

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 XXV.—(Continued)

"It was that spiteful Essex, who could not forgive me for breaking his tooth," said Frith.

"Shortly after we were both summoned to the Queen's presence. She was in a very bad temper, as is often the case, now that she is getting old; besides the new French seamstress whom Catherine de Medici sent as her request, had not made a gown to her liking. She asked us in no very pleasant manner, whether we did not know that every one at her Court must hold the same religious belief as herself? She was the Supreme Head of the Church in England, and she required us to reject the Popish superstition about purgatory, of which not a word was to be found in the Bible. I did not know what to answer, but my little friend was by no means abashed. With more candour than prudence, he boldly replied that he should be very sorry not to believe in a place of purgatory, as there was but one Heaven and one Hell, and Holy Scripture declared that nothing unclean could enter Heaven. According to the new doctrine, almost every one must go to hell, for not many people were so free from sin and guilt at their death, that they could go straight to Heaven. Then the Queen said one drop of the Saviour's blood was enough to wash away the guilt of sin. 'Yes,' the boy replied, 'in this life. But when sin is forgotten, the penalty is not done away with. King David suffered punishment for his sin, although it had been pardoned.' Elizabeth grew furious being contradicted. 'What,' she almost screamed, 'do you say I should not go straight to Heaven?' To my horror, Frith gravely shook his head and answered: 'Your Majesty must know best about that. But I should wish for you to make a good confession before death. And with out that I should go to purgatory,' continued the Queen. 'I fear not,' the boy replied.

Then Elizabeth was so exasperated that she would have struck the child, had not some of the Lords interposed, and said doubtless it was a slip of the tongue, and he meant to say 'I hope not.' They had some difficulty in pacifying her, and Frith was delivered over to the jailer to receive a sound caning. 'I tried to slip away unnoticed, but the Queen sent word to me that on the next day, when the Court was to remove to Windsor, I must either give her an unequivocal assurance of my adhesion to the reformed religion, or be confined to the Tower. Her Secretary Davidson should inform immediately of what had occurred. I felt that the time for action had come. There was nothing for me but to seek safety in flight and Frith too, must not be left at the Queen's mercy. So during the night I collected all my jewels together, and cut off all the pearls and precious stones which were, after the extravagant fashion of the day, sewn upon the stomacher of my Court dresses. They would, I thought, furnish me with the means of escaping to the continent, where I could live in seclusion and in peace. I also wrote to my father telling him what I was doing for conscience's sake, and bidding him farewell. I said much the same in a few lines addressed to her Majesty.

The next morning in the bustle and confusion of the preparations for removal, we two culprits were not thought of. This just coincided with my plans. No sooner had the Queen left the Palace than I went to the jailer who knew me well by sight, and saying that the Page Belamy had orders to accompany me, obtained Frith's release. Poor boy! he forgot his sore back in the joy of being again free, and on his way home, when he only thought severe punishments were in store for him. Then Frith in his turn related how they walked through the park together, how they were ferried over the river at Putney, dined at the "Golden Bell," and finally asked their way across the fields to Woxindon. They had not long entered St. John's Wood before the tempest began, and such was the violence of wind and rain, thunder and lightning, that they almost despaired of reaching the house.

We congratulated them heartily on their escape from the fury of the elements. But presently it occurred to grandmother, and to Father Weston likewise, that a far worse storm than that which was still raging around our walls, would soon burst over the two fugitives, and that the most formidable thunderbolts would be directed against Woxindon. Father Weston inquired of Miss Cecil when she thought the report of her fight would reach the ears of the Queen and of her father. She replied that the Queen would most likely bear of it at Windsor next

evening, and her father perhaps the day after. "If that be so, continued Father Weston, 'in all probability, before two days are past, Lord Barghley, or his representative, will be down on us like a swarm of pursuivants. Before that time, therefore, we must contrive that you, Miss Cecil, and my young friend here, and myself, should be in some place of safety, as far distant as possible. We will rest to-night and to-morrow, and when evening comes again, we must start anew on our wanderings.'"

Miss Cecil began to apologize for the trouble her coming had caused us, but grandmother, cutting her short, proposed that the young lady and the child should be concealed in the house, or in the ruined Castle, without going further afield. But the Jesuit negatived this decisively, saying that as it was a question of discovering Lord Barghley's daughter, the house would be more thoroughly and systematically searched than it ever had been before. We could not deny the justice of what he said.

Then Miss Cecil turned to him and said: "Reverend Father, I cannot doubt that it is the hand of an all-mighty God which has led me to Woxindon while you are here. I do not know when I may have another opportunity of speaking to a Catholic priest, or what may befall me in these troublesome times. I beg you therefore, in your charity, to regard me as your daughter, and if you see fit, to receive me into the Catholic Church."

We were deeply touched and greatly consoled by this request. Father Weston declared himself only too happy to render her any assistance, and asked her if there was any point of Catholic doctrine upon which she still had doubts. On her answering, not one, he told her that she had better prepare herself at once for confession; he would then receive her into the Church, and the next morning at an early hour she could hear Mass and receive Holy Communion. To this she agreed, but I could see that she felt great apprehension at the prospect of making her confession, as is always the case with adults who go to confession for the first time, and have never experienced the solace this Sacrament of Penance brings to the souls of those who approach it.

When Frith heard that Miss Cecil was to make her First Communion on the morrow, he pleaded earnestly that the like happiness might be granted to him also. Although grandmother would have preferred a longer time of preparation for him, yet at uncle Barth's and my request she allowed us to refer the decision to Father Weston. To our great delight he assented readily to our petition, as he considered the boy's courageous defence of his faith proved him to be sufficiently prepared.

