

# White Hand

A Tale of the Early Settlers of Louisiana.

BY AUSTIN C. BURDICK

## CHAPTER XXI.

Slowly and painfully dragged away the hours and the days to the poor sick wife in New Orleans. Old Loppa was yet kind, and so was the physician. Yet Louise had a very severe sickness, and a part of the time she was out of her head. But gradually the delirium passed away, and she was at length able to sit up. Three weeks had she lain thus ere she could rise from her bed; but on the fourth week she was able to walk about the room. It was at the close of the fourth week that her husband returned.

"Have I been away longer than you expected?" he asked.

"No," was the quiet reply, "for I've expected nothing about it."

"Ah!" uttered Simon, with show of chagrin.

"I have been too sick to expect anything," explained Louise.

"O!" uttered the husband, more mildly.

"Yes—I have been very sick. I even feared at one time I should never see you again."

There was something so piquant in this that Simon was sure there was sarcasm in it, but he chose not to expose his doubts.

"I, too, have been laid up," he said, after gazing into her face for some moments.

"Ah—how? I noticed your hand was rolled in rags. What has happened? Have you been fighting the wicked Indians?"

Again Simon bit his lip, but he kept calm.

"I have had a duel, on your account."

"Is it possible? How was it?"

"I heard you insulted most grossly, and I would not bear it."

"You should not have borne it, at least, if you loved your wife. But who was it?"

"Goupart St. Denis."

Louise started.

"Explain," she said, earnestly and eagerly.

"Ha! the name moves you, does it?"

"Why should it not? You know he was once a lover of mine."

This open avowal, so frank and honest, seemed to please Lobo, and he went on to explain:

"No matter what was said, but St. Denis struck me. Of course I challenged him. We chose swords. Your father was present. He would have stopped it if he could, for he feared I should get hurt."

"As you did."

"Listen. We fenced awhile, and I found that the boy was at my mercy. Twice I refused to press my point upon his open bosom. Finally, when I saw that 'twould be downright murder for me to kill him, I bade him put up his sword. He asked me for what—for he knew not that I only toyed with him. 'This is only boy's play,' said I. 'Then put up your sword,' said he. I did so, and just as my point touched the ground he brought me a blow across the hand. What do you think of that?"

"Perhaps I ought not to speak my thoughts."

"Surely you ought. What do you think of it?"

"Well, then, I think you have told me very fine story."

"Eh? Do you doubt my word?"

"Doubt you? Doubt the word of Simon Lobo? Believe that my own husband could speak falsehood? Never, Simon—never!"

Sharply the scamp looked into Louise's face, but he could detect nothing there, save a calm, cool expression of utter simplicity; yet he knew she was quizzing him.

Shortly after this Lobo went out, and when he returned he reported that the doctor would come in the morning. So that night Louise was left with Loppa, and on the next morning the doctor came, and with him came the anxious husband. The former examined his patient carefully, and he expressed the opinion that the wife should not undertake the journey under a week at least.

"Then I believe I shall go to Biloxi. There is a ship ready to sail, and I have some business to do there."

Louise expressed her entire willingness, so Simon resolved to go. In truth he was now expecting soon to be master of an immense fortune, and he was preparing the way to put it to immediate use, his main object being to obtain a profitable cargo to return to France, whither he meant to take his wife as soon as he could dispose of the few remaining obstacles that stood in his way. He started that very night for Biloxi, and his wife was once more left to the kind care of her sable attendant.

A week passed away, and her husband came not. She had now so far regained her health that she could walk out in company with Loppa, and the rose was all back to her cheek.

Another week passed, and she was well and just as she began to wonder if any accident had happened to her husband he made his appearance. That very day there was a barge to start up the river. New Orleans was all alarm and excitement. The garrison at Natchez had been surprised by the Indians, and nearly every soul murdered! Only six had escaped, and four of those had this very morning reached the town. Gov. Perier had sent messengers up to the plantations along on the river to put the French on their guard; and now this barge, full of soldiers, was about to start up to see if any assistance was required anywhere on the way, and in the meantime a council of officers was to be held to determine what further should be done.

Lobo gained passage for himself and wife, but they were forced to put up with such accommodations as the others had, save that a sheltered place was fixed for Louise, near the stern, in consideration of her recent illness.

Of course the passage up, against the current, was slow, the heavy barge not making a headway of over three miles an hour, and stopping sometimes at the few plantations on the way, so that it was not until the morning of the fifth day that they reached the establishment of Brion St. Julien. But the captain of the boat concluded not to go up to the chateau, so Simon and his wife were landed at the mouth of Walnut river, and from thence they made their way up on foot.

They had gained about half the distance when they were startled, on making a turn upon the river's bank, by seeing a small canoe ahead with two Indians in it.

