

Choice Literature.

One Life Only.

CHAPTER V.—Continued.

"He must have repented of his anger then, at the last, and wished Edwards to be convicted," said Una.

"So Dr. Barton thought, and every one else; but if it was so, Humphrey Atherstone did not act upon it. That is just one of his proceedings which people think so strange. The first thing he did, before his uncle had been dead a day, was to put an end to the whole affair, so far as Edwards was concerned; he paid the money himself to the bank on which the forged cheque had been drawn; declared at the trial that the matter had been explained by Mr. Atherstone before his death, and had Edwards liberated as speedily as possible. It is believed that he made it a condition with the Malay that he should leave the country at once, which the man did; but he very comely left his wife and children behind him."

"Was Edwards married then?" "Yes, I forgot to tell you; when he was quite young, not more than twenty, he married a handsome gipsy girl, whom he encountered in some of his vagabond expeditions. I believe old Mr. Atherstone was very much annoyed when he suddenly brought her home with him; but in spite of that he had the marriage ceremony repeated at the parish church here, in order to make sure that she was really his wife, and then he gave them a cottage on the estate, and was very kind to them. Humphrey Atherstone supported the family entirely during Edwards's absence; but I hear that the man has returned to this neighbourhood."

"What a very strange story it is altogether; but it seems to me, though the circumstances of old Mr. Atherstone's death were certainly very painful, that they contain no clue to the secret of the change which you say has taken place in his nephew since then."

"No, you are quite right, they do not, and that is just one of the reasons why people think there must be something wrong."

"Something mysterious there clearly is," said Una; "and I confess all you have told me makes me feel the greatest possible curiosity to see Mr. Atherstone."

At that moment a step sounded on the path which led along the river-bank, past the spot where Miss Northcote and Una were sitting, and as they looked up they saw a gentleman advancing rather slowly towards them.

He was a tall man, broad-shouldered and strongly built, but with an air of distinction and refinement, which prevented his somewhat massive proportions from giving him the least appearance of coarseness. He had a strikingly intellectual face, with an unmistakable look of power, and with strong indications of a passionate temperament in the dark, closely-meeting brows and the finely-cut nostril; his haughty, determined expression would have been almost repelling but for the wonderful softness of his large hazel eyes, and a certain sweetness in the curve of the lips—which, however, were scarcely to be seen under his thick black beard.

Lifting his hat to Miss Northcote as he came up to her, he showed a broad, well-developed forehead, bronzed with the sun, the effect of which was somewhat neutralised by the masses of dark hair that waved over it. Altogether, he was a remarkable-looking man, and one who would not have escaped notice even in a crowd.

Una observed with some interest the peculiar attitude of his manner and the vibrating tones of his deep voice, as he paused for an instant beside Miss Northcote, and asked if he should find her father at home. She answered that he certainly would, as she had left him with Colonel Dysart, who was still, as she knew, at the Manor, whereupon, bowing silently, the gentleman passed on, and was very soon completely lost to sight among the trees of the park.

Will Northcote waited till his footfall had entirely died away, and then, lying back on the bank, she went into fits of laughter, from which she could not recover herself for some minutes.

Una sat watching her, much amused at her merriment, without having the least idea what was the cause of it, till at last Will composed herself sufficiently to speak. "Never was a more opportune encounter," she said; "we need no longer have the slightest doubt to what class of beings the gentleman belongs, whose history I have been telling you. You know who it is that appears whenever people are speaking about him; even at the Cape of Good Hope you must have heard the proverb."

"Miss Northcote! you do not mean to say—"

"Una stopped, she could hardly have told why."

"I mean to say that you have just seen Humphrey Atherstone."

CHAPTER VI.

It is not often that any of the inhabitants of this world are able to say that they consider it an entirely pleasant place to live in; but such was, undoubtedly, the conviction at which Una Dysart had arrived, after she had spent a little time longer at her new home in Valehead. She and her father speedily became, not only intimate, but thoroughly friendly with the Northcotes and Crichtons, and they were on terms of pleasant acquaintanceship with various other families; but it was with those, their first friends, that they chiefly associated.

