

Griggs Courier.

FREDERICK H. ADAMS, Publisher.
COOPERSTOWN, DAKOTA.

THE LADY OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

She bears no crown upon her brow;
She boasts no lineage royal;
Her dower is to humanity
A heart that's warm and loyal.
The proud Republic's child is she,
The sovereign People's daughter;
Her winsomeness, her womanhood,
Nature and Freedom taught her.

No herald cries before her path;
No frowning guards attend her;
Her gracious ways are harbingers,
Her smile is her defender.
Let Kingdoms pledge their regal dames,—
God bless the People's daughter!
Her winsomeness, her womanhood,
Nature and Freedom taught her.

—EDNA DEAN PROCTOR, in The American Magazine.

VENTURA'S TARGET.

I had accompanied Dr. Noirot through the great gardens surrounding his private insane asylum, and was proceeding toward the entrance of his private study. The celebrated alienist was telling me the history of one of his most remarkable cases—a patient we had just passed on our way through the grounds, and who had saluted us in an almost patronizing manner.

"That man's peculiar mania," said the doctor, "is to believe himself a famous personage. He thinks he is a son of Heaven, the sovereign of the whole Celestial Empire; and there is not a day he does not hand the keeper enough of dispatches, confidential letters, and diplomatic instructions for his ambassador, Marquis Tseng, to make a whole volume."

Just at that moment a sharp report rang out a few steps away. I caught the doctor's arm, and exclaimed:

"What's that? One of your patients may have done something terrible!"

Dr. Noirot only smiled. "No," he said; "don't be afraid. This is another very curious case, I want you to see him."

And, turning to the left, he led the way toward a little pavilion concealed from view behind a clump of trees. He unlocked a door, made me pass through a narrow vestibule, and we found ourselves in a sort of long court-yard surrounded by high walls. A tall man was standing there, attired in a costume which recalled in some of its details the Mexican dress. The man was standing with his back against the wall of the pavilion, and as we entered he lifted his right arm, clutching a loaded pistol. Our advent did not disturb him in the least. He took deliberate aim, with a perfectly steady hand. I followed the direction of his aim, and I saw, about twenty paces away, about a foot from the further wall, a white face with a black hole in the middle of its forehead. It seemed to be, as well as I could make out, one of those well-known plaster casts of Greek heads. I thought I could distinguish it as a head of Diana the Huntress.

The pistol went off. The head did not move; and no splinters or fragments fell from it.

"Look," said the doctor in a whisper. "It is very singular. He never misses."

"How?"

"No, he never misses. Every ball goes in the same place—right into the little black hole, which isn't any bigger than a five-franc piece."

The man had taken another weapon from his belt. He shot. The target still remained intact. The arm was a revolver of the American pattern; the shooter fired five more balls in succession. Not one of them seemed to graze the forehead of the white face.

The doctor touched the marksman on the shoulder. He turned round. His face, heavily bearded, had a singular expression of mingled resolution and melancholy.

"Stop for one moment," said the doctor. The man nodded his head in consent.

Then the doctor led me to the other end of the court, and showed me, immediately behind the plaster head, a black piece of sheet-iron that had been fastened up to protect the wall. In the very middle of the piece of sheet-iron was a shining round spot, with reflections of lead caused by the crushing of the pistol balls against it.

"Now you can see," he said, as he pointed out the exact linear correspondence of the bright spot upon the sheet-iron to the hole in the plaster cast, "you can see for yourself that all the balls pass through the same hole. You won't find a single bullet mark anywhere else."

"It is marvelous," I said. "But what a strange case this must be."

"Come along," said the doctor, "and I'll tell you all about it when we get outside."

"This unfortunate man," said my host, "is one Guido Ventura. Whether he is an Italian, a Spaniard, or an American, I cannot positively say. Probably an American. It is the new world which usually sends us these virtuosos in the art of using the revolver or the rifle. And besides, it was from America that he came directly to France. You might have seen

him yourself last year at the Alcazar d'Automne, where he gave four or five exhibitions, and would have drawn all Paris to see him if his series of performances had not been suddenly interrupted by circumstances which I am about to relate. But I must begin at the beginning. There is quite a romance connected with the affair, and one which I am certainly the only person who knows, because during the six months this man has been with me I was the only one able to get any information from him. I have been able to get the main incidents of the story just by putting words or incidents which he would involuntarily speak of in moments of delirium. So I tell it to you just as I believe it to be, feeling sure my penetration is not at fault.