Then Father Weston gave us a beautiful instruction on the Sacrament of Penance, dwelling on the fact that it was instituted by the

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Saviour on the day of His glorious Ascension, as the most inestimable and richest means of grace that he could bestow upon His people. "For, when during that first Easter-tide He came and stood in the midst of His Apostles, the door being shut, showed them the wounds in His hands and in His side, the price and pledge of the forgiveness of sins, twice He greeted them with the words: "Peace be to you." And He said: "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you." And when he had said this, He breathed on them; and he said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (St. John XX, 21, 22, 23) With suchunction did the good Father expound these words that Miss Cecil's tears flowed freely at the thought of the goodness of the Saviour in bequeathing to His priests this divine power of forgiveness. Father Weston then helped us to examine our conscience, and awaken contrition and resolution of amendment, after which he heard us in confession one after another.

When this was over, he addressed, all together once more, taking Holy Communion for his subject; and then, as it was already late, we separated for the night. Soon after daybreak, I arranged the altar in the attic chamber, where the wonderful plant, whose blossoms had given place to five scarlet berries, hung down from the rafters and decorated it with beautiful flowers. Then I fetched Miss Cecil, to whom I had lent a white veil for the occasion. We were so on joined by Frith, who had scarcely slept for excitement and who was to serve the Mass. Presently in the stillness of the early morning, the Holy Sacrifice was offered, and our Blessed Lord, the source of all grace, hidden under the sacramental veil, vouchsafed to come and dwell in the heart of those who were prepared to receive him as their guest. This sacred Presence brought to us in the fullness of His mercy and loving kindness, consolation for past sorrows, strength for coming trials, and the confident hope of an eternal reward.

CHAPTER XXVI.

After some time spent in reflection and silent prayer, we assembled in the hall for breakfast. I wanted to take Miss Cecil into the garden, and show her Woxindon, but Father Weston put a veto upon this proposal, saying it was not without design, Providence had arranged that the two fugitives should come to us unperceived, under cover of the storm, and we must not unnecessarily expose them to observation. Grandmother said the same; accordingly we agreed to remain within door. This was no small privation for Frith for the cherries were ripe on the tree by the wall, and his grey pony was in the stable close by; but he acquiesced without a murmur in the wishes of his elders.

We then began seriously to deliberate upon the best means of placing our two fugitives beyond the reach of danger. Father Weston declared that nowhere in England would they be secure permanently, for it was obvious that the Queen and Lord Barghley would move heaven and earth to get Miss Cecil again into their power. It would therefore be advisable for them to cross the seas as soon as possible. He offered to furnish the boy with letters which would ensure his reception in one of the Jesuit colleges in France, or in Switzerland, where the celebrated Canisius had just opened a school in Freiburg. Miss Cecil might find a home in some convent in Brussels or elsewhere, or if she preferred, he would use his influence to procure for her the part of maid of honor at some Catholic Court. Until an opportunity for crossing the channel was found, he proposed to take them to Henley, where Lady Sturton was always ready to show hospitality to persecuted Catholics.

While we were discussing our plans, Uncle Remy suddenly came in, bringing the welcome news that Anne was desirous of returning to her parents' house. We regarded it as a truly providential circumstance, that on the very day of Frith's and Miss Cecil's First Communion, this consolation should be afforded us; and we scolded my uncle for not having brought her with him, as he knew she would be received with open arms. So he had told Anne, Uncle Remy replied; but the poor child was so downhearted about her fault, and really so far from well, that he could not persuade her to accompany him. It was agreed forthwith that in the afternoon I should ride to London with Uncle Barth's, to assure my repentant sister of full forgiveness, and bring her to Woxindon. Grandmother promised to go as far as the cross roads to meet her, like the father of the Prodigal, who did not wait for his son at the house door, but ran to meet him when he was yet afar off.

(To be continued.)

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The man who wins is the man who works— The man who toils while the next man shirks; The man who stands in his deep distress With his head held high in the deadly press— Yes, he is the man who wins. The man who wins is the man who knows The value of pain and the worth of woes— Who a lesson learns from the man who fails And a moral finds in his mournful wails; Yes, he is the man who wins. The man who wins is the man who stays In the unsought paths and the rocky ways; And, perhaps, who lingers, now and then, To help some failure to rise again. Ah, he is the man who wins! And the man who wins is the man who hears The curse of the envious in his ears, But who goes his way with his head held high And passes the wrecks of the failures by— For he is the man who wins. —Henry Edward Warner, in Baltimore News.

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British Troop O.I. Liniment is unsurpassed by any liniment on the market to-day. It is composed of healing, soothing and cleansing vegetable oils and extracts. It is put up in large bottles for the small price of 25 cents.

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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.

Mother.—How do you like your new teacher? "Oh, she's a splendid teacher; she don't care whether we know our lessons or not."

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The Lady—Yes; it's only men that turn tramps. Why aren't women idle? The Tramp—Because most of them are busy bodies, mum.

Found At Last.

A liver pill that is small and sure, that acts gently, quickly and thoroughly, that does not grip. Laxa-Liver Pills possess these qualities, and are a sure cure for Liver Complaint, Sick Headache, etc.

Myer—I wonder what causes concussion of the brain. Ryder—A collision between two trains of thought I suppose.

The essential lung-healing principle of the pine tree has finally been successfully separated and refined into a perfect cough medicine, Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. Sold by all dealers on a guarantee of satisfaction. Price 25 cents.

A girl doesn't object to chapped hands when it's the right chap holding them.

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The only good excuse for a married couple ever quarrelling is that they may need a few quarrels to teach them that there is no reason in quarrelling.

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BITTERS.

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