"Why?" uttered Lobo, after gazing upon the strange scene a few moments, "they are Natchez Indians. Do the villains mean harm here?"

"Rather a small party for that," said Louise, upon whose mind the sight of a Natchez had not that peculiar effect that it had upon her companion's.

"But we'll watch them. Here—let us keep further away from the bank, and then we can follow them, and not be seen. They surely mean to approach the house. Come, let's hasten, and we'll have them captured. Of course they had a hand in the dreadful massacre."

Louise made no objection to this, and accordingly they took the cross path, and ere long they reached the garden. Half way up the wide path they walked, and here they came to the closed gate of the barricade; but a few loud calls from Simon brought old Tony forth, and they were soon within the enclosure. The faithful negro could at first hardly believe his eyes. He gazed upon the "upper-shun," as he afterwards called it, and finally a big tear rolled down his sable cheek.

"Mam'selle Louise!" he gasped, extending his broad hands. "Bless heaven!"

With glistening eyes she returned the faithful fellow's grasp and salutation, and then bounded away towards the house, for she saw her father upon the piazza; she waited not for her husband now.

"Father!"

The frantic parent caught his child to his bosom, and with streaming eyes he murmured his thanks, for in that moment of reunion he forgot the dark cloud that hung over his loved one. Before the old man had found his tongue Simon had reached the piazza.

"My father," he uttered, "forgive me if I am abrupt—but you have heard of the dreadful massacre at Fort Rosalie?"

"Yes."

"Well, there are two Natchez Indians making their way up here in a canoe. Perhaps they know not of our habitation. Let men be sent out at once to capture them, and we will interrogate them, at least."

That was enough for Tony, for he had followed Simon to the house, and heard this remark. Ever since the abduction of his young "mas'r and missus," he had longed to get hold of an Indian, and here was a chance.

"Only two ob 'um, d'ye say, Mas'r Simon?"

"That's all, Tony."

"I'll hab 'um!" And with this the stout Afric disappeared, and in a few moments more he had four stout companions at his heels on his way to the river.

In the meantime, Simon followed the marks and his child into the house, and when they reached the sitting room, they found St. Denis there. He looked up and saw the marks; then he saw Simon Lobo, and then—his eye rested upon that female form. He started to his feet and turned pale as death. That loved face was turned upon him; those soft eyes, now swimming in tears, were bent upon his own, and her name dwelt upon his lips.

"My wife, Monsieur St. Denis," said Lobo, in malignant triumph.

"O, my soul!" burst from the wretch-

ed man's lips, and covering his face with his hands, he sank back upon his chair.

Louise seemed upon the point of speaking, but at that moment the tramp of feet and the sound of voices were heard in the hall, and in a moment more the door was thrown unceremoniously open.

## CHAPTER XXII.

"Bless heaven!" cried old Tony, bounding into the hall at a wild hop and planting himself directly in the middle of the floor. "We's cotched 'um, mas'r—we's cotched 'um, an' here dey am!"

At this White Hand and Coqualla came forward. Simon Lobo was the first to recognize, beneath the Natchez garb and the walnut stain, the youth whom he had hoped to destroy, and a stifled cry broke from his lips, while he turned pale and trembled like an aspen.

The next to recognize the living truth was Louise, and with one bound the brother and sister were in each other's arms. Their stifled exclamations of joy awoke the parent to his senses, and in a moment more he held them both upon his bosom.

"My children," he cried, raising his streaming eyes to heaven. "O, how blest is this moment! Almost it makes me feel to bow in humble resignation to the dreadful blow that has been inflicted upon me."

"Louis, my dear boy," at this juncture exclaimed Simon, having now recovered his presence of mind sufficiently to hide his real emotions of fear and chagrin.

"Dear Louis, let me welcome you back to our home."

And as he spoke he advanced and extended his hand. The youth gazed upon him a moment in stern silence.

"Simon Lobo," he uttered, drawing proudly up, "I did not think you would offer me that hand!"

"How—eh?" gasped the wretch, turning pale again. "You should not thus reject the hand of your brother-in-law."

White Hand started.

"Brother-in-law!" he repeated. "Are you mad?"

"No—I am a husband."

White Hand crossed over to where Louise stood and took her by the hand. They whispered together a moment, and then the youth turned towards Simon.

"Villain," he exclaimed, "you forced her to this!"

"She consented to the marriage," returned Simon, triumphantly.

St. Denis sprang to his feet. He moved to Louise's side, and grasped her hand.

"Louise," he said, in a broken voice, "tell me all, tell me if you gave this man your heart; for in the years of darkness that shall follow this blow, it will afford a glimmer of light to know I am not all forgotten by my soul's idol."

"Goupart, he forced me to the marriage."

