

THE INHERITANCE OF JEAN TROUVE

By NEVIL HENSHAW Author of Allons de Grand Woods, etc. BOOK TWO.—BAYOU PORTAGE CHAPTER XIII.

Later, when Toinette had finally submitted to the kindly ministrations of Tante Odile and had been led away, Le Bossu and I slipped out for a breath of air before the hut. It was a wonderful night, still and cool, and the stars shone so brightly that it was as though each had trimmed its lamp to welcome the big man home. We sat long beneath the tiny beacon lights, and as we sat Le Bossu spoke of the past, telling of things at which he had but vaguely hinted before.

"We will miss him, Papa Ton," he began. "All my life I have never seen his like. He was so true, so honest, so kindly to all save himself. Yet, as he told you, it was best for him to go. He had slipped far down in the well, and I doubt that we could ever have raised him again."

"Had I known his true plight I would have come to him despite a dozen partnerships. You must believe that, you and Toinette. Otherwise I could not bear it. Yet, as I have said, my coming could scarce have sufficed."

"And another thing. Papa Ton died well—and bravely. But for him young Pierre would have roamed alive. You must always remember this. It was a good way to go."

Le Bossu paused, and when he spoke again it was with the slow absent words of one who gropes amid a half forgotten past.

"Ah, but you should have known Papa Ton in the old days," he went on. "They were a big family, the Lavals, and they were proud with the pride of long standing. Of the many brothers and sisters Papa Ton was the only one whose ways were plain and simple. And for this he was the best loved, the most remembered of them all."

"What if, as a boy, he had thrown away his books to run wild in the fields and forests? What if, as a man, he refused to go out into the world, ever sticking to the old home like a rabbit to its burrow? What if, later on, he married unprofitably, picking out the poor daughter of a tenant farmer? These things do not count with humble folk. They look no further than the generous heart, the kindly word, the willing hand."

"You should have seen Papa Ton when he rode into town. Always his coming was an event. Here Oton, some one would cry, and all up and down the street the people would hurry out from their houses for a look and a word."

"It was the beginning of his ruin, this popularity. Each man must think his health, and he was never the one to leave a treat go unnoticed. True, in those days he was the master of himself, but he had already forged these fetters which only awaited some moment of weakness to bind him."

Your place is on the hilltop by the bridge. It is where you belong." On the instant I had seized him, fairly shaking him in my surprise and consternation.

"What?" I cried. "You know." "Most certainly," he smiled. "But you need not fear, Jean. I have told no one, nor will I do so without your permission."

"But how—" I began. "Jean, Jean," he interrupted. "At least give me the credit for a little sense. Did you look like the nephew of an uncle Jules? Good blood can not be denied, even upon the marsh. Take Toinette for example. I guessed from the very first. Afterward, knowing the story of your parents and hearing of your trip to the island, it was easy to make sure."

"And my mother's people?" I questioned, speaking for the first time of a matter over which I had often puzzled.

"The little man shook his head. "There was only an old father, and he was not of this country," he replied. "Afterward he went away."

"So," said I, and for a space I could only stare at him half stupefied by my utter amazement. It seemed incredible that, for this little man, my carefully guarded secret had been no secret at all.

"And so you knew?" I muttered. "You knew all along?" "As I have said," agreed Le Bossu briskly. "There were a hundred things to give you away. Yet you have set me one riddle to puzzle over, and that is your fear of being found out. Come now, what is the answer?"

"It was M'sieu Dugas," I replied. "I was afraid that he would take me away. And there was the General also. You do not know how hard and cruel he is. I do not like to think of what would happen to me if he were to get his hands upon me."

The little man chuckled, reaching out to shake me in turn—a brisk, comforting shake of kindly reassurance.

"Come, wake up, Jean," he ordered. "You are still frightened by the nightmare of your arrival. You are no longer the weekly runaway of two years ago. You are a big strong youth, hard, and quick, and well able to look out for yourself in any emergency."

"As for Dugas, he is, of all men, the one least able to harm you. They have driven him from the mainland and, if my ears have not failed me tonight, he will fare no better here. Also you need have no fear of M'sieu the General. Had he meant you ill, you would have heard from him long before now. Do you imagine that he has gone on in ignorance of his grandson's whereabouts? He has a long arm, that old General. Some day he will reach out for you, and it is of this that I am thinking. You are a young youth, and it must be very lonely on that hilltop. Suppose you try again before laying your plans for the future?"

"Bossu," I flared. "How can you say such a thing? Would you have me creep back after having been driven away. Besides, if the General were to come to me himself, I would not go with him. What do I care for that hilltop? I want you, and Toinette, and all the other folk who have been good to me."

trigger were I to see him coming up the bayou." We watched until the glow had faded out leaving only a smudge of sulken red that glowered like some dull evil eye across the vast shadowy reach of grass.

"Bien," said Le Bossu as he turned away. "It will be long before the marsh sees a better night's work. The only pity is that it was not done before. For us it is like the springing of an empty trap."

TO BE CONTINUED

MRS. MULRANNY'S ROSARY

It was a raw, cold, wet morning, and still quite dark. The sun would not rise for another three hours at least. Mary Devereux remained home in her father's luxurious limousine from the ball, at which she had danced every item on the program, shivered in the wet thick blanket coat and costly furs that she wore over her ball dress—in spite of the rugs, too, which enveloped her.

