

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE
—OF THE—
Times of
Queen
Elizabeth.

The Wonderful Flower of Woxindon,
By Rev. Joseph Spillman, S.J.

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CHAPTER XXXV. CONTINUED.—
That morning I had observed in Water Lane, close to the Tower, the shop of a dealer in second-hand clothes. Thither I now directed my steps, to purchase the linen and other clothes I should require in my character of serving-woman. I also bought some yards of cambric and fine holland; last of all I procured a stout chest, painted blue and adorned with birds and flowers, in which I packed the various articles I had purchased. The dealer, who was well content with the bargain he had made, sent a lad with me to carry the chest. Rachel, my fellow-servant, helped me to take it up to my chamber, and I then gave her the cambric and cloth, with all that was necessary for a bodice. She did not say much, but I saw that my gift had won her heart. And when, half an hour later, my mistress came into the kitchen, and began to rate me about something, Rachel stepped between us, and told her to her face that if she did not desist from her nagging, we would both leave her that same night. Thereupon the sour-visaged lady cast up her eyes, and expressed her wonder that a Christian maid servant under the Gospel should venture to rebel against just authority. Were we plotting a conspiracy against her, as the godless Papists had done against the Queen's Majesty?
As soon as she had gone, I took the occasion to put some questions to my companion about the conspiracy of which Lady Hopton had spoken. "What," she said, "has nothing been heard of it in your village? Did you not hear how Babington and his associates wanted to murder the Queen, set Mary Stuart on the throne, deliver the country to the Spaniards, and uproot the Gospel everywhere. And as true as I am a living woman, no one would expect it of the lads, they look so young and so good humored. I will show them to you; they are brought here every day to the Council Chamber to be examined, in the hope that they will give evidence against the Scottish Queen. But hitherto they have not done so, though they have been mercilessly tortured, so the clerk told me. It is said the Jesuits have given them some charm which prevents them from feeling pain."
"I was told that some gentlemen had been arrested with them," I said timidly, standing so that she could not see my face.
She replied: "Yes, two; old Mistress Bellamy and her daughter or granddaughter, who is said to be Babington's wife. They are confined over there in the Cold Harbor, that old weather-beaten tower by the White tower. You can see it from the kitchen window, and from your little chamber you can see the window of their cell. To-morrow we shall have to take them their dinner; they are both sick, the young one I think is the worst of the two."
At this point Rachel went away elsewhere, and in truth I had no wish to question her further. While I was occupied in my work, a man entered the kitchen, whom I recognized as the boatman, Bill Bell, who had taken us down to Gravesend.
I made myself known to him, and he exclaimed aloud in his astonishment at finding me there. But I silenced him with a gesture, and he took his cue in a moment. "I understand," he said with a low whistle "But be on your guard; you will find this a more dangerous place than the Thames. Yet our trip that night nearly brought me to the gallows. However nothing could be proved against me, so, as I am no Papist, I was let off with six months imprisonment for smuggling. I could not stand the confinement, so I offered my services to Sir Owen, and the arrangement suits us both admirably; he has not to pay a man, and I have the opportunity of earning many an honest penny. For this I must say: the Papists are very liberal with their money, when it is a question of helping their priests and co-religionists."
"You shall not find me less liberal," I said, slipping a piece of gold into his hand. "Take that to begin with. Now tell me what can be done, what you can help me to do for my poor grandmother, my sister, my uncle, and the other prisoners?"
The man, surprised at receiving

