

Adela, the Octoroon

ADELA, THE OCTOROON.

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ADELA, THE OCTOROON.

CHAPTER I.

That fine old seat, with all those oaks around,
Oft have I viewed with reverence so profound,
As something sacred dwelt in that delicious ground.

* * * * *
And now a lady, last of all that race,
Is the departing spirit of the place.

CRABBE.

THOMAS ROLAND lay upon his death-bed. The light of the setting sun shone into the apartment, and Adela, his only child, a beautiful brunette of eighteen, sat by his bedside, with tearful eyes, listening to his parting injunction.

"I shall die," said he, "my Adela, with the going down of the sun. Its parting beams seem to linger for me, that I may repeat to you my last request. See, daughter, that my will, so far as it relates to the poor people who have depended upon me, is fully obeyed. In whatever circumstances they may be placed, or wherever their lot is cast, do not, knowingly, let them suffer. The consciousness that they have been well cared for, and that their happiness may be still further increased by the provisions which I have made for them, relieves this last hour of my earthly

pilgrimage, of the remorse with which it would otherwise be filled."

"Father—dear—dear father," sobbed Adela, "all your requests shall be observed; but talk no more on this painful theme. You may yet live many days. It can not be that your end is so near."

"The time has come, dear," responded the dying man, in a faint tone, "is now here. The hand of death is upon me. I feel his chill gripe. The world fades upon my sight. Kneel, Adela, kneel and pray for the departing spirit of your father."

And Adela knelt by that bedside, and poured out her heart in a prayer of touching pathos. Long ere her surcharged soul was relieved of its burden, she caught the flutter of the pulse which, until then, had throbbed beneath her touch, and she opened her eyes to behold those of the beloved object of her petition closed in death. Claspings her hands in agony, she fell forward upon the bed, and burying her face in the bosom of the dead, she wept long and heavily. She was alone in the world. An agonizing sense of loneliness absorbed her thoughts, and she remained with the hand of her father clasped in hers, until it grew rigid and cold, when, rising and composing herself for the task, she broke the tidings of his death to other members of the household, and to them committed the duty of preparing the body for burial.

It is proper, here, upon the threshold of our story, that the reader should be informed as to the unexplained portions of this domestic scene. Thomas Roland was a wealthy southern planter. He was the owner of many slaves. His plantation was large, and located in one of the richest cotton districts of Mississippi. He had been, all his life, a humane man. His rule over his slaves had been stained

by few of the cruelties too frequently incident to the relation. They had been well fed, well clothed, and taught in all matters concerning their physical welfare, and in return for this treatment, they had labored to increase the gains of their master. He was rich, and bequeathed his fortune to Adela, making provision in his will for Tom and Nanny, favorite household servants, and Zeb and Henry, field hands, whom he liberated from slavery.

A few days after the funeral, Adela, in discharge of the promise to her father, informed the negroes of their freedom, and gave to each the allowance provided by the will.

The estate of Mr. Roland was worth several hundred thousand dollars. It consisted of a large cotton plantation, stocked with one hundred and thirty slaves, and all the necessary appurtenances to the most complete cultivation of cotton. The Homestead, a stately old edifice of baronial appearance and dimensions, occupied a beautiful elevation which overlooked all parts of the plantation. The inclosure surrounding it, containing twenty acres, was laid out into lawns, groves, patches of flowers and shrubbery—traversed by serpentine walks—adorned with arbors and summer-houses. Taste and wealth had been profusely lavished upon it. The rarest exotics had been cultivated with care in the hothouses, groves of orange and lemon trees, and long rows of magnolias, perfumed the atmosphere. The interior of the edifice was rich, but not gorgeous. The furniture was of the substantial kind, selected with a greater view to service than display. The rooms were large, and old-fashioned in style, and the walls hung with fine paintings, selected from the best collections in the country.

Adela Roland, now sole mistress of this estate, unlike many southern ladies of gentle birth, united with great beauty an appearance of strong and ruddy health. She

was, if anything, a little too short, with a tendency to dumpiness. Her complexion was dark, but clear, and her brilliant black eyes expressive of vivacity and intellect. In brief, without the smallest approach to the spiritual, Adela was really beautiful. She was endowed with a strong mind, which had been carefully cultivated, and to the accomplishments and refinements of a thorough education, she added, what is seldom found in southern women, a perfect familiarity with the domestic duties of the household. She superintended everything within doors, and was as busy as a bee, from morn till night, in the discharge of her various housekeeping duties. She felt no stronger the responsibilities of her position as mistress of the estate, after her father's death, than she had felt them for many months before. That event had been long foreseen, and in anticipation of it, she had made herself so well acquainted with affairs, that when it occurred, she knew as much about them, and was as competent to manage them, as her father himself. Though a sincere mourner, hers was a nature which grief could not long enthrall; and after the burial of her parent, she found, in the ever active duties of her position, a speedy relief to the poignancy of her affliction.

A maiden aunt of Mr. Roland was a prominent member of the family. She had been for many years a dependent upon his bounty, returning his kindness with such service as her feeble frame and advancing years permitted. Industrious and grateful, she performed with cheerfulness whatever her hands found to do. Her usual place was by one of the ample windows in the sitting-room, which she claimed by a sort of prescriptive occupancy. There she would sit, from morn till eve, employed in some light and simple labor of utility to the family. Like all unmarried females, who have passed the season of hope, and felt, for

the last time, that sickness of heart which results from hope deferred, she had fastened her affections upon objects which, had she been married, would never have found a place in her thoughts. She had a parrot and a Maltese cat, both of which, by their mischievous pranks, had become specially obnoxious to every person in the house but their mistress; a fact which they seemed to understand, for they shared with her the area in front of the window already spoken of, and often sought and found in it a sanctuary for their frequent delinquencies. Aunt Debby, as she was called, had many eccentricities of character, among which was one of supposing herself the head of the household, which amounted to a mania, and was the cause of many queer incidents. She was a good-hearted, fussy, little old woman, somewhat past threescore, lively as a cricket, and so thin as to be almost transparent. She had all the precision of speech, particularity of dress, and pride of appearance that belong to the much-reviled class of which she was so perfect a representative, and not being able to convince herself that marriage was a positive crime, she ever maintained with Paul, that a life of celibacy was much more perfect. On this point she fortified herself with Scripture sentiments in sufficient quantity to overwhelm any antagonist.

Aunt Debby found many ways of being useful to her benefactors. She superintended the feeding of the poultry, looked after the young chickens; learned the calf to drink milk; and during the period of gardening attended to the planting of peas, beans, tomatoes and onions. She was careful, also, to preserve the best seed, and gather for family use the most valuable medicinal herbs. In short, Aunt Debby, with all the peculiarities incident to protracted maidenhood, possessed a fund of practical good sense, which rendered her one of the most useful persons in the family.

Another inmate of the family was old Mr. Dennis, the steward and overseer. He had filled this double occupation, with great fidelity, for more than thirty years—and had become a kind of *Major Domo*—a man of all work, whose advice was sought, and judgment relied upon in all matters concerning the plantation. He understood, to a handful, the quantity of cotton that every servant on the plantation was capable of picking, and knew by what means to get this labor performed, without resorting to severity. All the slaves loved him for his kindness and familiarity; and he took great pleasure in having it understood that, in all his experience as overseer, he had never whipped a slave, or failed by good treatment to subdue those who were placed under his charge.

Among the slaves who labored on the plantation was one familiarly known by the title of Captain Jake. He was a mulatto—one of those large, finely-formed men, of whom, despite the manifold ugliness of the majority, the race furnishes many specimens. Captain Jake was industrious, faithful and honest; and possessed powers of mind of no mean order. Unlike most of the slaves belonging to the estate, he was taciturn, and never mingled in any of their gatherings or merry-makings. Though outwardly submissive to the restraints of his condition, his habits, and mode of life bore evidence of a strong undercurrent of discontent. But Captain Jake was a reliable man. His judgment was often consulted by the overseer, who treated him more like an equal than a subordinate—and his young mistress honored him with her confidence, and frequently sought his advice. During the lifetime of Mr. Roland, Jake had in every possible way consulted his interests—and large offers had been made for him, by neighboring planters, but his master's uniform reply was, that there

could not be money enough raised to purchase Jake. During his last illness, Mr. Roland had exacted a promise from Jake, to take good care of, and never forsake, his young mistress—from which circumstance, Jake supposed that it was the intention to give him his freedom. He was greatly disappointed, after the death of his master, to learn that no such provision had been made.

"I am of too much value," muttered he, as he turned away from bidding Zeb and Henry farewell, "to receive freedom. It is the boon of the old or worthless of our race. Those who can work must toil through life."

While thus giving a tongue to his thoughts as he slowly walked toward the mansion, Mr. Dennis stole upon him unperceived, and listened with astonishment to the treasonable character of his language.

"Halloo, captain," he exclaimed, "what's up with you to turn traitor? Can our faithful Jake be unhappy?"

"Yes, master Dennis," responded Jake, facing his interrogator, "I am disappointed. I deserved freedom more than either of the boys that obtained it. I should have made better use of it than they will. Master had my promise that I would look after and never forsake Miss Adela. I have done more for him to pay for freedom, than any other slave on the plantation. I *am* unhappy."

"But, captain," rejoined Dennis, in a soothing tone of voice, placing his hand upon Jake's shoulder, "have you not always been well cared for? Has not your master oftener consulted you confidentially, oftener followed your advice, than that of any other man on the plantation? Who has been better fed or better clothed? Bethink yourself, my old friend; how can freedom increase your happiness? Why should you be discontented?"

"Because, master Dennis,"—and a tear was seen swell-

ing in the negro's eye as he spoke—"all the privileges and attentions you have mentioned are not freedom. I am still a slave. The air that I breathe—this free, bracing air—only increases my bondage as it improves my strength. These strong limbs and active hands, this ever restless spirit, this busy thought—they are not mine, and while I feel that my condition degrades them, that so long as I can feel and think like you, but can not, like you, be free to express and use my thoughts and feelings, how can I be otherwise than unhappy? Oh, master Dennis, it is no new thing for me to be unhappy. I feel here," placing his hand upon his heart, "the desire for liberty. I think how happy I should be to mingle with freemen, and, like them, indulge ambitious aspirations, and enjoy rank, wealth, and station."

"Pooh, pooh, captain," said Dennis, "these are dreams fit only for the brain of a schoolboy. They ought not to affect sober men like you and I. Mr. Roland would have given you freedom, had he supposed it would have benefited you. He wished, as he told you, to have you ever near your young mistress, and thereby, Jake, he paid you a great compliment for fidelity. He knew that one such man as you was worth a regiment of Toms and Zebs on a plantation like this. We will try and make the thing equal. You are free in everything but the name. Cheer up, my good fellow. Your lot is cast in a pleasant land, and you shall never want for friends to look after your welfare."

"Thank you, master Dennis," replied Jake, gazing earnestly into the face of the overseer, "thank you for your kind words. They are well intended, and I am not ungrateful. Miss Adela and you both know that, however much I may desire to be free, I shall never resort to any

concealed measures to obtain my freedom. I love you both too much; and if I did not, I love truth and honesty too much for that."

"We fully understand that, captain," rejoined Dennis, "and it is only with a desire to alleviate your seeming unhappiness, that I have talked with you at all. But it will all come right in time, Jake. Let us jog on together as we have done. We've lived thirty years under the same roof without quarreling, and have both reached the commencement of the last ten of the seventy years allotted to man. But little remains to us. Our best days are over. Let us make the time as happy as we can for each other, and for the young charge committed to us."

Mr. Dennis here seized Jake by the hand and shook it heartily, and without waiting for a reply hurried into the house.

CHAPTER II.

With all my soul, then let us part,
Since both are anxious to be free.

MOORE.

THE Roland estate was bounded on the west by the Mississippi. At the distance of half a mile from the house, on the river bank, was a large wood-yard, where boats were supplied. Into this inclosure, with their baggage, near the close of the day that they were set free, Tom and Nanny strayed, and seated themselves upon a wood-pile to await the arrival of an upward-bound packet. Neither had any definite idea as to their destination, beyond a sort of understanding that they were going to the free States. Nothing in their lives, till now, had rendered it necessary that they should take any care for the morrow. Food and raiment always had been provided; therefore, they had never entertained, as possible, the thought that they should ever want for either. Their idea of freedom was formed from no correct conception of its realities; and, for the first time since they had received it, Nanny introduced the subject, while they were seated on the wood-pile.

"Tom," inquired she, "when we come to the free States, what shall we do thar?"

"What you ask such question for?" replied Tom.

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"When we's free, we'll do jiss as we please. How does our Missus do? How did ole Mass'r do? We'll do so, too, in the free States. We'll be our own property, and make money for our own selves, jiss like white-folks."

"Haint'e 'fraid, Tom, that we not get 'nough to eat and wear, nor no home so good as our leetle cabin on the plantation? Haint'e?" inquired Nan.

"Ki, Nanny," answered Tom with a chuckle, "guess you's tired a-ready, and want to be slave agin. I isn't 'fraid o' nuffin when I git in the free States, cause then I's jis as good as anybody, and not 'blige to dig or pick cotton, or do nuffin without pay. White-folks no better as you and I, in the free States."

"But they all has to work jis so hard for livin', whether they in free States or not. They not get 'long without. I doesn't 'spect to. Missus tole me so, and she say, 'Nanny, you'll see time, great many times, when you want to come back to ole plantation.' I tole her, I don't know—I want try and see, and if I get tired, and don't like free States, may-be she'll let me, and I'll come back agin, and live in ole cabin till I die. Then she tole me, she be so glad, and that I shall never want, 'cause, she say, she feel great intress for us, and want us to be spectacle-like and 'tented."

"Missus have been very good to us," said Tom, "and I doesn't like to leave her; but dis is not de place for free nigger. He better be slave than free here, 'cause he can't do nuffin, and everybody, even de slaves, hate him. If I could be free, and serve Missus, I'd stay here; but thar, where we's goin', when we's free, we's jiss as free as de rest ob de folks; and dat's de reason I doesn't stay. We's make our fortunes thar, by jis mindin' our own bisness. We buy our own house, and everyt'ing we want, and nobody oversee us."

"What in natur' are you two niggers doin' here, I should like to know," exclaimed a tall, long-nosed individual, approaching the wood-pile where Tom and Nanny sat. "What hev you got in them bundles; where d'ye come from; where ye goin'; and whose niggers are ye? Let's know all about it. May-be you run away, and ought to be arrested. Speak up, confound ye, and don't tell any lies."

"We be free, Mass'r," replied Tom. "Here is our papers."

"Oh, you be, hey!" said the Yankee, eyeing them suspiciously, at the same time taking the papers offered him by Tom, and running his eyes over their contents. "Ah, ha," he continued. "Old Roland give you your liberty, when he found he was goin' to make a die-out. May-be he thought he'd cheat the devil by it; but, between you and me, Tom, I guess the old chap waited too long. But where ye goin'? Up North, to be free, I s'pose. That's the way with all you niggers. You don't know when you're well off—never contented to let well enough alone. I tell you what 't's, Tom, you, and this dark-complected femanine with you, 'll find things different from what you think up there. I know all about it. I live there when I'm to hum; and, I tell *you*, a nigger don't stand any chance in the best of the free States. The whites 'll hate 'em any-way you can fix it. You 'll have to be a barber, a waiter, or a bootblack; and this piece of she trumpery 'll have to do all kinds of drudgery; and, after all's said, you 'll be nothin' but niggers. You'd better go back and serve your purty Mistress. Lord love her sweet face! She's the finest little body in Mississippi, and old Dennis is the likeliest man I ever met with in these States."

"Ki, Mass'r!" replied Tom, with a grin; "we's goin' to try 'em any-way. Our Missus very good to us, but we aint slaves any more."

"Oh, you're a pair of black fools! Of course," responded the Yankee, "it's no use talkin' to such. May-be you've seen some of our Abolitionists. They 'll tell you all about the blessings of liberty, what your rights are, how much you're imposed on, and how cruel your masters are to you. And then, when you get to the free States, and ask them for assistance, what can they do for you? They may give you money, they may find you employment, they may possibly, some of them, receive you at their tables, but they won't give you white skins, nor make you like white-folks. *You'll see!* But it's no use talkin'. I never saw a nigger made free yet, who was not a fool in ten minutes afterward."

The distant puff of an approaching steamboat now caught the ear of the negroes, who immediately became all excitement in the prospect of their long journey, and hastened with their bundles to the river side.

"Oh, you needn't be in such a hurry," said the Yankee; "the boat is below the bend and 'll not be here for the matter of twenty minutes or more. You 'll not find it so easy getting up North as you think for. These slave laws are rather harder on a nigger, after he's free, than before, and you 'd better keep a bright look out for trouble."

"We will, Mass'r," responded Tom; "guess dey won't catch dis chile, dis time, no-how."

"Not as long as you're careful, Tom; but don't trust everybody. Don't you know that people generally, in a slave State, are down upon free niggers? You 'll lose your freedom before you gain it, Tom, unless you're very cunning. You 'll see!"

"Mass'r," inquired Tom, in an earnest tone, "what's de reason dat de white-folks hate us in de slave States, and like us where dar be no slaves?"

"Ah, Tom," replied the Yankee; "there's where you poor fellows make the mistake. You think there must be a difference; but you'll see. The white-folks, the very best of 'em, dislike you just as much in the free as in the slave States. They don't like your color, to begin with. You aint like 'em. They don't like to see you about. You'll find a good many of 'em to pity you, because you've been a slave, and they'll tell you a good many ugly things about slavery, and a good many as pleasant about liberty, but you'll see that the comfort of living is no better—not quite so good, Tom, in the free States as that which you and your wife have always had on old man Roland's place. Do you know what you want to be free for? Your old master always treated you well. You never wanted for clothes or victuals, and if you expect anything more in the free States, you don't know much about it. It's all humbug, Tom. A nigger's a *nigger*, the world over, among *white-folks*. You can't break down the prejudice, and that's the very thing that'll use you up. Mind, Tom, if I knew you had been abused, or met with hard fare of any kind, I should tell you to go; but in your case, I don't think the change will increase your happiness."

"If I b'lieved you, Mass'r," Tom rejoined, "I wouldn't go, 'cause I know Miss Adela allas give us good home—never sell—never whip us. She's so good to us, it makes me feel bad to go."

The boat now made its appearance in the river below, and the conversation between Tom and his Yankee acquaintance was brought to an abrupt termination. Tom and Nanny jumped on board as soon as the boat approached near enough to admit of it.

"Halloo, niggers! what do you want aboard?" was the polite interrogatory addressed to them by the captain, who

hastened to confront them in a threatening attitude, seemingly with the intention of driving them ashore.

"It's all right with them niggers, captain," hallooed the Yankee, from the bank; "they're free, under the hand and seal of the Roland estate. Take 'em to the free States."

"Curl down there," said the captain, pointing to the deck forward of the boilers, "and don't stir till we get through, or we'll put you ashore. There's no truck," he muttered, turning to ascend the stairs leading to the cabin, "that I hate quite so much as niggers. I wonder their masters ever set them free."

The boat swung from the shore, and Tom and Nan were on their way to the "land of liberty."

CHAPTER III.

Oblige her and she 'll hate you, while you live.
POPE.

THE plantation adjoining Miss Roland's belonged to a wealthy planter by the name of Westover, who was fond of good dinners, good wine, and plenty of company. Unlike Mr. Roland, without being naturally a cruel man, dissipation of one kind and another, and a certain fondness for his own ease, had made this gentleman indifferent to the treatment which his slaves received, and careless, even, of the comforts of his own family. His infirmities and irregularities had rendered the intercourse between himself and wife merely conventional; and, as to his children, consisting of a daughter of sixteen, and a son of twenty-four, he seldom gave them a thought.

Henry Westover, the son, and the one with whom, in this history, we have the most to do, inherited none of his father's peculiarities. On the contrary, he was a young man of singular energy, ever in search of some speculation, large or small, by which his gains might be increased. Henry found no time to squander in the society of his father's friends, and gave little heed to anything save the concerns of the plantation. The object of his life seemed only in the way of accomplishment, when all the resources

of his father's estate were employed to increase the wealth of the owner. To a mind thus constituted, the practice of the cardinal virtues was not permitted to interfere with the desire for acquisition. Money *must* be made at any sacrifice. This done, the requirements of religion or morality, for form's sake, *might* receive attention. In a word, Henry Westover was a supremely selfish man.

The difference between Henry and his father was strikingly exhibited in the management of the estate. The one spent his time in accumulating, and the other in squandering the revenues. The amounts wrung from overtasked servants by the son, found a speedy release in the extravagance of the father, so that, when the year came round, despite the energies of the one, the property had dwindled in the profusion of the other. As a natural consequence, a mutual dislike existed between parent and child, which was prevented from running into open outbreak from selfish considerations. The father was conscious of his inability to manage the estate, the son equally so that his only chance of a fee simple to any part of it lay in his obedience.

Under the management of Henry Westover, the slaves belonging to the plantation suffered from the severe discipline of hard task-masters. They were poorly fed and clothed, and required to perform a certain amount of labor per day. Any failure was punished. Scarcely a day passed during which some of these unfortunate people were not bared to the lash for some fancied or real malfeasance of duty. A slave owner in the neighborhood could not alarm the fears of a refractory or dilatory negro more, than to threaten to sell him to Henry Westover. He was held in abhorrence by every slave within forty miles of his father's plantation.

This young man, between whom and Adela Roland there was not a single congeniality, professed to love her, and made her frequent offers of marriage. Twice during the lifetime of her father she had peremptorily rejected him, but all to no purpose; that tenacity of disposition so remarkable in all selfish men, together with a peculiar pride of character, caused him to persist in his suit for the hand and fortune of the fair heiress.

"Will you still refuse me, Miss Roland?" he inquired, while on a morning call about a fortnight after her father's decease; "are you still fixed in your resolution not to marry me?"

"As much so now, Mr. Westover, as when you first importuned me on the subject. Let me entreat you to think no more of it. It can never be. Suffer me to respect, but do not ask me to love you."

"You will think differently, Miss Adela. I can not give you up, but hope not to offend by perseverance. You will not always refuse."

"I beg you would dispel any such illusion. It is impossible that I should feel any more favorable to your proposal than at present. I can never marry you."

"Trust me, madam, there are considerations which will change your determination, if not from motives of affection, at least from those of policy. Your own good sense will discover to you, that, by our union, your estate will fall under profitable management, and its annual revenues become increased, while the care which you suffer as its proprietor will be shared by one who will feel an equal interest in its improvement."

"For shame, Harry Westover," replied Adela, reddening with indignation, "to hold marriage at so light an estimate. Do you think I will barter my affections to a man I can

not love, for mere gain? Never, sir, never! I entreat you to desist, before you teach me to despise you. Our feelings and views were never wider apart—never less fitted to contemplate the possibility of a union than at this moment. If I had ever entertained such a supposition, the selfish basis you have laid for it, would prevent its consummation."

For a moment only Westover showed signs of anger. Recovering his self-possession instantly, and really but little daunted in his purpose, he managed to change the tone of his suit from petition to inuendo.

"I suppose," said he, "Miss Roland keeps her smiles in reserve for a special favorite."

"Any supposition you may entertain, of that nature, sir," responded Adela, hastily, and in a tone indicative of resentment, "is of little consequence to me. I shall not try to undeceive you, so long as my conduct, whatever it may be, does not concern you. As to the charge implied by your observation, I have nothing to admit or deny. Be assured, however, that my affections will never be freely bestowed upon Harry Westover."

"I should be miserable if I thought so, Miss Adela," replied Westover. "Incorrigible as you seem, I can not but hope that time will work a change in my favor; and while I feel thus, I can not, will not, yield in the prosecution of my suit."

"And by pursuing it, Mr. Westover," said Adela, "you will both distress and disgust me; and I shall soon learn to feel toward you an emotion stronger than mere indifference, for when respect ceases, hatred begins. I would not willingly cease to respect you."

A nature so selfish as that of Harry Westover was not to be diverted by any of the considerations which Adela had employed.

"She is but trying my perseverance," he whispered to himself, as he arose and bid her good morning. To this was added but another thought, and that was, that she should have no reason to think him deficient in that quality.

How different were the thoughts of Adela! To her the addresses of Westover were a positive affliction. When he left the room, she burst into tears. Her thoughts, broken as they were, found utterance and vehemence befitting the occasion.

"Why," she soliloquized, "should he persecute me with his unwelcome addresses? Why persist, when so often refused? He knows I will not love him. Death would be preferable to a union with him. Yet he perseveres—hopes—urges. Why is it? Alas! I know not, unless it be my estate. But he shall see that I am not easily changed; that something beside mere determination is necessary to win the heart of Adela Roland. Notwithstanding his professions, I feel that he cares nothing for me. What would he care for my love? How would he return my affections? In what manner could I, personally, contribute to his happiness? I understand his nature too well to believe that any of these questions have ever entered his thoughts. He worships the broad acres left me by my father—the poor dependents upon my bounty—the paltry revenues of my cotton and sugar fields, and regards me only as the medium by which they may be transferred to his possession. But he shall have none of them. If this poor heart can find nothing more deserving of its worship, it shall wither in its own shrine, and never know what 'tis to love. Love! what is love? I would fain inquire of that unblest portion of my being, what corresponding traits in the idol it has pictured are necessary to warm it

into flame? I have, indeed, for the first time, to see the man that I could love well enough to make him master of myself. Who shall command my heart—who share my cares—who challenge my hopes? Does that man live? Heart! heart! I must study thy workings well before I surrender thee to another's keeping."

Adela's self-communings were here abruptly terminated by Aunt Debby, who opened the door to inquire whether Adela had seen Poll, her parrot, within the previous half hour.

"No, aunty," answered Adela; "Poll has become so unsteady that I fear you will lose her."

"Lose Poll," responded Aunt Debby, pausing, as if to comprehend how such a calamity would affect her. "Lose Poll? why, Ade, I shouldn't know how to bear it. It would be a heavy loss indeed."

"I wonder why, Aunty," said Adela. "She is a mere bird. What can you see in her to love? What claims has she to your love? She does not love in return—has no kindness in her nature. Her talk is mechanical. She can not think, is very mischievous, and evinces a very unamiable, unlovable disposition. She is only contented when her appetite is appeased. I never could understand your love for this ugly parrot. You are as different from her as can be. You have love, kindness, good nature, accommodation. Your heart is running over with sympathy and gratitude; and yet you seemingly love this creature, that has no corresponding qualities, as well as a mother would her child, or, perhaps, a wife her husband."

"What a mood you are in, child, this morning! What ails you?" inquired Aunt Debby, with much concern of manner and expression. "You never asked me so many silly questions before in your life. How does my love for

Poll concern you? Poll is a favorite pet. I take great pleasure in her peculiarities. If I had other things to love, I might not love her."

"Pretty Polly," said the parrot, from her perch on Aunt Debby's high-backed chair.

"Oh! there she is," said Aunt Debby, leaving the room to return to her old quarters before the window.

"I wish," thought Adela, as the old lady closed the door, "I wish I could find something as harmless as poor Poll to love. Little does aunty dream of the trials that now afflict this young heart."

CHAPTER IV.

A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
We bid be quiet when we hear it cry;
But were we burdened with like weight or pain,
As much, or more, we should ourselves complain.

SHAKESPEARE.

FOUR days after the departure of Tom and Nan, the other liberated negroes, Zeb and Henry, having concluded to accept of freedom, entered the wood-yard before alluded to, and unconsciously seated themselves upon the same pile of wood which Tom and Nan had occupied, like them, to await the arrival of an upward-bound boat.

Zeb, who was possessed of more foresight and sagacity than either of the others, had made his calculations to stop at the first place in the free States that the boat stopped at. He had formed tolerably correct opinions as to what his condition would be in a state of freedom, and did not indulge in such bright or lofty anticipations as his friend Henry, who, like Tom and Nan, supposed that it was only necessary to enter a free country to be perfectly happy.

"If I can't go to work on a farm," said Zeb, "I shall open barber shop and do as well as I can with the sixpences I can pick up for shaving."

"Well, sah," said Henry, "dat's nuffin to me. I shall go to Canada; and if I don't fine ebery'ting free thar I

shall join the army, and den I shall get plenty to eat and drink, and have nuffin to do, only jiss fight when its war, and be jiss as free as can be all de time."

"Yes, but when dere is war," said Zeb, "may-be you'll get killed, have you leg or arm shot off, and be lame while you live. Dat's no place for me. I'd rather be in de ole cotton field."

"Thar's no more freedom in de barber's business in de free States, 'an dey is here, in Mass'r Roland's parlor," said Henry, "but it is suffin to be a soger, and have good clothes, and be thought one ob de nation's offenders!"

"You're another brace of niggers that old Roland's freed, I conclude," remarked our Yankee friend, who had previously accosted Tom and Nan; and who, we shall for the present, at least, designate by the name of Wheeler. "You're goin' after Tom, and his dark complected Divinity, aint ye?"

Zeb fumbled in his pockets for his papers, which Wheeler observing, he said:

"Oh, you needn't show your commissions to me. I never 'rested a nigger in my life, free or not, and I don't want to disturb you. Only look out for yourselves, that's all. You should all be as free as this darkey thinks he will be, when he jines the British army; a kind of freedom, my fine fellow, that you'll see, takes the premium of anything in its line, you've ever seen in the shape of slavery, on old Roland's plantation. But you're goin' up, I s'pose, on the first boat, and there's one jest roundin' the pint. I'm a goin' along a piece, and I'll tell the Capt'n who you are."

"Thankee Mass'r," replied both the negroes, shouldering their baggage, and walking toward the landing. Four days afterward they stepped ashore at Louisville. While walk-

ing up the principal street, they were overtaken by Wheeler, who admonished them, that free negroes were liable to capture and imprisonment in that city, and that they could not be too careful. They strolled around the city, looking at the public buildings, and display windows, without meeting with anything of interest, until they approached the Court-House. Here, much to their surprise, they heard their names called in a loud and distressed tone of voice, apparently issuing from under the building, and upon a close observation, they saw and recognized the face of their old fellow servant, Tom, peering at them from behind a strongly-grated window. He was handcuffed and fettered, and looked the very image of despair. Tom told them, that soon after he left the wood-yard, while he and Nanny were talking over their plans, they were approached by an old man, who intimated to them, that he suspected they were runaway slaves, and intended to arrest them in the first place the boat stopped at. To undeceive him, Tom intrusted him with their free papers. After examining them he said there had been so many such papers forged and trumped up, that he deemed it his duty to keep possession of them until he learned whether they were genuine or not. He then put them in his pocket and went away. Supposing he would return them soon, Tom did not give himself any trouble about them. When the boat stopped at Vicksburg, he saw the man go ashore, and watched for his return, but the boat left without him, and Tom then remembered what Wheeler had said to him, and feared that evil awaited him, but as no one on board seemed to doubt his freedom, his fears abated, and it was not until he and Nanny were arrested and taken into custody, at Louisville, as runaway slaves, that he again thought of the evidences of his freedom, and the hopelessness of his condition. He

told the story of his robbery, but his captors laughed thereat, and told him that such was the story told by every runaway. You will have, said they, a number of days to obtain proof of your freedom, at the expiration of which, if you fail, and no persons appear to claim you, you will be sold to pay the cost of advertising you, and your jail fees. His money had been taken from him, on suspicion of being stolen, and his wife, Nanny, had been heavily ironed and confined in another cell.

They had been three days in custody, when Zeb and Henry found them, who, on hearing their story, inquired out a magistrate, and related it to him, expressing at the close, a wish that they might be released.

"Fudge, niggers," replied the magistrate, "do you suppose your oaths will be taken against the oath of a white man? There's no law for that in Kentuck, I can tell you. You must produce your papers, find a white witness, or the niggers will be sold."

Zeb and Henry were now in a greater quandary than ever. They returned to Tom, and he, on learning their ill success in his behalf, gave up to despair, bewailing most piteously his hard fate, and expressing many and heartfelt regrets that he had ever accepted of freedom.

In the depth of his agony he said, "If I had staid with Missus, I should always had good home—plenty, ebery-ting, and nuffin to care for. Now when we's sold we'll be whipped, set to hard work, and neber git freedom no more!"

Poor Nanny felt and expressed as deep grief as Tom, at the prospect before them; but most of all, and as the heaviest part of the calamity, she feared that Tom and herself would be sold to separate masters, and never again see each other.

Zeb and Henry engaged earnestly in behalf of their

fellow servants, and as the next resource to those they had already employed, they thought of applying to Wheeler, but when they made search for him, they learned that he had gone into the interior of the State. They next went to a lawyer, whom they employed to attend the trial before the magistrate, but from whose advice they gleaned nothing favorable to their friends.

The day came. The justice opened his court, but as it concerned nothing of more importance, than the consignment of two hapless beings to a life of servitude, an everyday occurrence, it excited no attention in the community. There were not a dozen persons, beside the prisoners and their faithful friends, Zeb and Henry, in the office. The justice, a hard-faced, flinty-looking man, seemed to regard the guilt of the prisoners as a foregone conclusion. The lawyer sat with his feet elevated somewhat higher than his head, and his hands clasped over the organ of reverence—a comfortable position to go through with the ordinary farce expected, on such occasions. He had, if possible, less idea of clearing the prisoners than the magistrate. Such a thing had never been known and the entire ceremony was a mere mockery of justice—a form, which would give to the unhallowed act an appearance of right. In other words, it was law, and being law, of course it was treason against the sovereign State of Kentucky to disobey it.

Poor Tom and Nanny sat upon a rough board bench, in front of the dispenser of the law. They looked haggard with care, and wan with fasting. No trace of a hopeful feeling could be seen in their woe-begone features. Their grief surpassed the power of shedding tears; with their hands firmly clasped, and their eyes fixed upon the justice, they sat like statues, awaiting the announcement of the decision, which was to doom them to a life of servitude.

"Well, niggers," said the justice, addressing them, "what have you to offer that your stories are true? The Court can not be delayed with your matters from attending to business of greater importance. Speak up, Tom, what do you say for yourself?"

Here Tom's lawyer, took his hands from his head, and rising slowly, told "*the Court*," that he had no doubt both of the negroes were free, and that, if the evidence of the two mulattoes (pointing to Zeb and Henry) could be heard, he would have no difficulty in proving it. He knew, he said, that the laws of Kentucky would not admit of such testimony; but as this was a pretty hard case for the prisoners—and there was no white evidence against them—he hoped the justice would listen to their story. It was not long; and its consistency gave it a claim to truth, which "*the Court*" would not fail, he thought, to adopt.

The lawyer sat down, and the magistrate, without noticing his plea, waved his hand significantly to the officer, as much as to say, "Off with 'em." That worthy was about to execute the command, when our Yankee friend Wheeler stepped forward, and said:

"Hold on a minit, Mr. Justice, if you please. I should like to swear in this case, myself. I'm a white man and live in Vermont. My oath'll put a different look upon matters. I know these niggers—all on 'em—know they are free, and that your proceedings are unregular."

"Come forward and be sworn, sir," said the justice, "and then tell us what you know."

Wheeler took the stand and narrated all that he knew about the Roland estate, and the free papers of Tom and Nanny. The magistrate was compelled to discharge them and return their money, except costs and jail fees.

They left the office, hand-in-hand, ejaculating loud and

fervent thanks to good Mass'r Wheeler, promising, if they could, they would return his kindness fourfold. Wheeler, seemingly as much pleased as they were, at their deliverance, accompanied them down to the bank of the river. Pointing to the opposite shore he said:

"There, niggers, is the land of liberty. You will never be safe till you reach it. When you get there, never come back. Here's a boat to set you across. Give one shout for freedom as soon as you set foot on the soil of a free State. Good-by, Tom, Nan. Farewell, Henry—Zeb, my fine fellow, you deserve a better fate, than you can win over there. But go—go while you're safe, and God be with you."

As the boat struck the opposite bank, Wheeler raised one shout, and waving the negroes a farewell with his handkerchief, turned away and was soon lost in the crowd that filled the business street of Louisville. They were accosted at the top of the bank, by a kindly-looking man, who bade them go with him. He conducted them to a large white house, nearly a mile distant, and ushered them into a spacious dining-room, where they were invited to sit down to a table filled with substantial food. Kind voices greeted them, and kind faces smiled upon them, to assure them they were free.

"Eat heartily, my friends," said Mr. Thompson, "you have a long journey to perform this afternoon, and will need food to strengthen you. We hope to place you out of harm's way before another day. But you must leave the river at once, to escape the vile harpies which the slave-power employs to kidnap and decoy you. My friend Wheeler has informed me of everything it is necessary I should know concerning you, and I have made ample provision for your trip into the interior."

Wheeler, in the meantime, sauntered into the postoffice, where a letter was handed to him, on opening which, he found the single word, "Return." He went to the levee immediately, and took passage on the first downward-bound boat.

CHAPTER V.

The modest, yet the manly mien
Might grace the court of maiden queen.
SCOTT

Oh! that a dream so sweet, so long enjoyed
Should be so sadly, cruelly destroyed.
MOORE.

ABOUT half way up the only street in the little village of T——, embowered by a grove of beautiful locusts, stood the office of Counselor Tidbald, in the door of which, at the time we write, sat a young man of about twenty years of age. His countenance was of that pale, intellectual cast, which denotes close study and deep reflection. His eye was alike expressive of energy and vivacity, and his large but admirably-formed mouth gave the idea that he was not deficient in eloquence. In stature he was above the medium height, but his form was slight, and without that firmness of motion and rigidity of muscle, which age alone can impart.

His dress was a coat of blue broadcloth, with gilt buttons, a buff marseilles vest, and white drilling pantaloons. It was scrupulously neat, and in the combination of its colors, as well as the exactness with which it fitted, evinced good taste upon the part of the wearer. He was sitting with his chair poised upon the hind legs; his hands clasped

upon his head—and betrayed in the thoughtful expression of his countenance, as well as attitude, a mental uneasiness, and concern, to which he had hitherto been an entire stranger. At times, his thoughts would seem to unbend, and he would stoop forward, and pick up a pebble, and throw it, without an object, through the thick foliage of the locusts—then, quickly recovering, would resume his old position. There was an indescribable restlessness in his motions, which seemed to indicate the presence of some topic that he found it difficult to keep for any length of time in steady contemplation. At times, a shade of anxiety would flit across his countenance; but this would speedily give place to a perplexed look, as if his mind refused to be subdued by any care which it might experience, in the investigation upon which it had entered.

Casting his eyes toward the well-filled shelves of the ample library, he said, in a tone indicative of the wandering character of his thoughts:

"What should I care for books? I have read studiously, thought profoundly, and burned the midnight oil to little purpose, if now I am to be thwarted in the strongest, dearest passion of my heart. And yet," he continued, after a moment's pause, "I fear it, and I know not why. 'Tis not because he has influence. He is, in fact, no rival; but there is a rival, that I can not brook—a rival, which may evoke both jealousy and refusal. 'Tis gold. I am poor, very poor. My struggle for existence must be a constant fight; and she may think, doubtless will, that it is for her gold I love her. Oh! that she were not worth a dollar; then I could sue with boldness. But why should I hesitate? I am unfitted for study till she knows and answers my petition. My thoughts are filled with her. Her dove-like eyes, her gentle countenance, her perpetual smile, are

constantly before me. If I ride, she is with me. If I attempt to converse, society becomes irksome; and I am only happy when contemplating upon her image, as it lingers, oh, too vividly, in my memory. I am truly—and must acknowledge it to myself—madly, irrecoverably, as poets would say, in love. And yet, I am under age, a mere student, measurably a dependent. What a situation for one who wishes to rise in the world! What would my bachelor uncle think of his promising nephew, could he listen to this precious confession?"

"That you are a fool," uttered a rough voice close behind him, "and have just entered upon that period of folly which happens once in the life of every man of true sentiment. But it has taken strong hold of you, Frank; and I fear for the consequences. It is like being at sea in a gale, to pass safely through the period on which you have entered. There are ten chances that you will be wrecked, for every one that you will escape. The waves run mountain high in your case. But talking will do no good, the voyage is begun and must be continued."

"My dear uncle," replied Frank Thornton, "had I known you to have been a listener, I should not have given utterance to words and thoughts, of which, at this moment, my memory does not enable me to recall a single one. Whatever I may have said, I certainly intended no disrespect to one who has been so kind to me as you."

"Fudge, Frank," said Tidbald, laughing, "do you think I am a stranger to these youthful reveries? I tell you, boy, I was once as great a romancer as the world ever produced. I have not always been the dry, crusty old chap that these books and a single life have made me. When I was young, I could write poetry, and was as fond of the ball-room as any madcap roysterer in all Virginia. But I

chanced, in an evil hour, to suffer a pair of soft, black eyes to bewitch me, and turn all my calculations, for eminence in my profession, topsy-turvy. I yielded to the song of the charmer, boy; and here I am, a bachelor, an old and nearly worn-out bachelor at sixty, with not a soul on earth, save you, Frank, and your little cousin Celestine, to care for me the value of a halfpence."

"And who, dear uncle, but you, have I to care for me. If it be mutuality in our feelings you desire, surely the weight of obligation falls heaviest on me; for what should I have been, among the associates I had found, in my native village, had not you, in a timely hour, snatched me from them, like a brand from the burning? But I will not revive a tale, at least, so offensive to myself. Come, uncle, I will give up my thoughts to your keeping, if you will sit down and tell me the history of that period in your life when you acknowledged a woman's thralldom."

"Ah ha, boy! I see which way the wind blows now. A few moments ago, you were unable to concentrate your thoughts, only on a single image. Now, curiosity to learn how another was affected, who survived that experience, conquered it, and came out of the fire unscathed, has recalled your wandering intellects long enough to listen. It is a story, Frank, that I never told to mortal ear. Many years have passed since it occurred. I look back upon it, as upon a dream; and though my memory takes in every portion of it, I have never recalled it, just as it occurred, since I began to feel that, for me, life was to be a dreary waste. But I will tell you the story, boy, as briefly as possible. Listen. In those good old times, when I was a boy, society was constituted somewhat differently from what it is now. Divisions were closer. Family was more thought of than wealth or talents, for the distinction that either con-

ferred upon its possessor; and it mattered little, if the head of a family was as poor as a church mouse, if he could trace his genealogy back, in the fortieth remove, to some count or duke, or other person of noble blood. That gave him position. True republican as I was, from having entered upon the stage, just after the close of our revolutionary struggle with Great Britain, I held all these distinctions in supreme contempt; and often, for no other purpose than that of kindling the family pride in the bosoms of my parents, would I engage them in discussions upon the subject, always taking, myself, the side of equality in everything. My father, on such occasions, much too reasonable to combat the justice of my notions, but unwilling to adopt them, would leave me in a pet, from which it would take him at least ten minutes to recover. My mother was, if anything, more stiff in her aristocratic tendencies than my father, and I could never succeed in detaining her for a listener to any sentiments which conflicted with hers on a subject that she thought of the highest importance.

"'George,' she would say, 'don't begin one of your sermons on liberty and equality, unless you wish me to go.'

"This admonition always shut me up; for, though republican, I was filial, and dearly loved my sainted mother. She was a glorious woman, Frank; one of your noble-spirited, revolutionary dames, who would have shouldered a musket, and taken the field, had it been necessary. Many, many years have passed since she died, but, oh! how vividly does the remembrance of her affection come over me. Her voice—I think I hear its kind tones as I talk, and her saintly smile—the sweetest that I ever saw on the face of woman; it seems to rest upon me now. She was a good Christian woman, loved her Bible, prayed earnestly, and

strove to imbue the minds of her children with her own excellent principles. Her last words to me—words, uttered but a few minutes before her pure spirit took its flight—were in character with her life: ‘Be a good man, my son,’ said she, ‘and so do and act as to meet me in heaven. I ask no more.’ Here the old man brushed away a tear, and proceeded:

“After the death of my mother, I was sent to C——, to college. It was, at the time, the gayest place in the Old Dominion—the abode of many of the wealthiest, as well as most aristocratic families in Virginia. Into their circle no person, whatever his abilities, could obtain an introduction, without he bore the patent of patrician origin. I understood, but hesitated to make up my mind to conform to this artificial condition of society. Some months elapsed, during which I was known as little more than an humble student, while many young men of smaller pretensions were basking in the beams of social favor. Occasionally I would hear of their round of enjoyments, of the pleasure they experienced in society, and all the various causes which contributed to render their social position much more enviable than a lonely, hum-drum student life, like mine.”

“Perhaps one reason, possibly the principal one, why I did not sooner enter society, was an almost unconquerable diffidence in the presence of females. I was never easy when alone in the same room with them, and my timidity was modified only, not conquered, when one or more of my own sex, bolder and more accustomed to female society, accompanied me. The evening that I consented, for the first time, to accompany a friend upon a call on two young ladies of C——, I regarded, at the time, as marking one of the most important events of my life. I well remember

the anxiety with which I prepared myself for the occasion; how I thought over what I should say; how I should act; what kind of greeting I should receive upon introduction; how long I should stay, etc., etc. And then I remember, too, how, when I entered the room where they were, all these wisely-planned preparations fled, in the confusion produced by my unconquerable trepidation. I could hardly see across the room, and sank, almost without motion, into the first chair I came to, while my friend, with an easy grace, engaged the young ladies in lively conversation. I was silent, and left, near the close of the evening, mortified and disheartened. My friend encouraged me. I accompanied him often, and soon began to experience the freedom I had so much envied in him. I became a favorite—grew suddenly into an importance that surprised me. In all schemes of amusement for drawing the young of both sexes together, I was the first to be consulted. My influence was sufficient to carry my plans. I was made to feel and exercise my power often against my inclination, and frequently at the expense of my modesty. But young men, situated as I was, soon forget to be modest, or that there ever was a time in their career, when they were not entitled to all the consideration they receive. I became vain and giddy. All idea of marriage was abandoned. I was proud to think that I stood foremost among the first, and could command the attention of those who occupied the same position among the opposite sex. I was a supreme arbiter. My advice was law. I could fashion the society of the village to suit myself. This was a dangerous position, however enviable, as I afterward learned, when I came fully to understand the jealousies it aroused among my comrades.

“A year or more after I had become thus associated, I was one evening unexpectedly thrown into the society of a

young lady, a cousin of one of my female acquaintances, who had but that day arrived on a visit in the place. She was beautiful; of a style of beauty indicative of as much loveliness of mind as of person. From the moment I saw, I loved her, and felt in her presence all the embarrassment of a devoted admirer. I told you I could write poetry. I did. I could sing and play the flute, and I serenaded her. In short, I performed all the antics and fooleries of a love-sick swain; so many and so ridiculous that I think them over now, only to wonder at the imbecility and weakness by which they were characterized. Emma was not long in comprehending my feelings, and they were quite as apparent to my acquaintances generally. She felt flattered by my attentions. But why prolong? We loved, told each other of it, and swore to each other eternal fealty. Who then so happy as I! Ah, the experience of first love! Who can measure its depth or fullness? Who can depict the glow of delight with which it fills the soul? What a rainbow-tinge it imparts to life! How it separates the ideal from the real, and destroys the consciousness of temporal ills. Thenceforth I dwelt in a world of unalloyed bliss—bliss too perfect to continue—to soon, alas! to be turned into agony.

"I need not be particular in detailing the causes which prevented our union. They are painful to dwell upon, and form an event in my life, which I never recall without sorrow. You may, some day, know more of it. Emma and I separated never to meet again. She returned to her friends, sank into a decline, and died ere the close of the year. I forsook society, gave myself up to my profession, and became the crusty old bachelor you now behold me. Without finishing, I have told you all that occasion calls for. There are darker shades to the picture, which time may unveil to

your gaze. But leave it now, and tell me the name of the fair being who has disturbed your thoughts."

Frank, who had been all attention to his uncle's tale, was unprepared for the sudden change he had given to the subject, and stammeringly inquired, in answer to his question,

"Shall I make a clean breast of it, uncle?"

"If you can trust me, Frank, yes," replied Tidbald

"In a word, then," said Frank, blushing, "it is Adda Roland. What do you think of the choice?"

"Such an one, my dear boy, as I can approve with all my heart," answered Tidbald. "Miss Roland is every way worthy of you, and, I hope, will listen to your suit. But it is a suit of your own, Frank. No one can solicit for you. If the young lady loves you, she will marry you, if she don't, you had better temper your affection with the reflection that you are better off without her. But work with courage—'faint heart,' you know. Find out soon if she loves you, for you will be of no use to yourself or anybody else, until the matter is settled, and if you are to be disappointed, you can not, for your own peace, know it too soon. Have you ever addressed the young lady?"

"Never."

"Does she know that you love her?"

"Only, as she might suspect it, on hearsay. We have never met but once."

"How do you propose to break it to her?"

"By letter."

"Fudge! Don't do it, Frank. Go and see her. Tell her in a plain, common sense way, all about it. Love letters are the literature of fools. You can not frame an offer of marriage in language fit to be read. It must be spoken. Not one in ten who resort to writing are accepted. Those who are, in their marriage and after-life, verify the saying

that 'two fools met.' I tell you, Frank, love is a sentiment that it won't do to trust to paper. Word of mouth is the only safe, as it is the only proper mode of conveying it to the ear of woman. It is the surest way to reach her heart. Go, and tell Miss Roland that you love her. Are you ashamed of it? No man need be. Will she be angry because she has inspired you with love? By no means. She may decline your offer, but she is a lady, Frank, and will do it like a lady. Write to her, and with her woman's wit, she will think you are afraid or ashamed to tell her what you have written, or have some sinister purpose to accomplish, in which love has no part. You will get no credit for modesty. Am I right?"

"I agree, my dear uncle, and will follow your advice, but I had rather face a double-shotted breastwork of seventy-fours—"

"Than run the hazard of a woman's NO. I thought so once, Frank. It's all moonshine. Courage, boy, you'll win."

CHAPTER VI.

Thy suing to these men, were as the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge.

BYRON.

GEORGE TIDBALD, at the time of the foregoing conversation with his nephew, was a member of the thirty-first Congress. He was an eloquent debater, a warm partisan, and one of the most efficient supporters of slavery in Mississippi. It was his devotion to southern policy, on this subject, that had gained him a seat in Congress. He possessed wealth and character, was eminent in his profession, and, in his outward appearance, a man of pure morality and refined sensibilities. He owned a plantation, which was stocked with negroes, and under the direct superintendence of an overseer. Cotton was his hobby. He understood the entire policy in relation to it—had made it a study—and it formed the principal basis of all his political operations. Whatever tended to produce, or protect, cotton and sugar, met his approval. In his opinion, slavery was destined to promote the cultivation of these great staples—and, viewed in this light, it was, as McDuffie had said, "the corner-stone of our republican edifice." At least Mr. Tidbald thought so.

He had been elected to Congress at a time when the peo-

ple of the northern States were in a state of political revolution upon the slave question. The Free Soilers were opposing all southern views, especially those that contemplated reenactment of the fugitive law, and abrogation of the Wilmot Proviso. Congress was flooded with petitions asking the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the Federal District. California was pressing her claims for admission. Mr. Tidbald supported the ultra southern view of these various questions. Sooner than yield what he assumed to be the rights of the South, with reference to these, he would secede, and, if necessary, fight. He regarded the territory we had acquired from Mexico, as a suitable field over which to extend the iron arm of the slave rule, simply because it would increase southern wealth, and render the "peculiar institution" more secure. He surveyed his own fields, whitening for the harvest, and the hundreds of dingy sons of toil that cultivated them, and wondered what would be their value if slavery were abolished. He counted his annual revenues, and asked what would be the change, if aught should occur to abridge or terminate slavery? He reflected upon the many privileges which he enjoyed through the aid of slave labor, of his fine dinners, his wine and cigars, his means for being hospitable and generous, his splendid horses, his widespread influence; he thought, indeed, of all the elements which, together, form southern chivalry, and could not avoid feeling that these acquisitions would be greatly abridged by the destruction of slavery.

But his views were not entirely selfish. He was a true southerner. He believed it would be unsafe to abolish slavery. To say nothing of the disasters it would bring upon the sources of wealth and power where it existed, it must inevitably, in his opinion, plunge the country into a

state of rebellion and bloodshed. On the ground of personal safety, he believed it to be necessary to preserve and extend the system. Northern people had no right to oppose it. It was domestic. The regulation of it belonged to the states that supported it, not to the General Government. Congress had no right to meddle with it. With these views, Mr. Tidbald was ready to enter the stormy session of the Congress of 1850. And that our readers may understand, at the commencement, the policy by which he was governed, we here, though somewhat out of place, insert a letter which he addressed to one of his constituents, soon after the debate was commenced on the Fugitive Slave Bill:

"MY DEAR SIR:

"Your inquiries concerning the present state of the discussion in this House on the Fugitive Slave Bill are easily answered. It will turn out just as we all predicted. John Randolph's character of the North will prove good for all time. We can always cajole the people. There are always demagogues enough among them who can be frightened or bought. What think you of the great ——— coming to our support? Consistency is nothing when money is wanted. All that southern members have to do, is to maintain a bold, united front, bully when we can't reason, bribe when we can't bully, and we are safe. The fugitive clause will become a law, and we shall have everything our own way. These are the facts—but, if I were inquired of as to what might be the case, if the North should make common cause against us, I should really tremble for the perpetuity of slavery. Our threats to dissolve would have no effect upon a Congress composed of such men as G—, and C—, and S—, and several others I might name. They listen to no compromises.

"I hardly dare look very far into the future, when I consider that this class of politicians are rapidly increasing in the North, and that anti-slavery alone is their rallying cry. We must stave off as we have done, and die hard."

In the district which Tidbald represented he had been the means of enkindling much excitement on the various measures before Congress, and while at Washington, the spring before, had put the franking privilege to profitable use, in sending documents and writing inflammatory letters to his constituents. Thereby he had multiplied friends, and come to be regarded as one of the leading champions of the slave interest.

During the interval between the sessions, he had been chiefly engaged in business of his profession, and the affairs of his plantation. To his various other accomplishments, he added that of being one of the most successful negro dealers in Mississippi. He had amassed considerable property in this branch of business, and prided himself upon his knowledge of what he called "negro nature." Among slave-dealers he enjoyed an enviable notoriety for his "proficiency in this business."

A few days after the conversation with his nephew, recorded in the preceding chapter, Tidbald was applied to, to sell a young mulatto woman, who had been raised upon his plantation. Eunice had been but a few months married to a man of her own complexion, a body servant of her master's, named Cudjo. He happened to be in the room and overheard the application for his wife, and his fears, taking the alarm, he set his wits to work to devise her escape. He informed her mother of it, for the reason that Agnes was known to have some influence with Tidbald. She was surprised, but assured Cudjo that Eunice should not be sold. In the meantime, Haynes, the slave-dealer, went to inspect Eunice, and the day following Agnes went to see her Master at his office. She found him alone.

"Why Agnes," said he, in a tone of surprise, "what has brought you here at this unusual hour?"

"O, master," she began, "ask yourself that question. Sure you need be at no loss to guess. I have not been unaware that for two days past you have been negotiating for the sale of Eunice, to that old villain, Haynes. I have come to ask as a particular favor, that you will not do it."

"Indeed," replied Tidbald sneeringly, "and by what authority, pray, would you control me in the disposition of my own property?"

"The authority which nature gives to a parent, heart-broken at the prospect of a separation from an only daughter whom she dearly loves," replied Agnes, her eyes streaming with tears, as she fell upon her knees and clasped the arm of Tidbald.

"Away! you black hag," he exclaimed, pushing her from him; "don't approach me with any of these sentimentalities. Eunice must be sold. Haynes offers a large price, and designs taking her to Orleans, where such beauty as hers always commands a round sum."

"My good master," Agnes replied, "and is it thus? Can you for a few paltry dollars sell this child to prostitution? Are there no reasons—none, that will plead against it? Have you no upbraidings of conscience in the contemplation of an act so unnatural?"

"What do you mean, Jezebel?" inquired Tidbald.

"That Eunice, whom you now propose to sell, is your own flesh and blood, master—your child—more willingly yours, as you know, and as God knows, than mine. And has not that natural tie which is supposed always to exist between parent and child, no voice to beseech the safety of Eunice?"

"Natural ties," replied Tidbald ironically. "What do you know about natural ties? you, whose life has been

passed in servitude? Will you assume to instruct in the science of the heart?"

"No master, no. I know nothing of that. I only appeal to your better feelings. I can not believe you capable of this monstrous inhumanity. Can you blame me, who, though a slave, am yet a mother, for asking that no harm may come to the only being on earth I can claim to love? I am your slave, master. I have been faithful to you. I am still able and willing to labor, and will renew my efforts to be useful to you, if you will only spare me this heavy affliction?"

"Go back to the plantation, woman; don't trouble me with business which does not concern you. For reasons, we both understand, I have ever treated you with particular favor. Do not provoke me to do otherwise. Off with you to the plantation. I have no time now for further conversation."

But you *shall* listen, monster," replied Agnes, rising to her feet, and gazing wildly at her master. "You *shall* hear me, spite of threats or violence. I *will* tell the story of this great wrong to every person in the district, unless you give up. You shall be known far and wide as the father who sold his daughter to prostitution. It shall follow you to Congress, haunt you in your dreams, and meet you everywhere. It shall curse you through life and accompany you through the dark valley. It shall rise up in accusation against you, before that Judge, who will try us both at the last day. I—Agnes—your slave—your mistress—the mother of your child, tell you this."

"Off to the plantation, you superannuated old fool," said Tidbald, seizing her by the arm and thrusting her from the office. He closed the door, and locked it, and dropped into a seat, overcome by exhaustion. "To be

taunted by a slave," he soliloquised, "and threatened with exposure. Fudge! Why should I care? Am I not George Tidbald? What harm can her story do me? It will pass me by as the idle wind, which I regard not."

His future communion with himself was cut short by the entrance of Haynes, who inquired if he had concluded to part with the girl.

"You shall have her," he replied moodily, "at the last figure we talked of."

"All right," said Haynes, counting out twelve hundred dollars in gold on the table by which they were seated. "Now execute your bill of sale and hand her over; I want to be in Orleans with her Thursday."

Tidbald drew up the required instrument, and picking up the gold in a shot bag, deposited it in an iron safe, arose, and accompanied by Haynes left the office.

CHAPTER VII.

"The lords of creation men we call,
And they think they rule the whole;
But they're much mistaken, after all
For they're under woman's control."

THE duties of her position, as mistress of the large estate, increased daily upon Adela Roland. She found a thousand things to do, which, while her father lived, gave her no concern. The faithful oversight of Mr. Dennis, and the never-relaxing diligence of Captain Jake, although they relieved her cares, did not abridge her labors. She had the energy and bent of a business mind, and devoted herself assiduously to her daily task from early dawn until "the bell tolled the hour for retiring." Manifold and various was her daily routine of duties—but she passed through it, with such good heart, so cheerfully and kindly, that every slave on the plantation loved the young mistress. And well they might. She spared no pains to fulfill by them the parting injunction of her father. They were better fed and clothed, worked less, and played more than the slaves of any other estate in Mississippi. Adela regarded them as children of misfortune, and while she found enough for their hands to do, she sought, by every means in her power, to alleviate the burden of their servitude. She ever met them with a smile, and never reproved

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except in the language of persuasion and regret. The negroes were not unmindful of her kindness, and on their part, generally obeyed, with alacrity, all her requests.

It need not surprise the reader, if amid the perplexities of business, Adela sometimes gave a thought to the discouragements of the future. True, she was independent, and could not by ordinary means ever be placed in a condition of want, but she was alone. Accustomed, in her views of the world, to look to the practical as well as sentimental, her first thought of marriage was nearly as much with reference to its convenience, as to the increase of happiness it would afford. She thought, how much it would relieve her, if a man, whom she could love, and who was qualified for the position, could look after the outer affairs of the estate, which now devolved upon her. If such a person should present himself, she thought marriage would be sensible as well as agreeable, but in the range of her acquaintance she could think of no one who answered her requirements. The right one to win her was yet to appear.

Frank Thornton, whose confessions on this subject we have already recorded, had met Adela but once, at a social gathering of young people, and had loved her at first sight. Of this, she was oblivious, and had hardly bestowed a thought upon him, since their meeting. Of course, in her enumeration of friends, from which she vainly sought to select one that she could love, Frank did not enter. It was not without surprise, therefore, that one fine evening soon after their first meeting, Adela entered her parlor and found Frank there.

"The evening was so delightful, Miss Roland," he observed apologetically, "that I could not resist the temptation to stroll away from the village, and almost without

object, before, indeed, I was aware of it, I found myself in front of Ash-Grove. The hospitable air of your open door, and the additional temptation to enter and improve a brief and pleasant acquaintance, must answer for my intrusion, if apology be necessary."

"You are heartily welcome, sir," replied Adela, dropping into a seat, "and I shall be but too happy, at all times, to see you at Ash-Grove. You have not been long a resident of T——, I believe."

"But a few months—not long enough, with a disposition naturally retiring, to make many acquaintances, and yet a sufficient period to feel that I am in a neighborhood where I shall find many friends."

"You were from the North, I think, I understood," remarked Adela, in an inquiring tone.

"No further than Virginia. I bring with me similar habits and tastes, to those I see around me—am accustomed to the same associations, and see and feel in Mississippi, in the social and domestic relations, but little at variance, with what I have ever seen and felt in my native State."

"What a beautiful moon. It is really in bad taste to sit in the house, with such a brilliant heaven outside. Shall we adjourn to the veranda, Mr. Thornton," said Adela, rising.

Frank arose, offering his arm to Adela, who took it; they walked out upon the ample veranda, in front of the mansion, seating themselves upon one of the benches, with which it was provided.

"You have a heavy charge upon your hands, Miss Roland," said Thornton, "to manage this estate; but then it is under such fine cultivation, is so well stocked; so delightfully wooded and watered, that I suppose you take great pleasure in it?"

"I'm not upon confession," Adela replied, laughing, "and if I were, should hardly know how to reply to your observation. Whatever my hands find to do here, is done with a will, and I feel contented and happy, only when I know that I have left no remembered duty unperformed. Besides, it affords me satisfaction to minister to the poor people under my charge, and to whom I am indebted for so many benefits. I believe I have enough of Northern feeling to pity the condition of the negro. Nothing would harmonize better with my notions of justice and fair dealing, than to be able to liberate my slaves and provide means for their future subsistence. But, it is impossible. I see, with pain, that our slave-laws, for ten years past, have been gradually increasing in severity; and, that while in every other species of legislation we have progressed, in this we have retrograded. You lawyers tell us this is in consequence of abolition movement in the Northern States, but I think the cause lies in the system, which must increase in severity as it increases in strength. Slavery has no *love* in it. It educates our people in cruelty. We are callous to scenes over which our Northern neighbors would shed many tears. I hate the system; but what can I do? How rid myself of being its supporter? In saying this, I but speak the sentiments of hundreds, who like myself, have been compelled to hold slaves."

"Really, Miss Roland," said Thornton, "I confess to a new view of the subject, which, as you observe, may be the parent of the increasing evils which gather around it. But then, slavery, in the abstract, is right enough. It has existed since the days of the patriarchs, and never has been free from cruelty. I wish it was at an end, and would be willing, were I an owner, to adopt any feasible plan, upon a scale of adequate magnitude, for the liberation of

my slaves. The schemes of the North are wild and inconsiderate. They can never be safely adopted. If we could colonize as fast as we could liberate, public sentiment would be ripe for emancipation to-morrow."

"You are more liberal than your uncle, Mr. Thornton," replied Adela. "I once undertook to discuss emancipation with him, and he grew quite violent, and uttered opinions that I should be sorry to believe he entertained."

