White Hand

A Tale of the Early Settlers of Louisiana.

BY AUSTIN C. BURDICK

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

The old chief took the youth's hand, and having gazed into his face a few moments, he said:

"White Hand, you once gave me an oath, but from all oaths you have ever given me I now absolve you. Coqualla has told me all. She has told me how true you are in heart, and how yet you long for the home of your childhood. I do not think your father has fallen in this general massacre, for his place is strong, and the red men owe him no grudge. Yet he may have fallen with the rest. If he has, you may sometime find opportunity to reach your native land. But you are under no oath now. Of what has now happened I will not speak, only to say that you cannot see nor understand all that has led us to this fearful work. The story of the white man's rule is everywhere the same. Where a tribe, or a people, have made peace and accepted the friendship of the French, they have become weak and puny. White Hand, I have a strange love for thee, but I hate thy people. And that thy father almost hates them too has drawn my heart towards him. But we could not see our people being gradually swept away, and our homes torn from us, without striking this blow. Yet Stung Serpent has fallen. The bullet of the white man has found his life. But he dies content. The white man has fallen, too."

The old chieftain sank back exhausted as he ceased speaking, and for some moments he remained with his eyes closed. When he opened them again, White Hand spoke.

"My father," he said, "ere the hand of death has done its work upon thee, wilt thou not tell me why I was taken from my father's house? Surely you cannot object to tell me all now?"

"No, my child, I have no objections, for I never promised not to tell. And when I sent for thee now, I meant to tell thee all. Do you remember when your father met me in the woods near his dwelling?"

"Yes," returned White Hand, bending over with eager interest.

"Well, I had then been to see Simon Lobois. By some means he learned that I was down the river, and he sent for me. He had heard that I was a savage chieftain, and a lover of gold. I met him in the woods, and he proposed to me that I should seize St. Julien's son and slay him, and for this he offered to pay me a hundred pieces of gold. But I spurned the offer and left him. I came home, and told my brother what Lobois had said to me, and he pondered upon the subject in a new light. You know the Natchez often send messengers to the Great Spirit, and the Great Sun had wished to send a white messenger to the white man's God, even as we told you when you first came here. At length I fell in with his views, and I knew of no one whose spirit would be surer of admission to your God than the spirit of Louis St. Julien, for I knew him to be a good youth. So I returned to your father's house and saw Lobois again, and he told me he had hired a party of Chickasaws to kill you, but that you and your companion had killed them all—six of them. I then offered to do what he wished. But this time his wants had received an addition. He not only wanted the son killed, but he wanted the daughter captured and carried off towards New Orleans. I agreed to this; but I made him give me a written promise to pay me the money when the work should be done. He hesitated at first, but at length he wrote the pledge and signed it; and then it was arranged that Louise should be left upon the bank of Lake Pontchartrain, at the end of the middle trail, and I pledged myself to take you with me and kill you, for you know this had been my purpose in seeking you."

"But the paper—the pledge—you had of Lobois—where is it?" uttered White Hand.

"It is safe. Coqualla, go to my closet, and you will find it in the oaken casket."

The princess went, and in the box she found the paper, which she handed to her father. He took it, and having opened it, he handed it to White Hand, saying, as he did so:

"Here—it is yours. And now all I ask is pardon."

"For all that you have done to me," murmured the youth, "I pardon you from the bottom of my soul; for you may have been an instrument in the hands of heaven for saving my life. Had you not taken me, another would, and I should not have lived. So I shall, after all, remember Stung Serpent with more of gratitude than of complaint or anger."

"Do you mean that?"

"I do."

Stung Serpent raised himself upon his elbow, and caught the youth by the hand.

"Coqualla," he whispered, "where art thou?"

"Here, my father."

"I have been kind to thee. If it lays in thy power, help White Hand to his people. Is it Coqualla I see?"

"Yes. Are you faint?"

