

CHAPTER L

THE STORY OF THOMAS WINGFIELD. I, Thomas Wingfield, was born here at Ditchingham and in this very room where I write today. I am sprung from the family of the Wingfields of Wingfield castle, in Suffolk, that lies some two hours on horseback from this place. My grandfather was a shrewd man, more of a yeoman than a squire, though his birth was gentle. He it was who bought this place with the lands round it and gathered up some fortune, mostly by carefully marrying and living, for though he had but one son he was twice married, and also by trading in

Now, my grandfather was godly minded even to superstition, and, strange as it may seem, having only one son, nothing would satisfy him but that the boy should be made a priest. But my father had little leaning toward the priesthood and life in a monastery, though at all seasons my grandfather strove to reason it into him, sometimes with words and examples, at others with his thick cudgel of holly that still hangs over the ingle in the smaller sitting room. The end of it was that the lad was sent to the priory here in Bungay, where his conduct was of such nature that within a year the prior prayed his parents to take him back and set him in some way of secular life. Not only, said the prior, did my father cause scandal by his actions, breaking out of the priory at night and visiting drinking houses and other places, but such was the sum of his wickedness he did not scruple to question and make mock of the very doctrines of the church, alleging even that there was nothing sacred in the image of the Virgin Mary which stood in the chancel, and shut his eyes in prayer before all the congregation when the priest elevated the host. "Therefore," said the prior, "I pray you to take back your son and let him find some other road to the stake than that which runs

through the gates of Bungay priory." It was believed both by my grandfather and the prior that the true cause of my father's contumacy was a passion which he had conceived for a girl of humble birth, a miller's fair daughter who dwelt at Waingford Mills. So the end of it was that he went to foreign parts in the care of a party of Spanish monks, who had journeyed here to Norfolk on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

Thus it chanced that when he had sailed from Yarmouth a year and six months there came a letter from the abbot of the monastery in Seville to his brother, the prior of St. Mary's at Bungay, saying that i "Kiss me before you go, my father had fled from the monastery.

Two more years passed away, and then came other news-namely, that my father had been captured; that he had been handed over to the power of the holy office, as the accursed inquisition was then named, and tortured to death at Seville. When my grandfather heard this, he wept. Still he did not believe that my father was dead in truth, since on the last day of his own life, that ended two years later, he spoke of him as a living man and left messages to him as to the management of the lands which were now his.

And in the end it became clear that this belief was not ill founded, for one day, three years after the old man's death, there landed at the port of Yarmouth none other than my father, who had been absent some eight years in all. Nor did he come alone, for with him he brought a wife, a young and very lovely lady, who afterward was my mother. She was a Spaniard of noble family, having been born at Seville, and her maiden name was Donna Luisa de

There were three of us children-Geoffrey, my elder brother, myself and my sister Mary, who was one year my junior, the sweetest child and the most beautiful that I have ever known. We were very happy children, and our beauty was the pride of our father and mother and the envy of other parents. I was the darkest of the three. dark indeed to swarthiness, but in Mary the Spanish blood showed only in her rich eyes of velvet hue, and in the glow upon her cheek that was like the blush on a ripe fruit.

My mother used to call me her little Spaniard because of my swarthiness—that is, when my father was not near, for such names angered him. She never learned to speak English very well, but he would suffer her to talk in no other tongue before him. Still when he was not there she spoke in Spanish, of which language, however, I alone of the family became a master, and that was more because of certain volumes of old Spanish romances which she had by her than for any other reason. From my earliest childhood I was fond of such tales, and it was by bribing me with the promise that I should read them that she persuaded me to learn Spanish, for my mother's heart still yearned toward her old sunny home, and often she would talk of it with us children, more especially in the winter season, which she hated as I do. Once I asked her if she wished to go back to Spain. She shivered and answered no, for there dwelt one who was her enemy and would kill her; also her heart was with us children and our father.

Now, when I was 181/2 years old, on a certain evening in the month of May, it happened that a friend of my father's, Squire Bozard, late of the hall in this parish, called at the lodge on his road from Yarmouth, and in the course of his talk let it fall that a Spanish ship was at anchor in the roads laden with merchandise. My father pricked up his ears at this and asked who her captain might be. Squire Bozard answered that he did not know his name, but that he had seen him in the market place, a tall and stately man, richly dressed, with a handsome face and a scar upon his temple.