"From position and interest he is compelled to take sides with the slave interest. It is unfortunate that our public men can not occupy an independent stand on this subject, but they must go with the mass, or not go at all. Our laws must necessarily conform to this state of public opinion; and yet, my observation convinces me that there is an undercurrent so strongly in favor of emancipation, even among planters themselves, that, were it not held under by party influences, would work out a system for the ultimate redemption of the slaves, in less than a twelve-month. How little does the North, which judges from our politicians, know of the condition of public sentiment in the Southern States on this momentous question! Can northern abolitionists tell us a pang that we have not felt? Can they arouse a sensation, awaken a sympathy, enkindle a prejudice in relation to slavery, that we have not, at some time experienced? Certainly not. The most hardened slave-driver among us, when he communes with his own feelings and experience, knows full well that the entire system is a fraud, a grievous wrong, a continued curse. But then we recur again to the question, What shall be done? How, in view of the difficulties attending it, are we to get rid of slavery?"

"I perceive," replied Adela, "that we shall agree too well to carry the argument far, but were we to be over-

heard by some of our public men, they would brand us as traitors for giving utterance to sentiments so much at war with their labors. And truly, the North does misjudge us. I so far agree with our apologists, as to believe that the North overrates the extent of the cruelties and wrongs growing out of the system. The law gives us power to commit many crimes, that the worst slaveholders never think of doing. That injures our reputation with the North. We, who live under the system, in the midst of its operations, are not so constantly reminded of its wrongs and cruelties, as northern abolitionists would make it appear. I can not say that I think there is much fairness in the manner in which our opponents fashion their arguments. While I admit that slavery is wrong, unnatural, oppressive, cruel, I do not believe in making it appear worse than it is. Our northern opponents ransack our law books, and extract from them every extreme provision they can find bearing upon the slave; they search the columns of our newspapers, and cull therefrom every advertisement of negroes for sale, negroes committed, negroes run away, and every narrative of negro torture, and collect this testimony gathered from all parts of our extensive slave territory, into a mass, and make it of local application to all parts of the South. It hits you, it hits me, when, perhaps, our slaves are better fed, better clad, better taught, and in every way better cared for, than they could possibly be in the free States. This wholesale denunciation is what I find fault with. However we may sin in our treatment of slaves, we are not responsible for the existence of slavery. We can not will or law it out of existence. We can not will or law away the cruelties of hard task-masters. Must we, because of this, be responsible for their existence? I should like to see the northern abolitionist that could feel

deeper interest in the welfare of my negroes than I do. I was nursed in the lap of old mammy, my foster-mother. Can I suffer harm to come to her? My man-of-all-work, the one of whom, in every exigency, I ask advice, Captain Jake, was the particular friend of my childhood, and is associated with almost every pleasing recollection of the past. Would it be in my nature to treat him ill? It is a mistake of the northern people. They do not comprehend slavery in its full extent. Many of the slaveholders deserve commiseration more than their slaves."

"I agree," said Frank. "Northern sympathy is morbidly fed, and injudiciously exercised. How much better off are the free blacks of the North than our slaves? I have spent time enough in the North, to know that they are subject to more numerous and greater evils than the slaves. Practically, perhaps, they do not suffer so much. They are not whipped nor sold. No one claims ownership in them. They are not broken up as families. They are theoretically free, but they are subjected to prejudices, passions, neglects, and indifferences, which interpose insurmountable obstacles to all their efforts to enjoy the fruits of freedom. They have no civil rights, and, in some of the States, are by law disqualified for any labor. They are barbers and waiters. You seldom hear of their employment in any business their white neighbors would engage in, or of their admittance to a family table. The man who is sufficiently defiant of public opinion to admit a negro to his table, is hooted at, ridiculed, and despised by the mass. In Canada, the boasted land of black freedom, negroes are no better off. The same prejudice—a prejudice which, from constant intercourse, we do not feel—visits them there, nearly to the same extent. I entertain but little respect for northern sympathy, and while I can not deny that there is a class

of people at the North, who honestly feel to deplore the condition of the negro, and who think that their measures are calculated ultimately to relieve him; as a mass, I believe the people of the North have neither wish nor care to see slavery abrogated. The noise about the evils of the system is made by a few busy-bodies, who have seized upon the single idea with a fanatical zeal, and have talked, preached, and labored it into the importance it has assumed. In England the feeling is stronger, for the reason that the English take pride in their acts of emancipation. They are thereby, as they claim, progressively ahead of this country in the scale of philanthropy. But we are not without power to retort. English peasantry and mechanics suffer greater hardships than southern slaves. The oppression of Ireland exceeds in enormity any oppression that can grow out of slavery."

Thornton was here interrupted by the appearance of Captain Jake at the parlor door, who, in an earnest tone, inquired of Adela if he could see her a moment.

Excusing herself to Thornton, Adela hastily followed the captain to the veranda by the side of the kitchen.

"Miss Adela," whispered Jake, "here is Mr. Tidbald's Eunice. Her master has sold her to old Haynes, and she has fled to you for protection."

"Oh, dear Miss Adela," exclaimed Eunice, throwing herself at the feet of Adela, "oh, save me, hide me, don't let the old man take me to New Orleans and sell me. Will you, Miss Adela?"

The sorrowing yet beautiful quadroon clung to the garments of Adela, and gave her such an imploring look, that her feelings were deeply moved, and she could not avoid shedding tears at the sight of so much distress.

"Rise, my poor girl," said she, addressing her in a kind

tone, and grasping her hand to aid her; "I will see what can be done—though I confess I was never more perplexed to know what to do in my life."

"Leave her to me, Miss Adela," interrupted Jake, "only give me liberty to hide her away in the old mansion, and not all the hunters of her master, or dogs of Henry Westover shall find her."

"Do so, Captain," said Adela, "and don't let me or any other person know how you have disposed of her."

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh, give me liberty!
For, were even Paradise my prison,
Still I should long to leap the crystal walls
DRYDEN.

TOM, Nan, Zeb, and Henry were not pursued. After a ride of fifty miles, which occupied the afternoon and night, early the next morning they found themselves in the quiet little village of W—, in the interior of Indiana. They were free, in a free State. The thought, of itself, was exhilarating. Their friend, Thompson, at parting, had advised them to get into employment as soon as opportunity offered, and to strive, by industry and attention to business, to accumulate property. No one will say this was not good admonition. Doubtless, Mr. Thompson thought it was practical advice. He was honest and sincere in giving it, and had no other object in view than the interest of the negroes. But what, let us inquire, are the achievements to be expected from the poor, uneducated, unfriended negro, who has been all his life dependent upon his owner for food and raiment, and upon his overseer for thought and calculation; who has never reflected as to the manner in which, by his own unaided exertions, any of these things are to be obtained? Without some

friend to guide and advise from time to time, and to help, if necessary, what use could such persons, as we have named, make of freedom in a country where all were strangers to them, and where prejudice prohibited their association with any not as ignorant and degraded as themselves? The man, who drove the horses, set them down at the door of the only hotel in the place.

"Here," said he, "you are safe from the kidnappers, and can go immediately to work."

Bidding them good-by, he took his departure from the town more hurriedly than he had entered it.

"What has brought you niggers here, I wonder?" inquired the landlord in an ill-natured tone. "I never had so many at my house before at one time, and I don't see how it's possible for me to keep you. You must look up some other stopping-place, and take your duds away right off. My boarders won't stay another meal, if they see so many niggers about. I s'pose you're runaways, anyhow."

"No," replied Zeb, "we are free. Our old master gave us freedom jes 'fore he died, and told us to come to the free States to live."

"It's hard telling which was the biggest fool, your master for giving you liberty, or you for taking it. How d'ye expect to live here—as niggers generally do, by stealing and robbery?"

"No, mass'r," answered Zeb, "of course not. We want to get work right away. Our old master gibe us money enough to pay for our living till we got a start."

"He did! Well, that was considerate. Men will do almost anything for money, and you'd better hold on pretty close to what you've got, for 't'll be the last you'll see probably this many a day. You've come to the wrong country to do much. Why don't you go to Africa? There

you niggers can be somebody. They've got a colony started there expressly for you, without any white folks in it. White folks, they say, can't live there, but niggers stand it first rate. That's the place for you. They had an agent for their Colonization Society here a fortnight ago, and he told such a fine story about the soil, the climate, and the crops, the number that had gone there, and how one had got to be a governor, another a judge, another a rich farmer, and so on, that he induced the only two nigger families in the village to agree to go in the next expedition that sailed from New York. Our citizens subscribed thirty dollars for every member of the two families, which the agent said was enough, just for the sake of getting rid of 'em."

"Will you tell me," inquired Zeb, "where one of these men libes? I would like to see 'em."

"Well," the landlord answered, "just around the second corner, up by the church. You will see in the field a little shanty that looks like a barn. It is whitewashed, looks neat, but has no windows. That is Sam Collier's house. He'll tell you all about it, and maybe take all four of you to board until you can provide for yourselves. I can't possibly keep you. You must find some place before noon."

"Thank'ye, mass'r," replied Zeb. "I shall go and look for the man. Henry, you stay with Tom until I come back."

Zeb, who was really the only one of the four who had any idea of the means necessary to obtain a livelihood, was a tall, straight, well-formed, fine-looking yellow man, about twenty-eight years of age. He had acted both as a field-hand and as a body-servant, and on one occasion had been instrumental in saving the life of his master, to which for-

tunate occurrence, he was indebted for his freedom. On two occasions he had accompanied his master on trips as far north as the Ohio, and having good powers of observation, had become somewhat acquainted with business rules. He possessed a quick understanding, and tact enough to manage his way through ordinary difficulties. The story, which the landlord told him about Africa, made a deep impression upon his mind, and he thought his fortune would be sure if he could get an opportunity to go there. He walked along in the direction pointed out by the landlord, in a half-dreamy state of mind, and not sufficiently conscious of the object of his errand to turn at the corner which led to Collier's house. Africa absorbed his mind. In contemplating the future which he might spend there, he experienced much of that joyousness of feeling which men oftentimes realize when pursuing some favorite phantom of imaginary bliss. To depict the picture painted upon his fancy in all its details, and give to each new hope, that rose there, its proper development, would exceed the powers of language. It was to him a haven of certain success. If he could only reach there, without a dollar, time and a stout heart would do the rest. While indulging in this medley of reflection and imagination, he became suddenly aware that he had passed the corner where he was directed to turn, and retracing his steps, hurried past the church, when he saw, at the distance of a quarter of a mile, in the midst of a sunken, swampy field, the lowly and sequestered hut of Collier. It was whitewashed, and wore an appearance of neatness, which was greatly belied by its unpromising locality. He thought it would be different in Africa, and with his head full of the subject, arrived at the door. Here he was accosted by Collier himself, a strong, plain-looking yellow man, who invited him in, and motioned him to be

seated upon a stool. As soon as he could collect his ideas, Zeb made known the object of his visit, and asked, for himself and companions, such accommodations as the poor man could afford.

"You should be welcome, all of you," said Collier, "but my cabin is not large enough to afford the conveniences you need. I will, however, provide for two, and my friend, Mr. Jackson, will take the others. Put on your hat, and I will go with you to see him."

Zeb retraced the path he had traversed, and accompanied Collier to a small, isolated hut, standing at the extreme end of a dirty, narrow lane, which entered the main street, a few rods beyond the point where he detected himself going wrong. This was the home of the only other black man that dwelt in the village. It was unpromising enough; and Zeb thought, as he surveyed it, that it was but a small remove, if any, in advance of slavery. It will not be so, thought he, in Africa.

"Jim," said Collier, addressing Jackson, "here are some friends from Mississippi, just liberated, who want quarters. Nixon refuses to keep them, and we must do the best we can by 'em. You take two, and I'll do the same."

"Yer welcome," said Jackson, shaking Zeb's proffered hand, heartily; "we'll give you as good as we've got; but our place is drifful small and oncomfortable-like, and we've got four child'n, besides the ole 'oman, inside on't."

"The landlord said you's goin' to Africa?" said Zeb, in a tone of inquiry.

"Yes," replied Jackson, "Sam and I have made up our minds, that this is about as poor a place and country, for colo'd people, as can be found. We've alla's lived here, and lived hard. Its been tight work to keep soul and body

together. And there's no prospect it'll ever be any better. The white people hate us; even those that treat us civilly, have nothin' to do with us. We have child'n growin' up, that must be provided for; and if they stay here, they'll alla's be kept under. It's a great undertakin'; we've thought on't for years, and got all the information we could, and have finally agreed to risk the oncertainties, 'cause, if we don't do better, we shant do worse."

"I should like to go wid you," said Zeb, "if there's a chance."

"You ken," Collier replied, "the agent told us, if we found any body as wanted to go, he could jest as well as not."

"Then I'll go," said Zeb, earnestly, "let Tom and Henry do as they may."

"It's a 'speriment," said Jackson, "but Sam and I think we can't do no better."

"You've never been in the slave States," inquired Zeb.

"No, nor never want to go thar," replied Jackson, "I hear 'nough 'bout slavery, from the poor fellers that come along on their way to Canada. We aller's help 'em, give 'em vittals and money, and take 'em along in the night, to friends, further on the route. An ole man came to my house, last week, after dark. He said, he'd been three days and nights in the woods, and lived on acorns, chestnuts, and slippery-elm bark. He was shrunk all up; so poor he could hardly stand. I kept him till last night, and took him ten miles after twelve o'clock. He said he had good mass'r 'nough, but, that he'd failed, and was 'bliged to sell all his negroes at auction; and that, rather than be sold, and carried to the South, on the cotton or sugar plantations, he run away, stole a canoe, and crossed

the river, and wanted to get to Canada soon as he could. I asked him, s'pose he'd been caught? He showed me his back, and it was all hard and tough as the inside of my hand. Then he larfed, and said, 'Spose they hurt that much.' Then he told me they would whip him, but he didn't care; he was used to it. They would put chains on him, and, maybe, a collar on his neck, he said, like a dog, and burn letters on his cheek or hand, but he didn't care for it all. He'd rather be killed than go South, 'cause he'd soon die there anyhow. He said he had a wife and three child'n, and they would be sold, and taken South. He tried to help 'em 'scape, but they couldn't, and he should never see 'em again. Then he cried, and said they had lived together nearly twenty years, and were very happy. I never felt so sorry for a man in my life. I thought I had a hard time 'nough; but I could not help praying to the good Lord, and thanking him, that I never was stolen and sold as a slave."

Zeb, to whom such narratives were familiar, only observed in reply:

"That he was glad the ole man got away, 'cause he would not know at all how much he'd have to suffer in the South."

It was a new thing to both Collier and Jackson, to see any slaves from the far South. They had often been told by the negroes, who escaped from the states bordering on the Ohio, of the dreadful calamities to which they would have been subjected, if they had been sold to southern cotton and sugar planters. Here was an opportunity for inquiring into those matters, and they received a promise from Zeb, that they should be enlightened upon the subject as soon as the company at the tavern had been removed to their respective quarters.

Collier went with Zeb to the hotel. As they ascended the piazza, where Tom and his companions were seated, Nixon, the landlord, said to Collier,—

"Glad you've come, Sam. Hardly knew what to do with the darkeys. 'S'pose you and Jim 'll take care of 'em."

"They shall be provided for, Mr. Nixon," answered Collier, civilly. "We came for 'em and their baggage. No charge, I suppose?"

"No—had nothing," Nixon rejoined; "only room on the piazza, and that I wouldn't deny to a dog. Is the tall feller going with you to Africa?"

"So he says," answered Collier.

"Glad on't, Sam. He's a smart, likely chap. Make su'thin' there. Just the kind o' man to go. Make his fortin', I guess."

"I hope so, Mr. Nixon," said Collier. "It will be what he or no other colored man can do here."

"Jes' so, Sam—jes' so," said Nixon. "This is no place for 'em to succeed. Too many white folks. Too much prejudice. Come, 'fore you go, call 'em in, and take a glass of cider and some doughnuts. I like to be good-natured to you fellers, when you behave yourselves."

It is wonderful how good nature begets good nature. Nixon, who was at heart a kind, whole-souled man, gave the party a comfortable lunch of doughnuts and cider, and expressed a great many kind wishes for them, especially for those who were going to Africa, which, he said, was "a land made for 'em by God; and they had no more business out of it, than he would have in it."

He shook them each heartily by the hand at parting; and when he came to Zeb, putting his hand on his shoulder, said to him,—

"Go to Africa, my fine fellow, as I tell you. I'll hear

of you, some day, being a big man there. You've got the snap in you, if you get in the right place.

"Thank you, mass'r," replied Zeb, his countenance showing that he felt the compliment of the landlord. "I shall go, if I can, and do the best I can when I get there."

CHAPTER IX.

They, who have nothing more to fear, may well
Indulge a smile at that which once appalled,
As children at discovered bugbears.

BYRON.

AFTER Agnes was thrust from the office by her master, she hastened, by a by-path, to the plantation, and told Eunice that there was no hope, and she must accompany her, with all possible speed, to Ash Grove. The plantations of Adela and Tidbald joined, and the buildings were not more than three-fourths of a mile apart. Arrived at Ash Grove, Agnes soon found Captain Jake, who seemed at once to comprehend the object of her visit.

"Leave her with me," said Jake. "I will see that no harm befalls her."

Tender was the leave-taking between that mother and child, copious the tears that were shed, and sad and few the words in which the final farewell was pronounced. Alas! who can know the anguish of that parent, whose every fear is aroused for the safety and purity of her child. How seldom do such scenes disturb the relations of any society, save that of the persecuted slave! A grasp of the hand, a kiss, a sob, and a farewell, without knowing where next, or under what circumstances, if at all, they might meet, was the parting ceremony between Agnes and Eunice. To out-

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ward observance, this was all; but the heart that has known the agony of separation from near and dear ones will appreciate, in some degree, the mingled torture and anxiety of that brave mother's heart, as she hastened her solitary steps back to the plantation of her master.

As soon as Jake obtained leave of his mistress to secrete Eunice in the mansion, he conducted her to the garret, when, by removing one of the floor-boards, he discovered what had once been a stairway leading between two rooms on the ground floor of the building. The stairs were still there, but the doors, that once opened into the rooms at their base and summit, had, for many years, been removed, and their vacancies sealed and covered with plastering and wallpaper. About ten feet above the ground floor, on the outer wall, was a window, which, from having been constantly blinded outside, was supposed, by the tenants of the household, to be a pair of blinds placed there for architectural uniformity. No other person, except Jake, knew that there was such a passage in the old mansion. Adela herself was ignorant of it, because it was closed when she was too young to remember it.

"There," said Jake, letting Eunice down to the stairs with a cord, and throwing some quilts after her for a bed, "that must be your home until your pursuers give up the chase. They may let out their dogs now, and send as many task masters and slave hunters after you as they please. They can not find your hiding place. I will bring you food at midnight. Keep quiet, make no noise, and put your trust in God."

Jake replaced the flooring boards, and piled upon them several articles of old lumber, to prevent any suspicion of its being a place of concealment, and descended into the yard in rear of the mansion.

Adela returned to the veranda where she left Frank, and resumed the discussion in which they had been previously engaged, and which was only terminated by his departure at a late hour. More in love than ever, he returned to the office. On his way he met Tidbald and Haynes.

"Frank," said his uncle, hailing him, "You are not out alone this fine evening for nothing."

"I was studying astronomy, sir," replied Frank.

"Aye, aye," rejoined Tidbald, "the bright, particular stars. Make sure work of it, boy. Nobody can do it for you."

In the hush of night, in the solitude of the chamber, when the weary frame is stretched for repose, and in the first pause before slumber visits the eyelids, the contemplative mind is busy with itself. It is at that hour that we think over our cares and magnify our troubles. Then the merchant, oppressed with pecuniary difficulties, weans slumber from his couch, with the fear that he will be unable to grapple with and overcome the obstacles that beset his pathway. Then the lawyer frets over his half-studied cause, and dreads the failure which he fears awaits it. Then the man settles his account with the transactions of the day. The mind, the memory are then most active, and freest from intrusion. Then the dishonest man remembers his iniquity, and feels a pang of remorse, in the reflection that what he has done is beyond repair. Then the drunkard reflects upon his career, and promises to himself the reformation which the morning thirst dispels like a vapor. Then the man who has been cruel, and oppressed his fellow-creatures, feels sad over the wrongs he has inflicted on his fellows, and renews in his mind the intention of immediate amendment. The pillow of Hon. George Tidbald was not entirely free from these admonitory visitations.

He lay for a long time in a state of retrospective contemplation, and as one by one the acts of his past life rose in review before him, he forgot his rank, wealth, and station, and remembered only his frailty and abominations. He thought of his interview with Agnes that evening, how earnestly she had pleaded, and how cruelly he had spurned her from him. He reflected upon what she had told him about Eunice, and felt no slight compunction at the thought that he had disposed of his own daughter to a man who avowed the intention of selling her for purposes of prostitution. He half uttered a promise that if spared till morning he would restore the purchaser his money and keep his child. But his evil nature triumphed. He thought of the institution that justified his course, of the common occurrence of like transactions, of its business character, and strove to appease the frettings of his conscience with the idea that it was part of the system, and in that view, right. It was long before he slept; and when, at length, sleep came, it was only to increase the evils with which his imagination was filled, and to break his rest with sudden starts and inarticulate mutterings.

He rose unrefreshed and feverish at dawn, and descended into the street. He took a long and lonely walk, returning to the hotel in time to partake of a scanty breakfast, from which he rose to be rejoined by Haynes, who was anxious for a speedy departure with his property. They walked in silence to the plantation.

"Where is Eunice?" Tidbald inquired of Davis, the overseer.

"I will soon find her, sir," was the reply. "Be seated gentlemen. She shall come in a minute."

Minutes lengthened into quarters, quarters into halves, and halves into hours, yet no Eunice came.

"What delays the jade, I wonder?" exclaimed Tidbald, impatiently. "I am anxious to get through with the business."

He spake truly. The thoughts that had visited him in the quiet of his chamber, and disturbed his dreams, made him anxious to dispose of the iniquity. Another quarter passed. His impatience increased.

"What can this mean?" said he in a hurried tone. "There is some mystery that I can not understand. Sit a moment, Haynes; I will inquire."

He withdrew to the yard, and learned from a house servant that Davis could find nothing of the girl; that none of the servants had seen her since the previous evening, and that Davis had gone to Ash Grove, and Westover's to make inquiry for her. He waited to hear no more, but hastened to the chambers in pursuit of Agnes. She met him at the head of the stairs.

"Agnes," he inquired in a tone of concentrated passion, "where is Eunice?"

"Sold, I suppose," replied Agnes. "You told me she should be last night."

"No trifling, girl; but tell me instantly, as you value your happiness, where have you hid her?"

"Me hid her!" rejoined Agnes; "where could I hide her, pray? I have not hid Eunice. If she is hid, (and I hope she is,) some one else has done it."

"Don't lie you jade. If she is hid, no one has done it but you, and unless you instantly tell me where she is gone, so that I can find her, you shall feel my heaviest displeasure."

"Indeed," replied Agnes, "I know not what heavier evil you have in store for me, than the one you have inflicted, by selling my child. My own life is nothing;

you can not do more than take that, and you are welcome to it. But I can give you no other answer, spite of your threats. I can not tell you where Eunice is. I have not hid her, and if she escapes the fangs of old Haynes, she will be indebted to others beside me for her good fortune."

"You lying, good-for-nothing old witch," replied Tidbald, now fairly furious; "do you think the girl will escape me? If so, you're mistaken. I will find her if I ransack the Union, and will follow her to her grave. But I'll devise means to make you confess. No fear of that. No slave shall brave me with a lie."

Agnes made no reply, but her countenance looked a defiance which indicated that her persecutor had undertaken a task that he would find difficult of accomplishment.

Tidbald descended to the room where he had left Haynes, and in an angry manner communicated to him the fact of Eunice's disappearance.

"Ah, ha," replied Haynes, a fiendish smile passing over his face; "we are to have a hunt for the girl, are we? Let me alone for that. I have ferreted out a thousand such cases in my time. It's rare sport, I assure you. I well remember the last case of the kind I was engaged in; it was a tough one. I bought a likely yellow boy down near Baton Rouge, and paid fourteen hundred dollars for him. He understood that I intended to take him to the Red River country, and so about two hours before I got ready to start, like the gal here, he came up missen. Nobody knew what had come of him. The nigs were all as innocent as old Agnes, but I got out a party with some dogs, and they soon took the track. We followed on, four of us, with guns, determined to catch or kill, and after a mile or so, entered a swamp. It was awful, I assure you, but after going a quarter of a mile or so, jumping from tuft to tuft, we heard

the dogs bark. We raised a run and soon came in sight of the dogs. They had ceased barking, and when we came up with them, we found them stopped by a pool of blood. The blasted critter had opened his veins on purpose to stop the dogs. We followed on a few miles, and had nearly lost track, when the dogs struck up again, and this time we had him. He was roosted in the very tip top of a tulip tree. We ordered him down, but he made no sign. We pointed our guns at him and threatened to shoot, but he looked at us, as if he would say, 'If you shoot you can't sell me, so fire away.' We struck with our hatchets into the tree, as if we intended felling it. All to no purpose. He seemed determined to die game. Our patience was exhausted. I didn't like to lose the nigger, but I saw that I could not get him, that he would stay there till he starved, so I gave orders to fire. It fetched him. He fell dead at the foot of the tree, and we chucked him in the swamp on the spot. I lost my money, but felt a little gratified that the darkey did not escape. They're not apt to escape from me when I'm once up."

"Well, well," said Tidbald, "cease your brute narratives, and let's hunt up Eunice. Here Davis, put the iron collar upon Agnes and shut her in the dark cellar. Give her nothing but bread and water until she makes a clean breast of it. Where's Cudjo?"

"Here I is, mass'r," answered Cudjo, who was standing just round the corner of the building.

"Come here sir. Where's Eunice?"

"Don't know, mass'r; 'deed I don't," replied Cudjo.

"Don't tell me so, you black rascal. You're in the plot with old Ag. What have you done with her?"

"'Deed, mass'r, don't know. 'Deed don't," persisted Cudjo. "Haven't seen Eunice since last night. Sartin, haven't."

"You lie, you villain. She's your wife, and you've hid her. You'd better die than tell me a lie, you scoundrel. Once for all, where is she?"

"'Deed, mass'r, sure as I live, don't know—was away till arter she was gone. Didn't find her when I come home, and asked Agnes. She tole me she don't know, but she s'pose Mass'r Haynes got her and carried her off."

"Here, Davis," said Tidbald, "punish this black scoundrel, and make him tell what he has done with his wife. Give him a round thirty-seven, well paid on, if he will not tell without."

"O, Mass'r Tidbald! Mass'r Tidbald!" cried Cudjo, as Davis led him away; "I is innocent. I don't know where Eunice gone. O don't whip me, don't dear Mass'r Tidbald. I has tole all I know about it."

"Away with him, Davis, and spare him as little as possible, if there is any chance of finding out where she is," said Tidbald angrily. "Now Haynes, as you are so expert in these matters, and seem to anticipate sport, let's know what's to be done."

"Gal hunting is harder work than boy hunting," said Haynes.

"How so?" inquired Tidbald.

"Why, you see," replied Haynes, "gals are always assisted. When they go, all the slaves lend 'em a helpin' hand, and unless a person understands it, they are apt to escape."

"Did you ever lose one?" inquired Tidbald.

"Never, but one, and that was before I had had much experience. She was a big wench that belonged on a plantation in the neighborhood of Jackson. She was married, and had several children, and it so happened that the whole brood lived together. The husband was a full-blood

and the children considerably advanced—the youngest being nearly twelve—so that the law did not prevent her being sold without 'em. She got to hear of it, and took it dreadfully to heart. It seems she was a favorite on the plantation, for all the slaves, pretty much, were concerned in secreting her. We never found her—never heard where she was concealed; but a year or two afterward we sent a decoy into Canada, and he came across her there, living very comfortably with another husband. They had acquired some property. Our man tried to induce her to cross the lines, but she was not to be caught, and he left her to try his skill on some easier subject."

"And did he succeed?" Tidbald inquired.

"It's a long story," said Haynes, "and I'll tell it to you another time. Let's find the gal."

Tidbald led the way to a piece of swampy woodland, but Haynes called him back.

"I see," said he, laughing, "you don't understand the business. She's never hid out doors. It's the boys that do that. She's in this house, or the house of some of the neighbors. We've got no fool's-play, squire. It'll be a long hunt, and, if you please, I'll take the lead."

They entered the house and searched every room and closet, in the chimneys and cellar, among the old lumber in the garret, in all the out-houses, leaving no place unsearched where it was possible to conceal a person.

"She aint here," said Haynes, "and I didn't much believe she was. Some of the Roland niggers have hid her, likely. We'll go there."

Captain Jake was on the alert, and met the hunters before they reached the house.

"Captain," inquired Tidbald, "have any of you niggers hid my Eunice? Have you seen her, boy?"

"If Mass'r Tidbald supposed I had hid her," replied Jake, "he would not ask if I had seen her."

"I don't suspect you, Jake—presume you know nothing about her," said Tidbald; "but we have come over to hunt for her, thinking that, perhaps, there are some boys and girls belonging to your mistress who would help steal her away, when they heard she was sold."

"Sold!" said Jake, with much apparent surprise. "Has Mass'r Tidbald sold Eunice? I did not suppose there was money enough in the country to buy her."

"Well, no matter what you suppose, captain," said Tidbald. "Tell your mistress we want the privilege of searching her premises."

"Yes, mass'r," replied Jake, as he entered the mansion, adding in an undertone, "and a right jolly time you'll have of it, I reckon."

Jake requested his mistress to give them a free pass to every part of the house.

"If they find her, Miss Adela," said he, "they are welcome to her, and I'll never try again. But they'll give up. She's where no slave hunter can ferret her out."

Adela hastened to the veranda and invited Tidbald and Haynes to enter and search freely. "Here," said she, "is the captain, who knows every crook and turn in the old building, and he shall guide you to every apartment."

"Aye, aye," thought Jake, "to all but one, and that you, Miss Adela, know as little about as they do." And Jake conducted them everywhere, down cellar, up stairs, in the garret. He opened cupboards, emptied old chests, turned over piles of old lumber in the garret, being very careful that every piece should fall upon the only entrance to the passage where Eunice was concealed.

"She's not here, mass'r," said he, and he went to another corner of the garret, and made a similar overhauling of old trumpery there. Tidbald and Haynes satisfied themselves that she was not on the premises, and pursued a similar search at Westover's. The day was spent without discovering a trace of the fugitive.

"We'll try the dogs to-morrow," said Haynes, as they slowly walked from Westover's to Tidbald's plantation. "The jade leads us a stout game; but we'll bag her yet."

Tidbald was discouraged with his ill success. Summoning Davis, he inquired what luck he had had with Agnes and Cudjo?

"As to Ag," replied Davis, "she says nothing. I put the collar on her, and left her in the cellar. She will not answer any questions. Cudjo flinched very much, under the lash, but protested his ignorance to the last stroke. He is considerably maimed, and very humble. I am of opinion that he has no knowledge of the place of concealment."

"No," said Tidbald, "but that black devil, Agnes, knows all about it. I must see her again, and make a last effort."

And he descended to the cellar, and unbolted the door, and entered.

"Agnes," said he, holding the light near her face, "I have come, for the last time, to demand of you the hiding-place of Eunice. You must tell me, or I will sell you, in her stead, to Haynes, and he shall start with you to Texas, to-morrow."

"You can do as you please," Agnes replied, fixing her large eyes upon him. "I have told you all I shall concerning Eunice. I can die for, but will not betray her. You

have now got the only answer I will make to your inquiries. Henceforth, my lips are sealed."

"Hag! devil!" cried Tidbald, pushing her forcibly against the wall. "I will sell you to-night. No power on earth shall prevent it;" and he withdrew hastily from the cellar, barring and double-locking the door after him.

"Yes," said Agnes, exultingly, as she heard the key turn in the rusty lock, "you are mistaken, George Tidbald. There is a power, even here, in this damp dungeon, which shall defeat your fiendish purpose. Oh, Eunice! may God defend and protect you. The hour has come for decision. I shall see her no more. The little that remains to me of life, even were it measured by its natural span, is not worth preserving in such a crisis. Surely God, who sees my suffering in this hour, will not condemn me, if I anticipate the moment which he has fixed for my departure to another and better world. I shall find mercy and forgiveness with Him, and escape wretchedness and torture here."

Unwinding the long cotton handkerchief which she wore upon her head, Agnes now tied it firmly around her neck, above the rim of the iron collar. Placing a small box against the cellar wall, she was enabled to fasten the other end of the handkerchief to an iron hook, which had been driven there for other purposes. So hurried had been these preparations, after her master's withdrawal, that he had scarcely entered the room over her head, ere the unhappy woman was ready to swing herself into eternity. Alas! poor, broken heart! Death was preferable to infamy or misery. She stood upon the box a long, long time, wrapped in thought. She thought of her childhood; of her father, the owner of a large plantation in Carolina, (for Agnes, like Eunice, was the daughter of a planter, by

his slave.) She thought of the time when, young and beautiful, she was sold to her present master—of the kind words he said to her—of the presents he made her—and of the long years she enjoyed his favor as a mistress—of the birth of Eunice—of the approach of age—and of the gradual decay of her master's affection. In her day of prosperity she had been instructed in many accomplishments. Her education had not been neglected, and she had slaves in abundance to do her bidding; but, as she grew old, cares increased upon her, and she had dwindled into a poor old house-servant, uncared for by a soul on the plantation, and remembered only to be spurned by him, who had once taken such delight in her. Eunice was the sole remaining comfort of her life. She had no wish to live if *she* were sold; none, surely, if, as her master threatened, this fate was to be visited upon herself. Death was the only door of escape, the only refuge for her poor, wounded heart. She could die, and be at peace. She could die, and escape the misery with which she was threatened.

"Yes," said she, "my master, there is a refuge from your cruelties, in heaven, and I flee to its embrace."

Springing from the box, she fell with sufficient force to dislocate her neck, and died instantly, with hardly a struggle.

While this tragedy was transacting in the cellar, Haynes was endeavoring to keep Tidbald in good humor above stairs, with his promised narrative of sending a decoy into Canada.

"It was," said he, "about ten years ago, that I was employed by a Mr. Goins, an extensive slaveholder, in Alabama, to ferret out the hidingplace of a lot of his negroes, that had escaped and gone to Ohio, two years

before. Some friend of his had told him, that while passing through the village of P——, in Northern Ohio, he had seen a very likely body-servant of his, named Henry, who had commenced business for himself as a barber. Goins had a negro—much such a fellow as this Captain Jake over to Roland's—true as steel, and full of shrewdness and cunning. I told him if he would let me have Sam to help, I would capture his nigger Henry at any rate. He agreed, on condition that I would be responsible for the safe return of Sam, to which I assented. I knew that Sam had too much sense to accept of freedom upon any common terms. He was too great a favorite at home. I trusted him right off—made a confidant and companion of him, and he entered into my plans with all imaginable zeal. I told him to go at once to P——, and see if Henry was there—and if so, to renew his acquaintance with him, and give him to understand that he had escaped from slavery and intended to remain in P——. He was then to inform me, and I was to go on and reclaim Henry, under the statute of the United States."

"Well, when Sam arrived at P——, he learned that Henry had fled to Chatham, in Canada, through fear of being pursued. He followed on to Chatham, where he found Henry employed as head waiter to the principal hotel, and the owner of a pretty little property. Henry had left a wife in Alabama. Sam remained at Chatham long enough to win his confidence, and told him that he intended to return to Alabama, steal his own wife, and the wife of Henry, and bring them with him to Canada. Henry believed him, and in a few days Sam left Canada, as Henry supposed, to carry his design into effect. Six months rolled around. One cold winter's morning Sam made his appearance at the Royal George. Henry, eager to learn

of his success, was overjoyed when Sam told him he had brought his own and Henry's wife as far as P——, the place of his former residence in Ohio, where the latter was taken sick, and he had left both in the care of some abolitionists, while he hastened on to inform Henry. He obtained leave of absence, and accompanied by Sam, took steamboat for P——, where he had scarcely entered the hotel, with the expectation of meeting his wife, before I caused him to be nabbed. The fellow was awfully frightened. It was before daylight, and a very cold morning."

"Did you start off with him immediately?" inquired Tidbald.

"No such good luck," Haynes replied; "but listen. He sent for a couple of lawyers, who, it seemed, had been friends of his when he lived there. The old squire who had issued the writ for his arrest, was more than half an abolitionist—and the lawyer that I had employed was not familiar with the proper course to pursue. Well, the cause came on. It made a great stir in the town. All the niggers were on hand, and ready to fight for Henry—and I reckon this was the case with a majority of the white citizens. I foresaw trouble, and sent Sam off as soon as possible, as the people, both black and white, were ready to tear him in pieces for his fidelity, which they called treachery."

"One of Henry's lawyers, a spectacled fellow, got up and made a long speech over a decision in some of the reports, by which it seemed that a justice of the peace might or might not act under the statute providing for the arrest of fugitive niggers. The justice adjourned the cause till the next morning to consider the question, and then he decided, inasmuch as he had the man before him, he would go on and hear the evidence."

"We'll have a fugitive law, to meet such exigencies as that, passed at our next session of Congress," interposed Tidbald.

"I hope so," answered Haynes. "Well, I felt quite sure of success, after this decision, and the crowd in the court-room, particularly the niggers, looked a good deal disconcerted. I began to get out and arrange my papers, and to prepare for being sworn in the case, when Henry's other lawyer, a beardless young chap, arose, and said he had another objection to make, before we could introduce our testimony. 'This proceeding,' said he, 'is instituted against this man in the name of the State of Ohio. Now, what has the State of Ohio to do with slavery, or with catching fugitive slaves?' Sure enough thought I. I saw I was lame. The justice decided against the warrant, and Henry's two lawyers hustled him with all convenient speed out of the court-house. He was met at the foot of the stairs by a gang of niggers, who, in anticipation of the decision, had provided a fleet horse, which Henry mounted, and as he started him on the run, sung out, 'Here's a dead horse or a free nigger.' The rascal escaped, and I was told privately that unless I was out of the way before, it was the intention of the citizens to ride me on a rail after nightfall. Of course I withdrew."

CHAPTER X.

The midnight passed—and to the massy door
A light step came—it paused—it moved once more;
Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key.

BYRON.

TIDBALD was informed of the death of Agnes by Davis, the overseer, early the next morning.

"'Tis like her," was his reply. "She always would have her own way, and has killed herself from spite. Give her speedy burial, Davis, without ceremony. The occurrence is unfortunate, but could not have been foreseen. Agnes has been an undutiful old jade these many years, and though I feel somewhat chagrined at the manner in which she has made way with herself, I am not sorry she is dead. She was quite as unprofitable as she was stubborn. She knew where Eunice was concealed, a fact that I fear no other person on the plantation is acquainted with."

The search for Eunice was resumed by Tidbald and Haynes, assisted by Harry Westover and his dogs. It was kept up, day by day, for more than a week, and finally given up as a hopeless job. Tidbald refunded the money which Haynes had paid him, and the baffled slave-dealer took his departure. As he entered the woodyard, he encountered our Yankee friend, Wheeler, who had just arrived from Louisville.

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"Hello, old Grab'em!" said Wheeler, accosting him; "you here, and alone, too? Where's your niggers? I never met you before without some newly-purchased darkey or poor devil of a runaway, in my life. What's up? You look as glum as a thunder cloud. Bad luck, I guess."

"Never worse," answered Haynes; "but it's my own business. I don't tell my troubles to everybody."

"So I should guess from your looks, man," said Wheeler. "One would not suspect you had a friend in the world. But when I ask you to tell your troubles to me, you'll sartin do it. You look hard, Haynes, as if you had been overmatched in a bargain, or foiled in a slave hunt. But, as you observe, it's your own business, and I don't care a straw about it."

"I believe," said Haynes, "that old Tidbald and Miss Roland have as dishonest a pack of niggers about 'em as can be found in Mississippi. They lie without compunction."

"How so?" inquired Wheeler.

"Why, they told me they knew nothing about a wench I was in search of, that I bought of Tidbald, who ran away before delivery."

"I don't know much about the rest of 'em, but you must except old Jake. He's an honest fellow—a perfect trump," rejoined Wheeler.

"Yes, Jake is a true man, but he knew nothing about the gal," said Haynes. "He hunted, with us, all over the Roland mansion, and was with us till we left."

"He was?" replied Wheeler, and continued in a lower key, "then, I'll be bound, you didn't find her. Jake is a deep fellow."

Bidding Haynes good morning, Wheeler pursued his course quietly to the residence of Adela, where he was met, at the gate, by Captain Jake.

"You got the letter?" said he. "Well, I've a subject for you, and you must take her away to-night." And Jake proceeded to give an account of the sale, escape, and concealment of Eunice. "And now," he continued, pointing to the blinded window, "I want you to come at midnight, with a rope-ladder and a handsome suit of boy's clothes, and I will deliver her to your care."

"I'll be punctual," said Wheeler, and turned and retraced his steps to the woodyard. Entering the little dwelling belonging to the keeper of the yard, he unlocked and entered a small apartment, which seemed to be under his exclusive control. Here he divested himself of his outer clothing, and put on the dress of a fashionable gentleman. His head was disguised in a wig of curly hair, a pair of false whiskers and mustaches concealed the sides and lower part of his face. His boots were neatly polished, and his coat and hat carefully brushed. In this costume he emerged from the building, and sauntered carelessly to the landing, apparently awaiting the arrival of a boat.

Night drew on apace. Wheeler withdrew from the landing, and entered his little room again. Here he provided himself with a dark lantern, a rope ladder, and a suit of boy's clothes, such as Jake had directed, not forgetting to slip a revolver in his coat pocket, to be used in case of emergency. Throwing a large Spanish cloak over his shoulders, he took the path that led to Ash Grove. Jake met him at the gate, and conducted him quietly beneath the blinded window.

"Remain here," said the old negro; "and I will take the clothes to the girl, and suspend the ladder from the casement. You must do the rest."

"Trust me, captain," rejoined Wheeler, in a whisper; "I

never fail. There's no such word in my dictionary. Let me put my grapplers on the girl, and she's safe."

An hour passed before Jake could remove the furniture, and lift up the floor over the passage.

"Eunice," whispered he, removing the case from the lantern and peering in the dark.

"I'm here, Jake," answered Eunice in a subdued tone.

"Take the lantern as I let it down. Release it from the cord, and I will then let down a suit of boy's clothes, in which you must disguise yourself as quick as possible."

Eunice did as she was desired. When Jake descended into the passage, he surveyed her disguise, and said she could not be detected. He then climbed to the casement of the window, withdrew the rusty bolts, and flung open the blinds. Fastening the ladder to the sill he reached down and lifted, or rather pulled Eunice to the place where he sat. It was but the work of a moment to readjust the ladder so that she could descend outside.

"Now Eunice," said he, "go down carefully. You will find a friend at the bottom, whose body servant you are to pass for. He will conduct you safely to the free States. Here," he continued, putting in her hands a roll of bills and some gold coin, "Miss Adela, God bless her, told me to give you this. It is enough, with prudence, to last you till you find employment in the land of strangers, where you are going."

Eunice was about to thank the faithful old man for his kindness, but Jake prevented her by saying:

"This is no time for thanks; keep them, girl, till we meet again—till when—farewell."

Eunice hastened down the ladder, and met Wheeler at the bottom, who in an undertone, told her to follow him, without speaking. They entered the woodyard just in

time to pass on board an upward-bound boat. Giving their address to the clerk, as "Mr. Whiteman and servant," Wheeler was conducted to a room, and Eunice provided with a settee for the night.

Captain Jake, having secured the blinds, reascended to the garret, and covering the passage, hurried to the wood-yard, where he arrived in time to see the boat round from the landing into the stream.

"There goes another," he soliloquized, "and if my life is spared she shall not be the last. So Mr. Tidbald, you and your friends could not discover the hiding place, which a poor negro had prepared for your intended victim. Poor Agnes! it's well Eunice does not know of her fate. She might return. But there's a time coming—it must come, when such wrongs as this will be righted. Justice can not always sleep. The guilty must sometime be overtaken by the avenger."

CHAPTER XI.

Your politicians
Have evermore a taint of vanity,
As hasty still to show and boast a plot,
As they are greedy to contrive it.
SIR W. DAVENANT.

WE must now change the scene of our story to Washington, the federal capital. It was the first day of the second session of the thirty-first Congress. The members of both houses had nearly all arrived, and the city was full of strangers. It was an exciting moment in the history of the country. Two motives—expectation of appointment to office, and solicitude for the fate of measures pending, and to be brought before Congress, had filled the city to overflowing, with people from all parts of the nation. Countless were the groups that assembled on the street corners, in the drinking shops, the bar-rooms, the sitting-rooms of hotels, and upon the steps and in the grounds of the capitol. A hum of voices was heard everywhere; excitement was depicted in almost every countenance, and in the deep undertone one could scarcely fail to know that the leading topic of the day was slavery and the territories.

Expectation was on tiptoe to listen to the message of the President, and when it was understood that Congress was about to assemble, the capitol was rapidly filled with a

dense crowd of eager politicians. In the House a speaker must be elected before the message could be read. This election was deemed a sort of test question, as to the relative strength of parties on the Territorial Bill. Ballotings commenced. Winthrop was the northern, and Cobb the southern candidate of the leading parties. The men who held the balance between the two, not satisfied with the choice of either, and unable to elect themselves, voted at random. Twenty-two days were passed in the effort to elect a speaker, and then by a trick in legislation, which the North ought never to have approved, Cobb was elected.

The message of the President did not contain a passage significant of the course he intended to pursue on the Territorial question. The South was clamorous for the admission of California as a slave State; the North, that she should be free. Angry words, then blows, and, finally, challenges, were exchanged between members from different sections while discussing. The bloody principle of Southern chivalry was resorted to, to stifle debate and punish such as dared to denounce slavery. Melancholy, indeed, were the spectacles daily exhibited upon the floor of Congress and in the dram-shops of Washington. The South bullied the North into partial compliance with her measures, by a constant reiteration of threats of secession and disunion. Timid politicians from the North were frightened, and dishonest ones bought, to go just as far in support of Southern measures as possible.

While the war outside and within Congress was waxing hotter and hotter every day, it was understood, that, on the 29th of January, which it will answer our purpose to consider near at hand, Henry Clay would offer a compromise, and support it with a speech. No stronger testimony to the remarkable influence, which this great man exercised over

the minds of those with whom he was associated, could be offered than the effect which this intelligence produced upon Congress. Debate seemed to falter and sectional bickering ceased. All were eager to learn Mr. Clay's recommendations.

At last the day arrived. At an early hour the principal streets and avenues of the city were filled with carriages, and the sidewalks crowded with people, going to the capitol. Hundreds of ladies, fashionably, many even, gorgeously attired, crowded the galleries of the Senate chamber, accompanied, if not by their husbands, by gentlemen as lavish in their outward expenditures as themselves. It was a gay and beautiful scene to behold so many bright eyes cast down upon that national arena, awaiting, almost breathlessly, the breaking of the silence, which reigned there, by the voice of our greatest orator: and there, too, sat the wise men of the nation; the men whose business it was to act as well as listen. That wonderful man from Massachusetts, whose fame has, long ago, filled the world, careworn and wrinkled, yet exhibiting those remarkable lineaments and conformations that would mark him among ten thousand, sat in his place, gazing dreamily from under his cavernous brows at those around him. How woe-begone, yet how noble, were those features! The massive forehead, heavy brow, magnificent mouth, and ponderous chin; the large and elegant head, with a form of body to correspond, altogether composed the most dignified and commanding figure of a man we ever beheld. At a little distance from him, wrapped in his cloak, his countenance pale and emaciated, indicating advanced and fatal disease, sat the great Southern statesman, scarcely less distinguished than his illustrious compeer, as the advocate of Southern views and doctrines. The third of the wonderful trio, who had won his way to

eminence by his collisions and arguments with them, was now to speak. Then there was the tough old Missourian, the able New York senator, the old hero from Texas, and the distinguished senator from Michigan: but why enumerate? The Senate was full. It was enough that Henry Clay was to bring forward a measure of relief. He had done so on other occasions, and always with success. It was a thrilling moment. Every man felt that the crisis was about to be grappled with by one of the master spirits, who had seldom failed, in seasons of national difficulty, to subdue the whirlwind and scatter the storm.

He arose, and, in that voice whose cadence fell so sweetly upon the ear, addressed the Speaker. There was no effort in his manner or language. Words and thoughts tripped smoothly from his tongue. His gesticulations and motions were the perfection of grace. One by one, he unfolded the components of his plan. It was the creature of no section. It did not enter into the views of North, or of South; but was designed to compromise, to furnish middle ground upon which all could stand and greet each other as brethren. True, it was unequal in its dealings with the North. It required greater concessions to be made by the North; but he felt that he had a right to ask more of the North. It was, numerically, the greatest; and greatness and magnanimity should go together.

This was the eloquent fallacy with which he wooed Northern members into the support of the nefarious fugitive law, and reconciled them to the belief that they had better admit the Territories without any proviso. Most eloquently, but most fallaciously, did the great orator plead his cause; and his allusion, at the close, to the coffin of Washington, was a befitting climax to his impassioned oratory. He ceased. After a moment of silence, a murmur of applause was heard,

which, almost instantly, broke into a full and undisguised round. The triumph of the orator over the hearts of his auditory had been complete. A moment more, and the gay throng of listeners swept from the galleries into the avenue.

Tidbald, sympathizing in all matters with the South, had been an eager, but disappointed listener to this speech; during the delivery of which, he had been seated by the side of a short, stocky, young-appearing senator, with whom, he had, several times, when Mr. Clay spoke against the inordinate love of slavery by the South, exchanged significant glances.

"I say," said he, addressing him, when Mr. Clay took his seat, "Ben, I don't relish the plan. It concedes too much to you Northern fellows; and all the old man said about magnanimity was mere twattle."

"It's rather old foggyish," replied the individual addressed; "but I imagine it is as far as the North will go, to adopt it at present. You hotspurs are too mercurial—too exacting—too pertinacious in your demands. I feel as well disposed toward your institutions as any northern man, but it seems impossible to make you understand that all you wish for can not be accomplished in a moment. Adopt old Harry's plan, in its essentials. Don't you see how it pleased Webster? See how heartily he congratulates his old friend. I haven't seen such a sparkle in his eyes these two years. You can see, too, that even the death-like countenance of your great prototype, Calhoun, begins to look hopeful. I tell you, the plan is better than most of your people had reason to expect. It has made all the out-and-outers mad. Seward will growl; Chase will scold; and old Gid will fume and bore your house incessantly with his vindictive twattle. But the character of the debate will

change; and, henceforth, it will be more logical, more hopeful, and in better spirit."

"But why tamper, Ben? Why not, if, as he says, slavery can not exist in California or the territories, admit them at once?"

"Ah! but principle, Tid—principle."

"Principle a fiddlestick. What need we care for principle, as long as nothing is to be gained by it?"

"You are an incorrigible fellow, Tid. I expect we shall meet all kinds of opposition from you, when the bill reaches the House."

"Assuredly you will," replied Tidbald; "the South shall never be sold while I can help it. We will fight first."

"Dissolve the Union, of course?"

"Yes, sir," said Tidbald, "you affect to treat the subject lightly, but I know how it is with you northern chaps. The intelligent among you have fears, but you wish to conceal them by affecting indifference. I tell you, Ben, we will not be restrained from exercising our rights, Union or no Union. It's not all gammon, as you suppose. The South is ripe to-day for an armed revolt; and it will require the strongest efforts of her representatives here to avert it, if that plan is not modified."

"And if those representatives are all like you, Tid, I fear it will require a pretty strong effort of patriotism to get them enlisted against such a revolt."

"Oh! as to that, Ben, I love my country—the whole of it—too well to counsel warlike measures."

"You are discreet in doing so; but, my dear fellow, you must hush up. You have already attracted the notice of a lot of crazy freesoilers over there, who seem to be nearly as full of gesture as you are. I will see you this evening, and we will talk further. Let's imbibe."

The senator and representative left the capitol arm in arm, and walked up the avenue to a gorgeous saloon, which they entered. Calling for a brandy-toddy each, they seated themselves in one of the eating stalls, where, for the present we'll leave them.

CHAPTER XII.

The grave, the gay, the fopling, and the dunce,
Start up (God bless us) statesmen all at once.
CHURCHILL.

BENEDICT WINSTEAD, the senator alluded to in the previous chapter, was the representative of a class of politicians, of which, it is fortunate for the nation, there are so few. He had risen to the position of senator, by the early adoption of a system of political tactics which rendered him popular with the masses. Few had given him credit for remarkable sagacity or particular adherence to principle. He had received a fair, early education. He went to the West, from New England, at a time when western society was receiving its force, character, and organization from such eastern emigrants as, from time to time, entered into it. He found it an easy task to weave into the affections of the people, and to teach them to think that he had few superiors. His rise was rapid. In three years from the day he settled in the West, he entered the legislature of the State, where, for seven years, he contrived to sway the councils of both Houses; and, when he left, it was only to be elevated to a seat upon the Supreme Bench.

Winstead was what the world calls a cunning man. He perceived, among a multitude of opinions, very clearly the

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one out of which he could make the most for himself, and, at once adopted and advocated it; often, for the purpose of doing so, sacrificing an opinion directly the reverse of one which he had been known to entertain but the week before. In all his movements, he had an eye to the main chance. He married rich—his wife, at the time, being the owner of a plantation, in one of the southern States, stocked with an hundred and fifty negroes. Unwilling to leave the State, where his fortune had been made, he enjoyed the fruits of slavery, without personal contact with it. He was, therefore, a fit representative of the views of the northern democracy on the subject. Their object was to allay agitation, and not interfere with the South; give them the protection of the fugitive law, and leave the door open for the introduction of slavery into the territories. Winstead planted himself upon this ground; and, from the first, thought he saw in it the means of speedily elevating himself to the Presidency. He reasoned, that because slavery existed, and because it was impossible, in a brief period, to abolish it, that any open opposition to it could injure no man or party so much as the man or party that indulged it. It was a mighty thought to find a place in his contemplations; but the precedent had been successfully established, and he was not to blame for an ambition which greater men dared not nourish. Animated by the hope of elevation, he was the first man to introduce a bill for the admission of the territories. That gave him a prominence in the debate which followed, which made it necessary for him to take an active part in the support of the measure. He entered the lists with the spirit of a gladiator. Like one who had gone before him, and been wrecked—a much greater and wiser man than he—Winstead saw that, to be successful, he must play into the hands of the South. That was the game to

win. Parties were breaking up in the North; and it became with him a study to know how he could best represent, and, therefore, secure, the largest fragment in the North, and the entire South. This was a large game, in which a single move might determine his fate.

Tidbald, less deliberate but more talented than Winstead, saw the goal at which he aimed, and determined to make a profitable use of him. From a mere passing acquaintance they became intimate. Kindred in tastes, they were constantly together. They drank together, gambled together, and formed a kind of fraternal connection, founded upon the influence which each supposed the other capable of exercising in favor of his particular object. Such friendships, alas! are much too common in the world. The relation between them was ripening into the form we have given it, at the time of the meeting mentioned in the foregoing chapter, and it was then that each formed in his heart the design of using the other in the furtherance of his views. They met in the evening at Tidbald's rooms.

"Since we parted," said Winstead, with the air of one who has something of great importance to communicate, "I have heard that Webster is prepared to go the whole figure on the compromise, and will take an early occasion to give his reasons for it."

"That's the best news yet, Ben," replied Tidbald, "if it be true; but can not some of the objectionable features of the measure be modified a little?"

"In what manner," inquired Winstead.

"Extend the slavery clause over the territories. Leave it out of California, if you will, but give it to us in Utah and New Mexico."

"You are the most unreasonable man in the world, Tid," replied Winstead. "Don't you perceive, if you do this,

that you unmask all the batteries of the North. That very move has spiked the guns of the whigs. You had us before—now, your only opponents is the little band of crazy free-soilers, with Seward, Chase, and Giddings at their head."

"But what shall we do, Winstead? Can't you see that we need this territory now. Slaves are increasing upon us hourly. We must have vent. There is a greater number of negroes than whites in some of the States already. If we can not have the new territories where are we to send them? Our cotton lands are wearing out rapidly. Competition is meeting us from Mexico, Egypt, and the East Indies, in the British market; and you understand, with their hostility to the institution, the English will not buy of us any longer than they are compelled to. How long will it be, if we do not find an outlet, before we shall be entirely at the mercy of our slaves?"

"You must and shall have all you need," was the confident reply of Winstead; "but you can't get it in California. The fate of that territory is in the hands of the yankees who settled it, and they will not permit slavery to exist there. It may be different with Utah and New Mexico. The compromise leaves all open. Send your slaves and their owners there, buy the lands, create public sentiment sufficient to carry the thing through, and don't you see the compromise won't affect you? But you are really not as near the crisis as you apprehend. There's Texas. We gave you any quantity of slave territory there—vent sufficient for your surplus slave population for many years, and the finest cotton country in the world. But we'll give you more—all that you need, if you do not kick your own dish over. Support the compromise. It's policy. It will conciliate the North. You'll get the fugitive law—the institution will not be assailed—and the door will be wide

open for you to convert the largest portion of our Mexican domain into slave territory."

"I wish I could see the thing as you do; but you are not as blind as you pretend," rejoined Tidbald. "You well understand that we can not people the new territories with slaves as fast as New England and New York can with yankees. We need a positive law, reëffirming the spirit of the Constitution, upon the subject."

"Well, Tid," replied Winstead, laughing at his friend's constitutional notions, "that is more than I could promise for the North. She may be coaxed, wheedled, possibly bought into temporizing measures, like this compromise of Clay's, but she will submit to dissolution, secession, and all the consequences of civil war, before she will consent to a positive enactment favorable to slavery. And are you so blind that you can not perceive it? What means the position of Webster? Don't you know that up to this time he has stood in the front rank of the opponents of slavery. No man in the nation has struck it more vigorously, but now he is on your side, and will give to your cause the influence of his great name, at the risk of his consistency. He expects pay for it, of course. He wants to be President, and has undoubtedly had pledges, but he counts without his host."

"Are you sure on that point, Ben," Tidbald rejoined in an earnest tone. "If Webster will do so, why delay? The North can not be fastened too soon, for we have a whole nest of hornets in the House. I doubt if there be a northern man there who will oppose old Gid and his clan. Let the giant lead off soon. His difficulty and ours increases with every hour's delay."

"He'll do so," said Winstead, "and, in the meantime, it is *your* policy to keep the South awake. Agitation there is as important as it is at the North."

"We'll give you enough of that, never fear," replied Tidbald, smiling. "You shall hear rumors within a month that will startle the nation, and give a show of earnestness to our threats, that will open the eyes of some of your crazy abolitionists."

The reader will understand what Tidbald referred to in his letter, which we inserted as emblematic of his character, and which was written at this time.

CHAPTER XIII.

He had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all.

BYRON.

NEAR the office of Tidbald stood the office of John Garnet, the only other attorney in the village. Tidbald and Garnet were rivals—sure, always, in the county court, to be opposed to each other. Garnet was an indefatigable lawyer, and enjoyed an excellent reputation. While Tidbald was at Washington, Garnet was applied to by Harry Westover to undertake, for a wealthy friend of his, the collection of a demand against the Roland estate. It had grown out of the indorsement, by Mr. Roland, in his lifetime, of the obligations of a relative, who had failed. Garnet had been an enemy of Roland's, and felt a thrill of secret pleasure at the opportunity which was now afforded him, to wreak vengeance upon the unoffending head of Adela. He lost no time in making known to her that he had the claim for collection. It was, in amount, sufficient to bankrupt the estate, but as bankrupt estates among slaveholders are common, no one was surprised—no one, really, at first, felt sympathy for the fair victim. What to do, Adela was at a loss to determine, though quite too much of a business

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turn to take counsel of her fears. Tidbald was absent, so she sent for young Thornton.

Frank learned with surprise, but with almost as much delight as Garnet, of Adela's ill fortune. "She will now be equal with me," said he, "and certainly can not refuse to marry." He was perplexed as to the counsel proper to be given, and proposed to her to submit the question to his uncle.

There was still another who exulted in the prospect of Adela's ruin, and this was her neighbor, Henry Westover. He thought that she would now be willing to accept of his offer, rather than become a beggar. Thornton had just closed his interview with her, when Westover entered, and with much seeming sorrow, offered his condolence.

"Has it not occurred to you, Miss Adela," he inquired, "that this might be remedied? Unite your fate with mine. I have ample fortune, and shall, with pleasure, repair the loss you will sustain."

"Cease to importune me, Mr. Westover," said Adela, "on a subject which you know has ever been hateful to me, and which, even in my present extremity, is free from none of its repulsive features. I can not love—can not—will not marry you, whatever fate betide me."

"Mark me, Adela Roland," replied Westover, in a tone indicative alike of chagrin and anger, "you will regret this decision. I have it in my power now to humble your pride, and cause you deep mortification!"

"Go and batten on your prospect of revenge," rejoined Adela, indignant at the threat concealed in the language he addressed to her, "I can be overtaken by no worse calamity than to marry you."

"We shall see," said Westover, with a fiendish laugh; "The worst has not come yet." He took his departure,

and as he returned across the fields to his father's house, seemed wrapped in meditation, which, every few moments, was broken by repetition of the words, "I'll humble her."

Garnet commenced suit. The amount claimed was an hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars.

And how did Adela bear her afflictions? With the coolness of a philosopher. She had too much good sense—too little love of money, or care for fortune, to borrow premature trouble through fear of its loss. True, it was a heavy blow, and the thought that she must leave the home of her childhood and go out, friendless and penniless, upon the world, was a bitter one. Summoning Dennis and Captain Jake, she acquainted them with the turn which things had taken.

"I condole with you deeply," said Dennis, "and sincerely hope that the trouble may be more easily overcome than you seem to think. The sum is a large one. A forced sale of the estate would hardly pay it; a year's crops, however, provided the season proves favorable, might. Has your lawyer satisfied himself that the signature is genuine?"

"There is no doubt of it," replied Adela. "My poor father little thought of the sorrow he was laying in store for me when he signed that note. Poor Jake! How shall I, in this exigency, contrive to relieve you from the consequences of the disaster?"

"Never mind me, Miss Adela," said the old negro, clasping her proffered hand fervently; "it will not fall so heavy upon me as it will upon you; and come what may, I shall never desert you until I am compelled. If Mass'r Roland had given me freedom, I should have accepted it, but now, I shall remain at my post."

"You are a noble old man, Captain Jake, as I have ever

known," said Adela, shaking the hand still clasped in her own; "but are you aware that this disaster, when it reaches the termination, will cause you, and all the other servants belonging to the estate, to be sold?"

"Even so, Miss Adela, and I may—probably will—become the sport of some brutal task-master. But I can bear it all sooner than leave you in your tribulation."

There was a pleasant smile visible upon the dark, but not inexpressive countenance of the old slave, as he uttered these words, which showed that he felt more than he could find words to express.

"I wish you were free, Jake," said Dennis. "It would place you beyond the reach of harm."

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," replied Jake. "I am happy now, because I am with Miss Adela. This old heart shall have no trouble on its own account. It don't matter what becomes of me, when I cease to be useful. Something may prevent my separation from Miss Adela, and then, however cruel my master may be, I will not repine."

"You are a philosopher, Jake," said Dennis, laughing, "and deserve a better fate than seems to have fallen to your lot."

