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The White Sepulchre The Tale of Pelee

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CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

There was another issue of Nemesis, the curse of another life through his coming back from the edge of the water. In the crush of self-hate, he smiled at the woman. . . . Until a moment ago the wrecking work of the morning had put thoughts of Soronia from his mind. He had come to the shop partly to marshal his final resources in an out-of-the-way spot and arrange the last line of action, and partly to avoid the possibility of arrest for the moment in case the Panther had brought an emissary of the law. His end was a matter of hours at best, his crushing and his friendship with Constable were over. Saint Pierre, of the lesser islands, was the last station of his traveling. During three days he had passed many hours in the shop. What those hours had accomplished was dramatically revealed now in the anguish of the maiden as she waited for the answer to her question.

"I have been thinking a great deal since yesterday. I found that I couldn't do what I tried—at least without seeing you again, Soronia." Breen spoke vaguely. He had sufficient honesty not to be deft with the forces he was now employing. "The future, I cannot tell yet. I may have to leave Saint Pierre for awhile, but I shall leave my heart here, and if I live—I will come back! To-day I must see my friend and tell him that I cannot cruise farther south with him."

She would have fallen had he not held her, but her eyes were shining. The old man ran for restoratives. Breen would have put the girl into a chair, but she clung to him.

"I have waited for you so long, my maker of pictures," she whispered.

Pere Rabaut stood beside them with medicines. The veneer of shop servitude was gone from the gray old face. The sharp black eyes were directed steadily upon the stranger, who saw that they were ready to soften or burst into flame.

Breen saw, too, that he was less in the presence of the father of a creole girl of Martinique than the father of an old-world housemaid.

"I am waiting for you to speak, monsieur," said Pere Rabaut.

"You have not waited long, sir," Breen answered. "It was just an instant ago that I had the honor of hearing from your daughter's lips—that she would wait for me until I could come back permanently to Saint Pierre."

"I know you will forgive an old soldier of France. So many people do understand—don't try to understand—that I deemed it a privilege to marry the mother of the maid in your arms—not because a governor general of Martinique was her father—but because she was worthy the worship of an old soldier of France. The girl is like her mother, monsieur."

"It is an honor I do not deserve, sir—the daughter of a country woman of Josephine and a soldier of France," said Breen, grateful that one of his utterances contained or covered no lie.

The bow from the veteran was a gracious thing. He held a glass to the lips of his daughter.

"I do not need it now, father," Soronia said softly.

There was a knock at the door. The maid listened to her room, and Pere Rabaut, once more the master of the shop, greeted a gasping patron. Breen was left to his thoughts. . . . That which he had done was unchangeable.

"Nicholas Stenbridge, rejoice! this is your wedding day!" he muttered. "What a time you've had down the years! You have lived long and freely, taking what you saw and daring consequences and prattling like a defective to keep up your spirits! Nick, do you recall the prime sentence of your philosophy—'There is nothing which Death cannot cure'? Isn't it a wonderful saying? So wonderful that it has exceptions! No, Death will not put Peter and his lady out to sea! . . . The police are after you; your lips are hot with lies; you sit in the gloom. Nick Stenbridge, you are whipped, cornered. You go out a coward and a liar. Where is your laugh of yesterday?"

And yet he smiled at the perfection of the pride-humbling trap the Fates had laid for him this day; smiled at the words he had uttered to Soronia and her father, who had hurried into a soldier of France. And yet there had been no other way. After what he had done to Constable, it was not in him to deprive Soronia of what she seemed to need—not under her pitiful eyes! His own part did not enter. He conjured no golden haze as the mate of this creature of ardor, fragrant, and gentleness. No, on the other extreme, did he reflect that to spend one's days in a torrid shop with a woman of black blood was a fitting end for a brutalized life.

He put the woman out of his mind, and turned to the sorry business of the wounded friend. He must find Constable and say the last words; then take the blame from the friend in the presence of the women. If he were taken into custody on the way—there was no help for that. All remnants of justice and whitemanship demanded that he set out at once. He hurried to the court.

"Soronia," he called, "I'll have to go now. Mr. Constable expects to leave with his ship to-day, and I must talk with him before he goes."

She appeared in the dress in which he

had first seen her. There were tender remembrances which he scarcely heard, but he answered gently. His mind was with the man.

"And you will be back this afternoon?"

"Yes, little fairy," he answered.