At this news my mother turned pale beneath her oliveskin and muttered in Span-

"Holy Mother, grant that it be not he!" My father also looked frightened and questioned the squire closely as to the man's appearance, but without learning anything more. Then he bade him adieu with little ceremony, and taking horse rode away for Yarmouth.

That night my mother never slept, but sat all through it in her nursing chair, brooding over I know not what. As I left her when I went to my bediso I found her when I came from it at dawn. I can remember well pushing the door ajar to see eyes fixed upon the lattice.

"I have never laid down, Thomas," she answered.

"Why not? What do you fear?" "I fear the past and the future, my son.

Would that your father were back.' About 10 o'clock of that morning, as I was making ready to walk into Bungay to the house of the physician under whom I was learning the art of healing, my father rode up. My mother, who was watching at the lattice, ran out to meet him.

Springing from his horse, he embraced her, saying: "Be of good cheer, sweet; it cannot be he. This man has another

"But did you see him?" she asked. "No; he was out at his ship for the night, and I hurried home to tell you, knowing your fears." "It were surer if you had seen him, hus-

band. He may well have taken another "I never thought of that, sweet," my

father answered, "but have no fear. Should it be he, and should he dare to set foot in the parish of Ditchingham, there are those who will know how to deal with him. But I am sure that it is not he."

"Thanks be to Jesu then!" she said, and they began talking in a low voice. Now, seeing that I was not wanted, I took my cudgel and started down the bridge path toward the common footbridge, when suddenly my mother called me back.

"Kiss me before you go, Thomas," she said. "You must wonder what all this may mean. One day your father will tell



Thomas," she

you. It has to do with a shadow which has hung over my life for many years, but that is, I trust, gone forever."

"If it be a man who flings it, he had best keep out of reach of this," I said, laughing and shaking my thick stick. "It is a man," she answered, "but one

to be dealt with otherwise than by blows, Thomas, should you ever chance to meet "May be, mother, but might is the best

argument at the last, for the most cunning have a life to lose." "You are too ready to use your strength,

son," she said, smiling and kissing me. "Remember the old Spanish proverb, 'He strikes hardest who strikes last."

"And remember the other proverb, mother, 'Strike before thou art stricken.' " I answered and went. I never saw her again till she was dead.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMING OF THE SPANIARD. And now I must go back and speak of my own matters. As I have told, it was my father's wish that I should be a physician, and since I came back from my schooling at Nerwich-that was when I had entered on my sixteenth year-I had studied medicine under the doctor who practiced his art in the neighborhood of Bungay. He was a very learned man and an honest, Grimstone by name, and as I had some liking for the business I made good progress under him.

Medicine was not the only thing that I studied in those days, however. Squire Bozard of Ditchingham, the same who told my father of the coming of the Spanish ship, had two living children, a son and a daughter, though his wife had borne him many more was died in infancy. The daughter was named Lily and of my own age, having been born three weeks

after me in the same year. From our earliest days we children, Bozards and Wingfields, lived almost as brothers and sisters, for day by day we met and played together in the snow or in the flowers. Thus it would be hard for me to say when I began to love Lily or when she began to love me, but I know that when I first went to school at Norwich I grieved more at losing sight of her than because I must part from my mother and the rest. In all our games she was ever my partner, and I would search the country round for days to find such flowers as she chanced to love. When I came back from school, it was the same, though by degrees Lily grew shier, and I also grew suddenly shy, perceiving that from a child she had become a woman. Still we met often, and, though neither said anything of it, it was sweet to us to meet.

Thus things went on till this day of my mother's death. But before I go further I must tell that Squire Bozard looked with no favor on the friendship between his daughter and myself, and this not because he disliked me, but rather because he would have seen Lily wedded to my elder brother, Geoffrey, my father's heir, and not to a younger son. So hard did he grow about the matter at last that we two might scarcely meet except by seeming accident, whereas my brother was ever welcome at the hall. And on this account some bitterness arose between us two brothers, as is apt to be the case when a woman comes between friends, however close, for it must be known that my brother Geoffrey also loved Lily, as all men would have loved her, and with a better right perhaps than I had, for he was my elder by three years and born to possessions.

