

THE WONDERFUL FLOWER OF WOXINDON.

An Historical Romance of the Times of Queen Elizabeth.

BY REV. JOSEPH SPILLMAN, S. J.

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CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

Walsingham's surmise was correct. We heard from Chereles that a messenger was despatched that very day to Paris; and about a week later Gifford was summoned to the embassy. The report must have been satisfactory, yet M. de Chatouneuf was too wary to commit himself to the proposed plan without a trial. He therefore gave Gifford a letter which compromised nobody, as it was merely an inquiry after the Queen of Scots' health. This letter was opened by Arthur Gregory, and after a copy of it had been taken by Philippe, it was fastened again so skillfully that no one could have discerned the least fault in the seal, for Gregory and Philippe were marvellously expert at such manipulation, and on that account their services were well remunerated. When my uncle read the letter, he exclaimed: "That is just what I expected, an experiment on Ohteseau's part. Francis, you must ride to Chartley to-morrow and give Sir Amias Paulet my instructions. Gifford can go by another road with one of my people and try his luck."

Accordingly the next day I started on my way. The distance to Chartley, which is on the borders of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, not far from Burton-on-Trent, is 130 miles, so that it took me two days hard riding to get there. As Walsingham's nephew I was well received by Sir Amias, untrifling though he was at his best. He asked me whether at last I was bringing Her Majesty's command that the head of the Machibian woman, who angered his just soul with her idolatries, was to fall by the executioner's hammer? And on my replying in the negative, he grumbled and snarled like the old bear that he was. When I explained that my coming and Walsingham's message were to prepare the way for what he desired, his temper improved a little. I proceeded to tell him of the trap that was to be laid for his prisoner, and that as soon as I had obtained proof in writing that she had desisted upon Elizabeth's life, she would be arraigned before a criminal court, in accordance with the new statute. At that he looked well pleased; however he paced to and fro in the room muttering to himself for a while, then he stopped in front of me and said:

"Mr. St. Barbe, you must know that all these tricks and stratagems to which diplomatists like your uncle have recourse, I loathe from my heart, for I hold with the precepts of the Gospel, which says: Let your speech be yes, yes, no, no; and that which is over and above these is of evil." But he also read in the Scriptures: "With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again." And this text reconciles me to the wily ways, whereby it is proposed to ensnare this woman for the furtherment of the pure Gospel, of which she is so stiff-necked an opponent. For I consider her to be as full of guile as any of the serpents the Papacy has ever bred! So let this Gifford come, and see what we can accomplish, but let him beware of foul play! I shall keep a strict eye upon him, and shall run both him and her through with my sword if he turns traitor. She shall not escape from my guardianship alive, unless the devil flies away with her to his own place."

Sir Amias said these last words in so spiteful a manner that a cold shiver ran over me. For some time he continued his denunciations of idolatry, similar in most respects to those uttered by the Jewish prophets of old. Presently, having vented his spleen, he came and sat down beside me, and, at my request, began to talk about his prisoner. She would not be persuaded, he said, to join the household at their devotions, nor would she listen to the pure word of God from the lips of the zealous and God-fearing preacher Bitterstone, who held forth to the effect of the people of God, for half an hour every evening, as the Spirit moved him. Instead of that, she and her attendants, with the secretaries Nau and Curle, knelt before a crucifix or an image of the Madonna, and pattered out the rosary, or some cursed idolatrous nonsense. She would only too gladly have the abomination of the mass, if he would let one of the priests of Bascombe under his roof, hitherto he had succeeded in preventing that, although to his great astonishment the Queen, who was unfortunately not altogether innocent of a leaning to Popery, had granted permission to his prisoner to have one of those servants of the devil about her. Then he begged me not to repeat what he had let slip in the heat of his just wrath, for not very long since, Elizabeth had condemned one John Stubbs to have his right hand chopped off by the hangman, for over-great freedom of

speech when expounding the Gospel. With regard to Mary Stewart, however, her bitterest enemy must admit that apart from her former crimes and her persistent adhesion to Roman errors, she was not so bad after all. She displayed in general far more patience than he would have thought possible in such a child of bell, and she even made a show of Christian charity, for he had overheard her praying for the Queen, and also for himself. He did not allow himself to be deceived by appearances, for he knew full well that the devil can assume the form of an angel of light, and that true beliefs are the only solid ground of justification. Instead of that she trusted to good works, according to the Popish teaching, as I should see in the afternoon, when she distributed her daily alms to the beggars who came from all the country round to Chartley, as they used to do in the old Popish times, to get the doles given away at the funeral of some person of standing in the country, to release his soul from purgatory.

We were still conversing in this way when we heard the sound of wheels in the courtyard and a clamour of voices. My companion ran to the window and exclaimed: "Here is the man we want, the very fellow your Gifford, or whatever his name is, spoke of."