"And I shall watch from the upper window, if the smoke clears, for your friendly ship to sail. . . . Ah, don't stay long from me!"

The sun could not shine through the ash-fog which shut out the harbor distances and shrouded the great cone, but volumes of dreadful heat found the earth. Though the Madams lay well in the harbor, she was invisible now, even from the terrace. There was no line dividing the shore from the sea, nor the sea from the sky. It was all an illimitable mass, whose fabric was the dust which had lain for centuries upon Pelee's dynamo.

There was no carriage for hire. The day had driven the public drivers to cover. Breen walked to the plantation house. The servant was long in answering his ring. Mr. Wall was in the hallway. The fall from guest to an enemy of the house pulled hard upon Breen's philosophy.

"Come in, sir," said Uncle Joey. His tone was repressed as he added: "I had I known your address, I should have sent your effects to you."

"I wasn't thinking about that, but looking for Mr. Constable," Breen declared.

"You are Nicholas Stenbridge?"

"Yes."

The elder man stared at him savagely. "Don't you think you have done enough damage?"

"More than enough, Mr. Wall; but there remains, from my point of view, an unfinished sentence."

"He is not here."

"Then I need trouble you no further." Breen had not the heart that instant to ask to see the ladies. At the pier he learned from Ernst, who had charge of the launch, that Mr. Constable was not aboard the ship, and had given up the idea of sailing for the day, apparently.

At the Hotel de France, Breen found that Constable had made his way beyond toward the River Blanc, which had flowed black and boiling yesterday. At the Hotel des Palmes there was definite word of M. Constable, American. The proprietor bore witness that the gentleman had stopped at the establishment long enough to procure food, mules and guides—the last at great cost, since the natives were in deadly fear—for a trip to the craters of Pelee.

CHAPTER IX.

The morning which broke through the defenses of Breen, and crumpled the dearest purpose of Constable, also drew Miss Stenbridge into the vortex of intense emotions. Whatever virtuous traits and impulses she had inherited from her mother, it had been her self-training to repress. Ample opportunity had been afforded her to note in her mother the career of an indomitable mistress of affairs. The result of her observations was a positive distaste for stiffness of views in any sphere, and a conviction that the display of masterfulness in woman did not make for woman's happiness.

As a girl, it had not occurred to Lara to exert an authority counter to her mother's. When she became a young woman she carefully avoided any extremity which might lead to the breaking of either her own or the more visible will of the house.

Now, in the midst of painful developments, it was borne home to Lara that she had progressed too far in the way of amiability; that she had unconsciously outstripped her intention, and passed into the boundaries of self-assertion. In the crisis of the newspaper revelations, she had followed her mother's initiative without question. The creature of indecisions that she had become grew more and more odious to her as the forenoon passed, and in her contrition she realized that the man whose first wish was to spare her from harm had been repaid with a lack of courtesy and a greater lack of courage.

Nothing that she had said or done, it seemed to her now, carried the stigma of decision. She had implored him not to speak; she had run from him, like a frightened child to her mother, when he had told his love and begged her, when she had told his love and begged her, when she had told his love and begged her, when she had told his love and begged her.

"Do you think you would be safe to go with him?"

"Safe as the sea—safe as the black women and their babies now crowded upon the terrible de Stael! I do not care to talk further. You have followed your inclinations regarding Mr. Constable, and until now I have allowed your inclinations to be mine. I am guilty as you are of outraging the sensibilities of a man who deserves at least the consideration of a gentleman. I shall learn the truth about these reports, and if they are as false in substance as I believe, I shall make up for my inclinations."

Mrs. Stenbridge felt that there was a resistance no less formidable than sudden. It must be crushed, of course, but the present moment was not propitious. She laughed gently.

(To be continued.)

ness were not sufficient to start tears of vexation. Lara's mind finally added to the inventor of its miseries by reverting to her conversation with Constable in the carriage on the day of his arrival. How she had berated the essayist for declaring that the stuff of friendship stirred not womankind! How vigorously he had agreed with her!

She sought her own room when the tumult mounted to the point of tears. Presently she went to the door and locked it, for the inevitable thought had come. What did the name of Peter Constable mean to her? She had felt his strength. Long ago she had dreamed of such strength and put the dream away. Whether or not he was to be the conqueror, she knew that mastery like his could rouse her heart.

She was evading the substance of the question. Before the mirror she frowned severely at the Lara there.