"Silence!" thundered Lobo, starting towards where the speaker stood. "Louise, remember you are my wife, and as such I claim obedience. Breathe another word of calumny on my head and I'll make you wish your tongue had been torn out by the roots ere you used it so."

"Simon, you know you did force me to become your wife."

At this moment St. Denis started up, and his dark eyes burning with fire, he said:

"Stand back, villain! You are her husband, but dare to interfere now and I'll smite you as I would a venomous reptile."

"And I am with you, Goupart," added White Hand, starting forward, and clenching his fists. "Go on, sister."

Simon Lobo gazed first upon St. Denis, and then upon the dark-skinned youth, and he feared them. Then he looked towards the aged parent, who stood with his hands to his eyes sobbing as though his poor heart would break; and the villain evidently felt uncomfortable.

"I refused him at first," continued the unfortunate one, "and told him I loved Goupart St. Denis. Then he told me he had seen my father's wealth accumulate under his care, and had looked on a part of it as belonging to him, and he would not now see another come in and snatch that wealth away. He determined to have his share. I told him if he forced me to become his wife I would beg of my father to give me not a sou. Then he swore if such a thing were done, he would make my life such a scene of torture I should pray for death to come and relieve me."

"Liar!" hissed Simon.

"No—no," calmly replied Louise; "I speak but truth." Then turning to her listeners: "But I refused to marry him, and on the very next night, after midnight, two stout men came and carried me away. I was weak and faint then, for I had but just recovered from sickness. Yet they carried me away and locked me in a dark prison house. They refused me both food and drink. There I came high famishing with hunger and thirst. At length the villain came to me; and when I begged for a drop of water he swore I should have none till I had promised to be his wife! My mind was fluttering, and thirst made me frantic. I promised to be his wife! Then he brought me bread and milk; he took me from the prison, and soon arrangements were made for the wedding. He had obtained the consent of the colonial governor, and we were married in the church, the governor himself being present. When the priest put his questions to me, I was burning with fever, and a dreadful sickness was upon me. Yet my mind was not shaken. I promised to the best of my abilities to do all he had asked of me. Then we were pronounced man and wife, and I begged of him to hurry away, for I was faint and sick. I reached our home; the fever seized me, and raged for many weeks. Health came at last, and I reached my father's house."

(To be continued.)

There is nothing more universally commended than a fine day; the reasons, that people can commend it without envy.—Shenstone.

## RUSSIA DEMANDS ANSWER.

Wants to Know Why China Rejects Her Terms.

London, May 4.—In a dispatch from Peking the correspondent of the Times says that in an interview held on Wednesday with all the ministers of the Chinese office, M. Planchon, Russian charge d'affaires, pressed for reasons for the rejection of the Russian demands. The ministers replied that they were unable to give the reasons separately. M. Planchon then, on behalf of his government, requested a statement of China's intentions, first, the contemplated alteration in the government of Mongolia; second, the non-alienation by lease, concession or otherwise of any portion of the Liaou valley to any other power, and, third, the opening of new treaty ports in Manchuria.

To the first clause the ministers replied that the alteration had not received imperial sanction; to the second, that China had no intention of alienating any of her territory; and to the third, that the opening of ports would depend upon trade developments.

M. Planchon professed to be satisfied with these answers, but the Chinese are still uncomfortable, knowing how impossible it is for her to resist Russia's demand. It is announced that M. Leeser, the Russian minister to China, is returning to Peking, and that the fulfillment of the terms of the Manchurian convention will be postponed until after his arrival and will result from his negotiations.

The fact that Russia now appears anxious to repudiate the orders given M. Planchon, concludes the Times correspondent, "does not mean that her demands have been abandoned; by these orders Russia has acquainted China with what she expects."

## NAVAL OFFICERS BRIBED.

Charge of Boodling Against Builders of Philippine Gunboats.

Victoria, B. C., May 4.—Two Japanese papers publish stories to the effect that the American officers sent over to watch the construction of the Manila gunboats for the United States by the Uruguay dock company were bribed and passed work which resulted in structural defects in the first gunboat.

The Niroku Shimpo says that three United States officers superintended the construction of the first gunboat and some Japanese officers who took her to Manila saw that, although outwardly the vessel was well constructed, there were some defects. They reported to Washington, and new inspectors were sent, and the four gunboats now on the stocks are being reconstructed at a heavy loss to the builders. The Japan Mail discredits the stories of bribing.

## CABLE TO MANILA.

Will Be Finished by Next Independence Day if Possible.

Chicago, May 4.—A dispatch from Washington, D. C., says: By July 4 there will be direct cable communication between the United States and the Philippine islands. This promise has been made by Vice President Ward, of the Postal cable company, during an extended conference with the assistant secretary of the navy.