They met constantly—riding out together, and spending the evening at each other's houses, and both Will Northcote and Lillith Crichton became very dear to Una. Will was, however, the one whose society she most enjoyed; she was so racy and original, so unfashionably honest and sincere, and so very much better in all essential good qualities than she chose to appear. With Lillith, though it was impossible for any one to know her without loving her, Una often felt a sense of awe and constraint, from the very extent of her child-like innocency and goodness, which seemed to make her unable even to understand the possibility of any compromise with evil. Happily her brother Hervey was quite

pleasantly human, and he managed somewhat persistently to make his way to Miss Dysart's side, whenever and wherever he could succeed in catching a glimpse of her.

It chanced one especially bright warm day, however, that Colonel Dysart and his daughter were going to ride out alone together, and as they passed through the gates of Vale House, Una asked her father if there was any particular direction in which he wished to go.

"None whatever, my dear; I am quite at your service, and I conclude from your asking the question with such extreme politeness, that you have entirely made up your mind what we are to do."

"Yes, I have," she answered, laughing, "you are quite right; I want to go to Atherstone Abbey."

"What! to pay a visit uninvited to Mr. Atherstone? Would not that be rather an eccentric proceeding for Miss Dysart?"

"Possibly, but I do not mean to go near him. I only want to see the place; and Will Northcote told me that any one who leaves their card at the lodge can have leave to drive through the grounds, which are splendid, I believe, and also, if they like, they may see the fine old house, where there is a good gallery of pictures amongst other attractions."

"That is very public spirited on the part of Mr. Atherstone; most English proprietors seem to grudge letting their beautiful parks be seen by any one but the rabbits and hares, and even those they shoot for their temerity. We will by all means profit by his benevolence, only we must not go to the house, Una; for I made his acquaintance the first day we went to Northcote Manor, and he said he should call upon me, but he has not appeared."

"What did you think of him? You have never told me, and people do spread such extraordinary stories about him."

"There is, undoubtedly, a strong prejudice against him in the country; but I saw nothing to justify it in the few minutes during which I conversed with him. There is, certainly, a rather peculiar reserve in his manner, and he looks proud enough to be descended from Lucifer himself; but he is a perfect gentleman, and he was very courteous and agreeable to me. You did not meet him, I think."

"Not at the house—he was gone before we came in; but I just saw him when I was out with Will."

"Northcote told me his history, and a strange enough one it is?"

"I heard it all from Will. Do you think he really has done anything wrong as people imagine?"

"It is hard to say. Northcote said Atherstone himself had told him that he considered himself in a sense guilty of his uncle's death, as he had driven the old man into the fit of rage which killed him; but I am sure I should have acted precisely in the same way with regard to the forger, with only this difference, that I should not have let him off as he did afterwards. I cannot conceive anything more intolerable than to be obliged, as Atherstone was, to associate continually with such a unmitigated scoundrel as that fellow Edwards seems to have been."

"Yes, and to see his uncle so miserably deceived by him, that must have been the worst of all; but let us go on a little quicker, father. I want to reach the place while the sun is still high, so as to get all the effects of light and shade on the grand old house."

