

The Whited Sepulchre

The Tale of Pelee

BY WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

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THIS is a serial of great power and interest, and will not soon be forgotten by those who love good literature. "The Whited Sepulchre" is THE STORY OF MONT PELEE, and is a graphic, natural narration of that great disaster which thrilled and shocked the civilized world. The word-painting is vivid and inspiring, the incidents powerful and exciting, the characters strongly delineated.

WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT, the author, is well known for his superior literary talent, and in the present instance he has selected a theme admitting of intense delineation. No story of recent years has covered a theme more interesting than that of the eruption of Mont Pelee. The serial has all the coloring and charm of the beautiful surroundings of Saint Pierre, and there are touches of perfection in the descriptions of scenery and incidents. Peter Constable and Hayden Breen, young Americans, visit Saint Pierre just before the Pelee volcano scattered death and destruction over the ill-fated island. The hero of the story, Constable, saves the life of the beautiful Lara Stansbury at the time of the eruption, and the scenes on that occasion are thrillingly described.

All through the story are incidents of the most fascinating character. They include a touching love romance of Hayden and the girl to whom he is devoted, and the horror and fate that reigned at the moment when the island was engulfed in doom and disaster. This brilliant and masterly narrative of the crash at Martinique—with a man and woman standing clear against the sequence of events—rivals "The Last Days of Pompeii" in pictorial and dramatic power. The story should have a very cordial reception, it will interest all readers, young and old, and may be classed among the very best serials of its class that have been written in recent years.

CHAPTER I.

Peter Constable sat forward on the main deck of his own yacht, the Madame de Stael, which had just been hatched to the bottom of Saint Pierre's harbor. His single guest for the cruise, Hayden Breen, was back in the cabin, with a book and a long, thin glass. Three weeks previously, early in April, Constable had met Breen for the first time. And of that meeting you must hear.

It came about some sixty hours before the Madame cleared from New York harbor, and a queer night for both men. Constable had been pacing the deck alone, when he heard a soft step below on the Brooklyn pier. He bent over the railing, and perceived that a stranger was about to throw himself into the water.

Constable called sharply. The figure at the pier edge stiffened, and a face swung upward. The two parleyed for a moment, and the voice that was borne to Constable was that of a gentleman. The man below hesitated—considered—then accepted with a laugh an invitation to come aboard. Presently in the cabin the owner of the Madame faced an individual, tastefully, even freshly attired, and one whose manner betrayed no flaw. The face was pale, imposing; a reckless face, but not devastated—though the eyes, perhaps, had a look of having seen too much. For two hours the pair talked about books, pictures, dollars, the tropics, and suicide. At the end, Constable was so strongly impressed that he invited the stranger to be his guest for the cruise.

Breen glanced at him whimsically. "I wonder if I really did drop off the dock, and this is the astral plane," he mused. "This is the edge of Brooklyn, and I am serious," Constable said.

"This is the edge of Brooklyn, and I am astonished," Breen replied.

"So far as I know, you would be my only guest."

"Had you better not wait until tomorrow? Think again."

"I should prefer that you say 'yes' now."

"Better hear more about me first. I have spoken only in generalities. My past is at your disposal," Breen warned.

"I should like to hear much about you, but not in the light of your decision. Will you go with me?"

"Yes."

"Where do you intend to stay tonight?"

"You altered my only plan, you will remember, Mr. Constable."

"I'll have a berth made up for you at once. I'm glad you have found it possible to look up the tropics again," the owner finished.

Breen appeared content, and accepted the various offices from his host with a fine, half-humorous appreciation. Constable found, in their early intercourse, not the slightest cause to regret his impulsive invitation. That the other did not carry him with references to his kindness was, to Constable's way of thinking, the severest test of a thoroughbred. Breen

did not leave the ship, and seldom the cabin, during the entire period of preparation. He sat in a reclining chair and read the essayists, mildly spirited. Whatever had been his attitude before, he accepted what life offered him now in calmness. He still had the jaded human's least resource, when this unexpected but pleasant portion of life was at an end. Such seemed to be the philosophy of this creature who had passed the death sentence upon himself.

Constable slept aboard the last night before sailing, and was at breakfast with his guest about eight in the morning, when a servant entered the saloon to announce that a gentleman on the pier wanted to speak with "Mr. Constable's friend." Breen set his coffee cup down slowly, and his eyes met his host's.