"Faint? Stung Serpent faint? No! Up, warriors of the Natchez, and strike for your homes! Who shall fear the dastards now? My braves, remember the trophies you have won under Stung Serpent's lead. Strike—strike, now, for your honor, your homes, and for the tombs of your ancestors! Sink your blades to the pole, and leave not a man of them all to tell their king the tale! Now! On—to the death!"

One long, loud warcry followed this paroxysm, and as it ended in a low, gurgling sound, the chieftain sank back. Coqualla moved to his side and knelt over him, and in a moment more the loud cries of the women rent the air, for Stung Serpent was dead!

CHAPTER XX.

There was consternation for a while in the village of the White Apple when it was known that Stung Serpent was dead, for he had been an important man among the Natchez. At the end of four days, the body was made ready for the grave, and nine persons, with ropes about their necks, remained fasting by it.

"And are all these people to die?" asked White Hand, after he and Coqualla had retired to their own dwelling.

"Yes. And but for the intercessions of my father himself, many more would have died."

"It is a cruel practice," said the youth, sadly.

"Cruel?" repeated the princess, in surprise. "Why do you say so?"

"Because one death is enough. Why should so many be added?"

"Ah," answered Coqualla, ingenuously, "you do not understand. Your people have not such love for the departed as we have. It is a long, dark road which my father has now to travel, and surely it is fitting he should have company."

"And does this always happen when one of your people dies?"

"Certainly; though some have not so many companions; but all have one. When the last Great Sun died, there were one hundred who went to keep him company over the dark road."

"So many?"

"Yes—and of course they were happy, for with him they were at once admitted to the happy home where the Great Spirit is."

"But," queried White Hand, "Stung Serpent has been dead now four days, and these people will not die until to-night. How, then, shall they go together?"

"Ah," returned Coqualla, with a faint smile, which seemed to indicate a pity for her companion's ignorance, "my father's spirit will not start alone. It remains near the old body until the other spirits join it, and then they all go off together. Do you not understand?"

"Yes."

"And is it not right and proper?"

"It is, if you think so; but I should hardly dare give my voice in favor of it. Why, look, Coqualla, and tell me if this very thing has not already reduced your nation from a once powerful people to a mere handful."

"My father spoke of that ere he died," answered the princess, thoughtfully. "He said he wished only his few immediate companions to go with him beyond the grave, and even they must be old people."

"And he was right, Coqualla. I have heard that the Natchez were once a mighty race—a great nation, numbering their warriors by the many thousands, and now they have only a very few hundred. In a large community, under ordinary circumstances, the births will not much overrun the deaths by nature. But see here—not only do your people die off as do others, but for every one who dies naturally from one to a hundred more must be killed to keep them company."

"I know," said Coqualla, thoughtfully—"I know. But still it were cruel to send my father's spirit away over the dark, long trail alone. Your people do not think of this. They do not think of the loved spirit wandering away in the dark alone."

"Yes they do, Coqualla."

"They do?"

"Yes."

"And yet they send them no company."

"Ah, their company comes from the other way," spoke White Hand, softly and sweetly. "When a human soul departs, we, or I, believe that the loved ones who have gone before come down to lead the new-born spirit away to heaven. I have a mother there, Coqualla, and I think she will come down to earth when my spirit departs, and welcome me to the home of the blest ones. Surely they know the way through the dark valley better than we could, or better than any others of earth."

Gradually the Indian girl's hands were brought together over her bosom, and her head was bowed. When she looked up there was a strange light in her eyes and a soft, hopeful expression dwelt upon her dusky features.

"White Hand," she whispered, "tell me that again."

"Is not the theme more pleasing than the strangling of helpless victims over the graves of the dead?" the youth asked, kindly.

"Yes—yes. But tell me more."

And White Hand went on and whispered into his companion's ear the whole of his own pure faith in God and the risen Saviour; and when he had done the princess murmured:

"It is sweet, and it is better than the faith I have been taught."