Now, when I had attained 19 years I was a man full grown, and, writing as I do in bered it soon enough, but on this day I extreme old age I may say it without false shame, a very handsome youth to boot. I was not overtall indeed, measuring but 5 feet 91/2 inches in height, but my limbs were well made, and I was both deep and her face glimmering white in the twilight of the May morning as she sat, her large my white hair notwithstanding, am still,

was wavy, was coal black. In my deportment I was reserved and grave to sadness; in speech I was slow and temperate and more apt at listening than in talking. I weighed matters well before I made up my mind upon them, but being made up nothing could turn me from that mind short of death itself, whether it were set on good or evil, on folly or wisdom. In those days also I had little religion, since partly because of my father's secret teaching and partly through the workings of my own reason I learned to doubt the doctrines of the church as they used to be set

On this sad day of which I write I knew that Lily, whom I loved, would be walking alone beneath the great pollard oaks in the park at Ditchingham hall. Here, in Grubswell, as the spot is called, grew, indeed still grow, certain hawthorn trees that are the earliest to blow of any in these parts, and when we had met at the church door on the Sunday Lily said that there would be bloom upon them by the Wednesday, and on that afternoon she should go to cut it. It may well be that she spoke thus with design, for love will breed cunning in the heart of the most guileless and truthful maid. Then and there I vowed to myself that I also would be gathering hawthorn bloom in this same place, and on that Wednesday afternoon-yes, even if I must play truant and leave all the sick of Bungay to nature's nursing. Moreover, I was determined on one thing—that if I could find Lily alone I would delay no longer, but tell her all that was in my heart, no great secret indeed, for though no word of love had ever passed between us as yet each knew the other's hidden thoughts. Now, it chanced that on this afternoon 1

was hard put to it to escape to my tryst, for my master, the physician, was ailing and sent me to visit the sick for him, carrying them their medicines. At the last, however, between 4 and 5 o'clock, I fled, asking no leave. Taking the Norwich road, I ran for a mile and more till I had passed the Manor House and the church turn and drew near to Ditchingham park. Then I dropped my pace to a walk, for I did not wish to come before Lily heated and disordered, but rather looking my best, to which end I had put on my Sunday garments. Now, as I went down the little hill in the road that runs past the park I saw a man on horseback who looked first at the bridle path that at this spot turns off to the right, then back across the common lands toward the Vineyard hills and the Waveney, and then along the road, as though he did not know which way to turn. I was quick to notice things, though at this moment my mind was not at its swiftest, being set on other matters and chiefly as to how I should tell my tale to Lily, and I saw at once that this man was not of our country.

He was very tall and noble looking, dressed in rich garments of velvet adorned by a gold chain that hung about his neck, and, as I judged, about 40 years of age But it was his face which chiefly caught my eye, for that moment there was something terrible about it. It was long, thin and deeply carved. The eyes were large and gleamed like gold in sunlight; the mouth was small and well shaped, but it wore a devilish and cruel sneer, the forehead lofty, indicating a man of mind, and marked with a slight scar. For the rest the cavalier was dark and southern looking; his curling hair, like my own, was black, and he wore a peaked chestnut col-

By the time that I had finished these observations my feet had brought me almost to the stranger's side, and for the first time he caught sight of me. Instantly his face changed, the sneer left it, and it became kindly and pleasant looking. Lifting his bonnet with much courtesy, he stammered something in broken English of which all I could catch was the word Yarmouth. Then, perceiving that I did not understand him, he cursed the English tongue, and all those who spoke it, aloud and in good Castilian.

"If the senor will graciously express his wish in Spanish," I said, speaking in that language, "it may be in my power to help

"What, you speak Spanish, young sir!" he said, starting, "and yet you are not a Spaniard, though by your face you well might be. Caramba, but it is strange!" and he eyed me curiously.

"It may be strange, sir," I answered, "but I am in haste. Be pleased to ask your question and let me go.'