"When Guido Ventura came to Paris he had with him a young woman known as Miss Arabella. She was a splendid creature of about 20, with the face of a goddess and the body of a statue. Any one could observe and admire that figure of her at the evening performances in the Alcazar, where she appeared in a close-fitting page's costume—pearl-gray tights showing the fine contour of limbs both vigorous and graceful and extremities of charming delicacy—and a doublet of black velvet confining the opulence of a torso strong, supple, and full of splendid curves. When you saw her with her head proudly thrown back the face would have made you think of Diana the Huntress.

"To tell you the truth, she had no end of admirers, and in less than a week it had become the fashion to go and see this wonderful Arabella, who assisted the celebrated marksman Guido Ventura in his exhibitions. She looked simply exquisite in her picturesque costume, which brought out her robust and elegant beauty to the best possible advantage, when she would stand with arms folded, right in the glare of the footlights, with a perfectly impassive face in front of Guido Ventura; sometimes holding a card in her hand for him to cut with a pistol ball; sometimes holding a pipe in her mouth, of which he would break the stem just two inches beyond her lips; sometimes placing a nutshell on her head for him to shatter with unflinching aim.

"One moment's trembling of the marksman's hand, and it would have been all up with the splendid girl. But the hand of Guido Ventura never trembled.

"What relation did the wonderful beauty bear to him? Was she his wife? It was probable, but not certain. The question was not considered of much importance, because the couple had come from a country where a marriage may be celebrated in one State and dissolved in another. What was certain was that Guido Ventura worshipped that woman as one worships an idol. To be certain of it, it was only necessary once to see the way his eyes would flash if some too gallant gentleman in the foyer made himself a little too familiar with the beauty. Jealous? Certainly he was jealous, and you know the Othellos of the new world are not apt to be patient about certain matters.

"The man must have suffered atrociously; for his companion was as coquettish as she was pretty, and she seemed to find fun in exasperating his jealousy. Sometimes, if the notion took her, she would flirt with a man that she had never seen before, showing the tact and self-possession peculiar to American girls in tantalizing as well as fascinating. Very little she seemed to care about what she made the unfortunate man suffer through pranks of this sort. One day the manager of the Alcazar himself stopped her behind the scenes as she left a group of young swells with whom she had been laughing and jesting:

"See here, my little woman," he whispered kindly, "you had better take care what you are doing. That man holds your life every evening at the end of his arm."

"Arabella only laughed. 'He kill me?' she answered, tossing her head. 'Stuff! He thinks too much of me to give me a scratch.'

"And every evening she posed calmly before the muzzle of the pistol, her velvet gaze quelling the anger of her lover as the eye of a lion-tamer masters a wild beast."

"One evening, only about a week after the names of Guido Ventura and Arabella had first appeared in great letters upon the advertising posters of the Alcazar, a fine-looking gentleman entered the foyer, walked directly to where the young woman was sitting, who uttered a little cry of surprise, and, taking her hand, lifted it to his lips. Guido Ventura, who was talking to the manager, turned, looked, and became very pale. The man who had just come in was a rich American, whose persistent devotion to Miss Arabella had made some sensation in New York. It had been especially on his account that Guido Ventura had made his Parisian engagement and suddenly left America. So this man had had the audacity to follow them! He could not have come to Paris except for the woman's sake.

Guido Ventura had a terrible scene with his companion in her dressing-room that evening.

"But a much more terrible scene took place eight days later. For the

whole week the newly-arrived American shadowed Arabella. Guido Ventura had insisted with the manager that the man should not be permitted to go behind the scenes. But the American had managed to obtain an interview with the manager in his private room, and had used money lavishly, and succeeded in revoking the decree of banishment.

