

**FOXGLOVE
MANOR, A NOVEL**

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Foxglove Manor, a novel by Robert Buchanan

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ROBERT BUCHANAN

**FOXGLOVE
MANOR, A NOVEL**

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FOXGLOVE MANOR

A *Nobel*

BY
William
ROBERT BUCHANAN

AUTHOR OF
"GOD AND THE MAN," "THE SHADOW OF THE SWORD,"
"THE NEW ENGLAND," ETC.

2nd ed.



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IN THREE VOLUMES

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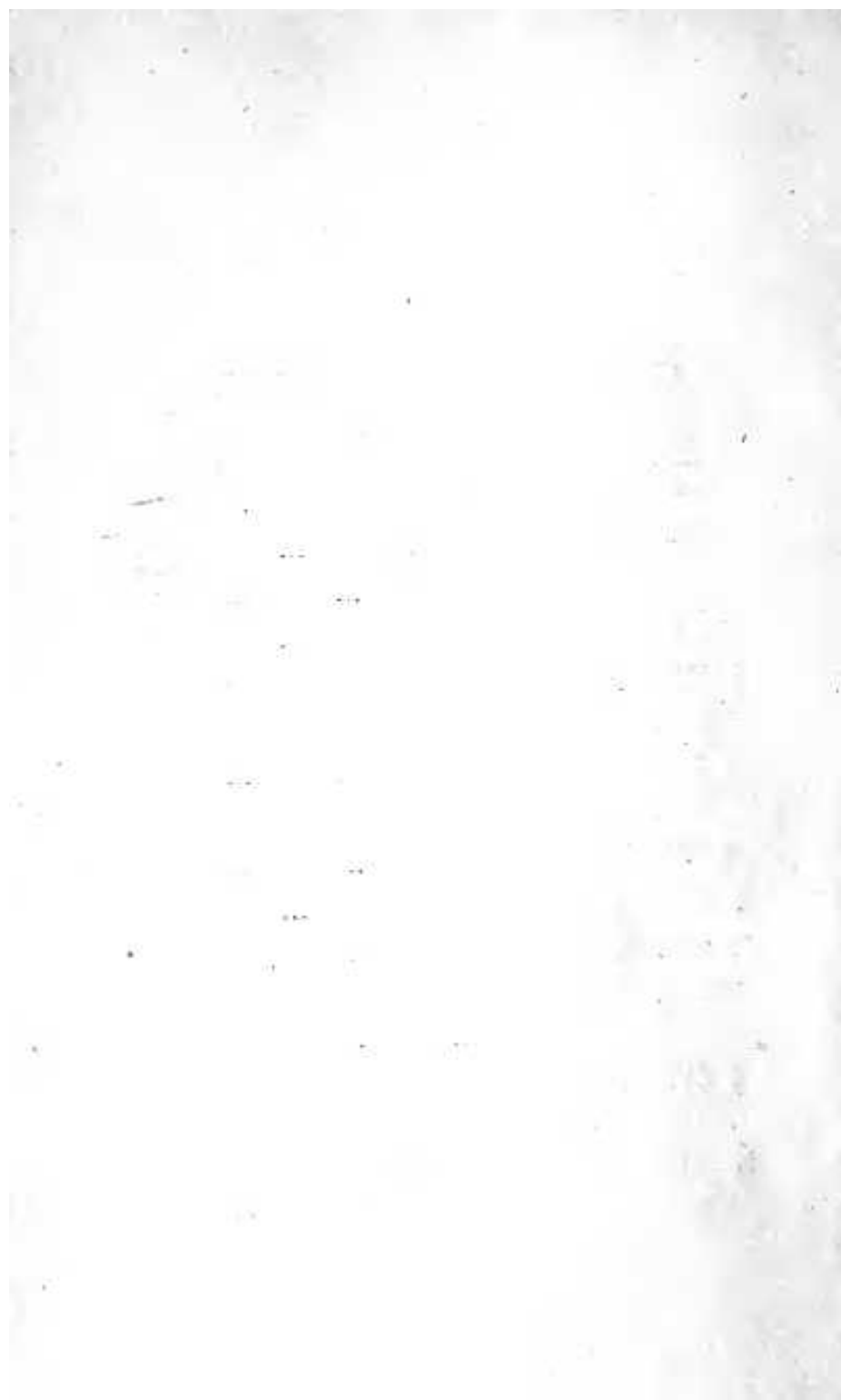
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1884

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FOXGLOVE MANOR.

CHAPTER XIV.

BAPTISTO STAYS AT HOME.

As Haldane sat in his study, the evening previous to the morning fixed for his journey to London, Baptisto entered quickly and stood before the desk at which his master was busily writing.

“Can I speak to you, señor?”

Haldane looked and nodded.

“What is it, Baptisto?”

“You have arranged that I shall go with you to-morrow, but I have had

during the last few days an attack of my old vertigo. Can you possibly dispense with my attendance, señor?"

Haldane stared in surprise at the Spaniard's face, which was inscrutable as usual.

"Do you mean to say you wish to remain at home?"

"Certainly, señor."

"Why? because you are ill? On the contrary, you look in excellent health. No; it is impossible. I cannot get along without you."

And Haldane returned to his papers as if the matter was ended.

Baptisto, however, did not budge, but remained in the same position, with his dark eyes fixed upon his master.

"Do me this favour, señor. I am really indisposed, and must beg to remain."

Haldane laughed, for an idea suddenly occurred to him which seemed to explain the mystery of his servant's request.

"My good Baptisto, I think I understand the cause of your complaint, and I am sure a little travel will do you good. It is that dark-eyed widow of the lodge-keeper who attaches you so much to the Manor. The warm blood of Spain still burns in your veins, and, despite your sad experience of women, you are still impressionable. Eh? am I right?"

Baptisto quickly shook his head, with the least suspicion of a smile upon his swarthy face.

"I am not impressionable, señor, and I do not admire your English women; but I wish to remain all the same."

"Nonsense!"

"Nonsense! In serious lament,

señor, I beseech you to allow me to remain."

But Haldane was not to be persuaded at what he conceived to be a mere whim of his servant. He still believed that Baptisto had fallen a captive to the charms of Mrs. Ferne, a little plump, dark-eyed woman, with a large family. He had frequently of late seen the Spaniard hanging about the lodge—on one occasion nursing and dandling the youngest child—and he had smiled to himself, thinking that the poor fellow's misanthropy, or rather his misogynism, was in a fair way of coming to an end.

Finding his master indisposed to take his request seriously, Baptisto retired; and presently Haldane strolled into the drawing-room, where he found his wife.

"Have you heard of the last freak of Baptisto? He actually wants to remain