While they were engaged in conversation Frank Thornton came in. Dennis and Jake withdrew, and Adela, offering her hand to Frank, said, with a smile,—

"How glad I am to see you. But this moment I was conversing with my old friends and advisers about the troubles which encompass me. They cause me much sorrow, and I hardly know where to seek relief. I try to forget them, but they steal over me occasionally with stunning reality, and I feel, for the time, overwhelmed. Do you think, Mr. Thornton, there is any possibility of escape from the disaster which threatens the estate?"

"The plainness of the case forbids that I should flatter with hopes which must prove delusive. I can see no way in which judgment can be avoided. Everything that can, shall be done. I have written to Uncle Tidbald, and he will reply soon. His opinion may give a new aspect to the whole case. God grant it may. In the meantime, can nothing be done to save you a pittance from the estate in anticipation of its sale?"

"I shall be destitute," replied Adela; "but I could face poverty boldly were the bolt to fall upon me alone. There are others that must suffer. Poor Aunt Debby, and my oldest and best friend, Captain Jake! When I think of this, it almost drives me to madness."

"They are, indeed, greatly to be pitied," said Thornton; "but can Miss Roland think of no method by which these consequences may be avoided?"

"Would to heaven I could!" said Adela, earnestly. "How cheerfully, even for their sake, would I improve it."

"Would you so? Then let me recommend one. Accept the offer of Henry Westover," replied Thornton, gazing intently upon the countenance of Adela as he spoke.

"Sooner die at once, Mr. Thornton," replied Adela, her countenance turning to a deadly paleness. "If Mr. Westover," she continued, in a hesitating voice, "after all that has passed between us, has sent you here to renew a suit which is really more painful for me to contemplate than the one that threatens me with beggary, you may return to him with the assurance that I am inflexible to all his devices."

"I came on no such errand, Miss Roland, though I confess, I was not without anxiety to be informed of the relations between you and Westover. But it was on my own account. I think—indeed—I feel that you have dis-

covered that I, too, am impressed with a sentiment of something stronger than mere regard for you; and now that I see the probability of an equality of fortune between us growing stronger, my heart whispers me to hope on and take courage. In this uncertain state of mind I come to you for relief. Either bid me hope, or resolve me of my error, and how painful soever may be the infliction, I will never more presume to address you upon the subject."

Adela sat some moments endeavoring to frame a befitting answer, her countenance meantime changing from its pallid hue to one of deep crimson. The declaration was unexpected. Adela had never communed with her heart to learn whether she loved Thornton. She had met him but three times, and was only conscious of thinking well of him. But, while she strove to marshal her scattered thoughts, her confusion every moment became greater, and she remembered of having caught herself unwittingly thinking of him since she had last seen him. Still she did not feel sure that she loved him, and her natural prudence did not forsake her when she came to reply.

"I was not prepared for this," she was about to say kindness, but reflecting that Thornton might take courage from a word so familiar, and determined by no word or act to give him any encouragement until she had had ample time to consider the subject, she immediately substituted politeness—and continued; "I would not wish to make a reply that would wound the feelings of one I so highly esteem as Mr. Thornton, or occasion regret hereafter. To avoid both extremes, I must solicit time to commune with my own feelings."

"Let it be soon, dear Miss Roland," replied Thornton, pleadingly; "for, by declining to do so now, you leave me

in a state of suspense—a more tormenting condition, while it lasts, than I should be in by positive refusal.”

“Be patient and trusting,” replied Adela, gayly. “But come, let us make my queer old aunt a call. She will be delighted to see you.”

Thornton followed her into the adjoining room, where sat Aunt Debby on her own territory. Adela introduced Thornton, who could not resist the inclination to seize the withered hand of the little old woman, and shake it heartily. Aunt Debby was vexed at what she deemed an improper liberty, but was too much of a lady to manifest it in her conduct while Thornton remained. After he left, she told Adela, with much indignation in her voice and manner, that it was the first time in thirty years that any man, except her father, had presumed to shake her by the hand.

Thornton soon found himself engaged in a cozy conversation with the old lady, but unfortunately he stumbled against some of her prejudices, in such a manner that she was a long while in forgetting it.

“Your parrot is a pretty bird, but she seems stupid.”

“I think more! I think more! I think more!” screamed the parrot, at the same time pluming herself, and casting a look of ineffable disdain at Thornton.

“How mistaken I was,” said Thornton, laughing heartily. “The bird knows more than some men of my acquaintance.”

“I think more—I think more—I think more,” again screamed the parrot—and this time Thornton discovered that these, beside her name of “Pretty Polly,” were the only words the bird had ever been taught.

“Polly understands herself, as well as can be expected of a bird,” said Aunt Debby; “but she is neither as stupid

or as clever, as she sometimes seems. Ade, dear, how blooming you look to-day. Have you been riding, or walking?”

“Neither, aunty,” answered Adela, blushing deeper than ever. “I have not been out at all.”

“Oh! well, I never,” muttered Aunt Debby, casting a glance at Thornton, as if to intimate that she fully divined the cause of the blush. “I must go,” she said, rising, “my duties give me but little time to talk with young people. We shall always be glad to see you, sir, at least Ade will,” she added, turning to Thornton, “and old people like me, you take no pleasure in conversing with.”

Adela and Thornton withdrew to the parlor, and as he took his hat to leave, he said to her, in a tone which trembled with the emotion that he felt:

“Remember, Adela, that you have full control of my affections. I can not endure the thought that you should reject me, and shall await, with an anxiety which I can not describe, your decision.”

“I will give it my instant attention,” said Adela, calmly; but she smiled as she spoke, and Frank thought there was more meaning in her smile, than in the unimpassioned language, and guarded manner in which she had replied to his requests. He took courage from it, and went forth from Ash-Grove with a light heart.

A genuine lover—and such was Frank Thornton—never mistakes the language of love. The smile with which Adela bade him farewell, dispelled, in his mind, all doubt of obtaining her affections. He felt sure of her love—sure that, had she intended to reject him, she would not have given him the encouragement of a smile, when a frown would have been in better keeping. Thornton’s heart was in a tumult. He could scarcely refrain from giving freedom

to the inward delight he experienced, by a song to the beautiful grove through which he was passing, but restrained himself, through a jealous distrust, that some listener might suspect the cause of his light-heartedness. Pictures of future happiness danced through his brain, the live-long day—and until long after he had retired, and when his waking visions fled, it was to give place to others, scarcely less delightful, which were not less welcome for coming to him while asleep.

CHAPTER XIV.

But this juggler
Would think to chain my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules, pranked in reason's garb.
MILTON.

A TRIP from almost any point, on the Lower Mississippi to the mouth of the Ohio, is tedious and uninteresting. The scenery possesses fewer attractive features than any other portion of our country. The shores are flat and tenantless. The eye occasionally catches a view of a plantation which, in the distance, wears an aspect of beauty; but the general tameness of the country around, the appearance of wide-spread desolation, and the dreamy, debilitating influence of a semi-tropical sun in summer, and rain and haze in winter, leave but few features in a Mississippi landscape worthy of special observation.

Our friend Wheeler sat upon the deck, in front of the door of his stateroom, gazing upon this monotonous panorama, as the boat was winding its course through the sinuosities of the river to the North. Eunice was seated within the state room, so as partially to escape the observation of any who might be passing. Her situation was a strange one. The country, the boat, the people; everything she saw was new to her and filled her mind with strange and novel thoughts. A few hours before she had been a poor

hunted slave, with the certainty, if captured, that she would be sold into hopeless and bitter bondage. Now she had nearly an equal assurance of freedom—and it was a painful contemplation that opened before her.

"What," thought she, "will I do in the free States? How will my condition there be improved? and how much will freedom increase my happiness? In any event, mine must be a life of toil. I shall be admitted into no society that is not composed of people darker than myself, and who are regarded either with contempt or pity by the whites. In obtaining a livelihood, I shall be compelled to engage in menial pursuits; and when I am sad, or sick, or distressed, I shall find no soul to sympathize with me, and pour the balm of consolation into my wounded heart. Is not the fate of one who has the misfortune to be born with black blood in her veins, in its best aspect, unrighteously hard? What has the negro done to deserve this dreadful prejudice? Why should he be followed, as by a curse, wherever he goes? Why endowed with faculties for the enjoyment of freedom, but deprived of the power to put them in exercise? I feel that I have a soul. God has given me perception to discover the sources of individual happiness, and I am as conscious of pleasure when it comes as the best of my white sisters. I could enjoy, in equal degree, all that they enjoy, were it mine, or obtain it as easily as they, were the way as plain and unobstructed before me. But the future for me is dark and desolate. Yet," and she cast her eyes upon the mirror suspended from the opposite wall, "I am conscious of being beautiful. Why should the slight shade between my complexion, and that of the imperious woman whom I now hear scolding her slave in the cabin, make the wide difference between us? My features are more regular, my eyes more sparkling, my expression more

amiable, my form more symmetrical, and my manners more refined; yet she is the mistress of a hundred slaves, basking in the beams of a prosperity for which she knows not how to be grateful, and I am the poor fugitive from slavery and degradation—a wanderer in a strange land, not permitted even to hope for an asylum where my condition can be elevated or improved in the scale of being. Oh, why was I born to so wretched a destiny!

Pursuing this unhappy train of thought, Eunice made a practical application of it to her probable condition in the free States. "I shall," thought she, "be compelled to hire out, by day's labor, to wash, to clean, to scrub. No less menial employment will be tolerated in me by my white employers. Of course, I can not sew: that would breed familiarity with my employers, which custom and prejudice would not tolerate. I can not teach; and yet such have been my advantages, that few can excel me in piano music or singing. My mother," and here Eunice heaved a deep sigh, which attracted the notice of Wheeler, "taught me all she could."

"You look unhappy, boy," said Wheeler. "What's the matter? Are you sick?"

"Not sick," replied Eunice, "but, as you say, unhappy."

"Why?" inquired Wheeler.

"Because I can not foresee anything but misery in store for me in the land where I am going."

"Hush," said Wheeler in an undertone. "Preserve your identity as a slave, or you are lost, and I shall be hung without mercy. Talk of something else, or not at all."

"Awful dull traveling this on the Mississippi," observed a tall, well-dressed, gentlemanly man, seating himself beside Wheeler.

"Do you think so, sir?" rejoined Wheeler. "You are

from the North, I suspect, where they have a greater variety of scenery. For my part, having always been familiar with this kind of scenery, I can not find as much fault with it as strangers seem to. It is quite as interesting to me as any portion of the country. However, 'tis home where the heart is, as the poet has it, and that's my case exactly."

"As the representatives, then, of opposite sentiments in scenery, manners, and, more than all, in domestic associations and institutions, and yet as citizens of the same great country," replied the stranger, "we are well met. I have spent but a few weeks in the South, having been called here by business, and am now on my return to New England. In my intercourse with your people, I have seen much to admire, which, from preconceived notions, I expected to condemn. I had been prepared, by previous representations, to find you brutalized to some extent by the institution of slavery. I had been told that every vice flourished in your midst; that you were cruel taskmasters, exacting more of your slaves than they could perform; that they were poorly fed and clad, and treated with greater severity than brute-beasts; that families were broken up by your internal slave-trade, the tenderest ties severed, and even murder often committed in the most barbarous manner without punishment. These stories, I am convinced, are exaggerations. The negroes that I have seen appear comfortable, many of them, happy—ignorant to be sure; but, with them, "ignorance is bliss." I am no lover of your system of slavery; but I think I can see that it is not a thing easily got rid of; and since it must be perpetuated, I can not discover how you can make its burdens any lighter than they seem to be. My opinion of the institution, as it really exists, has been greatly changed during my trip, and I shall go home less an advocate for the extreme doctrines

of a portion of our people than ever, and less prepared than ever to believe in the effect of moral suasion."

"You are not a freesoiler, I take it," replied Wheeler.

"Never was, sir—never. I always thought, and think still, that, if left to themselves, the South would eventually work out the freedom of the slave.

"They've been a good while trying," remarked a queer looking individual, with a stick in his hand, which he seemed to be trimming on the end with a huge jack-knife, "but the niggers are gettin' thicker all the while. How d'ye 'count for that?"

"Easy enough," answered the New Englander; "they can't send them away as fast as they increase. Colonization, in all points of view, is impracticable."

"How so?" inquired the man with the knife.

"Why in the first place, there is no colony suitable for negroes to go to; secondly, it would cost too much; thirdly, it would take too long a time, and fourthly, it aint the right way to dispose of them," the New Englander replied, with the air of one who thought his reply was unanswerable.

"Well now," returned the man with the knife, whittling more vigorously than before, "I see nothin' impossible about it. As you say 't'll take some time to do it, but the cost and the colony, and the wrong in the matter are pretty easily disposed of. Now I'm friendly to emancipation: should be right glad if every nigger in the Union could be free to-morrow. I'm agin slavery extension—want to see the system crippled by overgrowth where it exists now, and no outlet for it; at the same time I'm too much the friend of Cuffy to wish to have him remain here. Truth is, I'm like all the white-folks I ever saw—prejudiced—don't like the nigger no-how, and can't feel that,

as a race, even in the best possible circumstances in which they can be placed by freedom, they 'll have more 'n half a chance in our country. Truth is, whites and blacks won't mix. You can bring Dutch, Irish, French, even Hindoo and Indian among us, and they 'll all agree better together than either or all of them will agree with niggers. There's a suthin' about them that keeps up an awful dislike in the minds of the people of all the rest of the world. Well, now what you goin' to do, when you can't manage that? As I was sayin', I think you can colonize 'em. It's a big job, and it 'll take the government to do it. It 'll take a heap of money, but it can be done. Let Congress get her steamships runnin' to Africa; open a commerce with Liberia; help the niggers along there, and in a few years they 'll build up a good deal of a republic. Send all you can get to go. They 'll do well there, and our niggers 'll find it out and grow so anxious about it, that this country wont hold 'em. How long 'll it take then, do you s'pose, to colonize 'em?"

"All theory," answered the New England man; "it sounds well, seems philanthropic, but lacks the ring of the genuine metal. My idea is that the only true course is to leave slavery to the care and management of the people among whom it exists. This is their right. They know better than we what they want, and in their own good time will provide means for its abolition."

"Why not liberate them at once?" chimed in a man in Quaker garb, who had been listening to the conversation; "what's to fear?"

"Murder! bloodshed! revolution!" replied the New Englander, affecting a shudder. "They would desolate the south; make it one vast graveyard; pillage and burn its towns, and depopulate the whole country."

"How does thee know that, friend?" inquired the Quaker. "Hast thou found it in the good book that kindness was often returned with unkindness? Canst thou see in the law of nature that love begets hate? When I say to my slave; friend, thou art free, go where thou wilt, I have no longer any claim to thee, will he turn upon me and kill me for it; slaughter my family, burn my house, and commit the other depredations thou hast pictured? Is not that illogical friend?"

"I've heard these arguments before. The North is full of them," answered the New Englander in an excited voice. "They are the prolific cause of all the troubles growing out of fanaticism, Abolitionism and Freesoilism, the very elements that, unless checked, will end in a dissolution of this glorious Union, and plunge the country into civil war. I am an American citizen, and love my country a little better than any class of people in it, simply because they happen to be unfortunate. Their misfortune is not mine. I am not responsible for it, and when to meddle with it involves such momentous consequences, I can not see why I should meddle with it."

"Thou art unwilling to argue the question fairly, friend," said the Quaker.

"I intend no incivility, sir, but I can not help feeling annoyed and provoked, when I listen to arguments which I know are causing so much trouble in the nation," responded the New Englander. "I have often tried to converse calmly with people who entertain your views, but they are never willing to look at the question in its true light; as a question of expediency, of policy; as a question indeed which had more than one side to it."

"And why should they, forsooth?" returned the Quaker. "What right, if they pretend to live up to the teachings

of Christianity, or the plain requirements of the law of nature, has policy or expediency to do with the matter? Is not the South an aggressor every day that she fosters the institution? Where does she find authority to chain in servitude, and bind in ignorance; three-and-a-half millions of human beings?"

"In the first great law of nature—self-defense," replied the New Englander.

"There 'tis again," said the Quaker, "thee returns to thy first and only argument, a *petitio principii*, and asks us to take for granted, that all the evils thou hast depicted will follow emancipation. Wilt thou, friend, have the goodness to give me thy understanding of the operations of the law of love?"

"I have neither time nor inclination, sir, to engage in a controversy which promises so little," replied the New Englander. "We shall neither be persuaded by the other's arguments. We differ materially—wide as the poles; and let us leave the subject."

"As thee pleases," responded the Quaker, smiling. "If I offended, by my intrusiveness, I regret it. It was because I felt there was strength in my views, and that I might do some good by letting them be known."

"That is a complaint with which your party is troubled—too much talk—too much one ideaism," replied the New Englander, rallying. "You never take all things together. There is no comprehensiveness to your views. Emancipate, emancipate, and let consequences take care of themselves, is your constant cry."

"Even so," rejoined the Quaker, "we have no fear of any serious consequences. That is the plain reason. We want men to do right."

"Would it not be right, sir, for you and I to put our

hands in our pockets, and pay the South for every negro they set free?"

"Certainly not," replied the Quaker; "it would be admitting the very thing we contend against—that man can hold property in man. We say the South have no right to hold slaves. Neither the law of God or of nature confirms the authority, by which they claim to make property of their fellow-beings. In truth, every slave has as much right to his freedom as thee or me. Every slave that escapes from slavery, even though he kills his pursuers, is doing right."

"Hist, broadbrim," said Wheeler, "you are talking treason among people who will not long endure it. We shall have a row, and give the Honorable Judge Lynch a chance to sit on your case, in a few minutes."

"Is it so, friend?" inquired the Quaker; "must an American citizen fear to express his sentiments, with that glorious ensign floating over him?" pointing to the flag that floated from the staff at the stern of the boat.

"I don't mind what you say," said Wheeler, smiling. "My niggers are contented and happy, from old Sam down to little Jack here, my body-servant;" and he threw open the door of his stateroom, exposing Eunice to the gaze of all the disputants.

It would be impossible to tell which of the company was most interested in staring at the beautiful quadroon girl, who, in her boy's garb, looked exceedingly lovely. The Quaker was the first to speak.

"That interesting youth," said he, "thee claims as property."

"Until I can dispose of him to better advantage than to keep him," said Wheeler.

"He is for sale?" said the Quaker, inquiringly.

"Not to-day, friend," Wheeler answered; "but if you

wish to purchase, call at my stateroom to-morrow, and we will negotiate."

"Thou mistakest me, friend," said the Quaker, "I should buy but to liberate, if at all. But thou appearest to be a kind, considerate, reasonable man. If thou wilt hear me, I will see thee, at the time thou hast appointed, and endeavor to convince thee of the great wrong of the institution."

"I shall listen with pleasure, my friend," Wheeler replied, shaking the Quaker cordially by the hand. "You shall find me open to conviction, too. I've had frequent doubts whether slavery was strictly right; and your arguments with my Green Mountain friend have rather increased than allayed them. I shall be happy to talk with you."

CHAPTER XV.

Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope
Whereto thy speech serves for authority.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE day after the conversation narrated in the preceding chapter, found our Mississippi voyagers within half a day's sail of the mouth of the Ohio. The weather was colder; and the atmosphere was, by fitful starts, filled with short, driving flurries of snow. Staterooms were closed, and the social hall became the gathering-place for passengers, who huddled, shiveringly, around the stove. On a trunk, apart from the crowd, wrapped in a coarse but not ungraceful cloak, sat Eunice. A person of more interesting appearance than she, in her boy's costume—her beautiful countenance mellowed by an indefinable expression of sadness—could scarcely be imagined. Wheeler sat with his back to her, near the stove, listening to an earnest conversation which had sprung up between our New England friend and a traveling lecturer on temperance.

Suddenly he rose, and, in a loud tone, said: "Gentlemen, as the weather is too cold to leave the cabin, I think we had better invite our temperance friend to give us a lecture. We shall then have something else to think about, beside how we shall keep ourselves warm over this miserable fire."

"Agreed! agreed!" rang through the cabin from a score of voices; and the lecturer, who was one of the vainest of his kind, and who boasted in the presuming title of "The Thunderbolt," needed no second invitation to commence one of those protracted, rigmarole discourses, composed of stale anecdotes, witless comparisons, and hackneyed expressions, which, for several years past, have characterized the temperance effort. While this address was in the course of delivery, our Quaker friend seemed ill at ease. Frequently he was observed to rise, clasp his hands behind him, and walk backward and forward, as if intent upon evolving some train of reflection which gave him great perplexity. At length, watching his opportunity, when no one was observing, he made a significant gesture to Eunice, and hurried from the cabin. Unable to comprehend his meaning, Eunice consulted Wheeler, who told her to go out and see what he wanted. She went to her stateroom and found the Quaker standing in front of the outer or deck entrance. He stepped in as she opened the door, closed it hurriedly, and thus addressed the half-frightened girl:

"Would thee like to be free, boy?"

"It is the strongest desire of my heart," replied Eunice, partially comprehending the benevolent design of her interrogator.

"Hast thou a stout heart to face danger, and fortitude to bear the consequences of failure in any design which may provoke thy master to wrath?"

"I have, God helping me," said Eunice.

"Does thy master trust thee by thyself at night?"

"Always," replied Eunice. "He has no suspicion that I could be induced to leave him."

"We are near the land of freedom, boy," said the Qua-

ker. "If I will risk the chance of detection and lynch-law to give thee freedom, wilt thou incur a like hazard to gain it."

"With all my heart," replied Eunice, for the first time feeling an inclination to burst into a hearty peal of laughter.

"Thou must be silent, boy, and obey my directions implicitly. The boat will stop at midnight at a free port. Then will be thy time. Before that hour arrives, join me on the deck in front of thy room, and I will conduct thee, in safety, to freedom."

Before Eunice could frame a reply, the door of the stateroom was pushed open, and Wheeler, who comprehended everything at a glance, entered.

"So," he exclaimed, "old Broadbrim; plotting to run away with my little Jack, eh! Do you know the penalty, old man? Six—eight—ten years in prison, at hard labor. D'ye think I shall put up with it, and not retaliate?"

"Do thy worst," replied the Quaker, looking resignedly at Wheeler. "I but performed my duty, and neither ask nor expect favor."

"Jack," inquired Wheeler, in an earnest tone, "what was he saying to you. Tell me instantly."

Eunice cast a glance at the lugubrious countenance of the Quaker, and, unable longer to control herself, burst into a loud and hearty fit of laughter, in which she was joined by Wheeler, who, slapping the Quaker upon the back, grasped him eagerly by the hand, saying, as he did so:

"Give me your hand, my good friend, for an honest, courageous, conscientious man. You are just the person whose assistance I need."

Wheeler then gave him a detailed account of Eunice, and wound up by removing his curly wig and fierce mus-

taches, in confirmation. The Quaker laughed as heartily at the transformation in Wheeler's visage, as he did but a moment before at the Quaker's chagrin. The two became excellent friends immediately,

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,"

and advised together as to the best point of departure for Eunice.

On returning to the cabin, they found "the Thunderbolt" yet unspent, although most of his hearers had sunk to sleep under the infliction.

The boat soon entered the Ohio. Eunice, for the first time, looked forth upon a land unstained by the curse of slavery. Henceforth, God willing, this land was to be her home—the land where all her childhood and youthful associations had been cast, she had forsaken forever. Bitter were the reflections that she should go there no more—that she should never again see her mother—never mingle again with the companions of her youth. She gazed upon the shore of the Ohio, as it began to rise into bluffs, and at every turn in the river saw some new beauty in the scenery. She remained on the deck until long after the giant shadows of the bluffs lengthened in the twilight, and darkness had begun to mantle the landscape, and then withdrew to her stateroom, there to await the summons of Wheeler, announcing her arrival at the point of debarkation.

She did not sleep. Her heart was too full. The strange scenes through which she had passed had begun an eventful life for her. She felt it to be so. When Wheeler rapped upon her door, a little after midnight, she threw it open at once, seized her bundle, and sallying forth, followed him across the gangway-plank upon the common of Jefferson-

ville. The moon and stars shone brightly, and everything glittered with dew. With a strong puff of the engine the boat wheeled into the river, and left her standing by the side of Wheeler and the Quaker—free. She pressed her hand upon her heart. It beat violently. Her whole frame was convulsed by emotions that she could not control. Seizing Wheeler by the hand, she burst into tears.

"Cheer up, my good girl," said Wheeler, "the time for tears is past. You are free, but not safe. Let us take advantage of the night to find an asylum. Thompson will transport you further from danger and discovery."

The Quaker accompanied them to the door of Thompson's residence, and on turning to leave put a half eagle in the hand of Eunice, which he clasped, and uttering a fervent "God protect thee," hurried back to the town.

Thompson admitted the fugitive and her protector, and on learning her story, advised her immediately to join her old friends Tom, Nan, Zeb, and Henry, at W—.

"Go to-night," said he. "Let not the dawn of morning find you in sight of the Ohio, where you are constantly exposed to the danger of being kidnapped."

An excellent meal was prepared for Eunice by Mrs. Thompson, who also gave her much good advice. She bid a sad farewell to her friend and benefactor, Wheeler, and departed in the same carriage that had conveyed Zeb and his companions to the little interior village of W—.

"Wheeler," said Thompson, as they reëntered the house after the departure of the carriage, "this is a dangerous business in which you are engaged. Do you not sometimes fear detection, arrest, imprisonment or lynching."

"Sometimes, I confess," said Wheeler, removing his wig and whiskers, "I am a little anxious about the result of my expeditions. I've been in a good many tight places with

those southern chaps, but never failed to accomplish my designs. I tell you what, Thompson, I engaged in this business from conscientious motives. I satisfied myself, beforehand, that it was an enterprise which God would approve, and have ever been contented with success as a reward. Nobody pays me for it here; I look to the future for compensation. The rescue of this poor girl from her brutal owner affords me a world of happiness. But for me, she would have been exposed in the market of New Orleans, and sold to pander to the licentiousness of some miserable wretch, who ultimately would have given her over to a life of promiscuous debauchery. Such is the fate of almost every slave who has the misfortune to be born beautiful. Why, then, should I fear danger, when success is so delightful?"

"Do you return?" inquired Thompson.

"Immediately. There is more work on hand than I can accomplish for months. Hold yourself in readiness to assist me. This matter of to-night is an extra—not on my list—and has occupied more time than I intended."

"Stay till morning," urged Thompson; "surely there's no such great hurry."

"I hope to be far on my return before daylight," replied Wheeler; "my business brooks no delay."

Withdrawing to a small bedroom, Wheeler soon divested himself of the clothing he had worn on the boat, and appeared in a suit of plain homespun. No one would have supposed that he was the same individual who had passed for a dandy slaveholder on the boat. Bidding Thompson and his wife good-night, he hastened to the landing, and was soon quietly at rest in his stateroom, on a downward-bound boat.

Near the close of the next day, after a fatiguing journey,

Eunice arrived at the hotel in the village where Zeb and his companions had stopped but a fortnight before. Stepping from the wagon upon the piazza, she was met by our old friend, Nixon, the landlord, who conducted her into the room which answered to the various purposes of a sitting-room and parlor. A cheerful fire of hickory logs was blazing upon the hearth, before which Eunice seated herself, shivering with cold. When sufficiently warmed, she inquired of Nixon after the four colored persons who had arrived at W—a fortnight before. We have already informed the reader that Nixon was a kind-hearted man. He suspected, from the inquiry, that Eunice was the mistress of Zeb and his friends, and had traced them to W—for the purpose of reclaiming and returning them to a state of servitude.

"They did not stay here over-night," he replied, evasively.

"But," rejoined Eunice, "they are in the village, are they not?"

"Indeed, madam," answered Nixon, "I shall have to inquire before I can inform you. If they are here, you shall know to-morrow. I have not seen their friends lately." With these words he left the room, muttering as he passed into the bar-room, "It's so. She's the owner, and on the right scent, and those poor niggers'll have to go back to slavery again, unless I can prevent it. My fine fellow, that I've made agree to go to Liberia, will be taken off, unless he takes himself off. It's too bad, and yet, if I'd got to serve anybody as a slave, I should rather serve a pretty, little black-eyed woman, like her, than any other owner I know of. But I'll send to Collier, and tell him to come up and bring the yaller fellow along. He shan't be took if I can help it. Here, you Fred!" he exclaimed,

addressing his man of all work, "go down to nigger Collier's, and tell him I want to see him and the yaller man, Zeb, I think he calls himself, right away. Tell him I'm afeard the fellow's missus is here after him, and if she is, I want to hide him, so he can't be took, or send him on toward Canada during the night."

The man left to do the errand, and Nixon continued to mutter—"Canada, after all, is the only safe place for a nigger. They can't take him there. He's a free subject. On this side he's always in danger of being nabbed, in spite of the Abolitionists. Nobody has any mercy for him, because he's a nigger, and away he goes back to the South to be sold to some brute of a master, who makes him work without pay, whips him if he don't, sells him away from his family, or may-be, kills him with abuse. It's a hard case for the poor fellows any-way, if they really love freedom, and I s'pose they do. Now I shall jest set my wits to work to see if I can't outwit this little piece of southern aristocracy in the other room, by sending these niggers some fifty miles toward the north star, afore daylight."

In a little while the man returned, accompanied by Collier and Zeb.

"I expect," said Nixon, addressing Zeb, "I expect your young missis is in the parlor."

"God grant it," replied Zeb, turning to go to the parlor, "I would rather see her than any other person on earth."

"But she's after you, boy. She inquired for you," said Nixon.

"Then show me to her, Mass'r Nixon," said Zeb. "She's the best friend I have on earth," and Zeb again moved toward the door that opened in the direction of the parlor.

"Hold on, boy, hold on," said Nixon, "if you really want to enter the lion's mouth, that's another matter. It's

none of my business. I sent for you to give you a turn ahead, but it's no odds. Let them that like slavery have it. Go with me," and he led the way across the hall to the sitting-room, followed close by Zeb and Collier. Throwing open the sitting-room door, he exclaimed,

"Here, madam, here is one of your runaway darkeys, and he seems an honest chap—from his attachment for you I hope you'll forgive him."

Eunice rushed eagerly forward, and before Zeb, in the dim light of the apartment had recognized her, she seized both of his hands in hers, exclaiming,

"Zeb! Zeb! How glad I am to see you. I was never half so happy in my life before."

"Why Eunice," replied Zeb, in a surprised but joyful tone, "is this you? How came you here—where and what after?"

Eunice told her story to Zeb and Collier.

"The providence of God is wonderful indeed," said Collier, when she concluded. "In your case it is clearly shown. But let us leave this hotel. Nixon will be afraid to have you stay here, when he learns that you are nothing but a runaway slave. My little cabin will hold us all while we stay here. Thank God it is for a little while only."

"Not your missis, after all," said the landlord to Zeb, as the party withdrew.

"No, sir," replied Zeb; "a friend."

"And a slave," said Nixon. "I understand it all, my good fellow. She's run away, and I don't blame her. Such as she ought not to be slaves. She's a beauty, boy, and just as good as pretty. Marry her. She'll make anybody a good wife. Take her with you to Liberia. You'll never be sorry. If you have any trouble here let me know. I'll keep the slave-hunters on a wrong track."

"It's a mighty shame," muttered Nixon, as he turned away from the party and reëntered the bar-room, "it's a mighty shame, that such a girl as that should be a slave. We haven't one as pretty or well-behaved in our whole village. She shan't be took, no-how."

Eunice followed Collier to his lowly cabin.

"Here," said he, throwing open the door to the only apartment in the building, "to such a home as it is—and bless God, it is better than I deserve—you are welcome. Poor as it is, it is free and happy."

Eunice entered the hut. The scene that met her eyes was a pleasing one. The room, or area of the building, was neatly whitewashed. Along each end of it, at a sufficient distance from the wall, to accommodate beds, curtains were suspended, and the space between them was occupied for all the purposes of a dwelling. Beside the only table, which stood before the large fireplace, was seated a colored woman, apparently about forty years of age, engaged in sewing. She was very black, with features of the purest African mould. Laying aside her work, she rose as Eunice entered, and bade her welcome, with a good-natured smile. Four children—three girls and a boy—the eldest not a dozen years old, were variously engaged around the room. On the table lay a small and much worn Bible and a Methodist Hymn-Book. The little furniture that the room contained was of the plainest sort, but everything was remarkably neat; and homely as it was, the little apartment wore an aspect of real comfort.

The good woman, whose curiosity was greatly excited to learn the history of her new guest, did not let that interfere with the preparation of a warm supper, composed of the best the house afforded.

"Sit right up to de table, now," said she, "and eat

hearty. I know you mus' be very hungry after your long ride. Ridin' in de cole makes folks hungry. Take some of dis pork—dis new bread, and drink a cup of hot tea. Bress you, it'll put new life into you almos'. And here's some nice perserves, done in de bes' New Orleans Molasses."

Thus invited, Eunice did eat heartily of the substantial food which the kind-hearted woman had prepared for her. She rose from the table refreshed, and as soon as Mrs. Collier cleared away the tea-things, she responded to the invitation to repeat to the good woman the story of her escape, while engaged in which, she was frequently interrupted by such brief expressions of surprise as, "Bress me," "Laws now," and "You don't say," which the listener accompanied by looks and gestures suggestive of great wonderment.

Soon after Eunice had finished her narrative, Henry came in. He was overjoyed to meet her.

"I'm glad you came so soon," said he, "for I shall be off to Canada, to join the army, in a few days."

"I t'inks he's a great fool, to be sure," said Mrs. Collier. "It's jis' jimpin' out of de fryin'-pan into de fire, to go from slavery to de army. I's tried all—I knows how to 'suade him to go wid us tq Libery, where we can all be jis' as good as white-folks."

"Where's Libery?" inquired Eunice, wondering what place the woman referred to.

"Why, bress us," she exclaimed. "Dont'ee know where Libery is? It's way over de 'lantic ocean to Africa, where all colored people goes, as wants to have a country and home of deir own. When dey get dar, dey jis' do as dey's mine to. Dar's no white-folks to meddle—no slavery—no laws 'cept such as de colored people makes for deir own selves."

"Is there such a spot on earth as this you describe?" inquired Eunice.

"Yes dey is, to be sure, Miss Eunice," answered Mrs. Collier, "and me and my husban' and Zeb, is gwine to it. We knows all 'bout it, and 'spect, after we get dar, and gets what dey call 'climated, to lib like white-folks does in dis country."

"It is the true home for people of our color," said Collier, "if we wish to be free. Blacks have built, and inhabit it. They have carried the Gospel there—built up schools, towns, and a government of their own; and at this time they are in a flourishing and happy condition."

"We're all going but Henry," said Zeb, "who is determined to be a soldier, and Tom and Nanny, who have concluded to buy Collier's house, and stay here. Tom is satisfied to make a living as a barber, and Nanny equally so, to pick up sixpences by washing."

"Why can not I go with you to Africa?" inquired Eunice.

"You can," replied Collier. "The agent writes he will send all we can muster."

"Go wid us, Miss Eunice," chimed in Mrs. Collier. "Bress us, we shall be so glad; and have such nice time crossin' de old 'lantic."

Eunice could not find words to reply. Her heart was full. She had received a new idea. Such a country as Liberia, she had only dwelt upon in imagination. It filled her ideal of all that was needed to make a life of freedom happy. It opened to her a door of hope—and she thought and felt that only in that country, could she realize the happiness that should be coincident with a state of civilized liberty. She was all attention to everything that was said upon the subject, and examined with interest the map of Liberia, as Collier explained it.

"Will you go, Eunice?" inquired Zeb, as Collier ran his finger along the extent of coast which formed the western boundary of the colony, as designated upon the map.

"Yes, indeed," she replied. "It shall be my future home, if I can reach it in safety. I have dared something to be free, and if to dare as much more will secure it, I will enjoy real freedom." She spoke with energy and feeling. Her eyes glistened, and the lines about her fine mouth became almost rigid in appearance. "Yes," she continued, after a moment's pause, "time will pass heavily with me until I find myself freighted for the voyage. Life will know little pleasure, till I forsake, forever, the soil, where, at best, I can be only a slave."

CHAPTER XVI.

Like one who draws the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams,
BRYANT.

IN a large chamber of a boarding-house, which stood near the Capitol, in Washington, by the side of a table on which lay several books, and two or three large piles of manuscript, sat a pale, attenuated man. The seal of death was upon his countenance. His eyes glared with the unmistakable luster of pulmonary disease, and his thin, shrunken features, told but too plainly that his malady had reached the verge of a fatal consummation. Yet amid the ravages of disease and care, there was a stamp of true greatness in the countenance, which would not escape the most careless observer. He was clad warmly, with a velvet skull-cap on his head. He was writing—and every few minutes laid a half-sheet of freshly-written manuscript upon the pile before him. A fire glowed in the grate, in front of the table, imparting a warmth to the chamber which would have been oppressive to a man in full health. A few bottles of medicine stood upon the mantle, within reach of the invalid, and his bed, which looked as if he had left it but a few minutes before, was near him, on the side of the table opposite to the grate. He wrote with great rapidity

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and earnestness, pausing but seldom to take thought, or for any other purpose. His handwriting was peculiar—bold, running, covering large surface with few words, but plain and intelligible.

"While thus employed, a rap was given at the door of the chamber, which he failed to observe. Another followed. Pausing, laying down his pen, and casting an anxious and somewhat disturbed glance at the door, he exclaimed, in a low, but clear tone of voice:

"Come in."

A young man entered.

"Ah, my son," said he, "I did not know but I was to be interrupted in my labor, just as I had fairly got at it."

"It would be well, father," replied the son, "if your attention could be diverted from labors so illy suited to your present state of health."

"While I have life, I must toil," was the short, stern reply, and the invalid again addressed himself to his task.

The son, meantime, seated himself beside the grate, took up, and resumed reading a volume which he had left, seemingly, a short time before. The room was hushed in silence. Page after page was written over by the sick man with a rapidity scarcely equaled, and, for more than two hours, no sound broke the stillness of the room. At length, a violent fit of coughing seemed to disturb the train of thought which the writer had been pursuing. He raised his head, and, seeing his son, said in his low, musical voice, "John, I will go to bed now for a little while."

The son assisted him. He placed his head upon the pillow, and, in a few minutes, sank into a calm and undisturbed slumber. Hours rolled on. The son read while the father slept. When he awoke, it was midnight. The son rang the bell, and a female servant appeared.

"Some rice," was the laconic order, and the slave disappeared, returning in a few minutes with a small plate of boiled rice. The sick man sat up in his bed, and swallowed a few mouthfuls.

"My appetite continues to fail," said he. "It is quite evident my end is near." Casting his eyes toward the table, he added, in a voice indicative of concern, "But my work is unfinished. Help me, John, to my seat by the table."

"Father—beloved father!" said John, "'tis more than your friends should ask or you perform. You need repose."

"Aid me, my son," responded the invalid. "My own persecuted, wronged South, shall have the benefit of my labors while I can give them. This is a fearful time for us. None should shrink."

Seated again beside the table, he resumed the work of composition. The pen seemed to move in unison with the thoughts that rushed upon his mind. He seemed a corpse set in motion by galvanic power; so pale, care-worn and emaciated were his features. Occasionally stopping for a moment, he would throw himself back in his chair, push the skullcap back from his forehead, and seize hold of his bushy gray hair, where it grew upon the temple, with his left hand, and pull it violently, as if, by that power, he expected to release the thought which he struggled to express. The sight of one so old, so thin, so near the grave, thus anxiously employed at a time when other men slept, would have been pitiable, but that the observer knew it was a work of patriotism in which the writer was employed, and in that sense few nobler exhibitions of fidelity could have been presented. To think of the difficulty which the mind must encounter in overcoming the ills incident to fatal dis-

ease, and of the determination to remain calm and reflective, to study, think, write, and even to look beyond this to the possibility, the remote chance, of possessing strength enough to read what was thus written before he should finally surrender himself into the arms of death; we say, to think of these things, without associating the individual capable of performing them with our highest conception of true greatness, is impossible.

"Come here, John," said the invalid to his son, "and sit down by the table. I have nearly finished all that I would say, were I in health, upon the subject now before the Senate. I must be heard, if possible, to-morrow. Who had the floor at the time of adjournment?"

"Mr. —," replied John.

"He will give way. I shall go myself, but must obtain the services of Mr. — to read my remarks. They may do no good, but I have hope. They contain, as I believe, the true Southern doctrine. Their recommendations must, in the main, be complied with, or the Union is no longer safe. Will you request Mr. — and Mr. — to call in the morning?"

"I will arrange everything as you desire, father."

"A few days more of strength will enable me to complete my work upon the Constitution, and I shall then die content."

He resumed his labor, and continued to write until after daybreak. Then, slowly raising his head, he gathered up the pile of manuscript, and, carefully arranging it, requested his son to tie it together, in the fashion of legal papers, with a small ribbon. This being done, he glanced slowly over each page, pausing occasionally to make an erasure, dot an i, or otherwise amend the writing.

"I believe it is done," said he, carefully folding it up.

"It is about the last work I shall ever perform for my country. I think it does not contain a sentiment that I would not willingly die to defend. It will survive me and my generation; but, should it fail to produce the effects which I have sought, it will only survive me to mock my memory, and show to after times how much I was the victim of enthusiasm—a painful thought to one who dies with the consciousness of having honestly discharged his duty. John, assist me to bed."

Again the great statesman bent his head to the pillow in calm slumber.

Meantime the son went in pursuit of the senators whom his father had named, leaving him in the care of Samantha, his faithful slave. During the interval of his absence, the invalid awoke, and seeing the slave woman sitting by his bed, he said to her:

"Samantha, my good girl, hand me the drink."

"Yes, mass'r," she replied, handing a bowl containing some mucilaginous liquid.

"Samantha," he resumed after drinking, "you have been very faithful to me during my illness, and I should be glad to reward you. How shall I do it?"

"I's sure, mass'r, I's bery sorry to hab you die; you's allus been good mass'r to me."

"What shall I give you, girl, to remember me by?"

"I's sure mass'r, I doesn't know. Mass'r knows best what's good for a poor slave."

"Choose yourself, Samantha! I wish to give you what you most want."

"Well den, if mass'r will hab me choose, and won't choose hisself, I hope mass'r 'll not get angry at what I's goin' to ax for, but if mass'r please, he may gib me liberty."

"Liberty, girl—liberty! What wicked Abolitionist has

been putting that abominable idea into your head. What would you do with liberty? Where would you go? What would become of you? Surely, Samantha, I am too much your friend to commit so foolish an act."

"I hope mass'r not get mad. 'Twan't no Abolitioner tole me; 't was my own heart. I's longed to be free eber since my ole man 'scaped to de free States. My childern's all sold and gone, and I's left alone. I's gettin' ole, too, and I t'ought if I could once more see my ole man, and lib wid him, 't would make my heart so happy. Dat's all; dat's all. Don't git mad, mass'r."

"Samantha, I'm surprised. Jacob run away more than two years ago, and I supposed you had forgotten him before this time. Little Ike, your last child, went to Mobile last summer, and surely has been gone long enough to occasion you no further care. What would you gain by leaving a good home, where you are well fed and clothed, to hunt up a runaway husband in the free States?"

"O mass'r, I neber forget Jacob or de childern; I love dem cause dey're my own. I cry allus when I t'ink I shall see dem no more."

"Well, well; dry your tears, my good girl. I'll make you a handsome present. I'll do well by you. You shall be just as good as free. You've been very good to me, very, and I'll make it all right."

"T'ank ye, mass'r," said the slave sobbing, "but don't get mad if I say I'd like my liberty best."

"Pooh! pooh! Don't be crazy, girl. I should be cruel to set you free. No, no—I know better how to provide for my slaves. But never mind now; I'll talk with you again. You shall be well rewarded. Go now and get the rice."

"Yes, mass'r," said the slave, and she rose and left the room.

"Washington," thought the sick man, "is too far north for our southern slaves. Who would have supposed that that quiet, faithful girl—the best and kindest of all the female servants I ever owned—would think of liberty? She has never wanted for anything—never been severely dealt with—a pet from her birth with all the household, and yet she wants liberty—wants to hunt that rascally old Jake, that I never could manage, simply because they have been married. Strange! It's sometimes difficult to comprehend the motives by which this class of people are governed."

Samantha here entered with the rice, which brought the reflections of her master to a close, but she, too, had her thoughts, and they ran in this wise:

"Mass'r wonders why I want to be free? why I want to lib wid Jake? why I want to see my childern? 'Taint nuffin very strange, only mass'r don't t'ink I has feelin's like he has. He t'inks I can forget all I eber lub'd jis' as easy as cattle. Mass'r's bery good, but he don't know dat we poor slaves is jis' de same kine ob feelin' as does dat own us. I's sure I t'inks ob my husban' and childerns ebery day and hour. I lubs 'em allus. I neber can forget dem."

John now entered, accompanied by the two senators. Samantha withdrew to pour out her unavailing tears in the scullery. The senators expressed their regret at finding their friend in a condition so hopeless, but made a few commonplace remarks, intended to cheer him, which he answered by a look expressive of the hopelessness with which he regarded his chances of recovery.

"I am able to go to the Senate to day, but will depend upon you, Mr. —, to read my remarks," said he.

"With pleasure," replied the senator thus addressed.

"They are about the last work I shall do," observed the sick man.

"We hope not. We hope, sir, your valuable life may be spared to your country for many years," replied the elder of the two senators.

The great man looked his thanks in a smile of mingled satisfaction and incredulity.

"I have yet," he observed, putting his hand upon a large pile of manuscript, "a portion of this labor to finish. It has given me infinite concern, lest my strength should not hold out to enable me to do it. You know, V—, how industriously I labored upon it, before I came here, and my reasons for bringing it with me. In truth, I left home with a sort of vague presentiment that I should never return to it alive. I spent the three weeks previous to leaving, in settling up my business affairs, so as to leave as little as possible for my executors to do. But here was a labor, that I had been contemplating for years, yet unperformed. It lay by the side of my heart. And now, here it is, very near completion; but I have found so much to do on the great subject before the Senate, that I could give it but little attention. After to-day, I hope to be less occupied with senatorial duties."

"Father," said John, "the carriage waits."

Rising slowly, but with an air of much dignity, the senator, with the assistance of Mr. —, threw a cloak over his shoulders, and putting on his hat and gloves, was helped to descend to the street. It was an unpleasant March morning. The wind blew chilly; and the first gust that struck the senator, threw him into a violent fit of coughing, which continued, with slight intermissions, until some minutes after he had taken his seat in the Senate. An expression of sadness overcast the countenances of all the senators as he entered. Mr. Clay was observed to shade his face with his hand, as if to conceal the agitation of his

feelings. A whisper circulated in the galleries, in which could be heard the expressions: "How pale," "how wan," "consumption," etc. As he took his seat, he raised his head, and putting on his spectacles, looked pleasantly upon those around him, returning, with a smile, such salutations as he recognized. All eyes met his with friendly greeting; and, one by one, a crowd of senators gathered around his chair. Mr. Webster was foremost among those whose intimate relations with the senator admitted of a personal salutation. Some minutes were spent in an exchange of civilities; at the close of which, order being restored, the invalid senator arose, and, in his low, but pleasant voice, thanked the Senate for the opportunity to present his remarks.

Mr. — commenced reading them, and the Senate was hushed in stillness. They were heard with profound attention throughout; but the look of incredulity which sat upon the countenances of many of the northern senators, showed that they must fail to carry the conviction which was sought.

We need not trace the closing labors of the great man's life further. For several days after the reading of this speech, with much difficulty he appeared in his place in the Senate, and, at times, participated in the debate. At length his seat became vacant. Day after day it remained unoccupied. Whispered inquiries were made after his health, and the invariable answer was given, that he could not long survive. The month wore on, and the debate continued, with no prospect of termination. The dying senator, as the threads of life, one after another, were severed, still desired to live long enough to witness the settlement of the great question.

"Our Union," said he to his friend Mr —, after being

informed that the proviso would, in all probability, pass in some form, "Our Union is, in effect, at an end. The North has severed the last link in the chain. The South will never succumb. What is union worth to her people, if they can not enjoy the rights and privileges everywhere, in their country, that they enjoy at home? The Constitution is trampled in the dust. With her surplus products, the South can and must take care of herself, independent of the North; but the North will find this a difficult, if not an impossible undertaking."

The wasting away of life became daily more apparent in the illustrious invalid. His cough increased; his countenance became sunken, seamed, and anxious; and the seal which death imprints upon the victim which he destroys by consumption when he approaches dissolution—the clear, gloomy, glaring eye, the pinched temples, the hollow cheeks, the dry, bloodless lips, glued close to the lustrous teeth—all these were so many unfailing witnesses to the fact that his great life was drawing to its close. He felt it; and was, at no time during his illness, like most consumptive patients, deceived as to his condition. But three days before his death he wrote the last paragraph of his great work, and from that moment betook himself to his bed, to rise no more. It seemed as if he felt that his business with life, and its concerns, was, from that moment, closed. His faithful slave, Samantha, prepared such little things as he needed, but never enjoyed the promised opportunity to converse with him. His son was continually by his bedside. On the evening of the 30th, several senators and representatives called, and found him more than usually vivacious. It was the fire that precedes dissolution. He had much to say about slavery, and still expressed a wish to see an end of the discussion.

Morning broke, but the great man's reason had fled. He was dying. His bedside was surrounded by weeping friends. The sands of life ran low; the respiration grew shorter and shorter; and the vitality forsook the body, like the lingering decay of the spark that survives, for a moment, the taper which is speedily extinguished—at one instant bright with effulgence, then disappearing, and again brightening to sink at once into darkness.

Thus quietly passed away from the abode of the living one of America's distinguished sons. A nation mourned his loss. The South felt that her ablest, truest, and most honest defender was dead. There was gloom in the city when the tidings became known. Both Houses adjourned. Senators withdrew to their rooms. Nothing was heard in the streets or hotels upon the prevailing topic. All felt that a great man had fallen, and the unsolicited homage of silence was paid to his manes.

CHAPTER XVII.

A certain convocation of politic worms.
SHAKSPEARE.

LET us now retrace our steps for the purpose of following the track of the debate on the Omnibus Bill, which, after the speech of the senator whose death we have just recorded, continued to drag its slow length along in the Senate. Southern orators daily poured out the vials of their wrath upon the North, and many northern members, alas! threw their influence into the southern scale. Among others, Mr. Webster had registered his great name with the supporters of slavery. Poor man! He, too, was attracted by the presidential office. He, too, listened to the delusive whisper of hope, and saw only in the solid phalanx of southern votes, the power which could secure to him the darling object of his ambition. Many tears were shed, many curses uttered, and many judgments denounced at the course pursued by this great man. The true friends of the North regarded it as little less than treason, and a deadly stab at northern interests. That one who, in seasons of less peril, had stood by them, and struck the hardest blows at the slave power, should now desert them, and take his position in the foremost rank of their opponents, was regarded by all as a most serious obstacle in the way of liberty.

"What did you think of Webster yesterday?" inquired Mr. Colton, a western representative, of Mr. Williams, a senator from his State.

"His speech, as usual, was great, but his position before the nation is most melancholy. I feel sad when I think that a man of his superlative intellect could sell himself so cheaply. The South will love the treason, but despise the traitor. Webster will never be president, even if he survives to see another presidential term, which I consider doubtful. Did you observe how he tottered while speaking, and with what difficulty he stood out his speech. Poor old man! The world is fast receding from him, and it is most lamentable that, at a time when it is too late to retrieve, he should throw himself away."

"My thoughts precisely," replied Colton; "one could hardly desire to reply to a speech which, of itself, inflicted such deep and damning disgrace upon its author. But what will be its effect upon the measure?"

"In some form, the leading features of the Omnibus will pass, and so they would if Mr. Webster had said nothing. The Proviso will be abandoned, and a dangerous precedent established. With regard to the effect upon the Territories, it can make no difference. They can not be converted into slave States, for the simple reason that a dozen Yankees will settle there to every southerner; and they, you know, will never consent to it. My hope lies in old Zack. He's a slaveholder, but honest and independent—above the influence of bad advisers—and when the measures are presented for his approval, I believe the old man will give them the go-by, if they do not correspond with his ideas of right and duty. I'm half inclined to give him the credit of being of our side."

"His southern supporters would assassinate him if they

thought so, but if he is, he don't intend we shall know it until the time arrives for him to act."

"The Proviso is our sheet-anchor in such a storm as this. If we go down, let it be with our Union Jack flying. There will be a rally afterward that will resuscitate our party, and invest it with power to arrest all further encroachments from slavery."

"The South will then learn what 'tis to carry a measure to the 'bitter end.' This morbid sympathy for slaveholders will either die out or be changed to hate. Indeed, I think that the passage of the bill is the best thing that can happen for our cause. It can never pass at a time when it will do less harm, and it can never pass again. I dislike most the fugitive clause, but then such a monstrous provision can never be enforced."

"There's too little independence among our northern doughfaces not to give it a practical obedience."

"And the judiciary?"

"Will be as truculent and submissive as whipped spaniels. Here, read this sermon as an example of the position which a portion of the Church will occupy. It was preached but two Sabbaths ago by a noted controversial *D.D.*, in one of our most enterprising northern cities. See if doughfaceism is likely to become extinct. Old Dan would be compelled to yield the palm of obsequiousness to this reverend apologist for slavery. It is a labor not easy of accomplishment to indoctrinate the North with our peculiar sentiments upon this subject. The great majority of the people honestly believe that the perpetuity of the Union depends upon the adoption of the concessions provided by the Omnibus. They advocate them from no love of slavery, but from a belief that they contain the very essence of patriotism. There are demagogues enough to favor the

idea, and so Freesoilism has, in fact, become a reproach and a by-word. We shall be laughed at abroad, contemned, and held up to ridicule, until the North feels the foot of the giant on her free neck. Then beware! Woe! to the institution when that time comes. Its doom will be certain and speedy. There will be no more compromises then—no more provisos—no half-way legislation. Such men, as now lead, will then have no place in our national councils. And where's the danger? Who will then think that the South will dare to recede from the Union? Who will be deterred from performing his duty by any such threat? Don't you see they can do nothing? We will hem them in on every side, control our own affairs, elect no congressmen who will vote for a subservient speaker—no president who will appoint a slaveholding cabinet, or permit the majority of officeholders to be appointed among slaveholders. Then, we shall have no packed committees in either House, and the legislation in the Capitol will be a different thing from what it now is. Then, there will be no doubt about the principles we support in the persons of our candidates—no more than there now is in the South. Such a time is coming, Colton—and when it comes, we shall not see such a spectacle as that," pointing to a gang of chained negroes that were passing, "in the capital of our country. My God! How I wish we could all see this thing alike, and feel this disgrace as I now feel it. To-morrow, perhaps, those poor creatures will be sold at auction to be taken to the far South. We are parties to the damnable transaction. It is here, in our district—in the capital of the freest country on earth, and under the glorious banner of the stars and stripes that it occurs."

The gentlemen entered the hotel together, before which they had been standing during the foregoing conversation.

The office was filled with people discussing the great effort of the day.

"There," said Winstead to Tidbald, as they entered, "there comes Williams. He looks uneasy—troubled. He must see that there is small chance for Freesoilism here. Old Dan has taken the conceit all out of him—and yet, Williams is not the man to give up or recede. He'll die hard, and fight like a giant. That slender young man with him has made something of a figure in your house, by his course on the slavery question. They're evidently annoyed to-day. I saw old Gid, and Seward, and Chase, and four or five others of the same kidney, as I passed by Gid's room, a few minutes ago. Poor fellows! They'll never know what hurt 'em. Can you see now who are your friends, Tid?"

"Did you observe how Webster's speech affected Calhoun?" inquired Tidbald.

"I know," replied Winstead, "and it seemed strange that he should find so much in it to carp at, but Calhoun was never the man to be entirely satisfied with anything. I called upon him last evening. He was very feeble, but in excellent spirits, and laughed and talked for some time. He said he had never supposed it possible for Mr. Webster to be so liberal. A better day," said he, "is dawning upon the South, when such men come to the rescue. It bodes good to our institutions. I, Mr. Winstead, shall not live to see it—you may. If the North support Mr. Webster, which I sincerely hope, our institutions are safe. He has struck a blow for us which will tell with wonderful effect. I asked him," continued Winstead, "if he thought the South would be willing to support Webster for president. He hesitated some time before answering, and finally said he thought not, for the reason that they would not readily

forget old nullification times, the great battle with Hayne, and the support he gave to President Jackson's proclamation. We were humbled then, Mr. Winstead," said he, "by the might of Webster's mind. He was our strongest enemy. He had the whole North, the President, and all, on his shoulders, and he fought as never man fought before. I think his efforts of those days are the finest specimens of purely intellectual oratory that the world affords. No. The South, however much she may admire such a man, and however strong the obligations she may feel under to him, will never stultify herself so much as to support him for president. But Calhoun is dying. He will not survive to the end of the session, though mentally alive to every motion in the debate. His whole soul is in it, but his body is rapidly decaying."

Winstead was here interrupted by a loud shout and a clapping of hands, which were caused by the appearance of Mr. Webster, who had just entered the office from the street. The great man raised his hat so as to expose the full contour of his remarkable forehead, and, in a slow and even tone of voice, observed,

"I thank you, gentlemen, for this expression of your good-will toward me."

He then pursued his way through the office amid another shouting and clapping, to which he bowed his thanks, and disappeared through the doorway leading to the stairs.

"It's a proud moment for the old man—one of the proudest of his life," said Tidbald.

"I think so," replied Winstead, "I thought I could see, when he finished speaking yesterday, an expression of great satisfaction upon his careworn countenance. He thinks, and not without reason, that his speech of yesterday, beside being one of his strongest efforts, will prove to

be one of the most beneficial and effective in its consequences."

"He thinks," said Tidbald, "that it was a successful bid for Southern votes for the presidency, and therein will find himself mistaken."

It is well understood among those politicians who are familiar with the debate upon the Omnibus Bill, that fears were entertained, by all its friends, of its failure, up to the time that Mr. Webster spoke. That speech seemed to dissipate all doubt upon the subject. Indeed, it was not until after that that the debate waxed warm, and that there seemed, by the number and strength of the speeches in support of the measure, to be a determination both North and South, to make it a law. That speech opened the way for private consultation between northern and southern members, healed differences, restored confidence, and removed thereby the obstacles in the way of an earlier adjustment during the session. The real fight in the Senate was at an end, and the occurrences in the House which took place afterward, grew out of the fidelity of a few Free-soilers.

A conversation of a different character to the one we have just narrated, was, at the same time, in progress in one of the chambers of the hotel. There were met Seward, Chase, Giddings, Hale, and several other leading opposers of the compromise.

"If you are ready, Seward," said Giddings, "you can not go ahead too soon. This speech of Webster's is producing a most pernicious effect upon the masses here, and uncontradicted, it will injure our cause more in the North, tenfold, than any other event of the session."

"I shall obtain the floor on the 11th," said Senator Seward, turning over the leaves of his manuscript, "and I

should be glad now to understand how far you expect to go in opposition to Webster."

"The full length—the full length of course," replied Chase. "He has sold the North, and we must protest. It is too late to purchase peace on any middle ground. No more slave territory, must henceforth be our watchword. We must admit California free, and incorporate the Proviso in the Territorial Bill."

"But what shall we reply to his professed understanding of the obligation of Congress, to admit four new slave States to be formed in the State of Texas," inquired Seward.

"Admit, of course, that these States may come in as free or slave, according to their choice, after they are formed, but deny that they can be formed without the consent of Congress. That is the fact," answered Chase. "The language of the law is clear. Besides, we have ever denied the constitutionality of annexing Texas, and it must be our strong ground of opposition to the four slave States. The bargain was too iniquitous to be ratified."

"That is precisely the view I have taken of the subject," replied Seward; "but I have rather slid by the subject, for the reason that I do not wish to crowd too many issues into the debate. There is another point in which I think Mr. Webster has exposed himself to a most successful assault."

"What is that?" inquired Giddings.

"Proposing to devote eighty millions of dollars to remove the free colored population of the slave States."

"The surest way in the world to strengthen slavery," replied Hale. "It was humiliating to hear a grave, able statesman, the foremost mind in the nation, pretending to believe that such a measure was dictated by considerations of a national character. It shows the hollowness of the whole thing, so far as Webster is concerned."

"It won't do," said Seward, "to assail him, to make charges, or to cause outsiders to suspect that we believe him to be mercenary and selfish. He is much too great a man to fall before any such assault. The people of the North will reason for themselves. Time will show them his position. We can only reply. And I should rather make what I have to say a sort of text for those of you who follow, than a direct response to anything that has been said. Mr. Davis told me, not an hour ago, that he intended to speak soon, and gave me a partial outline of his speech. He makes no direct allusion to anything that Webster has said, but examines and exposes some of his fallacies, in very scathing argument. We shall not succeed, of course. The Fugitive law will pass—California will be admitted free—and the Proviso will not be embodied in the Territorial Bill. I am fearful that the slave trade in the District will not be prohibited. But we shall, after all, strike a great blow for freedom, and pave the way to a mighty battle, as well as a successful one, hereafter. We can not be too cautious. The intimidations of the South we must reason down, and their threats we must treat with the contempt they deserve. The North must be made to understand that the Union is in no danger, and that the South could bring no speedier ruin upon herself, than to execute the threat to secede. We must look after our own people, when such an institution as Daniel Webster takes sides with slavery. Danger is very near our doors. There is work to do at home, sentiments to correct, opinions to popularize. I like Old Bullion's notions. He says the Omnibus is a bundle of incongruities, and wants to try one thing at a time."

The company, summoned by the sounding of the gong, broke up and descended to the dining-room.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When we will tempt the frailty of our powers,
Presuming on their changeful potency.
SHAKESPEARE.

ON entering the House of Representatives, after dinner, on the day alluded to in the preceding chapter, Tidbald, among other letters lying upon his table, found one from his nephew, Frank Thornton, giving an account of the proceedings instituted by Garnet against the Roland estate. He was thunderstruck at the intelligence, and lost no time in writing the following reply.

"HOUSE OF REP'S., WASHINGTON, March 8, 1850.

"DEAR FRANK:—I am astounded by the intelligence concerning the Roland estate. I was not aware that it owed a dollar in the world. As you state the facts, I can see no way to avoid the sacrifice of the estate, to pay the note. Tell Miss Adela to keep up good spirits. I will render her every assistance in my power, and the case may not prove so desperate as it seems. If all else fails, we will try to effect a compromise with the plaintiff (compromises are fashionable now-a-days), and save something for her. I am very sorry for her, Frank, but you must not let this calamity make any difference with your calculations. I have enough for you both, whatever be the fate of the Roland property.

"We are getting on swimmingly with our measures, and shall have matters as nearly our own way as could be expected. Write often.

"Yours, ever,

GEORGE TIDBALD."

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"There," thought he, as he folded and superscribed the letter, "Frank will be delighted with the latter part, I know. The fellow is so deeply in love, it would be a pity to cross him—and why need I care if Adela be poor, as long as I have enough. It will give me a comfortable home, and place them above want."

Depositing the letter in the postoffice box, Tidbald left the Capitol and walked up the avenue. He had not proceeded far, when a heavy hand was placed familiarly upon his shoulder, and a pair of searching black eyes were gazing steadily into his own, as they turned up to meet them.

"Why Ed, how are you," said Tidbald, grasping the man's extended hand, and shaking it cordially, "What storm or wind brought you to Washington?"

"I arrived last night," replied the man.

"Was it business or pleasure, pray, that brought you here?"