They cantered on, and soon reached the nearest gate of Atherstone Abbey, which was not more than four miles from their own home. Here they found a very urbane lodge-keeper, who was quite willing to let them enter, and just as the heavy iron gates rolled back and they rode in, a horseman came at a hard gallop down the avenue towards them, whom they perceived to be none other than Mr. Atherstone himself. He was riding the powerful black horse, of which Una had heard already, and when he saw his visitors he checked him so suddenly, as almost to throw him back on his haunches, which movement had the effect of making Miss Dysart's fiery little steed execute a sort of fancy dance, that might have proved very inconvenient to a lady with a less firm seat than her own. Atherstone started forward as if to come to her assistance; but Colonel Dysart, who was watching his daughter, made him a sign to leave her to herself, and he soon saw that she was perfectly mistress of her position, and knew how to manage her horse and quiet his excitement, both with grace and skill. Her hat fell off in the process, however, and her bright beautiful face, with her long hair waving round it in the wind, seemed to Humphrey Atherstone the most charming picture he had ever seen. She completed the conquest of her impatient horse by giving him a run on the turf at the side of the road, and then brought him quietly back, laughing merrily at the escapade, as she regained her father's side. Atherstone had dismounted to rescue her hat, which had fallen into a bush, and now brought it to her, fixing his dark eyes steadily, as he did so, on the fair smiling face that seemed suddenly to have brightened all the sunshine round him.

Una met his look with one of eager interest. She could not resist the temptation of scanning attentively the features of the man whose strange history had so greatly excited her curiosity, and as his image impressed itself on her mind, never more to be forgotten, the indestructible conviction took possession of her, that it was a noble soul—a soul worthy of all human love and devotion—which lay behind that proud, dark countenance, whatever might be the errors, or mistakes or trials that had distorted his life.

"He is a king among men, let them say what they will," she thought, and when Colonel Dysart introduced him formally to her, she returned his salute with the brightest and most winning of smiles, longing, almost unconsciously, to show him that she at least would never share in the injustice which she felt sure was dealt to him by others.

"I was just setting out for Vale House with the intention of paying my respects to you," said Atherstone, "and I am very glad I have been saved from missing you by meeting you here."

"We came meaning to profit by your liberal permission to strangers to ride

through your beautiful grounds," said Colonel Dysart; "of course, we had no thought of intruding upon you at the house."

"But I hope you will now do me the favour of going there," said Atherstone, "for there is a good deal that is worth seeing in my old place—at least for those who care to examine relics of former days, and in any case I think you will like to look at the pictures—we have rather a fine collection."

"I shall like to look at everything, Mr. Atherstone," said Una, with a frank, merry laugh. "I think it best to tell you at once, that I have been wildly anxious to get the chance of seeing Atherstone Abbey, ever since I caught my first glimpse of it from the side of the hill. It looked from thence as if it might have been the palace of a Saxon king, or even, perhaps, the country residence of the high priest of all the Druids, in the days when those old gentlemen still went about with wreaths of mistletoe on their heads and golden sickles in their hands."

"It is tolerably ancient, certainly," said Atherstone, smiling, "and you shall see it all, Miss Dysart—from the battlements, where the old warders really did keep watch for any possible foe, down to the cave in the rock of the foundations, where it is said they used to put the refractory monks in the days when it was an abbey, though my own impression is that it was simply the abbot's wine-cellar."

"I cannot allow any prosaic explanations while I am here," said Una; "there is not much romance left in this work-a-day world, and you must, at least, let it linger round a grand old place such as this is."

"I am not sure that the romantic element has really died out of the modern world, Miss Dysart, only people do not let their whole career pass under the gaze of their fellow-creatures as they used to do; you may be sure if you would sit the lives of some of those around you, there would be found in them incidents quite as startling and terrible as ever in the rough days of old."

"He is thinking of himself," thought Una, glancing towards the face which seemed to darken as he spoke; and she was right. Atherstone lived a life of such continual introspection, such ceaseless brooding over one tremendous difficulty, that it seemed to connect itself with everything, however insignificant, and to follow him night and day like a ghastly spectre which no exorcism could lay.

"Wait a moment, Una, and let us enjoy this view, it really is grand," said Colonel Dysart, as a turn in the avenue down which they had been riding brought them right in front of the Abbey; and there for the first time it burst full on her sight—massive, stately, imposing, with its dark-grey walls and its frowning battlements, and its background of sombre pines clothing the steep hills behind it. She looked at it with wide-open eyes and parted lips, half breathless with delight; but in that hour she could have known under what circumstances she should one day gaze upon that grim old castle, she would have urged her fleet horse to his utmost speed, and flown away from it to some distant spot, where she could never look on it or its master more.

