranger, I should have gone to him myself long ago; I am very much inclined now, however, to take your letter as my credentials, and go to him at once, instead of writing, as you propose."

"But he is at Vienna!" said Una, opening her eyes wide; "have you forgotten what a long fatiguing journey it is to go there?"

"Don't you think St. Paul's example teaches us that part of the duty of the messengers of Christ is to be 'in journeyings oft'?" I can go to Vienna and return within ten days, and I can easily get a friend to take my work here for that time, or longer if necessary. I think that if I go

I may be able to bring him back with me, whereas it would only write, he may lack courage for a return home under such circumstances."

"There can be no question that it would be far the most efficacious means we could employ, and I have no doubt at all of your success; it was only of the fatigue to yourself that I thought as an obstacle to the plan."

"My physical self has nothing whatever to do with it," he answered, smiling. "It is quite plain that it is part of my work as the servant of God, and that settles the question. I shall go to-morrow morning, as I should like to see Mr. Northcote first; I shall ask him to give me a letter himself for his son, and I have no doubt he will."

"I cannot help being very glad you are going, though I would not have ventured to ask it," said Una. "I shall be most anxious to know the result."

"I will come and see you so soon as I return," said Trafford, "and then you shall know all that has happened. You are looking brighter yourself than when I saw you last," he added, bending his eyes searchingly on her face. "Lilith, as she passed into paradise, has left open a little chink of the gate, so that the blessed light shines down upon you even though all the earth shadows you."

"You that is precisely what it is," she answered, smiling; "and, Mr. Trafford, Lilith has shown me, among other truths, that however sad one's own life may seem, there is always an unfailing joy to be found in ministering to Christ's own poor as she did. I want you to tell me how I can be of use to the people here."

"That is easily done," he answered; "there is work enough and to spare; here as elsewhere it is the workers that are unhappily so scarce. You might become most useful to me as well as to the poor, if you would undertake various offices among the sick and the children, which are not in my province at all."

"I will do anything you tell me most gladly," said Una; "only you must give me explicit directions, for I am very ignorant in such matters."

"You shall have them written down before I leave home to-night," he answered with his usual energy; "there are one or two cases of sickness I shall be glad to leave under your care till I return."

"Then I will not take up more of your time now," said Una, as she walked home, with her heart lightened of half its load by the hope that she might be able in some small degree to relieve the sufferings of others.

Miss Dysart soon found that Trafford had been as good as his word in leaving her plenty of work, but the delight she took in being a true source of consolation to the poor around her, made the time of his absence pass much more quickly than she could have expected, anxious as she was concerning the result of his mission.

It was about a fortnight after he had left home when he suddenly startled her, one evening, by walking into the drawing-room at Vale House, when she was sitting there alone quietly reading, without the least expectation of seeing him. She started up with an exclamation of surprise and pleasure; and as she went forward to greet him she looked up into his face with an expression of eager inquiry.

"Rupert is safe at home," said Trafford, answering to her speaking eyes; "it is through his impatience that I pay you so late a visit, as we have only just arrived, after travelling night and day, and I remembered my promise to let you know the result of my mission as soon as I returned. He seemed at last as if he could not rest till he held his father's hand in his."

"Oh I am so thankful! How happy they will all be; and what a good work you have done, Mr. Trafford!"

"It has been Lilith's work, not mine, or yours," he answered; "the light of her pure life does indeed seem to shine out from paradise upon us still. It is wonderful what a mighty influence for good that one simple unpretending girl had exercised by the mere blamelessness of her obedience to the law of God; it has been a most striking illustration of the silent eloquence of example."

"What a blessing for the Northcotes that it has so completely conquered Rupert. It must have changed him very much."

"It has indeed; he is, in the deepest sense of the word, 'a new creature.' His undiminished love for Lilith Crichton predisposed him to hear with intense interest the history of her beautiful happy death; it filled him with remorse for having been the cause of it, and drove him to look back into his past life, and to consider what his own position would be when he came to his last hour as she has done."

