

THE WONDERFUL FLOWER OF WOXINDON.

An Historical Romance of the Times of Queen Elizabeth.

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CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

It may well be imagined that all this did not put Topcliffe in a better temper. After he had given a pull to Windsor's moustache to ascertain whether it was due to nature or to art, he left him alone, but made a rush at Uncle Remy, exclaiming loudly: "You were standing at the window of the 'Three Tuns' beside the Jesuit this morning. You must surely know where he is. I know for certain that he rode away in your company. And if you do not instantly tell me, you will be thrown into the Tower to-morrow morning, and before tomorrow evening you shall make acquaintance with the sack, and perhaps get a foot or so added to your length as you lay."

"Give me time to get my breath again, Master Topcliffe," my uncle answered with perfect good humor. "I am choking; and no wonder, for, upon my word, never did I see a more able valet-de-chambre than you have proved to my friend Windsor. I will not deny that I was in the 'Three Tuns' this morning, and that I witnessed from one of the windows, the shameful conduct of your underlings and your preachers. Somebody may have stood by me in a green doublet; they are common enough in London, and until I heard that to wear that color was high treason by Act of Parliament—for nothing of the sort is too preposterous in these happy times, under the blessing enjoyed under the new Gospel—I shall not pay great heed to the color of a man's doublet. Of this much I can at any rate assure you and I am prepared to assert it upon my oath, that no one else was with me when I rode out of London this afternoon except my good friends, these gentlemen here present. Your spies have either been misled by the dress Mr. Windsor happened to be wearing, or else they have put you on a false track, because they considered the price of blood you offered them to be insufficient pay."

Topcliffe would most probably have proceeded to ransack the house after his wont, knocking holes in the walls, upsetting all the furniture, plundering the storehouse and cellar, going off with his men after two days without having made any discovery, but not without a good deal of stolen booty, if something quite unanticipated had not occurred, namely the sudden seizure of my father with a mortal sickness.

During the judicial examination of our guests, and the war of words which ensued, our attention had, I am grieved and somewhat ashamed to say, been diverted from my good father, who sat bent down in his arm chair. All at once I heard him drawn a deep breath as if in pain, and looking round, I saw the ghastly hues of death gathering on the face I loved so well, while his hand was pressed convulsively to his left side. "Look at father, look at father!" I ejaculated, throwing myself on my knees at his feet. "He is dying!" Anne exclaimed. Grandmother and the others also knelt down by his side and began to pray aloud; whereupon the servants sobbed and cried as they gathered round, making a scene that would have moved the stoniest heart to compassion. We had no doubt that the excitement had brought on another stroke, which the physician had warned us would probably prove fatal. In fact, we thought all was over, for my father gave no signs of consciousness, and lay back in the arm-chair like a corpse.

We poor women did not know what to do; one called for the physician, another for the physician, a third uttered the prayer for a departing soul. Then young Mr. Windsor stepped forward and took my father's hand, saying that he had studied medicine, though he had not yet had much practice, and might be of some use in this emergency. He at once informed us that my father was not dead, only in a swoon, from which he hoped, please God, to awaken him. The young man appeared to us like an angel from heaven, and under his direction we busied ourselves in rubbing the sick man's limbs, and by the application of cold water and strong essences endeavoring to rouse him from the lethargy. When his respiration again became perceptible, Mr. Windsor succeeded, though not without difficulty, in getting him to swallow a few drops of some tincture.

After that, Windsor said we must put my father to bed, and hot poultices and mustard plasters must be put on, and renewed during the night. Then a truly diabolical thought suggested itself to Topcliffe. He had been looking on with rather a shamefaced mien while we were engrossed with the invalid; now he came forward and said if Mr. Bellamy required our attention continually that night, he would not interfere, but he must

be allowed to choose the room which he was to occupy. We all believed this was an act of hateful tyranny only done for the pleasure of annoying us, and uncle Remy spoke sharply to him about it, saying he wondered that he could take such a liberty in the presence of sickness, and threatening to lodge a complaint against him before Privy Council. But Topcliffe persisted in what he had said, treating my uncle's threats with the utmost contempt. And when he asked him, since he took it upon himself to behave as a master of Woxindon, where it was his pleasure that my father should be taken, to our surprise he named the upper chamber, where the wonderful flower grew in the ceiling. Former researches had made him intimately acquainted with every inch and out of our mansion, and we had no doubt at all, that he had his reasons for selecting that chamber for the sick room; but what those reasons were I was at a loss to devise.

However, for the present, there was nothing to be done but to make up a bed for father in the room indicated. As soon as all was in readiness, Uncle Remy took up his brother in his stalwart arms and carried him up the two flights of stairs like a child. There we laid him on the bed prepared for him, exactly under the spot where the wonderful flower grew.

CHAPTER V.

Before proceeding to narrate the occurrences of that night, I must say a few words about the adventures of little Frith met with.

