

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 IX.

The next morning, when I went down into the little garden that lay between the house and the river's bank, I found Tibbourn in a very different mood to that of the preceding evening.

We began to tease him, asking whether he was going to Court, to cut out Sir Walter Raleigh, who at that time was the acknowledged favorite of the Queen.

I could not consent to dress as gaily as Babington. I put on a black velvet doublet and a dark blue cloak, as more becoming to a member of the medical profession.

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I knew the young fellow by sight quite well, having often met him at various places of amusement. Babington seemed to be intimately acquainted with him; they greeted one another in the friendliest manner.

Thereupon he conducted us through an office, in which a dozen clerks were busy writing, into a small cabinet, drew two arm-chairs up to a table on which lay writing materials, and requested us to write on a sheet of paper our petition for an audience, together with both our names.

We were, in fact, scarcely kept waiting at all, before we were ushered into Walsingham's presence. I was taken by surprise at the friendly manner in which he received us.

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the Queen's ear. Only the other day she asked me, how it was that the young gentleman had never made his appearance at Court?

I of course excused myself, and presented my companion, as the Babington of whom he had heard. "How foolish of me," he exclaimed, "I might have known it, from the elegance and costliness of his attire!

With my lofty head I shall smite the stars. Ha, ha, one has to knock one's pate against something very different to the stars when one gets older.

Thus saying, Walsingham led us into his private room, and it will readily be understood that we were highly delighted at meeting with a reception so utterly unlike what we had expected.

Of course that only refers to dangers encountered in boating, riding, and so on. And in gambling too? No? Well, I am heartily glad that you are no dice-players.

It must be confessed that these words were a great relief to both of us, as Babington showed very plainly. We both thanked Walsingham for the good opinion he had of us, and assured him that Her Majesty had no more loyal subjects than ourselves.

My story seemed to make an impression on Walsingham. He shook me by the hand, and thanked me for the good service I had done to the government. Then he rang and inquired whether Topcliffe was in the ante-chamber, and on hearing that he was, desired him to be shown in directly.

Topcliffe on entering, looked not a little astonished to see Babington and me there. Walsingham spoke to him instantly, and pretty sharply too. "I must say you have done us great credit, by taking into custody a young lady and an innocent child!

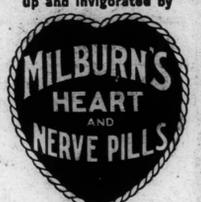
Topcliffe stammered out in excuse, that he had taken them into custody because it was evident that they both knew the hiding place of the Jesuit, and he thought that a night spent in Newgate would unloose their tongues.

"And then you imagined you would go and seize the priest," Walsingham answered in a scornful tone. "Really, Mr. Topcliffe, such stupidity is inconceivable!

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Secretary's part. Then he said: "I beg your worship not to be hard on me, and to remember how many mass priests I have brought to the gallows. And I should have succeeded this time, for I had laid my snares devilish well, if I had not been tricked so basely."

When you're dead All the good things will be said. All the tributes of the crowd. Lit with kindly smile and word. Will be murmured o'er your shroud.

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