"That's what I'd be glad to tell you Tid, if I were not afraid. There is glorious work on foot for the South. If we succeed, we'll not trouble you Congressmen to legislate much more for the South."

"I understand you Westville," said Tidbald, in a serious tone. "You are one of the Cuban invaders."

"Don't guess again, but listen, and be prudent. There is an expedition planned, with Gen. Lopez at its head, that is nearly ready to sail. The Creole population of the island is pledged to join him, the moment he makes a successful landing. He will take possession, and look to his friends in the South, now numbering hundreds of thousands, for assistance and support. I would like to see these Northern chaps prevent us from making Cuba a slave State."

"But what are you doing in this matter, Ed?"

"As yet, nothing. We are a kind of *corps de reserve*, to go when we are called. Our associations are in full operation, everywhere throughout the Southern States. At least one hundred thousand are ready to join the army of invasion to-morrow, should Lopez effect a safe landing. There are many, whom you would not suspect, in the secret—general officers, and others high in authority. It's a bold stroke, but if the North refuses us the new territories, we must keep up our representative strength in some other way. The annexation of Cuba will give us, immediately, two more senators, and eight or ten representatives."

"I like your plans," said Tidbald, "if you have pluck enough to carry them out. But it's a great undertaking. You'll break the neutrality laws, and provoke government opposition. Old Zack will fly into a passion the moment he hears of it. His proclamation will be followed up by ordering an armament to the Gulf—and you will be clever fellows, if you evade it. The North will be active in opposition. I fear you have not counted all your difficulties."

"Every risk has been subjected to mathematical calculation," replied Westville, "and you could no more stop us than the wind. Our councils are full of enthusiasm, and our members are the best blood of the South."

"And you will have the best wishes for your success, of every true Southerner in the nation," said Tidbald.

"You shall hear Tid, if you will join us. I can then tell you facts, that will surprise you."

"I've no objection, Westville, not the least in the world, if your members are all true. But exposure, you know, would affect me more sensibly than a man less before the public."

"Come with me, Tidbald," said Westville, taking him familiarly by the arm, "there's no danger whatever. There

are men linked with us, who would suffer an hundredfold more than you, by exposure."

Westville led the way, and after a walk of a few rods along the avenue, turned into a narrow passage or archway formed between two large brick buildings, and which terminated at a distance of a hundred feet from the entrance in a door, which he unlocked with a night-key, and followed by Tidbald, entered. After ascending two flights of stairs, Westville whispered his name, and some password, into the ear of a man, through a small wicket in the door, and with Tidbald, was admitted into a small chamber. Here an oath of secrecy was administered to Tidbald, and he was admitted into the council-chamber of the order of the "Defenders of Southern Rights." What was his surprise to find there some fourteen or fifteen members of Congress from the Southern States—several clerks in the various departments of the government, and three or four very intimate friends and advisers of the President. These persons were mingled in an audience of more than two hundred persons, who were delegates from cities and towns in the Southern States. The object of their organization was declared to be the invasion and annexation of Cuba, and any other country adjacent, south or west, that could be converted into slave territory, to the United States. At this particular time, they did not contemplate any immediate action. The expedition of Gen. Lopez had been planned, and they were to await the result of that for instructions how to act. If that proved successful, they were to aid it immediately by sending a large army to Cuba; if unsuccessful, they were to preserve secrecy, and make a more vigorous attack at some later period. The assemblage at the national capital was a kind of grand body of instruction to adopt uniform ceremonies, oaths, passwords, grips, and

by-laws. Tidbald was warmly greeted upon his entrance by many old friends.

"We shall beat our congressmen," said one, as he shook him by the hand, "on the extension question. You see, Tidbald, Southern blood is up. Union or no Union, we will have our political rights, just as they were given to us, and find room somewhere for our own institutions. This game is a severe one; but if the North will oppose us, this is the only remedy. We have too much at stake to submit; and if we fail in one direction, we'll traverse in another, until we subjugate the whole of Mexico and Central America, sooner than yield."

"We're having things our own way in Congress," said Tidbald. "It's necessary to complain, or we should get nothing. The greatest men in the North are with us. There is little doubt that every provision of the Omnibus will pass. That will form an entering wedge to mightier achievements. But we can not do too much now. This Cuban movement is well timed, to invite serious consideration in Congress. It will alarm the timid leaders in the North, and aid the compromise in both Houses."

"That's our grand object just now," replied the person addressed. "Indeed, *inter nos*, we do not regard this expedition of Lopez with any hope. It is too small an affair—will prove ruinous to those immediately engaged; but it may be the means of exposing the true state of public feeling in Cuba. That understood, we shall know how to act. We have an agent at Havana who keeps us advised of the course of events there. If we fasten Cuba, we shall have less care about the Western territories. It is the key to the Gulf. Hayti will follow in good time; and when our Northern friends seek Canada as a balance to Cuba, we'll counterbalance by bringing in Jamaica, Barbadoes, and as

many other islands as possible. The obstacles in our way are not very formidable. Government will move slow against us, while public opinion will move fast in all directions. We want our congressmen to talk manifest destiny, for the purpose of conciliating a portion of the North. It will enable us to purchase many of the men, who give a tone to society there, with a half-made promise of office. A Northern man will sell his country, and his last meal, for an appointment. We can be rich in promises, and buy a majority even for the invasion and admission of Cuba. We can talk of the grandeur of such a scheme, and make the pothouse politicians of the North run over with eloquence in its behalf; and that is what must be done. Before a decisive blow is struck, we ought to know exactly what to depend upon in the North."

"So far as that depends upon our exertions in Congress, you shall, of course," replied Tidbald. "But the question is not one of management entirely. It must be made to appear somewhat in the light of a retaliatory proceeding; and then if we fail to get Cuba, we will be sure of the Territories. 'A half a loaf is better than no bread.'"

The meeting was now called to order, and the ceremonial exercises were exemplified and adopted. Committees of Vigilance and Correspondence were appointed for every important city, and every congressional district in the Southern States. Our friend Tidbald, not a little against his inclination, found himself occupying an important post on one of the State Committees. Promising a compliance with all the duties that might be expected of him, he withdrew from the Association, at a late hour, with the feeling uppermost in his mind, that the plans which were laid for the extension of slavery could not fail to effect their object."

"We shall have," said he to Westville, who accompanied him, "if all these plans are realized, a fine market for our slaves for at least a century longer, and we may breed them as fast as possible."

"Exactly," replied Westville; "and we shall have the finest sugar and coffee country in the world. It will give us the monopoly in the three great staples in the English market—an achievement hardly second, in point of importance, to our greatly augmented political power."

"The bars were let down," rejoined Tidbald, "when Texas was annexed. The North can't complain. They helped to establish the precedent; and, when it works so much to our advantage, I do not see why we should not adopt it."

CHAPTER XIX.

So well he wooed her, and so well he wrought her
With fair entreaty and sweet blandishment,
That, at the length, unto a bay he brought her,
So that she to his speeches was content
To lend an ear and softly to relent.

SPENSER.

WHEN Frank Thornton received his uncle's letter, he went immediately to Ash Grove to communicate to Adela so much of its contents as referred to the proceedings commenced against her estate. He found her in high spirits.

"Sit down," said she, "Mr. Thornton, and, before you tell me a word about business, let me narrate what I have heard this afternoon. I love, above all things, every few days, to visit my servants, and make them little presents. They are so grateful for these little attentions, that I never bestow them without feeling more than compensated. I have an old servant, who, for several years, has been unable to do much work. She is very infirm. Two of her children, women grown, and five grandchildren, live in the same hut with her, and which, from an occupancy of more than forty years, she has learned, and with some reason, to call her own. She is a worthy, pious old body, and, from my birth, has thought a great deal of me. Aunt Rose, as we call her, expects a visit from me, at least once a week, and I am gen-

erally prompt in making one; but a fortnight slipped away since I had last seen her, when I called this afternoon.

"'Lor' sakes alive,' said she as I entered, 'why, missus, I t'ought you was neber comin' to see ole aunty any more; 'tis so long ago.'

"'Well, aunty,' I replied, 'I've been so busy, that the fortnight has gone without my knowledge.'

"'Bress your young heart, missus,' said she, 'you won't t'ink a fortnight is much, when you gets as ole as I be. It 'pears like 'twan't but leetle while since you was little baby, and I was ole woman den.'

"'Yes,' said I, 'aunty, you remember the Revolution, and all about it, don't you?'

"'Guess I does, Miss Ade,' she replied, 'I 'members when the Britishers come down to my ole mass'r's plantation on Congaree. Us niggers was bery 'fraid like. I was little then, not much bigger dan dat littlest grandchild; but missus sent me into de cotton-field to drive out some pigs. While I was gwine I heard a great clashin' and trampin' in de field, and, fust, I t'ought 'twar some more pigs. While I was ruminatin' where to find 'em, a big soger man come ridin' right arter me, and I t'ought he wanted to cotech me, and I run faster'n I eber run afore to de house. 'Run, you little black imp,' he holler'd; and he spurred up his hoss arter me, but I got t'rough de fence and into de house afore him. I tole missus how there was great many sogers out thar. Mass'r was out wid Marion's men; and so missus she went out and 'vited the sogers in. Dey drunk wine, eat all de cooked vittels in de house, and took 'way wid 'em all de pervisions in de cellar. Missus was tarin' mad, but she looked good-natured all de while, and by'n by de sogers goes off. Den missus goes out to de barn, and finds my

fader. He was 'fraid de Britishers would take him 'way wid 'em, so he hid hisself in de hay. Missus tole him: 'Now, Sam,' said she, 'go right down, fas' as your legs can carry you, to your mass'r, in de Tumerac swamp, and tell him what de Britishers has done.' So fader went, and found ole mass'r, and Marion started to head 'em; and, jes' 'bout sundown, de next day, 'long comes Gen. Marion, ole mass'r, and some fifty more. Dey had tuk more'n half de Britishers dat robbed de house de percedin' day. Dey tied 'em, and kep' 'em all night; and, de nex' day, tuck 'em to Charleston, where dey staid till the war was ober. Oh! but dey was orful mad, when dey foun' dey'd got to sleep wid dere han's tied behin' 'em, and have nuffin to eat in de bargain. And, so about midnight, one on 'em, who was layin' close by de door, rolled over like; and, arter workin' little, got his han's untied, and den he begin to untie de nex' one. I was layin' on a little bench, and seed it, and I t'ought I mus' tell mass'r, and so I make b'lieve cry. Mass'r was layin' on 'noder bench. He come to me, and cotech hole my hair. 'Rose,' said he, 'you little debbil, be still, and don't cry 'noder bref.'

"'Mass'r,' said I, in low whisper, and he seed I look kind of curious, and put his ear down close to my mouf. 'Mass'r,' I said, 'dat Britisher as lays by de door's got his han's ontied, and has been ontyin' 'noder.'

"Den mass'r gin a big oath, and called up a couple of Marion's men, and dey tied de Britishers tighter than eber, but dey didn't lay down any more. Mass'r gib me hand-some shawl and bonnet, 'cause I tole him, and missus had a silk frock made ober for me, and I was berry gran'-like; but de soger man, de nex' mornin', afore he went away, looked drefful spiteful-like at me, and said, 'If't hadn't been for you, you black imp of darkness, we would hab

been loose las' night. I should like to tap your claret for you, afore I go.'

"I jes' looked at him, kind of sassy-like, and tole him how I hated de Britishers, and loved de free people; and dey all larfed, and went off.'"

"I tell you this story, Mr. Thornton," continued Adela, "as a specimen of the stories I always hear when I visit Aunty Rose. She remembers everything, and always puts me in good humor with myself, and everybody around me. Indeed, I derive more real satisfaction in an hour from her conversation, than in any other society I know of. And then she is such a conscientious, grateful old creature. I should not know how to part with her—indeed, I should not. But you must excuse me, I am now ready to listen to business."

Frank informed her of the purport of Tidbald's letter.

"Tell him, when you write," said she, "that I indulge in no fears. The certainty of losing the estate to-morrow, would not keep me awake to-night. I am resigned to everything but the fate which, I fear, awaits my poor people. Would to God that I could make them free, and then Mr. Ewbank might take the property now."

"With a mind thus contented, you are prepared for any fate," said Frank. "But I have strong hopes that the suit may prove less serious than we anticipate. To me, it is a painful theme to dwell upon. Let me change it to one which, I hope, Miss Roland takes more delight in. Have you thought of the proposition I made you on my last visit?"

"Seriously, and, I hope, unselfishly," replied Adela. "Why do you ask? Surely it must be a blind passion that leads you to propose marriage to one so poor, as I

shall be, when deprived of this estate. You are also poor. Have you thought that we could feed upon love?"

"No, Adela," Frank answered, encouraged by her manner to drop the appellative form of address, for one more endearing, "No, Adela! Nor do I fear that we shall suffer from any such cause. I can replace the fortune you may lose, by hard labor and study. And I assure you I shall spare no pains to do so, if, for no other reason, than as a sort of counterbalance for the real satisfaction I have experienced ever since I learned that you were likely to lose your entire estate. To that knowledge I owe the assurance, which has enabled me to declare my affection for you; and it therefore imposes upon me the obligation to repair any fortune you may lose, whenever you are mine."

"I suppose you think," said Adela, laughing, "that I ought to be very much obliged to you for the pleasures my calamities afford you?"

"Indeed I do not," he answered, "nor do I think the feeling a very amiable one, but I could not control it. You well know the reason, Adela. You know your power to make me happy. Why delay longer to confirm my hopes. Let me learn from your lips to-night, that I am not rejected."

"And if I should confess to all that you wish, what guaranty have I that it will not be thrown away?" inquired Adela. "It behooves our sex to be careful of too hasty compliance with the behests of yours. Men are said not to know themselves when they first begin to love. May not that be your condition, Mr. Thornton?"

"On my soul, no!" answered Frank, impetuously; "Adela! dearest Adela! I bring to you a heart wholly unsophisticated, and a nature which scorns deceit. Can you think that I would trifle? Believe me, Adela, when I

repeat that I seek a mutuality of feeling, for the first outpourings of affection."

"I do believe you, Frank, and henceforth it shall be my study to deserve your love," rejoined Adela, offering her hand to her lover, "you shall fill my thoughts and impart happiness to my existence that it has hitherto been stranger to. Yes, I will love you—love you dearly, Frank—love you as a woman may. We will be all-in-all to each other. The gloom of the future shall be dispelled by the anticipated happiness of a union of heart and thought, which can welcome poverty and all its attendant evils, without blenching. The clouds shall break away before the clear sunlight of our love, and we will smile when calamity overtakes us, and regard it as the harbinger of better and sweeter days, of richer and purer joys, of holier and happier thoughts. Are you now answered?"

Frank rose from his chair, and, seizing the willing hand of Adela, imprinted a kiss upon her lips as a seal to the contract into which she had so fully entered. "You have made me," said he, "inexpressibly happy."

Oh, ye! who have experienced the bliss of first and requited affection, imagine the happiness of this youthful pair. First love enters but once into the heart. It is a bliss that knows no repetition in the same bosom, a possession which is never lost but once, a spot forever green in the memory, and delightful, even down to the latest moment of existence, to dwell upon. In life it has no parallel enjoyment. It is the starting point of true manhood, the monitor from which man learns the true object of his being, and the sentiment under whose benign influence he fulfills it.

The remainder of the conversation between Thornton and Adela, partaking of the sudden change which the

mutual avowal of affection had wrought in their feelings, was quite too tender to weave into this history. Let it suffice the reader to know that, with the lovers, the evening wore away with unwonted rapidity, and when, at length, Frank arose to depart, the village clock had tolled the first small hour of the morning. At the gate he found Captain Jake.

"Mass'r Thornton, allow me to attend him home," said the old negro.

"Why so, Jake?" demanded Frank, "I have no fears. It's a pleasant night."

"Morning, you mean, Mass'r Frank," answered Jake in humorous tone, "I have reasons," he continued, "for desiring to accompany you. If no harm comes, surely my going will do no harm; but should you meet with difficulty, I have a strong arm to defend you, and I must do that now."

"You're a deep one, captain," rejoined Frank, laughing, "but I can't imagine that any danger awaits me. However, come along. I accept your offer since you insist."

They walked on in silence till they descended into a deep ravine, about midway between Ash Grove and the town. The night was very dark. While passing through the ravine, Thornton felt his arms suddenly seized by some one from behind, who, before he could turn to see who it was, was torn from him by Captain Jake, and thrown, with some violence, over the small bridge that spanned the creek at the bottom of the ravine.

"Who was it?" captain, inquired Thornton, as Jake resumed his place by his side.

"I know, but can't tell you yet," answered Jake. "You see, Mass'r Frank, you would have had serious trouble but for me. Be careful how you go out alone, or unarmed, after nightfall. You have enemies that you don't know."

Miss Adela has other suitors that she never encouraged, who are jealous of you. They will watch for an opportunity to put you out of the way."

"Jake," said Frank, "in all probability you have saved my life. I will remember the service, and if it is ever in my power, return the favor. You are a good man Captain Jake, and deserve a better fate than that which seems to have fallen to your lot."

"Mass'r Thornton is very kind," replied the old man, "but I was born a slave, and expect to end my days in bondage. I had hoped to spend them in the service of my dear young missis, but now that she is going to lose her property, I know not what hands I may fall into; probably some brutal master who will soon wear out what little service there is left in this old body. I care but little. A poor negro slave can have small choice between life and death. He fulfills his destiny a little sooner in the hands of a hard master than in the hands of a humane one, and enters upon a rest—the rest which death brings to all weary souls, before old age has made him a burden to those whose business it is to take care of him. I have seen so much of change in the lives of others, that I feel quite indifferent as to what awaits me personally, for those who have been kind to me, like my dear Miss Adela, I have a sort of dread of the sorrow and care which threatens them, that is entirely separate from any care I have concerning myself."

"You are an unselfish, noble old man, Jake, and shall not be parted from your young mistress, if it can be avoided," said Thornton. "My uncle hopes to beat the old rascal that has commenced these proceedings, and save Miss Roland's property."

"Ah, Mass'r Thornton," said Jake, "he can't do it.

There's too many at work against her. Miss Adela has powerful enemies, and the estate is just as good as gone."

"Who is at work against her beside Garnet and Ewbank?" inquired Thornton.

"One that has ten times the malignity of either of them," replied Jake, "you will know soon enough. It can do you no good now. You can not help or avoid it. The same persons who hate her are trying to plot your ruin. Only be careful, and go prepared for any more encounters like this, from which you have escaped."

They had now reached Tidbald's office. Seizing Jake by the hand, Frank repeated his thanks and promises for the service he had rendered him, and bidding him good-night, entered the office.

"Poor slave!" he exclaimed, as he closed and locked the door. "How melancholy to reflect, that such as he—men of capacious soul, fine judgment, far-seeing sagacity, and excellent sense, should be doomed to dole out existence in servitude. Had Jake been educated, who can tell what he might not have been. He has all the characteristics of a great man. He would have been a man of mark the world over. And now, in his old age, with the burden of nearly threescore years upon him, the poor man looks forward upon a life of increasing toil and affliction. As the most unhappy event, the bitterest calamity of his life, he contemplates the probable separation from his kind and indulgent mistress. Oh, what a misfortune to be a slave! But my good old friend shall at least be spared this last sorrow, if I can help it."

Frank ceased soliloquizing, and sitting down by the round table in the center of the room, cast his eyes upon the ample library, which filled one side of it, and gazed a long time in silence. His reverie was one of those periods

of desultory thought, which, though frequent, and even common with all men of reflection, bid defiance to all attempts at literal description. Ambition and affection both mingled in the imagery which his fancy painted upon the future, and he saw in that picture, himself the happy husband of Adela, eminent in his profession, favored by social position, rank and fortune. No thought of the toil by which such a condition was attainable entered his mind, but from the point where he prefigured so much happiness and success, his busy fancy began to speculate upon the innumerable blessings which should follow. Oh what a beautiful castle was that which he had built! How exquisite was the delight he experienced in unfolding its imagined splendors! Alas! that so much of life as he had crowded into the picture, should never be realized! Alas, that the mind is so framed as to make itself the victim of disappointments, flowing from an imagined creation! But Thornton was young, ambitious, and in love. Was it surprising that he should indulge in these day dreams of bliss, or that his overheated fancy, should tinge with roseate hues that future, which for him embosomed only happiness. Long, long did he remain in his seat, indulging in the sweet ecstasy which his fancy had produced, and which increased in power, like a wizard's spell, the longer it was unbroken.

Many such visions find their way into the minds of the young and fortunate. They produce impressions which time can never efface, and often serve when after life has brought with it, its full quota of care and wretchedness, as sad contrasts to the actual of being. The unreal world ceases to lure with its attractions when the realities of life crowd around us, and we feel their pertinacious and unappeasable demands. But of these Frank had never tasted.

They formed no part of the ingredients of the cup of which he was now tasting. He was happy! oh, how happy! in mere anticipation. He felt as if the world could never contain any wretchedness for him. This beautiful world—now more beautiful than ever, because he had peopled it with so many delights, was bathed in unmixed sunlight.

Turning at length to the table, his eyes fell unconsciously upon the pens and paper lying there, and which, of themselves, seemed to invite him to write.

"My uncle!" he exclaimed, as he took up a pen and dipped it in the inkstand. "My uncle; he is cold, selfish, unappreciative. He will be pleased to learn of my engagement, but I can not surely tell him of my feelings. To whom, then, shall I write?" After a moment's pause he continued: "Yes, it shall be to him. I will write a cold, plain, sensible letter, merely telling him the fact in a business way." And the following was the letter:

"T—, March 20, 1850.

"Congratulate me, dear uncle, I am the most fortunate of beings! Adela has consented to be mine. My hand is yet warm with the pressure of hers, my lips yet moist with the first kiss of requited affection. The music of her voice, breathing forth the confession that tenderness would no longer permit her to conceal, is whispering in my ear. The glow, that bathed my temples as I listened, still suffuses my countenance, and that feeling of inexpressible delight that accompanied it, still palpitates my overcharged heart. I am indeed happy, most happy; happier than words can express, or than any language, I can employ, will begin to describe. You will think me foolish, the victim of a fantasy, but I tell you, dear uncle, mine is no trifle's love. I have reflected deeply to comprehend the source of that happiness which I now experience, and which has imparted such an inexpressible glow to my whole nature. It is intuitive, borrowing nothing from reflection, nothing from mere thought. It lies deeper, beyond the reach or comprehension even

of him who possesses it, and who becomes all unconsciously its slave. Adela has changed since her confession. She was dear before, but now she is indispensable to my happiness. She fills my entire thought. All other thoughts seem tame, when compared with those which she inspires, and I forsake them to return to her, and to bathe in that sea of happiness which stretches far away into the future of my existence.

"When I reflect that she has promised to be mine, and that I shall hold such a treasure in possession, I care but little for that which you, in your practical way, would call the real of life. I feel that I could face and brave all with her, and for her, and that no amount of mere suffering could subdue or even cool the ardor of my love, or dispel the delightful episode that has broken in upon my life. But I know—my own heart tells me that it is but an episode, that time will bring a change, that, alas! such luxury of enjoyment can not last forever. 'Tis well, perhaps, that 'tis so, for without some relief to such an overwrought tension of feeling, the surcharged heart would break with joy."

The letter contained a brief narrative of the circumstances of the attack upon him, and his rescue by Captain Jake. Frank read it over and over, and finally concluded that it was sufficiently cool and tame in its expressions for the perusal of such an unimaginative person as his Uncle Tidbald.

"He will judge," said he, "that I am taking the matter philosophically—investigating as I progress, and understanding exactly the ground I stand upon. He will not think I am so ardent as he gave me credit for, and will like me all the better for my moderation. Possibly he will advise me to take another glance at my thoughts, and see if I really love Adela. At all events, these are the thoughts which I wish to inspire him with, and if my letter fails to do so, I shall give up my skill as a tactician, in the knowledge and management of my fellow-man."

It was now near daylight, and Frank still lingered.

"Well," said he, "I'm quite too happy to retire. I'll make a night on't," and so he sunk back in his chair, and again surrendered himself to the pleasing visions which had so thoroughly enwrapped his thoughts.

Different from these were the feelings of Henry Westover, as he crept slowly up the bank of the creek into which Captain Jake had so unceremoniously thrown him. Wet, chilly, bruised, he traced his steps homeward, smarting alike from the sting of disappointment, and the injuries he had received in his fall.

"The villain," said he, "grasped me like a vice. I was a mere child in his hands. And then 'twas done so quickly, with so little noise, and I, all the while, supposing Thornton was alone. Who could he be? How came he with Thornton at such an hour? I'll find out. He shall not escape me. As for Thornton, there will be other opportunities. He shall be thwarted, and Adela Roland shall not refuse me without atonement. There are modes of revenge that they dream not of, which I can control, and I will do it. She shall be mine—mine, body and soul—mine to mold at will and pleasure—mine for life—my own! No earthly power shall prevent it! As for the beggar who has thrust himself between us, he shall be disposed of by some one who is his equal in life and prospects. I have a plan to inveigle him into difficulty from which he can not, on any honorable principles, extricate himself without exposing his life. Ha! ha! I have it all. 'Tis fortunate I was foiled to-night. It has saved me trouble. The deed shall be accomplished in a smoother way, by means in consonance with our beautiful state of public opinion, which brands, as a coward, the man who shuns the duel. Thornton shall have an *honorable* fate, or hold his life by a poltroon's tenure. Poor fool! thus to thrust himself

into the jaws of the lion, when he might make a figure in the world."

With these thoughts rapidly pursuing each other through his mind, Henry Westover entered his chamber, and divesting himself of his wet clothing, and donning a morning-gown, he sat down to his writing-table and wrote the following letter :

WOODSIDE —, March —, 1851.

"H. EWBANK, ESQ.

"*Dear Sir* :—Your claim against the Roland estate is in suit, and the whole estate, negroes and all, is under injunction. With your consent, and as your agent in the matter, I shall have the suit pushed to as speedy a consummation as possible. The buildings and fixtures are in a dilapidated condition, and daily depreciating in value. Roland's daughter is sole heiress, and she manages miserably. There are as many as twenty worn-out wenches belonging to the estate, which she pampers and indulges, as if they were children. Under present management, I think the whole estate would be wasted; and as there is barely enough of it, in the best condition it can be put in, to satisfy your demand, I think you will approve my haste in the commencement of the suit, and advise its speedy prosecution.

Yours truly,

"HENRY WESTOVER."

"That letter," said he, after reading it over, "will make the old fellow hasten matters; and I shall soon have the satisfaction of seeing Adela Roland in a condition where she can not reject me. She shall then know what 'tis to assume a haughtiness and pride which do not belong to her, nor any of her race."

Sealing and directing the letter, without removing any of the clothing he had put on a few minutes before, he stretched himself upon his bed, and was soon lost in an uneasy slumber.

CHAPTER XX.

I part with thee
As wretches, that are doubtful of hereafter,
Part with their lives, unwilling, loth, and fearful,
And trembling at futurity.

Rowe.

THE day fixed for the departure of our colored friends from W—— was near at hand. They were to take ship at New York. Everything was in a state of preparation, and Zeb and Eunice were very happy in the anticipation of soon being free. But, in the meantime, Zeb had been quietly communing with his own heart, and, somehow, had convinced himself, that it would be exceedingly proper for him and Eunice to unite their fortunes by marriage. It seemed to him that it would render the long voyage much more agreeable; and that, when he was far out upon the deep waters, and the waves were dashing around him, he could find, in the society of a wife, something that would divide his attention with the less interesting incidents of the trip, and dispel the fears which otherwise would take possession of his mind. Zeb reasoned that it would be a sensible arrangement, and, indeed, he began imperceptibly to understand, that his happiness was involved in it; but how to communicate his wishes to Eunice, was a source of great perplexity.

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We should belie the susceptibilities of Eunice, not to admit, that, from a cause equally inexplicable, she had also been strangely affected in her feelings toward Zeb. Neither knew the thoughts of the other. Neither supposed that the other loved; and, in this kind of ignorance, the surprise was mutual when they understood each other. "Where there's a will there's a way." Three evenings before their departure, Zeb and Eunice took a walk together; and, when they returned, it was understood and arranged that they should be married the next evening, which, in legal parlance, "was accordingly done;" and the happiness it brought to the parties was quite as pure and heartfelt as if they had passed through a thousand of the most fiery ordeals of true lovers to obtain it.

The day of their departure arrived. It was a delightful spring morning. A couple of wagons contained the earthly gear of the three families, beside affording room for themselves. In these conveyances they were to travel to the nearest railroad depot, a distance of forty miles, where they intended to take the cars for New York. Their departure was not an uninteresting spectacle. Whither were they going? What crime had they committed, for which they should leave the land of their birth, to seek an asylum beneath the tropical sun of western Africa? What great gain would they derive, by exchanging for a climate so pestilential, the free, pure air of America? Alas! they were not white. Providence had made them of a dark complexion, and they must flee to avoid the consequences. They were going in pursuit of a freedom which, they knew, they could not enjoy here. They were fleeing from prejudice, from wrong, from civil persecution, from unequal laws. They were in search of a home, where they could indulge the feelings and aspirations common to humanity

with hope, and enjoy the reward of well-directed effort without fear.

Few regrets were uttered at their departure by any of the villagers. They were only negroes, and the village was well rid of them. This was almost the unanimous sentiment. Their passage through the town excited but little observation. Nixon, the landlord, hailed them, as they passed, long enough to say good-by. Tom, Nan and Henry watched them, until they were lost in a turn of the road, while ascending the hill, on the north side of the village—on the summit of which Collier paused a few minutes, to take a last look at the place of his birth. Every object within the range of his vision was associated with some incident in his life that was now vivid in his memory. There stood the humble cottage in which he had lived from childhood; there meandered the brook, along whose marge he had passed many of the happiest days of urchinhood. Nor did he at this moment forget, that, when a boy, he did not suffer from the cruel prejudice which now drove him thousands of miles away.

"Oh," said he, "Zeb! you don't know how hard it is for me to bid farewell to the only spot on earth I have ever known as home. How well I should love to live and die here, God alone, who sees my heart, can tell. How dear every object is to me (more dear than ever, since I must leave all), Heaven knows. But I must not give way to this moment. It is what I have most dreaded in the whole journey—this tearing away from this spot. I have loved this home always—and notwithstanding I have experienced distress here, often felt broken and humbled in spirit, and threatened year by year to seek some more congenial abode, yet now that the moment of separation has really come, it seems like breaking my heartstrings to go. Hasten on;

these feelings must not unman me, or shake my resolution."

The wagons rolled over the top of the hill, and the little village sank upon his sight forever. "Thank God," said he, "I have seen it for the last time. One more such view would have won me from my purpose."

All day long the teams were on the road to the station, which they reached at dusk. It was the work of a few minutes to remove the trunks and pay the drivers. An hour passed, and the train whirled into the stationhouse—a very common occurrence to those who daily saw it arrive and depart, but a perfect phenomenon in the eyes of the young negroes.

"Golly, Bill," said little Tim Collier to Bill Jackson, "but dat's some hoss, aint he. What kind o' animal is he? He'd beat squire Tyler's big Bull, all holler, and dat's purty smart. Dey's good deal thunder and lightnin' 'bout him."

"Dat's de locomoter," replied Bill. "He snorts like he wor alive, and squeals like old York's Jin. Gorrry! what a load he's brung. See dem git out wunst."

Before this conversation was ended, the trunks of our party were thrust into the baggage-car, the bell was rung, and the conductor shouted, "All aboard," and "go ahead," in the same breath. The negroes were scarcely in the cars, before they were in motion.

"Here, you niggers," shouted the conductor from the rear end of the car in which they were seated, "come this way. We have a car on purpose for you in the rear. You can't occupy this one."

"We pay as much as those who do occupy it," replied Zeb, why should we be denied the privilege?"

"It's agin the rules," answered the conductor. "You must come to the rear, or leave at the first station."

With much jarring, staggering and difficulty, in the course of which they received some hearty curses from the passengers, our friends made their way through three well-filled cars, into one that was low, narrow, finished with leather, with small, high windows, and hard uncomfortable seats.

"You can have this car all to yourselves," said the conductor, "and now I'll take your fare."

This being paid, the party settled themselves back in their seats, and, for the first time since they came on board the train, began to realize the rapidity with which they were traveling. Trees, fences, farm-houses, and telegraph-poles, flew by them like the wind; and the continual grinding of the wheels beneath them made them feel, every moment, as if the bottom of the car would be torn from under their feet.

"Bress us," exclaimed Mrs. Collier, "Dis is what I call bery great bolocity. Isn't we in some danger of bein' broke down, Jim?"

"I guess not," said Collier; "but the cars beat my calculations. If we should break down, it would be but once."

The boys clung, with both hands, to their respective parents, expecting, every moment, that some part of the wonderful apparatus, in which they found themselves encased, would give way.

Zeb and Eunice sat upon one seat, their hands clasped, and their countenances expressive of great happiness.

And now, reader mine, what shall be the fate of this little band of fugitives! Who does not desire to see them comfortably settled in the far distant land whither they are hastening? They have cast their all upon a venture, and shall it fail? They have difficulties such as they never before encountered, dangers unlike any they have before known, griefs heavier than have yet visited them. Who

can penetrate these perils, and tell us what shall be their fate? Patience, dear reader! We will bespeak your company on our journey, promising that, henceforth, it will enter upon new scenes, and introduce a greater variety of characters. The illustration we have undertaken has a charm for us in the truth we are endeavoring to infuse into the minds of our readers, but for which, we should, long ago, have abandoned it.

Brightly shone the sun, burnishing, with golden beams, the magnificent bay of New York, on the morning of the day when the good ship Ashmun sailed for Liberia. Nature seemed to smile upon the enterprise; and when the agent, accompanied by ninety of that despised race, whose condition we are endeavoring to illustrate, ascended to the deck of the vessel, he felt, not less than they, that the work in which he was engaged was favored of Heaven: and, now, behold them assembled on the deck of the Ashmun. There stood the man of middle age, with his family of sons and daughters clustered around him, their countenances betraying all the alternations of expression between anxiety and hope, that the occasion was calculated to inspire. Close by him stood the young man, who yet had not known the cares of family, but whose face beamed with intelligence, and whose eye was fired by ambition. The one sought in Liberia a home; the other, fame and fortune. Behind them stood a widow, with an only child. Her features were wrinkled with care. She was going to Liberia: she knew not why. Above her peered the strong African face of one who had just escaped from servitude. Poor fellow! he was going to Africa alone, compelled to leave in bondage the wife and children that he loved.

"Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home."

A group of young persons of both sexes, who had been emancipated upon the condition that they would go, stood a little to the right of him, and still beyond them, on the outside of the group, were several families, among which were those of our friends Collier and Jackson. Outside of all stood our handsome young adventurers, Zeb and Eunice. Their arms were closely interlocked, and they seemed the least affected by passing scenes, and the most absorbed in each other of any couple on board.

The man of God—that devoted agent—addressed them in a few plain, sensible remarks, reminding them of the importance of the undertaking in which they had engaged, and the necessity for prosecuting it in a right spirit.

"It is said by the enemies of Liberia and of you," he remarked, "that you have not the capacity for self-government, and that colonization is a chimera. My friends, the refutation of this dangerous slander rests with you. Your whole nature, your pride as men, your ambition, your energy, all are concerned in giving it the lie. Go to Liberia, and aid in doing it. You will find the means there. God has blessed that land with a climate which favors the culture of the richest productions on earth. He has watered it with large rivers, wooded it with beautiful forests, and garnished it with mountains, rocks, and dells. The spirit of his blessed Gospel has been breathed there, and Anglo-Saxon manners and Anglo-Saxon progress have been planted there through the agency of those who have gone there before you. In Liberia you will be free. There you can choose for yourselves, and choose with the hope of success in any department of life."

A brief prayer was now uttered. The ceremony of leave-taking was soon over. The ship swung from her moorings, and, with every sail set to catch the favoring breeze, glided

swiftly down the bay. The passengers remained upon deck, watching with intense interest the fading of the landscape, which they were never again to behold, and awaiting the moment when they should bid their native land good night. And there was sentiment and sorrow mingled with that watchfulness which now found beating hearts and tearful eyes to attest its sincerity. The pang of a final separation from the home where our infancy was nurtured and our manhood developed, who can describe save he who has felt it? The poor negro does not think less of the land of his birth because it has been to him a land of slavery, however sensibly he may feel the injustice of his servitude. He does not care less on that account for the associations of his childhood, nor is the image of the past less vividly imprinted upon his memory. The skies are not darker, nor the air less pure because he has been a bondman. He loves them all, and feels as deeply the pain of separation from them as his brother man who tyrannizes over him. Many a pent-up sigh was heaved by these sad observers of the receding shore, when the land mingled with the horizon, and sea and sky bounded the scope of their vision.

They were upon the waters. Weeks, months were to roll over them before they could again tread the solid earth. Storms and shipwreck might intervene, pestilence might overtake them, and they might indeed, go down in the unruffled bosom of the ocean, and leave no soul to tell of the calamity. Who would mourn for them? These thoughts found place in the minds of some, and a solemn and devout feeling, inspired by the consciousness of their lone and helpless condition, for the first few days of the voyage, seemed to hold them spellbound. The weather was delightful. The good ship, favored by gentle breezes, glided silently but swiftly on her course, and her graceful undu-

lations produced emotions of pleasure in all the passengers. What a contrast this to another ship which left the coast of Africa on the same day for our happy shores! That, too, was freighted with negroes—not intelligent, civilized men, but the rude, barbarous natives of Congo. They had been stolen from their homes, separated from all they loved, sold to men more barbarous than themselves, and by them crowded into the stalls of the middle passage, there to breathe for months the pestiferous air of the slave-ship. The one cargo was going from slavery to find a home of freedom in a barbarous land—the other coming from freedom to be sold into slavery in a land of civilization. How sad are the reflections suggested by such a spectacle! Bless God! they are not wholly unrelieved by pleasing considerations. When we reflect that this very nefarious system of slavery may prove the agency through which God will fulfill the glorious prophecy, that “Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto” him—and that every shipload of blacks we may land upon the coast of Liberia will add so much to the amount of civilized and religious effort, which is engaged in the great work of African redemption, we can find even in the horrible slave trade itself—the greatest crime that stains the annals of humanity—some features that we can contemplate with satisfaction. But, beloved reader, consider that even now, while you are perusing this history, hundreds and thousands of your fellow-beings are suffering all the cruelties, tortures, and torments of this abominable traffic. Reflect how much of affliction it has brought upon the devoted race against which it is directed. Contemplate upon the families it has desolated, the hopes it has crushed, the nations it has overthrown, the wrongs it has inflicted, and the murders which, in cold blood, it has committed. Oh! could you see enumerated in long and bloody array its

catalogue of enormities, you could not remain insensible to our obligations to the negro, nor turn a deaf ear to the appeal for aid, how faint soever in its utterance from the depths of his slavery, he addresses to us.

Trusting our friends to the gales with which they may be favored, let us return for a moment to W——, and look after the fortunes of Tom, Nanny, and Henry. Tom had resisted all the arguments which Zeb could suggest to persuade him to accompany them to Africa, upon the ground that it was wrong—the surrender of a right which every colored person in the country, for the ultimate good of the race, should maintain. He contended, in his own way, that America was as much his home as his master's; that slavery, being wrong in its inception, might suspend, through force, his rights, but could never destroy them by principle. He believed that colonization stood in the way of freedom, and bought Collier's cottage, and rented a small building in town in which he opened a barber shop. The unplastered walls of this little room he decorated with old caravan papers, and some interesting lithographs of the Washington family, General Jackson, and a very fat, rosy-faced female, who seemed to rejoice in the name of Rose. Two or three chairs, a bench, a sink, a small round table, a stove, a shaving apparatus, consisting of four or five old razors, a few cakes of Windsor soap, a bottle of home-made cologne, a pair of shears, hair-brushes, etc., completed the furniture of his shop, and comprehended his entire capital in trade. On the door of the building Tom had nailed a small tin sign, on which appeared, in plain gilt letters, "Barber Shop," and rising diagonally into the air, from the side of the door to which it was fastened, was one of those anomalous sticks called barber-poles, very neatly entwisted with stripes of white and red, and capped with a large gilt ball.

Below the sign we have described, was one of less external pretension, which had upon it the single word "Washing." This was Nanny's part of the business. And these were the arrangements they had made for acquiring money. Simple enough, surely, and entirely unassuming. But Tom had entered upon the work with a determination to succeed, and he felt happy. Everything that he did pleased him. He was delighted with the internal arrangements of his shop, and surveyed them with great satisfaction. For some time he was in the habit of directing the attention of his young customers to the fat figure of his lithograph Rose, and asking them if they would not like such a beautiful creetcher for a wife?

Tom contrived to avoid all ill-natured remark by minding his own business. Slavery had performed its perfect work upon him. The spirit of a man, if he ever possessed it, had been crushed within him, and he always met his white neighbors in a subdued, cringing manner. It was not in his power to rise above the business he had chosen, and therefore he judged rightly that Liberia was not the proper place for him. He thought he could stay at W——, make a scanty living, and win the reputation of being an honest, clever negro.

Nanny could do more than Tom. She was needed for a hundred purposes. She could wash, nurse, cook, and perform the duties of a waiter generally, and, in this way, she could add to the earnings of the family. Beyond the business they had thus entered upon, Tom and Nanny never looked. Their gains, whatever they might be, would be spent as needed, and neither calculated upon amassing any more property than they both possessed.

Henry bid farewell to Tom and Nanny the morning after the departure of Zeb, and started on foot for Canada,

with the determination, upon his arrival, to join the army.

And thus, in little more than a month after their arrival at W——, our colored friends were scattered far and wide over the earth. Each had been left to his own choice of a pursuit, and had followed it. We shall keep an eye to their progress and inform our readers which among them has made the wisest choice. Our opinion is, however, and such also we fancy to be the reader's, that our friend Zeb, who is now crossing the Atlantic, will, sooner or later, furnish in his career, the most satisfactory characteristics of true manhood.

CHAPTER XXI.

Oh what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive!
SCOTT.

THE next Tuesday after the convention of the "Defenders of Southern Rights," Tidbald was called upon, at his rooms in —— Hotel, by Westville, who said he had called to inform him that the plans for the invasion of Cuba were rapidly maturing.

"There are," said he, "at least twenty thousand men ready for immediate service, and a goodly portion of them are already gathering at New Orleans. A large number will leave Cincinnati on the sixth, and Louisville on the ninth, under pretense of going to California. Lopez fully understands the sentiments of the Creoles, and the rising will be immense. I have just heard that Quitman and Twiggs are willing to lead in the expedition, if they can get an army large enough."

"All of which," replied Tidbald, "I am rejoiced to learn; but you don't seem to have been apprised that the President has sent an armed squadron to the Gulf to prevent the expedition from landing."

"A mere feint, I assure you. Old Zack winks at the whole thing, but just at this time, while the North is ply-

ing him so hard on the Proviso, he don't wish it to appear that he favors us."

"I can't think so, Ed. General Taylor is too independent for any of us. I've tried him on the Compromise, and feel perfectly certain that the old man values his integrity more than his negroes. He will sanction no law that does not conform to his special message."

"There are some of the cabinet aware of our proceedings."

"I should be sorry to think so. I do not believe that any member would approve of them. The feeling is different, even among southern men, than I supposed. Our great project for the convention at Nashville, meets with little support from the southern press. I begin to fear, despite all our efforts, that our own State will falter. You recollect Calhoun's letter. I supposed our public men in Mississippi would act immediately, after reading it. There is no doubt that our State is more deeply interested than any other; no doubt, as Mr. Calhoun said, that the call should be made there, but our people are lethargic. I received a letter from Jackson last night, stating that the Legislature took but little interest in the subject, and there was no excitement anywhere in the State. Foote has acted badly; and I really begin to fear that the whole thing will prove a sham. If that fails, and the expedition fails, we shall have made poor headway this Session."

"But it won't fail—it shan't fail, Tid. I tell you, we'll have the Queen of the Antilles in the Union in less than a year. The expedition will be ready to sail early in May."

While this conversation was transpiring between Tibbald and Westville, one of a very different character was in progress at the President's room in the White House.

Honest, plain-hearted Zachary Taylor, sat there sur-

rounded by the distinguished men he had appointed to take charge of the several departments of the Government. There was Meredith, and Clayton, and Preston, and Crawford, and Collamer, and our own Tom Ewing.

"Gentlemen," said the President, "I have learned but little about forms, but this Cuban business must be stopped. It gives me much greater concern than the other question. I have sent a few vessels to the Gulf, and one armed steamer; and I am prepared, if necessary, to order out land forces at all the southern ports."

"You are sensitive, General," replied Ewing. "For my part, I believe the best way to end the excitement would be to let the rascals effect a landing. Cuba is under arms, from Cape Antonio to Point de Maysi, and will give them a warm reception. It is only in some such way that they will find out the falsity of the reports about Creole disaffection. The dungeons of the Moro and the garrote will be more effectual than our interference."

"I'm satisfied," said the President, "that this expedition is the offspring of southern rashness and folly. Mr. Preston and Mr. Crawford both understand that the South has, for some years, been desirous of involving the country in a war with Spain. It was hoped by all leading southern politicians, that Spain would espouse the cause of Mexico in the late contest. It has a deeper origin than is apparent, and this Lopez is a mere tool. If he should succeed in effecting a landing, and be afterward joined by any considerable number of Creoles, the South would be in arms at once, and we could not prevent them from sending an army of invasion to Cuba. We must nip it in the bud, gentlemen. There's not a doubt of it."

"As a southern man," said Crawford, "I should not object to the acquisition; but I think, with the President,

the expedition should be arrested now. We have no conception of its extent. Measures must be stringent and active."

"What more than we have done can we do?" inquired Ewing. "The harbor of Havana is already closed to our passenger steamers, and the Captain-General has declared the city in a state of siege."

"Why not send a confidential agent to each of our southern ports, and be ready, at a moment's warning, to rally a strong army in the South?" said the President.

"That'll do," replied Ewing. "It will be peaceable enough, and we may obtain more reliable information in that way than any other."

And the recommendation was agreed to by the cabinet. They then took up other subjects, the consideration of which detained them in session nearly all day.

In the evening Tidbald called upon the President. General Taylor was alone in his room, and met him with great cordiality. They conversed freely upon a great variety of topics.

"I hope," said the President, "that Congress will purchase Mount Vernon. It seems strange that there should be any doubt about the propriety or expediency of the measure. It is the tomb of the Father of his country—a reason sufficient to justify a much larger expenditure than is involved in its purchase. We erect monuments, deliver addresses, celebrate anniversaries; all of which is well enough—proper—right; but, in the scale of patriotism, these observances appear to me to be secondary to such an act as the purchase of the beloved home and burial-place of Washington, to save it from passing into stranger hands, and from desecration. I have had my feelings deeply wounded, when passing through the old family residence, at the dilapidations that are going on unchecked, and for

want of means in the owner to arrest them. In a few years the building will be past repair, and then we shall be ashamed to exhibit the home of our great chief. It will cease to be a shrine of American patriotism."

"I shall aid the measure, Mr. President," said Tidbald, "with all the energy I am capable of; but you seem to fear it will fail!"

"I confess it," replied the President; "I am afraid that Congress will not think it of sufficient importance to give the subject full consideration. There is still another subject upon which I have been addressed, about which I feel deep concern, and that is, the expedition now being fitted out by Mr. Grinnell, at New York, to go in search of Sir John Franklin. I understand that Mr. Grinnell will petition Congress, that some of our naval officers and seamen may be ordered on this expedition. I hope the petition will be responded to favorably. What a glory it would shed upon our country, should the expedition succeed in finding the lost navigator!"

"The expedition was certainly conceived in benevolence," replied Tidbald, "and I should think the least Congress could do, would be to grant the prayer of such a petition."

"Is it your opinion," inquired the President, "that Sir John is still living?"

"Indeed, that is a most difficult question to answer," replied Tidbald; "I have had various opinions. Sometimes it seems as though he might be; and then, when I think of the search that has been made—of the inclemencies of the polar climate—of the long period that has elapsed since he sailed, it don't seem possible that he will ever be found alive."

"And yet," rejoined the President, "how often is it the

case, that men escape from as tight quarters as any in the frozen ocean. What a noble wife he has—one of the most admirable women of modern times!"

"What is the latest Cuban intelligence, Mr. President?" inquired Tidbald, changing the conversation.

"I see by the *Intelligencer* of to-day, that troops are supposed to be gathering at New Orleans. I suspect our madcaps in Mississippi have made up their minds that Cuba must be annexed. You are in a condition to know something of their movements. This office of President prevents me from becoming acquainted with these outside movements."

"You have sent vessels to the Gulf?"

"As the Chief Magistrate of the nation, how could I do otherwise? Of course, I must set my face against this enterprise. The neutrality laws must be respected, but I am not the less aware, that the acquisition of Cuba would work the salvation of the power for which the South is now contending in Congress."

"It would give us an immense advantage, general."

"Of course—I understand that—and I am not unmindful of the general benefit it would prove to the South. We could send any surplus slave population we might have, there. We should have an illimitable territory for the production of sugar and coffee. It would nail slavery beyond the power of removal."

"Even so, general, and, as a southern man, I should think that, while you would not fail to discharge your duty as Chief Magistrate, you would also consider how many, and what portion of your fellow-citizens, are deeply concerned in the success of the expedition."

"I shall, and that I may be able to do so understandingly, I will thank you, or any other person who knows, to tell me how extensive the expedition will be."

"My information, as to immediate measures, is limited. The expedition is, however, in a fair way to succeed. Quitman has joined, and is under pledge to go with a large body of troops in the event of a successful landing. The intention, I am told, is to sail early in May."

"I suppose the Nashville Convention will be attended by a large delegation?"

"Not if the present state of affairs in the South is an indication. There is not as much feeling on the subject as I expected."

"Mississippi will take a prominent stand."

"I suppose so; but not so decisive as we hoped for."

Two or three members now entered the room, and Tidbald arose and left, no wiser than when he came. President Taylor, on the other hand, as soon as he was at leisure, sent for Mr. Clayton, and communicated to him the intelligence he had received from Tidbald.

"Our confidential agents," said he, "may not prevent the sailing of the expedition, but they can give us information in time to prevent it from becoming very formidable in its character."

Tidbald sought his friend Westville, when he left the White House.

"The President," said he to him, "secretly favors the expedition. I think, from the conversation I have held with him during the past half hour, that he is with the South in everything, even the Compromise."

"I've never doubted it," said Westville. "Old Zack is as true southern grit as you'll find anywhere."

The two men walked up the avenue to a saloon, which they entered, and which was a frequent resort for members who indulged the habit of drinking. Here they found Winstead.

"Well, Tid," inquired he, "what's the prospect in the House?"

"We are doing well enough. Greeley says, 'Look to the Senate.' Will the Omnibus carry?" responded Tidbald.

"No-sir-ee," answered Winstead; "it will be split up and acted on by piecemeal. They'll begin with the payment to Texas, pass that, modify the territorial part, admit the territories, pass the fugitive law, and admit California. We've got it cut and dried. Old Harry begins to shake in his boots already."

"Winstead, you ought to be prepared with a new bill."

"Webster sees farther than you. He told me, in debate to-day, that in case California was admitted, I would be, and so I am, Tid, and no detriment to the South, neither. I'm afraid of the President. He's"—

"He's all right—all right," interposed Tidbald. "I know it. I've talked with him."

"Nevertheless," replied Winstead, in a serious tone, "I'm fearful the old man has a crook you don't comprehend. There's something ominous—almost sinister—in his reserve, and he has a way of committing those with whom he converses, that shows him to be a man profoundly skilled in human nature. Are you quite sure you got any pledges out of him. I have yet to see the first man who has succeeded in doing so. Think over your conversation with him."

"Tidbald gave but a moment to the task of recalling his conversation with the President, to comprehend the force of Winstead's remarks.

"Thunder!" he exclaimed, "it did not strike me so before. I didn't see it in that way; but, as you say, Old Zack has never committed himself to me."

"Have you to him?" inquired Winstead.

Tidbald now remembered that he had been communicative on the Cuban matter, and inwardly cursed his imprudence, but, save by a certain seriousness of expression which he put on after Winstead asked the question, that gentleman could not discover that he had divulged any secrets to the President.

"I have accomplished a point to-day," said Winstead, "by a little management, with two or three of our northern men, which will be of good service when the Omnibus comes up for a vote. I can't tell you who, of course, but they will go with me. Seward and Chase have played the fool by assuming a sincerity that they have not felt. Seward will not soon get over his "higher law" promulgations. He receives cuts every day, as direct as that of old John C's, when he told Foote that he would not shake hands with him. That was a hard one."

"Yes; and the only thing to be regretted is, that the old fellow did not live to see the end of it. He would have fought inch by inch. Whole platoons of such men as Seward and Chase would have been crushed by him."

"Don't believe it, Tid. Seward, as an adroit, skilful tactician, has few equals, and no superiors, in either House. He knows where he stands, better than any other member of the Freesoil faction. He works, plans, speaks, by method. He has had an eye upon the Executive from the first, and will make fewer mistakes in the game than any other man, of equal ability, who is playing for it. He sees it at a great distance, and approaches it by slow marches. He is willing to bide his time. Chase is equally unscrupulous, and less politic. He fails to enjoy, to any considerable extent, the confidence of his friends. He is double-dealing, has been a member of all parties, and has the confidence of none. He is a good thinker, a strong

debater, and will make a figure always, but he lacks influence. But either of these men would stand up manfully in debate against Calhoun, and acquit himself with eminence."

"Take an old whisky?" asked Tidbald.

"Yes. Make it of hot water—boiling. These dishwater punches are not the thing for this infernal climate. I'm going to make a late call upon Cass. The old fellow really regards all your southern blood and thunder operations about dissolving the Union as pure gospel. I talked with him a few minutes to-day, and he drew down his face a third longer than usual, and, in a very solemn tone of voice, remarked: "These are very critical times, Mr. Winstead—very." I saw he was really in earnest, and now I am going to put freesoil at him good and strong, and alarm his fears as much as possible."

"Talk the Nicholson doctrine," replied Tidbald, "that remarkable letter that failed to make him president."

"Tid, you are really a malicious fellow. Cass meant by that letter to do you fellows all the good he could."

"No doubt. Ha! ha! and he meant we should make him president in return for it."

"Do you treat all your northern friends as coolly as you have treated him?"

"We mete as we are meted unto, Winstead, as you will learn when your time comes."

"My turn? I have no aspirations. What mean you by my turn?"

"Devil trust you. All this side preaching has its object."

"Your position on committee will make or break you some day. You understand that? Play shrewdly, Winstead. You hold the trumps to win."

Bless your simplicity, Tid. Who put such an idea in your head?"

"Observation—a source through which I obtain all the information I have concerning you northern chaps. But don't feign, Winstead. I see the whole thing. You can depend on me for one vote, any-how, if you consummate the object you have undertaken."

"Really, I must not remain to listen. I'll report you for bribery, Tid. My patriotism is impugned."

"Not a jot. Not a jot. It's in no more danger than Cass's was with the Nicholson letter, or than Clay's was with Texas annexation. It's an ordeal all ambitious men must pass through. Old Webster, great as he is, is trying to play the same game now; and, oh! how illy it befits his mighty intellect. Old Scott tried to do it in his controversy with Marcy. Yet who will say they lack patriotism?"

"Excuse me, Tidbald," said Winstead, rising to go, "for bidding you good-night. You've touched a delicate chord, and I must not listen to its vibrations. We will talk some other time. I must call upon the 'great Michigander,' as Jack Hale calls him."

"Good-night and pleasant dreams, Winstead."

Winstead walked hastily up the street, his mind filled with the idea which Tidbald had ingeniously introduced. "It was never mentioned by mortal before," thought he; "and what, when I have watched it with more than a miser's care, should have caused Tidbald to suspect it is a mystery. Has any one else read my thoughts with equal accuracy? and shall I ever attain the position? It's a great eminence—a wonderful step for any man to reach; and I must reach it soon, or never. My elevation must grow out of this territorial trouble. I must find and seize the opportunity there, or lose it forever. The prospect almost makes my

brain reel as I gaze upon it. I must make sure of the South, for that will be the only political unit in the country when the question comes up. Freesoil, whiggery, and democracy will divide the North; and the democrat will get the largest slice there. California must come in without the proviso, and, ultimately, the old Missouri compromise must be broken down, to let in a portion of territory that can not remain free. There'll be an excuse for me with the North, as it is generally understood that I am, by marriage, a slaveholder. They can pardon, on the score of self-interest, such acts in me as they would never forget in another."

By this time, he arrived at and entered the lodgings of General Cass.

"I called late, general," said he, "hoping to find you alone. You speak again, soon."

"Doubtful. I think not. The discussion lacks nothing that I could supply, except to express my fears for the result."

"It wears a gloomy aspect, general."

"Yes. If we swerve from the Compromise, there will be a virtual end to the government. The Freesoilers either don't see it, or they don't care. We must fall back upon the compromises of the constitution now, and carry the only measure that will defeat the one-idea politicians in their designs. This freesoil movement in the North is more dangerous than any political enterprise ever before set on foot in this government; and why, in view of such positive and unequivocal testimony of the course which the South will pursue, such an enterprise should be persisted in, I can not tell. It is demagogical, dishonest, and unpatriotic. It is also unwise. Nothing can be gained by persisting in it."

"I perceive Michigan has repudiated the proviso."

"Nobly, Mr. Winstead, nobly. Ohio, on the other hand,

has tried to see how refractory she could be. The northern legislatures should all speak, if for no other reason than to keep their senators and representatives in good heart."

"Have you any fears respecting the president?"

"I have studied him to little purpose. I don't pretend to judge. He does not intend any one shall understand his position fully."

In the course of the conversation, Winstead contrived to make the general understand that he thought the safety of the Union depended upon carrying out the doctrines of the Nicholson letter, "for which," said he, "general, and for your manly stand in its support, you lost your election. This discussion would have terminated long ago, if those engaged in it were as well acquainted with General Taylor's position, as the world has been with yours."

"Even so," responded the general, complacently; "and hence the necessity that, on all these leading measures, the views of our public men should be fully understood."

Winstead bid the general good night, and left for his hotel.

"What a perfect old fogey!" he exclaimed, as he stepped upon the sidewalk. "He would have every one believe with him, and share in his fears concerning the Union. It's all ridiculous—the mere croakings of a superannuated old man. The country gained by the election of old Zack over such a worn-out politician!"

CHAPTER XXII.

Countless the various species of mankind.

GIFFORD.

WE must now transport the reader to a room upon the second floor of a building, the lower story of which is occupied as a store, in the village of T——. This room is accessible by a flight of steps outside of the building. It is a little, dingy apartment. In one corner stands a small library case, partly filled with dust-covered law-books, which, to all appearance, have occupied the same position for years. In another corner stands a table, on which, against the wall, is a case of pigeon-holes. Some worn-out boots are lying against the rear wall, and the floor is covered with filth. The windows are so thickly incrustated with the accumulations which time has deposited upon them, that they obscure all save a dull, gloomy light, from the apartment.

Two men are seated by the table. One is short, thick-set, and fat, with a beard of a week's growth. His grizzly hair seems not to have known the object of a comb or brush for weeks, and his entire dress bears evidence of the negligence of its wearer. There is, however, a scrutinizing expression in his countenance, borrowed chiefly from his small, penetrating gray eye, which, despite his external

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appearance, betokens that he is a man accustomed to close investigation and thorough preparation. This man is Garnet, the lawyer employed to prosecute the demand against the Roland estate. His companion is Haynes, the slave-dealer, with whom the reader is already acquainted. They have just entered the office.

"Westover informs me," said Garnet, "that your acquaintance with Thomas Roland commenced many years ago."

"We were boys together," replied Haynes, "but our intimacy ceased with boyhood. Roland was rich, I was poor. He inherited fortune, I became a slave-dealer. That was the reason."

"It is important, to the full success of our cause, that we should know his entire history. You can give it. The cause will be warmly contested."

"I understand. I suppose I can tell that history more accurately than any other living man."

"You will, doubtless, prove a valuable witness—a very valuable witness. But it is necessary to a right understanding of the case, that I should know the testimony that can be relied upon before the trial. All good lawyers make it a point to do so."

"I s'pose," said Haynes, in a drawling tone, "your suit is a very important one, is it not?"

"Yes."

"It involves the entire Roland estate?"

"Yes."

"And the title to the most *desirable* portion of the estate depends upon a personal history of Mr. Roland?"

"Yes."

"Without that you do not expect to be able to convert this portion of the estate to the purpose of paying its debts?"

"No."

"You rely upon my testimony to make the matter clear?"

"Yes."

"Well, if all this be so, I s'pose, as a matter of course, that my testimony will prove of great advantage to you—add to the money—and accomplish, perhaps, one of the great objects in bringing the suit?"

"Exactly so."

"Well, then, suppose I don't choose to testify? What then?"

"Oh, but, my dear sir, such a course would prove ruinous!"

"It would?"

"Yes."

"Such an admission from you, 'Squire Garnet, ought to be of more value to me than an ordinary witness-fee."

"So it shall, Haynes, so it shall. Here," handing him a gold eagle, "let this be an earnest of our intention to do the fair thing."

"Fair and easy, if you please, 'squire," replied Haynes, returning the coin. "If you have correctly informed me as to the value of my testimony, no such paltry sum as that ought to purchase it. I know that I'm the only witness as knows, and it's not for a small sum that I'll testify against an old friend like Tom Roland, 'specially since he's dead, and can't resent it."

"But I only wish to know what your testimony will be."

"And if I tell you, I suppose you'll subpoena me, and I'll have to tell the same story over again in court."

"Of course."

"Now, then, is the time to make the bargain. You don't know what my testimony will be now. Give me ten of those shiners now, with a promise of one hundred more

after I have testified, and I'll tell all. Don't look sober over it. You have often got as much for an amount of talk, much greater, but which did not accomplish half so much. I know things that you little dream of."

"It's a big sum, Haynes. You have no right, on any principle, to ask it, and if it were known that you had received it, on the trial, it would vitiate your testimony. But you seem to understand that we can not get along without you, and so, to cut the matter short, here are the ten eagles. We'll give the other hundred after you have testified."

"I s'pose I know what you want to prove," said Haynes, putting the money in his pocket. "Let me whisper the fact in your ear." He here whispered to Garnet, and that gentleman fixed upon him, by way of reply, a glance of mingled scrutiny and incredulity.

"Oh, you need n't look so keen now; it's a fact, and I'll tell all the particulars on the trial."

"Tell them now, as you agreed."

"Not another word, till the trial," replied Haynes. "Believe me, though; for as sure as there's a God in heaven, it's true, and I'll be here to swear to it."

"It will give us all we ask."

"Revenge and all, eh, 'squire? You see I understand. Young Westover is at the bottom."

"Haynes," inquired Garnet seriously, "can you corroborate this story by other witnesses?"

"I will make it all strong enough upon the trial. Ask me no more about it now."

"You know Roland's handwriting?"

"As well as my own."

"Is that it?" inquired Garnet, handing Haynes a dirty piece of writing.

"It is. I should know it anywhere."

"Do you know anything about the transaction in which that obligation originated?"

"Only as I learned it from the lips of Roland, himself, a few weeks before his death. 'Haynes,' said he, 'my estate is perfectly clear, except one obligation, which was not incurred on my own account. I'm on the paper of a man whose failure to-morrow would ruin me. It was foolish to sign it, and sometimes, when I think of it, I feel unhappy. But I can't help myself.'"

"Was Leonard Fancher the man?"

"Yes."