from me so large a gratuity, promised to aid me to the utmost of his power, provided there was no attempt to release any prisoner, for he was bound by oath to help no one to escape. He promised at my request to acquaint my relatives with my presence; otherwise, when I went to carry their food to them the next day, my secret might be divulged. "For the rest," he added, "mark you, inside the Tower a golden key opens every door. I really believe, if one had gold enough, the gates of the Tower itself would unclose at one's bidding; but it would be a matter of great difficulty on account of the number of warders to be corrupted. But within the walls a yellow coin such as you have just given me is as good as a skeleton key. Good Heavens! I have learnt a good deal, since I have been here. Over there in the Martin tower, at the north-east corner of the inner enclosure, a Jesuit named William Crichton has been immured for years. Almost every night that man is conducted either to the good Earl of Arundel in the Beauchamp tower, or to some other dungeon, where he says Mass for the Popish prisoners, and administers the sacrament. He gave you the sacrament and anointed him, although it was here in the Bell tower that he died, and the only means of access to it is through this house. Rachel was kind enough to open the doors for us, and she made a very good thing of it."
Here we were interrupted, and Bill went away, after repeating his promise to apprise the prisoners in the Cold Harbor of my proximity. That evening, when I looked from my attic window at the cell where my dear ones were confined, I could not sufficiently thank God for having so visibly guided and directed my steps during the past day. Long did I stand gazing at the gray walls and towers, lighted up by the clear moonlight. Opposite to me on the green was the Church of St. Peter ad vincula, and on a slight elevation in front of the Church I could see the block, where the unhappy Anne Boleyn paid the price of her evil deeds. What a record of deeds of horror surrounded me on all sides, but again, what heroic examples of Christian fortitude. With the thought of these I consoled myself as I lay down to sleep, and above all with the knowledge that almost every night the Holy Sacrifice was offered within the precincts of this cruel fortress, and fervent supplications ascended to Heaven from the lips of my Catholic brethren.
I need hardly say how much I longed, on the morrow, for the time when I should have to carry their dinner to the female prisoners. But another piece of intelligence awaited me before then.
It must not be supposed that, although I have for so long said nothing about my betrothed, anxiety, as to his fate was not one of the bitterest drops in my cup of sorrows. I was, however, completely impotent, for had I known with certainty that he had escaped, I should not have known where to seek him. I could do nothing but wait. I was resolved to be true to him, and as I could not in my present character, wear on my finger the ring he had given me beneath the wonderful flower at Woxindon, I fastened it round my neck on a ribbon, and wore it on my heart. If on the other hand, he had been drowned in the Thames, as was generally thought, I could only weep for him and pray for him, hope to be reunited to him hereafter, and submit to the decrees, grievous though they were, of an all-wise and all-loving Providence. I prayed earnestly for resignation, for I believed that my dear Edward had found a watery grave, and thus escaped the terrible death that awaited his associates only too surely. But I did not altogether give up hope, for youth and love do not readily despair.
And now, quite unexpectedly, I was to learn what had befallen him. Bill Bell found an opportunity of telling me he had executed my commission, and that if I was in a position to pay for it, he could provide my relatives in the Cold Harbour with bedding, and other little indulgences. To this I gladly assented, and gave the old sea-farer, who I knew was to be trusted, a good round sum for the purpose. When he said: "Miss Bellamy, after I left

you yesterday, it occurred to me there was something else you would like to hear." Dropping his voice to a whisper, he asked whether I was not betrothed, or perhaps married to Windsor, who had gone down the river to Gravesend with me? And when I eagerly answered yes, he told me that my lover was not drowned, as, fortunately for him, his enemies assumed, but had been taken out of the water in an unconscious state, and concealed in a garret at the top of his house by his son, at great risk to himself, for, as the reader already knows, Topcliffe presently came to search the dwelling. Thus Windsor, alone of all the chief conspirators had been able to elude the vigilance of the pursuivants.
"Where is he at present?" I inquired, once more breathing freely.
"In the attic, where my daughter Maud died. It would be impossible, or at any rate highly imprudent, for him to try to leave England just now. The harbours are so strictly watched, and the vessels so closely searched, that a hundred chances to one he would be caught. After the lapse of some time, when the wretched conspiracy is no longer present to men's minds, he may make the attempt. Meanwhile he is quite as comfortable in his attic as he would be in the Tower, and next week he will be able to see his associates taken to Westminster, to hear their sentence. Shall I send him any message from you, when my boy next comes to see me?"
I reflected for a moment, and then said no, for I thought the knowledge that I was here might tempt my betrothed to do something rash. But I thanked my informant for all he had done for him, as well as for having told me of his safety, and thereby taken a great weight off my mind.
Rachel's voice called me into the kitchen, and for two or three hours I had to work hard. We prepared the tasty viands for our master's table and the meagre soup, made from peas of indifferent quality, to be set before the prisoners. Lady Hopton took good care that it should not be too rich or highly flavored; it was not good, she said, for those in captivity, besides they ought to eat their bread with ashes, especially the obdurate Papists, who were in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.
At length eleven o'clock sounded from the belfry, and Rachel told me it was time to take the prisoner's dinner to them. My heart beat fast, as we began our round of the cells in the inner part of the fortress; the prisoners confined in the towers which formed part of the walls were served by others. We crossed the green to the Cold Harbour, and after filling the basins of the women on the ground floor, we ascended by a narrow winding stairs constructed in the thickness of the wall to the upper story.
What a sight met my eyes when Rachel turned the key in the lock, and we entered through the low door into the dungeon! On a heap of rotten straw, when arose an intolerable stench. I beheld two figures clad in rags. One seemed to sleep, and lay moaning as if in troubled dream; the other, putting aside her snow white hair that hung about her wrinkled, pallid face, shaded her sunken eyes with a trembling hand, and peered at me through the gloom. It was my dear, good grandmother! I should not have recognized her if I had not known that she was here, and heard the familiar tones of her voice, as with her own gentle manner, she greeted my companion, and asked who she had brought with her.
"Ruth Forster, our new maid-servant," Rachel replied. "We shall see how long she can put up with the she-dragon, our mistress. How are you to-day, Mistress Bellamy, and how is your daughter?"
"It is well with me and my poor granddaughter," was the reply, "for it is with us as God wills, and as he has foreknown from all eternity, and ordained for our eternal welfare. Anne is quieter, she is almost always asleep, like a child. God in His mercy has cast a veil over her mental vision, thus she is insensible to earthly woes. She fancies herself at Woxindon, and talks about the wonderful plant that blossomed there this spring, and in the summer bore five blood-red berries. I told you about it the other day. She that is your new maid-servant? Come

