

stone came back to Una, still frowning and disturbed.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Dysart. I was annoyed by the intrusion of a person who has no right here."

"I want you so much to tell me who that man is," she said eagerly.

"What do you know of him?" he asked, in an abrupt, stern tone.

"Nothing whatever; but I saw him once talking to the rector, and I took the strongest antipathy to him, for no reason that I could account for to myself."

"An instinct of what he is, probably—a villain, a base, deep villain, in the fullest sense of the word. His name is Edwards."

Una said not another word, and soon was riding home with her father, finding abundant food for reflection in her first visit to Atherstone Abbey. It was not her last.

CHAPTER VII.

Among the holiday gatherings which took place at Valehead during Whitsuntide, was the anniversary celebration of the foundation of a cricket club, which Humphrey Atherstone had been the first to establish, with the view of securing some better recreation for the young men of the village, than could be found in the public-houses where they were wont to congregate. It had been very successful, other parishes had joined in it, the great people all round patronised it, and in the last week of May a great day of festivity was held, when the Eleven of Valehead played a match against all Northangleshire. The field used as a cricket ground on this occasion was at some distance from the village, and was most easily approached by the river, which was always thronged with boats conveying the inhabitants of the neighbouring houses to the scene of action.

It was the fashion of the county to go, and so the county went, and made its own little arrangements for amusing itself, quite irrespective of the duty of encouraging the cricket club. This year the weather proved extremely propitious, and by noon on the appointed day many a merry party was moving down the river with pennons flying and gay voices filling the summer air with glee. Two boats were allowed precedence of the others as conveying a specially illustrious freight. Mrs. Northcote was seated in the first, with an air as solemn and frigid as if she were personating Charon himself, while her husband, much subdued in such close proximity to the great arbitress of his destinies, sat on one side, and the rector on the other. Colonel Dysart and a few more persons unknown to fame completed the number, and in sober and stately fashion they passed on in advance of the gay party which followed them.

In the next boat Will Northcote and Una Dysart sat together, with Mr. Knight and Hervey Crichton on either side of them. Farther on, Mrs. Burton, the doctor's wife—an affected, languishing invalid, who, suffered chiefly from want of occupation, was placed beside a very quiet curate, to whom she was detailing the extreme susceptibility of her nerves, and on the other side Rupert Northcote, deliberately turning his back on every one else, looked admiringly into the pure sweet face of Lilith Crichton. She seemed to be a being almost of another mould from the rest, as she sat there, perfectly still and unexcited, drooping her fair head like a graceful flower, her white robes glistening in the sun, without a fragment of colour about them to mar their spotlessness.

She appeared to be as much absorbed in Rupert's presence as he was in hers, but when she raised her great blue eyes and looked on him, they were filled with an intensity of mournful regret, which seemed strangely at variance with the knowledge

she could not but have of his devoted affection, and the extent to which she apparently shared it.

Una Dysart often looked towards her with great interest, for Lilith was in many respects an enigma to her, though Hervey left her very little time to think of anything but himself, as he did his best to please and amuse her in every possible way. Una was slightly restless, however, and at last she somewhat suddenly turned round to Hervey, and asked him whether Mr. Atherstone did not appear amongst his people on this the gala day of the institution he had founded.

"Yes, I believe he is always there," he answered rather shortly.

"Only he rides down instead of going by the river," said Will, "for the express purpose of avoiding such parties as ours, and when he gets there he devotes himself to the cricketers and their friends, and ignores the society of his equals with a sublime indifference."

"By the way, Miss Dysart, we were all much surprised to hear that Atherstone had conducted you himself over the Abbey. It was an extraordinary feat for such a determined mysogamist. I feel sure you are the very first lady he ever indulged so far," said Hervey Crichton.

"I am very glad I was so much favored then, for the house is well worth seeing."

"You did not find a wife imprisoned in any of the rooms did you?" said Will. "I sometimes wonder whether the fact that he has one already may not be the explanation of his determination never to marry—any of us at all events."

"I saw no one in the house but a fat old butler," said Una, laughing.

