

Choice Literature.

One Life Only.

CHAPTER XLII.

Mrs. Northcote had not delayed an hour after Atherstone's visit in hastening to Vale House, there to clear him most effectually from the suspicions which she herself had raised against him in the mind of her friend; and from that moment Lady Elizabeth regretted exceedingly the summary manner in which she had driven him from the house the year before; with the instinct of her woman's heart she felt that it had been the death blow to Una's happiness, for she knew nothing of the rumours in the neighbourhood respecting her marriage with Trafford, on the contrary, she had seen her repelling every person who showed signs of too warm an admiration, with a gentle firmness, which could only be the result of a deep seated resolution to listen to no whisper of love from any new acquaintance. Despite her selfishness, Lady Elizabeth was not an unfeeling woman, and even her personal comfort had been a good deal marred for the past year by the sight of Una's sweet sad face, and its look of patient suffering. She had therefore welcomed gladly the information brought her by Mrs. Northcote, which put an end to the necessity of further separation between Atherstone and Una; and Miss Grubbe had been obliged to own that it was useless for her to attempt to interfere with Miss Dysart's prospects of happiness, if Mr. Atherstone came to seek her again at the hands of her aunt.

But now it seemed to Lady Elizabeth that his departure for an indefinite length of time, so immediately after his return home, could admit of no other interpretation but a deliberate intention of avoiding Una, and putting an end to any idea that he wished to resume his former relations with her, and Una herself drew the same conclusion. The aunt and niece had never spoken on the subject together, however, and they did not now; only for the next few days the invalid's mental discomfort showed itself in greater irritability than that which was already habitual to her, and Una went about calm and gentle as ever, but strangely silent, and with a dim shadowy look in her eyes when she came down from what was supposed to be a night's rest, which might have told the most indifferent observer of the secret suffering which was so keenly trying her once joyous spirit.

Meantime, when Atherstone returned home from his visit to Dr. Burton, he found, as it so often happens in this world, that circumstances were working at a distance from him in such a fashion as to render it simply impossible that he should carry out his intention of leaving home without again seeing Una Dysart. He had been aware that Wilhelmina Northcote was to be married on the following day to Hervey Orlinton, and he had received a warm invitation from her parents to be present at the ceremony, but he had felt from the first that he really had not sufficient moral courage to witness such a scene in the very presence of his lost Una.

He knew that she must inevitably be there, as Miss Northcote's chief friend, and he was equally certain that Trafford would perform the rite which would so soon be repeated in order to unite himself to her who should have been poor Humphrey's bride, and still was the very darling of his heart. Could he bear to see that good man's happy triumph, and watch him meeting the tender glance of those sweet eyes that once had looked with such deep love into his own?

No; to go through such an ordeal seemed beyond his power; and he had that morning sent a cautiously worded answer to Mrs. Northcote, in which he tried hard to conceal the true reason of his refusal to attend the wedding of her daughter. No sooner did he arrive at home on this afternoon, however, than he was greeted with the information that Mr. Northcote was waiting for him in the library, and when he opened the door, he saw the squire seated on a chair in the centre of the room, with hands firmly clasped on the top of his gold-headed stick. He looked up with a merry twinkle in his eye as Atherstone came in, but did not move.

"Here I sit, friend Humphrey," he said, in his hearty genial voice, "and from this chair I do not move till I have brought you to repentance of your cold-hearted indifference to what concerns us so nearly, and won your promise to do honour to our pretty Wil. to-morrow by your presence. I could not have believed you would be so unfriendly as to refuse us."

"It is not indifference, indeed, Mr. Northcote," said Atherstone, his lips quivering with pain; "no one can rejoice more heartily than I do in any happiness that may come to you or yours, and Miss Northcote has my fervent good wishes; but you really must excuse me from appearing at her wedding."

"What is your reason? can you tell it to me?" said the squire, looking him straight in the face.

Humphrey's proud spirit revolted from any confession of the truth, and he answered, deprecatingly, "Forgive me, Mr. Northcote, but even that I cannot do."