She bowed her head again, and this time she remained a long while thoughtful; and when she next looked up, a change had come over her countenance.

"White Hand," she said, "I promised my father that I would help you escape from here, if you wished. What have I to remain here for? My father is dead; I have no brother or sister, and the ways of my people are not pleasant to me. May I not go with you?"

The youth threw his arms about the fair speaker's neck and drew her upon his bosom.

"Coqualla, speak but the word, and I'll die in thy service, if necessary, to lead you to my father's home. O, we will not be separated."

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The burial was over. Stung Serpent reposed in his grave, and by his side lay the bodies of those who had, in obedience to the cruel faith and custom, given up their lives that they might keep their loved chief company in his dark journey. And once more the Natchez commenced their mad orgies over their victory, for they were not yet satiated.

Late at night, while the warriors were dancing and howling in the square, Pricked Arm came to White Hand's lodge and called him out. The youth could not see her face in the gloom, but from the manner of her breathing, he could tell that she was deeply moved by something.

"White Hand," she said, "our plot has worked exceeding well. Not a blow has been struck save here at Natchez; so the great mass of the French are saved. But thou art in danger here. The moment the Natchez find that their plan has failed they will suspect thee, for it has been whispered that you visited the temple, and the Great Sun, when he looked towards the west for the moon last night and saw it not, was perplexed. This night they saw the new moon for the first time, and they remembered, for the first time, too, that the moon ought to have been a week old. Amid their mad joy they have not thought of this before. But they think of it now, and fear has already seized upon some of them, though those few keep it to themselves. Now you can judge how much risk you run."

"And will they suspect me?" the youth uttered, tremulously.

"They will be likely to; for you are of the hated people, and your powerful friend is dead. Dark, angry eyes have been bent upon you, because you have shown your loathing of the cruelties you have witnessed. And, again, the French will soon be on the Natchez trail. The future is dark for us all, but you may escape. Can you not remember the trail by which you came?"

"I fear not."

"But you can follow it part way from here?"

"Yes, for it is broad towards the village."

"There you can take the river. You know the southern trail. You went it once hunting with Stung Serpent."

"Yes—I remember that."

"Then all is safe. Follow that trail to the right, and it will bring you out upon the river fifteen miles below here. Among a clump of brakes there you will find a canoe. It is mine. Take it and float down the river. Still retain your present garb, and let the walnut stain be upon your face. In that way you may escape the Natchez, should any of them meet you, and by your speech you could quickly convince the French. I can do no more for you. I would have saved all the French if I could, for I loved them; yet I must follow the fortunes of my own people."

White Hand thanked the old princess for her kindness, and with a thoughtful step he returned to his lodge. Coqualla asked him what Pricked Arm had wanted, and he sat down and told her all.

"And will you go?" the princess asked.

"Yes, I must. But, Coqualla, have you changed your mind?"

"Only to be more strongly bound to thee. And yet," she added, putting her arms about her husband's neck, "speak but one word—simply whisper to me—that thou wopldst rather go free from care or thought of me, and——"

"Hush, Coqualla! You wrong me now. O, I should never sleep in peace again, did I think thou remaindst here when thy wish was with me. But we must flee to-night."

"I am all ready, dearest."

"But we need provisions."

"I have such all prepared as we can carry."

"Then you have thought of this?"

"Yes. But O, speak the truth, my love. If within thy inmost soul there dwells a thought——"

"It is all of love for thee, Coqualla," interrupted the youth, seeing at once her drift. "So let me hear no more of it. Now let us prepare."

"Bless thee," murmured the fair girl, sinking upon her companion's bosom. "O, since we first spoke of this, my heart has sunk deep down in its darkest mood when the thought of staying here has dwelt with me. Those sweet words you whispered to me have been with me ever since, and they have wrought a wonderful change in my feelings. When we get to our new home we will talk more about it, and you shall teach me to read the great book wherein these precious truths are written."