"Oh! Mr. Atherstone, you have indeed something to be proud of," said Una at last. "I should think the possession of such a place would compensate for many of the troubles of life."

"It has need to do so," he muttered to himself. "Come, Miss Dysart," he added more lightly, "let me do the honours in proper style. This was once the draw-bridge; but I hope you will agree with me that we have done well to make it a somewhat more safe and convenient entrance; and their horses' hoofs clattered noisily over an iron bridge which led to a huge arched doorway."

"Yes; but I am rather bewildered about the moat—if we are passing over it now: I thought it ought to be filled with water."

"I am afraid that has long since been drained away; but I hope you will think we have turned it to good account." Which they certainly had, for the channel, which had once been deep enough to drown a man, was entirely filled with blossoming plants, so that the stern old fortress seemed to encircle with a garland of flowers.

"I think it has a most charming effect," said Una; "but that ponderous door seems to be opening by magic, for you have given no summons."

"Very easy magic," said Atherstone, laughing, "as the butler has simply seen our approach through the loophole at the side," and laying his strong hand on Una's bridle-rein, lest the grating sound of the massive hinges should startle her horse, he led her through the great entrance of Atherstone Abbey, and rode on with her to the centre of a stone courtyard, where they stopped to dismount. As he did so a sudden strange recollection came over him, that just in this fashion the Atherstones of old had been wont to bring in their brides, and lead them with triumph and joy across the threshold of that ancestral home, when by deeds of prowess they had won the lady of their love, to share with them its grandeur and its power, and his brows contracted with a dark heavy frown as he thought of it, for it would have been impossible for any man to be more deeply, more sternly resolved than was Humphrey Atherstone, that no bride of his should ever pass through the entrance to the Abbey.

(To be continued.)

Protestantism in France.

A disruption of the Protestant Church of France now appears to be inevitable. We hear so little about French Protestantism that the announcement may not excite much attention even among persons who busy themselves with ecclesiastical affairs; yet for many reasons the history of that creed is full of interest, and it might safely be commended to the notice of the church Congress. The Huguenot church gave a wonderful example of tenacity during the generations in which it had to fight for existence or to worship by stealth. All the persecutions to which Catholics or Protestants have been subjected in England were trivial compared with those endured by the Huguenots. When we remember by what religious party those rigours were dictated, and how the same party still clamours for domination, we

may see some of the causes of that melancholy schism between clergy and laity to which the Revolution gave a terrible prominence, and which is still fresh to-day. The history of the Huguenot Church also shows how effective persecution may be when both relentless and prolonged. When freed from the worst of their disabilities more than a century ago, the French Protestants no longer possessed the rich store of moral and manly qualities which had once made a priceless addition to the public life of their country. Their spirit was cowed. They seemed no longer to have either the power or the will to propagate their own doctrines. Moreover, while they had been living in "the desert," as their writers called their hiding places, the bolder spirits of France had been drifting far beyond the denials of Protestantism. Voltaire, and, in a different way, Rousseau, had not only occupied much of the ground which had once belonged to the Reformed Church, but they had also spread a spirit of irreverent criticism which disinclined a large portion of the French to stop short of Protestantism. Thus crowds went straight on to infidelity itself, and there many have remained. The French Protestants, when they regained their right to meet and preach and write, found themselves launched into a state of society which they did not know, and which did not know them. Political passion was loose; the oldest and most venerated institutions were about to pass away; all the sanctities of life were to be shaken; and amid the tempest of the Revolution no one took any notice of the obscure sectaries who, less than two hundred years before, had been able to dispute the mastery of France. They were like the released prisoner who had been confined so long that he scarcely knew what to do with his freedom. It was difficult to see any likeness between the retiring Protestants and those Huguenots who had been as bold and aggressive as our own Puritans. When the State converted them into an endowed church, with all the checks of an Establishment, they became the tamest religious body that ever obeyed a ruler. They were given to understand as it would be indecorous for one salaried religion to attack another, they must abstain from assailing Catholicism in the pulpit. It was true that the Catholic Bishops and priests disdained to be bound by such a restraint; but Catholicism was the religion of the State, and it commanded powerful political influences; so of course, the Protestants could not expect to obtain the same freedom of speech as their rivals. This one-sided compact has been accepted with a meekness which is one of the strangest facts in religious history. As a body, those Protestants who take the pay of the State have ceased to make any effort to spread their creed. The old Huguenots would scarcely recognize their degenerate descendants.

