

# 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 very 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 at all."

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

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

"Oh!" 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 poignant 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?"

"Goupert 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 Louise, 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 my play,' said I. 'Then 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."

"Oh? Do you doubt my word?"

"Doubt you? Doubt the word of Simon Loppa? 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.

"But you did not tell me how this all came out," she said. "What did you do after Goupert had struck you on the hand?"

"What could I do? My hand was powerless. I might have knocked him down with my left hand, but I spared him. He was beneath all notice, save that of mere contempt."

"Poor Goupert! Did he know how deep was your contempt for him?"

"What mean you?"

"Why, simply that you could have inflicted no worse punishment upon him than to have let him know that you held him in contempt. It must have nearly killed him!"

"Look you, my fine girl, you are venturing on dangerous ground. You may say too much!" uttered Louise, now showing his anger.

Louise bowed her head a moment, and she seemed to think that her companion spoke the truth, for she quickly replied, after she looked up:

"Excuse me—pardon me. I have but just recovered from a severe sickness, and my first feelings were naturally those of joy and gladness, and you know how often you and I have joked and pestered each other. We have often said very hard things in jest, and I have even pulled your hair till you fairly cried with pain, and yet you never got provoked before."

This was spoken so earnestly, and with so much apparent feeling, that Simon was mollified in a moment.

"Let it pass," he said; "only in future choose a light occasion for light conversation. And now to something of more importance. When can you be ready to go up the river?"

"At any time," answered Louise.

"Very well. I will see the physician this evening, and be governed somewhat by his advice."

Shortly after this Louise 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 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.

Louise gained passage for herself 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 condescended 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 Louise, 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 out Tony forth, and they were soon within the enclosure. The faithful negro could at first hardly believe his eyes. He gazed upon the "appears-shun," as he afterwards called it, and finally a big tear rolled down his sable cheek.

"Mam'elle Louise!" he gasped, extending his broad hands. "Bless heaven! With glistering 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 his remark. Ever since the abolition of his young "mam's" and "misen's," he had longed to get hold of an Indian, and here was a chance.

"Only two ob'um, d'ye say, Mam's Simon?"

"That's all, Tony." 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 march of his child into the house, and when they reached the sitting room, they found St. Denis there. He looked up and saw the marquise; then he saw Simon Loppa, 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 Louise, in malignant triumph.

"O, my soul!" burst from the wretched 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 door. "We've cotched 'em, mam's—we've cotched 'um, an' here dey am!"

At this White Hand and Coquinal came forward. Simon Loppa 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 how in humble resignation, the dreadful blow that has been inflicted upon me."

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

"How—a—h?" 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."

"Goupert, he forced me to the marriage—"

"Silence!" thundered Louise, starting towards the speaker stood. "Louise, remember you are my wife, and as much 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, Goupert," added White Hand, starting forward, and clenching his fists. "Go on, sister."

Simon Loppa 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 Goupert 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. When the priest put his questions to me, 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 night fasting 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. 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 I raged for many weeks. Health came at last, and I reached my father's house."

(To be continued.)

When the Roosters Crow.

The feelings of some honest folk from the country when they visit a large city have been very accurately described by a Chicago paper, and as this old farmer says, there's very little difference between city and country if you only look for the things which they have in common.

"I'm all right in Chicago if I can hear the roosters crow once in a while," said John, "but when I don't hear them I get pretty homesick, and want to hurry back to the old farm in Ford County. That's why I always pick out lodgings as close as I can get to South Water street."

"I come up here once in a while on business of my own, and I feel at home well enough down at the stock-yards in the daytime, where the hogs grunt and the cattle bellow, but I'm lonesome at night when I can't hear the roosters. I reckon if you was down on my farm a night or two, you'd be mighty glad to hear a street-car gong, or a steamboat whistle, or a wagon clattering over the stones. When a fellow has heard a rooster crow about sunn' every morning for forty years, he doesn't feel just right when he gets where there are no roosters."

"You can talk all you please about your clean city and your 'city beautiful,' as the newspapers call it, but I'd rather smell a clover field in this town when I'm lonesome than the sweetest flowers you've got on State street."

"I recollect Paxon Cross saying once, in a sermon, that the word of nature makes the whole world kin. Somehow when I hear a rooster crow up here, or a sheep bleat, or get the smell of a stable, it makes me feel that Chicago people ain't so much different from us on the farm, after all."

One of Woman's Ways.

