

THE WONDERFUL FLOWER OF WOXINDON.

An Historical Romance of the Times of Queen Elizabeth.

BY REV. JOSEPH SPILLMAN, S. J.

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

(Reproduced from the Montreal True Witness.)

CHAPTER XXIX.

Nothing seemed changed on my return to Chartley; Sir Amias was as surely as ever, his prisoner as gentle and dignified in her manner towards me as heretofore.

The day following my arrival in Windor in the inn. I was astonished at the frank cordiality of his greeting, which, for all the constraint I put upon myself, I could not return civilly.

He changed color, and said nothing; I turned my back on him and walked away. He hurried after me and laying his hand on my arm, began by saying: "Keep your distance, sir! No Popish sneak shall trust me as a friend?"

"A sneak!" he exclaimed, flushing crimson, and laying his hands on the hilt of his rapier. "Remember I have as good blood in my veins as you have, and my religion gives you no right to insult me, seeing I have always professed it openly."

"I do not call you a sneak on account of your religion," I replied, "but because with your Jesuitical wiles you have perverted the young lady from her belief, and under cover of concern for her soul wormed a way into her affections. Out upon you for a hypocrite and seditious dissemler! You shall answer for it one day!"

Restraining his anger, he said:—"Mr. St. Barbe, you are under a strange misapprehension, and do me grievous wrong. But you are too much excited now to listen to reason. Let me assure you of one thing; I never had the slightest idea that you paid your addresses to my affianced bride, or that you were even acquainted with her. I assure you on my word of honor."

"This was a little too much. Every lady at Court knew that I aspired to Miss Cecil's hand. We were as good as engaged, for both the Queen and her father were known to favor my suit. And this man had the effrontery to tell me he knew nothing of it! I turned on my heel and left him there, in the midst of his protestations. The next day I got a note from him; it was sent back unopened; nor when we met by chance would I return his salutation."

About a week passed without anything noteworthy occurring. I heard of Windsor's goings on from the waiter at the M. S. flower. He went out a great deal to Babington's place at Dethick, and the principal towns in the neighborhood; from all I heard, I gathered that the conspirators thought the time for action was come, and were collecting their forces to strike. I thought it advisable to take some precautions against the meditated blow. Without attracting attention, the garrison in the Castle was strengthened, and a body of men-at-arms were ordered to take up their quarters in the neighboring town of Barton. The watch at the city gate had directions to keep a sharp look out, and should they at any time see a flag hoisted on the tower of Chartley, they were to hasten to the assistance of the garrison. Thus all was prepared on both sides, when one evening the fat brewer sent me word that Babington's epistle had been delivered to the royal prisoner, and she had let him know through her secretary that she should have an answer in three days time.

On the day when this letter from the Queen was expected, I betook myself, as agreed, to the Green Dragon in Burton, where I found Phillips and Gregory, whom my uncle had sent down from London. As soon as it arrived, they were to open and decipher this letter, which, as Walsingham said, would reveal to us Mary Stuart's heart.

It was with keen anticipation that we waited until the brewer should return, bringing with him the document upon which so much depended. Phillips and Gregory sat at a table

on which pens and paper, small sharp knives and other implements lay ready for removing the seal and copying the contents of the letter. The two rogues were playing a game of cards to while away the time, while I paced impatiently up and down the room. Gifford was waiting below, prepared to carry the epistle to London the same night, after it had been re-sealed with all the skill for which Gregory was noted. It makes me sick now to think of those fellows. Gifford soon received the reward of his iniquity. Before twelve months had passed, he was thrown into prison in Paris for some criminal action, and there ended his days after the manner of his unhappy Judas.

At last the heavy dray rolled into the yard, and we heard the empty casks taken out. I began to think that no letter was forthcoming, for more than an hour elapsed before the heavy tread of the obese brewer was heard ascending the stairs. He entered, and sinking into the nearest seat, began to wipe the perspiration from his brow, remarking that it was really too much for him to mount so high. If Jacob's ladder, reaching to heaven, about which his favorite preacher had recently discoursed with suchunction, were half as steep as that staircase, he must decline the ascent altogether.

"It is not very likely that you will require a ladder, when you go to your own place," I interposed impatiently. "We want the letter, not to hear about your preachers."

"I pray you have a little patience, sir," he rejoined. "Do not be hard on a good Christian, who has given up this world and the next in the service of her Majesty and the pure Gospel."

"At any rate," I replied, "you make a good thing of it as far as money goes. Give us the letter and leave us alone."

He went on grumbling about the evil times, and how much it took to pay the hungry preachers with their wives and families; meanwhile he unwittingly unbuttoned his doublet, and drew forth a thick packet of letters tied up in parchment. As soon as he had carefully counted and pocketed the price of his treachery, he left the apartment.