"What has become of him?"

"He's bankrupt. His effects have been sold under the hammer. They did not pay ten cents on the dollar. He has fled to California."

"Where is his wife and family?"

"I have no further information about him. Have you done with me?"

Haynes arose and took his hat, but hesitated to go, as if he expected some further questions.

"You have told all?"

"In effect—and without amplification—yes. But the story by which it is arrived at is a long one. Poor Tom Roland! He probably never expected this of me—and were I now, as I was when he told me, he would have had no reason. But money will purchase what no other consideration can."

He left the office, and Garnet arose and began to pace the room. This was a habit with him when agitated.

"It is accomplished," he soliloquized. "Through this man we can reach the whole thing, and bring the proud head low. What a day of calamity will that be! Westover will

realize the sweets of revenge, and he has a nature to enjoy them. This intelligence is too good to keep; and stumbled upon, as it has been, it should not be easily divulged. Westover shall not have it without full price. Haynes wants his slice. I'll take care of mine, and before Harry Westover knows how completely everything is under his thumb, he shall make ample provision for his counsel. To think it should all be true—all so easily—so triumphantly demonstrated. I imagine old Tid will make wry faces when he understands it, and he shall not understand it till the right moment. It will hurt his pride a little to be caught at such business—yes, and his popularity, too. His constituents will not endure it, and it'll bring his congressional career to an abrupt termination. And then my turn will come. I'll step in, as he steps out."

Harry Westover himself here entered the office, and interrupted the brilliant soliloquy of his attorney, by gruffly inquiring what he had learned from Haynes.

"Enough," he growled in an undertone, scarcely above a whisper, "to insure the judgment, and furnish the means to pay it."

"Tell me particulars, Garnet. I hate this enigmatical style of talking. Out with it, man; what does Haynes know?"

"He told me but four words in a whisper, for which I paid him ten gold eagles, and obligated myself to give him a hundred more."

"He bids high; but you did not hesitate?"

"Not at all, and should not if he had required four times the amount. Give me credit for appreciating your feelings in the matter, Mr. Westover—and for more than ordinary faithfulness in your behalf. It's not my business to hunt up the testimony, and it was by the merest chance

in the world, that I stumbled upon this piece of evidence in Haynes. When I commenced examining him, I expected that he knew but little else than that Roland had acknowledged this transaction. I was more fortunate. The information I obtained puts you in the possession of ample means of revenge for past injuries."

"By-the-by, Garnet, I've satisfied myself as to the person who picked me up so easily."

"Ah, who was it, pray?"

"That infernal old nigger, Captain Jake."

"Likely enough. He's up to it. He was a great pet with Roland, and since his death, no man on the estate—not even Dennis—is so often consulted as Captain Jake. He is the confidential adviser of his young mistress, and under instructions, doubtless, to keep an eye to the safety of those she loves. But it's as well, Harry; you'll never regret the rebuff. You have the means of enforcing retribution in your own hands."

"Explain, Garnet. What is new in my case? Don't mistrust me. If you are restrained by mercenary motives, and gold can unlock the secret, name the sum, and it shall be yours. I have entered upon this prosecution with a determination to be avenged."

"I must tell you, Harry, in the same brief, secret manner that Haynes told me. It's a development, in the play we are enacting, that will not bear to be mentioned above a whisper." Garnet placed his mouth to the ear of his client, and whispered the four words that contained the important secret.

Westover sprang from his seat as if he had received a shock from an electrical machine, and fixing upon Garnet a glance, in which a feeling of triumph, mingled with the most fiendish malignity was expressed, clasped his hands

together, and throwing back his head, exclaimed, "Is it indeed so full? Then am I amply avenged, and what I promised her, will be more than realized."

"You'd better use the fact, perhaps, to induce Miss Roland to marry you?"

"You'll learn me better than that, and so will she before the battle is over."

"You won't do it then?"

"What would you think of me if I would?"

"What! why, that you loved the girl; that's all. None can deny Miss Roland the possession of great personal beauty?"

"And what then?"

"And great accomplishments, too, Mr. Westover?"

"Will you understand me, sir," replied Westover sternly; "this trifling does not suit. You know I would not marry her now. But can I talk with Haynes on this subject?"

"Too many cooks spoil the broth, Mr. Westover. If you wish, you can take the management of the case, and I'll abandon it. If I'm to remain in it, you'll not say a word to Haynes?"

"Then so be it, Garnet. I'll say nothing, and be as quiet as possible, only go on as you have done."

While this scene was in progress at the office of Garnet, one of a different character could have been witnessed at Ash Grove. Adela sat at her writing-table, in her own little room alone. On the sheet before her, she was rapidly and earnestly tracing the thoughts of which her heart was full. She was an interesting object, as she sat there, with the intense expression of a mind overcharged, depicted upon her countenance. There was an earnestness in her look which denoted characteristics that, as yet, we have had no occasion to portray. Her mouth was firmly, even

tightly closed, the beautiful red of the lips completely hidden by their external outline. Her countenance was unusually flushed. After writing with great rapidity for the space of nearly an hour, she paused, and folding the letter, inclosed it in an envelope, which she carefully directed to "Leonard Fancher, San Francisco, California."

"It may reach him," she said in an undertone, "and, in remembrance of the father's kindnesses, he may come to the relief of the daughter. It is my only hope, now, and if it fails, so be it. I can still be happy in the love of Thornton, and poverty will be welcome."

Filled with the cheerfulness which this thought inspired, she left her little room, and seating herself at the piano ran her fingers rapidly over the keys for a moment, and then dashed off in that sweet little ditty

"Give me a cot in the valley I love."

Scarcely had she finished the concluding stanza, when a loud laugh from the piazza attracted her attention, and turning her head, she met the merry glance of Frank at the open window.

"Capital! excellent!" he exclaimed. "The best song I have heard this season. Surely, Adela, when such songs can afford you pleasure, in your present situation, yours must be a most happy temperament."

"And so it is, Mr. Saucebox," she replied, laughing; "but I am in a happy mood to-day, Frank. I've just written a long letter to uncle Fancher, in which I've told him everything; and do you know I feel that good will come of that letter, sooner or later. Come in and I'll tell you. My uncle was a peculiar man, but he was naturally very generous—very noble in his disposition. I feel that he will deem it his duty to assist me. He is doubtless poor—

always will be—but he may know something about this indorsement that will vitiate it."

"Adela, I wish I had your hope and buoyancy of spirits. You deserve to be happy."

"And I shall be, Frank, rich or poor. I'm not one to cry over evils that are past cure. Have you heard from your uncle?"

"Briefly. He bids me take hope for you, and says that, as soon as he can, he will leave Congress for home. The fugitive bill, and California and territorial questions engross his attention entirely."

"All to perpetuate slavery, too. That thought, Frank, makes me feel sad, whatever may be my spirits. I wish we were rid of the system that entails upon us so many evils. When I look, even now, upon my own servants, well fed and clad as they are, I always feel like uttering a prayer of thankfulness that I was not born to their estate. I can brave poverty in all its forms, it is a small matter compared with the condition in which the best fed, best clad, best treated slave in Mississippi finds himself."

"And yet, Adela, you, in effect, consented to be mine, when last we met. Surely that slavery is not so unpleasant to contemplate?"

"What a transposition! For shame, Frank, thus to interpret my meaning. I'm half a mind to reconsider my decision."

"And, in that case, you would only have me again a slave at your feet; thus, virtually proving, by your conduct, that there was, at least, one species of slavery which you could delight in."

"Hush your nonsense, and listen, Frank. Do you know that, in the event of my failure in the suit, I have made up my mind to go to one of the free States to reside? There,

I can be poor and yet respected. It will not degrade me in the scale of being, to labor. I shall enjoy poverty there, while here I should feel its disadvantages."

"And what do you intend to do with me, in that case, Adela? Where shall I go?"

"As for that, I suppose, if you are determined, you may go along with me, and practice your profession. Would you not like it, Frank?"

"If driven to it by stress of circumstances, yes; but not otherwise. I'm a true child of the South, Adela. I love it, with all its faults. Beside, I do not think there will be any such alternative necessary. You know that uncle Tidbald has promised to repair your misfortunes. But why talk? You are only joking."

"Many a thing said in joke actually transpires, Frank. To be serious, then, I will not persist in saying that I ever seriously entertained the thought of emigration, but it has sometimes occurred to me, since trouble has overtaken me, that the North would afford a good refuge to me, in case I found myself in a very reduced condition. Next to slavery itself, it seems to me, must be the humiliation brought upon one who, having tasted the prosperity which slavery bestows, suddenly finds herself bereft of her possessions, and a victim to the disparagements which, by reason of slavery, are visited upon the heads of the poor. How could I endure such a condition here, even though your uncle's gold might be employed to save me from it?"

"Let us not pursue the hateful theme," said Frank. "'Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.' I came early, this afternoon, for the purpose of going out with you upon the plantation, and witnessing the operation of the system. You know I have only seen it in Virginia."

"No wonder you judge lightly of its evils. But I will show you," said Adela. "My servants are, however, better off than those of most planters."

Together they visited the cotton-gin and the slave-quarters; and Frank, although convinced from all he saw, that the slaves were well cared for, could not refrain from exclaiming, as the survey progressed, "Thank heaven, I am not a slave!"

Yet they wore happy faces, worked with a will, all the while telling comical stories, and playing practical jokes upon each other—occasionally some one, with a lighter heart than the others, breaking forth into one of those incoherent, whimsical songs so common among the negroes everywhere. Now and then, in his survey, a sober, staid-looking countenance would be turned upon Thornton, so full of thought, and so suggestive of the wrong which its wearer was suffering, that he would forget the merry faces of others, who seemed indifferent to their condition, to study the one which showed that "the iron had entered into his soul." "One such countenance," thought he, "is a stronger commentary upon the injustice of the system, than thousands of happy hearts. Poor fellow! He feels the wrong that is done to him and to human nature, but sees no remedy for it."

Adela introduced Frank into several of the cabins, that he might judge of their domestic comforts. "Here," said she, entering one of the largest, "is the cabin of old Christopher, a slave that has been raised on the plantation. He is an old man, now living with his fourth wife. Three have been sold from him, after they had become mothers. Their children, too, are scattered. The woman, now here, has lived with him longer than either of the others, and they have a nice little family of children. It grieves me to

think that, when the estate is sold, they must again be divided."

They entered the cabin. Calista, the wife referred to, met her mistress with a pleasant smile.

"I's so grad to see you, missus," said she.

"Where are your boys, Calista?" inquired Adela.

The slave-woman cast a sidelong glance at Thornton, as much as to signify that she thought a purchaser was after her children.

Adela comprehended the expression, and immediately allayed her fears by assuring her that she had no idea of selling any of them.

"Here, Dickey, Frank, George Washington! come here, you little darkeys, and show yourselves to Miss Adela!"

Three coal-black, shiny-faced little fellows, with jet-black eyes and very white teeth, now crept from under the bed in the corner of the cabin.

"Why, Dickey," inquired Adela, holding out her hand to the eldest; "what made you and your little brothers hide yourselves from me? You never did so before."

"We 'spected the man wanted to buy us, and mammy told us to get out of sight," was the artless reply of the little black boy.

"You see, missus," said Calista, who was abashed by the exposure which Dickey had made; "you see, missus, I t'ought how, if he didn't see de boys, he wouldn't t'ink of buying dem. And so I jes hid 'em like, to keep de idea away."

"Never mind, Calista," said Adela; "as long as I am mistress of the plantation your children shall not be taken from you. Come here, Frank. Why, how you grow, you little monkey! Thornton, did you ever see a prettier trio?"

Thornton admitted that they were perfect little beauties,

and gave to each of them a small piece of coin, for which the little fellows bowed their thanks.

"Dickey, can't you play us a tune on the banjo?" inquired Adela.

The pleased child laughed, as only a little black boy can laugh, and exclaiming in reply, "Is 'm," he ran to a little cupboard by the side of the bed, and took from thence a very antiquated-looking, home-made banjo, and commenced thrumming away at the strings with the air of a master. Thornton could not refrain from a hearty laugh at the manner of the urchin, and the expression of his countenance, as he turned the screws, to bring the instrument into tune, and his listening attitude as he thrummed, to see if the note was properly expressed. Dickey looked very grave, and seemed to feel that, for once at least, he was the most important individual in the crowd. Calista's eyes sparkled with delight, as she saw the approval with which her little boy's actions were viewed, and the merriment they excited.

"Can we not have a dance?" asked Thornton.

"Oh yes, mass'r," replied Calista: "Here, Frank, George Washington; now, when Dickey plays Juba, you must dance."

And Dickey struck up the famous negro dancing-tune, and Frank and George Washington danced. It was a most comical exhibition. The little negroes entered into the spirit of the occasion, and each strove to eclipse the other. Their faces were lit up with animation; and as the notes of the banjo increased in rapidity, so did their motions. It was surprising with what accuracy they observed every note and step. At length, when the music had been increased to a rapid movement, Dickey threw aside the banjo and began to clap the time with his hands, accompanying it with his voice. The little dancers moved in harmony with

the increased velocity of the music. Thornton laughed, till the tears rolled down his cheeks, at the grotesqueness of the exhibition. While thus enjoying the scene, old Christopher, the father, entered the cabin. He was a large, sober, quiet-looking man, with a subdued expression of countenance. He bowed to Adela and Thornton; and, standing by the side of Calista, watched, with much apparent interest, the frolics of his children.

"You are nice boys," said Thornton, addressing them when they finished dancing. "Who learnt you how?"

"Daddy," replied Dickey, glancing at his father.

"Are you fond of playing on the banjo, Christopher?" inquired Thornton.

"Yes, mass'r," replied the black man, "bery fond of it, 'specially when I feels bad and lonesome-like. Den it makes me forget all de bad t'oughts, and feel thankful to God dat I is no wus."

"And you made the banjo, Christopher?" said Thornton, taking the clumsy instrument in his hands.

"Yes, mass'r. I made him more dan fifteen years ago, jus' when ole mass'r sold Lucy and her little gal. Dat was my fus' wife, mass'r—jus' when he sold her to go to Texas."

"Did you play on it much in those days, my old boy?"

"Berry much, mass'r, when I come home from de cotton pickin', and had nuffin else to t'ink of. Lucy and her little gal would come into my mind, and I used to 'flect what would come of dem, wheder dey was togedder or not—wheder dey was live or dead, and how dey was treated by deir new mass'rs; and it would make me feel so bad, dat I would take de banjo and play and sing till I could t'ink of nuffin else."

"And the old banjo, then, has made you happy a good many times?"

"Oh yes, mass'r. It has been all my comfort ebery time my wife and chi'dun's been sold. T'ree wives and six chi'duns. C'lista, here,'s my fourt' wife, and dese leetle boys de only chi'dun's left."

"Don't you know where the others are?"

"No, mass'r. Ole mass'r, he sold dem, and neber tole me. I went to work in de mornin', and lef' Lucy and her little gal in de cabin, and when I come home at night, dey was gone. Dey only said to me, dey was sold. Dat's all. Den, arter a year, ole mass'r wanted me to marry Deborah. So I took her. We lived berry happy t'ree years. She had two chi'duns—a gal and boy. Ole mass'r tell her one day, he want her take her chi'duns and go down to de village, jes for ride. She neber come back agin. Dey said she was sold wid her chi'duns. Den I feel so bad, I t'ink I will neber hab anoder wife. But, in a year or two, ole mass'r buy Susan. She was young and hansum. Ole mass'r say he bought her purpose for me, and, purty soon, we lub one anoder bery much. Den we lib togedder, and hab t'ree chi'duns—one boy and two gals. A young mass'r, like you, mass'r, came wid ole mass'r to de cabin, one time, and he sort liked Susan, and make mass'r great offer for her and her chi'duns, and mass'r sold her right afore me, and while we was both beggin' him not to part us. Den I was bery 'stressed, and wanted to die; but mass'r kep' talkin' to me 'bout it, and sayin' he would gib me 'noder, better wife, and all dat. So I kind a got ober it, and de nex' year C'lista come to lib wid me. Since den, bress God, we hab not been parted, and Dickey has done most of de playin' on de ole banjo. I has been bery happy."

"And you deserve to be, poor old Chris," said Adela;

"and as long as I can help it, you shall never be parted from your wife and children again."

"Bress you for it, my dear young missus ; I's berry t'ankful."

Adela and Thornton left the cabin, and proceeded to the mansion, whence, in a few moments, the latter departed for the village.

CHAPTER XXIII.

*She felt the chilling heaviness of heart
* * * which attends*

** * *
The death of those we doat on, when a part
Of us dies with them, and each fond hope ends.*

BYRON.

IN the only room of a small, unpainted dwelling, in the little village of M——, upon a bed neatly but plainly covered, lay a female, apparently in the prime of life, in the last stages of consumption. Her countenance was much emaciated. The hectic which sat upon her cheek seemed to mock, with its brilliant flash, the ruin which disease had wrought. Beside the bed sat a young girl. She was eighteen, but, in appearance, several years younger. She was busied with sewing ; except as, occasionally, she arose to attend to some half-uttered want of the invalid. It was mother and daughter.

"Celestine," said the mother, "lay aside your work, and bring your pencil and paper. I have some important directions to give, which will be of service to you hereafter."

The daughter arose almost mechanically, in obedience to her mother's command, and, crossing the room to a small stand, took from the drawer the articles she had been directed to take, and returned to the bedside.

"Your uncle lives in T——, more than two hundred miles distant. You will go there as soon after I am interred as possible. Don't remain here. There is nothing left worth staying for. Marsh has promised to pay you enough for the house to defray the funeral expenses, and the expenses of your journey. Your uncle assures me he will give you a hearty welcome, and you shall share in his estate."

"Mother!" replied the daughter, sighing, "how can I accept the bounty of a relative who has been so unkind to you?"

"Let it make no difference, my dear. Your uncle thought I had justly forfeited the regard of my relatives, by marrying against their will. He never could get over it, and the consequences of my marriage have, in some degree, justified his opinion. It is quite a different thing with you, and if ever so much disposed, you are quite too poor to resent a fancied injury. He will be your only friend, when I am gone, and you must let no trivial pique affect your interest."

"I will obey you, mother, but I can not prevent the thoughts, which my uncle's neglect suggests, from crowding upon my mind."

"Tell him, Celestine, that I died with no hard thoughts of him. Do not inform him of the full extent of our poverty. I would not have him know that I wanted any comforts which I could not obtain during my last illness. Preserve inviolate the past history of our misfortunes. Vail the faults of your misguided father from the scrutiny and criticism of an uncharitable world. Should you ever see him, tell him that, in my last moments, I forgave every pang he had made me suffer. So live as to keep your conscience clear, and cause your uncle to love you. Bury me by the side of Eudora. Do not mourn the loss, which

must prove to me so great a gain. We shall both be happier by the change. You know how anxiously I have waited its coming."

"Mother, dear mother, do not say more. Your language almost crazes me. How can I give you up? How part from the only one who cares for or loves me?"

"Do not distress me, dear, with these misgivings. It is a consolation, the greatest consolation that I know in this extremity, to feel that you will be provided for, and have the place which I have occupied more than repaired by your uncle."

"Say not so, dear mother. Who will watch and anticipate my little wants as you have done? Who will advise? who know my griefs or share my joys? Can gold do this? Can a more splendid home—gayer dress—ampler means, compensate for the loss of a mother's love and a mother's care? O mother! don't I know how sad I shall be—how I shall dread the dreary journey—the meeting with a relative I could never love—the sense of dependence I shall feel—the lonesome hours I shall spend in thinking of my dear little home, humble as it is, here with you. Don't I know that there are latent springs of feeling in my nature, which this sad event must arouse; that there is bitter experience to endure; world-knowledge to gain; and deep suffering to undergo? Have I watched by your bedside, these many weeks, and seen your sad decay without some idea of the misfortune that awaited me? Oh! tell me not that I must not grieve. It would kill me if I could not."

"Compose yourself, my dear child. Reflect that I am prepared for the great change, and long to go. I see beyond life into the future of my being, and there is nothing there to alarm or terrify. The dark valley is lit up with splendors before me. I feel the aid of His sustaining

hand, in whom I have ever trusted, and who never in the hour of darkest adversity forsook me.

'Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are.'

Should not this hope, which smooths my pathway to the tomb, comfort and console you? Trust in Heaven. When all else fails, and you feel that this world, and all that you have loved or treasured in it begins to recede from view, there is comfort and help there. When flesh and blood begin to fail, and you realize that your tenure of life is over, it is the only trust upon which you can rely and feel safe. Let this trust be yours now."

"Oh, my mother! my dear—dear mother!" exclaimed Celestine passionately, and bursting into tears, she buried her face in the bed-clothes, and sobbed as if her heart was breaking. Claspings her in her emaciated arms, the mother for a moment gave way to the warm gush of sensibility, which the event excited. From this she was aroused by a return of her cough with increased severity. When the cough abated, she had barely time to utter the word "Remember," when she sank into a state of insensibility, from which she was released by death, ere midnight.

Poor Celestine! It was worse with her than even she had anticipated. Her young heart, for the first time, felt the sting of real sorrow. Those who have never felt the grief consequent upon the loss of a beloved parent, can know but little of the poignancy of this young creature's anguish. The world for her, was shrouded in impenetrable gloom. She yearned to join the released spirit in happy companionship beyond the grave. Her whole thought magnified the heavy calamity which had befallen her. She refused the consolation offered by sympathizing friends, and finding no comfort in her own contemplations, gave

way to the most inordinate grief. It was agonizing to hear her moaning—more so, to see her wrestle with her misery, in the vain effort, from time to time, to subdue it, and become composed. Oh! there is no anguish keener than that which, from any adequate cause, first visits and overwhelms the young heart! It is the tribute which pure and happy nature pays to our fallen condition—the rapid transition of soul and mind from an earthly delight, almost Eden-like, to an extreme which is as directly and substantially its opposite, as winter is the opposite of summer.

Celestine buried her mother by the side of Eudora, and delayed the journey to her uncle's only long enough to dispose of the remains of the little property left to her, and to collect the scanty wages for her sewing.

It was a bright morning when she left her childhood's home. The birds sang sweetly in the forest, and it seemed to Celestine, when she looked out upon the calm sunshine, the beautiful fields, and the freshly-bursting flowers, as if every creature and everything in life was happy but her. Her sorrow was too fresh, too sacred, to be displaced by any joyous emotion. She rode on alone, in silence and, in tears.

Tears! What balm do they afford the wounded heart! How refreshing their relief to a mind overcharged with affliction! Blessed almoners of heaven! We remember, while we write, how often we have sought and found in ye a consolation which was denied us by every other resource of nature. We love genuine tears, shed for genuine sorrow. They betoken a heart uncalloused and pure—a nature kind and sympathizing. We love tears more than smiles, for the unmistakable evidence they afford of sensibility and affection. Tears are seldom deceitful. A child can detect the genuine from the false. He whose grief can

be appeased by tears, how much soever he may have suffered, is affected by no incurable anguish. The tear is not less welcome for the relief it brings to the surcharged soul, than for the assurance it gives that its sorrow is transient. Grieve on, then, poor orphan! Let your tears flow thickly and fastly. They will do you good; and when time shall have worn the edge from your sorrow, you will bless the providence that brought tears to your relief in the heaviness of your affliction.

Poor, timid, little Celestine! Her road lay through a portion of the country untraversed by any conveyance swifter than the stage-coach, for the entire distance. She must ride two dreary days and nights. It was a great task to perform alone; but to all coming difficulties she presented a dauntless front. She was sole occupant of the coach, the first day and night. On the morning of the second, at a little village on the route, a gentleman and lady, somewhat advanced in years, accompanied by a son, took passage in the coach. The son was a fine-looking young man of pleasing address, and as the day wore on, the new passengers gradually formed a pleasant stage-coach acquaintance with Celestine. The young man took much interest in all that concerned her. And no wonder. She was very pretty, notwithstanding her plain attire and modest demeanor. She had a round, plump face, clear white and red complexion, and one of the sweetest little mouths imaginable. Her form, though small, was trim and beautiful. She was a very lovable little creature, and, without intending anything of the kind, by her quiet looks, bright eyes, simple answers, and more than all, by her sad, tearful demeanor, she was calculated to entrap the hearts of young men, less impressible than the one who now gazed upon her with admiration. Celestine was favored with the

society of this family during the remainder of her journey, and when, on the morning of the third day after she left her home, the coach drove up to the hotel in T——, she really regretted to say good-by to such pleasant, friendly traveling companions.

Celestine soon learned of the absence of her uncle Tidbald, but the landlord, at her request, sent a messenger for Frank Thornton.

"A young lady at de hotel wishes to see Mass'r Thornton 'mediately," said the man.

"A young lady at the hotel," replied Frank, giving the negro a blank stare. "Who is she, pray?"

"Don't know, mass'r. Neber seed her," answered the slave. "Mass'r sent me."

"Tell him I'll come directly," said Frank, running his fingers through his hair. "What can a young lady want of me at the hotel?" thought he, putting on his hat and stepping into the street. He walked rapidly to the hotel, where he was shown into the parlor by the landlord.

"I took the liberty to send for you, sir, in the absence of my uncle Tidbald. I am the only surviving child of his youngest sister, and"—Celestine was proceeding, when Frank bounded from his chair, and seizing her hand, exclaimed:

"My dear cousin, Celestine, I am overjoyed to meet you. This is a delightful surprise. But you are not alone?" he said, inquiringly, at the same time casting his eyes around the apartment. "Aunt Sophia—where is she?"

At the mention of her mother's name, Celestine burst into tears. It was a long time before she could sufficiently compose herself to detail to Frank the particulars of her mother's death, and the object of her journey to T——.

"Uncle George will be as much delighted as I am, to see

you, cousin! I shall strive very hard to make your residence here as agreeable as possible, but your coming has taken me so much by surprise, that I shall have to provide for you at the hotel until I can find pleasanter quarters. It shall not be long, I assure you. I have a dear friend of your sex, who, I have no doubt, will rejoice to have you spend the summer with her. In a very little time I will be with you again."

Frank hastened to Ash Grove, and informed Adela of his cousin's arrival, and of his own embarrassment in obtaining for her a suitable home.

"I will accompany you, Frank," said Adela, "and bring her immediately to Ash Grove. She is just the companion I have long desired to have, and just now she needs sympathy and sisterly affection."

Adela ordered her carriage, and rode with Frank to the hotel.

"Go immediately with me, Miss Lee. We shall soon be great friends," said Adela, seizing the poor orphan by the hand, and shaking it tenderly. "Your arrival is most opportune," she continued, in a soothing tone, "for I have thought, this long time, of selecting from the circle of my female acquaintance, some friend who would share with me the tedium of my lonely residence. Richard, take this trunk and bandbox. Jump into the carriage, dear. It is but a short drive. Drive on, Richard. And, in a few moments, Celestine was ushered into the ample parlor of the mansion at Ash Grove. She dried her tears—how could she help it? Adela was so kind and sisterly, anticipating all her wants, and conversing with her in a tone and manner so familiar and gentle, one would have thought, to have heard and seen them, that Adela had been the intimate friend of Celestine for years. Oh, the power of kind-

ness! How it dries up the fountains of grief, and softens the feelings. Adela was just the friend Celestine needed.

Frank, more delighted than ever with Adela, returned to the office and wrote a long letter to Tidbald. Speaking of the arrival of Celestine, he wrote:

"I am sure, my dear uncle, that, could you see the young creature, you would be delighted with her. She has the most winning manners, is intelligent and pretty! I am proud of her as a cousin, and pleased that she has come to T—— to reside."

Frank continued to write until the evening was far advanced, when his attention was called to the door by a slight rap. Opening it, what was his surprise to meet the full, pleasant face of Captain Jake.

"Why, captain," said he, "you're out late to-night. Walk in. You must have some special errand to bring you here. What is it, captain?"

"I have just seen Harry Westover," said Jake. "He is satisfied that I am the man who threw him over the bridge into Meadow Run the other night."

"Are you sure, captain?"

"He told me so," replied Jake, "and said that he had set it down on the debtor side of his account against me, which, when the estate was sold, he said he intended to put in a way of settlement. I shall have it out of your hide, you black rascal," said he, "if money can buy you for the purpose."

"And what did you tell him in reply, Jake?"

"That I did not doubt the extremes to which a revengeful disposition might drive him, and if I ever was so unfortunate as to be his slave, I would neither expect or ask for mercy from one whom I knew to be so incapable of exercising it."

"You shall never be his, captain, if I can help it."

"Your influence will weigh but a feather in the scale against his money and malice. If I am sold, he will buy me, and if he buys me, of course I shall suffer; but it's of no account what becomes of me when I leave my dear young mistress. Oh! Master Frank, you don't know how much I lament her misfortune. She don't deserve it. She is so kind and good to everybody, especially to her own servants."

"Captain," said Thornton, "you can take your liberty now, before judgment is entered against the estate. Miss Adela will take great pleasure in setting you free."

"No, Master Frank. She might have done so a month ago, by going with me to a free State, and then giving bonds for my good behavior if I had returned, but since that time a writ has been served upon her, prohibiting her from selling, or squandering, or, in any way, disposing of any property belonging to the estate."

"An injunction. Well, old Garnet seems to be determined to hold on to everything. There is one way left, Jake. You can run away, with a certainty that your mistress will not follow you, and she'll furnish you money to go with."

"I could do that, Mass'r Frank, but that would prevent my return. I can't leave my young mistress in the hour of misfortune. It seems to me as if I was destined to be of some great service to her hereafter, and every time the thought has occurred to me that I had better run away, this other idea has impressed itself so forcibly upon my mind, that I have given up the notion altogether, and determined to trust the whole thing to time and a good Providence. Miss Adela has, several times, suggested the same mode of escape; but I feel that, without the privi-

lege of returning, I can not go. I don't know how it is, Mass'r Frank, but it seems to me all the time as if something dreadful was going to happen to my young mistress. I see these men—Garnet, Westover, and old Haynes—together a good deal of the time, and know, from their sinister glances, that it all has something to do with this law-suit. I fear, and my heart keeps telling me, that the loss of the estate is but the beginning of calamity, that Mistress Adela will be persecuted, that her poverty, perhaps, will be taken advantage of to oppress her, and I don't know what, but my mind is full of foreboding."

"All of which, I presume, captain, are the merest phantasies. How can these men follow up their legal triumph against Adela, without subjecting themselves to the law? They would be punished, of course. Beside, your young mistress will have one sworn friend in my uncle, and you know, captain, that I will never see her suffer."

"Ah, Mass'r Frank, I don't doubt your kind intentions. But the kindness of the rich toward the poor is never reliable. When my young mistress is deprived of her property, your uncle will have but little motive for befriending her. He may do so. I don't mean to think ill of him, but he's a rich man, and all rich men are alike, so far as my observation goes."

"Why, captain, how mistaken you are. I can show you letters from uncle George, in which he approves of my affection for Adela, and says that he has enough for us both, let the suit go as it may."

"I may do him great wrong," replied Jake; "for Mistress Adela's sake, I hope I do; but, after all, Mass'r Frank, I have made up my mind to see the end on't, even though it should fasten the chains on my old limbs for life. I have but a few years longer to stay, at any rate,

and as I have always been faithful, so will I remain, God willing, until the end. I told my old master I would, when he was dying, and, come what may, I'm prepared to meet it."

"Noble-hearted old man!" exclaimed Frank, seizing Jake warmly by the hand, "your mistress is fortunate indeed in the love of so brave and faithful a servant."

"There'll be need of it, Mass'r Frank, need of it all, you'll see. Watch 'em, Mass'r Frank, watch 'em close. They'll be prepared for desperate ends to gain their objects. I wish your uncle was here, to keep an eye upon their movements. He could tell what all these secret meetings meant better than either of us."

Jake arose, and bidding Frank good-night, left the office. Frank resumed writing, and wrote as follows:

"It is now near midnight, and I have just had a visit from Adela's faithful old slave, Captain Jake. The old negro thinks that the preparations which Garnet is making for the suit, forebode something of more dreadful import to Adela, than the loss of the estate. He don't pretend to know what. I tried to pacify him, but he said, in reply, that the frequent meetings between Harry Westover, Garnet, and that villainous old Haynes, meant more than I dreamed of. Garnet has caused an injunction to be served, prohibiting the sale or disposition of any of the effects of the estate."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Whose game was empires, and whose stakes were thrones,
Whose table, earth—whose dice were human bones.

BYRON.

IN a pleasant apartment of one of the suburban residences of New Orleans, on the evening of the sixth of May, 1850, sat four gentlemen, who appeared to be engaged in conversation upon a topic of more than ordinary import. The principal personage in the company, and the one to whom the others, from time to time, addressed questions, was, seemingly, past middle age. He was in the full uniform of a commanding officer. In person, he was too short to be of imposing presence, but, in other respects, he lacked none of the outward qualifications to make a good officer. His countenance was of a strongly-intellectual cast, with features too prominent to be handsome, and lit up by a pair of restless, piercing black eyes, which looked almost anywhere but at you, when their owner addressed you. This individual had little else to say than to answer, in broken English, the questions propounded to him by the three other members of the company, all of whom wore the undress uniform of American officers.

"Do I understand you, general," inquired one, "that you have men enough enlisted to make such a demonstration as you wish?"

"I have; and shall need all the assistance you can render, in less than a fortnight, or never. You may be sure it's no child's play. I understand my game."

"But, General Lopez," inquired another, what are your calculations in case we fail to reinforce?"

"To die in the cause of Cuban independence in any manner that Providence may direct. Cuba can be taken, gentlemen, but not without the assistance you have promised. My expedition will be a commencement. I shall effect an immediate organization among the Creoles. Then I shall expect your assistance."

"You have our joint promise that you shall have it," replied the first gentleman, whom, for the purpose of designation, we will call General Ashburn. "A clear demonstration, by so large a portion of the inhabitants of the island as the Creoles, ought to be respected, if not by our Government, at least by our people. My men, I know, will go at a moment's warning, and very many of them will be the tried soldiers that were under my command in Mexico. Of the same character will be your troops, General Riggs. No raw hands. If we go, we go full-handed, prepared to make short, but bloody, work of it. Cuba will come into our confederacy like a whirlwind. Old Zack will have the honors piled into his administration at a more rapid rate, and in greater quantities, than even he imagined."

"And not be sorry either," interposed Riggs, laughing, "notwithstanding his manifesto. He's a great stickler for duty, and, as President, may oppose us, but, as Zachary Taylor, the Mississippi slaveholder, no man will rejoice more than he in Cuban annexation. I've heard him talk about it before he ever thought of being president."

"How soon will you land, general?" inquired Ashburn.

"As soon as steam and weather will permit us to complete

the voyage. We are all ready. Our troops are chiefly on board the steamer, and she is under sailing orders for eleven o'clock to-morrow. Three days—four at most, I trust, will witness our safe debarkation at Cardenas."

"What will then be your movement?"

"Marching directly along the coast, and gathering men as rapidly as possible, so as to be able to capture Matanzas on our arrival there. From thence, if we are favored, as we expect to be, we will march, with all possible dispatch, upon Havana, and make an attack upon it on land. That taken, the island is ours, for Havana is Cuba."

"All plausible enough, general, if you can rely upon the defection," said Riggs; "but if that fails, you will be captured, and die, like dogs, by the garrote."

"So be it, then," said Lopez, resignedly. "We can not die in a better cause."

"And you go to-morrow?"

"Without fail," replied Lopez.

"Of what does your force chiefly consist?"

"Men from all the western and south-western States. Many who came, grown tired with waiting, have returned home in disgust. I am complained of for delay, but, gentlemen, as you well know, this is less my fault than yours. I go now because I can not delay longer. My men are deserting every day, and the expenses are making fearful encroachments upon our funds. I go, with your promise, to be sure, but so uncertain as to whether it will be fulfilled that I might as well be without it. In short, gentlemen, I go with the fullest confidence that the desire of the Creoles for independence will render it unnecessary for you to aid me until after I have planted our banner upon the citadel of Matanzas. Then, I know, if you don't come, there will be enough that will, and Cuba will be mine."

"Rely upon us, general," said Ashburn; "we will be with you, in force, to aid in the capture of Matanzas."

"Thank you for the promise, gentlemen. I feel certain of success."

General Lopez departed with the cordial good wishes of the three officers, and a repetition of their assurance to aid him, if he made a successful landing.

After he had left, the conversation of the three officers was changed to a consideration of the benefits of annexing Cuba to the Union.

"We should not feel the necessity of aiding in this virtual treason," said Riggs, "if the people of the northern States did not drive us to it, by their unwarrantable hostility to slavery. It seems to me, if they could see how much iniquity they were the cause of, by meddling with our affairs, they would let us alone. The capture and annexation of Cuba will open their eyes."

"Yes," replied Ashburn, "and to counteract its effects, they will go to work and annex Canada; and involve us in a war with Great Britain. The truth is, the Union is too unwieldy by half. It will fall to pieces of its own weight, ultimately, and might just as well be dissolved now as ever. The North and South will never be at a loss for something to quarrel about. If slavery were abolished to-morrow, the North would devise a plan the next day, to induce our negroes to leave the country. And what difference would it make? We should have greater political power if our slaves were free, and entitled to vote, for we should then be compelled to hire them, or starve. Do you think the North would be any better satisfied? Not at all. They would still put their feet upon our necks. Our only safety is in disunion. My State is more deeply interested than any other."

General Felix, the third officer of the party, and who, up to this time, had taken no part in the conversation, abruptly broke in upon the remarks of Ashburn.

"I can't support your doctrine, general," said he. "Let us stick by the Union, and hold the North to the compromises of the Constitution. They should have nipped the evil at the commencement. It's too late now. We will extend from pure necessity. The North can not stop us. If we take Cuba, we'll have slavery there—so with St. Domingo—so with Mexico—so with Central America. It's all destined, sooner or later, to be ours; all destined to aid in the extension of slavery. The operation of causes purely natural, will bring these things about, and no opposing force will prevent it. It's God's own work. The North will understand it when they find themselves thwarted on every side; and thwarted, too, without bloodshed or disunion."

The next day, at a little past eleven o'clock, the expedition of General Lopez sailed. Of its success, it is almost superfluous to speak. The landing at Cardenas—the attack upon the jail—the retreat and return to New Orleans—the Contoy prisoners—the fate of some and release of others—the arrest of Lopez by our authorities; of all these things we were informed, and they need no other allusion here to remind our readers of the signal failure of the enterprise.

Just three weeks after the conversation we have narrated, the three officers who took part in it, met again.

"Are your troops ready for Cuba?" inquired General Ashburn of General Felix.

"Was there ever, since the days of Jack Falstaff, a more complete military hoax. To think that we should all be gulled by such a popinjay. It seems the man knew nothing about the Creoles. Not a man joined his stand-

ard, even though, in the first part of the conflict, he was successful. I tell you what, Ashburn, between you and me, this Cuban invasion is a great humbug; and, after the reception given to Lopez, I think we may as well get out of it with as little noise as possible, and wait some more decisive demonstration. The North will not be misled by it."

"Nothing that has yet occurred," observed General Riggs, "impairs my confidence in the project, as one of great national importance. It is, as Polk used to say, the 'manifest destiny' of Cuba to fall into our hands. It will eventually become one of our great escape-pipes. The failure of Lopez is the beginning of the end. In all probability there will be a Cuban expedition, as often as once in two years, for the next ten years. They may all prove as successful as this one; but, in the end, Cuba will yield. I feel no shame in the promise to follow Lopez, in case he was successful. But he was not the man for the occasion."

"It was a brave affair, truly," said Felix, "but it has terminated unfortunately for the South. We have boasted that we would have Cuba. Our papers have been very noisy; our politicians have blustered; and the thing, in the form of weak and silly bravado, has found its way into the debates in both House and Senate; and just now, when our friends at Washington want the assistance of everything of the kind, this insignificant fizzle will dampen their zeal, and expose them and their cause to the derision of northern zealots. Nor is this all. It will make the Nashville demonstration look like a small affair."

"You are too easily troubled," replied Ashburn. "This affair has not terminated very differently from what we expected. I don't think we've lost anything. Our plans were not generally known, and the North will be slow to believe that we had much to do with it. It's only a

question of time with Cuba. She will be ours, sooner or later."

"And what shall we do with her?" inquired Felix.

"You a military man, and ask that!" rejoined Ashburn. "Is she not the key to the Gulf? What may we not do with her as a military post? But I am quite as much accustomed to looking at the project commercially as in a military sense. The productions of Cuba are equal, in value, to those of three of our best southern States; and, under our form of government, may be soon doubled in quantity and value. They are of a kind to bring immense revenue into the National Treasury. The climate is the best in the world for slave labor. We need her for our protection; and, as a measure of true southern policy, I think we can not too soon insist, that we intend to annex."

"My opinions, Ashburn, exactly," replied Felix, "but the difficulty is in making the doctrine general. The South can improve the condition of the inhabitants of Cuba by annexing her to the States. If this idea can be infused into their minds, so as to provoke their hostility to the Spanish rule, we can then aid the popular cause without the animadversion of foreign observers; but, until then, Cuba will remain unalterable in her attachment to the Spanish crown. My doctrine is, that when a people seek a change in their own form of government, it is right to aid them in obtaining it. This expedition of Lopez has revealed no such disposition in the Cubanos; on the contrary, so far as we can judge, they are satisfied as they are. What can we do so long as that is the case?"

"Buy her, of course," replied Ashburn, "if we need her. What is a hundred millions for such a permanent acquisition to our country as Cuba? We could make no better

use of the money; and, if we are not to win by conquest, where's the objection to negotiation?"

"It's well enough to talk about it. But, Ashburn, you can not seriously believe that our Government can be induced to buy Cuba?"

"Some of the fanatics of the northern States," said Riggs, "believe that, by doing so, we will bring into the Union a powerful aid to the abolition of slavery. They think that the soil and climate of Cuba are so much more favorable for the production of the articles upon which slave labor depends for its support, that our slaves will, ultimately and gradually, be transferred there, and thus, after the lapse of a number of years, die out in the States altogether."

"I think they should be encouraged to cherish this idea," said Ashburn, laughing.

"What's to be done with Lopez?" inquired Felix.

"Arrested, of course," replied Ashburn. "The form of a trial will be gone through with, and a judgment equivalent to an acquittal will be pronounced."

"Farce upon farce," said Felix. "I am not a little disgusted with our course all through. Our members have pursued an extreme course in Congress, and, by opposing the Compromise, hindered any amicable or permanent arrangement there. The subject may be settled for the Session, and remain fixed, so far as California is concerned. Another Session will hardly pass over before some demagogue, North or South, will open the wound afresh by some extreme form of organization for Nebraska or Kansas. So we go. We shall all be ashamed of the tomfooleries we have been engaged in, in less than a year."

"How d'ye mean?" inquired Ashburn.

"How?" returned Felix, "why, the Cuban expedition, the Nashville convention, the empty threat of disunion, and the

pompous and ridiculous bravado of our members upon the floor of Congress. I blush for the South every time I think of these things. They belie the true sentiment of the people, and give occasion for the most violent opposition on the part of the northern fanatics. Look at it. Don't you suppose northern bigots fathom the object of these enterprises? 'A hit bird flutters.' They understand that. Hence, we are covered with all manner of abuse by that insolent old Giddings. Hence, the question is frequently asked, in derision, when we expect to commence the dissolution of the Union. There is no end to the jokes put upon us by the North for overdoing the matter: and this is not all. They give us no credit for sincerity in our professions. Nine-tenths of them believe that these threats of ours are for effect; and, indeed, they think correctly. I tell you, Ashburn, we can not alarm the North in any such manner. They feel so strong in what they call the justice of their cause—preach over it, and pray over it, so much, and mix it up with their religious notions to such a degree, that they feel conscientious in opposing every possible obstacle to the extension of slavery. If we talk to them of dissolution, they dare us to do it, and go to work, by facts and figures, to prove to us, how much more we shall suffer than they will by such a calamity. Our most serious movements are mere sport with them."

"Nevertheless," replied Ashburn, "there are enough of our southern slaveholders to carry out the doctrine of dissolution."

"I should like to see the relative strength of the friends and enemies of such a measure tested in the South. But suppose it even possible; what shall we do then?"

"Build up an independent republic of our own, to be sure," replied Ashburn.

"Yes," rejoined Felix, "with slavery as its corner-stone."

The idea is simply absurd. Dissolution would divide the country into separate dependencies, and we of the South would have our own separate interests to look after, as well as the hostility of the North. Think you the multiform and multiplied embarrassments, which, through these causes, would be imposed upon us, would be as favorable to prosperity and happiness, as the glorious form of government under which we now live? It is the merest folly to talk soberly of dissolution. Let us annex if we can. Let us extend slavery if we can. Let us maintain our power in Congress and in the government if we can. Let us fill the Blue Book, as we have ever done, with the names of southern officeholders if we can. There is strength and good sense in these movements; but this Nashville convention operation is so palpably foolish, that we only stultify ourselves by trying to uphold it. It is unworthy of us as Americans: it impeaches our patriotism; and represents us to the world as having really placed, as the value of the American Union, the extension of slavery. It is discreditable to our judgment and knowledge of men and things, for the simple reason that all the world looks upon it in the light of a shallow artifice."

"One would think you were an Abolitionist, general, instead of the owner of two hundred negroes, to hear you talk," said Ashburn.

"Think and be hanged," replied Felix. "I am as strong a supporter of slavery as the institution will bear. It goes terribly against the grit, Ashburn; and I am convinced that no man in this nation would rejoice more, if slavery could be annihilated, than I. I know it can not. I know that all efforts to put an end to it will prove abortive; and, therefore, I go in with the rest of you for having enough of it. But I can not indorse your fooleries."

CHAPTER XXV.

Amid the ancient forests of a land
Wild, gloomy, vast, magnificently grand.
BURLING.

AN hour before sunset, of one of the warmest days of June, the good ship *Ashmun*, with streamers flying, cast anchor in the roadstead of Monrovia, the principal city of Liberia. As she rounded to within the shadow of Cape Mesurado, she was saluted from the shore by a gun, to which she responded with her own long-tom. Her deck was crowded with eager passengers, who gazed upon the African coast as their goal of deliverance. Nor was their first view uninviting. There is something in an African forest, with its profuse foliage, its never-ending variety, and its rich and dense green, that is alone sufficient to exhilarate the feelings of the overtaken voyager, but where this is united with an agreeable diversity of outline — exhibiting in one view all the variety of mountain, headland, slope and plain, it can not fail to awaken emotions of pleasure in the bosom of one who sees it for the first time, at the close of a long and perilous voyage.

"We are here at last," said our friend Zeb to his pleasant-looking wife, as the chain of the right bower rattled from the windlass. "This is independent Liberia,

the only spot on earth where people of our color can live and be free."

"God be thanked for the fair winds, that have wafted us to it!" replied Eunice, gazing into the face of Zeb. "I have not a sigh to send back to the country I have left. This before me is beautiful."

While they stood gazing upon the shore, a boat was seen to leave, and come toward the ship. It became an object of attraction to all on board. Pulling alongside, the oarsmen deposited their oars, and with the aid of some of the sailors, soon stood upon the deck of the vessel. Among their number was one, a yellow man, of commanding figure and expressive countenance, who seemed, from the deference with which he was treated, to be clothed with authority. The captain of the ship soon made his way through the crowd of emigrants, and seizing this person by the hand, exclaimed:

"Ah! Mr. Agent, I'm rejoiced to meet you once more. You see I've returned with another cargo, as I promised."

"Larger than the last," replied the agent. "This speaks well for our little Republic. I must scrape acquaintance with your passengers, captain, and give them a cordial welcome to Liberia."

The agent, in an easy, graceful manner, proceeded to announce to the emigrants that, as the agent of the Colonization Society, he bade them heartily welcome. "You have done well, my friends," said he, "to exchange America for Liberia, but I came on board to say to you, that liberty is never obtained without trial and suffering, and your difficulties have not terminated with the voyage. For the next month at least—or for such time as our physicians may deem necessary, you must take quarters at our emigrant-house. You will find everything comfortable there.

Your wants will meet with prompt attention. Proper diet and regimen will be prescribed, and in a period not, perhaps, to exceed three weeks, you will be attacked with African fever. Your sickness will depend greatly upon the preparation of body in which it finds you, but, with most of you, doubtless, it will yield to treatment, in a few days. To-night, you must remain on board. As soon as the sun goes down, get under hatches, and remain until called for in the morning."

The agent remained on board a few moments, and then took his leave. The emigrants, who were sorely disappointed at the idea of spending another night on the vessel, one by one withdrew quietly to their quarters, and before the sun went down, the deck of the Ashmun was clear, and save the lonely watch that paced to and fro upon her quarter, not a soul could be seen upon her deck, as she rode gently the undulations of the ocean.

No effort to describe the different emotions which affected the newly-arrived emigrants, could convey to the reader any adequate idea of the reality. For the first time in their lives they felt that they were free. The idea of being a citizen—a voter—an aspirant for place and emolument took speedy and almost absolute control of Zeb's mind. "This," thought he, "this feeling which possesses me, this lightness—as if a load were removed—this consciousness of being my own possessor; this, it is, that I know to be freedom. I never felt it before. I shall soon begin to understand its benefits, and get used to it, as I grow in knowledge of myself. These hands, this body, these eyes; this busy, thinking being, that my old master prized so highly, are mine—my own. I may use them for myself and Eunice. I may gain wealth, fame, all the enjoyments of earth, and thank nobody but myself. Surely, I was

born to be free. Surely, the difference which freedom produces, even in feeling, is worth the risk of coming to Liberia to enjoy it."

Similar thoughts were indulged by all the passengers on the Ashmun—and, as we may suppose, they were but the natural feelings consequent upon a release from a life of bondage.

Morning dawned. The sun dispelled the heavy dew which had fallen, ere the inmates of the vessel were summoned to the deck. The boats were soon manned, and before noon, all the emigrants were safely housed in the emigrant-house, where they found comfortable quarters. Here they were put upon a vegetable diet, of which they were permitted to eat liberally. Their drinks were cocoa and coffee. During the afterpart of the afternoon, just before sundown, they were permitted to exercise in the open air, and if disposed, to ramble around the city. In this manner they passed their time, with no perceptible indication of disease, until the twentieth day, when two or three were attacked with fever. The next day several others, among whom were Zeb and his wife, were attacked; and before the close of the thirtieth day, not a person that had landed from the Ashmun, was well. It was the good fortune of all to recover, but some were very low for several days. As soon as they were able, the President of the Republic, accompanied by the agent, visited them to ascertain from each what he intended to do for the future. Before any of them made choice of pursuits, President Roberts addressed them briefly upon the importance of making selection of such pursuits as they intended severally to follow:

"There are," said he, "great evils growing out of the mistakes made by some of our emigrants, in this respect.

I have, during my administration as president, taken it upon me to advise every emigrant, as I now do you. If you have trades, and desire to follow them, go to some one of the towns in the Republic, and settle permanently. Make it your fixed abode. You will be provided with a lot for your residence, and by your own industry you will be able to earn a livelihood. Those of you fond of agricultural pursuits, can select any of the numerous unoccupied farms in the valleys of the Mesurado, St. Paul's, or Junk. There is not an acre there, that is not worth, for purposes of tillage, two acres of the best quality of soil in the United States. Such of you as have been brought up in the field, will do better for yourselves and for the country, to go to farming at once. Every farmer aids in the production of a surplus for commerce. Liberia needs farmers more than any other class."

The character of the emigrants sent out by the Ashmun, was much better than that of any company that had preceded them for years. They were nearly all field-hands—familiar with the production of sugar, cotton, and tobacco—and to them the rich valley of the St. Paul's presented superior attractions. Zeb, who had thought of settling in Monrovia, until made acquainted with the ill-fortune of those who remained in the city without any definite object in view, was the first to select a farm of two hundred acres, within five miles of Caldwell, on the St. Paul's.

"We both knew how to work for our old masters, and now, that the product is to be all our own, we will work hard for ourselves," said he to Eunice, as he made his mark upon the map to designate his choice of a farm. "Let us now be off, as soon as possible," he continued, stepping toward the door of the president's office.

"Young man!" said President Roberts, calling to him,

as he was about stepping into the street; "I want to say a few words to you before you leave the city. Bring your wife to my house this afternoon, and spend the evening and night with me. I shall have a few friends."

Zeb signified his acceptance of the invitation with a true republican bow, and, at the time appointed, with Eunice upon his arm, was ushered into the president's drawing-room. There he was introduced to Chief Justice Benedict, Hilary Teage, the poet editor of the *Liberia Herald*, and to several other leading citizens of Liberia. The ladies of these gentlemen were also present, and Zeb, who was generally addressed as Mr. Roland, found himself in the full enjoyment of the social position which had ever been inseparable from his idea of true freedom.

"Three months ago," thought he, "I was a tenant of a small slave hut—a slave myself. Since that time my wife has been sold, for the purpose of being disposed of to pander to the vilest passions of a licentious master. Now we are guests in the mansion of the president of the only black commonwealth on earth. Our intercourse is with the highest dignitaries of the country. Is it not something to be free?"

The evening wore off delightfully to our new emigrants. The entertainment was pleasant and intellectual. The ladies discussed a variety of subjects, not the least interesting of which were the latest styles of dress, and the merits of the latest works of fiction produced by the American press.

"I have received, by the Ashmun," said Mrs. Benedict, "several recent publications, said to be very interesting, and the last three numbers of Harper."

"Harper," said Teage, "is not such a magazine as America needs. It is a re-hash of British literature. Some

publisher should get up a magazine which should be entirely American. There would be plenty of first-class contributors—men, too, capable of giving an individuality to the literature of America, such as it has never yet received. Think of a country being without a literature exclusively its own, which has produced such writers as Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Bancroft, Prescott, and Emerson. Is it not strange? If Liberia ever becomes such a land, as we hope she will, I hope those who live here in that day will see a literature worthy of her."

"Doubtless they will, Mr. Teage," replied Mrs. Benedict; "and I wonder that a subject so full of interest, even in our present condition, should be so much neglected. We are not without the ability; but, beside yourself and Mrs. Teage, I know of no writers among us."

"Oh, my dear madam! how can you be so unmindful of the merits of your own liege lord? beside, here's the president, and our friend, Harris of Bassa. They all contribute to the *Herald*."

"Do they, indeed?" replied the lady, smiling. "I'm glad to hear you have such efficient aid. If it could only be made to pay, now, to publish a magazine—"

"We must wait for a few more arrivals like that of our friend here," said President Roberts, alluding to Zeb, who sat at his right, and was at the time replying to some question asked by Mrs. Roberts.

The compliment was felt. Zeb bowed, and, laughing, said: "The president is too complimentary. I have yet to learn."

"An easy matter, if one is determined," said Benedict. "When I came to Liberia, I was unable to write my name."

"And my education was limited to the spelling-book, Testament and multiplication table," said the president.

"There is hope, then, for one as ignorant as I," said Zeb.

"Men who are free, can learn easily," said Teage. "Freedom favors knowledge. This is especially true of those who have been brought up under the American Constitution, and seen the effects of Anglo-Saxon laws and government. Roland will, of course, comprehend this, and, before he is aware of it, will possess the intelligence he now desires. It needs but a strong will."

"I wanted to talk with him upon that subject," said the president, "before he left Monrovia. It is a great pity that so many young men who come here, commence wrong. They seem to have an erroneous impression of Liberia, and to indulge the belief that, as soon as they arrive, their fortune is made, when the truth is, labor with them has but just commenced. Liberia is no place for play. Every person who comes here should have an object. My young friend has judiciously selected a farm. What I would say to him on the start, is, don't get discouraged. You will have sickness, and pecuniary difficulty, but a strong and abiding faith in success will ensure it. Our fine soil and tropical climate are so favorable to culture of almost every kind, that a man can readily make a living. It may be coarse at first, and he may feel the want of some things, which, even in slavery, he has been accustomed to, but time will bring them. No man of ordinary industry need live as plain, in the beginning, as almost any of the new settlers in the States. Our productions are more desirable, and the natural fruits of spontaneous growth, more numerous. But it is specially of the rewards of labor here, that I would speak. Mr. Roland will reap these sooner than he is aware. His farm will produce two crops, in the same time that he could raise one, across the Atlantic. There is no species of tropical culture in which he can not engage

successfully. Sugar, cotton, tobacco, rice, indigo, all yield to culture. In his forests he can find the choicest gums and dyewoods. From his palm-grove he can obtain oil for export, and wine for his own consumption. Coffee, of better quality than Mocha, grows spontaneously on his hills. The most delicious tropical fruits can be grown in his orchards. Everything grows and yields continuously. Sun and rain divide and alternate the year. No winter, with its frosts, blights his crops.

"My young friend can probably appreciate practical argument, when plainly presented. He has sought in Liberia a home of freedom. He has come here to aid in perfecting the work of good government. It is in his power, as well as in the power of every inhabitant of this little Republic, to make his name famous. We wish to make Liberia an asylum for the unfortunate of our race, and to have every slave who turns his eyes hitherward, long for freedom only as the means of emigrating to our Republic. Such a time, we believe, is coming. Our desire is to hasten it. Every new farm we cultivate, every new acre we plant to cotton, sugar-cane, tobacco, or indigo, aids in the work. There is a public sentiment, on this subject of slavery, already sufficient to control the markets of the world in behalf of the products of free labor. If Liberia could supply England with cotton, she would not buy a pound of the slave States. So with other products. The experiment is in progress. Cotton and sugar are yearly on the increase in the British dominions in India, in Egypt, in Mexico, and in Central America. Shall not Liberia aid in their production, and hasten the period when the aggregate of all these countries shall present the desired competition with the slave States? We shall thus cheapen slave labor, reduce the demand for slaves, and force the

owners themselves to sell, or even liberate their servants. This should be a leading idea with every person who settles in Liberia. We are all philanthropists. We all owe a duty to our brethren in bonds across the Atlantic. Freedom is only valuable here, as it affords us the means of bringing about their redemption on the one hand, and the civilization of Africa on the other. Take this thought with you, my young friend, into the beautiful valley of the St. Paul's. It will be worth more than gold to you. When you find your labor hard, your diet coarse, and your comforts few, remember that you are working for a greater object than your own personal happiness. Let your thoughts, at such moments, cross the Atlantic to your brethren, and they will nerve your arms to renewed exertion, and beget in your very nature a spirit of thankfulness, that you are not with them in hopeless and bitter bondage.

"But I would not leave the subject here. God has promised that 'Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hand unto him.' Every man who comes to Liberia is a missionary. He owes the ignorant and depraved native population of Africa a great duty. See what our little Republic has done. We have just destroyed the last slave-factory on more than six hundred miles of coast. We have afforded protection to the only churches and clergymen that have ever labored effectually among this benighted people, for the salvation of souls. Until our Colony was established, no missionary could remain on this coast. We have been the means of partially civilizing and christianizing more than twelve thousand pagan natives. But the work is hardly begun. There is an immense field for us to labor in.

"Again," and by this time the president had grown quite

eloquent, "we have in our form of government, a problem to solve. We must prove by our success, or failure, the capacity of our race for self-government. We have brought to the African coast Anglo-Saxon customs, manners, and institutions; we have ingrafted them upon the parent tree. Shall they survive or perish? Shall Liberia grow into a mighty nation, or sink into barbarism? Our citizens should ever remember that the eyes of the world are upon them, that they are a 'city set upon a hill,' and that this little spot, extending along six hundred miles of seaboard, is the only free colored republic on the earth's wide surface.

"These, as it seems to me, should arouse every young man to exertion, who comes to Liberia, aside from any purely selfish considerations; but, when we consider that the avenues leading to preferment in any branch of industry, politics, mechanics, law, government and theology, are all wide open, it must affect every true lover of the Republic unpleasantly to think that there is a citizen here, without sufficient ambition or conscience to obey the behests of duty, patriotism and interest."

As President Roberts closed his remarks, he seized Zeb by the hand, and shaking it heartily, told him that from the first moment he saw him, he predicted a brilliant future for him.

"President," said Teage, laughing, "this beats anything you have said in the Legislative Council for years. Young man," he continued, addressing Zeb, "if you go into agriculture, make it a business. Be a good agriculturist. Bring in a large surplus every year. Send it to the States. Study the science itself. See that your land is well prepared for the wet and dry seasons. We have no good agriculturists yet in Liberia. You can make yourself a

greater public benefactor in this branch of business, than in any other, and it will prove very delightful after you are fairly commenced."

"You see, Mrs. Roland," said Mrs. Teage, "we give you but little time to play in Liberia. Work is the order of the day. Our friend, the president, is one of the most laborious men in the world, and his good lady is a pattern of economy and prudent housewifery. We all pattern after her as much as we can."

"Mr. Roland," said President Roberts, rising, "I have a specimen of the native African, in the other room, which I desire to exhibit."

"Who is it, president?" inquired Judge Benedict.

"Ballasada," answered the president. "The old warrior made his appearance in town to-day, the first time in six months, and I invited him to spend the evening with me. I just heard his voice in the other room."

The president withdrew, but almost instantly returned, followed by a tall, well-formed, athletic African, in the ordinary costume of an American citizen. Teage, Benedict, and the ladies, all rose and crowded around him, each eager to be the first to take him by the hand. When this ceremony was over, the president turned to Zeb and Eunice, and remarked:

"This, my friends, is King Ballasada, a native warrior, who, a few years ago, was the principal fighting man of the Golahs, one of the most powerful native tribes in this part of Africa."

The old chief shook Zeb and Eunice cordially by the hand.

"How does it happen," inquired Zeb, "that one of so much character with his people, has forsaken them?"

"Ballasada sabe gub'ner, see town, see 'em read Bible,

pray for God, and all grow, sabe ship, farm, leetle boy, leetle gal, read book in, make palaver much on paper, send 'em ober de big water. Ballasada want to be so too, no lub gree gree any more, no care for fetish, want to be like 'merica man, carry 'em back, makey all black folks like 'merica man, too, build church, hab school, read, make talk with feather and all."

"There's a specimen of perseverance for you," said the president. "When you feel dispirited, think of the example of this old native, and take courage. Africa has been greatly belied in the States. Those who think there is no desire for knowledge among the natives, ought to see Ballasada. He was so much distinguished as a warrior in his tribe, that the king, by right, became jealous of him. I visited Yando, for the purpose of making a treaty of amity, and there, for the first time, saw Ballasada. Before I left, he applied to me for leave to move within the boundaries of our colony, and become a subject. I granted him the privilege as soon as I could, and he resigned his chiefship, and is now one of our best citizens. No man in Liberia would fight harder to preserve our independence than Ballasada."

"Is he a member of any church?" inquired Zeb.

"Ask him," replied the president.

Anticipating the question, Ballasada, with an expression of solemnity, raised his hands and cast his eyes upward, exclaiming,

"Ballasada love God and Jesus Christ!"

"How did you worship before you loved them?" inquired Eunice.

"Ballasada then fear devil, no care for God, hab fetish, leetle grasshopper on pole, beat tom tom, scare away devil, keep gree gree for not get kill in fight, kill wife, drink from

skull, feed sassawood, eat enemy, make beads and spike for nose and ears, from bones. Now Ballasada pray God, feel so happy, so good to enemy, he want all for be jis likey him, only better."

"What will you do for your poor people?"

"Long time, great many years may-be, they be likey 'merica man, too; raise sugar, cotton, cassida, indigo, coffee, all such. Sabe how trade, send to 'merica, bring back money, build church, big houses, buy clothes, burn up gree gree, live happy, make leetle boy and gal learn, may-be."

"When will you commence?"