"Ah," he said, "perhaps I can guess the reason of your hurry. I saw a white robe down by the streamlet yonder," and he nodded toward the park. "Take the advice of an older man, young sir, and be careful. Make what sport you will with such, but never believe them and never marry them-lest you should live to desire to kill them!"

Here I made as though I would pass on, but he spoke again:

"Pardon my words; they were well meant, and perhaps you may come to learn their truth. I will detain you no more. Will you graciously direct me on my road to Yarmouth, for I am not sure of it, having ridden by another way, and your English country is so full of trees that a man cannot see a mile?"

I walked a dozen paces down the bridle path that joined the road at this place and pointed out the way that he should go, past Ditchingham church. As I did so I noticed that while I spoke the stranger was watching my face keenly, and it seemed to me with an inward fear which he strove to master and could not. When I had finished, he raised his bonnet and thanked me, saying:

"Will you be so gracious as to tell me your name, young sir?"

"What is my name to you?" I answered roughly, for I disliked this man. "You have not told me yours."

"No, indeed; I am traveling incognito. Perhaps I also have met a lady in these parts," and he smiled strangely. "I only wished to know the name of one who had done me a courtesy, but who, it seems, is not so courteous as I deemed." And he shook his horse's reins.

"I am not ashamed of my name," I said. "It has been an honest one so far, and if you wish to know it it is Thomas Wingfield."

"I thought it," he cried, and as he spoke his face grew like the face of a fiend. Then before I could find time even to wonder he had sprung from his horse and stood within three paces of me.

"A lucky day! Now we will see what truth there is in prophecies," he said, drawing his silver mounted sword. "A name for a name; Juan de Garcia gives you greeting, Thomas Wingfield."

Now, strange as it may seem, it was at this moment only that there flashed across my mind the thought of all that I had heard about the Spanish stranger, the report of whose coming to Yarmouth had stirred my father and mother so deeply. At any other time I should have rememelse could hold a place in my thoughts.

without shame. But spring as I would I | mingled some touch of reverence. could not avoid the thrust altogether. It was aimed at my heart, and it pierced the sleeve of my left arm, passing through the flesh-no more. Yet at the pain of that cut all thought of flight left me, and instead of it a cold anger filled me, causing me to wish to kill this man who had attacked me thus and unprovoked. In my hand was my stout oaken staff, which I had cut myself on the banks of Hollow hill, and if I would fight I must make such play with this as I might. It seems a poor weapon indeed to match against a Toledo blade in the hands of one who could handle it well, and yet there are virtues in a cudgel, for when a man sees himself threatened with it he is likely to forget that he holds in his hand a more deadly weapon, and to take to the guarding of his own head in place of running his adversary through

And that was what chanced in this case, though how it came about exactly I cannot tell. The Spaniard was a fine swordsman, and had I been armed as he was would doubtless have overmatched me. who at that age had no practice in the art, which was almost unknown in England But when he saw the big stick flourished over him he forgot his own advantage and raised his arm to ward away the blow. Down it came upon the back of his hand, and his sword fell from it to the grass. But I did not spare him because of that, for my blood was up. The next stroke took him on the lips, knocking out a tooth and sending him backward. Then I caught him by the leg and beat him unmercifully, not upon the head indeed, for now that I was victor I did not wish to kill one whom I thought a madman, as I would that I had done, but on every other part of

Indeed I thrushed him till my arms were weary, and then I fell to kicking him, and all the while he writhed like a wounded snake and cursed horribly, though he never cried out or asked for mercy. At last I ceased and looked at him, and he was no pretty sight to see. Indeed what with his cuts and bruises and the mire of the roadway it would have been hard to know him for the gallant cavalier whom I had met not five minutes before. But uglier than all his hurts was the look in his wicked eyes as he lay there on his back in the pathway and glared up at me.

'Now, friend Spaniard," I said, "you have learned a lesson, and what is there to hinder me from treating you as you would have dealt with me who had never harmed you?" And I took up his sword and held it to his throat.