I have already said that the boy let himself down from a casement in the hall into the garden below. The jump did no harm, the distance was only a few feet, he had often jumped as far or farther. He then ran nimbly along the terrace behind the yew hedges which bordered the way to the gate. It must have been through an inspiration of Providence that he went over the soft earth, not on the hard gravel, otherwise his footsteps would have been heard by the guard which Topcliffe had stationed at the garden gate. The pursuivants had taken old Thomas, the porter, by surprise, as they did once before, and set a watch at the gate, believing it to be the only means of egress before Topcliffe and the rest of his party slipped into the house. This they did not have done without being observed, had not almost all the servants been assembled in the hall, to hear the account of the martyr's death.

Now when little Frith got near the gate, he heard the men talking together, and perceived before it was too late, that they were not our own people. So he crept back in the shade of the yew-shade—it was three weeks after Easter and the moon was out of its first quarter—till he reached the cherry tree, then in full bloom, one of whose branches hung over the wall. He knew this tree well enough; only the year before he had climbed it without permission, before the cherries were fully ripe, and father had given him a scolding, and a beating, too, for it. Now he got into the tree, and slid along the branch until he was beyond the wall; then grasping one of the smaller branches with both hands, he let himself drop to the ground. He fell a good height, but thanks to his guardian angel, he was not much hurt. Picking himself up, he ran along the way through the woods leading past Woxindon from London to Harrow-on-the-hill. Here, however, his heart failed him, for he had to pass the cross roads, where the way to the old castle turns out of the main road, and a gruesome ghost story

How To Gain Flesh

Persons have been known to gain a pound a day by taking an ounce of SCOTT'S EMULSION. It is strange, but it often happens.

Somewhat the ounce produces the pound; it seems to start the digestive machinery going properly, so that the patient is able to digest and absorb his ordinary food, which he could not do before, and that is the way the gain is made.

A certain amount of flesh is necessary for health; if you have not got it you can get it by taking

Scott's Emulsion

You will find it just as useful in summer as in winter, and if you are thriving upon it don't stop because the weather is warm.

which old Bosgrave had lately told him, just then came into his mind.

The story ran that more than a century ago, before the old fortress fell into ruins one of the knight's serving-men had assassinated a fellow-servant from motives of jealousy at that very spot, and had been hung as the punishment of his crime, on the oak that stood at the crossways. Since that time the place had been haunted; on moonlight nights two black dogs with eyes like glowing coals, had been seen chasing one another round the stem of the oak, till the castle-clock struck one, when they instantly disappeared. Whether this legend was idle talk, and the two dogs were really village curs at play in the moonlight; or whether, as old Bosgrave and many persons, whose opinion was worth more than hers, asserted, the souls of the two unhappy serving-men wandered about under that form, is a question which I cannot decide. But one thing I will say, that nothing could have induced me to go by night and alone to that uncanny spot.

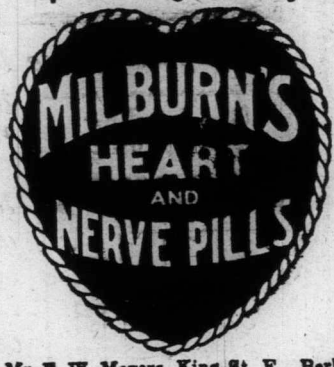
Now Frith was only ten years old, so no wonder the poor little fellow's hair stood on end, when just as he stepped on to the cross road, and caught sight of the old oak in the moonlight, he beheld a great black dog not ten feet in front of him. We tried to persuade him afterwards that it was nothing more than the shadow of a large branch thrown across his path, but he persisted that it was a real dog, not a shadow to which his own fears gave the form of a phantom. I will not assert that he was mistaken, since it is quite possible that the evil one, as Fr. Weston declared, might have tried to frighten little Frith, in order that the priest might fall into the hands of the pursuivants. However, that may be, I know I should have run away as fast as I could. Not so, Frith; he showed wonderful courage; he invoked his guardian angel and the blessed Mother of God, then laying his hand on the little cross he always wore, and which contained a fragment of the true cross with the sweet name of Jesus on his lips, he ran towards the ghostly dog, or whoever it was, though he trembled from head to foot. His bravery was rewarded, for as he went forward the phantom slunk away among the undergrowth and vanished in the darkness.