"Do you think the hope of seeing her again in a happier sphere had any share in the change which has taken place in him?" asked Una.

"Just at first, as a secondary cause, it may have had; but before we left Vienna he had learnt to appreciate the value of a far higher hope of happiness than the renewal of mere human love could give. It so happened that on the Sunday we spent together I preached in the chapel of the British Embassy, on the words, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' I had Lilith in my mind, no doubt, when I chose them, but that same evening Rupert came to me at the hotel, with his eyes so bright and his whole appearance so radiant, that I thought some great good fortune had befallen him. I asked him what it was, and he told me that one painful thought had continued as it were to pierce his heart, through all the blessed change that had come upon him, and that it had now been suddenly removed, so that he seemed lightened of all his burthen, and full only of thankfulness; and then he explained to me that it had seemed to him so sad and cruel, that Lilith who had benefited so many others should herself have been cut off in her fairest spring, and punished as it were by death for her very goodness; but when he had heard me speak that day of the glorious blessedness of those who, because of their heart-purity, had attained even to the visible presence of their God, it flashed upon him like a light from heaven, that so far from being punished, Lilith had in truth received the highest reward that could be given her, inasmuch as she, so pure in heart, was rapt away from

this sinful world, to see and enjoy the ineffable vision of the Divine Love—of God, who is love for evermore; he said he never again should grieve that she was gone, but would only feel thankful always for her blessedness, and for the mercy which had given her to earth a little while, that she might shed her bright influence on her steadfast soul."

"It is exactly what I felt myself when I saw her lying dead with the rapturous smile upon her face," said Una; "but indeed dear Lilith would have thought it reward enough to have saved Rupert from an evil life, as she seems to have done."

"No doubt she would; and his parents have good cause to bless her memory; for she has given them back their son as one who was dead, and is alive; who was lost, and is found."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Una Dysart lay down to rest that evening with the feeling that whatever the future might have in store for her of pain or of regret, she had it in her power to become possessed of one pure joy at least, which the world could neither give nor take away.

She was tasting it even then—the exquisite enjoyment of knowing that she had been able to relieve the sorrow of some of her fellow creatures, and that she had brought back hope and brightness to lives that but for her would have struggled on in grief and gloom beneath a load of care. She was too young yet to know, as those do who have travelled longer on the rough paths of this mortal life, that the consolation she was then experiencing is, in truth, the one and only human happiness which can never deceive or fail us. All other earthly joys contain in their very essence the power to destroy as well as to bless, for none are exempt from the chances of death and change, satiety or decay; but the relief of suffering is in the power of all, be their own fate what it may; and the most desolate heart that beats on earth may know somewhat of the bliss of the tender ministering angels, when its active sympathy has won back smiles to the lips of mourners and shed brightness on forlorn souls.

Una thought with delight of the happiness little Wil. must feel in having not only regained her lost brother, but in being relieved from all fear of separation from her future husband; for she suffered herself so keenly in the consciousness that mighty trackless oceans divided her from the presence she most desired on earth, that she could well understand what it must be to Wil. to know that she would go with Hervey now to his Indian home; but it was for the poor old squire chiefly that her gentle heart rejoiced; now would he be able once more to lift up his head, and face the world without the dread that his honest name would ever again be tarnished by him who should most have sought its honour, or his old age bereft of the first-born son in whom had been centred all his hopes and dreams.

Una felt that it would indeed be sweet to her to see her friends in their restored happiness; but she resolved, with the delicacy which was one of her most charming qualities, that she would not intrude upon them in any way for some days, and that she would avoid as much as possible any allusion to her own share in Rupert's repentance and return.

She found, however, on the very next morning that she was to have no choice in the matter. Lady Elizabeth always remained in her room till a late hour of the day, with Miss Grubbe in attendance upon her, and Una had scarcely finished her solitary breakfast, when she was told that Mr. Rupert Northcote had called and wished to know if he could see her.