"Strike home, you accursed whelp!" he answered in a broken voice. "It is better to die than live to remember such shame

"No," I said; "I am no foreign murderer to kill a defenseless man. You shall away to the justice to answer for yourself. The hangman has a rope for such as you.' "Then you must drag me thither," he

groaned and shut his eyes as though with faintness, and doubtless he was somewhat

Now, as I pondered on what should be done with the villain, it chanced that I looked up through a gap in the fence, and there, among the Grubswell oaks 300 yards or more away, I caught sight of the flutter of a white robe that I knew well, and it seemed to me that the wearer of that robe was moving toward the bridge of the "watering," as though she were weary of wait ing for one who did not come.

Then I thought to myself that if I staid to drag this man to the village stocks or some other safe place there would be an end of meeting with my love that day, and I did not know when I might find another chance. Now, I would not have missed that hour's talk with Lily to bring a score of murderous minded foreigners to their de-



I thrashed him till my arms were weary. serts. And, moreover, this one had earned good payment for his behavior. Surely, thought I, he might wait awhile till I had done my lovemaking, and if he would not wait I could find a means to make him do so. Not 20 paces from us the horse stood cropping the grass. I went to him and undid his bridle rein, and with it fastened the Spaniard to a small wayside tree as best I was able.

"Now, here you stay," I said, "till I am ready to fetch you," and I turned to go. But as I went a great doubt took me, and once more I remembered my mother's fear, and how my father had ridden in haste to Yarmouth on business about a Spaniard. Now today a Spaniard had wandered to Ditchingham, and when he learned my name had fallen upon me, madly trying to kill me. Was not this the man whom my mother fcared, and was it right that I should leave him thus that I might go Maying with my dear? I knew in my breast that it was not right, but I was so set upon my desire and so strongly did my heartstrings pull me toward her whose white robe now fluttered on the slope of the Park hill that I never heeded the warning.

Well had it been for me if I had done so and well for some who were yet unborn. Then they had never known death, nor I the land of exile, the taste of slavery and the altar of sacrifice.

> CHAPTER III. THOMAS TELLS HIS LOVE.

Having made the Spaniard as fast as I could, his arms being bound to the tree behind him, and taking his sword with me, I began to run hard after Lily and caught her not too soon, for in one more minute she would have turned along the road that runs to the watering and over the bridge by the Park hill path to the

Hearing my footsteps, she faced about to greet me, or mther as though to see who it was that followed her. There she stood in the evening light, a bough of hawthorn bloom in her hand, and my heart beat yet more wildly at the sight of her. Never had she seemed fairer than as she stood thus in her white robe, a look of amaze upon her face and in her gray eyes that was half real, half feigned, and with the sunlight shifting on her auburn hair that was so set upon my tryst with Lily and showed beneath her little bonnet. Lily what I should say to her that nothing | was no round cheeked country maid, with few beauties save those of health and youth, but a tall and shapely lady, who "This must be the man," I said to my-self, and then I said no more, for he was had ripened early to her full grace and on me, sword up. I saw the keen point sweetness, and so it came about that, flash toward me and sprang to one side, though we were almost of an age, yet in having a desire to fly, as, being unarmed her presence I felt always as though I were "You have risen early, mother," I said. were large and dark, and my hair, which except for my stick, I might have done the younger. Thus in my love for her was there, not five paces from us, stood Squire

"Oh, it is you, Thomas," she said, blush-



Having made the Spaniard as fast as I

not-I mean that I am going home, as it grows late. But, say, why do you run so fast, and what has happened to you, Thomas, that your arm is bloody and you

"I have no breath to speak yet," I answered. "Come back to the hawthorns, and I will tell you."

carry a sword in your hand?"

"No; I must be wending homeward. I have been among the trees for more than an hour, and there is little bloom upon

"I could not come before, Lily. I was kept and in a strange manner; also I saw bloom as I ran." "Indeed I never thought that you would

come, Thomas," she answered, looking down, "who have other things to do than to go out Maying like a girl. But I wish to hear your story, if it is short, and I will walk a little way with you." So we turned and walked side by side

toward the great pollard oaks, and by the time that we reached them I had told her the tale of the Spaniard, and how he you to come kissing honest men's daughstrove to kill me, and how I had beaten him with my staff. Now, Lily listened cagerly enough and sighed with fear when she learned how close I had been to death.