"No; Atherstone will never marry," said Mr. Knight. "I do not know his reason, but he is much to be pitied, for there is certainly some painful motive which makes him quite immovable in this determination. Poor fellow! I feel for him deeply," and Mr. Knight accompanied this remark with so meaning a glance at Will, to whom he had most vainly been endeavouring to make himself agreeable, that she started up, seeming determined to find a means of putting a stop to his attentions. She had a resource at hand. Stooping down, she drew out from under the seat a small violin-case, and took from it a dainty little violin, which she proceeded to adjust on her shoulder in the orthodox fashion, and then taking the bow in her firm little fingers, she began to draw forth the most exquisite melody from the strings, playing with all the grace and execution of an accomplished artist. Una was delighted, and even Hervey ceased looking at her in order to listen to the enchanted sounds, while little Will's bright black eyes grew soft under the influence of her own music, and only Mrs. Burton whispered plaintively to the curate, "How that masculine sight must pain you! I am so feminine in all my tastes."

(To be continued.)

THE British Post Office is about taking an advance step in the transmission of the ocean mail. Instead of continuing the subsidies to the Cunard and Inman lines, which have hitherto received them, it proposes to give the mails to the steamers which make the quickest passages, paying the companies according to weight.

WHILE the English Arctic Expedition, though fitted out so completely, has failed of accomplishing anticipated results, Prof. Nordenskiöld, an eminent Swedish scientist, has settled the fact that there is an open route between Europe and China by way of the Arctic ocean and the Yenisei river which traverses Siberia nearly to the frontier of China.

THE DEVIL'S FOUR SERVANTS.

The devil has a great many servants, and they are all busy, active ones. They ride in the railway trains, they sail on the steamboats, they swarm along the highways of the country and the thoroughfares of the cities; they do business in the busy marts, they enter houses and break open shops; they are everywhere, and in all places. Some are so vile-looking that one instinctively turns from them in disgust; but some are so sociable, insinuating, and plausible, that they almost deceive, at times, the very elect. Among this latter class are to be found the devil's four chief servants. Here are their names:

"THERE IS NO DANGER." That is one.

"ONLY THIS ONCE." That is another.

"EVERYBODY DOES SO." That is the third.

"BY-AND-BY." That is the fourth.

When tempted from the path of strict rectitude, and "There's no danger" urges you on, say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." When tempted to give the Sunday up to pleasure, or to do a little labour in the workshop or the counting-room, and "Only this once," or "Everybody does so," whispers at your elbow, do not listen for a moment to the dangerous counsel. If the Holy Spirit has fastened upon your conscience the solemn warnings of a faithful teacher or friend, and brought to mind a tender mother's prayers for your conversion, do not let "By-and-by" steal away your confidence, and, by persuading you to put away serious things, rob you of your life. All four are cheats and liars. They mean to deceive you and cheat your soul of heaven. "Behold!" says God, "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." He has no promise for "By-and-by."—*Christian at Work.*

CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD.

There are and will always be, innumerable things in the Divine government impossible for us to comprehend; and as those which are more known to us require our thanks and praise, so the former call for other sentiments and dispositions of mind equally reasonable,—admiration, submission, trust; and all conspire to demand the conformity of our lives to the will of God. In cases which we understand, we see there is great reason for this; and and in those we do not, there may be greater.

When we read of the miracles done by the apostles, and find that, in ancient times, the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, the lepers were cleansed, the lame walked and the very dead were raised at the speaking of a word, we are amazed at the power bestowed on the first preachers of the Gospel, and should be willing to submit to any degree of rigor in our lives, that ourselves also, if it were now possible, might be honored with the same signal endowments.

Men may work miracles in support of God's true religion, and yet be found at last to have been the servants of another master; and the preacher of righteousness be condemned for his sins.

There will be found among the workers of wonders, among apostles, prophets, martyrs, who shall be "cut off, and cast into outer darkness;" but of those who love God and keep his commandments, not one shall be lost. The obedient shall all be received into the state of bliss, and be made "kings and priests to God, for ever and ever."

A SOCIETY for promoting legislation for the control and care of habitual drunkards has been formed in London.