Since the cable was opened to Honolulu the work of laying the cable from Hawaii across the Pacific has proceeded with great rapidity. The present plan is to time things, so it will be possible to make the fourth of July, 1903, in Manila memorable by the establishment of communication with the home government, through an American direct cable.

## Fire Destroys Oil Wells.

Bradford, Pa., May 4.—Late advices from Watsonville, the town reported to have been wiped out by fire, indicate that it escaped almost miraculously from the fate which had been predicted for it. The property losses in the vicinity, however, are large. Mount Jewett also escaped with small losses. But in the vicinity of Simpson and Bingham the destruction of oil property was complete over a wide area. It is estimated that at least 1,000 oil wells in McKean county were destroyed.

## Gunboat to the Rescue.

Pekin, May 4.—The United States consul at Canton has notified Minister Conger that a mob recently attacked a party of engineers at work on the Canton-Hanow railroad. The United States gunboat Callao was dispatched to the nearest point up the river to aid the engineers. Mr. Conger has requested the Chinese foreign office to investigate the matter and instruct the viceroys to give the engineers protection.

## TURKS OFF GUARD

SURPRISED BY REBELS WITH MOST DISASTROUS RESULTS.

City of Salonica Plunged into Darkness by Explosion of a Bomb—100 Turkish Soldiers Killed—City is Under Martial Law—Germany Sends a Gunboat to Watch Proceedings.

London, May 6.—Except as to the number killed, which is now said to exceed 100, the latest telegrams and mail advices from Salonica fully confirm the previous reports of the serious nature of the outbreak there. Advantage seems to have been taken of the fact that the Turks had relaxed their precautions, and the garrison was seriously depleted, amounting to only 400 soldiers. The first mine that was exploded cut the principal gas main and plunged the city in darkness. Then the Ottoman bank and other buildings were attacked with bombs, as already has been described. Soldiers were hurried up to the scene of the disorder. They fired wild volleys, but many of their attackers were killed or wounded by the explosion of their own bombs.

Attempts at throwing bombs are now being dealt with summarily. At noon Sunday a man disguised as a Turkish priest tried to throw a bomb into the telegraph office at Salonica. He was apprehended and executed on the spot.

The authorities continue to make arrests, and many Bulgarians disguised as Turkish officers are being seized. Among those arrested are professors in the Bulgarian school, who are alleged to have been at the head of the revolutionary movement.

Edib Pasha, who arrived in Salonica last Saturday to carry out the decree of martial law, has issued a proclamation, stating that the Sultan has ordered him to deal severely with all persons guilty of outrages.

At Uskub, European Turkey, the police have seized stores of dynamite in the houses of the Bulgarian settlers. The news that Germany has sent a warship to Salonica has led the Austrian newspapers to discuss the probability of European intervention. In both Berlin and Vienna, however, semi-official statements have been issued explaining that the object of sending the ships of war is solely the protection of foreign subjects, and that the vessels will be withdrawn as soon as the danger is over.

MORE TIME IN BUTTE STRIKE.

Continuance in Hearing of Injunction is Granted Western Union.

Butte, May 6.—A continuance has been granted by the Federal court to the American labor union in the hearing on the injunction granted to the Western Union telegraph company, restraining all members of the union from interfering in any way with the business of the company. The hearing has been continued until May 18, at which time the court will decide whether the order shall be allowed to stand and be made permanent or withdrawn. Attorneys have been secured by the Trades and Labor assembly to fight the matter out in the courts.

It was announced at the offices of the American Labor union today that no further action is to be taken in the affair until after the court has rendered a decision. Since the injunction was issued the messengers of the Western Union company have been unmolested and there has been no attempt to intimidate them or persuade them to quit the service.

The "unfair" banner which was placed in the street in front of the Western Union office for several weeks has been taken away.

Road Across Andes.

Washington, May 6.—In a report to the state department, Consul Mansfield, at Valparaiso, says that during the last session of the Chilean congress, which adjourned in February, a bill was passed which provided for the construction of a railway over the Andes mountains to connect Buenos Ayres with Santiago and Valparaiso. This will be the first line to cross the continent of South America. The Argentine government is building a railway from Buenos Ayres, which is connected with the line from Valparaiso.

London Objects to Americanism.

London, May 6.—The Yerkes-Speyer scheme for the consolidation of all the underground railways of London is meeting with much opposition. The newspapers protest against such "Americanism" and monopoly and urge parliament not to submit thereto. The parliamentary committee of the London county council will submit its report to the council tomorrow. This report will insist upon a further investigation of the consolidation scheme, which the committee contends will raise fares.

Chicago Fire Loss.

Chicago, May 6.—Fire tonight destroyed the five-story building at 151, 153 Wabash avenue, causing a loss of \$150,000. The building was occupied by several mercantile firms, whose stock was completely destroyed.