"I will," promised White Hand. "But the night comes on; the morning will be speedily approaching. Come—we will talk on the way."

Just as the first gray streaks of dawn appeared in the east, the fugitives reached the great river, and without much trouble they found the brake and the canoe. They easily pulled the light craft from its nest and dragged it to the river. It was a smooth, beautifully finished boat, fashioned from a huge log of yellow pine, and seasoned without crack or check. Into this the adventurers put their little store, and then, with hopeful hearts, they entered and pushed out into the broad stream.

(To be continued.)

PIANO OF MUSICAL STONES.

After Years of Search M. Baudre Collected the Flints.

It was a work of years, says L'Illustration, for M. Baudre to make the collection of flints which constitute his geological piano. The stones do not belong to the class of resonant rocks known as "phonolytes," such as are found in Auvergne, not far from Mont-Dore, but are flints collected by M. Baudre with infinite toil and search, each giving when struck a true musical note.

By accident, while taking a country walk one day he picked up a flint and, chancing to strike it, heard a faint note respond to the blow. The idea took hold of him to gather, if possible, enough flints to form a complete chromatic scale. Difficulties in the search for these stones only increased his ardor. For more than thirty years he pursued the quest, making it the principal aim of his life to form out of a collection of flints the instrument he called the "geological piano."

From the neighborhood of the little village of the department of L'Indre, where he lived and first met with the singing flint, he extended his search far and wide. Only once in a while would he hit on the ideal flint which uttered a true note with generous vibration. That was finding the precious stone which repaid him for his thousand and one disappointments, his toilsome wanderings, his diligent search in stony places.

After many years he had at length got together the full scale in flint notes, and numerous examples of each, with the exception of one. He had been so far unsuccessful in putting his hand on the first "do." Perhaps it did not exist in nature. He gave up hope that he could meet with it in France. He would try Canada. But the new world showed no trace of the initial note of the octave, and M. Baudre returned to his native land resigned to the notion that the chase must be abandoned in his old age. Fortune once again smiled, and the stone of which he despaired suddenly appeared, as he was walking in Berry.

Advanced in years, he now passes his leisure in playing, as he does with skill, on this curious piano.

An Australian Fish Story.

Writing from Bunbury, West Australia, to a brother in London, Reginald Shaw relates the following amazing incident, which, he states, happened to one of his party when fishing from the jetty:

His friend had baited his hook with a large whiting, hoping to catch a kingfish, when a shark about seven feet long swallowed it! The angler gently brought the shark to the surface of the water, while a man working on the jetty came to his assistance with a big iron hook and after several ineffectual attempt to jab the hook into the shark's mouth the latter got away

On pulling up his line the fisherman found that he had lost the whiting bait, but had hooked two large ribs of beef from the stomach of the shark. Then, to the amusement of the crowd, one of whom remarked, "Well, exchange is no robbery," he landed the beef safely on the jetty.—London Mail.

Bicycle Versus a Cow.

An Irish farmer went into an ironmonger's shop to buy a scythe. After serving him the shopman asked him if he would buy a bicycle.

"What is that?" queried the Irishman.

"It's a machine to ride about the town on."

"And, shure, what might the price of it be?"

"Fifteen pounds."

"I'd rather see fifteen pounds in a cow."

"But what a fool you would look riding around the town on the back of a cow!"

"Shure, now," replied the Irishman, "not half such a fool as I'd look trying to milk a bicycle!"—Tit-Bits.

Tiresome Work.

May—Mr. Huggard called on you last evening, didn't he?

Fay—Yes, and he made me very tired.

May—I suppose he tried to kiss you.

Fay—Yes, and every time he kissed me I had to slap him.—Philadelphia Press.

Idleness is the burial of a living man.—Jeremy Taylor.