I too went to the window, and looking out, I saw a heavy wagon drawn by two horses crossing the courtyard. On the driver's seat was an immensely corpulent man, resembling in shape the bear barrels with which the dray behind him was loaded.

"That is Tommy Bulky, the 'honest brewer,' on whom Gifford put his finger," Paulet said to me. "He brings over the beer from Burton every Monday, and I think he is just the man to answer our purpose. We must go down to the porter's lodge to speak to him, for such a barrel as he is cannot well be got upstairs."

This was apparent enough from the difficulty the good man had at alighting from the wagon. The servants brought a short pair of steps of solid oak, part of the side of the wagon was removed, and Tommy advanced one of his legs of elephantine thickness, encoiled in dirty leathern breeches, placing it cautiously on the topmost step of the ladder. Although I was in no merry mood, I could not forbear laughing as I watched him, and even the features of my morose companion relaxed into a smile, as he compared the "honest brewer" of Burton to the obese king of Amalek.

In going down to the porter's lodge we found our man sitting on a bench, still panting and puffing from the exertion of alighting from the wagon. His fat arms were propped upon the table, and he wiped the perspiration from his brow with his apron as he greeted the knight respectfully, and gave me a searching look from under his bushy eyebrows. I saw in a moment that the fellow was a sly dog. Sir Amias told him I was a nephew to Secretary Walsingham, and had come down from London about a little business. The brewer gave me another sharp look with a rather unceremonious nod, and continued to wipe his bald head. Sir Amias then sent the porter over to the "Mayflower," a tavern in the vicinity, where Gifford, who must have got there by that time, was to lodge, with orders to bring him over at once.

Meanwhile the "honest brewer" had recovered his breath. After he had taken a long draught out of a huge tankard that stood on the table, he said, as he wiped the foam from his beard: "I was once in London, sir, I shall never go there again. Bad beer there, sir, vile stuff, not fit for a Christian to drink. Before I had drank a dozen mugs of it, I had the gripes, as if I had the devil inside me. I warrant you, sir, I had to pay more for physic than for my victuals that time. Men who brew such ale ought to be drowned in their own vats, that would serve them right. Pure Gospel and good beer, I say. But it appears in these days, the purer the doctrine, the worse the brewer, although my good master here will not have that it is so. Our Burton ale is still excellent, sir, mine is at any rate. But the ditchwater they

drink in the country round has so brought down our prices that upright folk will soon have to beg their bread, as sure as my name is Tommy Bulky."

Then I said that the Burton ale was renowned for its excellence all over England, and I was sorry that he and his brother-brewers did not make the business answer well. On that account I was all the more glad to be able to put him in the way of getting a little money. On hearing this, he set down the tankard which he was in the act of carrying to his lips, and listened to me attentively. In a few words I told him about the matter; that my uncle had discovered a conspiracy of some young Popish gentlemen, who wanted to carry on a correspondence with the captive Queen of Scots, and who had fixed upon him for their middle man. Here the brewer interrupted me by bringing his fist down upon the table with such violence that the tankard was nearly upset. Did he, he asked with an oath, look like one who would be a traitor to the Queen? If the Popists required such things of him, he would stave in their heads with his fist as if they were rotten casks.

I had some trouble to pacify him, and make him understand what it was, I meant. It was not the conspirators themselves who had fixed upon him, but one whom Walsingham had got in among them to act as a decoy bird and who knew that the honest brewer could be thoroughly relied upon. Did he now catch my meaning? Bulky only replied with a sly wink and a low whistle. If he managed the affair successfully, I continued, Walsingham promised him a bounty of £10, for the payment of which Sir Amias would be witness and surety. How much he should demand from the other parties, from the Queen of Scots' secretary, on the one hand, and from the Popish gentlemen on the other, I should leave to him, as I did not doubt he would know how to bleed them both freely. The only stipulation to be made was that all should be arranged so craftily that both the conspirators and the inmates of the castle should fall into the trap, and should be convinced that he was dealing with them in good faith. Moreover it was agreed that all the letters before being given to the Queen's secretary or delivered to the Popish gentlemen, as the case might be, should be left for one night with an agent of Walsingham's, who would lodge near his brewery at Burton.

After I had clearly explained everything to him, and even at his request given him my instructions in writing, write my own signature and that of Paulet attached to them, the honest brewer declared himself ready to do our bidding, and swore upon the Bible, that he would carry it out exactly, and give up all the letters confided to him. With a well satisfied smile he pocketed the gold piece I gave him into the bargain, emptied the tankard at one draught, and said: "Gentlemen, it is a fine thing when one can serve the Gospel and Her Majesty the Queen, whom God preserve, and do one-self a good turn at the same time."