Ballasada laughed such a laugh, that both Zeb and Eunice jumped from their chairs, greatly to the amusement of the listeners. The king then gave them his hands confidently, to signify that he meant no harm, and replied, laughing,

"Gub'ner knows. He send missionary there now, right 'mong my people. Dey lub him, think for kill him, gub'ner kill me. Dis make 'em safe. I go there tell 'em for lub missionary. Leetle child go for him school, sabe read, sabe make feather talk, sabe everything, like 'merica man."

"Have you a wife?"

"Great many wife, old, young, all dere."

"Don't you think it's wicked to have so many?"

"Me no sabe. Lub 'em all, lub me. No spare any leetle children, big children all canty leave one for 'noder. Better live with 'em now. My people do better, may-be. Young man takey but one, lib with her, she die, takey one more, but only one for time, that's the way now, foreber."

Supper was now announced, and the president's lady led the way through a pair of folding-doors into a spacious and neatly-furnished dining apartment. There was nothing

ostentatious in the furniture or crockery. It was plain, neat, and such as our citizens daily see in their own dwellings. The food was tropical. A plate of baked bananas was placed in the center of the table. A small plate of boiled rice, formed in a teacup, stood by the plate of each guest, as a substitute for bread. Coffee was the beverage, instead of tea. Arrowroot custard, pineapples sliced and spread with grated sugar, and a plate of large oranges, composed the luxuries upon which the friends of the president were invited to partake. Grace was asked standing, and in all else the manners of the Liberians, at meal-time, were like our own.

When supper was over the party returned to the parlor. Singing was introduced, and Eunice delighted the company with several songs of modern origin. Her fine voice and animated appearance while singing, took them by surprise, and they did not cease to importune her, until she had sung nearly every song she knew. Ballasada and Mrs. Benedict sat down to a game of dominoes, of which the chief seemed remarkably fond; and Mrs. Roberts played several waltzes and song-tunes upon the guitar. The gentlemen conversed upon topics of general interest, and, in truth, had an American popped in upon the company, he would have seen a repetition of the occurrences, amusements, and conversation, with which his own people enliven their social gatherings. At eleven o'clock the guests signified, by their movements, a disposition to disperse, and the president drew out a small table upon which lay a large family Bible and hymn-book. From the latter he read a familiar hymn, in the singing of which the whole company joined—even Ballasada, whose discordant notes were heard above all the rest. The president then read a chapter in

Psalms, and the company knelt and united with him in a fervent prayer.

Zeb and Eunice were the president's guests for the night, and, after the remainder of the company had dispersed, the president spent an hour in giving them practical advice as to conduct and business.

CHAPTER XXVI.

But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never felt till now.

MILTON.

THE morning after his visit at the president's, Zeb purchased a cart and two pair of native oxen, and, piling his effects into the vehicle, seated Eunice upon the top of the load, and walking alongside of the oxen whip in hand, in true pioneer style, he left Monrovia in search of his new home. Descending into the lowland, he followed the course of the sluggish Montserrado a few miles, but poorly satisfied with the gloomy, unhealthy-looking country and rut-worn road. He was half inclined to feel discouraged, and to believe that all that had been told him of the luxuriance of the soil, and beauty of the forest scenery, was a fable. But the farther he traveled, the more the country improved. At length, upon emerging from a grove of beautiful teak trees, he came suddenly in view of the broad and majestic St. Paul's. The sun shone upon its silver surface, in which for miles, was mirrored one of the most gorgeous forests in the world. Zeb cast his eyes up and down the expansive valley, and, for a moment, thought he had never seen anything so beautiful. Eunice, for the first time in an hour, spoke to express her delight, and the feelings of disappoint-

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ment which both had been nursing quietly for the preceding hour, vanished in a moment.

"Beautiful—most beautiful!" exclaimed Eunice. We can not fail of being happy where everything that meets the eye affords pleasure."

While pausing to look at the scene before them, and give the oxen a breathing spell, a number of half-naked natives passed with calabashes of palm oil on their heads, which they were taking to Monrovia to sell. They fixed a curious stare upon Zeb and Eunice, but made no stop.

Every step of the distance, from the point where they entered the valley of the St. Paul's, to the land which Zeb had purchased, revealed new beauties of scenery and vegetation. Soon, nestled away amid a cluster of palms and orange trees, the little agricultural settlement of Caldwell, with its white cottages and neat little church, formed a prominent object in the landscape. The gentle slope from the village to the river, with small clusters of trees and patches of herbage, looked like a picture of fairy land. Zeb could scarcely realize that the panorama before him was not the impression of a vivid dream. He reflected upon the change which a few months had made in his condition, and inwardly thanked God that the unpleasant memories of the past would soon be forgotten, never to be revived.

At Caldwell he found his friends Collier and Jackson, who had left Monrovia the day before. They had selected farms near Zeb's, and were waiting his arrival at Caldwell, that they might assist each other in the erection of houses. Leaving their families at Caldwell, they proceeded in company in pursuit of their land. Collier's land was the first, Zeb's three quarters of a mile beyond, and Jackson's about a mile beyond Zeb's. The three farms joined, and

lay upon a stretch of the river of more than three miles in length, in a direct line, so that each could see the others' dwellings, when they were completed. There was something in the landscape, soil, and climate, that imparted a cheerfulness to these three men, which caused them, for the time, to forget all the hardships and sufferings of their past lives. If we could suppose how a prisoner, who had been, for years, unjustly confined, would feel on the moment of his release, it would probably convey to our minds some idea of the pleasing emotions which animated theirs. A sense of freedom, such as they had never before experienced, took possession of them, and they now questioned each other, to ascertain if either had any lingering regrets. But there were none. Liberia far exceeded their expectations. They felt contented to take any fortune that awaited them, without a wish to return to such fortune as was theirs in America.

"People of our color," said Collier, "that can come here, are fools to remain in America. If they could know the truth, they would not. But there has been so much hostility, among the Abolitionists, to Colonization, that the blacks of the free States hardly know what to believe. Many of them think that this country is, in every respect, worse than it is represented; and that if they come here, they will not, in case of disappointment, be permitted to return. I can't believe that any colored man from America, bond or free, ever saw this beautiful valley, and indulged a wish afterward to return to the States. Why should he? America contains nothing equal to it. Look at those forests of teak, camwood, and barwood! See yonder coconut groves and orange orchards! Examine the fair, round, plump berry of this native coffee, and this profuse growth of indigo! Remove your hat, and bathe in this delightful

breeze! Watch the ripples and rifts in the majestic river! Cast your eyes from valley to upland, and take in the whole thing at a glance! Has America anything to compare with it? Two years, at most, of prudent, active exertion, ought to place us all beyond want. America should help this little Republic now. An intelligent farmer at Caldwell, told me to-day, that Liberia needed a market at home, or means sufficient to transport her products across the Atlantic. The commerce could be trebled immediately, if this were the case. Settlers would live easier, and there would be more capital in the country to favor internal improvements and pecuniary operations. There is hardly an article raised here which does not enter largely into the consumption of the Americans, for some purpose. We can furnish many things in larger quantities, and at cheaper rates, than they can be obtained through intercourse with any other people; and there is every motive for America to control, as she may, the bulk of our trade. It is the only discouraging thing in the whole enterprise of Colonization. We may work and accumulate large surplus products, and have them spoil upon our hands for want of a market. The gentleman I spoke of, said that the British Government had obtained a large traffic, through the medium of the slave factories, in gold, ivory, grain and hides. What should prevent this trade from going immediately to America? The United States will receive thousands of dollars in return for every dollar she can expend in establishing a regular communication, by steam, with Liberia, beside imposing upon the Liberians a debt of lasting gratitude for the accommodation. This is a matter, however, that will regulate itself. I expect we shall have close times for awhile; but, at no distant day, Liberia will be dealt justly with by other nations."

"Yes," replied Zeb, "when other nations find it for their interest to deal justly by us. We stand no equal chance. Our color makes the difference. We have prejudice to overcome. But we can work, and make such good use of the benefits we enjoy, as to force other nations to respect us. Pay them for it, and they'll be good friends; but when we ask for help simply, it'll never come. I've tested the boasted generosity and kindness of white men, until I am satisfied."

Collier took a map from his pocket, and compared the description with the land over which they were passing, and found they had arrived at his farm. He soon explored the boundaries. A little one side of the center, on the brow of the upland, they found a fine spring, which gurgled up over the surface, and flowed, in a small creek, to the river.

"Here," said Collier, "I'll build my cabin. The spring is convenient, and, seemingly, unfailing. The prospect is extensive and delightful. Look up and down. Can anything be more beautiful!"

The timber was now felled, and the oxen set to hauling it to the spot. Before the close of the third day, the rough log-cabin of Collier was inclosed, and everything completed except the roof and chinking, which Collier could make at his leisure. Before the close of the next week, Zeb and Jackson were provided with similar cabins, and had entered into the occupancy of them with their respective families.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Shall we resign
Our hopes, renounce our rights, forget our wrongs,
Because an impotent lip beneath a crown
Cries, "Be it so!"

SIR A. HUNT.

GREAT events have transpired at Washington since we left it. Zachary Taylor, the people's president, has been gathered to his fathers, and the administration of the government is in the hands of new men. The Omnibus Bill, as was predicted, has been defeated, and Congress is employed in the separate consideration of its various parts. The failure of the Cuban expedition has caused the club, to which the reader has been introduced, to disband; and those who were its members, to disavow all knowledge that it ever existed. Lopez, who was regarded as a patriot and sagacious officer, is now denounced as a fusty old enthusiast. The great game of southern politicians, to wheedle the North into the support of slavery extension, has failed in all its parts. The address of the Nashville convention, and the solemn farce enacted by that assemblage, have had no other effect than to renew the derision of the North for southern tricks and bravado.

The debate in Congress has cooled. Southerners have ceased to threaten vengeance, which they never intended

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to execute; and northerners, to affect despondency, which they never experienced. The dark cloud which, it was said, hung over the Union, charged with "firebrands, arrows and death," has exploded in smoke. Southern members, who declared that the Union was dissolved, having had an opportunity to test its powers of cohesion, have come to a different conclusion. Indeed, the Federal City is as destitute of excitement as it always is during the intervals of Congress, except that the public offices are infested, as usual, upon the incoming of a new administration, by hordes of office-seekers. Day by day the subject of Californian annexation is discussed, with all the pertinacity of versatile repetition and multiplied denunciation. Members from North and South are wearied out, and anxious for an adjournment. The summer is hot and sultry, and nearly over. Many, compelled by duty to remain and participate in the final action upon the great question, sigh for an interval, when they can hie with their families to Cape May or Newport—bask in the dissipation of Saratoga, or the giddy whirl of Niagara. Many, who felt that their presence might not be needed for a few days, have gone, with railroad speed, to their homes, to glance at their families, and return.

Our friend Tidbald belongs to neither of these classes. He is still hoping that something may occur to change the California bill, and make the Eldorado a slave State. With his devotion to Southern interests—his admiration of the "peculiar institution," how should it be otherwise with him? His efforts to bring public opinion in the South, to his standard, have all failed. The Mississippi address, which breathed little else than threatenings, failed, and the Nashville manifesto, milder in expression, and marked by greater consideration, never received a second

thought among Northern people. Tidbald can not comprehend it. Giddings and Chase, for aught he can discover, eat as much, appear as cheerful, and seem to think that danger is as far off as ever. Seward shows no malignity. Honest John Davis is just as free and candid in the expression of his opinions against the extension of slavery as ever. Tidbald has read with care and scrutiny, the leaders of the Tribune and Post, and other prominent Northern journals, but can discover no change in their tone. The truth is, he is disappointed, because the North is not frightened. He is angry because Northern men have not failed to perceive, in the efforts and devices of the South, a design to cajole them. He has been looking over the Blue Book, counting the majority of Southerners, who hold office under the government. He has been examining a compendium of the census, to calculate how much the vote of the South would be increased by the growth of slavery for the past ten years. He has been making an estimate of the effect, which the addition of California, as a free State, will have in abridging the political power of the South. Tidbald has been busy, very busy, but all, as he thinks, to little purpose. Poor man! He is jaded and worn. There is an anxious, even sinister expression on his countenance, and he is observed to watch with untiring attention everything that is said on the admission of California, and to take copious notes, as if preparing for an elaborate effort. From the moment of meeting in the morning, until the adjournment for the day, he is in his place. Not a word or look escapes him. Even his friend Winstead, and his love of good liquor, for the last few days, have failed to lure him from his post.

Observe him, reader, at this moment. He has just received Thornton's letter, informing him of the arrival of

his niece. He reads it carelessly — as if it were a duty rather than a pleasure. With customary promptness he prepares to welcome his niece, and draws the paper, upon his desk, toward him for that purpose, and writes the date, commencing the letter thus:

"MY DEAR"——

"What's her name," he mutters, as he refers to Frank's letter to find it. "Ah! Celestine," and then he writes the name, and sits looking upon the paper, wondering what he shall say next. Just as he is about to resume writing, a member from Indiana rises, and asks leave to renew his motion for a suspension of the rules, to permit him to introduce a bill for the admission of California, as a State, into the Union. Tidbald pushes the paper hastily from him, thrusts his pen into his pocket, and gives his entire attention to the fate of the motion. The vote is taken and it is lost.

"Good," he mutters. "May it ever meet a like fate." He now resumes writing to his niece.

"I am so much engrossed with the great question now under discussion here, and which so vitally affects the interest of the South, that I have not time"——

"Tid," whispers a voice in his ear. "Tid, the Senate have admitted California, *free!*"

"The devil!" he replies, dropping his pen, and staring at Winstead bewilderingly.

"Even so, old fellow. Come, let's go and take an imbiber, on the strength of it."

"Just as I was congratulating myself upon the failure of Robinson's motion. But is it beyond recall, Winstead? Did Butler say nothing? Was Mangum silent?"

"All of no avail," replied Winstead. "The bill went straight through."

"The devil," again exclaimed Tidbald, as if the name of his satanic majesty was the only one left for him to utter, in this exigency.

"Come," said Winstead, pulling him by the arm.

"No, Ben, no! I can't go. I won't drink over any such unholy performance; beside, there is more reason now than ever, that I should watch here."

"What's to be gained by it, man? You can't prevent the admission. The Senate, on my motion, will proceed immediately to act upon the Territorial bill."

"I don't object so much to that, Ben, because it leaves the bars down, and we can work our card there hereafter; but the admission of California, in such an unquestionable shape, is a grievous calamity to the South."

"You must play the Nashville game harder next time. But this is no place to talk. Cobb is looking daggers at us now for disturbing the House. There is neighbor Sam looking over this way. He seems awful dry," and Winstead beckoned to one of the members, who instantly rose and came to the place where he was standing. "Here, Sam," said he, "Tid is so very angry with our conduct in the Senate, that he won't go and drink."

"It must have been very culpable," replied the member, "if it can produce that effect upon him. What have you been doing?"

"Admitting the gold diggers," said Winstead.

"The jig's up, then. Well, it's as I expected. Come, Tid, console yourself with the comfortable reflection that what's did can't be helped. Let's go and take just the least drop of that last importation. It'll do you good, and brace your spirits up against the calamity that awaits

you in the House. "Come, come," said Sam, pulling him.

"Order!" shouted the speaker. "The sergeant-at-arms will cause the members to be seated."

"There, come now," said Winstead, and Tidbald reluctantly rose and followed him and Sam to the restaurant.

"I feel," said he, "quite too sad to indulge in hilarity, gentlemen. A great evil has befallen the South. You can not realize it as I do. It is the entering wedge to successive and continued northern encroachments."

"Ay," replied Winstead, laughing, "but had the question been decided differently, you would have been one of the first members to repeat the vile slander of John Randolph. But never mind, Tid: there is enough territory left. We've compromised the compromise, and the North has not seen the last of it yet. They may find from a more bitter experience, that, hereafter, slavery is not to be stayed by compromises, and that to make compromises popular may be as beneficial to one part of the Union as the other. Let them look well to it. It's a game we all can play at."

"I don't understand you, Winstead," said the member they called Sam, "whether your insinuations are meant for North or South."

"He means to be President," said Tidbald, "and by southern votes."

Winstead colored, and felt that he had betrayed himself, but, laughing pleasantly, replied to Tidbald's half serious, half joking impeachment, "Come now, Tid: that's a pretty good symptom of your recovery from the fit of the 'awful suz.'"

"Twitting upon facts, eh, Ben," said Sam, at the same moment swallowing nearly half a tumblerful of the article he had denominated the "last importation."

"Glorious Otard! glorious," said Winstead, setting his tumbler forcibly upon the box. "It'll dispel your troubles, Tid. Give us a cracker, barkeeper; your pewter's out; and come, Sam, don't keep Tid any longer. Take advantage of the sunshine, for 'twill be rainy weather with him soon enough."

Returning to his seat in the House, Tidbald was reminded of his letter to his niece by seeing it, in an unfinished state, on his desk, and, resuming it where he left off, he wrote:

"even to express to you, in suitable terms, the pleasure I feel at hearing of your safe arrival at T——. Frank also informs me that you have found agreeable quarters with my friend Miss Roland, to whom I am greatly obliged for her politeness. Make yourself as happy as possible. I shall soon be with you to welcome you. In the meantime, accept the inclosed trifle, which will probably be sufficient to meet your present want.

Your affectionate uncle,

GEORGE TIDBALD.

He inclosed in this letter a hundred dollar bill, sealed and addressed it to Celestine, and then inclosed it in another of greater brevity, which he addressed to Frank.

Other persons in Washington, beside the Hon. George Tidbald, were suffering severely from disappointment. The death of Zachary Taylor was a heavy blow to the Freesoilers. They had distrusted him, at the commencement of his administration, for the reason that he was a southern slaveholder; but, after having witnessed his integrity and the firmness with which, even unto death, he had resisted the importunities and threats of the South, their confidence in him had increased, and they felt that, in his hands, their cause would, at least, be respected. No such confidence was reposed in Mr. Fillmore, who was known to be a conservative, and no proviso was anticipated during his administra-

tion. The hope which they trusted to the honest nature of old Zack, that the Territorial bill, without the proviso, would be vetoed, was lost, in the full belief that, with the proviso, it would have shared the same fate at the hands of his successor. There was bitter regret in the thought that they must be defeated, but it was not on their own account. They foresaw, as Winstead did, that this was but the beginning of evil, and that the Territories would follow California—first, New Mexico and Utah, and after them, sooner or later, Kansas and Nebraska, and that compromises would be broken, promises violated, and compacts destroyed. It was this flood of evils which they felt to be a disappointment; but they strove to make a virtue of necessity in this exigency, and pledged to each other an undying hostility to slavery from that time thenceforth. They tried to persuade themselves that, by pursuing such a course, they might avert the consequences which they had predicted, and arouse a public sentiment sufficiently strong in the North to repel the aggressions of the South.

"Shame on such sacrifices!" said Hale, while in conversation with Campbell. "Shame on such sacrifices, as long as they must be made at the expense of honesty as well as freedom. Our northern members are all hostile to this extension, but it is the slavish fear of demagogism—dread, lest thereby they should lose their bread and butter, that prevents them from openly opposing it. We are sold—sold cheap, dog-cheap, as John Randolph used to say; but it will never do to give it up so. The battle is but begun. The honest, thinking commonalty of the North will not always wear the yoke peaceably. Let us fight on, and fight with a will. The power to check the slaveholder, and keep slaves within their present confines, will accumulate upon our hands from this time forward, and every movement in

favor of extension, whether successful or not, will but hasten our triumph."

"We will have it," replied Campbell. "If all the northern States were as true as mine, there would be no battle to win. Let them succeed to the full extent in the matter of the Territories. Reaction — strong, sympathetic, religious reaction will be immediate and irrevocable. Thank God! the crisis has arrived to a point where the North can only be fooled once more. The day of retribution is at hand."

The conservative interest, of which the President was, by his position, the acknowledged leader, was the only party that was fully satisfied. North and South, under the modest claim that, but for them, the Union would have been dissolved, they indorsed the whole succession of measures from the Texas Indemnity bill down to the admission of the Territories. It was right all the way through, and anything else would have been perfectly ruinous. The non-combatant principle, or as near it as possible, without meddling with slavery, was the doctrine upon which, in their opinion, the salvation of the country depended. If it was to be disturbed at all, incline it, as much as possible, to the South. Make the scale preponderate in that direction, and keep the chivalry quiet. Allay agitation, because it begets excitement, the end of which is dissolution and bloodshed. Affirm the old fugitive law, surround it with guards, and make it an efficient and certain means of recapture. Deny the right of Habeas Corpus to the slave, and make him really property, but call it by a milder name. Make northern people believe, if possible, that any other course would be unpatriotic and destructive of the compromises of the constitution. Suffice it to say that it was a majority of such fusty old politicians as these,

that destroyed the proviso, passed the Fugitive bill, and furnished the precedent that compromises were not finalities."

And what a plea was theirs! They believed that these measures would amount to an adjustment, for all time, of the difficulties between the North and South, that they were, in themselves, a finality. They supposed by the passage of the Fugitive bill, the free people of the North would feel obliged to restore every poor, hunted negro, that was found in the act of making his escape, to his condition of servitude and misery. Southerners exulted in this feature of the adjustment. Even Tidbald could not repress a smile of complacency, when he saw how completely the North was under the control of the South.

"Government," said he, "foots the bill of recapture, and the North performs the labor. That must set well on their free-soil stomachs, and make the pulpit-denouncers of our institution particularly happy. But they will obey or hang. It will try their principle, and we shall soon see how many of them are willing to die for their faith. We shall learn who are the descendants of the good old Puritan stock."

These different shades of opinion, partaking, in some degree, of the moral and religious elements by which men are controlled, naturally increased the coldness which had previously existed between parties. It was painful to witness the frequent exhibitions of ill-feeling made by members in debate in both Houses, and at public gatherings and reunions. It was well, perhaps, for the peace of Washington, that, with the passage of the adjustment measures, the session was brought near its close. The Post-office bill and a few other measures, upon which all could unite, only remained, and these were speedily passed. Congress adjourned, and Washington was empty.

In less than three weeks after his letter of welcome to his niece, Tidbald was on his way, by the most speedy conveyance, to his home, where the reader must await his arrival, until we return from a brief visit to the humble home of Tom and Nan.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age.

BYRON.

FREEDOM is a precious boon. Without it no one can be happy or even know in what happiness consists. The apologists for slavery contend that negroes are happier in servitude than when free. Judged by their standard of what constitutes freedom, and what, slavery, we can readily admit this proposition to be true. Indeed, we have seen slaves apparently much happier than the negroes of the free States; yet it was not because they were in servitude, but simply for the reason that those with whom they were contrasted were not free. We doubt if, as a general thing, the condition of the slave is at all improved by a removal to the free States. And so thought our friends, Tom and Nan, before they had resided three months at W——.

"High!" said Tom to his better-half, one evening, after a hard day's work at his shop. "High, Nan! Dis is hard place for cullud pusson to lib in. I could stan' it, pervided de people would b'leve I was hones'. Dey come and git shaved, pay der sixpence, and go right off widout sayin' anyting to make a feller feel good-natured, or t'ink dat dey cared 'bout him at all. Ole mass'r neber done so.

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He used to say, 'Tom, you're a good boy,' when I pleased him, or 'Tom, you're a fine feller, Tom,' and you could see by de wink ob his eye, dat he was please wid you beyond 'spression. But dese norder folk, dey say, 'Come, nigger, hurry and shave me,' or else dey look at you so kind o' 'portant like, jes as if dey hated you like pizen. If I was sick, none ob 'em would care; if I war almos' starve, dey wouldn't feed me, and I war eber so rich, dey would only try to git my money by ebery means in deir power. High, Nan! Ole woman! I's half a mine to go back to young missus."

"Don't do no such a t'ing, Tom. We's come and we's stay, and hab jes so much ob de freedom as we can. If dey don't treat us good, we's not to blame for't. I's drefful tired movin' about, and can put up wid more nor I useter, for de sake ob bein' quiet."

"And not have anybody to care for you, or look at you kindly?" said Tom. "De money which I pick up by six-pences, buys us a good libin', ole woman, but I doesn't feel one bit more free, dan I did on the ole plantation. Den, to be sure, I wan't my own man. My money was massr's, but den I could dance, and sing, and play de banjo, and go to meetin', and see great many good times, but here I mus' behave all'ays jes so. Dese norder people ti'nk it's suffin drefful for nigger to larf—they feel 'sulted if he speak to 'em eber so civil, and dey watch him all de while, jes as if dey t'ought he would steal, or do suffin wicked. I feel, all de while, jes like I was goin' to do suffin bad, dat would make dem swear at me or kick me. I aint nuffin nor nobody, here. I tell one yes'erday, dat soon as I got money 'nough, I's goin' to open a store. He look at me all exprise. 'Yes,' he say, 'you'll open store, you will, ober the lef'.' I say to one, 'noder day, how, dat soon

I git little money ahead, I shall not brack boots or shave any more. He kind a larf. 'Well, nigger,' he say, 'what you t'ink you good for, if 'tain't to brack boots and shave?' 'To sell goods,' I say, 'and be merchant.' 'Who eber hear ob such thing as nigger merchant?' he say, and den he hole his head back, and larf all de while, so I can't hardly shave him. 'Noder one bring me greasy ole coat, and want me to clean it, and when I tole him I got nuffin for do it with, he say, 'You mus' be d——n ignorant nigger, dat's all I got to say.' 'Noder want to trade me an ole hat, worn almos' out, and I say to him, 'I neber buys any but new hat.' He looks at me, and 'plies, 'Well, dis hat good 'nough for d——n nigger anyhow.' I don't know hardly what I shall do. Dere's no freedom in all this."

"Ki, Tom" answered Nan, "dey'll git right by-m-by, and den you'll unstan' dem. You must wait wid patience. Keep workin', be hones', 'tend to your own business, and den dey'll t'ink your'e good man 'nough. I has been jes so. When I went to wash las' week, missus, she say I mus' keep in de back kitchen. I didn't hab no dinner 'till all de res' was done—de hired man, and gal and all—and den dey let me set down at de table, and pick de bones, and eat de leavins; and de hired gal, she take hole of my plate, when I got t'rough, wid her t'umb and finger, jes as if it would pisen her. And dey look at me so sharp, and missus went out, her own self, after I hang up 'de clothes, and count 'em all, and come in and say right afore me, to de hired gal, dat she guess dar's none gone, jes as if she 'spected I would steal suffin. It make me feel bery bad, but den I t'ink dey git over it pretty soon."

"Dey neber'll do it, Nan," said Tom. "It's our skin, woman! Dey hate niggers, and can't help it. I heerd dat ole landlord say, dat he wish dere would neber be

'nother nigger. He say dey all ob a piece. Dey'll lie and steal, dey smell bad, and look like de debbil hisself, dey're lazy, and good-for-nuffin. And de men dat he say it to seem to tink jes like him. A nigger don't stan' no chance here. He can't neber be anybody. I wish I had gone with Zeb to Libery."

"Goshums, nigger! don't say dat. If dis is bad place, Libery's wus. Dey'll die dere, and here we can lib."

"Yes, like hosses or cows, or any oder dumb animal, to be 'bused and trod on," replied Tom bitterly. "I tell you, ole woman, I come here for to be free. I t'ought I might be like men—talk—visit—vote, my own self, and may-be, be officer, and have all de same privilege like white man. But dis place have no freedom for de brack man. Tudder day, when dey 'lected justice, I ask de men who took de votes, if I might vote, and dey larf and joke over it a hour. Who eber hear of such t'ing as nigger votin', say one of 'em."

"Our young missus tole us it would be so," said Nan, "but she say we mus' behabe oursels, and we'll git 'long."

"Dat ole feller, mass'r Wheeler, tole us so in the wood-yard, too. He say we better stay dere, we's goin' 'way from home."

Tom's troubles increased daily in number and magnitude. Before he had been three months a resident of W——, he learned that even in the free States, white freedom was quite a different thing from black freedom, which, in his experience, had really been hardly preferable to slavery. He became convinced, that to defend himself from the afflictions and disasters, which were brought upon him, through the mere influence of prejudice, he ought to have more education, a better knowledge of business, and differ-

ent ideas upon the subject of freedom, than those with which he had commenced.

"After all," said he, while talking over the matter with Nan. "After all, honey, I's nuffin but a nigger, and wid all de knowledge in de world, I can neber 'spect to be treated like a white man. Dem who tole me so afore I come here, don't know nuffin 'bout it, so well as I do. Dey wan't niggers, and none but niggers can tell. I have jes de same kind of feelin's as the white man—tink jes as much of myself, but it's no use. Dere's not so much 'spect for a nigger's feelin's here, as dey is 'mong de slaves."

To cap the climax of his misfortunes, Tom was one day arrested on suspicion of stealing, and taken before a justice for examination. He was in a distressed state of mind, and poor Nan, fearful that he would be taken off to prison, cried as if her heart would break. A guest at the hotel missed twenty dollars, and suspected Tom, simply because he had seen him in the hotel an hour before.

"What's your name, nigger?" inquired the justice, looking very fiercely at Tom, as he was ushered into his presence by the constable.

"Thomas Shannon, sir," answered Tom, in a very humble tone.

"Where'd ye come from, when you came here?"

"From Massassip State."

"Hem—you was a slave, I s'pose?"

"Yes, mass'r."

"Run away, may-be, ought to be back there now?"

"No, mass'r," replied Tom, "I was set free by my old mass'r, in his will."

"Not very likely. But how came you to steal this man's money? That's the question."

"Mass'r," said Tom, looking the picture of an abused person, "I didn't steal it. I neber saw it."

"No, no, Mass'r Justice," exclaimed Nan, throwing herself at the feet of the magistrate, and clasping his knees, "I know he didn't steal it. 'Tain't like him. He was allays hones'."

"Take away the wench," cried the justice, thrusting Nan forcibly from him. "Take her out of court. We can't be disturbed in the administration of justice by any such annoyances. You say," he continued, addressing Tom, while the constable led Nan screaming away; "you say you did not steal it?"

"Yes I do, mass'r," answered Tom, casting a sorrowful glance at his wife, as she was pulled over the threshold.

"We shall see," said the justice; "sit down. Let the complainant rise and be sworn."

The person thus designated, arose, and was in the act of taking the oath, when his eyes chanced to light upon the jagged corner of a bill sticking out of the watch-pocket in his vest.

"Stop, 'squire," said he. "I remember all about it now. Here's the money. The nigger didn't take it. I put it in this pocket to keep it safe, and forgot it."

"That happens well for you, prisoner," said the magistrate, "for if he had not found the money, my duty would have compelled me to commit you for trial, even upon suspicion. Go about your business, but be very careful how you are arrested again."

"The darkey's none too good, I guess, though he did 'scape this time, observed Nixon, the landlord.

"Of course not," the magistrate replied, "but he could not be committed, under the circumstances."

"Tom, my poor fellow," said a kind-looking man, who

had witnessed the entire farce before the justice, "you have been badly treated. It's a hard place for you here. After this, the people will be very suspicious of you, and you will have the credit of stealing, however innocent. I would go to some larger place."

"Where can I go, mass'r, and be free from dese troubles?" inquired Tom, impressed with the good-nature of his adviser.

"To some city, Tom—some larger place—where there are a good many of your own color, and you can escape observation."

Tom thanked the man for his advice, and hastened home to his lowly cabin. Poor Nan, having nowhere else to go, had hurried home from the justice's office, and thrown herself upon the bed, and there, alone, and in the greatest mental distress, had been prematurely attacked with the pains of labor, and brought into the world a dead child. Tom hastened for a doctor, and by paying him a large fee in advance, prevailed upon him to go to the relief of his wife.

A fever followed, and the poor woman was brought near the grave. During her illness, Tom was obliged to act as nurse and cook, and to abandon his business altogether. Poor Nan! Not a soul visited her during her illness, and the attending physician having made known its cause among the villagers, she became the subject of heartless jest and cruel ribaldry. Her sickness nearly stripped Tom of all his earnings, as well as of the means left him by his old master. In his extremity of distress, he went to the man who had spoken kindly to him, and requested him to write, in his behalf, a letter to Miss Adela. The man kindly performed the task, and upon Tom's assurance that she would send him some money, even let him have a few dollars for

immediate use. Nan was very weak and thin, and though declared convalescent, was obliged to live upon light diet, and keep her bed most of the time. Day after day passed away without making any perceptible change for the better in Nan's condition. Poverty and distress stared Tom full in the face, and his courage, which had never before known any more severe trial than an occasional scolding on the plantation, now fairly quailed under his misfortunes.

"Where," he exclaimed, in his grief, "where is de Abolitioners dat dey tole me 'bout in ole Massassip. Why dey no come now and help poor nigger, when he want help more dan eber afore in his life? Where is de frien's what carry runaway slaves t'rough to Canada? Dere's enough here dat knows of my condition and poor Nanny's sickness. But dey no help me, 'cause I's brack."

The man who had aided Tom came occasionally to see him, and contributed to his relief as much as in his power.

"I'll tell you, Tom," said he, while conversing with him on one of these visits. "I don't like to advise you to go back to slavery, but these free States are awful hard upon a negro, when he is reduced to your condition. There's no mercy for you anywhere, not even among the Abolitionists themselves. They think that as soon as you get into a free State, their duty is performed. If your mistress sends you money, Tom, I don't know, if I were you, but I should use it to get back to her."

Nan, who overheard the advice, rose up in bed and told Tom not to think of it. "Let us go to de city," said she, "I shall soon go to work, and will git de money it has cost us, all back again."

"You're an ambitious creature," said the man, "and may be you're right. I want to advise you for the best."

"I neber lost anyting yet," said Tom, "by following

Nan's advice. She allays knows what's best to be done, when dey's any trouble about."

"Well, well, Tom," replied his friend, "I don't say nothin' agin it. I thought just as yer wife did at first, and p'raps it's best, after all."

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Three weeks passed away, and yet Nan was unable to sit in a chair. She could bear to be propped up on pillows, and eat sparingly of boiled rice and chicken tea. The time had passed when Tom should receive a remittance from his mistress, and the poor fellow began to feel that he was forgotten by all the world. The people of the village, with the exception of the kind-hearted man who had befriended him, had never thought of him, unless in connection with some circumstance which gave them opportunity to vent their prejudice against the race to which he belonged. It was the darkest period of his existence, and many a day did he sit by the bedside of his suffering wife, with nothing to eat, during the twenty-four hours, but a few baked potatoes. Yet, within hailing distance of his cabin, dwelt families who had an abundance of every necessary. His nearest neighbor was a man who would open his house at midnight to receive the fugitive from slavery, fight in his defense, if necessary, and brave the coldest weather to transport him on his journey to Canada. But for the destitute sojourner by his side, he had no feeling but that of prejudice.

Our readers may judge that we have drawn this picture too strongly against the suffering negro in our midst. We shall be rejoiced if it prove so. It is better to fail on the side of humanity, than on the side of prejudice. One object of our story is to arouse the people of the North to a just appreciation of their own relation toward the negro,

and to convince them, if possible, that, before he can be free among them, or even before, as a general thing, his condition can be improved, by exchanging slavery for a residence among them, they must divest themselves of some of the most violent and inhuman prejudices that ever held captive the mind of man.

After Tom had given up all hope of aid from any quarter, his friend brought him a letter from Miss Adela, inclosing a fifty dollar bill. She advised him to go to some larger place; and gave him, as a reason for remaining in the free States, a history of her own condition. With the money Tom was enabled to pay his debts, and procure such aid for Nan as she required during the remainder of her sickness. She finally so far recovered as to be able to take care of herself, and look a little after family affairs. Tom recommenced business in his shop, but met with no encouragement. People regarded him with suspicion, and talked of him as the nigger who was arrested for stealing money. He waited until Nan was fully restored to health, and then, at a great reduction upon the cost, sold his cabin and shop, and left T—— for the city of B——.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Is Seignior Montanto returned?

SHAKESPEARE.

THE morning after his return from Congress, Tidbald called at Ash Grove to welcome Celestine, and to counsel with Adela concerning her lawsuit.

"I am truly rejoiced to see you, and shall take great pleasure and pride, in at once adopting you as my own child," said he to Celestine, taking her heartily by the hand.

He then inquired into her early history, and when she told him of the suffering and penury to which, during the year preceding her death, her mother had been subjected, and how she had labored to provide for her during her sickness, Tidbald's countenance betrayed, by an expression of deep concern, how keenly he felt the rebuke implied by the narrative.

"Why was I kept in ignorance of this? Your mother knew that, much as I had disapproved of her marriage, I would never have permitted her to want."

"Did you receive no letters from her, uncle?" inquired Celestine.

"I did, but they were few and couched in the language of reproach, rather than complaint. She did not inform me of her need."

"Mother was proud," replied Celestine, "she would not beg."

"Nor was it necessary. If she had intimated to me that she was suffering, I should immediately have ministered to her relief."

"She wrote on the occasion of sister's death, and again when she was forsaken."

"Merely to inform me of those events, without even hinting at her condition. I was left to suppose that, while she stood in need of sympathy and kind words, she had abundance of this world's goods."

"Would it not, at that time, dear uncle, have been considerate in you to have written to her?"

"I confess it would; but, like your mother, I too had feelings that I could not easily restrain. I regret it deeply, Celestine, but do not think, because of these unhappy passages between your mother and me, that I think less of you. My failure to her in affection and attention shall be more than repaired in my love for you."

Adela, who had remained without, from motives of delicacy, now entered the room, and was cordially greeted by Tidbald, who, when offering his hand, said:

"I am greatly obliged to you, Miss Roland, for your kindness to my little girl here. I intend soon to make her my own little housewife, and shall trouble you with her, as a guest, but a short time longer."

"The obligation is all on my side, Mr. Tidbald," Adela replied. "Celestine is like a sister. I should hardly know how to part with her, especially in this season of trouble."

"I sincerely sympathize with you," said Tidbald, "and it was part of my business here to talk with you about this most unfortunate affair. Your father was such a careful, prudent man, that I am led greatly to wonder, every time

I think of it, how he was induced to indorse for such a madcap as your uncle Fancher. Do you know anything about him or his circumstances?"

"He is in California, as I am told—poor, at work in the mines, and wholly unable to pay his debts."

"Doubtless. It is the fate of the class to which he belongs. You have great fortitude, Miss Adela, to bear up so philosophically against this threatened reverse. Unless we can devise some means of defense, I suppose it will sweep away the entire estate."

"So I am told, and, indeed, I expect nothing else. The holder of the note is so certain of making his debt in full, that he declines any sort of compromise."

"That's natural—if a man has been all his life a money-lender. I have, as yet, given the subject but little attention, my time has been so much occupied at Washington, but I shall leave no stone unturned. Mr. Garnet, I am told, has been very busy ever since he was employed. He is very careful to furnish no clue to his testimony."

"Harry Westover is aiding him," replied Adela.

"The scoundrel!" exclaimed Tidbald. "What reason can he have for such a course? But it's no matter, Miss Adela, let the whole pack come on. I shall soon know what may be depended upon. Your father, if I recollect, left you sole heiress, and his will has been admitted to probate."

"He did," said Adela; "and it was his intention that I should have his entire estate."

"You have been in possession of the property, and controlled it ever since his death?"

"Yes, sir."

"I hope, uncle," said Celestine, "that you will save the estate for Adela, or, at least, the most of it."

"I think I may," he replied; "though, it must be admitted, that the prospect is not encouraging. Adela must hope, but be prepared for any fortune."

From Ash Grove Tidbald went immediately to the court-house to examine the papers in the suit. He found a simple declaration against Roland's administrator, charging that, in his lifetime, Roland had indorsed the note of Fancher, and that judgment had been obtained against Fancher, and no property found to satisfy it. The plaintiff sought now to recover the debt of Roland's estate, upon his liability.

"A pretty plain, but a pretty hard case for the young lady," thought he. "I'll just plead general issue, and give notice that the property belonged to Adela before suit was commenced against the estate, and contend that the liability did not accrue until after Roland's death. If I can make that stick they'll fail." He drew up and filed his plea and notice before leaving the clerk's office, after which he passed into the street, and met Garnet a few rods from the court-house steps. They shook hands, and after a few moments' conversation on general topics, Garnet said to Tidbald:

"By-the-by, the rule for plea is nearly out, in the suit which Ewbank has commenced against Roland's administrators. We shall insist upon a trial at the next term."

"I've just pleaded," answered Tidbald; "and, for aught I know now, will be ready at the first calling of the docket."

"All right," said Garnet, turning to go in the direction of the court-house.

"There's something about this lawsuit that I can not fathom," muttered Tidbald, as he pursued his walk to his office; "Garnet acts like a man who is certain of triumph.

I expect to be beaten — expect the estate will have to be sold to pay the indebtedness, and about that alone there will be nothing particularly strange, but there is an air of preparation about the whole matter, as if it would be so great an achievement to obtain a judgment, that I feel, and I can not tell why, as if there were something in it that I do not comprehend."

Garnet sat down in the clerk's office, and read the plea and notice, which Tidbald had filed but a few moments before very carefully. A grim smile overcast his face as he read the notice. Folding the papers carefully, he handed them to the clerk, and requesting him to make copies, walked hurriedly from the office.

"Tid has run his nose straight into the trap set for him," said he to himself. "He has raised the very question in his notice that we wished him to, and which our proof will be abundant to satisfy."

While reflecting upon the subject, Garnet was accosted by Haynes, and asked him to go with him to his office.

"Are you quite sure, Haynes, that you will be able to prove all that you told me you could about Roland?" inquired Garnet.

"You're a d—d suspicious man, or a very dishonest one, and I am at a loss to know which," said Haynes in reply. "D'ye think I told you a lie, that you repeat your question now?"

"Of course not—of course not, my dear fellow," answered Garnet. "I only wish to feel perfectly certain that we understand the thing alike, and that I shall not have to look elsewhere for testimony."

"Once for all, then, make yourself easy. My testimony will be just what I told you it would; and fully fortified, if need be, at that."

Garnet laughed a peculiar laugh. It was more than half a hiss. "Tidbald has put the very point in issue, in his notice, and depends upon it for a defense. I can sweep it to the winds with your testimony."

"Glad to hear you say so. You'll be more willing to come down with a handsome reward."

"Never fear, Haynes. We'll do the fair thing by you."

"When does Court sit?" inquired Haynes.

"Six weeks from Monday. Tidbald does not intend to apply for a continuance."

"It seems to me," said Tidbald, addressing Frank, as he entered his office. "It seems to me that Garnet is following up a scent in this case against Roland's estate, that we don't any of us understand. His declaration is a simple form of holder against indorser, which is well enough; and yet the whole thing matured after Roland's death, and his property had passed into possession of his only devisee, Adela. Now, I can't understand how he expects to hold the estate. The law is against him, and, without amending his declaration, and setting forth and proving a different state of facts, he must fail. He may get a judgment, to be sure, but he can not hold the property."

"There is something very mysterious about the matter, uncle. Garnet and Westover are together a good deal of the time, and old Haynes, without anything, seemingly, to occupy his time, has taken quarters at the hotel. They are all concerned in this lawsuit."

"I'll endeavor to sound Haynes," said Tidbald, and he turned to his library and took down Chitty on Bills, from which he made copious notes and references. At length, laying down his pen, he cast his eyes over his spectacles, at Frank, who was seated opposite to him at the table, and, in a tone half serious and half quizzical, inquired:

"How does your suit progress against the Roland estate, young man?"

"Pleadings are filed on my side, sir, but there's no issue made up yet."

"No demurrer or special plea?"

"Judgment by default probably, sir."

"If that's so," said Tidbald, smiling, "Adela need have no care about the estate. I'll supply all deficiencies. Your friend Westover is quite angry about it, I presume."

"And would have done me injury, if Captain Jake had not been at hand."

"The old nigger understands men as well as a white man," said Tidbald. "You'd better keep on guard."

"So Jake told me, and I bought a revolver, but am almost ashamed to carry it."

"Keep it by you, and don't use it, unless you are compelled; then fire home. That's my principle in those matters."

Tidbald left the office to visit his plantation. He had not been there since the search for Eunice and the death of Agnes, and as the old mansion rose again upon his view, he could not help thinking of those events. Time had mellowed his recollections of Agnes, and the passion with which he pursued her to her death was a source of regret to him whenever he referred to it. He felt a sorrow that he was loth to admit, because, by admitting it, he impliedly confessed that his treatment of her had been harsh and cruel, and therefore he strove to reason himself into the belief that the blame was hers in part, and in part chargeable to the system. He learned from Davis, the overseer, that the plantation was in fine condition, and everything was well with the servants.

"Have you ever heard from Eunice?" inquired Tidbald.

"Never a word, sir," replied Davis. "She is somewhere among the Abolitionists in Canada or the northern States."

"I think not," said Tidbald. "I set the police on the alert, at all our great thoroughfares, to keep a look out for her, and could only learn that a person answering her description, sailed as the wife of a colored emigrant for Liberia, last spring. We shall probably never see or hear of her again."

"Her husband has been worthless ever since she left."

"We'll fix that," said Tidbald. "And, by-the-by, it will afford me a good opportunity to talk with Haynes. I'll sell him. What's he worth?"

"He's a strong, able-bodied nigger, full of day's works, and a tolerable mechanic. I should think he ought to bring, at least, one thousand dollars."

Tidbald made an examination of the estate, visited the cotton gin, called at several of the huts, and spent some time in looking over the loss and gain account exhibited by his book-keeper.

"Where is Cudjo?" inquired he, as he passed out of the room.

"In the small cabin at the end of the row, on the right," said Davis. "I forgot to mention that he's married again."

"What girl?"

"Old Keziah's daughter, Zilpha."

"The rascal has good taste, anyway," replied Tidbald. "Zilph is a beauty—prettier, if possible, than Eunice. Well, I'll sell them both if I can. What's she worth?"

"She'll bring, as a fancy, perhaps, fifteen hundred; but if you can get twelve hundred, or even a thousand for her,

let her go. She's lazy, careless, and so very vain that we can do nothing with her."

Tidbald returned to his office, and from thence went to his lodgings at the hotel, intent upon driving a bargain with Haynes, if he should chance to meet him.

CHAPTER XXX.

Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand.
 HEER.

THIRTY miles down the coast from Monrovia, the beautiful river St. John's empties into the Atlantic. The land on each side of the mouth stretches away into a vast undulating plain, which gradually swells into upland, and is bounded on the east by conical hills. The whole country is covered with trees of perpetual verdure—the foliage of which is so profuse as to shut out the heavens, and almost obscure the light of the sun. Several of these hills rear their emerald summits directly in rear of the little colonial settlements of Bassa Cove, Edina and Fishtown, which stand about equidistant from each other on this delightful ocean-slope. Trees of elegant form and luxuriant foliage, embower the residences of the colonists, which, being neatly painted or whitewashed, shimmer in the sunlight through the interstices of the verdure, imparting by the happy contrast of coloring a most agreeable appearance to the wild, tropical landscape.

This spot was purchased in 1822, by the Pennsylvania Colonization Society, and under its auspices, a settlement was attempted there, upon the peaceable principles of Wil-

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liam Penn, but it was cut off by the natives in a single night. This calamity happened at a time when the Colonization movement was daily falling into disrepute, and for awhile the friends of the institution thought that it would eventuate in its final destruction. Since that time this spot has grown in favor, and at present is one of the most desirable localities in the Republic.

The Bassa Cove side of the St. John's was, before the settlement we have mentioned, the site of one of the most extensive slave factories on the coast. Easy of access—affording a fine harbor for vessels—and on the boundary of a territory filled with the most formidable native chiefs, it was only when he was compelled to do so, that the slavedealer abandoned this locality; and his desire to re-occupy it, has never from that moment forsaken his mind. But his day is over. This spot—so long the abode of misery, so frequently the witness to all the excesses of the worst, most debased society on earth, is now consecrated to the freedom of the slave, and the christianization of Africa.

Below the new settlement of Fishtown, at the time of which we write, stood a small native settlement. It was then in the occupancy of several British traders, who, in consequence of the anti-liquor law of the Republic, claimed a special exemption from that law, of all the territory, including Fishtown, and the native settlement, upon the ground that the Republic had never purchased it. Some of the new settlers protested against this assumption, and threatened to complain of the traders, if they did not at once abandon the traffic.

It is at the time when Hansen, the leading British trader, an educated native, and also Consul for the British government is denouncing in terms of unmeasured abuse this

protest, that we wish the reader to accompany us to this part of the African coast.

"It contains a base lie," said he, to two other traders, with whom he was in consultation, "this territory has never been purchased from the natives. We are under no obligation to quit the traffic, and will not. My government will sustain me in any measures I may see fit to employ to expel this usurping, self-styled President Roberts, and his subjects from the soil, and I will do it. Grando and Boyer are ready with their whole force to attack the town and kill every soul in it. Let us encourage the enterprise, and then reestablish the old factory. There's a mine of gold in the operation."

"I'm agreed," replied Spence, an old grim-looking trader, who had passed through every grade of crime familiar to an old resident on the coast of Africa. "It's what I've always contended for. We shall never have peace until we fight our way through, and expel these fellows from the territory. If I'd had my way, all of these settlements would have been cut off long ago. The best slave factory on the coast has been destroyed by 'em, and the finest set of native slave-catchers in the world, corrupted by their Methodism and hymn-singing. Send for Grando and Boyer, and let's see what they will do."

Hansen sent messengers to the villages of Grando and Boyer, which were but a few miles distant, and on the evening of the same day those sable monarchs made their appearance at his establishment. They were perfect specimens of the aboriginal inhabitants of Africa, and owed their title and authority to their immense stature and hideous features. Naked to their waists, with a piece of cloth, little more than half a yard in width, around their bodies, silver rings in their noses and ears, tin bands around their arms;

and oh, mockery of majesty! tin crowns upon their heads, wielding immense clubs for scepters, and followed, each, by a retinue of fifty of the ugliest of his subjects, these two kings entered the yard in front of the Consul's store and seated themselves upon their thrones, which were made of sections of the trunk of the cam-wood tree, rudely carved.

"What for you want, Boyer and Grando," inquired Boyer, pompously, of Hansen, "we come see."

Hansen was about to answer the question, but Grando interrupted him with—

"Grando no hear, Boyer no hear, till Hansen give us rum."

Hansen took the hint, and gave them liberally of his adulterated liquor, and then proceeded to address them upon the subject of their rights:

"You are very brave," he commenced. "You are great kings; all Africa holds you in fear. You can wipe out these men, and leave no trace. 'Tis a small matter. They have taken your homes, destroyed your business, meddled with your affairs, and desolated your country. You have let all pass unpunished. Will you do so any longer? We are your friends; we bought your prisoners, many years ago. We sell you liquor, beads, rings, and gree-gree now. These 'merica men want to drive us away, and after we have gone, they will grow strong and drive you away. You will have to find homes beyond the mountains. What say you, Boyer, Grando? Will you submit to it?"

Both the monarchs responded that they were ready to engage at once against the new settlers, and would do so whenever Hansen thought best.

"Right away," said Hansen; "don't let two days more pass over their heads alive."

A pledge was made by the kings, that they would attack the new settlement the next night, burn the buildings, and massacre the inhabitants.

"Me big king, Hansen," said Grando; "bery big king—make 'em all leave bery soon."

"That's right," replied Hansen. "You was always a big king, Grando."

"Me too—me too," exclaimed Boyer. "Grando no do 'lone; Boyer help."

"Yes, Boyer," said Hansen, "you're a very great king."

The attack upon the settlers was as unexpected as it was unprovoked. They were able to offer but feeble resistance. Nine were most inhumanly butchered, and the others took refuge from their assailants in Bassa Cove. Their dwellings were plundered and burned, and hardly a vestige of the little settlement, save the black and smoking timbers of the dwellings, was left at dawn of day.

President Roberts received immediate information of this onslaught, and determined to punish the natives who were engaged in it, but as the season was unpropitious for such an enterprise, he delayed until January. An army of five hundred Liberians was then organized, who, with the president at its head, marched immediately into the Bassa country. Our friend Zeb was among the volunteers, and took his place in the ranks. The march preparatory to the attack upon Grando's town, was toilsome and severe, but the barricades behind which the enemy were encamped, soon gave way to the steady fire and intrepid charge of the Liberians. Grando and his men fled in dismay, leaving their dead behind. The town was entirely destroyed.

From Grando's town, flushed with victory, the little army continued their march toward Boyer's. To reach the fastness of this monarch, they were compelled to wade, waist

deep, through a morass of more than two miles in width, and lift their muskets and ammunition above their heads, to keep them dry for use. But they persevered, and after a most harassing march, drew up in battle array before the barricades. The natives, by some means, had become possessed of several field-pieces, from which, and their small arms, they poured an incessant but ineffectual fire upon their assailants. To use the language of President Roberts, "The hand of Divine Providence was on the side of the Liberians, and they gloriously triumphed!" The conflict raged desperately nearly two hours, all of which time the little army was exposed to the fire of the enemy. At the expiration of that time they had made such inroads upon the barricades as to expose the interior to their fire, and they dealt dreadful slaughter among the aborigines. Closing in upon them gradually, Boyer soon saw that the day was lost, and was the first to beat a retreat. His men followed pell-mell, but before they had ceased to fire, Zeb, with the standard of the Republic in his hand, scaled the barricades, and planted it in triumph upon the point, which, but a moment before, had been most hotly contested by the two armies. The shout which followed this act of gallant daring, proclaimed the victory for the Republic, and baptized Zeb as its hero. The president himself soon reached the side of Zeb, and seizing him warmly by the hand, amid the shouts of the whole army, thanked him in the name of the Republic for the service he had performed. The action was entirely successful in expelling both the hostile kings, and their subjects from the country, and the traders, at whose instigation they attacked the settlers.

The little army returned to Monrovia, where it was disbanded by the president, who made honorable mention of it in his report to the Congress of the Republic.

"Roland," said he, taking Zeb by the arm, after the troops were disbanded, "that courageous act of yours at Boyer's has made your fortune. It was a well-timed stroke. The time indeed 'taken at the flood.' The Liberians will never forget it. You have only to bide patiently, your turn will come. But come, your wife, Mrs. Roberts informs me, has been at my house two days, awaiting your return, with an anxiety bordering upon distraction."

As he ascended the steps leading to the veranda of the president's mansion, Zeb was met by Eunice.

"There's your hero," said the president. "I told you I would bring him back safe. What's more than that, he has won an enviable reputation, and stands to-day accorded by the entire army, the boldest, bravest man in the expedition."

"I care not for that," said Eunice, throwing herself upon the neck of her husband, and bursting into tears, "so that he has returned in safety."

She wept long and heartily, until Zeb gently led her to a seat in the drawing-room, and assured her that the expedition had been remarkably successful, and productive of good fortune to all who were engaged in it, but especially to himself.

"I hope," said Eunice, sobbing in the effort to smile, "that the president will never have occasion for like service from you again."

"My dear little woman," said the president, laughing, "we shall make a general, or some such military personage, of your husband, and give all such expeditions as this over to his charge entirely. The Republic can not afford to be deprived the services of one so efficient and daring. But we hope never to need him again for any such purpose. Our battle has, probably, taught the natives a signal lesson,

and they will not soon, if ever, provoke such heavy retribution."

"Roland, my fine fellow," exclaimed Judge Benedict, as he stepped from the hall into the drawing-room, and advanced rapidly toward the seat which Zeb occupied. "I hear a glowing account of your intrepidity at Boyer's. Every man in the army is full of it. I congratulate you heartily. You are the hero of an achievement which, alone, will immortalize you, and have not yet been six months a resident of the Republic."

The president's ample drawing-room was soon filled with the leading officers and citizens of Liberia, all of whom sought out Zeb, to congratulate him as the real hero of Boyer's village.

"Had you been shot, Roland, while in the act of planting our banner upon those bloody parapets, we should have canonized you," said Attorney-General Draper.

"It was a natural act," said Zeb; "what any man in our army would have been as apt to perform as I. We had no cowards among us, and fought an enemy, at least five thousand strong, without thinking it possible to retreat. For my own part, I felt as certain of success, at the commencement of the attack, as I did when I waved the flag of the Republic over the brawny backs of the retreating natives."

"Bravo!" said Mr. Phillips, an eminent attorney of Monrovia; "I would give more to have been the man who performed that act, than to be the possessor of every glittering grain on Gold Coast. It's an act for time, Roland,—one that will grow brighter with age, and survive its author, to glorify him in the hearts of the people. True courage, gallantly displayed, achieves for its possessor, by the simplest means, a more brilliant fame than any other quality."

Awkward as it was for Zeb to receive so many compliments, he yet felt a glow of happiness at the thought of his success, which was very exhilarating.

"I shall never regret," thought he, "that I came to Liberia. It was the right field for me to labor in."

Soon after the event we have recorded, and, probably, from the feeling of increased security which it inspired, the Liberian Government interposed to put an end to the hostilities which had long been waged between different chiefs of the Vey and Golah tribes. These belligerent leaders were persuaded to enter into a treaty with each other, and to promise the president that they would cease fighting. Three of them, Cane, Tom Gum, and Dohaby were true to their pledge; but Boombo soon broke it, and became more troublesome than ever. Several companies were formed by the settlers, for the purpose of capturing him; and the one to which Zeb belonged was, finally, successful. Zeb, the acknowledged leader of the company, led the fallen chief to Monrovia in triumph. His reception, on this occasion, was quite as flattering to his ambition as the former one; and the desire for his appointment to a military position in the Republic seemed general among the citizens. But this, although offered to him, he had the good sense to decline, upon the plea, that having made choice of agriculture as a pursuit, he was unwilling to forsake it.

"What I have done," said he to President Roberts, when he urged his acceptance of a post in the army, "for the Republic was dictated by duty. If it has won me reputation, it argues that I have accomplished what was expected of me, and no more. But my inclinations are all peaceable. I have no taste for the shedding of blood—no desire for further distinction upon the battle-field."

The Congress of Liberia voted him their thanks for his

gallantry at Boyers; and when Zeb returned to his lowly cottage, from Monrovia, after the capture of Boombo, no man in Liberia—President Roberts excepted—shared more largely of public esteem and admiration. It must not be thought that Eunice took no pride in the growing reputation of her husband. She did; but her fears for his safety, at the time of his departure upon an expedition involving the possible risk of his life, were more than counterbalanced by her glory in his achievements, when he returned, unharmed and successful, amid the plaudits of a grateful and admiring people.

Many were the inducements offered to Zeb to remove to Monrovia. The settlers generally, who had engaged in agricultural pursuits, had been so unsuccessful, that it was feared he might be discouraged, by want of success, and, like many of them, drop down into some less worthy occupation.

"I shall make my farm tell, if not now, at least, when the United States furnish us the means of an international commerce, and recognize our independence," said he one day, while conversing with D. T. Harris, Esq. "I am young, Harris. I can wait and toil. The day is not far distant—it will come in my time, if I live out the ordinary allotment—when agriculture will not only be as honorable, but quite as profitable, as any pursuit in Liberia. I was brought up a field-hand. My old master thought I was a good one. I have as good a farm as can be found on the earth's surface; and I am so much happier, so much better off, so much freer, than I ever expected to be, that I can not bear the thought of any change."

"You deserve success, Roland," replied Harris. "No doubt you will win it anywhere. I wish, however, you could think that the Republic needs more of your services as a citizen, than as a farmer merely, you will be enabled to give it."

"You are mistaken," replied Zeb. "Am I less competent for advice or for action, because I am a farmer? Show me the nation in which the farmers are not the class most to be depended upon for service in time of danger, for action in time of peace, for counsel at all times, and I will show you a miserable oligarchy—not such a Republic as Liberia aims to become. How was it with America in her revolutionary struggle? Who fought bravest, longest, and strongest, in all the great battles? That's an example for us. Liberia is my home. I am ready to fight and die for her, if need be. She shall always have my best services, though I may follow a farmer's life. Come out and see me, Harris. It's a pleasant ride. I'd like to show you over my plantation. Everything is in good log-cabin style, but you will see, by my arrangements, how it would break in upon all my calculations to give up my present mode of life. I'll give you good cabin fare. Bring your wife and spend the night."

"Thank you, Roland. It's the very thing a few of us have had in contemplation for some time. You need not be surprised to see us, at any time, before wet weather."

This promise was soon performed. It was a beautiful day in January, that the President, Teage, Benedict, and Harris, with their ladies, rode out to Zeb's farm on a social afternoon visit. He was engaged, at the time he saw them, in breaking a pair of young native cattle, that he had purchased a few days before, to the plow. Eunice was, at the same time, working over a few pounds of freshly-churned butter, with which she designed to purchase some cotton cloth, the next day, at Caldwell. The visitors heard her rich, sweet voice trilling a lively tune, some time before they reached the dwelling. Zeb forsook his unruly cattle, and ran into the house.

"Wife, wife," said he, "here's President Roberts, and four or five other gentlemen, with their wives, coming up the lane. What shall we do?"

"Never fear, husband," said she, laughing, "let me alone for seeing that they are well entertained."

Brushing back her curls, she hastened to the front door, and greeted her visitors cordially, exclaiming, as she shook them by the hand:

"Your visit is all the better for being unexpected. It will afford you an opportunity to see how Liberian farmers live."

Zeb had only time to doff his broad-brimmed palm-leaf hat, ere his friends were upon him.

"I'm truly rejoiced to see you," said he, "but you've caught me with one of the most difficult jobs on hand that I've undertaken since I arrived in the Republic. Job himself would have been tried by it."

"So we thought," said the president, laughing, "as we saw your animals scud with the plow, after you left them. You'll have a chase before you retake them. You should blind them; they'll pull better, and yield to guidance more readily."

"I've tried nearly everything I could think of," said Zeb. "This is the second day, and I can not perceive that the rascals improve at all. If I did not know that they could be subdued, I should give up in despair."

"What are you plowing for?" inquired Teage.

"Corn. I've planted two fields, but have not as much as I desire to market."

The company sat a few moments, when, at the president's suggestion, the gentlemen, led by Zeb, engaged in hot pursuit after the runaway cattle, which led them a long and exciting race.

"Now," said Teage, "Mr. Farmer, enlighten us upon

the subject of your calculations a little, and let us judge of farm life. I want an article on the subject for the Herald. What have you got in this bottom land?"

"This field fronting the house," said Zeb, "is planted with corn and yams, the next below, skirting the river, is divided into meadow and pasture. The lot beyond is cassida and arrowroot. Yonder, the entire hill-side in rear of the house, is set out to coffee trees. There are some twelve hundred, and, as soon as I can get the timber off. I mean to set out five times as many. They will be my reliable crop, though I intend to cultivate a large crop of indigo every year. Down by the river, beyond the fence, and through that camwood grove, you see as fine a lot of palms as there are in the valley. You see I am already well supplied."

"Have you made any calculation upon the probable product of your farm, this year?"

"No further than to feel certain that it will afford me a fine living. I can send away, perhaps, fifty gallons of palm oil, one hundred pounds of coffee, three hundred pounds of camwood, twenty bushels of cocoanuts, beside several hundred bushels of corn. I am constantly sending butter and eggs to Caldwell. Next year," and Zeb's eyes brightened as he spoke, "the Lord willing, I shall make money; but you perceive, Mr. President, that we farmers are looking for your aid, in getting a line of packets between Monrovia and the States. It would make a vast difference with our gains."

"I am aware of it," replied the president, "and when I visit the States next summer, shall urge the enterprise upon all the friends I meet with."

"The Union is unkind not to recognize us," observed Harris.

"The slaveholders understand that," said Benedict. "They fear that a recognition of Liberian independence might interfere with their beloved institution in some way. And if they could see but one plantation like this, they could tell how, but as at present informed, they are ignorant, only, as you perceive, their fears are excited whenever the subject is mentioned in Congress. We shall be on full terms of equality with all the nations of Europe, before our independence is formally recognized by the United States."