She felt that she could not refuse, and desired the servant to show him into the drawing-room, but it was with a certain timidity and unwillingness that she joined him there. She had only known him slightly in the days when she used to meet him in society, where he had always been entirely absorbed in Lilith's presence, and she had never been prepossessed in his favour, though her artistic eye could not fail to be struck with his personal beauty. The young man was standing by the window, looking out on a bed of white lilies which had been Una's special care from some association of ideas with Lilith, and as she came in he turned round at once, and came forward to greet her with a frank and manly modesty which put her instantly at her ease.

"Miss Dysart," he said, "I have come to thank you with all my heart for your letter, in my own name and in Lilith's." His voice faltered on the last word, and she answered warmly, "I am so glad, so thankful that you have returned home!" They sat down, and then she had time to note the great change that had taken place in his appearance; he was dressed in the deepest mourning, and there were dark lines now under the large eyes that used always to seem so full of joyous light, while the beautiful sunny face she remembered was pale and haggard now, but his once bold and reckless expression had given way to a look of earnest thoughtfulness, and the scornful curve was gone from the calm mouthful lips; all the sparkling gaiety, which had been one of his chief fascinations, too, had vanished, and there was a quiet humility in his manner which seemed to her very touching.

"My dear father and Wil. are coming to see you presently," he said; "but, Miss Dysart, I was very anxious to meet you first alone; there was so much I wished to say to you. Your letter has been to me like a message from the paradise of God, and I cannot find words to express how grateful I am to you for having written it."

"You must not think of me in the matter at all," said Una; "that letter really came to you from her who alone had a right to say to you all that in her name I ventured to repeat."

"Yes; and it is for that very reason that I wish to tell you what those words have done for me; it is a foolish fancy doubtless, but I feel as if when it is told to you she too will learn it and rejoice; it almost seems to me as if I might be able to catch some echo of her accents from your voice, since you were the last to hear her tones on earth before she went to add them to the angels' songs, and indeed there may be some word she said that night which you have omitted in your letter."

"I think not, for I wrote down all I could remember the very next morning, and I sent you the record just as it was," said Una; "but you know dear Lilith's departure was startlingly sudden; it almost seemed as if a supernatural strength had been given her till she had completed her task in speaking to me, and the moment she had said all that was needed, she was caught away as swiftly as if the fiery chariot had been waiting for her as it did for Elijah."

"No doubt her Master would not keep her back from heavenly joy a moment more than could be helped, but I shall never cease to thank Him for having sent you to her that you might be her interpreter to me."

"And I too have reason to be deeply grateful that I was allowed to see her," said Una, "for she opened my eyes to the errors of my own life with wonderful power."

"I have often thought of late," said Rupert, "that she was really one of God's own messengers, whom He merely lent a little while to this world that she might work out His purposes of mercy, and then when she had done His bidding He straightway drew her back within the gently gates, before the dust of earth had time to soil her snow-white garments. You can hardly imagine, Miss Dysart, in how strange a manner she has influenced my life, from the first moment I saw her. It was by no overt act of her own; she never said a word of reproach to me in all the time I knew her; nor did she ever try to teach me her religion; but it was impossible for me not to see that it was simply her very life, it shone through her transparent nature with a pure and steady light that illumined all the way around her as she went upward with her flying feet on the steep ascent to heaven; I saw it, I felt it, and I rebelled against it with all my power, but it was an overlasting witness for her God to my erring soul, from which I could not escape, for I loved her so intensely that I was literally unable to give her up, though I knew her whole being was animated by the influence I dreaded most. My one hope always was that if only I could make her my wife, I should soon be able to coerce her—tender, loving, and obedient as she was sure to be—into flinging aside the faith which would have ever stood as a barrier between us."

"When he said this Una looked up at him with a question on her lips, which she checked before she uttered it; Rupert saw her movement.