"Mr. Constable," he said, "you have noted, no doubt, that I have remained under cover rather closely since our interesting meeting. There is no one in New York whom I care to see, but the person out yonder feels differently toward me. In fact, he is very much absorbed in my movements. I happened to step to the railing a few minutes before breakfast, and caught his eye. The truth is, if I see him now, he will persuade me to go with him, and I would much rather accompany you."

"What would you advise?" Constable asked quickly.

"With your interests at heart, I can only advise you to bid me good-by and allow me to thank you for many genuine courtesies. Perhaps you remember that I offered to outline my past, and you deterred me for the time being."

"I want you to go, of course. What is the simplest way to manage this?"

"How soon do you sail?"

Constable went to the speaking tube and called Captain Negley. A moment later he turned to Breen with the information that the Madame was just ready to clear, and would be put off as quietly and quickly as possible. The servant entered with the word that the visitor insisted upon seeing "Mr. Constable's friend."

There was a passage of bells from the bridge to the engine room, and the Madame came to life. Constable climbed to the bridge. The stranger below on the pier was in a furious state of mind, and was trying to force his way aboard. It was plain that Breen was badly wanted, and equally plain to Constable that he was running into the danger of entangling himself in the meshes of the law; but he was stoutly disinclined to give up an admirable companion for the voyage. The progress of clearing went on quickly. The Madame's prow was turned out into the harbor, and the signal given to free the aft cable.

At this point the insistent stranger raised his voice and struggled with the dockman to prevent him from slipping the rope. Constable stepped to the railing of the bridge and invoked the assistance of two men on the pier head.

"Take that fellow in hand," he ordered. "He seems to be laboring under a delusion. That's good, men!"

The stranger was overpowered, and the cable cast off. Harsh fragments of speech were carried upward, but no sentences that cohered sufficiently for Constable's intelligence, until the very last, when, as the ship swung free, he heard plainly:

"I'll get you both, if I have to follow you around the world!"

"I don't know but what you will," the man on the bridge muttered to himself. "You seem moved by a rather emphatic disposition."

That night, in his oil skins, Constable paced the hurricane deck. His mind was serene, and he was inclined to regard the affair of the morning as a far-off thing which didn't signify. What had placed Breen in the fugitive lists he did not care to know. He was just enough not to forget that there are regrettable transactions in every man's past—a black bundle of perversities which some men designate their "chamber of horrors," and others call their "pet frailties." Constable felt that he was called upon to judge no man. He liked Breen, and did not want his liking altered, save for the better. He could not imagine Breen doing a cowardly thing; and anything else did not greatly matter.

The spray swept in gusts over the Madame's dipping prow. The bare masts tipped with lights, swung with a giant sweep from port to starboard and back to port again, fingering the black heavens for the blown-out stars. Constable couldn't be half-miserable out there on the tossing floor of the Atlantic.

Mr. Pugh, the new third officer, secured at the last moment to take the place of Mr. Hatt, who was ill, was on the bridge now. Occasionally in the glow of Pugh's cigar Constable could see the face of the seaman. It seemed small, colorless and rubbed out—not the face of a man who could bring a ship up to port through a raging gale. It was nearly midnight when Constable went below Breen was still reading.

"How does it happen, Peter, that a man of your substance happens to be out here in a sumptuous yacht with only one guest and that an accidental one?" Breen questioned.

"I have few friends, and little aptness for entertaining," Constable said. "I wouldn't know what to do with a ship load of guests. I took out a party once. The members of this party played poker. I would rush down to the cabin door calling, 'Come on deck quickly, my friends. An old socker of a whale is snoring off our port bow!' 'All right, Peter,' somebody would say; 'bring it right in. It's your deal, Dickie.' One man got all the money finally, and then there were testy tempers."

"Men—men," said Breen; "but woeer go down to sea in other men's boats."

"I don't know any women up there," Constable declared. "By 'up there' I refer in general to the States and Canada. I shouldn't know what to do with women here. They'd be sick. They'd talk about things they didn't know about, put on rakish caps, look frowsy when the wind was on, and when they had sprung all their changes of raiment, they'd want to go home."

"Peter, you are on the wrong tack. There are rich men's sons who can go to sea without poker or bridge; and feminine aristocrats who know no senselessness, and who look adorable in rakish yachting caps and blowing hair. Some time you'll find one—"

Breen halted. The other was staring hard into the prism of glass on the buffet—staring and smiling.

"I believe you are jockeying me into delivering platitudes, Peter," Breen finished.

"I have an uncle in Martinique, Breen—a fine old chap whom you'll be glad to know. This uncle has a partner in the fruit and sugar business. They are keen, kindly men, both—partners in the higher sense of the word. My uncle is a bachelor, held sweet by a past, the good old story. His partner, however, has a wife and daughter."