MAZATLAN, PRETTY MEXICAN CITY, WHERE BUBONIC PLAGUE HAS BROKEN OUT

As the spot on the western hemisphere where the dreaded bubonic plague has gained foothold, Mazatlan, the softly pronounced name of a picturesque faraway and practically unknown little city on the west coast of Mexico, has suddenly become known in the United States through the press dispatches," said a Washingtonian who has traveled in the tropics, according to the Washington Star.

"Mazatlan, in the Mexican state of Sinaloa, has heretofore been distinctive as being the first stopping place of importance in the Pacific south of San Diego for the Pacific Mail steamers, 1,350 miles south of San Francisco. When I visited Mazatlan a few years ago I little thought it would become a plague spot, and I can fully understand how the inhabitants fled precipitately to the interior, 5,000, it being stated, having left the place. If this dispatch be accurate the best part of the entire population must have decamped.

"The danger of the spread of the plague overland may be said to be quite remote, if strict quarantine regulations should be enforced against Mexico, if it comes to that unfortunate pass, as Mazatlan is unconnected, or was when I visited it, by railroad. Durango, the capital of the state of that name, was, it is my recollection, the nearest railroad city, and Durango is several hundreds of miles to the east on this side of the high range of mountains called the Sierra de Nayarit, whose sharp peaks cut off much of the west coast country of Mexico from the interior. Acapulco, the next principal landing place on the west coast touched by the Pacific Mail steamers, and perhaps 1,000 miles or thereabouts south of Mazatlan, is also cut off from the interior by a high range of mountains. It is well to bear this fact in mind should a report reach us that the plague has broken out in that ancient Mexican city. Traffic with the interior from both cities was maintained by mules over the narrow passes of the mountains.

"Mazatlan lies on a gentle slope on a land-locked bay, with the garrison post on a hill surmounting the city. I recall the hot day I trudged through the narrow streets of the town and up the hill and wondered how the little Mexican soldier in full uniform stood his clothes and carried his rifle without succumbing to the heat as he paced up and down doing guard duty. The principal wealth of the town comes from the rich mines in the interior, their product of crushed ore being shipped on the steamers for reduction elsewhere. A large trade is done in coffee and the American traveler will always remember Mazatlan as the first place where, under the awnings on the steamer's deck in the hot sun of the tropics, swarthy-skinned Mexicans temptingly offered him native cigars at such prices for quality that made him invest heavily in the weed, a good cigar being obtainable for three cents and a fine one for five and six cents.

"Mazatlan and Acapulco rely almost exclusively upon the steamers and coastwise vessels for communication north and south and with the outside world and the greatest danger of the plague entering the United States from any west coast Mexican city would lie in its importation in this manner rather than overland. Mazatlan has a large cathedral, custom house, several goodsized hotels, many commercial houses and one portion of the city overlooking the sea where the wealthier classes live is built up with fine houses of Mexican style of architecture. Taken altogether the city, with its picturesque tropical surroundings, would be about the last place one would associate with a plague."

GREAT SUMS PAID HEADS OF SOME NATIONS FOR OFFICIAL DUTIES ACTUALLY PERFORMED

One often reads of the extravagant allowances granted the heads of nations by their respective governments and of the almost fabulous sums paid out annually by some of the European powers for the maintainance of royal families, but not until recently has any adequate idea of what they are paid for actual work performed been obtained. By work actually performed is meant that part of the daily routine of the head of the government devoted to his strictly official duties, not to state levees, receptions, reviews and functions at which he must be present.

The actual work of the head of a nation is the review of all parliamentary documents, state papers, treaties, cases against the crown, pardons and commutments of sentences, death warrants, the correspondence of the throne, preparation of papers to be read at certain meetings of the ministry or before parliament and perhaps a score or more of other duties at his desk, and the figures which follow show the approximate amount earned by the respective heads of the government named.