(To be continued.)

A Sustaining Diet.

These are the enervating days, when, as somebody has said, men drop by the sunstroke as if the Day of Fire had dawned. They are fraught with danger to people whose systems are poorly sustained; and this leads us to say, in the interest of the less robust of our readers, that the full effect of Hood's Sarsaparilla is such as to suggest the propriety of calling this medicine something besides a blood purifier and tonic,—say, a sustaining diet. It makes it much easier to bear the heat, assures refreshing sleep, and will without any doubt avert much sickness at this time of year.

The man who attempts to take all, often gets more than he can take.

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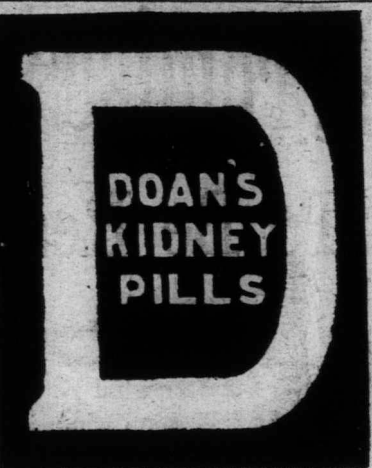
Women are roses of humanity, but the prettiest of roses have thorns.

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THE SACRED HEART.

Two lights on a lowly altar, Two snowy cloths for a Feast; Two vases of dying roses, The morning comes from the east, With a gleam for the folds of the vestments, And grace for the face of the priest. The sound of a low sweet whisp'er, Floats over a little bread, And trembles around a chalice, And the priest bows down his head! O'er a sign of white on the altar— In the cup—o'er a sign of red. As red as the red of roses, As white as the white of snows! But the red is the red of a surface, Beneath which God's blood flows; And the white is the white of a sunlight, Within which a God's flesh glows. Ah! words of the olden Thursday, Ye come from the far away! Ye bring us the Friday's victim, In his own love's olden way. In the hands of the priest at the altar His heart finds a home each day. The sight of a host uplifted! The silver sound of a bell! The gleam of a golden chalice, Be glad, sad heart, 'tis well; He made, and he keeps love's promise, With thee all days to dwell. From his hand to his lips that tremble, From his lips to his heart a thrill, Goes the little Host on its love path, Still doing the Father's will; And over the rim of the chalice The blood flows forth to fill. The heart of the man anointed With the waves of a wondrous grace; A silence falls on an altar— An awe on each bended face— For the heart that bled on Calvary Still beats in the holy place. The priest comes down to the railing Where brows are bowed in prayer; In the tender clasp of his fingers— A Host lies pure and fair, And the hearts of Christ and the Christian Meet there—and only there. Oh! love that is deep and deathless! Oh! faith that is strong and grand! Oh! hope that will shine forever, O'er the wastes of weary land! Christ's Heart finds an earthly heaven In the palm of the priest's pure hand. —By Father Abram J. Ryan.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Any dentist can extract teeth without pain, but they are false teeth. The worst kind of poverty is discontentment in the midst of plenty. About the best remedy known for rheumatism is to thank the Lord that it is not you'. Backache, swelling of feet and ankles, puffing under eyes, frequent thirst, scanty, cloudy, high colored urine and all urinary troubles lead to Bright's disease, dropsy, diabetes etc. Doan's Kidney Pills are sure cure. You can discern more of the outcroppings of human nature at a dog fight than at a prayer-meeting. There are always two sides to a question—your own side and the wrong side. Milburn's Heart and Nerves Pills cure Anæmia, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Weakness, Palpitation Throbbing, Faint Spells, Dizziness, or any condition arising from Impoverished Blood, Disordered Nerves or Weak Heart. It must be a great relief to politicians to get into a crowd where nobody can make a political speech nor touch him for a campaign fund. Minard's Liniment relieves neuralgia. When a man says life is not worth living he generally tells the truth, provided it is his own life he has reference to. A crank is always trying to understand something that he can't prove, or prove something that he can't understand. Widows must always marry the second time for money. Love, like lightning, seldom strikes twice in the same place. Dr. Schule, by analysis of the stomach, reaches the conclusion that sleep after meals 'decreases the mobility of the stomach and increases the acidity of its contents, and hence it is not advisable.' In order to make wise men out of some of our citizens you would have to unlearn them more than you would have to teach them. It is bad form for a girl to turn and look at a man on the street; but a girl of this town only turns and looks at a fellow to see if he is looking to see if she is looking. Minard's Liniment Cures Garget in Cows. 'Now, what must I do with this wedding cake of dream of it? asked a gushing young damsel of a matter-of-fact young man. 'Just eat it; that's all,' was the reply. Minard's Liniment the best Hair Restorer.

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