"When he entered the waiting-room the marksman's lips were set and his brow dark. He took aim at his own reflection in one of the great mirrors just to see if his hand was steady. His hand did not tremble.

"Five minutes later he was on the stage commencing the performance. Happening to turn his head at a certain moment he caught sight of the American's face peering from behind a side-scene. Just then Miss Arabella took up her position in front of him with folded arms and her nutshell poised upon her hair. She smiled. Who was she smiling at? At the man behind the scene—Guido Ventura knew it from the direction of her eyes. . . . When she moved them again she suddenly ceased to smile and a strange expression shadowed her face. . . . She saw Guido Ventura taking deliberate aim at her forehead.

"A report rang out and Miss Arabella fell as if struck by lightning. . . . When they tore her dead body from his desperate embrace Guido was mad! 'Crime or accident—which? No one could tell. Indeed, every effort was made to hush up the affair. In Paris the dead are quickly forgotten. After the first excitement had passed the chief actors in the bloody drama were never thought of.

"Since then Guido Ventura has been in my care. Once he was unlucky enough to break it, and it made him delirious for a week. 'Otherwise, as you have seen for yourself, he is quite harmless.'"

We re-entered the pavilion and found our marksman in the act of putting his weapon away.

"Didn't miss once to-day, did you?" asked the doctor in a pleasant voice.

"No," responded the man in a deep voice; "every shot right through the forehead."

Uncle Zeke at the Zoo.

Among the yesterday's visitors at the zoo was an old colored man, who spoke with a befo'-de-wah accent. By the group of children who were with him he was called "Uncle Zeke." It was evidently not Uncle Zeke's first visit to the zoo, for he possessed a familiarity with the animals which belongs only to the student of natural history and the frequenter of the zoo.

"Dere now, children," said the old man, pointing with his cane to the cage, "I want to call your 'tention to dis animal in partik'lar. He am from de jungles of Asia. You remembah dat de bible ax dis question, 'Can a leopard change his spots?' 'Well, dis am de leopard and dere am de spots, and he can no mo' change dem spots dan a yellah man become black.'"

"Oh, Uncle Zeke," said one of the little girls, who had been to Sunday-school, "the bible speaks of a leper, a man who is suffering with a—"

"Don't you contradict me, chile; don't you contradict Uncle Zeke," interrupted the old man, and he pounded the floor with his cane until all the frightened animals began to growl.

The venerable negro had become so excited that he sought the fresh air, and as he assembled his little flock near the large row of old poplars, some of which have recently been cut down, he gave the children the benefit of his meditations. "How much like a man am I, after all," he said. "De tree sends down its roots into de groun' and also 'bs nourishment from de earth, just as man gains sustenance from de products ob de earth. An' den de tree puts fo' th its leaves, which take nitrogen from de atmosphere, jus' like de lungs of a man take de oxygen; an' de sap, it go all thro' de tree, jus' like de blood in a man's veins, and de tree, it blossom like de blossom on a man's nose. So de tree grows an' by an' by, maybe, its cut down an' used for stove wood, an' becomes gas an' ashes, jus' like when a dead man's put into a oleomargatory. Or, maybe, de tree falls ober dead in de forest, where it decays an' becomes part ob de soil, an' de air, jus' like de body ob de man what's buried. But come 'long, ch'ldren, you don't know nuffin 'bout dem tings," he concluded, as he led the way to the beaver dam.

"There, children," he said, as he leaned over the fence, "that's a beaver. You notice, he's swimmin' in de water one minute an' de berry next he am climbin' up de bank. He's jus' like some temp'rance people I knows of—berry fond of water sometimes, but ready to take somethin' more solid when dey kin get it. You see how flat his tail am? Well, his head's jus' as level, an' you wouldn't kotch him signing a magistrate's bill, nor by a—"

Poor old Uncle Zeke! Before he concluded his sentence the fence gave way, precipitating him headlong into the icy waters of the pond. The children joined in a chorus of lament which brought the guard to the assistance of their aged friend.—Philadelphia Times.

Erlenmeyer calls cocaine "the third scourge of humanity." Morphine and alcohol are the other two.

WAR IS A BAD THING.