Just then a cloud covered the face of the moon, and under the trees it was so dark that the boy, who was confused by the fright he had had, could not find his way. In his perplexity he knelt down and said an Our Father; sorely he had finished the last word when he heard horses' hoofs approaching through the woods, and then voices, one of which he recognized as that of our old servant John. He hastened in the direction whence they came and met the riders at no great distance from the crossway. The old serving-man was much startled at hearing a child's voice calling to him out of the darkness, and blessed himself in the old-fashioned way, with the words, "All good spirits, etc." But the next moment convinced him that it was no apparition, but his young master in bodily form; and when he and his companion heard the tidings the child brought, they gave thanks to God, who had thus delivered them from falling into their enemy's clutches. They then held a consultation as to what should be done; the priest wanted to conceal himself in the wood until day-break, and then ride on further, for fear of bringing his entertainers into trouble. But John would not hear of this; he assured the priest that there was a capital hiding place in the old castle, only a little way off the main road, which communicated with our house by a secret way. He said it had often afforded a refuge to priests, and Father Weston would be safer there than anywhere else for the night. After a moment's deliberation, Father Weston consented, and well it was, as we shall hear presently, that he did so. The old servant lifted Frith up onto his horse, and they rode on towards the ruin, the darkness did not matter, for he knew every step of the way, and guided the horses with unerring hand to the foot of the square tower. Then he alighted, and after pushing aside a moss-grown slab of stone, he crept through a narrow aperture into a vaulted chamber, half-filled with rubbish, whether he beckoned to the priest to follow him; leaving Frith's apartment he struck a light, lit a small oil lamp that stood in a deep recess in the wall, drew his companion's attention to a bed of dried leaves in the corner, showed him a kind of a cupboard contrived in the masonry, which contained some provisions, and finally entreated him not to quit this hiding place until, through the boy or some trustworthy messenger, he received tidings of Topcliffe's departure. This done, John left the vault, pushed the stone back carefully over the entrance, and told Frith they should now make their way back to the main road, and together ride straight up to the garden gate, as if they had just come from London. He also said that he meant to behave as if he had taken a little too much, for the sake of deceiving the guard, and getting himself and the horses home without much ado.

(To be continued.)

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And little it cost in the giving,
But it scattered the night
Like morning light
And made the day worth living,
Through life's dull warp a woof it wove,
In shining colors of light and love;
And the angels smiled as they watched above,
Yet little it cost in giving.

It was only a kindly word,
And a word that was lightly spoken,
Yet not in vain,
For it stilled the pain
Of a heart that was nearly broken.
It strengthened a fate beset by fears,
And groping blindly through mists of tears
For light to brighten the coming years,
Although it was lightly spoken.

It was only a helping hand,
And it seemed of little availing,
But its clasps were warm
And it saved from harm
A brother whose strength was failing.

Its touch was tender as angel's wings,
But it rolled the stone from the hidden springs,
And pointed the way to hidden things,
Though it seemed of little availing.

A smile, a word, or a touch,
And each is easily given,
Yet one may win
A soul from sin
Or smooth the way to heaven.
A smile may lighten the falling heart,
A word may soften pain's keenest smart,
A touch may lead us from sin's snare—
How easily each is given.

—S. H. Review.

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Minard's Liniment Cures Diphtheria.

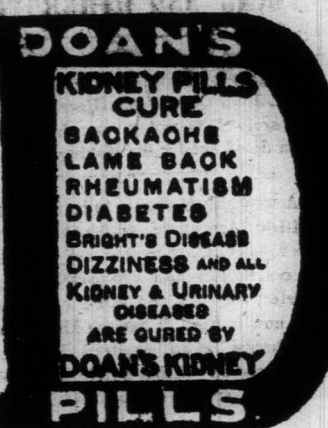
If there are any fish that make good brain-food it must be the kind that travel in schools.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

Any candidate who believes half the promises made prior to election needs his head examined.

Life Guards.

The Life Guards are two regiments of cavalry forming part of the British household troops. They are gallant soldiers and every loyal British heart is proud of them. Not only the King's household, but yours, ours, everybody's should have its life guards. The need of them is especially great when the greatest foes of life, diseases, find allies in the very elements, as colds, influenza, catarrh, the grip and pneumonia do in the stormy month of March. The best way that we know of to guard against these diseases is to strengthen the system with Hood's Sarsaparilla—the greatest of all life guards. It removes the conditions in which these diseases make their most successful attack, gives vigor and tone to all the vital organs and functions, and imparts a genial warmth to the blood. Remember the weaker the system the greater the exposure to disease. Hood's Sarsaparilla makes the system strong.

A man will soon forget a favor, but if you cheat him he will remember you the longest day he lives.

For Cuts, Wounds, Chills, Chapped Hands, Rheumatism, Stiff Joints, Burns, Scalds, Bites of Insects, Croup, Coughs, Colds, Haygrass, Yellow Oil will be found an excellent remedy. Price 25 cents. All dealers.

The man who thinks there is not an honest man living ought to put off saying it until he is dead.

If a child eats ravenously, grinds the teeth at night and picks its nose, you may almost be certain it has worms and should administer without delay Dr. Low's Pleasant Worm Syrup, this remedy contains its own cathartic.

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Yours gratefully, A. DAIRY. St. Timothee, Que., May 16th, 1899.

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