Although the French Protestants have ceased to be a proselytizing body, and may almost be said to be perishing of respectability, they have shown no lack of mental agitation in their own ranks. They have had many eminent preachers and scholars. Their theological schools have won a considerable reputation. A large portion of them have also been so greatly influenced by the rationalistic teaching of Germany that the Calvinism of their ancestors has become little more than a mystical and Christianized theism, in which the stern phrases of the old Huguenot faith float about in strange confusion. Advocated by men of virtue and genius, that form of religion has attracted a large minority of the Protestants. They call themselves "the Liberals." Were they not connected with a church, many of them would doubtless have drifted away into Voltairianism. The majority of the French Protestants, on the other hand, have for years had growing doubts whether "the Liberals" are Christians at all, and they have been striving to cast out their heretical brethren. The shackles of the State, however, prevented the Orthodox party from taking the necessary legal steps until its leader, and, indeed, its pope, M. Guizot, persuaded M. Thiers, then the President of the Republic, to convoke the General Synod of the Church—a body that had not met for more than two centuries. When the Synod assembled, the war of the factions, led by M. Guizot on the one side, and by M. Coquerel on the other, speedily made a schism inevitable. It is interesting to remember that M. Guizot, who ended his ministerial career by breaking up a Monarchy, almost ended his life by breaking up a church. He would give no quarter to the "Liberals." He and his party insisted that the privilege of electing the pastors, and thus of determining the theological teaching of the Church, should belong only to those who would subscribe a particular canon of orthodoxy. The Synod passed that decree, and the working of it would, of course, gradually deprive the "Liberals" of all the pulpits and all the State pay. They have tried hard to make ministers of the public who had no right to the regular salary, but without success. They have attempted to draw up such a verbal statement of doctrine as might be subscribed by both the parties, but this orthodox people refuse to act as if they believed in a unity of faith which is notoriously absent. It would seem, therefore, that the long expected schism is now at hand. The Synod will soon be convoked, in order to hasten the process of severance, and when that process shall be complete the "Liberals" will appeal to the National Assembly for a share of the ecclesiastical funds. It is a melancholy episode in the career of a church which has contributed many pathetic, many heroic, and some splendid chapters to the history of Christendom. But perhaps it may do one great good by breaking up the respectable lethargy of French Protestantism.—London Times.

PRESIDENT ELIOT says: "The employment of women in the schools in the enormous proportion in which they are now employed in many towns and cities is an unwise economy, because it inevitably tends, first, to make the body of teachers a changing, fluctuating body, fast thinned and fast recruited; and, secondly, to make teaching, not a life work, as it ought to be, but a temporary resort on the way to another mode of life."

Scientific and Useful.

SOBE TEATS AND LINED OIL.

J. Durham, in the Country Gentleman, recommends lined oil for sore teats, and says that any dairyman troubled with cows having sore teats should use plenty of lined oil before and after milking. He will find but little if any sores or cracks about his cow's teats if this is done. Many cows are kickers that would delight to be milked if a little lined oil were used on the teats. I recommend a vial of it to be kept in every dairyman's stable. Sometimes teats appear smooth that are tender, and only need a little oil to make the cow happy.

BOILING TEA.