"No, because you have not a single valid reason to give me. You know as well as I do that the Northcotes and Atherstones have been friends for some hundreds of years, and there never yet was a great festive occasion in the one house without the representative of the other being present; there must be a mutual consent before you break up such an old custom as that, and you will not get mine, I can tell you. But the truth is, Atherstone," continued the squire, more seriously, "it is not merely to give me pleasure that I urge you to do this, but for your own sake; it may affect your future standing in the county very injuriously if you seem to fight shy of your neighbours on this special occasion; it will be your first appearance after your absence, and all the painful circumstances connected with it, and every one expects to see you there, and to welcome you back to your own place once more; if you avoid being present—which at any time would have seemed very strange conduct on your part—it will inevitably convey the impression that mat-

ters are not after all cleared up, and there will be a renewal of doubts and suspicions which may not be easily dispelled."

Humphrey was too sorely wounded at the heart to feel all the bitterness which would once have been aroused within him by such remarks, and he answered, despondingly, "I do not seem to care much what any one in the world thinks of me now."

"But you should care, my dear fellow; we have to avoid even the appearance of evil, and you are bound to make yourself worthy—in the eyes of others as well as in reality—of the position in which God has placed you. Come, my friend, be advised by me; you must come to us; I will take no refusal; and, after all, it is no such very dreadful affair; we meet at the church soon after eleven, and when they have converted my little 'Will o' the wisp into Mrs. Hervey Orlinton, you shall come back to the Manor House for luncheon—breakfast I believe it is to be called—and the whole business will be at an end before three o'clock. I do not care about your staying to the evening party unless you like to do so; but I do beg you to be present at the wedding itself."

Then Humphrey resigned himself. What, after all, was a little additional pain, more or less, when all was so dark and hopeless around him? "You are very kind to care what I do, Mr. Northcote," he said; "and since you wish it, I will come to the church at all events."

"And to the breakfast. Good! Now I am satisfied; and you will not regret it yourself, Humphrey, I am very sure."

Atherstone only smiled rather sadly; and the squire took his leave, declaring he had more to do than he then knew how to manage.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Wilhelmina Northcote's wedding-day dawned as sunny and cloudless in all the perfection of summer beauty as if this world were but the fairyland of hope and brightness, which it often seems to us to be in the days of our untried youth; none could have dreamt those azure skies were ever darkened by snow-laden clouds and angry storms, or that the fair green valleys of the flower-decked earth but hid the ashes of the countless dead. All was serene and gay; and the morning smiled like a radiant bride, jewelled with the sparkling dew-drops, and heralded with songs of triumph from a thousand carolling birds.

We are often aware of a strange sympathy existing between Nature and the human race—a sympathy which links itself with our immortal being rather than with that personality which is known and seen to our fellow-creatures. It has been well said that to God and to Nature we never grow old; there we are known to be ever the same, even as we know ourselves; the same in our child-like need of a Father's love, in our self-pity for our unseen pangs, in the imperishable desire for happiness, which sets our hearts bounding in its earliest years, and still burns within it fierce and strong as ever, when, worn and wounded, it is feebly beating out its last remains of life. If the world presses hard upon us, and we are hurt by the quick or cruel wrongs from trusted friends, or by the sting of slanderous tongues, there is a subtle consolation in passing out to the solitude of woods and fields, where the unseen presence of the only true and deathless Love impresses itself upon us through the outward aspect of Nature in some mysterious manner, felt though not understood; but there are times when this mysterious mission seems to be repudiated by our mother Earth, and she turns upon us with glittering smiles and garish brightness, when we long for the soft shadows and the tender gloom of sun-veiled skies to speak responsive to our darkened souls.

What a cruel mockery that brilliant sparkling morning seemed to Humphrey Atherstone, as he stood on the steps of his own door waiting for Nightshade to be brought round that he might ride to the church in time for the wedding ceremony, according to his promise. Never through all the troublous years since his uncle's death had he felt so despirited and hopeless as he did that day; his conscience was clear, his position assured, his future all before him free and independent, only Una was lost to him, and she had so twined herself about the very fibres of his life, that, since it must be spent without her, he longed to be rid of it as an intolerable burden, and would have been well content if the friends assembling that day had been called together in order to lay him down in peace beneath the churchyard sod.