"But you are wounded, Thomas!" she broke in. "See, the blood runs fast from your arm. Is the thrust deep?" "I have not looked to see. I have had no

time to look." "Take off your coat, Thomas, that I may dress the wound. Nay, I will have

So I drew off the garment, not without pain, and rolled up the shirt beneath, and there was the hurt-a clean thrust through the fleshy part of the lower arm. Lily washed it with water from the brook and bound it with her kerchief, murmuring words of pity all the while. To say truth, I would have suffered a worse harm gladly if only I could find her to tend it. Indeed her gentle care broke down the fence of my doubts and gave me a courage that otherwise might have failed me in her presence. At first indeed I could find no down and kissed her ministering hand. She flushed red as the evening sky, the

est upon the white hand which I had kiss-"Why did you do that, Thomas?" she

flood of crimson losing itself at last be-

neath her auburn hair, but it burned deep-

said in a low voice. Then I spoke. "I did it because I love you, Lily, and do not know how to begin the telling of my love. I love you, dear, and have always loved, as I always shall

"Are you so sure of that, Thomas?" she

said again. "There is nothing clse in the world of which I am so sure, Lily. What I wish to be as sure of is that you love me as I love you."

For a moment she stood quiet, her head sunk almost to her breast. Then she lifted it, and her eyes shone as I had never seen them shine before.

"Can you doubt it, Thomas?" she said. And now I took her in my arms and kissed her on the lips, and the memory of that kiss has gone with me through my long life and is with me yet, when, old and withered, I stand upon the borders of the grave. It was the greatest joy that has been given to me in all my days. Too soon, alas! it was done, that first pure kiss of youthful love, and I spoke again, some-

what aimlessly: "It seems, then, that you do love me

who love you so well?" "If you doubted it before, can you doubt it now?" she answered very softly. "But listen, Thomas. It is well that we should love each other, for we were born to it and have no help in the matter, even if we wished to find it. Still, though love be sweet and holy, it is not all, for there is duty to be thought of, and what will my

father say to this, Thomas?"

"I do not know, Lily, and yet I can guess. I am sure, sweet, that he wishes you to take my brother Goeffrey and leave me on one side."

"Then his wishes are not mine, Thomas; also, though duty be strong, it is not strong enough to force a woman to a marriage for which she has no liking. Yet it may prove strong enough to keep a woman from a marriage for which her heart pleads. Perhaps also it should have been strong enough to hold me back from the telling of my love."

"No, Lily; the love itself is much, and though it should bring no fruit, still it is something to have won it forever and a

"You are very young to talk thus, Thomas. I am also young, I know, but we women ripen quicker. Perhaps all this is but a boy's fancy, to pass with boyhood."

"It will never pass, Lily. They say that our first loves are the longest, and that which is sown in youth will flourish in our age. Listen, Lily. I have my place to make in the world, and it may take a time in the making, and I ask one promise of you, though perhaps it is a selfish thing to seek. I ask of you that you will be faithful to me, and, come fair weather or foul, will wed no other man till you know me

"It is something to promise, Thomas, for with time come changes. Still I am so sure of myself that I promise-nay, I swear it. Of you I cannot be sure, but things are so with us women that we must risk all upon a throw, and if we lose goodby to happiness."

Then we talked on, and I cannot remember what we said, though these words I have written down remain in my mind, partly because of their own weight and in part because of all that came about in the after years.

And at last I knew that I must go, though we were sad enough at parting.

So I took her in my arms and kissed her so closely that some blood from my wound ran down her white attire. But as we embraced I chanced to look up and saw a sight that frightened me enough, for Bozard, Lily's father, watching all, and

his face wore no smile.

He had been riding by a bridle path to the watering ford, and seeing a couple trespassing beneath the oaks dismounted from his horse to hunt them away. Not till he was quite near did he know whom he came to hunt, and then he stood still in astonishment. He was a short, stout man, with a red face and stern, gray eyes that seemed to be starting from his head with anger. For awhile he could not speak, but when he began at length the words came fast enough. All that he said I forget, but the upshot of it was that he desired to know what my business was with his daughter. I waited till he was out of breath, then answered him the Lily and I loved each other well and were plighting our troth.