Water which has been kept in ebullition does not make so good a infusion of tea as water 'just on the boil.' A reason for this is suggested by a writer in the Chemical News, who says that the escape of dissolved gases might possibly account for the inferiority of the tea infusion made with long-boiled water. To test this he passes for ten minutes through boiling water a stream of carbolic acid gas, and then made an infusion of tea with it. The result was decidedly better than when water was employed which had boiled for the same length of time without the addition of the carbolic acid gas.

PICKLED SWEET APPLES.

Pare, quarter and core the apples. To ten pounds of the fruit add four pounds of sugar, a half teacup of water, and one lemon, or the rinds of two. Stew the apples until they are a little soft, then skim them out and place them on a sieve to drain; set the sieve over a pan. When the fruit is drained pour the juice into the kettle and boil 20 minutes. Add a quart of vinegar and pour over the apples. Cover only with a thin cloth till cold; then put a plate upon them to press the fruit down into the syrup. Two or three thicknesses of paper tied over the jars, excludes the air better than cloth.

FERTILIZERS.

The grasses which in their decay annually enrich the prairie, and the leaves which render forest land so fertile, contain not only the three elements, nitrogen, potash, and phosphoric acid, which the chemists consider so essential for plant food, but a multitude of other elements, and especially carbon, which the chemists tell us is not essential in the soil, being profusely supplied to plants from the carbonic acid of the air. Every practical farmer knows that this carbon renders the soil friable and porous and much more capable of absorbing and retaining the moistures and gases of the air. By the aid of muck, which is mainly composed of carbon, we have seen heavy clay lands rendered light, easily worked, and productive, and sandy soils made retentive of moisture, ammonia, and other fertilizing gases. Barn-yard manure abounds with carbon, and produces the same effect on clayey and sandy lauds.

—American paper.

PHYSIOLOGY OF SABBATH.

As a day of rest, I view it as a day of compensation for the inadequate restorative powers of the body under continued labor and excitement. A physician always has respect to the restorative power, because if once this be lost, his healing office is at an end. A physician is anxious to preserve the balance of circulation as necessary to the restorative power of the body. The ordinary exertions of a man run down the circulation every day of his life; and the first general law of nature, by which God prevents man from destroying himself, alternating of day and night, that repose may succeed action. But although the night apparently equalizes the circulation, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life. Hence, one day in seven by the bounty of providence is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect by repose the animal system.—J. R. Farre, M.D.

MIND AND HEALTH.

The mental condition has far more influence upon the bodily health than is generally supposed. It is no doubt true that ailments of the body cause depressing and morbid conditions of the mind; but it is no less true that sorrowful and disagreeable emotions produce disease in persons who, uninfluenced by them, would be in sound health; or if disease is not produced, the functions are disordered. Not even physicians always consider the importance of this fact. Agreeable emotions set in motion nervous currents, which stimulate the blood, brain, and every part of the system, into healthful activity; while grief, disappointment of feeling, and brooding over present sorrows and past mistakes, depress all the vital forces. To be physically well one must, in general, be happy. The reverse is not always true; one may be happy and cheerful, and yet be a constant sufferer in body.—Brooklyn Journal of Education.

USE FOR APPLES.

In some parts of the country, says The Cultivator, through heavy crops and hard times, there is little market for apples. They should not be allowed to waste. They may be placed in heaps on the grass and covered with straw or corn-stalks and will keep till winter; and if the straw is a foot thick long keepers will remain uninjured till spring. In this condition they are readily accessible for feeding. Properly fed to milch cows, they largely increase both the quantity and quality of the milk. Always begin feeding in small quantities, and gradually increase the rations. Large quantities given at an outset will do more harm than good. Nothing is in more danger of choking a cow than smooth-skinned round apples. They must, therefore, be either passed through a slicing machine, or cut on the floor with a clean spade, ground sharp. Fed in connection with corn-meal, they are excellent for swine. Horses fed on dry hay are benefited by a few apples. Sheep eat them with avidity. A few in the hen-house are eagerly sought. In all these instances they do more good than the mere amount of nutriment they contain.