He let the bridle lie loose on Nightshade's arched and glossy neck as he rode along; perhaps he almost hoped the instincts of his favourite horse would guide the animal to bear him away in reckless flight far in the opposite direction; but the stately black horse paced onwards steady and sure, and soon it had borne him to the livery-gate, where the villagers were assembled in happy groups, looking out eagerly for the coming of the bride. Atherstone's groom rode up as he dismounted, took the bridle which his master flung to him listlessly, and led Nightshade away; so that Humphrey seemed to have no alternative but to pass on to the scene he dreaded, yet never perhaps had his splendid beauty and noble dignified bearing been so striking as on that day, when he uncovered his dark head in the sunshine in answer to the salutations of the crowd, and passed on calm and grave into the shade of the churchyard trees.

Here were assembled well-nigh all the wedding guests, who preferred to wait outside in the pleasant air rather than within the church; and to Humphrey Atherstone the whole scene appeared strangely out of harmony with that quiet resting-place of the dead: light laughter filled the air, gay dresses swept over the graves, and merry groups leant on the marble monuments which recorded how much beloved had been the lost and how full of anguish were the living. Atherstone was met very cordially by his neighbours, to all of whom the peculiar circumstances of his history were now known, and he patiently went through the congratulations on his return, and answered courteously, to the hopes expressed by many, that he would mix again with his friends, as in the days of his earlier youth; but as soon as he could he withdrew himself from among them, and es-

aped into a side alley shaded by branching trees, which seemed to him to be quite deserted. It was lined on either side with the green monnds which sheltered the very poor, whose surviving friends had been unable to mark each cherished spot, except by a few wild flowers laid on the turf from day to day; but there was one solitary grave placed at a distance from all the others under a fine old elm-tree which was distinguished by a white marble cross at the head, while at the foot there stood the figure of a young man, motionless as if he sought to be a living monument to the dead who slept beneath. Atherstone did not know whose resting-place it was, for that quiet grave had opened to receive its tenant—brought many miles to rest in Valehead churchyard—since last he had passed within its gates two years before.

But in a moment he guessed the truth, for it was Rupert Northcote who stood there; and as Humphrey drew nearer he saw that a broken lily was sculptured on the cross, with the inscription below it, recording no name but only the words, "They shall walk with me in white," while a row of the same pure stately flowers marked out the narrow space where Rupert's darling slept. Atherstone had already seen him since his return, and they had renewed their early friendship; so now he went up to him quietly, and laid his arm on his shoulder with a sympathetic pressure which the young man easily understood.

"You have made it a lovely spot," said Humphrey; "those beautiful lilies are most appropriate."

"It was Una Dysart who suggested to me to plant them there," said Rupert; "she said they always reminded her of saints in their white garments, and my Lillith is a saint—the angels have gained what I have lost. Generally speaking I can school myself against daring to regret her; but on this her brother's wedding-day, it wrings my heart to feel that only her senseless form lies there cold and unheeding while all she loved best are gathered round her, and while I above all would give my best years of life to gain one look from her again."

For a moment Atherstone did not speak, and then he said, in a voice of deep emotion, "Rupert, do not think that I fail to appreciate your trial, for I do with all my heart; but, believe me, there are worse enemies for human love than even death."

"Not, surely, for the love that survives? how is it possible? for her it is best, I know, but for me—could any separation be more complete?"

"Yes, a thousand times I though both were still breathing the self-same air. You have not lost her, Rupert; she is yours as entirely, as faithfully, as when you still could clasp her dear hand in your own. She died loving you, she loves you still, and she will never change to you through all the eternal ages. You have her memory in your heart, embalmed there fresh and pure as in her days of life, your own for ever. Who dare dispute that grave with you? or who but yourself can claim to be the dearest earthly memory of her blessed spirit in the realms of paradise? And you think there can be no worse fate than yours? I tell you, Rupert, you little know what men may have to bear, or with how much reason they might envy your gentle sorrow!"