"Say what you will, Miss Dysart; no reference to the past can hurt me now, for I feel as totally changed from what I was then as if I had died when Lilith did, and risen again to a new and purer state of existence."

"I only felt the wish to ask," said Una, "whether you had in those days actually adopted sceptical opinions."

"Only in the sense described by our Lord Christ when He said that men would not come to the light because their deeds were evil; I had never examined the subject intellectually, but I was resolved that pleasure and self-gratification should be my only gods, and I tried to persuade myself that the pure faith which warred against them was a delusion. I would not look at the question or think of it as regarded myself, and I chose to believe that the majority of persons professing Christianity were insincere, and the remainder, like Lilith, deceived by so unsubstantial a dream, that it would at once dissolve in their grasp so soon as it came between them and their happiness. It was this hope that made me commit the crime whereby I disgraced myself so deeply, and he reddened painfully as he spoke.

"I thought that if I could hurry on our marriage by this fault, and then make her cognisant of it, she would become entangled in the meshes of my error, and would abandon for ever the laws of her immaculate righteousness."

"How little you knew her!" said Una. "True," he replied, "I only knew her love, which seemed to me strong enough to conquer every other feeling in her heart."

"Love strong as death," said Una, in a low voice; "but a living faith in Christ is stronger still."

"Yes, so my darling has proved," he said; "but when I left her that day by the river-side, it was with the full conviction that if I absented myself for a time, she would so suffer in the separation that as soon as she was of an age to defy her brother's authority, she would fling her religious scruples to the winds, and bid me come back to claim her as my wife. I lived in this hope a reckless ungodly life, and as I never heard from home I knew nothing of her illness whatever, till the news of her death came upon me like a thunderbolt; and then when you sent me the history of her last hours, it was to me an absolute revelation from heaven. My remorse and terror were, however, so great, that I think they would almost have killed me if Trafford had not been with me then, for I felt that I was Lilith's murderer, and it seemed to me impossible that the righteous God could ever pardon me; but that good and wise man showed me how deep answers to deep, and uttermost sin is met by uttermost mercy. He raised me with a strong hand out of my gulf of misery, and now he has set my feet on a new straight path, wherein I hope to walk unswerving to the end."

"I am sure you will," said Una, "and," she continued, smiling, "dear Lilith will be to you what Beatrice was to Dante;" but she could not add more, for at that moment the door-bell rang, and little Wil., rushing impetuously into the room, flung her arms round her friend's neck, sobbing with delight; the squire followed almost as quickly, and clasped Una's hands in both his own, while he prayed God to bless her for ever and ever, since it was to her they owed the happy return of their dear lost Rupert, and the restored peace and comfort of the home his absence had made desolate.

(To be continued.)

The superintendent who unites the teaching force of the school in securing the best discipline and developing the best counsels, and in directing the teaching to the best ends, is a successful superintendent.

Scientific and Useful.

STEAMED PUDDING.

Two cups of milk, half a cupful of molasses, two-thirds of a cupful of chopped pork, one teaspoonful of soda, three cupfuls of flour. Steam two or three hours, and eat with a sweet sauce.

PUDDING SAUCE.

One cupful of sugar, one cupful of butter, one egg, the yolk and white beaten separately, flavor to suit the taste, beat all together, and add one tablespoonful of hot water just before serving.

ECHARO.

There is scarcely any ache to which children are subject, so bad to bear and difficult to cure as the earache. But there is a remedy, never known to fail. Take a bit of cotton batting, put upon it a pinch of black pepper, gather it up and tie it, dip in sweet oil, and insert into the ear. Put a flannel bandage over the head to keep it warm. It will give immediate relief.—Selected.

HOME-MADE VINEGAR.

Almost every family uses apples enough, if they would save the peelings and cores, to constantly keep pure and healthy vinegar. Have ajar, and throw all the peelings in, with soft water; and so soon as they thoroughly ferment, squeeze out the juice and put into the vinegar barrel. Then, as apples are used, fill up the jar again.