hither, girl, if you do not shrink from an old woman, and let me see your face, as well as I can in this prison twilight."
A slight cry which would not be altogether suppressed, escaped my lips, as I stepped forward, and taking my grandmother's hand, kissed it tenderly. I sank on my knees, hardly able to contain myself; Rachel thought I was fainting. "I told you, you had better remain outside, it takes time to get accustomed to the stench of these dungeons," she exclaimed, and taking some water from a stone pitcher that stood by, she sprinkled it on my temples. I sprang to my feet, and once more raised my grandmother's hand to my lips. I then perceived what I had not noticed before, that her right arm was fettered, and fastened by a thick chain to a ring that ran on an iron rod reaching from one wall to the other behind the bed. "Is it possible," I cried, "that any one can treat an old woman of eighty in this wise!"
My grandmother smiled, and said: "These fetters will not hold me long. You seem to have a kind heart; may God bless you in time and in eternity!" and she made the sign of the cross on my forehead. I looked sorrowfully at my sister, who lay with averted countenance on the bed, and she added: "Do not disturb poor Anne, she is asleep." She pressed my hand, and I went away, fearing to awaken suspicion in Rachel's mind. As we descended the spiral staircase, she did in fact say: "You are far too soft-hearted for a maid in the Tower. Or perhaps you know the Bellamys before?" Thereupon I replied that such a sight, even in the case of a perfect stranger, was enough to move anyone, and she did not gainsay me.
Towards evening I contrived to ask the old skipper whether he could procure me an interview with Father Crichton, or, to speak plainly, an opportunity to approach the Sacraments and hear Mass, for he knew I was a Catholic. He said it was always a venturesome thing to do, but often the Catholic prisoners came out of their several cells, and met in one where Mass could be most conveniently said. The golden key was omnipotent. He thought that very night, between two and three in the morning, they were to meet for that purpose in the Beauchamp tower, where the Earl of Arundel was confined, and if I was not afraid, he would conduct me thither. I assented joyfully; and he showed me a ladder whereby I might climb down out of a loft to which I could obtain access from my room. If I had the courage to do that, he would await me in the stable below at two o'clock precisely. I said, I would trust to my guardian angel to keep me from missing the ladder in the darkness, or taking a false step, and so the matter was agreed upon. I wanted to persuade him to bring my uncle Remy and poor Babington as well, but although I offered him a large bribe, he would not hear of it. It was quite impossible, he said, for they were heavily ironed, and the key of their fetters was in the Lord Lieutenant's safe keeping. However he promised to take the priest to them before their execution, which was now certain, and with this I had to be content.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—The following night was a wakeful one for me, so fearful was I of missing the appointed hour. The prisoner to whose cell I was to be conducted, was one of the most distinguished of English peers, in whose fate I was deeply interested. Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, had two years previously been received into the Church by our friend, Father Weston. In order to live in accordance with his creed, he had resigned the highest posts at Elizabeth's Court, intending to go abroad. Betrayed by the captain of the vessel on which he took his passage, and brought back to London in custody, he was, by the Queen's command, without even the semblance of judicial inquiry or sentence, imprisoned in the Beauchamp tower. There he languished for ten years, and died the death of a confessor, or rather of a martyr, for poison was mixed with his food. At the time of which I am speaking he had been about a year in prison, and was leading the life of an ascetic; increasing, as far as his outer man was concerned, the sufferings of incarceration, but alleviating them in regard to his inner man, by almost unbroken prayer and meditation, by strict fasts and voluntary acts of penance. We had heard much that was edifying from his confessor, Father Weston, of this man, who for Christ's sake joyfully bore separation from wife and children; and I rejoiced at the prospect of seeing one whose example I should do well to follow.
At last the clock struck two. Noiselessly I crept through the loft,