Quickly and deftly Gregory loosened the silken string, leaving the seal intact, and I was able to read the superscription of the various missives. They were addressed to the French Ambassador, and to different prelates, princes, personages of note both in France and Scotland. But with these I was not concerned, the one of interest and importance was the last, addressed: "To our trusty and well-beloved Anthony Babington, Esquire, Lord of Dethick, etc." I looked closely at the seal. It bore the impress of the Queen's ring; a square shield, quartered with the Scotch lion, the English leopards, the Irish harp and the French lilies. On each side of the shield were the letters M. R. (Maria Regina.) I banded the letters to Gregory, and watched him

first touch the seal with a little oil, then cover it with a soft substance, which speedily hardened. "I do that for fear lest the sealing wax should break, or give way. In that case I could seal it afresh with this mould, and get as good an impression as the original one," he explained. His next act was to pass a thin sharp edged blade betwixt the seal and the paper, detaching the former with such consummate adroitness that no mark remained either on seal or paper. "So far, so good," he said. "Now I beg that in reading and copying the letter, great care be taken not to hurt the seal. Then with a little hot wax we can easily re-seal it, so that the sharpest eye will be unable to detect any trace of its having been tampered with."

The letter was a long one, the contents showing that the whole scheme had been expounded to her. It was in French, for Mary Stuart preferred that language to English, and was written by one of her secretaries in cipher. Phillips had deciphered so many of her letters that he was able to read it as fast as I could write from his dictation.

The letter—as far as I can recall its contents at this distance of time—began with an eulogium of the 22d Babington displayed for the cause of religion in general, and of the captive Queen in particular. The number and weight of the Catholic party was daily dwindling, and unless measures were soon taken by the Catholic potentates, it would be too late to prevent the extinction of the faith in England. The interests of religion were the determining motive that induced her to sanction the scheme; she was content to waive her own rights, except in so far as they were bound up in those interests. She impressed upon her friends the importance of attempting nothing rashly, without due deliberation and careful arrangement. It was necessary to ascertain what forces on foot, as well as on horse, could be raised, and who were to be the captains appointed for them in every shire; which towns, ports and havens could be depended upon to grant succor to auxiliaries from the Low Countries, Spain and France; what place might be thought fittest for landing the troops; what monies, armor, ammunition and provisions were at their disposal; by what means did the six gentlemen intend to proceed in the work of liberation. All this must be well considered; she advised them to consult Mendoza the Spanish ambassador in France, in whom she had the greatest confidence. Not until they had certain promise of adequate succor from abroad, would she give her consent to the enterprise, otherwise the result would be as disastrous as that of the recent rising in the North. Another thing to be thought of was that she should be provided with a sufficiently strong escort, or conveyed to some fortress where she would be in safety, for were the Queen to get her again into her power, she would thrust her into a dungeon whence there would be no chance of escape, if she did not dispose of her in a yet more summary manner. And far more than her own evil fate, would she deplore, in case of failure, the misfortunes that would befall her faithful adherents.

She then proceeded to name several Catholic noblemen, who might be enlisted in the project; adding a warning against traitors, who might even be found under the disguise of Catholic priests. Finally she said that in all probability at the end of the summer she would be removed to Dudley Castle; they might find out when that would be, and arrange for her to make her escape then. Or if she remained at Chartley, one of the three plans might be pursued. If she were allowed to ride out on the lonely moor between Chartley and Stafford, a body of some 50 or 60 horsemen could carry her off, as her guard seldom exceeded 20 men at arms. It would be possible to set fire to the granary near the castle in the middle of the night, and in the confusion that ensued, it might not be difficult for the conspirators to penetrate into the castle and carry her out. It might be so contrived, that one of the wagons which bring provisions to the castle in the early morning, should be overturned in passing through the gateway, so that the gates could not be closed, when a troop lying in ambush closely might enter and make themselves masters of the castle.

Promising to reward Babington's loyal devotion to the best of her ability, and commending him and his comrades to the protection of Almighty God, the captive Queen ended and signed this lengthy epistle, Maria R.

(To be continued.)

S. D. C. Students will find Weeks & Co's store a grand place to buy their Furnishing Goods such as shirts, collars, cuffs, neckwear, hosiery, gloves, hats, etc. Everything of the newest fashion and at the lowest prices. We're always glad to show any of our goods to inquiring buyers.—Weeks & Co. The People's Store.

If you want the world to have a good opinion of you, you must set the example by having a good opinion of yourself.

Burdock BLOOD BITTERS CURES Dyspepsia, Bolls, Pimples, Headaches, Constipation, Loss of Appetite, Salt Rheum, Erysipelas, Scrofula, and all troubles arising from the Stomach, Liver, Bowels or Blood.

THE TEMPLE OF GOD. God upreared a noble temple And a tabernacle fair, Ere His Son, as priest and victim, Came man's mortal life to share.

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.

Milburn's Sterling Headache Powders give women prompt relief from monthly pains and leave no bad after effects whatever. Be sure you get Milburn's. Price 10 and 25 cents. All dealers.