Atherstone had spoken with so much vehemence that Rupert looked round at him surprised; but at that moment a burst of joyful shouting from the crowd at the gate announced that the bride had arrived, and it was needless that her brother should be there to greet her. The young man silently linked his arm in that of his friend, and they walked together out from the sombre alley where they had been standing, to the broad sunny path leading to the church door, where already the wedding procession was being marshalled. The little children of the village school lined the road on either side, holding baskets of flowers from which they flung sweet blossoms beneath the feet of the veiled bride as she passed along, leaning on her father's arm; and close behind Wilhelmina—the chief actor in the scene on which the dazzling sunshine was streaming down—there came another fair and graceful figure, walking with her beautiful eyes fixed on the ground, her little hands clasped tightly together, and her gentle feet seeking to avoid stepping on the pretty flowers which strewed the path, that her light tread might not crush them.

He stood there and watched her; his lost Una, in all her gracious loveliness, with her flowing white robes, only distinguished from those of the bride by the rose-pink flowers which looped them up, and her soft brown hair catching flakes of light upon its waving masses. She was very pale, but her sweet face was rigidly calm, and she passed on with quiet noiseless movement, never lifting her eyes to look to the right hand or to the left, yet Humphrey had an instinctive consciousness that she knew he was present, and that she was aware how the sweeping folds of her dress had touched him as she moved along.

Mr. Trafford and Richard Orlinton were at the west door of the church with the choristers to meet the bride, and as the squire led her in, his bright and happy little daughter, the choir and clergy turned and preceded her up the nave, singing the well-known bridal hymn, "The gate that breathed o'er Eden," till they reached the altar, where Hervey stood waiting with his friends.

Atherstone saw Una's figure, all white and dazzling in the sunshine, disappear under the shadow of the doorway, while the gay crowd swept in after her, and the impulse was strong upon him to dash back to the gate, and mount his horse, that it might bear him far away at its swiftest pace; but Rupert still held his arm and drew him on, and, yielding in the recklessness of despair, he too entered the church.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Rupert Northcote left his friend, as they drew near the altar, and went to join his mother, who was standing a little apart, visibly agitated, now that the period of final parting with her daughter had arrived; while Atherstone took up his position where, half hidden by a pillar, he could fix his eyes undisturbed on Una's face. Just at that moment the deep melodious voice of Mr. Trafford was sounding out the sol-

emn charge to those who were about to be joined in life long bonds, that they should declare whether they knew of aught against their union, as they would have to answer for it at the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts should be made known.

"Now," thought Atherstone, "Una knows that those words will soon be addressed to her and Trafford, and unless she has made herself hard and cold as ice against me, she must betray her consciousness that if the deepest secret of her heart were revealed it would tell of a love between her and me, which well might hold her back from taking vows to any other man."

He watched her intently, as the awful adjuration rolled through the echoing aisle, and was followed by a pause of morose silence, when no answer came from the true young hearts that had long been open to each other in loyal affection. But Una never moved, and her beautiful face remained white and still, as if chilled in monumental marble. Humphrey continued to gaze upon her earnestly, while the sacred rite went on and the pledges of undying love were given and taken; and only once he marked a change. Like a sudden breeze rippling the surface of a quiet lake there came a tremor of agitation over Una's pure pale countenance, which made her lips tremble, and her eyes grow dim with tears, when she saw the young bride rise from her knees, her hand clasped in that of her husband's, while the clear voices of the choristers rang out the words, "Oh, well is thee, and happy shalt thou be!" Atherstone knew not what chord was touched at that moment in Una's heart, but in truth she felt as if it were ready to break within her, for it was crying out in passionate longing for the bliss which she believed her own young life was never to know. Ah! well it was with the bride so deeply loved, and happy would she be; but she had given all her life and all her heart to him who stood there in his living beauty as utterly dead and lost to her as if the grave had hid him away for ever from her sight. The thought of the long years of loneliness that seemed to be before her was more than she could bear, and as she swayed like a reed under the tempest of anguish that shook her very soul, her glance fell for a moment on Atherstone's countenance, looking dark and stern from his inward pain and resentment, and at once her maidenly pride enabled her to master the emotion which might betray to the man whom she believed had deserted her how unchangeably she loved him still.