"Ah!"

"They all live together in a grand old plantation house on the bluffs south of the Morne d'Orange, Saint Pierre. Mrs. Stansbury, the wife of my uncle's partner—it is important that you get this—is a very remarkable woman, tempered like a Damascus blade, ornamental as the vase of Alhambra. This description is not extempore. I have spent years thinking it out. I am proud of it. A splendid Frenchwoman, this mother, with mystic eyes, and some strange insight which leads her to dislike me soulfully, and the stuff of Jeanne d'Arc in her brain and hand. She's not quite adjustable to words. You are fascinated, yet afraid of her. At least, I am. She fires me with a childish zeal to show the best wares I have. The result is, I play circus before her."

"Most entrancing lady," said Breen.

"The daughter is more like the beloved Josephine," Constable resumed lightly—"brave and true and tender. At least, from my pilgrimages and meditations, I should say that Miss Stansbury resembled the empress more than the Sword-Handed Jeanne. And to think that once she graced these very decks! That was a marvelous day, old man, a Caribbean day of blue and gold. The maiden improved it by pointing out to me how utterly worthless I am in the world—'just sailing 'round.'"

(To be continued.)

How to Handle a Hog.

Scratch his back and tickle him under the belly. You can lead him anywhere. This applies—figuratively speaking—as well to the human swine as to the members of the drove that had the seven devils. Hogs have sense, and don't you forget it. An old razzback sow has more brains than all the cattle and horses on the plantation.

POPULAR SCIENCE

Those who think that invention is approaching its limits would do well to consider the fact stated by M. Abraham, an authority on this subject, that the best telephone does not transmit to the ear more than one one-thousandth of the energy that it receives from the line. Although there may be cases in which one could wish that the telephone would transmit less rather than more, yet, seriously, it is a challenge to inventors, as well as an indictment of human inefficiency, when an instrument of such universal utility is allowed to remain so prodigal.

The immense advances recently made in the power and speed of transatlantic steamships have not yet, in the opinion of J. J. O'Neill, a Scotch engineer, been carried to the limit. Addressing the Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Scotland, Mr. O'Neill said that the lengths of the present liners warrant the belief that greater power can be obtained with the same dimensions, the present speeds with shorter lengths. Investigation shows that the variations of form involve relatively small gains, and Mr. O'Neill thinks that if the same attention had been devoted to the development of the screw propeller that has been given to the form of vessels greater advantages would have been secured.

Prof. Joel Stebbins and Prof. F. C. Brown have recently constructed a small selenium cell, which, when placed in the focus of a twelve-inch refracting telescope, causes measurable deflections of the needle of a galvanometer in response to the impact of light waves from individual stars. The planet Mars gave a deflection of nine millimeters, the star Aldebaran a deflection of 3.4 millimeters, and even a fourth magnitude star, Gamma Arietis, caused a visible deflection. It is hoped that by the use of a specially sensitive galvanometer this method may be greatly improved, and that if certain disturbing influences, particularly temperature changes, can be eliminated, accurate measurements of starlight by means of selenium cells will become possible.

C. S. Gager presents in the Journal of the New York Botanical Garden some interesting facts about the self-pruning of trees as observed in the garden. In October the sapling poplars litter the ground about them with branches, most of which are two years old and bear winter buds. The catalpa, the alantus, the horse chestnut, the elm, the lilac, the mulberry, the maple, and seventeen or eighteen other varieties of trees have this habit of self-pruning. With some, as the maples, it occurs in spring or early summer; with others, in the autumn. The purpose appears to be to get rid of superfluous branches. The branches thus eliminated are not dead to begin with, but die as a result of the pruning process, which begins by the formation of an "abscission layer," or a brittle zone, at the base of the branch.

Passing of African Game.

For two centuries there has been little let or hindrance to the slaughter of animal life in Southern Africa. But now game laws exist, and with their enforcement it is expected that the supply of game can be kept up and that some of the old hunting grounds may be restocked.

Lions are still plentiful over large areas, and even in the mining districts of Rhodesia. Elephants are becoming scarce, being particularly extinct south of the Zambesi, except on the east coast and in a few parts of Rhodesia. They are now strictly protected, to save them from extinction.

The rhinoceros is rare, except in the Portuguese country south of the Zambesi. The hippopotamus is to be found only in Orange river, the streams of Zululand, and in the Portuguese rivers.