The Mother Who Patiently Waited For Her Boys Who Never Came.

"People talk about war with Mexico and war with England, and the newspapers print pleasant incidents and glorious achievements of the noble soldiers who figured in the late War, which is all well and as it should be, but," said old man Plunket, looking over his spectacles, "thar's none of 'em what knows what war is lessen they's been thar."

"I tell you, stranger," said the old man, "you may read and you may look at pictures of battles, and you may go to all these 'campsments and see them have their sham fights, but you won't know a bit more about what real war is than a man who would suppose your Gate City Guard could thrash old England. War is a bad thing, mister, war's a bad thing, sure!"

"Do you see that house up the road?" asked the old man, pointing with his finger. "Well, stranger, right by that window thar by the chimney is a vacant chair. Not mor'n a week ago, the dear old woman who sot in that chair, right by that window, with her eyes lookin' right down this big road ever since Lee's surrender, was buried over yonder at the church, and thar's not a n an nor a woman in this settlement but what has shed a tear over the grave whar she lies."

The old man wiped his spectacles with his red bandana, and with his head bent and his eyes cast down shook his head and uttered, "War's a bad thing, stranger; war's a bad thing."

"That old lady," continued the old man, "had four as fine boys as ever shouldered a musket for the Confederacy—and that's sayin' a right smart. They all went to Virginia, and one by one they were killed till there was only one left. Tom, he was the oldest, and I shall never forget when the news come that he was killed at Seven Pines. Squire Adams he lived cross on the other road yonder, and the mail for the settlement went to his house during the War, and the neighbors would get their letters from thar. We'd done here thar'd been a big fight at Richmond, so I was settin' right here in this piazza smokin' after supper, and I hered Jim, one of Squire Adams' niggers, start from the Squire's house down the path that led across the fields to yon house, hallowing and blowing his quills, and I told my old 'oman thar was a letter for our neighbors. Jim he went down the path, and directly he crossed over the branch yonder, and the sound from his quills came up the branch, and I could hear the doleful tune he was blowing as if I'd been in 200 yards of him. I followed the sound of his quills till he struck the path through yon pine thicket, and then he quit blowing his quills and sung:

"Down in de cornfield,
Hear dat mournful sound,
All do de wail an' weepin',
For massa's in de cold, cold groun'.
I told my old 'oman I was afeared that nigger had bad news for our neighbors, and so it was, for no sooner than he'd got to de house, I hered screams and hollerin', and me and the old 'oman put over thar, and what I seed then makes me know war's a bad thing, mister, war's a bad thing."

"Then," said the old man, "thar was more nigheten and the army it went into Maryland and our neighbors they'd sorter calced themselves in their anxiety for the other thre' sons, and the army it come out n Maryland and then pretty soon we he'ed of a lig fight at Frate'sburg; and a few nights arter I was settin' right here on this piazza alone, and I hered Jim start from the Squire's agin, and as he went down across the field yonder he was singin'."

"I cannot work until to-morrow,
Be-cause the tea-drops flow;
But I'll try to drive away my sorrow,
Pickin' on de old banjo."

"And then he'd blow his quills and then sing another verse till he'd got over yonder to our neighbors, and then I listened to hear any weeping, if he carried any bad news, but thar was no fuss this time, but I went over thar, me and the old 'oman, and when we got close to the house we seed the spinnin' wheels nor the loom warn't running, and we knowed something was wrong, and sure enough the letter brought the news that two of the boys—the middle ones, Bob and John—had been killed in the battle, and there was only one left—William, the youngest; and that poor family was too sad to weep; they could not cry; they were huddled down in the middle of the room on the floor, leaning one upon the other, and not a word spake they. I tell you, stranger, war's a bad, bad thing."