"Is this so, daughter?" he asked. "It is so, my father," she answered

Then he broke out swearing. "You light minx," he said, "you shall be whipped and kept cool on bread and water in your chamber. And for you, my half bred Spanish cockerel, know once and for all that this maid is for your betters. How dare you come wooing my daughter, you empty pillbox, who have not two silver pennies to rattle in your pouch! Go win fortune and a name before you dare to look up to such as she!"

"That is my desire, and I will do it, sir," I answered.

"So, you apothecary's drudge, you will win name and place, will you? Well, long before that deed is done the maid shall be safely wedded to one who has them and who is not unknown to you. Daughter, say now that you have finished

with him." "I cannot say that, father," she replied, plucking at her robe. "If it is not your will that I should marry Thomas here, my duty is plain, and I may not wed him. But I am my own, and no duty can make me marry where I will not. While Thomas lives I am sworn to him and to no other man.

"At the least you have courage, hussy," said her father. "But listen now. Either you will marry where and when I wish or tramp it for your bread. Ungrateful girl, did I breed you to flaunt me to my face? Now for you, pillbox! I will teach ters without their leave," and with a curse he rushed at me, stick aloft, to thrash me.

Then for the second time that day my quick blood boiled in me, and snatching up the Spaniard's sword that lay upon the grass beside me I held it at the point, for the game was changed, and I who had fought with cudgel against sword must now fight with sword against cudgel. And had it not been that Lily, with a quick cry of fear, struck my arm from beneath, causing the point of the sword to pass over his shoulder, I believe truly that I should then and there have pierced her father through and ended my days early with a noose about my neck.

"Are you mad?" she cried, "and do you think to win me by slaying my father? Throw down that sword, Thomas.'

"As for winning you, it seems that there is small chance of it," I answered hotly, "but I tell you this—not for the sake of all the maids upon the earth will I stand to be beaten with a stick like a scullion."

"And there I do not blame you, lad," words, but as she bound my wound I bent said her father, more kindly. "I see that you also have courage, which may serve you in good stead, and it was unworthy of me to call you 'pillbox' in my anger. Still, as I have said, the girl is not for you, so begone and forget her as best you may, and if you value your life never let me find you two kissing again. And know that temorrow I will have a word with your father on this matter."

"I will go, since I must go," I answered, "but, sir, I still hope to live to call your daughter wife. Lily, farewell till these storms are overpast."
"Farewell, Thomas," she said, weeping.

'Forget me not, and I will never forget my oath to you."

Then, taking Lily by the arm, her father led her away.

I also went away-sad, but not altogether ill pleased, for now I knew that if I had won the father's anger I had also won the daughter's unalterable love, and love lasts longer than wrath, and here or hereafter will win its way at length. When I had gone a little distance, I remembered the Spaniard, who had been clean forgotten by me in all this love and war, and I turned to seek him and drag him to the stocks, which I should have done with joy and been glad to find some one on whom to wreak my wrongs. But when I came to the spot where I had left him I found that fate had befriended him by the hand of a fool, for there was no Spaniard, but only the village idiot, Billy Minns by name, who stood staring first at the tree to which the foreigner had been made fast and then at a piece of silver in

"Where is the man who was tied here, Billy?" I asked.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Cold Bridle Bits.

During the bitter cold weather in winter much suffering is thoughtlessly inflicted on horses by putting cold bridle bits into their months. If the person who does this will apply his tongue to a piece of iron on a frosty morning, he will understand at once what the suffering to the poor brutes is. To slightly warm the bits before putting them into the horse's mouth would require only a small expenditure of labor. This can be done by rubbing them with a blanket or other cloth a moment or two if other means of warming is not at hand. The beneficial results in the gentleness of the animal will amply compensate it.

Scrofula on His Head

Which became a mass of corruption, spread so that it got into our little boy's eyes. The sores



Clarence D. Crockett

spread over his neck and we thought he would be blind. The doctors failed; we gave him Hood's Barsaparilla. Several bottles cured him after we had despaired of his ever getting well. He s now a bright and healthy child D CROCKETT, JR., Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Even when all other preparations fail. Be sure

to get Hood's and only Hood's.

Hood's Pills should be in every household.