Russia leads in the salary paid its ruler. The czar drawing for every minute of actual work approximately $81. Austria comes second with Francis Joseph drawing $35 per minute; Italy third, with $21 as her king's salary, and Germany following with $18 per minute for her kaiser. Great Britain gives Edward VII. $15 per minute; Spain allows Alfonso $14, and Bavaria and Sweden each gives to its monarch $8 per minute for his services. Belgium and Denmark allow their rulers respectively $4 per minute, while the United States pays its president the smallest salary of any nation in Europe, his pay being forty cents per minute for actual work performed.

These figures are reckoned on the annual salary, and placing the daily working hours at six.

It will be seen that the salaries of the heads of the governments are not in proportion to the size, population and wealth of the countries named, and that while the United States is the wealthiest government, the salary of her chief magistrate is insignificantly small compared with that allowed the king of even such a small monarchy as Denmark.

THE SOUTH BEFORE THE WAR.

A Large Proportion of Its People Engaged in Many Pursuits.

There were in the South (by the census of 1850), in round numbers, 174,500 persons owning from one to five slaves. If these whites represented a family of five persons each on an average—and many Southern families were large—we have no less than 872,500 persons dependent upon five slaves or less to the family for support, when only two in the five were capable of profitable work, their own support to come, at the same time, out of the profits of their own labor. Was a population of 1,745,000 souls ever clothed and fed by the labor of only one-fifth of their number?

However much Southern men may have been accused of idleness and indolence, very many of them—slaveholders and non-slaveholders alike—were compelled to rely upon their own energy and industry for a livelihood. To rely upon the labor of the few slaves they owned signified increasing poverty and embarrassment.

And how were the thousands of families that owned no slaves, and yet composed two-thirds of the white population of the South, to be supported? Here again the United States census for 1850 gives us many interesting and significant facts. The number of white persons engaged in laborious occupations in the South in this year was larger in proportion to population than in the North. The census gives us the number of white persons over 15 years of age engaged in any occupation in each State of the Union. The figures are decidedly to the credit of the South.

Let us compare a few Northern with a few Southern States. In Massachusetts the percentage of persons over 15 years of age engaged in work was 45.39; in Rhode Island, 46.71; in New Hampshire, 45.05; in Connecticut, 40.46; in New York, 47.61; in New Jersey, 47.85. Now let us glance at an equal number of States in the South. In Maryland the percentage of white persons over 15 years of age engaged in work was 51.80; in Virginia, 46.54; in Georgia, 47.18; in Florida, 53.04; in Mississippi, 51.23; in Texas, 54.03. The average for all the States in the North was 47.92; for those in the South 49.14. Only one Southern State—Missouri—fell to an average so low as Massachusetts. Two in the North—Pennsylvania and Iowa—rose to an average as high as Maryland or Mississippi, not one of them equaling Florida, Arkansas or Texas.

These facts are decisive of the question of industrial conditions in the South, says the Rev. J. M. Hawley, in Things and Thoughts. Whatever may have been the influence of the African shadow upon the people south of the Mason and Dixon line, it did not produce men who despised labor and lived in idleness and luxury. Go to any State of the South and the fact remains that the average of the white population living upon the interest of invested money and having no occupation was considerably smaller than in the north.

HIS MOTHER'S SMILE.

Influence of Little Acts May Endure for Years.

Gen. Wager Swayne, who died, recently, had a mother of exceptional character, of which her son was tenderly appreciative. One of his pleasant recollections of her was connected with a young clerk in a bookstore at Columbus, Ohio. The youth was poor, ambitious and of a retiring disposition. His reticence did not tend to make him popular among his mates, but Mrs. Swayne, whenever she visited the store, never forgot to greet him a smile and a friendly word.

Years after, when Gen. Swayne, as commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, was puzzling over the management of half a million former slaves in Alabama, he found Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton a staunch supporter. The secretary was the sternest of all heads of departments, yet to the general he was always kind. He was, said report, "unapproachable;" yet Gen. Swayne could always approach him.