One of the remarkable natives is King Khama. The headquarters of his tribe is Serowe, a town of 20,000. Here and in all his dominions he has abolished European liquors, and their introduction or use is followed by severe punishment. He has suppressed witchcraft, and so encouraged education that most of his people can read.

The Mashonaland plateau is beginning to fill up with European farmers. With its perfect climate and fertile land, it grows every kind of crops of the temperate zone, and the farmers are already looking forward to raising enough to supply the whole of Rhodesia. Thus throughout the "Dark Continent" in whatever direction there are evidences of a rapidly-growing civilization. —Indianapolis News.

Paper Making in Norway.

About 35,000 tons of paper are annually turned out at Svalbard, Norway. The laborers, 1,000 in number, receive only 40 cents to \$1.10 per day.

Takes 'Em Easy.

"Does she run after the men?" "No, she doesn't have to. She wins in a walk."—Cleveland Leader.



Rhubarb Marmalade.

Four pounds rhubarb, 4 oranges, juice of all, peel of 2, 4 pounds sugar, 1 lemon, 2 pounds raisins. Peel and cut the rhubarb into half-inch pieces. Prepare the oranges by squeezing out juice and cooking the peel in water till tender. Drain and scrape out white skin. Extract the juice of the lemon. Put the rhubarb into a granite preserving kettle, heat it slowly to boiling, cook fifteen minutes, then add the sugar, orange juice and peel, lemon juice and raisins, and cook slowly until thick. This is delicious fresh, and a portion may be sealed for future use.

Apple Pudding.

Four cups flour, 1 level teaspoon salt, 6 level teaspoons baking powder, 4 level tablespoons butter, 2 cups milk, 2 cups finely chopped apple, one-half cup butter, 2 cups sugar, 1½ quarts water.

Sift together the flour, salt and baking powder. Work in the butter with the fingers and add the milk. Mix well, turn onto floured board, roll out one-half inch thick, cover with the apple and roll up like a jelly roll. Press the ends together and press down the sides to keep the apple in. Place in a buttered pan and add the butter, sugar and water. Bake in a moderate oven for one and one-half hours.

Fried Chicken.

Clean and joint two small "fryers." Put two tablespoons each of butter and lard in a baking pan and melt. Roll the chicken in flour that has been well seasoned with salt and pepper and lay in the pan, making only one layer. Place the pan in the oven and when the chicken is brown on one side turn it over. When done remove to a platter, garnish with parsley and serve with gravy made in the pan. This saves the discomfort of frying in a skillet and also insures a well cooked chicken.

Cream and Spinach Soup.

Wash and look over thoroughly two quarts of spinach, then cook in a little boiling salted water until soft enough to rub through a colander. Heat to the scalding point in a double boiler a quart of milk and thicken with a tablespoonful of flour, rubbed smooth with a tablespoonful butter. Add the spinach, season to taste, and send to the table with a spoonful of whipped cream on each plate. Serve with crostons.

Butter Cake.

To make it one creams one tablespoonful of butter. Then add a cup of sugar, two eggs, separately, stirring between each addition; two-thirds of a cup of milk, one and a half cups of flour mixed with one teaspoon baking powder. "When nearly done pour plenty of melted butter over," sprinkle with powdered sugar and bake until a good brown.

This sounds well worth trying, and one is willing to believe it delicious.

Cider Cup.

One quart of cider, two bottles of soda water, one bottle lemonade, one heaping tablespoonful of granulated sugar, a sprig of mint and 2 inches of cucumber.

Cut the cucumber into slices without peeling it. Place it in a pitcher with the sugar, cider and mint. Allow it to stand, on ice if possible, for two hours. Then add the lemonade and soda water and a few pieces of ice, removing the mint.

Speed Cherries.

This makes a nice sauce to serve with roast duck or game. Stone and stew the cherries down to a pulp and then add sugar, vinegar, ground cinnamon, cloves and allspice to taste and also a little lemon juice; cook until quite thick, and when cold put in jars and tie up with waxed paper.

Pulled Bread.

Tear away the crust from a loaf and pull the crumb apart in long strips from top to bottom. Tear the loaf first into halves, then into quarters and then into eighths, to insure uniform size in the strips. Put in an open oven for an hour, then close the door and let the bread color slowly to a light brown.

"Dyspeptic Pie Crust."

One quart flour. One teaspoon soda. Two teaspoons cream of tartar. Two large spoons lard or butter. Roll thin, as it rises.

Short Suggestions.

In choosing a grape fruit see that it is heavy in proportion to the size. A dry fruit is very light.

To polish a looking glass first rub it with a duster wrung out of cold water and dipped in whiting and then polish with a dry cloth.