"Tell me this," said the woman, "do I want him to go away?"

"No, no," said the image.

"No," repeated the woman; "not if he be innocent."

The image scowled at her conversation. "You deserve to suffer. You sent him away without a title of your trust, without a morsel of your mercy."

Standing in the upper hallway, she heard what passed between Breen and the planter at the front door. Why did not Uncle Joey demand extenuating circumstances? She was sure that Breen would have dropped some hint, at least, of Constable's part in the mysterious alliance, had it not been for the barred iron of the door's watch.

She did not go downstairs to luncheon, but often crossed the hall, entering Constable's room to look at the mountain and cityward along the smoky highway. In one of these watches she saw the little black carriage of Father Damien approaching. He should have driven by, but she ran below and called to him from the veranda.

"Come in and rest a minute, father. Is there any good to tell?"

"Very little, Lara. The gray curse is on Saint Pierre, indeed. I have grown afraid for my people, and an warning to seek refuge in Fort de France. Your guest suggested this step, and has helped nobody with money to care for the people fleeing to the capital."

She drew from him an account of his meeting with Constable on the highway in the morning. He told her, too, how the young man had sent sick native mothers and their children out to the ship for refuge from the heat and sulphur fumes, and of the large sums of money he had volunteered for the care of the favored few who fled to Fort de France. Lara bent her head toward the priest.

"And what do you think of this man, father? He questioned suddenly. Some say that he has gone to the craters of Pelee."

"Where is he now, Father Damien?"

"That I cannot tell, dear. We have not seen him since morning. Some say that he has gone to the craters of Pelee."

She sprang up, but repressed the exclamation upon her lips. Her mother had entered.

"Good morning, Father Damien," Mrs. Stenbridge said pleasantly. "Is Lara rehearsing private theatricals for you?"

The priest made haste to depart, saying that he was on the way to Fort de France with the money Constable had given, to make the refugees there as comfortable as possible. The ladies followed him to the door. It happened that the old man faced Lara as he said:

"I hope it may be a false rumor that your friend has sought the craters of Pelee. Such services as his we cannot afford to do without. There is power in the man—"

"I think I have felt it, father," the girl answered quietly.

"What does this mean, this talk of 'friend' in connection with the confere of a thief?" Mrs. Stenbridge asked.

"I did not quibble in the use of the word—"

"Do you count as a friend one who would try to put you aboard a ship which bears the reputation of the Madame de Stael?—one who would bring to our house the notorious Nicholas Stenbridge?"

"There were no terms. Mr. Constable said he was invited to go, remember."

"My dear child, you are overwrought. I cannot believe that you are appealed to by this sudden interest of his in your welfare; nor that you dreamed of accepting terms that would have frightened our Domremy saint who braved wars."

"I do not like your talk of terms, mother. There were no terms. Mr. Constable asked me to board his ship, that I might be safe. His care for my welfare is not important in this talk."

"Do you think you would be safe to go with him?"

"Safe as the sea—safe as the black women and their babies now crowded upon the terrible de Stael! I do not care to talk further. You have followed your inclinations regarding Mr. Constable, and until now I have allowed your inclinations to be mine. I am guilty as you are of outraging the sensibilities of a man who deserves at least the consideration of a gentleman. I shall learn the truth about these reports, and if they are as false in substance as I believe, I shall make up for my inclinations."

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(To be continued.)

TAFT'S VICTORY IS ASSURED

Returns from All Parts of Country Show that Republicans Elect President.

HUGHES ELECTED

Returns Also Give New York State and City to Taft.

CANNON TO CONGRESS

Results Give Many Surprises—Democrats Carry Where Republicans Expected To Win and Vice Versa.

New York, Nov. 4.—Election returns from throughout the United States received up to an early hour this morning show the following results:

William H. Taft, of Ohio, has been elected president with 298 votes secure and 13 doubtful.

Practically no change is indicated in the complexion of the national house of representatives.

The United States senate will retain its present Republican majority.

Governor Hughes has been re-elected in New York state by about 76,000 plurality.

Indiana has gone for Taft by 15,000 to 18,000 plurality.

Bryan apparently has carried Nebraska, although the Republicans still claim the state.

Ohio, returns have been seriously delayed, owing to the immense size of the ballot, but Taft has carried the state by a majority ranging from 50,000 to 75,000.