One day Secretary Stanton drove to the War Department in haste, on his way to an important meeting with the President. He sent a messenger into the building, to inquire if any one were waiting to see him.

"Gen. Swayne is waiting, sir," was the messenger's report.

The secretary left his carriage and hurried into the building. The two men had a little business talk, and then Gen. Swayne at last gave way to irrepressible curiosity

"Mr. Secretary," said he, "I don't understand your great kindness to me. I have never understood it. You have shown me such unusual favor that I want to ask why you have done it."

"Gen. Swayne," said the secretary, "when I was a poor, struggling, lonely clerk in Columbus, studying law at night and working by day, your mother's kindly smile and her encouraging words put heart and hope into me. I knew about her work among the colored people of Columbus, and I was aware of her interest in the ex-slaves. Now do you understand? I remember your mother's smile."

It is the complaint of every old fashioned woman that when a girl gets on her best dress, she "slops in it" around the house.

It costs more to keep a chafing dish than it does to keep a horse and buggy.

THE SCHOOL WAGON

An Interesting Experiment Which Is Soon to Be Tried in Illinois.

THE SCHOOL WAGON.

Prof. Alfred Bayliss, State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Illinois, is a strong advocate of school district consolidation.

Suppose the taxable wealth of a rural township in Illinois should be assessed for the purpose of raising the funds necessary to maintain and equip one central school house. There is hardly a rural township in the State in which a central school maintained and equipped in such a way would not be one well worthy of the name. To begin with, the building would be commodious and comfortable. In ventilation, lighting, warming and every sanitary arrangement it would be a century ahead of the little district school houses to be found at nearly every turn of the road in Illinois, but hundreds of which are, in late years, attended by a half dozen children or less, and not a few of which are closed for want of attendance. Supt. Bayliss says the real reason for this change is the movement to the cities and towns. He tells a story in this connection. "I met a friend on the train the other day," he says, "who was returning, with his wife, from a visit to old Lancaster County, where they came from. He had had a good time, and was going home to think it over and talk it over. He is a rich farmer; has hundreds of broad acres, a great barn, into which you could haul the district school house, a fine home, etc. 'Well,' I said, 'I suppose the boys have been running the farm.' 'No,' he said, 'they are not at home.' 'How's that?' 'Well, John, he's practicin' law over in Iowa, and doin' pretty well, too. Henry, he's a dentist. Hung out his shingle up in Wisconsin last April, and wrote me that he cleared nearly a hundred dollars the first month. Jim, he's at the school of pharmacy in Chicago.' 'And who's on the farm?' I asked. 'Oh, us two and the hired help.'

"You all know that man, don't you?" the professor asks. "His name is legion." Then he goes on to tell about the man he had in mind. "This man has a railroad station, a school house and a graveyard on his farm, and they used to be very proud of the fine large school." When asked how the school was flourishing now, he answered: "Oh, I hardly know. We had six scholars last winter, but the Jones family moved not long ago. I don't think of any more to come in."

An outgrowth of the system of township consolidation of schools will be the school wagon, to collect the children from the more distant parts of a township and bring them to the school. The calculators think this could be done without increasing taxes or even reaching the limits of taxation for school purposes in a township, after the area of assessment for the support of a central school is made so much larger than that of the district. In course of time, no doubt, after this system is developed, and its logical outcome and results are seen, the wagons will run, no matter what the condition of the weather or the roads. All roads in a rural Illinois township will lead, then, to the school house in the center, or in that spot in the township which can be reached the most easily and speedily. That is what the system is sure to come to, and probably in a few years.