Whenever you can, pay cash for what you buy. A bill owing is like pot wine—it generally improves by keeping.

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. All dealers.

A self-conscious man is sometimes one who is aware of his worth; a conceited man is generally one who is not aware of his unworthiness.

Minard's Liniment Cures Garget in Cows. There are people whose signature has no more significance at the end of a letter of insults than it has value at the bottom of a check.

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

Minard's Liniment Cures LaGrippe. A WARNING TO BACKACHE SUFFERERS. Backache may strike you at any time. Comes when you least expect it. Comes as a warning from the kidneys.

BRITISH TROOP OIL LINIMENT FOR Sprains, Strains, Cuts, Wounds, Ulcers, Open Sores, Bruises, Stiff Joints, Bites and Stings of Insects, Coughs, Colds, Contracted Cords, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Bronchitis, Croup, Sore Throat, Quinsy, Whooping Cough and all Painful Swellings.

MILBURN'S HEART AND NERVE PILLS FOR WEAK PEOPLE. Are a True Heart Tonic. Nerve Food and Blood Purifier. They build up and renew all the worn out and wasted tissues of the body, and restore perfect health and vigor to the entire system.

MISCELLANEOUS. "Was there much of a gathering to see the ship start?" asked Colonel Carter, whose servant had been down to the wharf.

Of course two can live cheaper than one, because when that condition comes about they have less desire to live.

He—Do you think it would be safe to tell your father I want to marry you. She—Why not? Joy never kills.

Minard's Liniment relieves neuralgia. "Ah, how do I find you this morning?" "My breath, doctor, is getting shorter and shorter."

The Christmas Dinner. In spite of the fact that the word dyspepsia means literally bad cook, it will not be fair for many to lay the blame on the cook if they beguile the Christmas Dinner with little appetite and end it with distress or nausea.

Proprietor (to clerk sleeping with his head on his books).—Are you so near-sighted? You'll hurt your eyes, Mayer.

Miss Bunker—Your brother plays golf, does he not? Sinnickson—Yes, but I assure you he's perfectly rational in every other respect.

A WARNING TO BACKACHE SUFFERERS. Backache may strike you at any time. Comes when you least expect it. Comes as a warning from the kidneys. Cure your Backache by taking DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS.

There is not a Kidney Trouble, from Backache to Bright's Disease, that Doan's Kidney Pills will not relieve promptly and cure more quickly than any other kidney remedy. 50c. per box or 3 for \$1.25. All dealers or The Doan Kidney Pills Co., Toronto, Ont.

Carter's Bookstore HEADQUARTERS FOR Books, Magazines, News-papers (Home and Foreign) STATIONERY, WALL PAPER, FANCY GOODS, TOYS.

The latest Works of Fiction and all the leading Magazines and Newspapers promptly received. Ample supplies in all lines at all times.

!SAY! If you want to buy a SATISFACTORY pair of BOOTS or SHOES or anything else in the FOOTWEAR line, at the greatest saving price to yourself, try—

A. E. McEACHEN, THE SHOE MAN. QUEEN STREET.

JOHN T. MELLISH, M. A. LL. B. Barrister & Attorney-at-Law, NOTARY PUBLIC, etc. CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND.

JAMES H. REDDIN, BARRISTER-AT-LAW NOTARY PUBLIC, &c. CAMERON BLOCK, CHARLOTTETOWN. Special attention given to Collections MONEY TO LOAN.

North British and Mercantile INSURANCE COMPANY ASSETS - - SEVENTY MILLION DOLLARS. The strongest Fire Insurance Company in the world.

HYNDMAN & CO. Agents. Queen St, Dec. 21, 1898.

Quaker MARMALADE put up in One Pound Glass Jars. It is a Very Superior Article And gives splendid satisfaction whatever used. Try a pot of it from

BEER & GOFF, GROCERS.

Stoves! All kinds of Stoves at LOWEST PRICES Ask to see the "HOTBLAST." Fennell & Chandler

Suits. WE KEEP

Right to the Front IN THE Tailoring Trade;

But we do not charge high prices for our Goods—just enough to make you feel satisfied that you are getting the best value in town. Tweed & Worsted Suits FROM \$14 UP.

JOHN McLEOD & CO. Merchant Tailor.

It Will Pay You TO INVESTIGATE OUR PRICES ON OUR

Made-to-Order Suits, Overcoats, Trousers, Fancy Vests, etc., White Shirts, Colored Shirts, Silk front Shirts, Underclothing, Bathing Suits, Collars, Cuffs, Ties, Suspenders, Gloves, Socks, Linen and Silk Handkerchiefs, Tennis Shirts, Waterproof Coats, Umbrellas, Light Summer Coats and Vests, Caps, Collar Buttons, Cuff Links, Tie Clips, etc.

Everything New and Up-to-date. GORDON & MACLELLAN, Men's Outfitters.