"And she should be the first to give us the helping hand," said Teage.

"And the last to abandon us," said Harris, "for if any country in the world is to be glorified by the success of our Republic it is the Union."

"Such enterprises as this of yours, Roland," said the president, "will soon compel the United States government to open a commerce with this Republic. It is not yet understood by the government how greatly her revenues, as well as her commercial importance, may be increased by a traffic with Western Africa."

"We shall ultimately have the whole of it," said Teage.

"Have you any gums?" inquired Harris.

"A few copal trees," answered Zeb, "no senegal. It is the only valuable product that I care for which I have not got."

The gentlemen returned to the house, but found that the ladies had gone to a little rustic arbor, which Eunice, with her own hands, had fashioned in the midst of a group of plantains, that grew near the house. After they were joined by the gentlemen, Eunice stole away and prepared a delicious collation, of which, in due time, they partook, and at an early hour in the afternoon departed for Monrovia.

"Eunice," said Zeb, passing his arm around his wife's waist, as he saw the carriages turn from the lane into the road, "what do you think of this in comparison with the United States?"

"O, pray, don't mention it," she replied, "or I shall forget that the experience of the difference is real."

Zeb returned to the task of breaking his cattle, and before nightfall had the satisfaction of seeing some evidences of submission.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A malady
Preys on my heart, that medicine cannot reach,
Invisible and cureless.

MATURIN.

"I HAVE found the task greater than I supposed, even here in my own city, to convince my friends that the Fugitive Law is even practicable. I hardly know a northern man, who, in his heart, believes it to be right, but there are enough who pretend to. This will answer the same purpose for the present. But it will not last. Public sentiment is all agog. I shall not be surprised, if extreme measures are not interposed to prevent it, to see a great change in northern sentiment, during the next four or five years. The supporters of the Fugitive Law are all politicians. Our yeomanry, who are in the habit of doing their own thinking, scout it, as disgraceful to northern independence, and the rights of a free people."

When Tidbald had read thus much of Winstead's letter, he paused to contrast the effect which the passage of the Fugitive Law had produced upon the slaveholder, with that which Winstead had depicted.

"Who cares," he exclaimed, laying aside the letter, "what the North thinks, so that she does right. The law will be executed there. Not a doubt of that. Let the

Fre-soilers wince. The concession has been made, that the South is entitled to protection, and she will have it."

Tidbald had just finished reading the letter, when the slavedealer, Haynes, entered the office.

"You sent for me," said he, with a sneer. "What do you want? To sell another wench?"

"The very thing. How came you to guess so well?" replied Tidbald, laughing, as he motioned Haynes to a seat.

"I have a presentiment of evil always," replied Haynes.

"I don't understand you."

"Yes you do; but come, to business. What is it?"

"To sell you the prettiest woman you ever saw."

"She'll have to be pretty, then," replied Haynes, "for I've seen some beauties in my time. I'll go and look at her, and then, if you think she can be prevented from running away, we'll strike a bargain."

While Haynes went on this errand, Tidbald crossed his cotton-field to an isolated cabin, which was inhabited by an old slave, known by the name of Aunt Christmas, which she owed to the circumstance that she was born on Christmas day.

"How d'ye do, Aunty," said he, looking around the room. "Where's Crissy?"

"Jes in de shed," replied the old slave. "I'll call her, mass'r."

Crissy, a beautiful, but pale, sickly-looking mulatto, of about eighteen, entered the room, and mechanically took hold of the proffered hand of her master, which she shook languidly, and seemed by her bashful demeanor, to await his orders, as to what should be her next service.

"Sit down, Crissy, my girl," said Tidbald, "it is a long time since I have seen you. How is your health? You don't look as blooming as you did when I left."

"No, mass'r," answered Crissy, sighing; "I isn't well. I has drefful pain here," and she placed her hand upon her chest. "I has bad cough, and t'ink I is goin' into a recline."

"Oh, I think not, Criss. You're a little worn down with the child. Isn't that all?"

"No, mass'r, 'tain't so much dat. I has bad pain in my head, and feels ebry day as if I was gittin' weaker, and sometimes I t'inks dat I'll have to give up, my breath is so short, and I gets tired so quick."

"Shouldn't work when you feel so, Crissy. Take time, and get well. Aunt Christmas ought to look after you closer."

"Aunty's berry good, mass'r, berry good. She looks arter me and de boy dere, all de time she hab to spare."

"Let me look at your boy, Crissy."

The mulatto stepped to a little recess on one side of the room, and took, from under a pile of clothing, a healthy-looking infant about fourteen months old, which she brought to Tidbald, who took him in his arms, observing, that he had greatly increased in size and beauty, and promised to become a very handsome boy.

"Aint you proud of him, Crissy?" he inquired.

Crissy blushed, smiled sadly, at the same time fixing a knowing look upon her seducer, sighed rather than whispered:

"Yes."

"Don't you love him?"

"Dearly, mass'r," she replied.

"What makes you feel so bad, then, when I speak to you about him?" inquired Tidbald.

"Mass'r, you know," said Crissy, bursting into tears.

Tidbald blushed even in the presence of his slave, and

fairly blanched as she fixed her large, sad, solemn-looking eyes, in a meaning stare, full upon his face.

"Here, Crissy," said he, handing her a neat gold chain; "I've brought you a present from Washington. Isn't it pretty?"

"Very," replied Crissy, in a sad tone, taking the chain, and putting it on her neck.

"It becomes you, Criss," said Tidbald, throwing his arm upon her shoulder. "Don't feel so bad. We'll find a husband for you soon, and then these troubles will all disappear."

"I doesn't want no husband. I only want to die."

"Pshaw! nonsense, girl! Don't talk so. Cheer up. You'll be very happy with some fine young fellow, and I shall buy one on purpose whenever I find one that suits."

"I hope mass'r will not make me marry, when de berry t'ought gib's me so much trouble."

"What shall I do for you?" inquired Tidbald.

"Let me die and be forgotten, as I deserve," answered Crissy.

"It's jes so all de time, mass'r," said aunt Christmas; "she don't do nuffin but cry, and groan, and cough, night and day, eber since you's been gone away. I has tried eberyting I could 'magine, but it's de mine, mass'r, de t'ought and de feelin's dat's 'fected. She'll wake up sometime in de middle ob de night cryin', and den she'll hug up de baby, and wish herself dead, and won't hear me say a word to comfort her."

Tidbald seemed to be affected by this intelligence, and, after sitting a few moments, rose and left the cabin abruptly, taking the path he came, across the field toward his office.

Crissy sank into the chair as he closed the door, and sobbed as if her heart would break.

"Poor gal!" said aunt Christmas, as she put her arms around her neck, and gave her, what was intended to be, a sympathetic kiss. "Poor Crissy!" There was so much of real sympathy in the tone and manner of the old slave, as she uttered this simple ejaculation, that Crissy, unable longer to restrain from it, burst into open and loud crying. Aunt Christmas joined in it, and, for awhile, the two were unable to control their feelings long enough to speak. At length aunt Christmas wiped away her tears, and, while supporting the head of Crissy upon her arm, made out to say to her:

"Come, chile, don'te cry so much. Mass'r don't know dat you know de truf, and dat's what make you feel bad. You mus' tell him nex' time he come, and den, may-be, he'll feel bad."

"Oh no, aunty!" said Crissy; "let mass'r fin' out some oder way, dat I know it."

"I's sure I'd tell 'em," replied aunt Christmas, indignantly. "I's sure I'd let 'um know dat I knew I was his own chile. He know'd it all de while, de ole rascal."

"I would, aunty, but it would only make him hate me, and I is his slave as well as his chile."

"Yes, de ole villian!" said aunt Christmas; "and if dat was all, dere would be no use ob cryin', but he is de fader ob your chile, and dat's de berry reason dat I'd let 'um know it."

"Oh, aunty! dat's de reason dat I tole him I wanted to die," and the poor girl pressed her babe to her bosom, and broke into a fresh fit of crying and sobbing.

In the meantime, Tidbald pursued his way slowly across the field, with his head bent down and his hands behind

him. If we were to have followed the current of his thoughts at this time, they would have been found to run somewhat in this wise:

"Can it be that Criss knows her origin? Has any one informed her, and if so, does that knowledge cause this grief? Why should it? She is a slave, and there is nothing uncommon or at war with the privileges of the institution in this matter. If she does even, what of it? Why need I care, where my will is law? She is not responsible, and there is no good reason why she should feel aggrieved. I will find her a husband, and make it all right with the girl. She will not refuse, if I insist, and, after she has been married awhile, it will all be forgotten."

"You're in a brown study, squire, I reckon," said, or rather hallooed, old Haynes. "Is't about selling me the wench, or that law-case against old Tom Roland's estate?"

Quick to avail himself of an opportunity to press home such inquiries as might elicit the information he was desirous of obtaining from Haynes, concerning the part which that personage was expected to act in the lawsuit, Tidbald replied gravely:

"I was indeed thinking of the suit against my fair young client, and by-the-by, now I think on't, you are a witness against her, I believe, are you not, Haynes?"

"That's as it may be," replied Haynes. "I want to talk about the wench now."

"Oh! it's a secret then," said Tidbald. "Excuse me, Haynes, I did not ask you to tell me your testimony, but I supposed there could not possibly be any reason for keeping the fact of your being a *witness* a secret. I had been told so."

"It's no secret—neither that, nor what I know," said Haynes in a confused tone and manner; "only I'm after a bargain now, and don't want to leave the subject. I've seen yer gal—like her—will buy her, if you'll sell her on reasonable terms, and take her to Orleans to-morrow."

"She has a husband," said Tidbald, "a fact I forgot to mention. I want to sell him too. He's a likely fellow."

"Well, I'll buy both," said Haynes. "How much for her?"

"Fifteen hundred. The same I asked for Eunice."

"It's a bargain," said Haynes. "I'd rather have this one than two of the other, for the reason that she'll be satisfied to be sold. She's of the right stamp. No tears about her. Just as soon go to New Orleans as anywhere. She's clear grit! What's the man worth?"

"You may have him for a thousand, because I'm opposed to dividing families," said Tidbald.

"Yes, said Haynes, "I always knew you to be very sensitive on that point, when you wanted to sell, but not so, generally, when you were the buyer; but I'll take the boy on your written representation."

"Done," replied Tidbald.

The sale was immediately effected, and the property, consisting of Cudjo and his wife Zilpha, was delivered into the possession of Haynes.

Zilpha seemed to be pleased with the prospect of a change, but Cudjo was at first inclined to feel bad. Zilpha rallied him, and he at length expressed himself as being satisfied to accompany her to New Orleans.

"Behave yourselves well," said Haynes, "and you shall fare first-rate. I'm good natured to niggers, as long as they know what's for their own interest."

"You wont tell me what your testimony will be?" inquired Tidbald.

"May-be I will," replied Haynes, "sometime or other. If not sooner, I'll certainly do so on the trial."

"I suppose it can not be of much consequence?"

"Probably not. I'm no lawyer and can not tell that."

"I'm anxious to save the property for the young lady," said Tidbald. "It seems a great misfortune that she should suffer for such a cause."

"You're like all lawyers. You want to beat, if possible, and that's probably your greatest interest in the result, aside from the fee?"

"Oh no, Haynes! You mistake my position in this case. My sympathy for Miss Roland prompts me to the performance of this task."

"The greater fool you. It's what I wouldn't do."

The two men now entered Tidbald's office. Haynes paid over the money for his purchase, and took a bill of sale. In two hours afterward he was on a boat with his negroes, bound for New Orleans. Cudjo and Zilpha were followed by Haynes into the cabin, where they were ordered to take a seat upon a pile of baggage in the social hall.

"You can be free," said Haynes to them, "so long as you are quiet, otherwise, I shall put on the bracelets."

"I's sure mass'r won't hab no 'casion to put 'em on me," said Zilpha laughing. "I so glad to git 'way an' see suffin, I'll 'have bery good."

"All right," replied Haynes.

Cudjo and Zilpha were sold on the evening of the day of their arrival, for a sum greatly in advance of that paid for them, to a Mr. Leffingwell, a wealthy citizen, who took them to his residence, where they were to serve in the capacity of house servants.

"Here, wife," said he, as he entered his sitting-room followed by Zilpha, "I've brought you what you have so long

desired—a fancy chambermaid, who looks like an houri, and her husband will be my office-man, till I can find him other employment."

Mrs. Leffingwell was a pleasant, agreeable looking woman, with an expression of great kindness upon her countenance. She gazed upon Zilpha's beautiful face and figure some minutes before speaking to her. At length she inquired of the girl:

"What is your name?"

"Zilpha," she answered with a smile.

"Who was your former master, Zilpha?"

"Mr. Tidbald, up in Mississip'."

"What!" said Mr. Leffingwell, in a tone of surprise, "not the Hon. George Tidbald, the congressman?"

"Yes, mass'r," answered Zilpha.

"Oh, well," said Mr. Leffingwell, "you will have an opportunity of occasionally seeing your old master. He's here as often as twice a year always, sometimes four or five times."

The change in Zilpha's condition was not such an one as she had expected or desired. She knew she was beautiful, and she thought that in New Orleans, she would make such a market of her beauty as would furnish her a home of ease and plenty, where she would have little else to do than pander to the desires of her owner, and share largely in his affections. This was a slave's ambition. She knew that she could in no other way shake off the thralldom, and avoid the drudgery incident to her condition; and it was from a desire for freedom, that she was willing to submit to the degrading penalty, by which alone, it could be obtained. To find herself installed as chambermaid only, when she expected to be mistress, was a great disappointment. She soon manifested, by her conduct, how illy she

was suited with her new home. Her work was done carelessly. The rooms were half swept, beds poorly made, furniture undusted, and she was continually embroiled in a quarrel with one or more of the other servants.

Mrs. Leffingwell remonstrated against such conduct, and in the kindest language told her what must be the consequences.

"I have taken a deep interest in your welfare, and will give you a pleasant home here as long as I live, if you will only do for me, as well as you can," said she to Zilpha, after she had had occasion to reprove her. "Your husband, too, will always remain with you. You shall never be separated. We never permit our servants to be whipped. If they do not behave, we can not keep them, and in that case, only, they are sold. I don't want to sell you Zilpha, but I shall not endure your negligence and mischief-making disposition. You must do better, or be sent to the market to be sold to the highest bidder."

This was the alternative which Zilpha desired. She thought that, if exposed in the slave-mart, her beauty would gain the admiration of some young man, who would buy and duly install her as the mistress of his affections. Then she would attain the object of her ambition. She conducted herself accordingly. Every day something occurred to increase the dislike of Mrs. Leffingwell—and every day that good-natured woman contented herself by repeating the threat, the performance of which, Zilpha, by her negligence and ill-temper, labored to provoke.

At length she effected it. Mrs. Leffingwell's patience was completely exhausted—and one day, after a quarrel of more than ordinary asperity, with one of the servants, Zilpha was told that if she ever engaged in another, she should be sent to the slave-market.

"I dislike to do it, Zilpha," said Mrs. Leffingwell. "It will be the means of separating you from your husband, and perhaps of placing you in the custody of a brutal master."

Zilpha smiled as she turned away from the rebuke of her mistress.

"Missus shall not wait long for de 'casion to send me to de market," said she to herself.

Nor did she. Three days afterward, a more violent outbreak than ever occurred, and Zilpha was sent at once to the market. This method of disposing of negroes, is one of the most disgraceful features of the institution, but withal, it is a very necessary and convenient one, in some instances. Zilpha arrived at the market, while sales were progressing, and was put upon the stand in less than an hour afterward. During that hour she had attracted the attention of several young men, who learned from her own lips, that she desired to be sold to some one who could love and provide for her.

"We shall have a little strife over her, I fancy," said young James Perkins, a successful cotton-dealer in the city. "If my purse is long enough, no one else will get her."

"I have a limit," responded Charles Noble, a young dandy exquisite, with a formidable pair of sandy mustaches. "Any one who goes beyond that, is welcome to her, though I confess she's a very dainty-looking creature."

"Can't we compromise, boys, and agree that the one who will give a certain amount, shall have her?" inquired Mr. Halpin, a middle-aged man.

"No, by Jupiter!" exclaimed Perkins. "No compromise on her. She's mine, if I can oversize the piles of other bidders. I give you due notice, gentlemen, that you've got to bid high, if you get her."

"While this conversation was going on among the bid-

ders, Mr. Leffingwell, the owner of Zilpha, entered the warehouse, and going up to her, said to her in an undertone:

"You see, Zilpha, what you must come to, if you are sold. My wife has sent me here, to make you one more offer, and to take you home, if you will solemnly promise hereafter to behave yourself."

"I doesn't want to go back," said Zilpha. "I'd rather be sold. I couldn't live peaceably wid missus."

"As you will," said Mr. Leffingwell, leaving the warehouse.

"Come up here, beauty!" said the auctioneer, beckoning to Zilpha, who stepped gaily upon the block by his side, and gazed upon the crowd with a smile.

A murmur of admiration ran through the multitude, as they huddled closely up to the auctioneer's stand.

"There," began that gentleman, "there is a girl that speaks for herself, gentlemen. Look at her and don't all bid at once. Hold up your head beauty, and stand erect. How much shall I have bid for this beautiful young mulatto? How much?"

Perkins began the run, by a bid of fifteen hundred dollars. Zilpha looked smilingly upon him, but before the auctioneer had time to cry the bid, Halpin bid eighteen hundred.

"Two thousand," chimed in Noble. "That's my limit, gentlemen. Anybody who will give more may have her for me."

"Twenty-two hundred," exclaimed a rough, brutal-looking man, adding at the same time, "Bid high, gentlemen, I'm after you."

A laugh followed this announcement, but Zilpha, who, up to this time, had looked gay and cheerful, now became silent and moody.

"Cheer up, beauty," said the auctioneer. "Look at the face and form, gentlemen—a head like Juno and a form like Venus—faultless, gentlemen, upon my honor. If I were selling her amid the most beautiful Circassians in the Turkish market, she would lead the crowd. Only twenty-two hundred bid? Who bids more?"

"Twenty-five hundred," bid Perkins, and again the countenance of the slave woman was wreathed in smiles.

"Twenty-six hundred, and done," cried the brutal-looking man.

"All done at twenty-six hundred, gentlemen. Not another such chance this season, gentlemen, I do assure you. Twenty-six hundred dollars! All done at twenty-six hundred? Last call, gentlemen. Once, twice, three—"

"Three thousand," exclaimed Perkins, and Zilpha fairly danced upon the block with delight.

"Take her—take her," shouted twenty voices in the crowd, and, in a moment more, Zilpha was handed over to Perkins, who told a negro man, near by, to take her clothes and conduct her to his rooms.

The slave woman's ambition was gratified. She was the property of a young man who would treat her kindly, dress her elegantly, and provide for her every luxury; and, in return, she was to be introduced to that career of vice and misery, which is the fortune of nearly all of her race, in that great city, who have the misfortune to be beautiful. In this instance (unfortunately, in most instances), it is the choice of the woman to lead this gay, discreditable life. As the choice must be made between that and slavery of a menial kind, is it to be wondered at that so few are found who have sufficient moral principle to forego the pleasures and temptation of the one, and bear the sufferings incident to

the other? Zilpha was, therefore, but a type of her race—in no particular worse than a majority of them.

Her purchaser, Perkins, was the son of a New York clergyman. He had been a successful speculator in cotton, and was by no means, outwardly, a young man of loose principle. He was attentive to business, drank nothing stronger than water, and was a regular attendant at church on the Sabbath; yet, with all these good qualities, he did not hesitate to conform, in his mode of life, to the society in which his lot was cast, thus furnishing, in his conduct, a type of a very large proportion of the unmarried male portion of the society of New Orleans.

"It might well be asked here, whether this condition of society is one of the results of slavery; but this is a speculation which we leave for our readers to solve.

Cudjo was not sorry to be separated from Zilpha. She was an uneasy wife, and made him very unhappy. In a very few weeks after she left, with his master's consent, he married a much plainer, but more worthy woman, whose acquaintance he had made in his master's kitchen. It must not be denied, however, that while these changes were occurring in his domestic life, his thoughts would sometimes wander after the absent Eunice, who, he fancied, dwelt in some of the cities of Canada. The poor heart could not be unfaithful to its first love.

After the visit which Tidbald had made her, Crissy seemed to decline in health more rapidly than before. Her grief was inconsolable. Aunt Christmas (good old soul!) tried every means in her power to cheer up the sinking spirit, but, at the same time, would say to herself, "it was no use: when de mine was so 'fected, de poor gal would die." Her cough became hollow and racking, and Crissy was marked as the victim of consumption. The babe had

nursed the disease from her, and began also to exhibit symptoms of speedy decay.

The disease was more rapid in its progress than usual. In less than a fortnight after the visit of Tidbald, Crissy was unable to leave her bed. The hollow cheeks and glassy eyes betokened the dissolution ever consequent upon them. The afternoon of the day of her death Crissy sent Aunt Christmas for Tidbald. He came, and as he gazed upon the shrunken features of the poor girl, a look of real concern seemed, for a moment, to take possession of his naturally somber visage.

"Can nothing be done, aunty?" said he, addressing Christmas, who stood, with her hands folded, by his side.

"I has tried eberyting de doctor 'commend, but it all don't do no sort of good. De poor gal seem to keep goin' right along just as if nuffin had been done," said Christmas in reply.

"Crissy!" said Tidbald, speaking to her, at the same time seating himself by the bedside, and placing his hand gently upon her forehead.

She opened her eyes, stared at him wildly for a moment, but instantly her countenance wore a glance of recognition, and she put out her hand to grasp his, and said, in a hoarse whisper:

"Mass'r, I's glad you come. I wanted to look at you once more 'fore I died."

"Don't talk of dying, Crissy," said Tidbald, nervously.

"I is goin' to die, mass'r, dis night. It'll all be ober wid me 'fore anoder day. You won't scold cause I sent for you de las' time."

"Why dont'ee tell him, poor chile," said Aunt Christmas, whose cheeks were bedewed with tears; "why dont'ee tell him dat you knows it all?"

"What," inquired Tidbald, whose face fairly blanched under the gaze of Christmas, as he fixed upon her an inquiring look, "what does she know?"

"Dat you are her fader, and de fader of dis chile, and dat's what's killed her, mass'r," said Christmas, in a tone of voice in which indignation seemed blended with fear.

"Oh, God!" exclaimed Tidbald, dropping his head upon his hand, "and you sent for me to rebuke me, Crissy?"

By an almost superhuman effort, the dying girl raised herself in bed, and throwing her skeleton arm over Tidbald's shoulder, whispered faintly in his ear, as she kissed him:

"No, my fader; I only wants your blessing, and I'll die in peace."

"My child—my beautiful, my dishonored child," said Tidbald; "all the blessing an erring father can bestow, shall be yours. Would to God I could recall the past, and blot out its iniquities."

"Oh, t'ank you! t'ank you! I'se so happy now," said Crissy. Her arm relaxed from his shoulder, she fell back heavily upon the pillow, and, with her eyes fixed fondly upon him, the father and seducer, she drew her last breath without a struggle.

Tidbald gazed long and silently upon the victim of his unhallowed passions. He felt humbled—crushed. The fountain in his bosom was, for once, unsealed, and he wept long and bitterly over the dead body of the unfortunate girl.

As he rose to depart, he said to Christmas:

"Take good care of the child, aunty, and save him, if you can."

"He'll foller his modder, and it's bes' he should, poor little thing," said Christmas.

Tidbald took a last look of Crissy, and, with eyes and heart both full, left the cabin. For once, at least, he felt deeply the wrong he had committed, without seeking a refuge for it among the incidental and permitted evils of slavery.

CHAPTER XXXII.

For love, at first, is but a dreamy thing
That slyly nestles in the human heart,
A morning lark, which never plumes his wing
Till hopes and fears, like lights and shadows, part.
MRS. WELBY.

A FEW days after Crissy's death, Tidbald, accompanied by Celestine, went to New Orleans. At the landing they were met by Mr. Leffingwell, who had come with his coach to convey them to his residence. What was the surprise of Celestine, to recognize, in the person of Mr. Leffingwell, the gentleman, who, with his wife and son, a few weeks before, had rode a day and more in the stage-coach with her, when on her way to her uncle's.

"My dear Miss Lee," said Mr. Leffingwell, "my wife will be rejoiced to see you. We did not dream that you were related to Mr. Tidbald, at the time we journeyed together."

Mrs. Leffingwell welcomed Celestine with great cordiality, but there was one meeting that remained for her, which for some reason she did not understand herself, she shrunk from. It was with the son. She had often thought of him since they parted, but never with the idea that she should meet him again; or that, if she should, such a meeting would occasion her any embarrassment. How subtle are

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the young heart's affections! How they conceal themselves, and seize upon the most unexpected opportunities for development! What embarrassment they often occasion to those was unconsciously entertain them, and when *they* strive most to appear unconcerned, how these telltales reveal themselves in the eyes, upon the cheeks, and in the conduct.

Celestine did not suffer these embarrassments alone. We have already intimated that young Leffingwell was pleased with her on the journey. When he came home, at noon, his mother said to him:

"William, you can not imagine who is in the parlor."

"Mr. Tidbald, I suppose," he replied; "father had a dispatch from him, informing him that he was coming, two days ago."

"But there is a person with him," said Mrs. Leffingwell, smiling, "that you will little expect, but be delighted to see."

"Who is it, mother? Let me know, that I may be prepared, in some degree, for the agreeable surprise."

"Our pretty little fellow-traveler, Celestine Lee, whom you so much admired."

"Indeed," responded William, blushing to the eyes, "that is pleasant intelligence," and he went immediately to his room, to brush and prepare, with more than ordinary care, for a meeting.

The meeting was awkward on both sides, and when young Leffingwell was about, as he supposed, to seat himself upon a chair, after he had shaken hands with Celestine, his father prevented him from sitting down on the floor. This embarrassment was of brief continuance. Before the dinner was over both had found tongues, and thoughts, and modes of expression which absorbed their

attention, almost to the utter exclusion of what was going on around them.

"Why, Tiny," said Tidbald to his niece, "I have not seen you so lively before since we first met. The trip has done you good. Your cheeks are as red as a rose. What does it mean?"

"I am wholly unaware of it, uncle," replied Celestine, laughing and blushing, "it must be the journey."

"They'll have you posted for to-morrow night," said Mr. Leffingwell to Mr. Tidbald. "It's generally known that you are to be in the city."

"Sorry for 't," responded Tidbald; "I did not intend to speak during this intermission anywhere, and have already refused at home; but if I speak here, my constituents, of course, will not excuse me."

"I couldn't help it," said Leffingwell; "it leaked out at the telegraph office that you were coming, and I had all the politicians in the city after me in less than an hour."

After dinner, Tidbald accompanied Leffingwell to the St. Charles, where they met a delegation of gentlemen, who, on behalf of the city, requested Tidbald to address them at the Franklin Hall, the next evening, on the political questions which had been discussed and settled at the session of Congress just ended. He at first declined, but the request was urged upon him so pertinaciously, that he finally consented.

The papers of the city, for the evening, contained the following announcement:

"The Hon. George Tidbald, of Mississippi, the uncompromising supporter and champion of southern institutions and the rights of the States, will address the citizens of New Orleans, at Franklin Hall, to-morrow evening at seven o'clock."

This notice which was circulated in the form of an

immense handbill the next day, was accompanied by a number of eulogistic editorials, in which the services of Mr. Tidbald, both in and out of Congress, were carefully enumerated, and the citizens were called upon to rally and learn the history of the conspiracy set on foot, by the people of the northern States, to destroy and break up the most valuable institutions of the South.

Our friends, William and Celestine, while these matters were progressing, were endeavoring, in every way they could devise, to be as agreeable to each other as possible. William had already planned a ride to Lake Ponchartrain, and a sail on its bosom—a circuit through the city, and at least three different attendances upon the opera, and French and American theaters, and Celestine, without knowing what her uncle's calculations might be for remaining in the city, had accepted of all his invitations. In less than an hour after dinner, the young pair were riding at full trot after a pair of splendid bays, through some of the principal streets of the city, and William was pointing out to Celestine, at every turn, some building, or improvement, or peculiarity, which he thought would afford her pleasure.

"Bring up the horses, boy," said Mr. Leffingwell to Cudjo, as he entered the house hurriedly.

"Dey's gone, mass'r," said the slave. "Mass'r William took 'em an hour ago."

"Confound that boy!" said Mr. Leffingwell. "He always seems to anticipate me," and turning to Tidbald, he said: "We shall have to get a livery team. Run, boy, and tell Mr. Taylor to send us his best horses and carriage with a careful driver."

"I see," said Tidbald, "you've got a boy I used to own."

"Yes, Cudjo; fine fellow," said Leffingwell; "the most trusty man, in his place, I ever owned."

Tidbald made no reply. He thought of poor Agnes, of the search for Eunice, and of the deathbed of Crissy. The most trifling incidents sometimes serve to arouse the sense of guilt in the most hardened offender against the laws of God and humanity.

The carriage came, and jumping into it, Tidbald and Leffingwell rode speedily out of the city, down the river. At a distance of three miles they drove up in front of an old French dwelling, where they alighted and, entering the house, Tidbald inquired of an old negress, if Mr. Cousineau was at home.

"Yes, sah," she answered; "walk in de parlor, gemmen."

In a few moments the person inquired after, a tall, gaunt, middle-aged man, entered.

"We have called, sir," said Tidbald, rising, "to ascertain how far we can rely upon information which we have received concerning a deed of trust, executed to you by Thomas Roland, of Mississippi, in which his entire estate was conveyed to you in trust for his daughter, Adela Roland, some three or four years previous to his death."

"I hold such a deed, sir," replied Mr. Cousineau; "it was executed five years ago, never recorded, and is this day in full force, and the young lady is in possession of the property."

"Under the deed?" inquired Tidbald.

"No, under her father's will. A better tenure."

Tidbald then informed Mr. Cousineau of the proceedings which had been commenced against the estate, and of the fears which he entertained of preserving it under the will. "This deed of trust which you hold," said he, "I first

heard of through Captain Jake, a very intelligent negro belonging to the estate, and have followed it up, hoping, almost against hope, that it might prove true. We shall want your testimony, Mr. Cousineau, week after next, upon the trial of the cause, together with the instrument, and I am here now chiefly for the purpose of obtaining your promise to be present."

"Most assuredly, sir," said Cousineau. "Where so much depends upon my testimony, I should be guilty to stay away. Depend upon me, without fail."

Tidbald smiled, as he rose to leave, saying: "This will be piling Pelion upon Ossa, in the way of testimony. I am sure of success."

We have no wish to occupy the time of our readers with a report of the able and eloquent speech, which Tidbald delivered before a large audience, on the evening of the next day. It was the same old story about state rights and southern policy. The southern view of the slave question, in all its phases, was fully considered, and the North was charged with conspiracy, fraud, and dishonesty. All the measures adopted by Congress as a compromise, were reviewed, and Tidbald was liberal enough to admit, "that if they could not do better, these measures were sufficiently southern to protect their property in slaves."

The occasion passed off, as all such occasions do, with hurrahing, shouting, and stamping, whenever anything was said disparaging to the North, or particularly patriotic on the doctrines of the South. Tidbald had enough of the demagogue, to know exactly how to please a New Orleans audience. Accordingly he spoke of the annexation of Cuba as a possible thing, and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise as probable. The audience broke up at a late hour, and Tidbald, followed by a large procession of

admirers, went to his quarters at Mr. Leffingwell's. The crowd serenaded him from without, and he was obliged to address them from the veranda, at some length, before they would disband.

Several of the engagements which had passed between William and Celestine were unimproved, but Tidbald informed his niece that she must be ready to return home by the afternoon of the next day. This was felt as a hardship by her and William. There was Lake Ponchartrain, the French theater, and the opera, yet unvisited, and the time they had passed in each other's society, seemed so brief, that they silently wondered why it could not be prolonged. Before the hour for parting came, William, on one pretense and another, made Celestine various presents, such as a diamond ring—a silver card-case, elegantly chased—and last, but not least, a rich gold locket, in which was inserted his own daguerreotype.

"A fair exchange is no robbery," said he, as the artist handed him the picture. "You must now sit for yours, Miss Lee, to remain with me."

Celestine hesitated. She had no scruples on her own account. Her own heart told her that she loved William, but she feared her uncle might be offended when he came to understand it. She however consented, and William rejoiced in the possession of a spirited likeness.

"It would be wrong," thought Celestine, "for me to conceal these presents from my uncle. If William's intentions are as I suspect, he will soon leave me no alternative beside an application to uncle, at any rate."

"They parted with no interchange of vows, but William intimated that he might take the liberty of addressing a letter to her occasionally. She smiled an assent. Soon after they left the levee, Tidbald entered the ladies' cabin,

to give Celestine some oranges, when his attention became riveted upon the locket.

"Why, Teney," said he, "what in the world have you there?" and he reached for the locket, as Celestine, blushing like scarlet, handed it to him.

Opening it, his eyes rested for a moment upon the manly features of William Leffingwell.

"Well, well," said he, returning the locket, "what a world we live in, Teney. Why, neice, you are the very last person in the world I would have suspected. Do you love that young madcap?"

Celestine blushed deeper than before, and drawing up a chair, signified, by her actions that she wished to treat the matter confidentially. Tidbald, laughing, sat down.

"Never mind, Teney, dear," said he. "He's a nice boy, and I shall be only too happy to see you happy, if he is worthy of you. But you have done right to tell me. Young ladies can't always tell about these city larks. I will find out all about him, and then leave you to the guidance of your own good sense."

Celestine thanked her uncle for his good advice, assured him that she was under no engagement, and that she would try to be governed in her choice, by the result of his investigations.

"Why, Teney," said he, "Where am I to go? I thought I should have a nice little housekeeper in you, but you are scarcely with me, before you begin to think of leaving. Frank will soon go, and I shall be left to sing,

"Something must be done for me,
Poor old bachelor!"

"Never fear, dear uncle. I shall not leave you as long as you want me."

"What a generous dog the young fellow is!" said Tidbald, holding up her hand to examine the single diamond that glittered on her finger. "And no promise either?"

"None, uncle, upon my honor."

Tidbald was now requested to make one of a set at whist, in the gentlemen's cabin, and Celestine, for the want of something better to pass away the time, picked up a cheap publication, which was lying on the cabin table, and was soon absorbed in one of Dumas' best stories.

Meanwhile, Adela, who had been contriving ever since Celestine left, how she could prepare for her a pleasant surprise on her return, having learned through Frank when she might be expected, had invited a large company of young people, to meet at Ash Grove, on the succeeding evening. Speaking of this party to Frank, she said, in a tone of mock seriousness,

"It will probably be the last party I shall ever give, and I wish to make it a good one, Frank."

"I should be very unhappy if I thought so," replied Frank, "or even if I thought you were in earnest in the expression of your fears, or if I could discover in your conduct or conversation, anything bearing the slightest resemblance to secret sorrow."

"I am no sentimentalist, Frank. My disposition, if I know anything about it, is a cheerful one. I can look the troubles which surround me boldly in the face, and laugh them to scorn. Loss of property is only an inconvenience, not a crime."

"We shall be all the happier for being poor," said Frank, "after we get used to it. 'Love in a cottage' you know."

"No Frank," interposed Adela. "Love in a cottage I don't know, and don't wish to. It would please me to keep and enjoy my property. I have no admiration for poverty."

As I told you, I am no sentimentalist. My desires are moderate, but I dread the thought of being stinted. I dislike to be compelled to abandon my happy home, and see it occupied by strangers. It suits my idea of happiness to live here in a peaceful state of domesticity. Why, what are you doing? How awkward, Frank, to spill the water from that vase of roses on the rug. See how you have disarranged the flowers! That dear, little white rose, that I intended to put in Celestine's hair, you've quite crushed it."

Frank thrust his hand into the midst of the bouquet, to relieve the coveted flower, but Adela hastily took the vase from him, and, in a few minutes, repaired the mischief for which she had reproved him. Handing it back to him, she said:

"Now, Mr. Careless, see if you can possibly cross from the table to the mantel without again displacing the flowers."

Frank walked very carefully to the mantel, and, placing the vase upon it, looked around at Adela with a comical expression.

"How does that satisfy you, Miss Prim," said he.

"Now, Frank," responded Adela, "if I thought you were in earnest in bestowing such an inappropriate name upon me, I would have a quarrel with you."

Frank was by her side, his arm around her waist, and his black eyes gazing steadily, but quizzically, into hers, before she had half uttered the sentence.

"This," said he, kissing her, "is the proper termination of all lover's quarrels, and may ours never be longer or more belligerent than the one I have just brought to a close."

"Or have a more disagreeable consummation," added Adela, laughing and blushing; "but you are hindering me

Frank, instead of helping. My rooms are not half ready, and the work in the kitchen, I fear, will not progress with any order, unless I am there to look after it."

"Harry Westover will feel the slight of not being invited, keenly," said Frank.

"He should not—will not, if he exercises common sense," said Adela. "He must comprehend my reasons. But whether he does or not, rich or poor, I hope always to feel independent of him."

Captain Jake now entered the front hall, with a large armful of beautiful boughs of the southern arbor vitæ.

"Thank you, captain, a thousand times," said Adela. "These are beauties. They will give a pleasing relief to the walls of the hall, and the green will contrast sweetly with the white. Harmony in the blending of colors always promotes cheerfulness."

"Are there enough, Miss Adela?" inquired the pleased old negro.

"Plenty, captain, and the nicest I ever saw."

"Can I help you arrange them," inquired Jake.

"Mr. Thornton is here for the purpose of assisting me," said Adela. "I'll not trouble you, captain."

"A valuable assistant," said Jake, looking at Frank, who had picked up one of the finest boughs, and began to trim it by breaking off the branches. "He has already spoiled the prettiest limb of all. That very branch like to cost me a fall. I crept to the very end of a small limb under it to pick it, and the one I stood upon cracked beneath me. It was, at least, fifty feet above the ground."

"What a mischievous fellow you are Frank!" said Adela.

"Indeed, captain, I am very, very sorry. I thought I was doing right. It was my design to help," said Frank, dropping the unfortunate branch.

"Frank," said Adela, "go home and stay till I get through. You do nothing but tease and torment me here. I can work twice as fast, and as well, if you are away. The captain will give me all the assistance I need, and you can come over this evening and see the rooms. Come, now, there's a dear."

"I suppose your will must be law," replied Frank, as he left the hall and sauntered slowly down the yard toward the gate.

"Adela and Jake labored hard, and when Frank returned in the evening he was forced to admit that, had he remained, the rooms would not have been as gaily and beautifully decorated. The spacious hall was shaded with arbor vitæ, and the large parlor and sitting room were decorated with vases of flowers, whose blossoms distilled a sweet perfume through them; and every article of furniture and ornament showed the effects of the lustration which Adela had so laboriously performed.

Frank praised everything hyperbolically, and got his ears soundly boxed by Adela, who playfully declared that, unless he behaved himself, she would not invite him to the party. Several times during the evening, Frank indulged his disposition to tease to the utmost limit of endurance, contriving, whenever there were any symptoms of real anger, to reconcile matters with a kiss.

"I like these quarrels," said he, "and I think, Adela, that you and I will be apt to quarrel a great deal."

"Why so?" inquired she.

"Because the reconciliations are so pleasant," said Frank.

"You are disposed, from some cause, to be very funny this evening," said Adela. "What good fortune have you met with that exhilarates you so much?"

"I am always happy—always mirthful when I am here."

"Come, come," said Adela, "don't grow sentimental. You are either one thing or the other; there's no medium in your composition. What time, probably, will Celestine arrive to-morrow?"

"Not till late, I judge. The dispatch read that they would leave after dinner, and it takes about twenty-eight hours to make the trip up."

Adela rung a tea-bell, and a little negress, about fourteen years of age, obeyed the summons.

"Primrose," said Adela, "tell Hannah to send up the sherbet and cake."

"What a perfect specimen of the genuine little negro," said Frank. "She seems the embodiment of concentrated cunning and shrewdness."

"Nor does she lack," said Adela, "though very interesting, intelligent and trustworthy."

Primrose returned in a few minutes with the refreshments.

"Prim," inquired Adela, "what have you been doing this afternoon?"

"Me take care ob de chil'en, missus."

"How did you take care of them, Prim?"

"Me sing to 'em—dance wid 'em—tell 'em story—take 'em into de yard an' draw 'em in little wagon—pick flowers for 'em, an' swing 'em all to sleep in de bark hammock."

"Do you love the children?"

"Oh yes, missus, bery much; me lub 'em cos dey lubs me better dan anybody else."

"Can't you sing us one of the songs that you sing to your little brothers and sisters, Primrose?" Thornton inquired.

"Yes, mass'r," and the voice of the pleased child soon warbled with great sweetness of expression, one of the touching refrains, which, in the hands of some of the

indifferent white imitators of the negro, have been set to words, expressive of none of the feelings in which the tune originated. Music seems to be a part of the nature of the poor negro. It is seldom we see one who has not an ear for melody. Among themselves, and in a slave state, they are the greatest improvisatrices in the world, often, without any apparent preparation fashioning tunes of the most plaintive description. Little Primrose was somewhat of a proficient, but her occupation, (being that of attending to three little ones younger than herself,) had forced her to become more of a musician, than, under other circumstances, she would have been.

"If she were white," said Thornton, "she would be a prodigy."

"Yes," replied Adela. "I have a little errand boy, who, in his way, is an extraordinary child. Primrose, go and tell Tim I want to see him."

In a few minutes, Tim, followed by Primrose, entered, and running to his mistress:

"Missus want me?" said he, bowing respectfully to Adela.

"In a moment, Tim," said Adela, as she made a long row of compound numbers with her pencil upon a piece of paper, and handed it to Tim, saying, "Add the double column, Tim, and give the result."

The eyes of the boy glanced up and down the column two or three times with great rapidity, but often enough to see and remember every number. He returned the paper, giving an answer, which, by a much longer process, Thornton found to be correct. Many intricate mathematical questions were then asked him, to answer which, required profound skill in calculation, but he replied unhesitatingly, and always seemingly from a rapid but thorough mental operation.

"Oh slavery!" exclaimed Thornton; "how much of

genuine worth is overshadowed by thy sable wing! How much of absolute merit pines under thy iron rule!"

The children being now dismissed from the room, the conversation turned naturally enough to the subject of the "peculiar institution."

"It is an awful wrong, Adela," said Thornton, "that we inflict upon those poor creatures, by keeping them in servitude, how much soever we may value it as a convenience. It is a wrong that we can not remedy, but which, in the very nature of things, must, sooner or later, find its own remedy. God did not create us to rule over our fellow-men. Heaven did not ordain that such an institution should ever be used to trample upon the body, and crush the intellect, and destroy the genius of any one of its creatures; and when I see such unmistakable signs of intelligence as those I have just witnessed, in these poor creatures, it fairly makes my blood boil, when I reflect that there is no help for it. Oh! what a disaster! what a fearful disaster, will at some time be precipitated upon this erring, sinful nation! The oppressor must be oppressed in his turn. It will come when we are least aware of it. Justice will not always sleep, nor the black race always remain unavenged. I believe that our iniquities are followed by judgments of corresponding magnitude. What a judgment must be meted out to the upholders of this system of fraud and corruption!"

"Hush, Frank, that's a dear, now," responded Adela, putting her hand over his mouth. "What's the use when we can't help it? Show me how I can better the condition of my slaves, by freeing them, and then blame me because I neglect to do it."

It was late when Frank, accompanied by the ever-faithful Jake, walked to the village.

The boat which bore Tidbald and Celestine did not arrive at the woodyard until twilight of the next day. Celestine had barely time to dress for the occasion, before Adela's guests began to arrive, and Tidbald failed to make his appearance until long after the entire company had assembled. It was a gay throng of planters, their wives and children of both sexes, who resided within twelve miles of Ash Grove. As an exhibition of southern ostentation, or we should say profusion, it was equal to any similar gathering, even among the aristocracy of Charleston. People, proud alike of their blood and of their wealth, the planters of the southern States spare no opportunity which offers for display—and could the gayest belle in any of our northern Atlantic cities have looked in upon this gathering she would have found her practiced taste at fault, in the estimate she might previously have formed of the elements of true fitness and richness in dress. Planters are lavish of their wealth, simply because it is easily obtained, and costs them nothing. Their wives and daughters wear the costliest silks, richest laces, and purest diamonds the world affords. They buy for occasions, and when the occasion is over, their favorite slaves become the recipients of their dresses, bonnets, laces and shoes, which generally exceed in richness and value the best wardrobes of northern ladies.

Adela's ample rooms were filled with southern aristocrats, and, as Celestine moved through the crowd, and was introduced to one after another, she felt strangely, by contrast, the change that had taken place in her condition. Adela herself was everywhere. She seemed to possess the power of ubiquity, and to be always near when her guests wanted her. Her dress was a plain black silk. She wore no jewels. Her cheerfulness, like a mountain spring, was

inexhaustible, and our friend, Thornton, thought he had never seen her when she appeared half so lovely.

The visitors seemed to dispose of themselves in little groups around the rooms, and it would have interested a northern person to have listened to the various topics of conversation. It is a fact that fashionable society in the southern States lacks the sense, the freshness, the hilarity, and the ever-present variety of fashionable society in the North. There is a stiffness and deficiency in cultivation about it, which we find it almost impossible to explain, but which to a northern observer for the first time seems almost to amount to positive ignorance. In fact, it is the natural product of lives of comparative listlessness and inactivity on the part of the females, and of effeminate occupations, and, in many instances, the grossest sensuality on the part of the males. It is almost a wonder that, in such a society, there should exist so much mental vigor and discipline as appears, especially when allowance is made for all the untoward influences that surround the childhood of the people. We can not but deem it one of the greatest evils of slavery, that it infiltrates with the early teachings of the southern people, into their minds and hearts, a constant and unremitting contempt for everything like labor. Neither sex, as a general thing, think they can work. Few, very few, only such, in fact, as have struggled with the difficulties which by these means beset their pathway, know anything about the pleasure, the real luxury of hard work.

This fact was apparent in the conversation and manners of the company assembled at Ash Grove. They conversed, but it was mostly upon subjects which were confined to the narrow limits of their own estates. They danced, but the motion emulated that of the old-fashioned minuet, perhaps,

however, atoning in grace for its want of activity. They played cards for pastime, but unless there was something at stake, the game had no interest for them. Southerners of all classes and sexes are inveterate gamblers. Their round of amusements, various enough perhaps, lacks the energy and life which render the same amusements exhilarating and delightful in northern people.

"Come over to our house, Miss Lee," said Sarah Volney, a very beautiful young lady of eighteen, whose parents lived four miles distant from Ash Grove; "come over to our house, and spend a few weeks with me. We have such a delightful house and yard, and I am so lonesome all the time. Pa tells me I must find a female friend to spend my time with. We have everything, everything; but where one has to enjoy it all alone, it affords us no pleasure. I never know in the morning how I am going to get through the day."

"I should think you would read a great deal," said Celestine. "It is a delightful as well as instructive amusement."

"Yes, but it's hard work after all; besides books are so stupid. Don't you think so, Miss Lee?"

"Some, I confess," answered Celestine; "but I have taken more satisfaction in reading than almost any other kind of pastime."

"I've tried," said Sarah, "but never could get much pleasure from 'em. I think I should like society, should like to travel some, and should feel much happier if I had some friend or friends to whom I could talk and tell my feelings."

Poor girl! she suffered for the want of some occupation suited to her taste.

When young Willis Bell invited her to dance with him,

she gave him her hand so languidly, and walked into the hall in such a listless and indifferent manner, that Celestine wondered why one so beautiful should possess so few valuable qualities. "I should never enjoy myself a day," thought she, "in the society of one of such limited intelligence."

Loud laughter now attracted her attention to the front room, where, surrounded by a score of visitors, stood Tidbald, narrating, in his own inimitable style, a story of his early practice at the bar.

Frank, who had danced but once during the evening, was about to lead Adela upon the floor for a quadrille, at a late hour, when William Seagrove, a young exquisite of the village, intercepted them, and claimed that she was under a prior engagement to dance the figure with him. Frank replied, laughingly:

"I hold," said he, "that possession is nine-tenths of the evidence necessary to constitute a claim. How will you rebut it, Mr. Seagrove?"

Seagrove's countenance fairly reddened with anger, as he turned, discomfited, away and walked to a distant part of the room, leaving Frank and Adela to enjoy the quadrille. He was observed, however, to retire at an earlier hour than the other guests, and without observing the customary ceremonial of a parting salute to the mistress of the mansion.

The evening wore on, and the guests departed at a late hour. Ash Grove was silent. The full moon shone down upon it, gilding mansion, trees, walks, and distant plantation with its mild beams.

The guests of lawyer Garnet, who held a select levee in his dirty office, had not yet gone. Harry Westover, and Haynes, the slavedealer, sat there with the old lawyer until

long after midnight. The assemblage at Adela's had been, to them, the occasion of infinite mirth.

"The joke," said Garnet, "will be too severe. Old Volney, for instance; think of his being there with his beautiful daughter."

"Oh yes—but Tidbald; it'll be the most severe on him of any," said Westover, "he'll never get over it."

"Nor forgive me that I kept it from him," said Haynes. I've no doubt he would abandon the case to-morrow, if he understood it."

"Keep close on that," said Garnet; "he must not be informed. It is of more importance to keep him in ignorance, than any other person."

"What do you suppose took the old fellow down to Orleans?" asked Westover.

"To glorify politically," replied Garnet, "nothing else. You can see by the looseness with which he has drawn his pleadings, that he has no idea of the true defense."

Some of the carriages of the visitors to Ash Grove now passed, and Westover pulled aside the dirty window curtain to look and laugh at them.

"It's an awful inconvenient thing, sometimes, to be proud," said Garnet. "Our party-going friends of this evening are in a fair way to understand that."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

In single combat thou shalt buckle.

SHAKESPEARE.

"HA! ha! Adela," exclaimed Celestine, the morning after the party, "I know all about it, now. The secret is out at last."

"Why, what do you mean?" responded Adela, reddening. "One would think you had found out something that I had purposely hidden."

"Now don't look so sober, dear; don't, or I'll never presume to laugh at you again, as long as I live," said Celestine; "but, really, when I saw how wistfully Frank Thornton's eyes followed you last evening, and how well it seemed to please you whenever he stood near you, I could not help thinking how blind I must have been not to have discovered it before."

"Perhaps your wits have been sharpened by a little experience, during your visit to the city," replied Adela.

Poor little Celestine. It was now her turn to blush, as she, very awkwardly and somewhat evasively, replied:

"Why, one may be presumed to know something from observation, may n't she?"

"Fudge!" exclaimed Adela; "a truce to this jesting. If you did not know it before, Celestine, it was not because
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I wished to keep the fact a secret, that an engagement has, for sometime, existed between Frank and me. He is a noble young man, Celestine, and fears to face none of the consequences of this vexatious lawsuit. I know he loves me, and my affection for him increases daily. What do you think of it? How will you like me for a cousin?"

"Quite as dearly as I love you for a friend, replied Celestine, throwing an arm around Adela's neck and kissing her, "and to show you that I am not altogether unworthy of your confidence, I will now acquaint you with my own little affair of the heart."

She then, with great simplicity, gave Adela a history of all that had transpired between herself and William Lefingwell, while she was at New Orleans. "But," she concluded, "we are not engaged. William said he should write, and uncle thinks his presents mean something more than mere politeness."

"Well," said Adela, "if a young man were to present me with a gold locket containing his likeness, a silver card-case, and a diamond ring, I should certainly begin to think that a declaration would follow. I don't think, if the depth of your uncle's sagacity were to be tried by his discovery in this instance, that he would ever be supposed to possess an extra amount of discernment. We are both affected by the same complaint, and the fact can not fail to increase the interest of our companionship. Put on your palm-leaf and let us take a walk. I could wish," continued Adela, as they stepped upon the lawn in front of the house, "I could wish to be successful in retaining this estate, more on Frank's account than my own. He is suited by disposition, as well as capacity, to enjoy such a home. Every creature on the plantation would soon learn to love him. For a Southerner he possesses rare merit. He is a man of pure

morals, refined, cultivated intellect, and of a most generous nature. I have had the most convincing evidence on all these points, and you know, Celestine, how utterly impossible it is for any woman to love and respect a man who is deficient in either of these characteristics. But Frank seems only to care that the estate should be saved for me. I think he has no wish to remain in the South, though he is as friendly to southern institutions, as most men of pure principles can be."

"I'm glad that your prospects are so pleasant, Adela. While yours are settled, mine are all undetermined. I shall never feel happy until we are engaged."

"Never fear, Celestine. You can hardly avoid that result. You feel now as if you might lose him—as if a promise would be worth all the world to you. How sacred to the beloved one is the promise of her heart's idol! Yet we are told by many profound observers, that a lover's vow is unreliable. I can not believe it. As a general thing, I believe there are no promises more faithfully kept than those which pass between two persons fondly attached."

"You are growing philosophical," said Celestine. "Let us change the subject."

"I wonder what brings Frank this way so early," said Adela, looking down the road that led to the village. "We will wait for him to come up. Why, Frank," she continued, addressing him as he approached, "how sad you look. What has happened?"

"Nothing, Adela," replied Thornton—"that is—nothing worth mentioning. It seems that my refusal to surrender you to Seagrove, last night, has given that individual mortal hatred, and his friend Graydon brought me a challenge this morning."

"A challenge—what, for a duel?" inquired Adela.

"Even so," responded Thornton.

"And you, Frank——"

"Intend to fight him, to be sure. What else can I do?"

"Nobly said," replied Adela. "Had you made any craven reply, I should have been ashamed of you. Make sure work of it, Frank. You shall have my prayers and best wishes for your success. Do anything—die even, sooner than recede."

"I shall do the best I can, confident, that if I fall, it will be from no intentional injury on my part."

"When do you meet?" inquired Adela.

"To-morrow morning, with pistols, on the bank of the river, half a mile below the woodyard."

"Preserve your courage and spirits, Frank, for my sake; and when you turn to fire, remember that you have some one beside yourself to live for, to whom your honor is quite as dear as your life, then fire without moving a muscle, and yours will be the triumph."

Our readers will, probably, be surprised that such advice should have been given by Adela Roland, to the being she most loved on earth. But Adela was a southern female, and felt as deep an interest for his success in the duel as he did. She would have despised him, had he refused to fight, or evinced the smallest symptom of cowardice. Celestine participated in this feeling, which is common among southern ladies. Frank remained but a short time with Adela and Celestine; and when he left, they both requested him, in the same breath, to bring them the earliest report of the termination of the meeting.

"I hope," said Adela to Celestine, after Frank left, "that whatever may be the result, Frank will not lack in true bravery. I have often thought, that if I were a man I should like the opportunity to meet an antagonist in a

duel, just to see how well I could stand fire! There must be an excitement about it that is full of pleasure."

"I should have no taste for such a meeting myself," said Celestine, "but I should want a husband or a lover, above all things, to evince no lack of personal courage."

While Adela and Celestine were engaged in this conversation, Mr. Seagrove was at Westover's, in close conversation with Harry.

"He's no shot at all," said Harry; "knows nothing about pistols, while you have already fought three duels with great eclat. Your skill, as a marksman, and steadiness of nerve, are proverbial."

"Don't you think the thing was cleverly managed to get him in?" inquired Seagrove. "I told you, before I went, that it could be effected without any of the difficulties you apprehended. The cause, he will think, is very slight; but, then, it's sufficient for my purpose, and — yours."

"Yes," replied Westover; "for, though I shall never renew my suit with Adela Roland, I want to see the upstart, who first thwarted me, thwarted in his turn. And there are other reasons, Seagrove, why I should wish him out of the way, that will disclose themselves in due time."

"We'll strike the balance as soon after daylight as possible; but I shall expect you to abide your promise," was the parting response of Seagrove, as he turned to leave the room.

"To the letter, be assured," said Westover, who also left the room to go in a different direction.

Frank returned to the office after leaving Ash Grove. There he met his uncle, to whom he made known the challenge, and the cause in which it originated.

"The gentleman is very sensitive about a small matter,"

said Tidbald; "but here, boy, don't go on the ground unprepared. Here is one of a pair of dueling pistols," he continued, taking down a leathern case from a shelf in his private closet, "that have conducted me safely through several hostile meetings, and one or two regular rough-and-tumble street fights. They will do the same for you. Take this one, and mark out a human figure on a board, and there practice firing at it for the remainder of the day, until you can hit every time in the vital part. For one inexperienced, like yourself, the left breast is the part to aim at. I should take the head. But go and prepare, Frank; be sure and make the ball tell every time."

With Tidbald's assistance, Frank soon procured an image to be made in chalk, upon a board, of a person about the size of his adversary, which he placed against the fence in the yard, in rear of the office, and there, under Tidbald's instruction, he took his first lessons in the art of dueling. The result of the teaching was, that before the close of the afternoon, Frank could fire half a dozen bullets through a space of less size than a dollar, upon any part of the object at which he aimed.

"You are a wonderful proficient," exclaimed Tidbald, delighted with his accuracy of aim, and steadiness of nerve. "The bird is yours, spite of his boasted skill. Who is your friend?"

"I have not got so far along with my preparations, uncle," answered Thornton.

"Not! with whom, pray, did Graydon confer?"

"With me, personally."

"Ha! ha! You're decidedly a novice, Frank. But you must have a second. Take Hampton."

"The very man," exclaimed Frank. "Will you speak to him?"

Tidbald did so, and made the arrangement.

At an early hour the next morning, each party, with his second, was upon the ground, sometime before sunrise. It was chilly and foggy—one of those damp, disagreeable mornings, common in southern latitudes at this season. As soon as the sun arose sufficiently to dispel the fog, the seconds conferred and made choice of the spot, and agreed upon the preliminaries. The parties were to stand ten paces asunder, and when the words one—two—three—fire—were given, each was to raise his pistol and fire.

Frank took his position as calmly as he took it the day previous, at the same distance, before the image in the office-yard of his uncle. He felt no emotion whatever, as to the result. His mind was bent upon the single thought of taking certain aim, at the heart of his antagonist. He calculated the distance between them, with great accuracy, and from the moment that he took his position, fixed his gaze steadfastly upon that part of the person of Seagrove which he designed to hit.

Seagrove took his position with a swaggering air, giving Thornton a look which seemed to say, that his superior skill would enable him to make short work of the encounter.

The seconds took their places, and when all was ready, Graydon, in a clear voice, enunciated the fatal words.

"One—two—three—fire."

The report of the two pistols was simultaneous. Seagrove gave one leap into the air, and fell dead, without moving a muscle. Frank's aim had been certain—the ball had pierced the heart, and cut the aorta, or large vein, at its root. Frank was uninjured; and getting on his horse rode hastily to Ash Grove, to bear to Adela the earliest intelligence of the result. As he entered the mansion, Adela

met him at the door, threw herself upon his neck and burst into a passion of tears.

"Thank God—thank God," she exclaimed, "you are safe. How is your antagonist?"

"Dead—fell at the first fire," responded Frank.

"The dreadful penalty of folly," said Adela. "It was his own fault."

"I have fought my last duel, Adela," said Frank, seating himself upon the sofa. "Henceforth, I will submit to be called coward, rather than imbrue my hands in the blood of my fellow-man. It is an awful thought that now oppresses me, and yet I am not to blame. It could not be avoided. Custom sanctions it, and I thought I must yield to the claims of common observance. If I had not done so, Seagrove would now be living, and I should be innocent."

"And branded with the name of coward by all your friends and acquaintances. Could you bear that, Frank?"

"Better, Adela, than this—this dreadful consciousness of having slain a fellow-man. The custom is a vile one—the product and relic of a barbarous age, unworthy of a free and intelligent people. I have forever done with it."

"From my heart, I hope you may never have occasion to resort to it again, but should you, it would pain me deeply to know that you shrunk from it."

"Say no more, dear Adela. I shall be at no loss for means to preserve my honor, should it ever again become necessary. Suffer me, now that you are assured of my safety, to go immediately to the village, and communicate the tidings to my uncle."

The duel was soon forgotten, and the defunct actor in it soon faded from the memory of those who remembered him, as a successful gambler and duelist, in the little

village of T——. Thornton gained reputation by his success in the affair, and became popular with the citizens. There was one person, however, to whom the result of the duel was as gall and wormwood. This was Harry Westover. He had calculated upon the death of Thornton as a certainty—had, indeed, concerted with Seagrove the plan for the duel, with the express purpose of making Frank the victim. For Seagrove, personally, he had no particular care, and did not feel his loss, but that Frank should escape unharmed, he felt to be a heavy calamity. But we have elsewhere spoken of the indomitable perseverance of that gentleman, and it will not be supposed that this failure diverted him from his purpose.

"I will accomplish the object yet," said he to himself as he sat in his room, with his hands clasped tightly over his head.

Tidbald was delighted with Frank's courage and skill, and said a thousand things in praise of them that would never have entered the mind of a man, whose life had been unaffected by rencounters of similar character. Leaving Frank in the office he walked over to Ash Grove, to make a morning call upon Celestine, and not finding either of the girls at home, entered the parlor, and stood gazing at a copy of Vandyke's painting of the Crucifixion, when they both entered.

"Do you know," said he, addressing Adela abruptly, "that the countenance of the figure which represents the Virgin, in this picture, bears a striking resemblance to you?"

"I have been told so before," replied Adela, laughing, "and if many more as good judges as Mr. Tidbald tell me so, I shall feel highly flattered."

"It is a beautiful painting," said Tidbald. "There is a

grandeur in the conception, surpassing anything I have ever seen in modern art."

"Vandyke was a devoted Catholic, I believe," replied Adela. "That may account, in some degree, for the spirit and truthfulness with which the design is executed. He has put his religious feelings upon the canvas, and made them tell the story of the Savior's suffering."

"How is my little girl to-day?" inquired Tidbald, with much apparent kindness, of Celestine.

"In better spirits, uncle, than I have been before, for many a day," replied Celestine.

"Indeed," replied Tidbald, smiling, "if that be so, we shall have to go to New Orleans often."

Celestine blushed, and Adela laughed.

"What did you find there, to bring the bloom to her cheeks, and impart so much cheerfulness to her conversation?" inquired she, naively.

"I perceive," said Tidbald, "she has made you a confidant, and I presume the secret is so important, that, if it were possible, she would get a dozen to help her keep it, within the next forty-eight hours. She lacks your discretion, Miss Roland. I must beg that you will advise her, and infuse some of your own prudence into her conduct. I called," he continued, "to encourage you. Your fortunes are not so unpromising as they seemed. I stumbled upon some testimony at New Orleans, which I think can not fail to save the estate, and, by-the-by, I heard of it first, through Captain Jake. Where is the faithful old fellow? It would probably gratify him to know that I have been successful."

"Jake, who was in the front yard, was called in, and listened, with no small degree of satisfaction, to Tidbald's explanation of the effect which Cousineau's evidence might

have. Yet Captain Jake secretly feared for the result. He suspected things that he dared not even hint—things which, if true, must irretrievably decide the cause against his young mistress.

"Old master," said Jake, "always taught me to hope for the best, but to be prepared for the worst. I take some counsel from my fears in this case, while I hope, oh! how sincerely! that they may not prove true."

"I am confident," said Tidbald, "they know nothing of this French testimony. On that point, the law is decidedly with us."

"I rely entirely upon you, Mr. Tidbald," said Adela, "but if I fail, I shall not repine. It will be one of the consequences of litigation."