That building consolidation is one of the purposes of the proposed reform, however, Mr. Bayliss leaves no room to doubt. "Here in Illinois," he says, "we must have out in the country pleasant, roomy, convenient and sanitary school houses, as well adapted for their purpose in all respects and even as attractive architecturally as they are fast coming to be in the cities. Architecturally, the school house should exhibit the taste and to some extent the aspiration of the neighborhood. It should be better than the best dwelling house, but in many a country district there are those who wouldn't exchange their best barn for the school house. It should be lighted from the right direction; have the teacher's desk in the right place; have ample air and floor space; have cloakrooms for boys and girls, entered from the schoolroom, and be furnished with lavatories opening into properly constructed closets, accessible in no other way. It should be properly ventilated, and when possible have a dry, clean and warm cellar. It should have abundant book cases and cabinets and reading tables. A portion of the ground should be properly ornamented, and altogether the house and ground should be the just pride of the community."

Prof. Bayliss admits that, at first view, the taxpayers might fear that they could not stand the expense. But he evidently doubts whether their expenses would be greatly increased. They could not stand it, he admits, "under the grotesque system of school maintenance now prevailing. The idea is to centralize and improve systems and force results by cutting off a great many useless expenses and putting the money which is now paid into incompetent hands into the hands of others who can give value received. "The reduction of the number of districts in each township," he said, "would in many, if not most, cases lead to the consolidation of all the schools, the organization of a graded school, and the establishment of a high school department in every township. If, because of bad roads or other causes less real, a township does not choose to consolidate all of the schools in one building, then at least the older children could be brought together in a central school, and given the advantage of companionship and association with others of their own age."

The township high school is one of the prime results aimed at by the proposed change. There is provision for township high schools in the Illinois school laws, but as long as the district system prevails there is little prospect of the opportunity being utilized. The new system, it is believed, would bring the township high school into existence all over the State. "There ought to be," says Supt. Bayliss, "within reach of every farmer's child in Illinois, a country school that should be as worthy a place on the accredited list of the State university as the city schools that now make up that list. It ought to give as good quality of instruction in mathematics and science and language and literature as the city high school." As to the effect of centralizing the common schools of the township, he says: "Our present system has served its purpose. It no longer meets the requirements."

From all of which it would appear that President Eliot of Harvard is not so far wrong when he says that the educational system of this country is capable of vast improvement. Supt. Bayliss attributes the decay of the country school to the great and growing movement toward the towns and cities, and he has some pronounced views as to this movement as a cause of which there are likely to come many serious effects. "Society is moving," he says. "The city school, for reasons I need not stop to recapitulate, is keeping up with the procession. The country is re-enforcing and regenerating the city with its best blood. The movement is not new, but it is continuous and accelerated. The elements which destroy the population of cities will operate in the future as in the past. We are proud of the fact that the majority of the great men this country has produced come from the farms, and it will be a most serious mistake to even seem to encourage the idea that success in life is possible only to those who leave them."

Millions in a Battleship.

Seven million dollars will be the cost of the British battleship Edward VII., which is now in process of construction at the Devonport dock yards—more money than has ever before been represented in an engine of war. The keel of the mammoth craft was laid by the king in March, 1902, and already the hull is virtually complete, over 4,000 tons dead weight of steel plating and armor having been built into her.

So quickly has this superb warship been brought forward that, although the original specifications did not allow for her being ready for the pennant before March, 1905, it is now officially stated that she will be completed many months earlier than this.

The original estimates were for £1,500,000, and although they have been cut down, it is authoritatively stated by prominent officials at Devonport yard that the total expenditure will amount to well over £1,400,000.

This outlay on a fabric which a well-directed torpedo would annihilate makes one realize how costly the game of modern naval war would prove.

Two more battleships of the same class have been laid down—the Dominion and the Commonwealth.

Result of Experience.

"I went to the church fair last night, and I think I see a new meaning in that old adage now."

"What's that?"

"It's my idea that none but the brave have any business there."—Philadelphia Press.

No Danger of Fire.

Guest—Any danger of fire in this hotel?

Bell boy (with his teeth chattering)—N-not unless yer pay extra fer it.—Judge.

When a man is buried he gets in on the ground floor, which is true at no previous time in his career.

Not one in fifty has sense enough to begin repenting a sin before he is found out.