"Most women hate to spend new money," says the observant salesman. "I haven't the faintest idea why this should be so, but I've noticed it often right here in the store. A woman will make a purchase and pull out her purse to pay the bill, but if she happens to have to part with a clean, crisp note in making up the amount she looks greatly annoyed. I've seen women with fat wads of bright brand-new bills flustered when they came to pay for purchases, because they hadn't sufficient old money to meet the charges. They would dig out the contents of their purses and stow the crisp notes to one side, and if they couldn't scrape up the sum in a few cases I've known them to give utterance to little feminine exclamations of dismay, and will hasten to pay for the articles selected in the new money. Then they will march off with quite a show of indignation, just as if they had been inveigled into spending the money. I know one man who always takes his salary home in beautiful, clean certificates. He has caught on to this peculiarity of the sex, and he says it saves him all kinds of money."—Philadelphia Record.

Diff'rence Pare's Subjective.

"How far?" asked the woodcock, "do you call it from here to Thompson's Grove?"

"Well," answered the crow, "the distance, as I fly, is four miles, but as you fly it's about nine miles and a half."—Chicago Tribune.

Monuments in Berlin.

The recently unveiled Bismarck statue makes the seventy-second monument of its kind in Berlin. Among the men commemorated are twelve of princely rank, eleven generals, nine architects, nine scholars, ten poets, three physicians, three statesmen.

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE DROPS OF WATER," CELEBRATES EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY

Little drops of water, Lead the good way, Make the mighty ocean, And the pleasant land.

So the little moments, Humble though they be, Make the mighty ages Of eternity.

Little deeds of kindness, Little words of love, Help to make earth happy Like the heaven above.

Mrs. Julia A. Fletcher Carney, author of the famous poem, "Little Drops of Water," recently celebrated her eightieth birthday at her home in Galesburg, Ill. She wrote the poem in 1845, when she was a school teacher in Boston, and her object in writing it was to help her pupils understand the value of little things. A few years later the poem had been translated into many languages, and generations have recited and sung it in all the civilized countries of the world. Mrs. Carney's husband, who was a Universalist minister, died at Galesburg in 1871.

POORHOUSE TO PARLIAMENT.

Labor Candidate Who Won a Notable Victory in London.

Political preferment awaits the man of ability in England as well as in this country. This is shown by the recent election in the Woolwich division of London, where William Crooks, labor candidate for Parliament, defeated his opponent, Geoffrey Drage, Unionist, by a majority of over 3,000 although the constituency has for many years been regarded safely Unionist by a majority of nearly 3,000. The election of Mr. Crooks is a victory for the labor vote, which has caused the London Times to say: "The election means that the specter that has hypnotized the continental governments has shown itself at last among ourselves."

Crooks was born in 1832 and spent a portion of the early years of his life in the poorhouse at Poplar. After leaving this institution he worked at odd jobs until he was 14, when he was apprenticed to a cooper. As late as 1878 he tramped from London to Liverpool in search of work. He was then in the greatest poverty, but before that had been engaged actively in trade agitations. He worked hard for the dockers in the great London dock strike and became chairman of the Poplar Board of Guardians and other local bodies. Subsequently he was elected mayor of Poplar—the first labor mayor ever elected in England. He then became a member of the London County Council and has since been supported by his fellow workers.

Mr. Crooks is a man of the John Burns type. He is a ready speaker, a skilled politician and a well-posted social economist. He neither drinks nor smokes, but devotes all his time to his duties and to self improvement. His selection has greatly strengthened the labor party in England, impressing upon it the value and necessity of solidarity. During the South African war Mr. Crooks was an advocate of the Boer side and strongly denounced the action of the British government.

RANK OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

In Point of Architecture It Is in a Class by Itself.

One moonlight night in June, 1902, while strolling through the grounds with Charles F. McKim, one of the members of the Park Commission, we seated ourselves on one of those mounds which tradition ascribes to John Quincy Adams's taste in landscape architecture. That afternoon crowds of people arrayed in joyous costumes befitting the season had come from the hot city to rest under the trees and listen to the Saturday concert of the Marine Band. The musicians, clad in white duck, were located in a little depression, so that the sound of the music rolled up the slopes to the attentive audience.

A year before we had observed the same effect at Versailles; and both the similarities and the differences of the two pictures were being discussed as we sat in the quiet night, behind the locked gates, where not a sound from the city streets broke the grateful noise of water splashing in the fountains.

On the high terrace the President sat amid a group of dinner guests, and the lights of their cigars were "echoed" by the drowsy figures sitting about the grounds, only the brilliantly lighted windows of the secretary's office even suggesting the workaday world. The moonlight, shining full on the White House, revealed the harmonious lines of its graceful shape.

"Tell me," I asked the architect, "among the great houses that have been built during recent years in the

SOME STORIES OF RUSKIN.

He Still Feared His Parents When He Was Forty Years Old.