feeling in the dark for the ladder. My guardian angel guided me to it. Not without trepidation did I set my feet on the rungs, and begin to descend into unknown depths. Before I reached the bottom, Bill Bell opened the door, and a ray of moonlight fell across the floor. We stole along the side of the Lieutenant's house, and along the foot of the wall connecting the Bell tower with the Beauchamp, taking care to keep within the shadow they cast, for all around the moonlight shone clear as day on tower and turret. Within the vast fortress, whose precincts enclosed many a sad and brokenhearted sufferer, perfect silence reigned, broken only by the tramp of the sentry on the ramparts; hearing which, we crept closer to the wall, to elude observation. At length the Beauchamp tower was gained; the gate was ajar; a few steps further and we passed through a massive oaken door into a spacious apartment, wherein numerous state prisoners, some guilty, some guiltless, and several martyrs too, had been confined.
On entering, I saw several prisoners there, kneeling on the flag-stones. A small table was placed before the hearth, to serve as an altar, a crucifix and candles stood on the mantel-shelf. Behind them I could discern the words which the noble Earl had carved in the stone:
"Quanto plus afflictionis pro Christo in hoc saecula,
Tanto plus gloriae cum Christo in futuro"
I knelt down quietly in a corner of the cell, and in a few minutes the priest came in, a man still young, and very pale, whose office was not to be known by his clothes, which were of a grey color, but by the respect wherewith Lord Arundel greeted him. Father Crichton (for it was he) knelt for a brief space in prayer; then, in purposely low tones, he addressed to those present a brief exhortation, saying in a few short sentences much that was encouraging and consoling about the royal road of the Cross, which the Son of God points out to us as the path to Heaven. This done, he seated himself on a chair in one corner, and heard Arundel's confession, as well as that of one or two others. I expected as much, and had prepared myself; accordingly I went up and made my confession. At the close I asked the priest, whom I told who I was, whether he could give me any comfort about my relatives. He told me of Uncle Remy's happy death, and said Uncle Remy and my grandmother rejoiced to suffer imprisonment; and perhaps death for a deed of charity. Nor was I to grieve over Anne's lot; in a lucid interval she had made her confession, and now the Divine physician, who apportions to each his measure of suffering, had caused sleep to fall on her mental faculties. Finally he warned me that I must use great circumspection, and counselled me to supernaturalize by the love of God the hard service I had undertaken for love of my kinsfolk.
Immediately afterwards he vested, and said Mass. Lord Arundel served, and we all received Holy Communion. Aply is that celestial food called the bread of the strong; the solace and strength I derived from it was great indeed. I do not think I could have borne for a single week the vexations to which my mistress subjected me, had it not been for the support afforded by this holy sacrament, and the Mass at which I assisted almost every week, either in the Beauchamp or some other tower. Thus even in the prison-house, when at times my burden seemed too heavy to be borne, a source of spiriting consolation was still open to me.
The next time that I went with Rachel to carry the prisoner's dinner to the Cold Harbour, we found, to her surprise and my joy, a great change in their circumstances. The cell had been cleansed, a wooden bedstead and mattress substituted for the foul heap of straw, and even a small table and two chairs were placed before it. My dear grandmother was sitting at the table with her back against the wall; she rose and came to meet us, as far, that is as her chain permitted, saying to Rachel, "see, what influence and the kindness of friends can do for one. We are really too well accommodated for this place. May God reward a thousandfold those who have befriended us!" And then she looked at me in such a loving manner, that I felt amply rewarded for all that I had done. Thus I daily had an opportunity of hearing a word of consolation and encouragement from my grandmother's lips; as for my poor sister she never spoke to me, but remained in the same imbecile condition.
My feast, the Nativity of Our Lady, came and went; I heard that Walsingham's nephew was now an in-