"Well," resumed the old man, "the War went on, and at last news came that Lee had surrendered and that all the Soldiers would soon be at home. My neighbors over thar sorter brightened up then, cheered with the hope of soon having William with them. The railroads 'twixt here and Virginia was all tore up, so the boys all had to walk home and get home the best they could. They paired off in little squads and started, every man for himself, and pretty soon this one, and then that one, and then another, according to their ability to make the trip, came in, and several brought the news that William was on the road and would be here at any moment, and that dear old mother, who we buried last week, took her seat by that yonder window every morning, and thar she sat watching down this

road for William, her baby boy, who has never come yet, and never will come. She set by that window over twenty years, waiting and watching, with a ball of thread in her lap and a half-finished sock in her hand that she held to all this time, never sayin' a word, but looking down this road so anxious, O, so anxious. Last week about 3 o'clock one day she raised her arms and with a cry of joy, 'My boys! O, my boys!' she fell over on the arm of the chair, dead. War's bad, stranger, very bad."—Atlanta Constitution.

Senatorial Literary Tastes.

Senator Ingalls likes old English novels and is well up in scientific literature.

Senator Hoar is regarded as the best authority on American history in the body.

Senator Hale has one of the finest libraries in Maine, and is well read in general literature.

Senator Eustis speaks and reads French like a native, and is fond of yellow covered novels.

Senator Ransom runs to Latin and dates, especially in Horace, whom he is fond of quoting in his speeches.

Senator Beck is fond of poetry and can repeat the "Lady of the Lake," without a slip from beginning to end.

Senator Joe Brown, of Georgia, spends most of his time perusing musty volumes of public records and documents.

Among the senators who write for magazines or other periodicals are Sherman, Hoar, Ingalls, Ransom and Hale.

Senator Vest is a great reader of the Bible and knows whole chapters by heart. All scriptural facts in dispute are referred to him.

Senator Sherman is a classical scholar and reads French. He scans the newspapers but does not believe in reading a book until time has tried it.

Senator Joe Blackburn is well informed in sporting matters and can tell the record and pedigree of every fast horse in Kentucky without looking it up.

Senator Payne is not noted for his literary attainments, but he is fond of biography and travel and has more reminiscences to tell than most any man in the Senate.

Ruins in Central Africa.

Some way south of the Zambesi River there is a large region, extending nearly 400 miles inland, and 300 to 400 miles toward the south, in which ruins are constantly being discovered, proving that in prehistoric times the country was inhabited by a civilized people. To-day only the rudest black tribes inhabit this land, save in a few places, where the Portuguese have established stations. The little bee-hive huts of the natives are seen among massive ruins, betokening a degree of architectural skill which rivals that of the ancient Aztecs. Our earliest records of travel and trade on the East African coast, extending back to the beginning of the Christian era, do not mention them. The coast town of Sofala is shown on all maps of East Africa. Near that town Carl Mauch found extensive ruins, remarkable for their enduring nature and strange shapes. There are partly-ruined walls still 30 feet high and 12 feet wide at the base, built of small hewn blocks of granite. Here and there, built in the walls or standing by themselves, are round, stone towers, which evidently rose to heights of 30 to 50 feet.

It is not positively known yet who built these ancient structures. All these ruins are surrounded by surface gold mines. It is believed that all this country was occupied some time before the Christian era by a great colony, probably of Phoenician origin; and that its chief occupation was gold mining. Mr. O'Neill says that a large region in inner Africa now given up to savage men and wild beasts was subject many centuries ago to the control of the people who were considerably advanced in the art of civilization.

He Beat the Tailor.

A very prominent young lawyer, who lives in an historic town about ten miles from Boston, lately acquired a new and handsome overcoat, warranted by the tailor to be of the best English cloth and particularly durable. He had worn the new garment scarcely a month, when one morning, as he came to town in the train, happening to glance at his coat sleeve, he perceived with horror that it was frayed and shabby. Arrived in Boston, he took his way to the tailor's in a towering passion, and after a somewhat troubled discussion there, the seller of the coat admitting his liability, refunded half the purchase money. The next day the wearer of the now-despised coat received a call from a friend of his who communicated the astounding fact that they had unconsciously changed overcoats, and each had worn the other's garment for two days without discovering the mistake! It is needless to say that the person most pleased at this intelligence was the tailor, whose money and reputation were at once restored. In some quarters I should hesitate to publish this anecdote, for it certainly suggests an ingenious method of "beating" an honest tailor.—Boston Post.