With a strong effort she drove back the tears that well-nigh choked her; raised her fair head in dignified calm; and from that moment never showed by look or movement the least sign of feeling through all the subsequent scene. The service was over, and the newly-made husband and wife passed out of the church, and walked down the graveyard path in the sunshine, with their friends following close behind them. "Caught at last, my Will-o'-the-wisp!" whispered Hervey to the little bride whom he was bearing away in triumph. "Fairly caught," she answered. "I hope it is not proper for me to cry, because I can't, I am so happy;" but there were bright drops on her bright eyelashes as she spoke, for her eyes turned lovingly on the kind old father, whose house was to be her home no more.

At the gate the village people clustered round the squire's daughter and her husband, all eager to touch her hand or win a last look from her smiling eyes, and in the confusion Atherstone found himself close behind Una, but she still maintained her stately calm, till suddenly Trafford, hurrying from the church-door with his swift vigorous tread, came straight up to her, and bending down from his stately height, whispered a few words in her ear; they were, in truth, only prompted by a kind wish to remove the sadness which the quick-eyed clergyman had noted on her face, by reminding her that all the happiness that day around them was due to her own success in bringing Rupert Northcote back to his home. But Atherstone did not hear what was said, he only saw that Trafford's voice brought light to her eyes and colour to her cheek, and that she looked into his face with a sweet bright smile, and answered low and softly to his secret whisper. And the sight was too much for Humphrey's powers of endurance; with a determined effort he made his way through the crowd to the place where his horse was waiting him, and hastily penning a note to Mr. Northcote, begging him to excuse him from being at the luncheon, he gave it to his groom, and told him to ride to the Manor House with it, and then mounting Nightshade, Humphrey himself darted away in the opposite direction, and was soon galloping at full speed along the most lonely road he could find.

Poor Una could not so easily escape from what had been to her an almost unendurable ordeal. She was obliged, as the bride's favoured friend, to accompany her back to the house, to sit in patience at the table while the wedding feast went on, and finally she had to take her place with all the other guests on the outer steps, and join her good wishes with theirs as the daughter of the house was borne away by her husband, to begin together the new life that seemed so full of promise. Then only would she hope for a few minutes' relaxation from the strain of the determined calm beneath which she had hidden her anguish through these long trying hours.

The Northcotes had insisted that Una should remain with them till the following day, in order that she might be present at the evening party with which the festivities were to terminate, and bitterly distasteful as all such gaieties were to her at present, she knew that she must not avoid them if she would conceal the reason which made them so; but now that Wil was gone, for the next few hours at least she was free, and hastily throwing a dark mantle over her white dress, she ran with fleet steps through the shrubberies till she reached a side gate which led to an outlying hamlet on the Northcotes' estate. Una had a definite purpose in taking this direction, but when she found herself in the perfect solitude which was so great a relief, she relaxed the rigid self-control with which she had maintained her composure,

and gave way to irrepressible sobs. Like the king of old, who hastened away, weeping as he went, when he heard that the son was dead, whom to have retained in life he would have been well content that all others should have died that day, she passed on through the quiet woods in all their summer brightness, with her fair face bathed in tears and her lips quivering out the bitter cry, "Would that I had died before I lost him! Oh, my love—my love! for Atherstone's conduct at the wedding had utterly killed the last hope within her, and the whole long life that she might have to live stretched out before her one dark and dreary blank, where the lights of earth had all gone out, and the far-off stars would alone have power to shed radiance on her path.

This complete abandonment of herself to her grief for a few minutes brought a sense of relief, and when she reached the little old-fashioned farm house which was her destination she was able to wipe the tears from her eyes and regain her composure, at least in outward appearance.

(To be continued.)

Scientific and Useful.

DANDELION WINE.