"Poor missus!" said Jake, turning to leave the room. "I hope your philosophy may not fail you, when the trouble really comes, even though it should be tenfold greater than you anticipate."

"I thank you, my good old servant," replied Adela, "for your warm and manly sympathy. It has done more to sustain me in my troubles than any one comfort else, and I feel strong whenever I turn to it."

"You might except Mass'r Frank," said Jake, "from such a comprehensive declaration."

"No, captain," replied Adela, blushing and laughing, "not even him, though I confess he has been very kind and attentive."

"I wish the dog was here to hear that," said Tidbald. "He is a most incorrigible fellow. He can not read, write, or stay in the office at all. You must do something with him, Miss Adela, ere long, or I fear he will never do anything for himself."

"Never fear, uncle," said Celestine, laughing. "You

would be less harsh in your judgment, had you watched him as closely as I did last evening."

"Stop," said Adela, putting her hand upon Celestine's mouth, playfully. "Let us change the subject. Surely, your uncle can not take much pleasure in seeing his poor client teased about more than one subject at a time. Let us return to the lawsuit. Do you learn, Mr. Tidbald, what the interest of Henry Westover is in this controversy?"

"Nothing but sheer spite," replied Tidbald. "The young man is evidently spending a great deal of time and money upon Mr. Garnet—a fact that has seemed to me very surprising, whenever I have thought of his supreme selfishness in all pecuniary matters."

"He is very angry with me," said Adela.

"Yes, but who cares," replied Tidbald. "His ill-will may be unpleasant, but it is not dangerous, and if Garnet has no deeper plans for success, than such as Westover may contrive, your suit is not in great danger."

"One thing helps me," said Adela; "I am not very easily disheartened, and have made up my mind, if I fail, to look my ill fortune straight in the face, without a tear."

"It will soon be repaired," replied Tidbald, "and as the instrument who may be the means of doing it, I much admire your fortitude and courage. Sorrow is almost always unavailing. Why should it be indulged in at all?"

"Even so," answered Adela. "On the score of personal comfort, why should I give way to grief? If need be, I can work, even in the South, for a livelihood, and not be ashamed."

"Self-reliance is independence," said Tidbald, "the only intellectual independence that the world affords. But the alternative you mention can not possibly happen, in any event."

"God grant it may not," exclaimed Captain Jake, who had been listening in the hall.

"Do you fear it at all, captain?" inquired Tidbald.

"This is a world of uncertainties, Mass'r Tidbald," answered Jake. "We can none of us look far enough into the future to provide against all possible contingencies."

"Your remark is one of general application," said Tidbald, "and as such, correct, but how can you find a place for it in the troubles of your mistress?"

"Oh, mass'r," said Jake, "why not in her case as well as in that of thousands of others, who as little anticipated it?"

"Why, Jake, you understand that, as the friend of my nephew, I could never permit it."

"Will Mass'r Tidbald promise as much, upon his honor, let what will happen?"

"Will I—to be sure I will. I hope Miss Adela so understands it. The loss of this estate, will not lose to her a particle of fortune that Frank shall not entirely repair."

Adela thanked Tidbald, and told him she had been so assured by Frank from the first.

Jake left the house, and walked toward the woodyard.

"I wonder," said he to himself, "if that old rascal thinks I place the least confidence in his promises?"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm.

SHAKESPEARE.

WITH less money than they had when they left their mistress, and hearts saddened by misfortunes they had never foreseen, Tom and Nan left their village residence for the city with no very definite idea of the occupation in which they should engage to procure a subsistence. Their experience had caused them to form an unfavorable opinion of the freedom which they had so often dreamed of in servitude; but they had not quite surrendered the idea that it was a great thing to be free. What their conceptions of freedom, abstractly considered, were, we are unable to reveal; but that they were not so exalted as they might have been, we think quite apparent from the course they pursued. The city where, by losing his identity as a man, whose skin was darker than his neighbor's, Tom hoped to escape persecution, seemed to have for him some advantages, which he would have deemed embarrassments when he first entered the free States. His desire for notoriety had entirely forsaken him. He wished to live where he would be unknown, and to work out a living by the most menial employments. This, we venture to assert, is the feeling of a great portion of the negroes of the free States.

They soon learn that it is the only condition they can fill among the whites. Every avenue of promotion is closed to them. Every occupation that gives them notoriety, brings down upon their unoffending heads the displeasure and abuse of the community. Whatever men do, who style themselves Abolitionists, admitting or recognizing the equality of the negro with them, is from an impulse of duty and not inclination. The prejudice remains. It can not be overcome. Poor Tom had this idea infused into his mind, and when he arrived in B——, his first object was to find a place where he could avoid as much of it as possible.

On inquiry of one of his own color, he was directed to obtain a residence in a portion of the city inhabited exclusively by negroes. He was surprised that black and white, in the free States, could not dwell in the same neighborhoods, though he found for himself and his poor wife, on that condition, a shelter from the observation and ill-nature to which they had been exposed in their village home. Though a fullblood African in color and dialect, Tom was not deficient in a certain amount of good sense, and that enabled him to distinguish many of the most prominent inconsistencies of the vaunted freedom which the negro was admitted to in the free States. True, he felt that he was not a slave, that his body was his own, that no one could deprive him of his reward for labor, but still he was an outcast. Nobody cared for him as he was cared for when in servitude. People looked upon him loathingly, as if they wished him away. His sociability, except among those of his own color, was broken up. His conduct was under perpetual restraint, and he did not, in fact, enjoy a single element of the freedom he had dreamed of when a slave. But a living was to be won, and he began to cast about for something to do.

He had been much engaged in driving team on the plantation, and the thought occurred to him, that, perhaps, he might find employment as a drayman. He made application to several, but was met by each with looks indicative of surprise and contempt. At length one, a rough, brutal fellow said to him: "We never employ niggers in that business in this free city."

It was enough. Tom found it too responsible a business for him, and after thinking what next to do, he finally bought a handcart, and a license as porter.

The occupation was a tedious one for Tom. He possessed himself of a corner at the junction of two of the principal streets, and engaged with zeal in the enterprise, but it was only when a white man could not be as readily obtained, that he was fortunate enough to get anything to do. A few shillings a day was usually all that he obtained; scarcely enough to afford him and his wife a supply of the coarsest food the market afforded. He worked on hopefully, until he found that he was likely to use up the little money he had brought with him to the city, and then, in despair, sold his cart, and bought out a fruit dealer's stand at one of the corners. He supplied it temptingly with the choicest fruits. People would look at it, and see poor Tom standing by it, and pass on to purchase of a white proprietor at some other corner. Fruits rotted on his hands. His gains were more than counterbalanced by his losses. After a few weeks' trial, he was obliged to dispose of this business. No pursuit, thought he, that white men will engage in, in the free States, can be made successful in the hands of a negro. It was a bitter reflection, but Tom followed the course which experience dictated, and set up as barber, bootblack, waiter, etc. This proved to be more profitable than any business in which he had engaged, but less con-

genial. He felt his ambition to be declining as his gains increased. His last employment was too menial in character to be pursued by white men. A hundred times a week he would hear the stereotype command from some rude customer—"Nigger! shave me. Nigger! do this. Nigger! do that;" and if this form of address was ever modified, it was only to call him Tom or some nickname equally significant. Often, after a day's work was over, Tom would go to his humble home in a cellar, and spend the evening in discussing with Nanny the expediency of returning to servitude, or of going to Liberia. But Nan had better courage than her husband. She invariably, in these conversations, set her wits to work to invent some reasons which should satisfy Tom to remain.

In his last occupation, Tom was better pleased with the city than the village, for the reason that he made more money, and lived in greater obscurity. But he thought (and negroes sometimes think as strongly as white people), that it was a strange kind of freedom, which obliged a man to seek a refuge from insult and wrong, in the destruction of his individuality. As he gazed upon the many lucrative occupations in which white men were engaged, saw their fine dwellings, their gay equipages, their various pursuits, as he contemplated them as the possessors of civil rights, and then reflected that men of his color were only servants, to do their bidding, his hopes of freedom died within him. He would reason upon the theme, and ask himself why the mere fact, that he was black, should make such a difference? Am I less capable, less intelligent, less deserving? And he was as unsuccessful in attempting to explain the cause of the prejudice, as the man who finds in the expression, "I hate a nigger anyhow," sufficient reason for heaping upon the object of his hate unnumbered injuries. Tom

felt that the improvement in his condition was not so great as he had thought it would be, by exchanging slavery for liberty. In exchange for personal chastisement, hard words, and severe usage, he had obtained freedom, but it was incumbered by a host of sentimental vagaries, every one of which he escaped while a slave. The whip galled his flesh, but these ground into his soul, and caused him to feel an inferiority to which he had ever before been a stranger.

There is not a person, perhaps, who reads these pages, but knows something of the bitterness of that feeling which arises from the knowledge that a general prejudice, on account of some personal peculiarity, prevails against him. A deformed person—a cripple—is often made painfully conscious of the fact, that his misfortune has made him the victim of this prejudice. The negro has a similar consciousness on account of his color. It is a sentiment that defies all hope, but with the slave the case is different. He may suffer great abuse, still hope is left him. He may anticipate escape, and take great delight in contemplating its possibility; but no such pleasure is vouchsafed to the victim of mere prejudice. So thought and reasoned our moral hero Tom with his better half, and very often, even in his improved condition in the city, he expressed a willingness to exchange all the suffering, and toil, and wrong incident to servitude, if, thereby, he could blot out the experience which he had derived from freedom, of the estimate in which he was held by the world.

One day a kindly, good-natured man, more than ordinarily communicative, entered his shop, and while Tom was shaving him, inquired into his history.

"Well, boy," inquired he, "what do you think of freedom?"

"It's not as I 'spected, mass'r," replied Tom. "I t'ought it meant dat I should be jes' as de white man is."

"How does it differ?" inquired the stranger.

"Oh, mass'r," replied Tom, "it's not like at all. We hab nuffin like de white man. No matter where a man come from, if he white, den he hab all kine ob privileges, but if he black, he jes' hab to gib up to de white man, an' not be treated hardly so well as a horse or cow."

"Why don't you go to Canada?" asked the man, laughing at Tom's earnestness. "Take care now, don't cut my throat while you're answering my questions."

"Ki, mass'r," said Tom, venturing a laugh, "I don't t'ink Canada is any better dan dis place. I t'inks I can see where dey is white folks, dey is no chance for nigger anyhow."

"You're a pretty sensible fellow, Tom. Most of our negroes don't think so. They spend all their earnings in dress and jewelry, and strive to imitate the weakest, silliest portion of the white population, supposing thereby that they are measurably improved, but this is sheer folly. As you say, a negro among whites, the world over, is generally unfortunate. The best and kindest men of our color indulge violent prejudices toward your race, and if I were a negro, with my present feelings, I would not stay in a community of whites."

"I's been devolvin' de matter, mass'r, wheder to stay or not," answered Tom, "but I t'ink I is jes' as much native-born citizen, as de white man, an' hab jes' as good right to stay here as he."

"I wont argue that with you, Tom, for you'll beat of course, but I look to the consequences to one's self. What's a right good for, if, in the very nature of things, you can't enjoy it? It's a mere abstraction. I never

would submit to be abused, trod upon, crushed, contemned and spit upon by any community, merely on account of my color, and if I found an entire people employing these various kinds of abuse, for such a reason, how much soever I might desire to prove that my rights were as good as theirs, I would get out of their way as soon as possible."

"I know, mass'r," said Tom, with a significant nod of the head, "you all want to get rid ob us poor niggers, but I b'leve I hab done goin' any furdur out ob de way. I t'ink I will submit to all dese prejudices, and git 'long de bes' way I can."

"Do you feel as free from care here, as you did on your old master's plantation?"

"No, mass'r, I neber know'd what 'twas to care for anyting when I was thar."

"How much better off are you now, than you were in slavery?"

"Well, mass'r, it's all de sentiment ob de t'ing. I is, in fac', I 'spose, no better off, but den thar is some t'ings dat I hab here, dat I could neber hab in slavery."

"Is your wife any better provided for?"

"No, mass'r, not as well."

"You pay about as much money to live, as a white man in the same circumstances, but you do n't get the money as readily. He may go into society, and escape the prejudice to which you are exposed. He can obtain a hundred different employments, where you can obtain one. He will be spoken to kindly by those who esteem it a privilege to abuse a negro. No suspicion will fasten upon his actions. He is a voter, a real-estate holder, a man, neither of which qualifications for public favor are often the lot of the negro, but tell me, does the neglect with which you are treated make you unhappy?"

"How can it help doing so, mass'r? Who would not be unhappy? I can't tell ob it for nobody cares, and nobody b'lieves dat I has de same feelings ob de white man."

"Well, Tom, persisted his questioner, "if you had known how it was going to be, would you have left the condition of slavery?"

"Yes, mass'r, I t'inks so; but den sometimes I t'ink I wouldn't, 'cause I was allays bery well treated on old mass'r's plantation. He was kind, mass'r; but den it's suffin to be free, and to know dat you isn't goin' to be sold, or hab your wife and children sold, and your family broke up."

"But you perceive, Tom, that the hopes of your being anything more than you are now, are effectually blocked in the free States. You have no voice in public matters; you hold no social position; you are ineligible to office. If you have children, they can't go to white schools. If you worship God, it must not be in a white church. If you travel, you must be content with a second-rate car, and a place at the last table, at meal time, by yourself. Your residence must be lowly, and located at a distance from the residences of white men. With your white neighbors you can enjoy no privileges in common. The division wall which sunders you from them can never be broken down. Some among them may pity your misfortunes, administer to your wants, have sympathy for, and exercise charity toward you; but the best among them will never aid in your elevation to his condition. Do you not find it so?"

"Yes, mass'r. It's all jes' as you say; and I has often tole my old woman dat it was not de right place for us to lib, where we mus' allays be objects of charity and sympathy."

"That's a bad statd of society for any one, because its

tendency is to keep every one that needs its aid in a condition to continue to need it. Hence, you can never rise. You must, of necessity, be poor and unhappy. The contrast in the condition of the whites and blacks is constantly before your eyes, and by it you are taught, imperceptibly, to feel and acknowledge an inferiority that will cling to your race as long as they live among the whites. But I am the advocate of no benevolent enterprise. I pity your unfortunate race—pity them in slavery; pity them here, where they are but little, if any, better off; pity them in Canada, where their condition is in no wise improved. I can see but one enterprise which, in its effects, promises permanent relief; and that, at first view, seems a great hardship: it is colonization. When the blacks can be united under an independent government of their own, and kept entirely aloof from the prejudices which assail them on every side here, they will develop energies and intelligence, that in time will become as marked as similar developments among the whites. What should prevent it? Liberia is already a proof in point."

"I doesn't want to go thar," said Tom.

"Don't understand me as urging you to do so, though, if facts and reasonings are at all reliable, it is the best place for you."

"But den," said Tom, "de Abolitioners t'ink we better stay here till we get eddication—dat it would be wrong to send us to Africa while we are ignorant."

"Yes—I know," replied the man, with something of bitterness in his tone. "They seem to think that our Christian population should give you the benefit of our churches and schools to prepare you for doing good in Africa; all of which would be well enough, if they could do so; but it will never be. The schools and churches here can never compete with the schools and churches of Liberia. You

can obtain as good an education there, and have free access to as good Christian privileges there, as here, without feeling you are indebted to charity or sympathy for them—without, indeed, encountering on every side the same insurmountable, unyielding prejudice, which here obliges you to acknowledge a condition of inferiority. There is no good sense in the idea that you should be prepared, by instruction here, to do good in Africa. You should go there among your own people, to your own fatherland for instruction, and then, when you obtain it, you obtain with it, and at the same time, and under the same influence, an enlarged idea of freedom—of responsibility. Your field of labor is before you, prompting you continually to the performance of virtuous action, and urging you to higher endeavors. That's my idea of colonization and Liberia."

"It may be jes' as you say, mass'r, but I should be 'fraid ob de climate, and de savages, and de wild animals. Besides, if a man once gets thar, thar is no pervision made for him to come back again, if he want to."

"Poor Tom!" replied the man, putting on his coat and handing him a shilling. "You will persist in duping yourself, and never find out your mistake."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Unjust decrees they make, and call them just.

WATSON.

THE Court by which the suit against the Roland estate was to be tried commenced its session. It was a rainy, chilly day, that, upon which the cause was called up for trial; but that did not prevent the ample court-room from being filled with spectators, who had been attracted there, some by mere curiosity, but a far greater number by sympathy for the fair heiress, whose interests were so deeply involved in the result. Many of the planters, who owned neighboring estates, were there, with their wives and daughters. An expression of seriousness, amounting almost to sadness, sat upon every countenance, and imparted a solemnity to the proceedings which it is not usual to find in courts of justice. The faintest whisper could be heard throughout the large assembly, and the rustle of silk dresses fairly disturbed the profound stillness which seemed to pervade the place. In the bar sat some ten or dozen members of the profession, all seemingly intent upon the progress of the trial. Old and young members alike were interested, not so much from any novel or intricate questions arising in the cause, as from a deep and all-pervading wish that Adela might be successful. This same desire was also

manifested in the benignant countenance of the judge, who seemed a man of liberal understanding and kind heart.

Beside Tidbald, who sat by the trial table on the right, in front of the jury, sat Adela and Celestine, apparently watching with great interest the testimony elicited from the witnesses; and still behind them, but beside the table, on the left of Tidbald, sat Garnet, with his pencil in his hand, and a large pile of papers and law-books on the table before him. Crowded in between Garnet and the table, seemingly for the purpose of getting as much out of the way as possible, on a low seat, was Harry Westover, and in his face aloné, of all the company within the bar, lurked a sneer of almost diabolical expression. The jury, composed of good, substantial-looking men, seemed, by their appearance, to be fully alive to the importance of the question upon which they were to pass; but, despite their oath of impartiality, one could discover, by the frequent kind glances which they cast toward Adela, that they were under the influence of the same sympathy that seemed to affect the rest of the assembly.

A conspicuous, and not uninteresting, object in the scene we have attempted to delineate, was our old friend, Captain Jake, who was present by permission, and sat upon a block of wood just outside the bar, at a spot where he could have a full view of the judge, jury, and lawyers. There was greater anxiety and interest betrayed in the old negro's countenance than in that of any other person in the court-room, and much of the sympathy of the spectators, who knew Captain Jake, seemed, as the cause continued, to be divided between him and the young mistress whom he loved so well.

Frank Thornton stood beside the clerk's table most of the time during the trial, and when not directly interested

in the testimony, busied himself in fumbling over the files, as if in search of some missing paper. No person in the court-room watched more closely the questions that were made by counsel, and no one strove less successfully than he, to conceal his feelings from the audience.

Having now furnished the reader with an idea of the court-room and audience, let us go back a little to the moment when the judge called up the cause for trial. It was upon the assembling of the court, just after dinner on the fifth, and last day of the term.

The judge took his seat, after the crowd had assembled. Having ordered the sheriff to open Court, he said to Mr. Garnet, inquiringly:

"Nothing has occurred, sir, to prevent the trial of this cause of Ewbank against the Executors of Roland?"

"Nothing, your honor. We're ready."

The jury being called and sworn, Garnet arose, and in a clear and succinct manner, set forth the claim of his client.

"Gentlemen," said he, "this suit is brought to recover the amount of a note given by Leonard Fancher to the Plaintiff, which was, at the time, indorsed by Thomas Roland, now deceased. Fancher failed to pay it when it was due, of which fact Roland was notified at the time the note was protested. The note bears date September 12, 184—, and was payable in seven months, with interest. The case is a very plain one, involving no intricate questions of law, and, though very severe, probably, in its effects upon the present holders of the Roland estate, is, as we shall endeavor to convince you by proof, gentlemen, such a cause as you need not, and can not, have any hesitation in deciding for the plaintiff."

Garnet next proceeded to exhibit, in testimony, the note, together with the certificate and notice of protest, and the

record showing the death of Roland, and the appointment, under the will, of Adela as executrix, when, turning to Tidbald, he said:

"With this evidence we rest."

Tidbald then addressed the court. "This note," said he, "was not due until after the death of Roland. He had, previous to his death, as appears by the testimony offered by the plaintiff, disposed of his property, by will, to his daughter. It was hers. The court may render judgment, but can not hold the property to answer the debt. They must dissolve the injunction against the estate."

Garnet replied briefly, and the court decided that the property must be held to discharge the obligation.

Garnet's countenance betrayed a look of triumph, as he inquired:

"Have you any other defense, Brother Tidbald?"

"We have, sir," replied Tidbald. "Mr. Clerk, swear Mr. Cousineau."

Mr. Cousineau, who has been before alluded to, now took the witness stand, and received the obligation.

Tidbald proceeded to question him as to his acquaintance with Thomas Roland, in his lifetime, their intimacy, their business relations, and the confidential nature of their friendship, commencing at an early age, and existing through a period of more than forty years, on all which points Cousineau gave clear and satisfactory evidence.

"Tell the jury," said Tidbald, addressing him, "if, at any time previous to Roland's death, you saw this document?" handing him a paper; "tell them what it is, when it was made, and whether it was ever revoked?"

Garnet asked to examine the paper, but upon seeing what it was, much to the surprise of Tidbald, handed it to the witness without interposing any objection.

"This," said Cousineau, holding up the paper, "is a deed of trust executed to me by Thomas Roland, in behalf of his daughter Adela, some five or six years before his death. It conveyed his entire estate, was made at the time it imports to have been made, and has never been revoked. It has been in my possession ever since its execution."

"Have you any questions of the witness, Mr. Garnet?" inquired Tidbald.

"Not at present," replied Garnet, "but we wish Mr. Cousineau to remain, as it may be necessary to recall him."

Tidbald had expected to be opposed very strongly by Garnet, in introducing this testimony, and had accordingly prepared himself with a great array of authorities. With him it had been the strong point in the case, and when he encountered no opposition to it, he was staggered to know upon what ground his antagonist expected to succeed. Garnet saw and enjoyed his confusion, but said nothing.

"Your honor," said Tidbald, rising, "can easily anticipate the point that I now make in the case. This conveyance was made when Roland did not owe a dollar; years before he indorsed this note. The property has been in the constructive possession of the witness ever since. How then can it be held to answer this liability?"

"The court is of opinion," said the judge, "that the injunction against the property must be dissolved, under this view of the case, and that the defendant is entitled to judgment, unless the plaintiff has other testimony."

A murmur of delight ran through the audience at this decision—and it was plain to discover from the multitude of pleased faces, that there was but one wish prevalent with the crowd. Tidbald glanced triumphantly at Garnet, and

turned to his fair client, and was in the act of congratulating her, on the result, when Garnet in a clear loud voice said:

"Mr. clerk, call Simeon Haynes to the stand. We have sought, Mr. Tidbald," he continued, addressing him in an undertone, "to avoid the introduction of this evidence, but it is the only means of success left to us."

The old slavedealer stepped firmly upon the stand, and being sworn, turned toward the lawyers, at the same time brushing, with his skinny hand, the long matted locks of gray hair from his eyes.

"How long is it since you first knew Thomas Roland?" inquired Garnet.

"We were boys together—attended the same school, lived in the same neighborhood, and never lost sight of each other, a great while at a time, during his life. We were confidential business friends, for more than forty years."

"You bought and sold slaves for him?"

"Always. There is not an old slave on his plantation that I did not purchase for him."

"What is the object of this testimony, Mr. Garnet?" inquired the judge.

"I will be more direct, may it please your honor," replied Garnet. "Tell the jury, Haynes, if you ever knew the mother of Miss Adela Roland?"

Captain Jake was observed to rise from his lowly seat, and advance a step toward the witness, when this question was put.

"I knew her well," answered Haynes.

"Who was she?" inquired Garnet.

"The court can not understand the object of this testimony," said the judge, interrupting the witness.

"If your honor will permit the witness to answer this question, it will be made apparent," said Garnet.

"Answer it, sir," said the judge to Haynes.

"She was a slave—a quadroon."

A loud groan now broke upon the stillness of the room, and old Captain Jake, the first to see the drift of the testimony, fell back upon his seat, and dropping his head into his hands, exclaimed, "Oh! my dear young mistress."

Tidbald's quick perceptions comprehended the point in a moment, and looking at Garnet he exclaimed:

"My God sir! it can not be."

"Go on, sir," said Garnet to the witness. "Tell the whole story."

"I bought her sir," said Haynes, "for Roland in New Orleans. He took her home—she passed for his wife, but they were never married."

Adela sprang from her seat, pale as ashes, and raising her arms, wildly exclaimed:

"It is false! It is false. You are foresworn before God."

Frank Thornton hastened to her side, and begged her to be seated, and calm herself. The whole audience was in confusion, and the words, "She is a slave"—"She is a octoroon," ran through the crowd like wildfire. One by one, the planters, with their wives, began to withdraw, until the court-house, so lately filled with an eager, sympathetic audience, was nearly vacated.

Poor Adela sat trembling with emotions too great for utterance, listening to the kind words of Thornton, while Captain Jake drew himself up behind her chair, and stood there looking defiance at the sneers that now disfigured the faces, which a few moments before were lit up with sympathy and kindness.

As soon as order could be restored, Haynes proceeded with his narrative.

"Adela, the daughter, here," said he, "was the child of the quadroon, who died when she was born, and her history was never revealed. Roland often told me never to mention anything about her origin. He always professed to me to love Adela as much as if she had been born in lawful wedlock."

Haynes took his seat. Tidbald had no other witnesses, and consented that the jury, under the instruction of the Court, should find a verdict for the plaintiff. He seemed stunned by the development, and glancing at Adela who sat petrified with grief by his side, seized his hat, and hurried from the court-room. Harry Westover was the only man whose countenance wore a smile, and his relaxed into one so fiendish and malignant in its expression, that even Garnet said to him:

"Restrain yourself until a more befitting season, Westover."

"Adjourn court without day, Mr. Sheriff," said the judge, as he signed the journal.

Slowly did Adela arise from her seat, and hanging upon the arm of Celestine, made her way into the courtyard below, followed by Captain Jake and Thornton.

"I knew it would be so, Mass'r Thornton," said Captain Jake; "your uncle never thought of it, when he promised to befriend mistress."

"She has a friend, notwithstanding," said Thornton.

"May God bless you for saying so, Mass'r Frank," said Jake; "she will need your friendship now more than ever."

When Adela and Celestine entered the mansion at Ash Grove, they found the sheriff there, in possession of the property. He was engaged with several persons in taking

an inventory of the effects, and observed to Adela, as she entered, that he had been instructed to permit her to occupy the dwelling, and make use of its contents until the day of sale. Adela thanked him, and promised that everything should, at that time, be delivered over to him to dispose of as the law should direct.

While they were conversing, a carriage drove up to the gate, and a young man entered, and made inquiry for Miss Lee. He handed a note to Celestine, which, upon opening, she read as follows:

"The developments on the trial, to-day, render it highly improper that you should longer remain at Ash Grove. You will, therefore, repair in the carriage, which I send, to the hotel, where comfortable rooms have been provided for you."

"GEORGE TIDBALD."

Celestine felt indignant at a summons so cold-blooded, but knew that obedience was the only alternative. Throwing herself into the arms of Adela, she informed her of the contents of the note, but promised that, come what might, she would be her friend.

"I will obey my uncle," said she, "that I may be of greater service to you in your trouble and distress. If I do not see you again soon, dear Adela, don't distrust me. I will love you as much as ever, and do for you all that is in my power."

They parted with tears, but a heavier trial than this awaited Adela when Frank took her by the hand, at the close of the evening, to say good-by.

"You will not be permitted to visit me again," said she. "Difference of blood and baseness of birth must forever separate us."

"Believe it not, dearest," said Frank, pressing her shrinking form to his bosom, and imprinting a kiss upon

her lips; "you are dearer to me than ever, Adela, and though all the world beside forsakes you, I will not."

"But your uncle—"

"Shall learn that his nephew will not submit to any exactions, save those he pleases," replied Frank. "I care not for any restrictions he may place upon my relation to you. You are mine—my own, for life, and naught but death shall sunder us. Keep in good spirits, beloved. We will yet see many, many happy years." With these assurances he tore himself from Adela, and hastened to the village. At the office he met Tidbald.

"Well, Frank," said he, with a sneer, "have you been administering comfort to the octoroon since the disclosures on the trial?"

"I confess, sir, that I have not neglected the kindly offices which the occasion required."

"Let it end with that. Henceforth all intercourse between you and this girl must cease. We have been already sufficiently disgraced by the affiliation. Do you understand, sir?"

"I understand, and on all other subjects but this, uncle George, will dutifully respect and obey your wishes; but I never can—never will, surrender a tithe of the affection I bear toward Adela Roland. She is dearer to me now than ever, for the reason that she is destitute of friends and fortune. She has, in addition to her lovely character, the charm of misfortune, and I yield to its claim the homage of a faithful heart."

"You must surrender these sentimentalities, sir, or leave me forever. Let the girl sink to the station where she belongs. She is a negress and a slave."

"You offer me an alternative, sir," said Frank, "and I most cheerfully accept of it. I can leave you, but will

never forsake Adela." He walked toward the door of the office, to signify his intention to leave, and as he turned the knob, Tidbald said to him:

"Go, if you please, sir, but if you go, let no consideration tempt you to return. I will have nothing to do with a man who seeks to wed a slave."

Frank left his uncle's presence, and walked hurriedly to the hotel. There he had an interview with Celestine, and told her everything that had transpired between him and his uncle.

"Bless you, bless you, Cousin Frank," said Celestine, pressing his hand warmly. "God will reward you for your kindness to our poor, unfriended Adela. Go to her and tell her how much I love and feel for her, and that I will let no opportunity pass to aid her in her present extremity. I shall obey Uncle George, Frank, but it will be for her sake and yours, and you shall not want as long as I can wheedle a dollar out of him to assist you. But we must meet by stealth, and it must not be understood that I favor your course, or longer recognize Adela as an acquaintance, at least for the present. It is hard, Frank, to act a feigned part, but with such an obstinate, uncompromising old bachelor as Uncle George, what else can we do? Go now, cousin, but meet me again to-morrow afternoon, and we will talk more."

Meanwhile Haynes and Harry Westover met Garnet at his office, by appointment.

"Well, Harry," inquired Garnet, "how are you pleased with the day's work: has all gone to suit you?"

"Admirably," was the response, "and now it only remains for the sheriff to dispose of the estate, and settle up the claim. This, I suppose, can be done without delay."

"Execution was issued as soon as the judge signed the

journal, and long ere this the property is in the hands of the sheriff, who has orders to advertise and sell immediately. The estate will hardly be sufficient to satisfy the judgment."

"What a rout the development by Haynes occasioned."

"Great scampering among the uppercrust," said Garnet, dryly. "Old Volney, it is said, swore a blue streak all the way home, at his folly, in being duped by a slave, and his pretty daughter was heard to exclaim, as she passed out of the court-room, 'to think that I should have attended a dancing party given by a negress.'"

"I suppose," said Haynes, interrogatively, "that the reward for these services is none the less certain, now that the game is bagged?"

"Certainly not," replied Westover. "Call at my room to-morrow, Haynes, and I will cross your palm with the filthy lucre. Hurry the sheriff, Garnet. There will be no end to the trickery until the property is sold."

"Don't fidget, Harry. 'The world was not made in a day.' All will come round in good time."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

And o'er that fair, broad brow were wrought
The intersected lines of thought;
Those furrows which the burning share
Of sorrow plows untimely there;
Scars of the lacerated mind,
Which the soul's war doth leave behind.

BYRON.

THE distance between a state of comparative happiness and a state of utter desolation, was seldom traveled more speedily than by Adela Roland. In contemplating her condition, as the despoiled heiress of a large estate, she found many alleviations, some of which, if not entirely compensatory for her loss, were yet sufficiently soothing and agreeable to reconcile her to any change which mere poverty might produce. But she had descended to a condition that she had never even dreamed could be possible. She was a slave—so adjudged and condemned by a court of justice, upon testimony which appeared to be unanswerable. If any humiliation to which she might have been subjected could have broken her spirits, and destroyed the pride which she had really possessed, this was the one; for to be a slave, amid slaveholders, and in a land where slavery is tolerated and upheld by law, is a degree of degradation which admits of no superlative. While Adela felt all this, she was yet buoyed up by the hope that something would

occur to remove the blight that had fallen so heavily upon her. She had a vague, an undefinable impression, not unlike a presentiment, that some providential circumstance would clear away the dark cloud that lowered over her, and restore her to sunlight. How natural such a feeling in such an extremity! We all encounter seasons, when we trust to Providence for help, to a greater extent than our pride will ordinarily permit us to confess.

Adela availed herself of the permission given by the sheriff to remain in possession of Ash Grove, during the interim preceding the sale, which was already advertised to take place at a day four weeks distant from the day on which the levy by the sheriff was made. In the meantime, as often as once a day at least, she enjoyed a visit from Frank Thornton, who nobly pursued the course he had signified, in his conversation with Tidbald, and who advised her to prepare as soon as convenient, to leave the State, and seek a home in the North. She had made up her mind to adopt this course, as soon as the sale was over, and this soon came to be understood in the community.

The sheriff, by direction of Garnet, had placed several deputies in charge of the property, and made it their duty to look after the interests of the plantation, watch the slaves, and prevent escapes. These men were often disagreeably obtrusive in the discharge of their duties, and from their constant observance of her actions and movements, became especially offensive to Adela, who felt, that whatever might be their duties in preserving the estate, they had no right to intrude upon her privacy, or meddle with her affairs. Poor girl! She did not realize all this while that she was a part of the estate, and that when the time came to dispose of it, she would be sold into hapless servitude.

In the preparation for this event, which the reader doubtless has already anticipated, we have but little to say, and shall therefore hasten to it as directly as possible. Adela and her only friend, Thornton, were kept in ignorance of any design on the part of the judgment creditor, or his accredited agent Westover, to carry this nefarious project into execution. But it was the hellish revenge for which Westover had all along thirsted—the main object indeed, which he had sought to accomplish, from the moment that he had learned what would be the purport of Hayne's testimony.

Captain Jake, who foresaw this result, and would have informed his young mistress of it, was seldom permitted to go into her presence, and never without some one to take note of whatever conversation occurred between them. Notwithstanding this system of espionage, the old negro contrived to slip a letter into the postoffice, addressed to his old friend Wheeler, at Louisville, containing the single magic word "Return," and the mark to signify to him its authenticity. Jake was too much of a practical man, had seen too much of the world, not to know that the dilemma in which Adela was now placed, required the employment of powerful means to extricate her, as well as great skill and shrewdness, in putting them in motion. He remembered, too, the promise he had made to his old master, to stand by her, and mentally resolved, at the risk or even sacrifice of his life, to save her from the degradation with which she was threatened. We have already seen that he was a wary, watchful man, always moving strongly and surely in every enterprise he undertook, and never trusting to a half-formed or speedily concocted plan. He thought of a thousand things at this time, none of which would have been too desperate for him to undertake, if he could

have seen that they would have proved successful. All the wormwood of his strong character was stirred up, and he desired in his heart nothing so much, save the rescue of Adela, as the death of her persecutor, Westover. This thought haunted him, until it amounted almost to a foregone conclusion, in his mind, but how to effect it without injuring rather than benefiting the condition of Adela, Jake was at a loss to determine. He had finally concluded to trust the matter to the opportunities which time might furnish, fully resolved in his heart, to let no occasion pass unimproved, which would accomplish the two objects. Jake, under the influence of these feelings, became moody and silent, speaking only when addressed, and then in as few words as possible.

Wholly unconscious of the design of her oppressors, Adela saw the day upon which the sale was to commence, arrive with pleasure, because, with her it was the harbinger of better times. She thought it would bring with it a release from the thralldom which now environed her, and that in the free States she would not seek in vain for the rank and station, of which in the slave States she had been so mercilessly deprived. It was understood between Frank and herself, that they should marry immediately, and settle in some one of the northern cities, where he was to practice in his profession, and wait for labor and ability to bring them fortune and fame. Under all circumstances it was a blissful dream, and both Adela and Frank confessed to each other, that they had never, in the days of their prosperity, contemplated any thing more delightful. Alas! that it should have been so soon dispelled.

The first day of sale arrived. Early in the morning the yard in front of the mansion at Ash Grove was crowded with a motley assemblage of individuals, attracted to the

spot by the selfish hope, predominant on all such occasions, of amassing property out of the wreck of their neighbor's fortune. Planters were there from a region more than a hundred miles distant, and many slave-dealers from the New Orleans market were also present, ready to purchase such of the slaves as they might select. The poor slaves belonging to the plantation were all huddled into one corner of the yard, near the auctioneer's stand, in a convenient position to be inspected by the crowd of spectators. There stood old Christopher, with Calista by his side, and the three interesting little children that we have already noticed, there too was little Primrose, and the mathematical prodigy, Tim, and there, sick and lame, was the poor old negress, aunty Rose, that Adela had so long and so kindly nurtured and petted. It was indeed a melancholy scene, and as Adela gazed upon these faithful servants, and reflected upon the probable misery and suffering which awaited them, wholly unmindful of her own unhappy condition, she could not refrain from bursting into tears. She felt real sorrow for their calamities, but her grief knew no bounds when her old and tried friend and adviser, Captain Jake, was led into the yard, handcuffed, and added to the melancholy group. She ran to him, and seized him by the hand, bedewing it with her tears, while she gave utterance to the most passionate expressions of regret and sorrow for an occurrence so entirely beyond her control.

"Look to yourself, my dear young lady," said Jake, in a kind tone, "I am well cared for. These chains do not alarm me. I only desire freedom now, for your sake."

He was prevented by the crowd around him from saying more, but stood up proudly before that assemblage of cold-hearted men, and regarded with scorn the various indig-

nities to which they subjected him, while going through with the customary process of personal inspection.

"Good muscle—strong bone," said one dealer to another, "must have been a powerful fellow in his day, but quite too old now for much service."

"Strong constitution naturally—good for ten years yet," was the reply of the person addressed, passing his hands along Jake's arms from the elbows to the shoulders.

"Fine chest, here," said a third, thumping with considerable force upon the large breast of the captain. "Ample room for breathing, boy, hey!"

Jake returned the glance of the man who thus addressed him, but deigned no reply.

Haynes, the instrument by which all these disasters were wrought—the miserable slave-dealer—was not the least interested of the spectators and attendants upon the sale. His peculiar voice could be heard, and his uncouth person seen in the midst of the slaves, each of whom in turn, was subjected to his inspection. When he approached the spot where Captain Jake stood, the old negro calmly told him to keep away, and not lay his hand upon him.

"I would not, here," said he, "be tempted to commit any act which should betray a spirit of anger or revenge, but your presence is so hateful to me, when I reflect that, through your agency, all these wrongs have been heaped upon the innocent head of my young mistress, that I know not what I might do, if you were once in my reach. Keep away, Haynes, keep away."

The old villain heeded the warning, and was careful not to pass within reach of Captain Jake while the sale lasted.

The negroes belonging to the estate being the most desirable portion of the property, were first offered for sale. One by one they were disposed of to different

purchasers, some to be taken up Red River, some to New Orleans, and a few back upon the plantations in the neighborhood of Ash Grove. Poor Calista was sold away from her husband and children, and taken to Jackson, the capital of the State. Thus was old Christopher, a fourth time, a widower and childless. When Captain Jake was offered, bids ran high, but the poor old fellow was finally struck off, for a large sum, to his relentless enemy, Harry Westover, who, as soon as the purchase was announced, approached him, and, in a voice of blended sarcasm and triumph, said to him:

"My turn has come now, sir, as I told you it would. You have not forgotten what I told you?"

"Nor have you, Harry Westover, what I said to you in reply. You shall find me as patient to endure, as you can be cruel to inflict. Do your worst. I defy you."

Harry motioned to a couple of athletic negroes to conduct the old man to his father's house.

When the negroes were all disposed of, the auctioneer proceeded to sell the household effects, and these were followed by a sale of the plantation. Adela saw, with heart-breaking calmness, all the furniture, books, and pictures, with which her earliest recollections were associated, and finally, the dear home of her childhood sold under the auctioneer's hammer. During all this trying ordeal, her fortitude was sustained by the presence and kind words of Frank Thornton, nor did he leave her side on either of the four weary and painful days that the sale continued, until the plantation itself, which he supposed was the last subject enumerated in the sheriff's schedule, was offered. Then, with a promise to return in a few hours, he went to the village, and during his absence the plantation was sold.

"Gentlemen," said the auctioneer, addressing the eager crowd of listeners, "I have but one more article of property to dispose of, and the sale will close, and that is," he continued, glancing furtively at the spot where Adela was standing, "the beautiful young octoroon, who, but recently, was the possessor of all this property, Adela Roland."

Adela heard no more. The bolt had struck at last, and she fell forward upon the floor in a state of insensibility. Blood streamed from her mouth, and her countenance changed from its tinge of full health, to the ghastly hue of death. She was removed to another apartment, and a physician sent for, but the sale went on, and she was struck off to the single bid of Harry Westover, who exulted in the feeling that she was his slave.

The next day, though very weak from loss of blood, Adela was removed to the plantation of Westover, and placed in charge of a physician, in a well-furnished apartment of the family residence.

In this situation, dear reader, we must leave her, while we make a parting visit to our friends, Zeb and Eunice, of whom, by this time, we fancy you are anxious to hear.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

I can not think of sorrow now, and doubt
If e'er I felt it—'tis so dazzled from
My memory, by this oblivious transport.

BYRON.

It is afternoon of a warm, sunshiny day. The breeze scarcely rustles the leaves of the orange and cocoanut trees, amid which the log cabin of our friends, Zeb and Eunice, is embowered. A change has come over the place since we last visited it. Crops are growing finely, and large fields, which before rioted in the luxuriance of tropical profusion, now exhibit long and well-cultivated patches of cassava, beans, corn, indigo, rice, and coffee trees. Seldom have we seen the new-found residence of an American farmer even, more thrifty in appearance, and bearing such incontrovertible evidence of hard labor on the part of its proprietor. We all feel to rejoice for Zeb and Eunice, and also for the country of their adoption, that Zeb made so wise a choice of pursuit. We can no longer doubt that, as an agriculturist, he will accomplish all that he ever promised. He will become rich in his annual productions, and soon change his humble dwelling for a more substantial structure.

But draw near with us, kind reader, to the cabin, and let us look in upon the little family. A joyous laugh rings out upon the air as we approach. We have heard it before.

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It is Eunice. Ha! old friends again. We have happened opportunely in our visit, for here is Collier and Jackson, with their wives, seated around the well-filled table, enjoying a social visit with Zeb and Eunice. And Eunice—how beautiful she looks, with that smiling little infant in her arms. Their home has been doubly blessed. But this is the first meeting they have all had, in a social way, since they came to Africa, and it is natural that they should, in their conversation, tell to each other their experience. Listen to Collier.

"As I was observing," said he, "I can not but be satisfied with the change—indeed rejoiced to think that I had the courage to make it, though, as you will admit, I have encountered greater difficulties than either of you. My health has failed, and I have never fairly recovered from my first illness. I have lost two dear children, and have not been able to bring my farm under such fine cultivation as yours. Still I bless God that he put it into my mind to come to Africa, for I am free here—free to worship him—free to educate my children—free to enjoy, in my own way, the fruits of my own labor. The soil, the climate, and the productions are all very much better than I expected to find them, and were I of your age, Roland, I would wish for no more favorable opportunity than this Republic affords, to make both fame and fortune. You have begun right to do it, and already laid the foundation for great success."

"Thank you," said Zeb, "for your compliment. If you do not complain, Collier, with the severe afflictions that have visited you, surely Jackson and I ought to rejoice, with joy unspeakable, that we came to Liberia. But why need we discuss the difference? We can, either of us, stand in the door of our humble cabins, and behold, at a glance, on our own farms, enough to make us forever grateful to the good Being who directed our course hitherward.

And this is but the beginning. What shall we say of the contrast in our condition five or ten years hence?"

"If we could induce our friends in America to believe it all," said Jackson, "that country would not hold them. I think that class of persons, who advise the colored population of the free States against emigration to Africa, however much they may have their interest at heart, would not do so, could they know, as we know, the difference which a year's residence in Africa makes in the entire mental and moral nature of the black man. I have never felt for a moment, since I set foot in Liberia, that cringing, servile sycophancy by which alone I was able to elicit common civility from my white neighbors in America. I wonder how it is with poor Tom, who bought you out, Collier?"

"Oh! he has a hard time undoubtedly, like all the rest of his race," replied Collier; "but it's well for what little happiness he may enjoy, if he intends to remain in America, that he is not rightly informed about Liberia. I should like to look in upon him for a few minutes, and see how well he succeeds in the big plans he made just before we left. Poor fellow! he will find it all a dream before he gets through, if he has not already."

But, reader, we will not tire you with the common-place conversation of our old friends. We merely desire that you should see them as they really exist in Africa, and then contrast their condition with that of the negro, under the best possible circumstances, in our Union. You can then judge, whether it is the more feasible project, all things considered, that our colored friends should remain here or emigrate as rapidly as possible to Liberia. In the characters of Zeb and Eunice we have endeavored to keep within the line of probability, and wherever we have departed from it, it has been only to render the argument of our story the more apparent and striking. All that he is,

at the time we take leave of him in Liberia, all that he may become by pursuing a similar course to that which he has pursued, is within the means of attainment by any citizen of that Republic; and though Zeb is but an imaginary character, what we have related of him is true, almost literally, of a great number of the American population of Liberia.

But we must bid farewell to our African friends. We leave them prosperous and happy, surrounded by comforts and blessings that they never knew in this country, and regarding them as but the foretaste of richer joys in the future. What shall be their future mission? We leave this question for each reader of our little volume to settle in his own way, but in our view there is not a benevolent enterprise of this enlightened age, which opens the door of hope and mercy wider to the poor suffering denizens, whose lot we have been contemplating, than African Colonization. Small, weak, humble, and inefficient as it may now appear, it will prove to be like good seed sown upon good soil, and bring forth an abundant harvest. Years will give it strength and influence. Its mighty power, as a civilizing, Christianizing, and commercial agent, will soon bring it under the consideration of the practical minds of America, which have yet scarcely deigned to notice it. The improbabilities of the scheme will then dwindle away, and we shall begin to feel and know how much and how well Colonization can do for the negro. The negro himself will know it, and, at that time, if not before, be prepared, in some measure, to gauge his own destiny by that which we have meted out to Zeb and Eunice in Liberia, and to Tom and Nanny here. He will flee to the only city of refuge. Ethiopia will thus, by means purely natural, but by means abundantly blessed of Heaven, in the strong and encouraging language of prophecy, "stretch forth her hands unto God."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

But slaves that once conceive the glowing thought
Of freedom, in that hope itself possess
All that the contest calls for; spirit, strength,
The scorn of danger and united hearts,
The sweet presage of the good they seek.

COWPER.

WHEELER returned South in the first boat after receiving Jake's note; but, alas! before his arrival, the sale was completed. He was at a loss what to do. Jake, the only person, beside the keeper of the woodyard, with whom he was accustomed to confer confidentially, was not accessible, except by stratagem, and from no other person could he learn the facts of the transaction. It finally occurred to him to apply to Harry Westover in the capacity of a slave-dealer, and, under pretense of examining his stock of negroes, steal, if possible, an interview with Captain Jake. The stratagem was successful. Wheeler was permitted to go through the negro-quarters, accompanied by the overseer. It was sometime before he came to Jake's apartment, and when he did, he found the old man sitting apart from the other slaves that occupied the same room, careworn and dejected.

"Why, bless me," said Wheeler, with well-feigned surprise to the overseer, "here's Roland's old Jake. Why,

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captain," he continued, addressing him and taking him by the hand, "how came you here?"

"Sold, Mr. Wheeler," answered Jake; "and that's not the worst of it: my dear young mistress has also been sold to Harry Westover, and is now a slave in his father's house."

"Miss Adela Roland sold into slavery? Is this true, Mr. Overseer?" inquired Wheeler.

"It's just as Jake tells you, sir. She is the property of young Mr. Westover, and he told me this very day, that he intended to make a lady of her."

"He make a lady of her!" growled Jake, scornfully. "He'll break the poor girl's heart before a month rolls round, unless a kind Providence interposes to prevent it. Oh, Mass'r Wheeler, can you not tempt the evil man who possesses her, with gold to part with her, and restore her to freedom? Think how terrible must be the thought to her, that she is Harry Westover's slave."

"Courage, captain, courage!" exclaimed Wheeler. "It is not possible that any immediate harm should come to your young mistress; and if Westover can be persuaded to dispose of her, if money will buy her, she shall be free within the next twenty-four hours."

The attention of the overseer being called away for a moment, Wheeler immediately added to what he had said,

"And if she is not, you and I must free her, Jake. I may not see you again, but, until something is effected for her relief, I shall remain at the woodyard. If you can do anything to free her, do not let the opportunity pass, even though it should end in bloodshed and death. Keep up your spirits, old man: all will yet be well."

"God bless you for saying so, Mass'r Wheeler. You shall find me faithful."

The overseer now came up, and Wheeler took leave of Captain Jake, and went from the quarters to Westover's room.

"I hear," said he, in a familiar tone, "that you have become the purchaser of old Roland's pretty daughter, who was proved to be a slave at the lawsuit. Old Jake seemed to regret that more than the change in his own condition."

"Yes, the old rascal," replied Harry; "but he'll sing another tune before we get through with him. I've not forgotten his officiousness in behalf of Thornton."

"Pshaw, Harry! You would not harm the old negro because of his fidelity, would you. Treat him well, and he will do as much for you as he has even done for your rival. But I want to talk about Adela. What are you going to do with her? She can be of no use to you as a slave, except to sell, and I will give you more for her than any other man in the country. I want her much, and am prepared to count out just as much gold for her as you dare to ask. You have full liberty to be exorbitant. What will you sell her for?"

"Wheeler, this world does not contain gold enough to buy her. I will only part with her after I have humbled her. She shall feel and know what 't is to be a slave."

"You surely can not mean to take advantage of her misfortune to do her injury?"

"She is my slave—mine, body and soul, and I may do with her as I please, may I not?" Westover's eyes gleamed with unwonted fire, and all the dark passions of his revengeful nature betrayed themselves in his countenance, as he uttered these words. "Yes," continued he, "Adela Roland, my slave, has done more to humble me, and mortify me, than any other human being. I have been scorned and derided by her, and jeered at by her lover, Thornton, until I felt all the blood in my system urging

me to revenge. Do you think I'll part with such a prize, when I have her so completely in my power? She's a slave—my slave, and the law which made her mine gives me sufficient power over her person to use it as I please."

"Say no more, Harry. I'll not discuss the question. Only tell me how Adela bears her misfortune."

"Gloomily, but as proudly as if she were mistress instead of slave. She's yet unwell—scarcely recovered from the shock which she suffered when she became aware that I had purchased her."

"Does she talk any with you?"

"Only to bid defiance to all my advances, and to assure me that the moment I trespass upon her feelings, or wound her sensibility, she will put an end to herself."

"Poor girl!" murmured Wheeler. Hers is a sad destiny, indeed. Will you sell Jake?"

"Not at present," answered Westover, "I can't forget the grudge I bear him, and yet so valuable and intelligent a man as Jake, deserves kind treatment. I shall consider his case, Wheeler, with lenity. If the old man will be as faithful to me as he was to Roland, I shall freely forgive him."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Harry. Give him a fair trial. Make a friend of him instead of an enemy."

After spending a few moments longer in conversation, Wheeler withdrew, and went to the woodyard.

Captain Jake pondered long and profoundly upon the advice which Wheeler had given him, and resolved to act upon it as soon as possible. He accordingly shook off his taciturnity and became a companion of the other negroes on the plantation. He joined with them in their frolics, sung songs and told stories to them, until he became, by far, the most popular slave among them. And Jake improved his position in this particular, by infusing,

through the medium of the stories which he told, and the songs which he sung, dark and rebellious thoughts into the mind of his companions. He talked to them of their wrongs—of their right to be free and happy, and to employ such means as they pleased, to effect their freedom. He aroused their prejudices against slavery, and excited in their minds a feeling of diabolical hatred for their master. He found them generally pliable, and when he got everything prepared for it, proposed to them that they should strike for freedom. They were strong enough—and the laws of God and nature plead for it. They were willing, but did not know how. Jake organized them, drilled them privately, and before the close of the first month of his experience as the slave of Harry Westover, he had nearly all the slaves on the plantation formed into a company, ready at a moment's warning, to rally at his call, and massacre every white person in the vicinity. Meantime he imposed upon the credulity of Westover, who was led thereby to intrust him to go wherever he pleased. This enabled Jake, from time to time, to communicate his plans to Wheeler, who on his part was thus assisted in making preparation for conveying Adela to a place of safety, whenever she should be committed to his care.

Matters were thus ripening for an outbreak, while Harry Westover, secure, as he thought, in the possession and control of Adela, was only awaiting her restoration to health, to impose upon her such conditions and restraints as his evil nature had suggested. She, poor girl, was confined in a room by herself, most of the time, and when not alone, compelled to endure the society of her persecutor. He had more than intimated to her, during some of these grievous interviews, the character of the position he expected her to fill as his slave, and on one occasion, had bluntly

told her that unless she complied without, he would resort to compulsion. Adela well knew this, but her firmness did not for a moment forsake her, and her purpose, if the exigency ever occurred, was fully premeditated.

Thornton was kept in ignorance of these designs, and was anxiously endeavoring to devise some means for Adela's escape. His first impulse, after he had learned the disposition of Adela, was to challenge Westover, but reflecting that such a course might end in his own death, without relieving Adela, he wisely concluded to study out some surer mode of redress. His money was exhausted, except as he was aided by Celestine, who, by maintaining a position of strict neutrality, contrived to get from her uncle, under pretense that she wanted it for her own use, money enough to enable Frank to avoid debt, and pay his board bill. They met frequently, and together strove to fashion some mode of relief. At length, despairing of success, Frank made an appeal directly to his uncle, in behalf of Adela, assuring him that if he would effect her release from Harry Westover, he would abandon all thought of marriage with her, and obey the lightest wish of his uncle on that subject. Tidbald coldly informed him, that he would not meddle with his neighbor's property, and as for Adela, he had interested himself quite as much as he intended to, in her affairs.

"Well, sir," said Frank in reply, "she shall be set free, at the hazard of my life."

"Which you will certainly lose," said Tidbald, "if you engage in any such foolhardy enterprise. But it's no concern of mine. When we last conversed together I gave you my views and wishes. You are at liberty to take your own course."

"Cold-blooded, heartless man!" responded Frank. "Is

it thus you abandon your helpless, innocent fellow-creature to suffering and misery, when, without the smallest injury to yourself, you could effect her release. Henceforth, we will be as widely sundered in affection and interest, as if we had ever been strangers."

"You will see things in a different light, soon," rejoined Tidbald, turning upon his heel and abruptly leaving Frank, who gazed after him, until he was lost to sight in the grove, in front of his office. "There goes a man," thought he, "who worships this cursed institution. It has sapped all the finer feelings of his nature, perverted his understanding, and hardened his heart. He has little mercy for slaves, less for those who are merciful toward them. The social and political tendencies of the institution, have corrupted him in both mind and body—and having been so long accustomed, himself, to exercise supreme control over his slaves, and to take the most unwarrantable liberties with them, he recognizes, in others, the right to a similar empire. It shall not be. By Heaven! it shall not be. Adela shall be freed." Frank walked slowly toward the hotel, pondering the question he had thus prematurely resolved to settle, as much at a loss as ever what means to employ to effect it.

Five weeks had passed away since Adela was sold, and she was still the helpless, persecuted slave of Westover. Day by day, she was subjected to his evil importunities and bitter threats of violence, during which period the only refuge from his wicked design, that presented itself to her mind, was self-destruction. She had determined upon this as a last resort, and carried, concealed in the folds of her dress, a small dirk, with which, when the emergency came, she intended to stab first her persecutor and then herself.

At length the hour of trial—that dreadful hour she had

so long and so fearfully anticipated, and for which she was measurably prepared—came. It was the hour of midnight—a dark and gloomy midnight. Westover stole, like the guilty thing he was, into her apartment while she slept. Noiselessly he groped his way to her bedside, and opened upon her face the glimmering light of his muffled lantern. It was but the work of a moment for her to awake and to become perfectly conscious of her condition. Leaping from the bed, upon which she had lain down, as had been her wont, since she had been a slave, without removing her dress, she drew from her bosom the dirk, which glittered in the faint light of the lantern, and gleamed fitfully in the eyes of Westover.

"Advance but one step, one single step farther, Harry Westover," said she, "and as sure as there is a God in heaven, I will seek your life!"

Westover stood for a moment, paralyzed at the tragic language and attitude of Adela, but recovering himself immediately, he uttered what was intended as an expression of contempt, and was about to rush forward, when a loud crash at the window arrested him. In a moment more the window and sash tumbled into the room, and it was filled with negroes, armed with clubs, axes, hoes, and such other implements as were in use on the plantation. Westover was about to demand the meaning of this abrupt entrance, but was checked by a blow from an ax on the head, which felled him dead upon the spot.

"Die, as you deserve," cried Captain Jake, at the same moment seizing Adela in his arms, who had already sunk insensible on the floor, and hastening with her through the window into the dooryard. With rapid steps Jake bore his helpless burden to the woodyard, where he met Wheeler.

"Take her, take her, Mass'r Wheeler, and save her from the ruin with which she is threatened."

Adela opened her eyes, and becoming suddenly conscious of what had transpired, threw her arms around the neck of her faithful old servant, and wept.

"Go in the first boat, up or down," said Jake, "there is no longer any safety for you here. Take care of her, Mass'r Wheeler, and may God bless my dear young mistress!"

"And you, my dear old friend," said Adela, "what is to become of you?"

"I shall never die by the hangman, nor suffer the torture which my master's friends might desire to inflict. But my life is forfeit, and I am prepared to meet my fate. I have done my duty."

"A boat," said Wheeler.

"Farewell!" said Jake, and he disappeared in the darkness.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

They fought like brave men long and well.

HALLECK.

THE news of the insurrection and the murder of Harry Westover, caused great consternation among the planters in the vicinity, and a large force was organized the next day, to go in pursuit of the negroes who were engaged in it, who, after Jake fled with Adela, soon abandoned the house, and retreated to the wilderness. Jake, whose sole object was accomplished by the rescue of his mistress, followed his companions, after taking leave of Adela and Wheeler. By the aid of bloodhounds, the hunters soon struck the track of the fugitives, who had intrenched themselves in the midst of a cypress grove, upon a small hummock, surrounded by a swamp. The dogs gave notice of the discovery of their retreat by their barking, but were kept at bay by the negroes, who continued in possession of the implements, with which they had made the attack upon the house.

"We are discovered," said Jake, "but let us fight our way through, and every man die at his post. Don't be taken alive. Now, each one take a tree as soon as our pursuers come up, and dodge them, until you can bring them to close quarters, then clinch if possible, and fight

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for your lives, but in no event, permit them to capture you, for they will then put you to a horrible death."

The negroes followed Jake's advice, and when the hunters came up, not a man could be seen, and but for the continued barking of the dogs, the pursuers would have turned away.

"They must be here," said a voice, which Jake instantly recognized as Haynes'; "let us enter the grove cautiously," and as if to demonstrate the correctness of this advice, Haynes walked boldly in for several yards, in advance of his comrades. "They are here," he shouted, as he passed the tree behind which Jake was stationed; "come on!" and while he was in the act of drawing his rifle to his shoulder, a blow from Jake's ax, clove his skull to the chin, and he fell in his tracks. Jake stooped to pick up the still loaded rifle, when a ball struck him under the shoulder-blade. He raised his body erect, and giving his pursuers a look of calm defiance, fell forward across the lifeless body of Haynes, a corpse. The fight continued for sometime after his death, but most of the negroes, preferring death to capture, were finally shot down. Those that were taken, were hanged upon the spot without mercy, and amid the jeers and curses of their relentless pursuers. Thus perished our noble old friend, Captain Jake, who, in the manner of his death, verified his last words to Adela, "that he would not die by the hangman, or by torture." Even his pursuers, as they surveyed his dead body, awarded to him the tribute of being a faithful servant, and a noble-hearted man.

No search and but little inquiry was made for Adela in the neighborhood. People generally, and especially such of them as had been intimate with her, when she was the happy mistress of Ash Grove, were pleased that she should

escape, and would, had it been necessary, have employed means to prevent her recapture. Accompanied by Wheeler, she went to New Orleans, where she remained concealed, until the arrival of the New York packet for Chagres, and on that she took passage for California, and reached San Francisco in safety, after a perilous voyage. There she found her uncle Fancher, who had taken advantage of the opportunities afforded for amassing wealth, and became enormously rich. He listened to her story of suffering and misfortune, gave her a home in his own splendid mansion, and restored to her the wealth of which, through his negligence, she had been deprived. She was once more free and wealthy, and her first act was to write to Thornton, inform him of her good fortune, and urge him to come immediately to California. The letter acted like a charm upon the spirits of poor Frank, who, until he received it, was wholly unable to learn whither Adela had gone. He went with it immediately to Celestine, who was overjoyed with the happy change in Adela's condition, and congratulated Frank heartily upon the prospect of a speedy union with her. Frank left T—— in the first boat, and joined Adela at San Francisco a fortnight afterward. They were married immediately, at the residence of her uncle, who gave for the occasion, one of the most brilliant entertainments of the season. Frank opened a law office in San Francisco, where he bids fair to become one of the first lawyers in the new State.

Soon after Frank's departure, Celestine received a visit from William Leffingwell, and they were married, in pursuance of arrangements then entered into, the succeeding fall, and she took up her residence at the mansion of her father-in-law in New Orleans.

Tidbald, for the present, we leave as we found him; a

bustling, a principled politician, evidently wedded to southern institutions, and intent upon extending the area of servitude, from motives quite as selfish as patriotic. In some future history, perhaps, his career, together with that of his northern friend and coadjutor, Winstead, may be resumed. Until then, we apprehend our readers have had enough of him.

Having now disposed of the principal characters in our book, we fancy we hear the reader inquire, what has become of aunt Debby and Mr. Dennis? Your pardon, kind reader, for our long neglect of them. They did not seem to be characters necessary to the development of our story, and we lost sight of them just where the story leaves them. You may fancy that aunt Debby died, and that her parrot and cat, sharing the usual fate of such favorites, met with cuffs instead of caresses, and soon disappeared, no one knew or cared whither. As for old Mr. Dennis, he remained in charge of the estate of Ash Grove, after it passed into the possession of its new owner, and if not dead, he probably remains there, a chirk, hearty old man to this day.

But Tom and Nanny—have you done with them? Alas! what more can we say that will please you? Look around you, dear reader, and make yourself acquainted with the lowly, persecuted negro of the free States. His history or the history of his wife, is but a reproduction of the history of Tom and Nanny. He has no home, no individuality, no character, no freedom here. Driven from place to place in pursuit of employment, and compelled to take up with any menial service which offers, to obtain a livelihood, how much more is his mental, or moral, or physical condition improved, by a transition from slavery to the free States of our Union?

But then Henry, he went to Canada, how has he fared?

The last we heard of him, he went with his regiment to the Crimea. To some of the casualties incident to that bloody campaign, he doubtless fell a victim. Nothing has been heard of him since its close.

Our friend Wheeler is still active in his labors to ameliorate the condition of the slave, and doubtless, reader, you will join us in the wish, that he may escape detection and lynching.

Gentle reader, our story is done. If it but affords you a tithe of the satisfaction to read it, that we have enjoyed in its composition, we shall not have written in vain.

THE END.