Taft carried New York city by about 1,000 plurality, this being the first time the city has given its vote to a Republican presidential candidate since 1896, when McKinley had a small plurality.

Taft received a greater plurality in New York state than Roosevelt did four years ago. The indications point to 202,000 for Taft as against 175,000 for Roosevelt.

Hugen, the Independence party candidate for president, received about 28,000 votes in Greater New York.

The indications are that Democratic governors have been elected in several of the Middle Western states that have given their presidential votes to Taft.

Taft exceeded Roosevelt's pluralities in New Jersey and Massachusetts, as well as in New York.

The Republican plurality fell off heavily in the Middle West in a manner thoroughly surprising to the Republican managers.

Speaker Cannon has been re-elected by his usual majority. Representative Payne, of New York, and Representative Dalzell, of Pennsylvania, have been re-elected, and the house of representatives will probably continue under its old regime. Mr. Payne will have charge of the new tariff bill in the extra session which Mr. Taft will call immediately after March 4 next.

Missouri has returned to the "Solid South" on the presidential ticket and elected Cowherd, Democrat, as its governor.

Some of the figures relating to the Republican slump in certain states regarded as certainly Republican are little short of amazing. Pennsylvania's immense plurality of over 500,000 four years ago has been cut in two. Illinois, which gave Roosevelt 305,000 in 1904, has gone for Taft by about 170,000. The highest claim of the Republicans for Indiana is 15,000 against a plurality of 93,000. Iowa, which gave Roosevelt 158,000 plurality in 1904, has dropped down to about 40,000 for Taft.

The return of Missouri to the Democracy on the presidential ticket wiped out a Republican plurality of 25,000 four years ago.

West Virginia is confidently claimed by the Republicans, but the returns are meager. Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey are striking exceptions to the generally reduced Republican pluralities.

There has been a shrinkage in the Democratic vote in several of the Southern states, notably in Virginia and North Carolina.

Taft has carried Wisconsin by a plurality estimated at 75,000, a falling off from the Roosevelt plurality of 155,000 in 1904.

Kentucky has gone safely for Bryan by about 5,000.

Representative W. S. Cowherd has probably been elected governor of Missouri over Hadley, Republican.

Governor John A. Johnson, of Minnesota, has probably been elected governor of that state for the third time, although the state has gone safely for Taft.



W. H. TAFT

Illinois.

Chicago, Nov. 3, 10 p. m.—The Republican national and state tickets have gained a complete victory in Illinois, although the pluralities will probably fall short of those obtained by the party in the Roosevelt campaign of 1904. Taft has carried the state by approximately 170,000 votes.

Charles S. Deneen, Republican candidate for governor, ran far behind the national ticket, but has been elected by a plurality of about 100,000 over Adlai E. Stevenson, his Democratic opponent.

Chicago and Cook county gave a plurality to Taft of 50,000 against 125,000 for Roosevelt four years ago.

Outside of Cook county the plurality for Taft is not far from 120,000. The plurality of Roosevelt in 1904 was 304,939 for the state.

Stevenson, Democratic candidate for governor, carried Chicago by about 8,000 and the county of Cook by about 6,000. He lost heavily, however, in the state outside of Cook. The state legislature, which is to select a successor to Senator Hopkins, will be strongly Republican.

The Socialist vote showed a considerable falling off from that of four years ago. Debs in 1904 received 69,225 votes. From the returns so far obtained it seems probable he will not receive much over 40,000.

California.

San Francisco, Nov. 3.—George A. Stone, chairman of the Republican state campaign committee, tonight said:

"Taft will carry the state of California by 75,000 majority. So far as the returns have been received," said Chairman Stone, "the plurality of the state is far in excess of any estimate made by me based upon reports of the county committees. The returns show a vote not reasonably expected."

"Regarding the removal of the state capital, indications are favorable for its change. I am satisfied that the cities of the bay have voted for it. But the South is to be heard from."

John F. Murray, secretary of the Democratic state committee, at 11 p. m. said:

"I should not be surprised if Taft carried California by more than 40,000 plurality. Judge Dunne has defeated Cook for re-election as a result of the extensive scratching of Cook by Republicans."

"Returns so far received indicate that the state capital will be removed from Sacramento to Berkeley."

Iowa.