mate of the Tower, that Windsor was still in hiding in the skipper's house at St. Catharine's wharf, and that it was thought that the Queen of Scots would be put to death.
Then came the day when Babington and his friends were arraigned before a Court of Justice appointed by the Queen. It was the 14th of September, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. We watched the barge with the accused as it passed beneath the broad arch of the bridge at St. Thomas' tower, to go out through the Traitor's gate down to Westminster. John Ballard, the priest, my unhappy brother-in-law, Anthony Babington, besides Salisbury, Barnewell, Donne and Tichbourne were there; also John Savage, whom I had never seen before. He had been arraigned on the preceding day, but sentence had not been passed on him. Heavily ironed, they sat, surrounded by men-at-arms, in the centre of the boat, which moved slowly onwards, keeping close to the banks, in order that the crowds of spectators who had assembled there, might stare at them and revile them at their pleasure. The prisoners remained unmoved amid the insults of the populace. I was told that they all pleaded guilty of having conspired to set Mary Stuart at liberty, and of not having given information of Parma's design to land foreign troops in England; but they positively denied having plotted against Elizabeth's life. Savage alone owned to this; he said a certain Gilbert Gifford, formerly professor of philosophy at Rheims, persuaded him that the assassination of the Queen was a lawful and meritorious act. Nor could Babington deny having been privy to Savage's murderous design.
The noblest answer was that of Ballard; he admitted that "practised the Queen of Scots' deliverance, and went about to alter the religion," but that he had intended to kill the Queen he would not admit. All the others made a similar statement. But it was of no use; according to the criminal law they had incurred the dreadful penalty of high treason, and judgment was given to that effect. And yet, I heard Sir Owen Hopton say at table, those who were present were not satisfied with the proceedings; all hoped that evidence would be adduced that Mary Stuart was a party to, and had sanctioned the proposal to assassinate Elizabeth, in fact that the conspirators would be compelled to bear public witness against her. But neither in the accusation nor during the trial, was mention made of the alleged complicity of the Queen of Scots; and many were heard to say, as they left the Star Chamber, that the general opinion in that respect appeared to be an incorrect one.
On the following day all the other accomplices, all that is, who aided and abetted Babington or his friends in their flight, were likewise conducted by water to Westminster, to hear sentence passed on them. I shall hardly be believed when I say that my aged grandmother was arraigned with the rest. But the clerk of the Court happened to have inadvertently given her a wrong Christian name, and on this account the Lieutenant allowed her to remain behind. Of the seven men, Uncle Remy was the only one who was not a stranger to me. I was shocked when I saw him; accustomed as he was to an active life in the open air, the close atmosphere of the prison had pulled him down sadly. He acknowledged that he had supplied Babington and his friends with provisions. His defence was characteristic of the man. "I am a Catholic," he said, "and I do not think St. Peter will shut the gate of Heaven against me, when I tell him my fellow countrymen sent me to the gallows for having fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty, as our Lord commands." When condemned with the others to death for high treason, he said not a word.
A few days later, Bill Bell came to me, and asked if I would accompany him, the following night, to the cell where Tichbourne was confined. The unfortunate young man was, he said, extremely desirous to send a farewell letter to comfort his young wife, who was sick in Hampshire, but he could not hold a pen, his wrist having been completely dislocated on the rack.

(To be continued.)

TO MOVE GREAT TREES.
Probably the largest contract ever let in this country for the transportation of big trees is that just entered into for the World's Fair in St. Louis. The site is Forest Park, in which there are many large trees. Actuated by a desire to preserve as many as possible of the trees and to have their shade in the broad avenues of the Exposition, the director of works will have seven hundred trees, each twelve to eighteen inches in diameter, lifted and replanted.