Take a quantity of the flowers, boil half an hour, and then strain; add sugar to the extent of three pounds to a gallon, boil again twenty minutes, with the rind of a lemon and one orange, and then add the juice. When lukewarm, stir in a small quantity of yeast; keep filling up, lay something light over it, but do not fasten down till the fermentation ceases.

THE HABIT OF FEATHER EATING.

At this season fowls have much idle time, and get into mischief in consequence. Being deprived of animal or nitrogenous food, they take as the best substitute the feathers from each other's neck. The remedy is to give them a sheep's pluck or liver to peck at, hanging it up within reach, or to give them wheat scattered in the earth or litter of their houses. This will give them food and work to occupy their time.

CHERRY TART.

Pick the stalks from the cherries, put a small cup upside down in the middle of a deep pie dish, fill round it with fruit, and add moist sugar to taste. Lay some short crust round the edge of the dish, put on the cover, pressing round the edge with your thumbs; cut the overhanging edge off evenly. Ornament the edges, and bake in a quick oven thirty-five to forty minutes; when done, sprinkle some loaf sugar over the top.

STEWED SWEETBREADS.

Trim some sweetbreads and soak them in warm water till quite white, blanch in boiling water, and then put them in cold water for a short time. When cold, dry them and put them in some well-flavoured white stock. Stew for half an hour. Beat up the yolks of two or three eggs with some cream, a little finely-minced parsley and grated nutmeg, pepper and salt to taste. Add this to the sauce, put it on the fire to get quite hot, dish the sweetbreads, pour the sauce over and serve.

EXTERMINATING ROSE BUGS.

This formidable enemy of rose bushes and of many other plants appears after the rose is developed, (when it feeds upon the petals. These bugs are so hard and covered with shells so horny that showering does not affect them. In short, they are affected by none of the usual remedies. In the first place use loads if you can find them. They eat the rose bug with avidity. If the bushes are thoroughly shaken a great many will fall off and be snapped up at once by the waiting loads. A sure way is hand picking. Go over the bushes, picking off every bug and dropping it into a basin of boiling or hot water. This is a good deal of trouble, but it is effectual.

HOW TO COOK RICE.

Mr. F. B. Thurber, of New York, writing from Japan to the American Grocer, gives the following account of the Japanese method of cooking rice:—Only just enough cold water is poured on to prevent the rice from burning to the bottom of the pot, which has a close-fitting cover, and, with a moderate fire, the rice is steamed rather than boiled, until it is nearly done; then the cover is taken off, the surplus steam and moisture allowed to escape, and the rice turns out a mass of snow-white kernels, each separate from the others, and as much superior to the soggy mass we usually get in the United States, as a fine mealy potato is to the water-soaked article. I have seen something approaching this in our Southern States, but I do not think even there they do it as skillfully as it is done here, and in the Northern States but very few persons understand how to cook rice properly. I am sure that if cooked as it is here, the consumption of this wholesome and delicious cereal would largely increase in America.

PROGRESS IN PHOTOGRAPHY.

During the last three months Mr. James Inglis, the well-known photographic artist, of Montreal, has been laboring to perfect a species of portrait hitherto unknown in this country, and his efforts have been crowned by a decided success, as shown by the beautiful likenesses at his rooms. The new process was first discovered in 1864 by a Mr. Swan, who obtained a patent which he sold to Mr. O. L. Lambert, who at present holds it. The sole manufacturers of the necessary material are the Autotype Company of London, England, who furnish the same only to Mr. Lambert's licensees, of whom there are two in Montreal, namely, Mr. Inglis for photographs, and Mr. Alexander Henderson for landscape views. When Mr. Inglis purchased the license for the chromotype, as the invention is named, it had not nearly attained to its present perfection, but by perseverance it has been able to produce a depth of shadow and variety of color from the Indian ink to a perfect imitation of the old style of portrait, which makes the new much superior to the ordinary photograph. A pigment being used in the chromotype, it is claimed that it will not fade, a property the great worth of which those who possess fading likenesses, memoranda, perhaps, of departed friends, prepared by the old silver process, will attest.