CUMMINT LOAF BREAD.

Make a batter of one quart of flour and one pint of warm sweet milk, two teaspoonfuls salt, and a half a cake of compressed yeast dissolved in a little water; cover and set in a warm place until very light. Then rub to a cream one cupful granulated sugar, and a piece of butter the size of an egg; add this to the sponge and one teaspoonful powdered cinnamon and the half of a small nutmeg grated. Have one-half pound of currants cleaned; rub through them a little flour and put in the dough; mould up very soft and place in the pan or dish you intend baking it in; cover warm, and let it rise quite light.

WHAT IS DANDRUFF?

Is it a disease? Is it curable? No, no, no! It is an evidence of a healthy scalp, and as to its cure, you might as well attempt to stop your toe-nails from growing. It is simply Nature's mode of renewing the scurf skin all over the body, and the reason why it is not shown on other parts is that the friction of clothing removes it as fast as it is loosened, while the hair of the head, if not often brushed and combed, or washed, prevents its escape. Now, if you have any doubts as to the truth of what I have asserted, rub the inside of your lower limbs smartly with a black cloth, and you will find you have rubbed off a white powder which is of the same material as the dandruff on your scalp, only more finely pulverized.

THE INFLUENCE OF PICTURES.

A room with pictures in it and a room without pictures differ nearly as much as a room without windows. Nothing we think, is more melancholy, particularly to a person who has to pass much time in his room, than blank walls and nothing on them; for pictures are loopholes of escape to the soul, leading it to other scenes and other spheres. It is such an expressible relief to some persons engaged in writing, or even reading, on looking up, not to have his line of vision chopped square off by an odious white wall, but to find his soul escaping, as it were, through the frame of an exquisite picture to other beautiful and perhaps idyllic scenes, where the fancy of a moment may revel refreshed and delighted. It is winter in your world? perhaps it is summer in the picture; what a charming momentary change and contrast.

CHILDREN'S FEET.

Life-long discomfort and sudden death writes a medical man, often come to children through the inattention or carelessness of the mothers or nurses. A child should never be allowed to go to sleep with cold feet; the thing to be last attended to is to see that the feet are dry and warm. Neglect of this has often resulted in dangerous attacks of croup, diphtheria, or false throat. Always on coming from school, on entering the house from a visit or errand in rainy, muddy, or damp weather, the child should remove its shoes, as the mother should herself ascertain whether the stockings are in the least damp. If they are, they should be taken off, the feet held before the fire, and rubbed with the hands till perfectly dry, and another pair of stockings and another pair of shoes put on. The reserve shoes and stockings should be kept ready for use on a minute's notice.

TO DRIVE AWAY RATS.

A lady writer, in a recent number of New York journal, discourses in the following style concerning her treatment of rats and mice: "We cleaned our premises of these detestable vermin by making a white wash yellow with copperas, and covering the stones and rafters of the cellar with thick coating of it. In every crevice where a rat might tread, we put crystals of the copperas, and scattered the same in the corners of the floor. The result was perfect stampede of rats and mice. Since that time not a footfall of either rat or mouse has been heard about the house. Every spring a coat of the yellow wash is given to the cellar, as a purifier as well as a rat exterminator, and no typhoid, or sentry or fever attacks the family. Most persons deliberately attract all the rats in the neighborhood by leaving fruits and vegetables unperished in the cellar; and sometimes even the soup scraps are left open to their regalement. Cover up everything edible in the cellar and pantry, and you will soon starve them out. These precautions joined to the service of a good cat, will provide a good rat exterminator as the chemist provides in our dwelling; they are so able to die in the wall, and produce no annoyance."

The energy that would animate a noble is not more than is wanted to inspire a solved submission, when the noble has of the soul reasserts itself.—George Eliot.