One gets the impression from reading of Ruskin's early years that he missed many of the privileges of healthy boyhood. When he was a man, he and a companion were out one day upon the mountainside. They passed a group of men, says a writer in the Strand Magazine, who were engaged in rough work with pickaxes.

"How I wish," said Ruskin, "I could do what those men are doing! I was never allowed to do any work which would have strengthened my back. I wasn't allowed to ride, for fear of being thrown off; nor to row, for fear of being drowned; nor to box, because it was vulgar. I was allowed to fence, because that was genteel."

Sometimes, when he was living with his parents at Denmark Hill, he would enjoy a surreptitious row on the river. "I used to be told," says the same companion, "not to let his father and mother know where he had gone." Ruskin was then in the forties.

It is easy to read here a woman's fears and prejudice and domination. Ruskin was always, quite properly, under his mother's control; but it is possible that if he had had the outlet of reasonable athletics his destructive moods would have been less marked. It was during his residence at Denmark Hill that he was anatomizing something or somebody most unreasonably.

"John," said his mother, "you talk too much and you talk nonsense."

"Yes, mother," Ruskin replied, as humble as a little boy, and changed the subject.

Ruskin was not afraid to admit to others besides his mother that he was wrong. In a lecture at Oxford when he was a Slade professor, Sir William Richmond defended the fame which the world had accorded to Michelangelo and Rafael. Formerly Ruskin had denounced Michelangelo and was not very well pleased with Sir William for presenting the other side. When Ruskin recovered from the illness which had caused him to give up the Slade professorship, Sir William retired, that he might lift it again. Touched by this, Ruskin sent, asking if he might come down and dine with his former pupil, who was delighted to have him. At the close of a pleasant evening, Ruskin said:

"Will you do me the honor to visit me about Michelangelo?"

"Mr. Ruskin, because you talked nonsense," replied Sir William.

Meanwhile Mr. Ruskin rose to go. "You are quite right, Will," he said, in his candid way. "It was nonsense."

QUEER STORIES

Sweden is said to have the lowest death rate of any civilized nation. During the last ten years the annual average has been only 16.49 per thousand.

A fence nearly two hundred feet long at Livingston, Mont., is made entirely of horns of the elk—more properly called, wapiti. These animals, like the others of the deer family, shed their horns once a year and grow new ones. The old horns are found in large numbers in the forests, and are used for various commercial purposes.

The old notions of phrenology have been dispelled and a new system of localities has been established. The localities in certain parts of the brain mean log, arm, speech, and so definitely are they that a skillful expert can often times get at, and by trepanning, remove the cause of paralysis of one or another of the muscles or faculties.

There is an extraordinary old man at present living in Russia, in the village of Marewka, in the government of Smolensk, known as "Sweet" Ship. He was born in May, 1775, and is, therefore, 127 years old. He has never been ill, and is able to walk each Sunday two versts to the village church. He also does work at the Schloos, knits stockings and weaves sandals.

American tourists abroad often comment upon the literal translation into English of notions in foreign languages. The well-meant efforts of landlords and others to convey, in the language of the visitor, the meaning of the native, often produce laughable results. A Washington citizen found this notice posted in his room in an Alpine hotel: "Mistress, the venerable voyagers are earnestly requested not to take clothes of the bed to see the sun rise for the color changes."

The fifteen principal causes of death, with the rate per one thousand, as made public by the census bureau, is as follows: Pneumonia, 191.9; consumption, 191.5; heart disease, 134; diarrheal diseases, 85.1; kidney diseases, 88.7; apoplexy, 69.6; cancer, 69; old age, 54; bronchitis, 48.3; cholera infantum, 47.5; debility, 45.5; inflammation of brain and meninges, 41.8; diphtheria, 34.4; typhoid, 33.8; and premature birth, 33.7. Death from all principal causes shows a decrease since 1890, the most notable being consumption, which shows a decrease of 54.9 per one hundred thousand.

Much interest has been awakened by the alleged discovery of small squids, miniature representatives of the terrible devil-fish of the ocean, in Onondaga Lake, near Syracuse, N. Y. Prof. John D. Wilson and others have pronounced the specimens to be genuine squids, and the discovery has brought out accounts of previous finds of the same kind in the lake. Prof. John M. Clarke suggests that the animals may be descended from ancestors which entered the lake when it was in communication with the sea by way of the St. Lawrence valley, and that their kind has been enabled to survive amid such strange surroundings on account of the salinity of the bottom waters of the lake, which are in contact with the rocks from which the Syracuse salt works derive their supply.

When a man returns from a visit, all the information his women folks can get out of him is by applying questions that are answered with a "yes" or "no."

In novels the hero sometimes marries money, but in real life a man marries kin.

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