

THE WONDERFUL FLOWER OF WOXINDON.

An Historical Romance of the Times of Queen Elizabeth.

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PUBLISHED BY PERMISSION OF B. HERDER, ST. LOUIS, MO.

(Reproduced from the Montreal True Witness.)

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued)

That evening in my solitary chamber I pondered long over the startling intelligence I had heard, without, however, arriving at any decision as to the course of conduct I should pursue.

Nothing worthy of note marked the next few days. Gifford received from the brewer, as he expected, a thick packet of letters, addressed, he told me, to the French ambassador, the Archbishop of Glasgow, the Duke of Guise, and other of Queen Mary's partisans.

CHAPTER XXII.

For several weeks I led a quiet country life at Chartley. My humble patients visited me daily, and in every increasing numbers, so that the host of the "Mayflower" was fain to place at my disposal a small room on the ground floor to be used as a consulting room.

Frequently I sought out the sick myself, in the banks of the Done and the Trent, or the borders of the wide-spreading moorland. By this means I learnt how faithfully the rustic population clung to the old religion. Christian almsgiving seemed quite to have died out under the influence of the so-called "pure Gospel," the new creed wherein faith was everything and works were nothing.

I began in my turn to construct a scheme which could be carried out independently of Babington and his comrades. In the course of my visits to the sick, in the forest that stretched to the north from Barton nearly to Derby, I had come upon the cottage of a gamekeeper whose son had been attacked and severely injured by a wild boar.

"If I had to give my life for it, I would do so most willingly for the faith or for my persecuted brethren." The man spoke with feeling; I was deeply touched and shook him by the hand, saying some day I might perhaps remind him of his generous offer.

A ride which might besides too sorely tax the Queen's strength—such as an accident to one of the horses, uncertainty as to the right road, official warning preceding us, might frustrate the whole scheme!

I thought over the plan a good deal and determined to propose it to Babington when next I saw him. In the interim I gave the gamekeeper money to lay in a stock of provisions, for my mind was made up, that should an opportunity present itself for carrying off the Queen, I would set on my own responsibility, and not allow the occasion to slip.

On my return to the "Mayflower" I found my host awaiting me at the door, with the intelligence that Mr. Gifford had already been there twice, and was coming again. He handed me a letter, which Gifford had left for me. As the handwriting was unfamiliar to me, I opened it at once.

I need not be in so great a hurry, for this first love letter contained much that was bitter as well as sweet. The true and loving heart of the writer spoke in every line, but the general impression was a sad one. She told me that since my last visit to Woxindon her sister Anne had become more contrary and self-willed, and would not listen to a word of rebuke either from her or their grandmother.

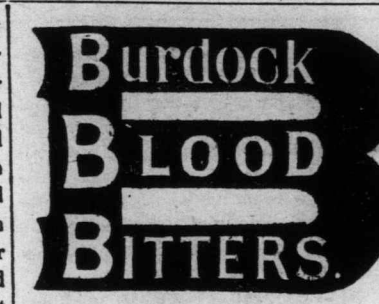
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was as good as her word. A few days later Anne had come into her sister's room at night, embraced her fondly, asked her forgiveness, and entreated her to say a good word for her to the grandmother; then before Mary could answer, she had run off and shut herself in her own little room.

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MY MOTHER.

She gave the best years of her life With joy for me, And robbed herself, with loving heart, Unostentatiously.

For me with willing hands she toiled From day to day. For me she prayed when headstrong youth Would have its way.

Her gentle arms, my cradle once, Are weary now: And time has set the seal of care Upon her brow.

And, though no other eyes than mine Their meaning trace, I read my history in the lines Of her death face.

And, 'mid His gems, Who showers gifts As shining sands, I count her days as pearls that fall From His kind hands.

—Christain Advocate.

Summer Hotel Proprietor (proudly).—Nearly all of my waiters are college men who are working their way through college.

Guest.—Well, judging by the way they work your guests, they'll all be graduated with honors.

Messrs. C.C. RICHARDS & Co. Gentlemen.—In June 98 I had my hand and wrist bitten and badly mangled by a vicious horse.

I was still pacing up and down my room, thinking over the contents of the letter I had in my hand, when Gifford entered.

"What do these grave looks mean Mr. Windsor?" he inquired. "No bad news, I hope, from your lady love."

I was not going to let this man into our family secrets, so I told him all as well with my betrothed, but in the present day there was much to make a good Catholic sad.

(To be continued.)

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Literary Young Man (confusedly).—I beg pardon, Miss: I should have said read "Crabbe's Tales." Young Lady (still more scornfully).—And I was not aware that red crabs had tails, either.

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