There were loud, startled shouts, and the limousine pulled up sharply. Roused from her pleasant recollections of the night's pleasure, Mary Devereux looked forth and saw that the chauffeur had only just stopped in time to avoid running down a poorly-clad, elderly woman, who was being helped on to the curb by several men, also very poorly-looking, and for the most part very thinly clad for such an inclement morning.

Mary Devereux saw also a string of beads—a rosary—lying in the middle of the road, evidently dropped by the old woman, and that the car had pulled up at a church, in front of which a small crowd of poor working people were gathered.

The rosary shone in the light of a near-by lamp upon the muddy road, out to shake me in turn—a brisk, comforting shake of kindly reassurance.

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Again the little man's hand went out, this time in a clutch of silent approval.

priest, genuflecting and raising high, held aloft first the Host and then the chalice.

"Yes," she said to herself, "this seems like proper religion—the true one. These poor people are true worshippers of God to come here so early in the morning, through the wet and cold, before going to their daily work. And—I have been leading a mere butterfly existence caring only for pleasure and nothing for the God who made me, never thinking what awaits me beyond the grave, never going to any place of worship, even on a Sunday. For all my education and superior attainments and my father's wealth, there is not a man, woman, girl or boy in this church at this moment who is not vastly my superior, I should say."

When Mass was over, and she was going out with the rest of the congregation, she noticed cheap rosaries for sale on the bookstall at the bottom of the church. She dropped the modest sum asked on the card into the box, and took a rosary.

Somehow she felt quite elated over her morning's adventure as she walked home. She found her father impatiently awaiting her.

Whatever possessed you to break your journey and go into the street, he asked with an odd little quaver in his voice, and eyeing her askance rather than looking full at her.

"I felt ashamed, to tell the truth, dad," she replied, "at the sight of the poor people going to church so early, and in the wet and cold, while I was returning home from pleasure. I could not help comparing my future with their useful God-sent lives. It was picking up a poor old woman's rosary for her that made me think, I suppose. Turner told you, of course, that we nearly ran the poor old creature down."

"Yes," "I was so impressed by the service, Dad," Mary went on, never noticing how perturbed her father seemed, "although I couldn't understand it, that I bought a rosary coming out. It was the only kind they had on sale." And she displayed her purchase.

Patrick Devereux looked at the beads, then, turning his head away, said: "You do not know, Mary, but I was a Catholic once, and should be still. I was born and bred a Catholic, and all belonging to me were good Catholics. Your own dear mother was the best of Catholics, and you yourself were baptised one."

"Then—then how is it you are not a Catholic now, father?" she asked in surprise. "And that you have never as much as hinted anything of this to me before?"

"Because I turned against God when you were a little girl, and your little brother died," he answered in a choked voice. "I felt I did not deserve that cruel double blow. It embittered me, and I said I would no longer worship a God who could treat me so. And so I ceased to go to church or attend to my religious duties. I ceased to be a Catholic and became the nothing that I am. When I brought you up in no religion—banned the very word 'religion' from my home."

"I am a Catholic; then, or should be, and my dear mother was one," Mary gasped. "Oh, father, then—then I must learn all about the Catholic religion. I think it is a most beautiful one. You must tell me all about it, and we will go to church together regularly. I feel we ought to."

A VEXED QUESTION

ANGLICAN BISHOP WILL NOT INDUCT CHOICE OF PARISH London, Eng.—An ecclesiastical tangle has occurred at Washwood Heath, Birmingham, where the Rev. Herbert E. Bennett has been chosen vicar of St. Mark's (Anglican) church and cannot get himself instituted by the Bishop, the well-known Dr. Barnes.

The Bishop and the vicar-designate both have views on transubstantiation. Dr. Barnes does not believe in it, and wants Mr. Bennett to give certain undertakings with regard to reservation. Mr. Bennett refuses to make this concession to his conscience, and the churchwardens who are, of course, backing the vicar-designate, say that Bishop Barnes' predecessor authorized the very things which he is trying to suppress.

LAW ACTION THREATENED Attorneys representing the churchwardens have informed the Bishop that a law action will be begun if he does not institute Mr. Bennett. The Bishop has replied that he will not do so unless he is compelled by his reluctance to be a party to a suit at law. He declares the costs would be heavy, though he feels sure he could get the money. "But I seek peace no less than truth," he says "I have never yet been involved in litigation; and to bring doctrinal disputes into the law courts seem to be deplorable."

The trouble has been pending for several months. In July last the parishioners of St. Mark's petitioned the Bishop to institute the vicar of their choice. Dr. Barnes offered then to give later a considered statement of his position.

Bishop Barnes has now issued his considered statement. He quotes from Cripps' "Law Relating to Church and Clergy" a judgment which says, "the reservation of the sacrament and services connected therewith (e.g., the service of Benediction) are unlawful."

The Bishop points out, very reasonably, that "the practices and services to which I draw your attention . . . are meaningless unless some doctrine akin to transubstantiation is accepted."

"Now it is the duty of a bishop," he goes on, "solemnly undertaken at his consecration, with all faithful diligence to maintain and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's word."

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