Des Moines, Ia., Nov. 3.—The incomplete returns received at 10 o'clock indicate that Taft has carried Iowa by a plurality of from 40,000 to 50,000. This is a tremendous falling off from the Roosevelt plurality of 158,000 of four years ago, but it represents only a slight falling off from the normal plurality. The entire Republican state ticket is elected, probably by about the same plurality.

Kansas.

Topeka, Kan., Nov. 3.—Kansas election returns are still very incomplete, owing to the long ballot and the late hour of closing the polls. The returns seem to substantiate the claim of the Republican state committee that the entire Republican state ticket, headed by Walter R. Stubbs, for governor, has been elected by about 25,000 plurality, and that Taft's plurality is a few thousand votes larger.

Colorado.

Denver, Nov. 3.—With thousands of scratched ballots yet to be counted and returns on straight ballots complete in no city, town or county in Colorado, conditions are such at midnight that it is impossible to give even an idea of how the state has gone. It is estimated that more than 50 per cent of the ballots cast throughout the state were scratched. Outside of Denver and Pueblo, Bryan and Taft are running neck and neck, straight ballots, with definite returns from no point.

New Jersey.

Trenton, N. J., Nov. 3.—Revised returns received up to midnight show that Mr. Taft's plurality in New Jersey will be between 65,000 and 70,000. Republicans elect seven congressmen and the Democrats two, the Sixth district, which is now represented by a Democrat, William Hughes, being very close and in doubt.

Missouri.

St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 3.—Missouri has given its electoral vote to W. J. Bryan by a plurality estimated at 30,000 to 35,000. The governorship is in



JAMES S. SHERMAN

doubt, though W. S. Cowherd, Democrat, is leading Herbert S. Hadley, Republican, on the early returns. Cowherd, however, is running behind Bryan and there is a possibility that he is defeated.

Utah.

Salt Lake City, Nov. 3.—Utah is Republican again this year by a heavy majority, that of the national ticket being much greater than for the state candidates. One hundred and four election districts, including half the precincts of Salt Lake county and Ogden complete, give Taft 19,021, Bryan, 13,451.

Delaware.

Wilmington, Del., Nov. 3.—General T. Colman Dupont, Rep., state chairman, claims Delaware for Taft by 3,500 plurality. He also claims the election of Pennewell, Republican, for governor, by about 2,000, and the remainder of the Republican state ticket by the same figures, with the possible exception of Davis for attorney general, whose election he claims by 1,500.

Oklahoma.

Guthrie, Okla., Nov. 3.—Oklahoma has continued loyal to the Democratic party, but the majority has been reduced materially, and Bryan's lead is estimated at only 25,000. The five members of congress, four Democrats and one Republican, were re-elected. The legislature is two-thirds Democratic.

Massachusetts.

Boston, Nov. 3.—The Republican national and state candidates swept the state today and all eleven Republican congressmen were re-elected. Both branches of the legislature will be Republican by heavy margins. Early estimates indicate a plurality for Taft of 120,000.

Connecticut.

New Haven, Nov. 3.—Taft's plurality in Connecticut will exceed 25,000. Liley, Republican, for governor will have over 1,500 plurality over Robertson, Democrat.

Republicans carry complete state ticket and probably hold their usual majority in the legislature.

All five Republican congressmen are re-elected.

Wisconsin.

Milwaukee, Wis., Nov. 3.—The Republican national and state tickets are victorious in Wisconsin today by a plurality estimated at 75,000. The congressional delegates with one district to hear from probably will remain about the same as two years ago, nine Republicans and two Democrats.

Maine.

Portland, Me., Nov. 3.—Maine today gave Taft an estimated plurality of 31,100. John P. Swazy and Frank E. Gurney, Republican, were chosen in the Second and Fourth congressional districts, respectively, to fill short term vacancies.

Ohio.

Cincinnati, O., Nov. 4.—At 1 o'clock this morning it seems that Taft will have slightly more than a normal plurality of close to 50,000, while Harris, Republican, for governor, is defeated. The indications at this hour are for the election of Harmon, Democrat, by over 15,000.

South Carolina.

Columbia, S. C., Nov. 3.—South Carolina will give Bryan about 60,000 majority, while the state and congressional tickets are overwhelmingly Democratic.

Virginia.

Norfolk, Va., Nov. 3.—The Republican state committee concedes Virginia to Bryan by 15,000, but claim a gain of one Republican congressman.

Nevada.

Reno, Nev., Nov. 3.—Republican State Chairman Humphreys concedes the state to Bryan by 3,000.