



"Old Joseph, the Patriarch." — Page 63.

RUTH'S SACRIFICE;

OR

LIFE ON THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY

MRS. EMILY C. PEARSON.

BOSTON
CHARLES H. PEARSON,
NO. 67 CORNHILL.
GRAVES AND YOUNG,
NO. 24 CORNHILL.
1863.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1893, by
CHARLES H. PEARSON,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

Ix
P317
853e

PREFACE.

It is Macaulay, we think, who complains of a *lack* of historians, that they do not give us *men and women*. We have tried not to forget our men and women in the following tale, wherein we have sought to exhibit, as Willis has it, "truth under a thin veil of fiction." Nor let any of our more fastidious readers run a tilt against our taste, if they find our style occasionally descending to the lowest strata of dialectical peculiarities. We have let our men and women, whether white or black, rich-white or poor-white, do their own talking. We took some pains during our residence in Virginia, as our voluminous note-books attest, to secure accuracy in the nondescript vernacular of the cabin and the hut; it has afforded us satisfaction to have our accuracy in this respect strongly commended by competent judges in the case.

But works of the present class are charged by some with exaggeration. In one sense they are exaggerations. There are points in which they do not correspond with the reality. It is, however, only in those respects in which all works of fiction resting on a basis of fact transcend the actualities of life. The tame, the common-place, the repetitious are thrown out of view, just as the painter omits many of the trivial objects in his landscape, and yet is true to nature and fact. In this sense, all of Scott's immortal fictions are exaggerations; but who is so weak of brain, or so green in literature, as to hazard such a criticism? And who of his readers does not feel, and not merely because the wand of a mighty magician is on them, that they are drinking in the spirit, and mingling in the scenes and strifes of Scottish life?

The "poor whites," a phase of Southern life not so well known at the North, and to which we have given some prominence, are not an accident of the slave system, but a necessary result, bound to it by the immutable law of cause and effect. No picture of Southern "institutions" is complete, in which this is not seen distinct in the back ground.

It will be seen that we have retained the *nom de plume* under which the letters were originally written.

LIFE ON THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

LETTER I.

INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL.

PORT ROYAL, VA., DEC. 17,-18—.

DEAR S.—I find myself at length an inhabitant of this pretty Southern village, this "hot-bed of Virginia aristocracy."

But before I tell you one word about it, I must glance back at my journey. I wrote you during my stop with our friends in Philadelphia, and will go on with my recital from thence.

I fortunately fell in with acquaintances—the W.'s—who were taking a bridal tour, designing to stop in Baltimore a few days. This made the ride from Philadelphia to Baltimore very pleasant; how I wished they were going all the way to Port Royal! This being "alone amid a crowd," whizzing through the country at a rate that forbids you the small amusement of looking at the posts, or counting the mile-stones, is not, I assure you, at all to my liking. And then, if you are a lady, you must join the crustaceous tribe,

and ensconcing yourself in your shell, peep out very timidly. A suitable travelling dress of dignity and reserve must be adopted as a coat of mail to protect you from too rude a freedom. No lady thinks now-a-days of making acquaintances in the cars; she may, however, be so happy as to meet them, for every body is a traveller, and only hermit exceptions stay at home. In the good old times of stage coaching, as grandfather would say, a journey of a few hundred miles would develope more character, and make firmer friends, than years of casual intermingling in society could do.

On reaching the Baltimore depot, I saw the steamer Rappahannoc laying in the dock, not half a square off. Pointing out my baggage to a porter, I followed him to the boat. The captain was standing on deck, and stepped forward to meet me. In answer to my inquiry, he said that "the Rappahannoc had made her last trip, and I would be obliged to go by the land route, and I would have a rough time of it, too." This assurance from that weather-beaten man of the water, was anything but inspiring, it must be confessed; but I had "put my hand to the plough," and it only remained for me to go forward. Hastening back to the depot, I found the Washington cars had just left. Here was a dilemma; it was Friday afternoon, and if I spent the night in Baltimore, I must remain there over the Sabbath, or finish my journey on that day. The first could not be afforded by my purse, nor the last by my conscience. My only alternative was to get aboard the cars and go to Washington that night. The

cars leave Baltimore under the tug of horses instead of steam; and this getting aboard was not among impossibilities, though they were at some distance. A hack was at hand, and Mr. W., having seen my baggage put on, handed me in, saying to the driver, with Napoleonic brevity and force, "To the cars." The horses were duly lashed and coaxed, and coaxed and lashed; but alas for the resistance which inactive matter makes to a change of state. The street was encumbered with masses of mud and snow frozen in the roughest shapes, and the wheeling was intolerable. With much ado the *venerable* steeds were excited into a lumbering gallop, quite vexatiously ludicrous; indeed, to my fidgety fancy they seemed to be lazily prancing without progression. In truth, we did not gain on the cars at all; and the hackman, in despair, turned round and said, "*It's a no-go; I can't ketch them cars!*"

"O, yes you can;" said I. "In a moment they'll stop and change horses for steam, and you can gain on them then."

I said this more hopefully than I felt, I must confess. The hackman was good-natured, and seemed inspirited by the hope I held out, and shortly succeeded in enlisting his tame animals in his feelings. The locomotive was attached, and the cars just ready to start, when we came alongside. I thanked the driver, paid him a dollar, and being put in the care of the conductor by Mr. W., stepped into the cars, delightfully exhilarated with the success of the experiment.

Two hours brought us to Washington, and me to Mr. B.'s hotel, "a pretty, quiet place," as the kind conductor assured

me, "where many ladies who came down in the cars stopped." A pleasant room was assigned me, and black Maria, the chambermaid, soon came to call me to tea. I was a stranger and alone; I shrank from the public table, and chose to have my tea in my room.

Maria was a slave—the first I had seen to recognize as such, and interested me not a little; now that I was at leisure, I regarded her most observantly, although, as in duty bound, I put on the externals of indifference.

"It is true, then," thought I, as I gazed with strange feelings on the representative of slavery in my room; "the capital, the heart, the citadel of free and proud America, is slaveholding! Human beings clank their chains within the very adytum of the temple of liberty. Yet what prophet, years ago, would have dared to proclaim that the sons of the brave battlers for freedom would outvie the rest of the civilized world in defence of the slave-whip! What seer could have foreseen this heritage of Heaven so accursed? Shall it be that a woe! woe! resound in echoes of death through the land of lofty mountains, noble rivers, and glorious scenery—that so eloquently teaches of all things free? Heaven interpose for my beloved country!"

"Poor Maria!" I said to myself, as I turned my head to conceal a tear, "thou art a slave! thou hast 'heart histories' of a blighted life, made aimless, hopeless, useless to thyself, by the inexorable laws of my own free people. I know it by that grief-set eye, and by the deep furrows on thy dusky brow. If thou couldst outpeak, thou poor thing, chattelized

and cattleized, thou wouldst tell of wrongs, of burning, ceaseless wrongs; nought has gone right with thee since that dread fate befell thee—the slave fate.

"It may be that thy babes have been torn from thee and sold to the Southern drover, and thy husband has been consigned to the dank rice swamps, where the 'fever demons' dwell. Poor thing, would I might ask thee. But no; it may not be. And what avails my sympathy? I cannot help thee."

Such were some of my thoughts, and thus went out my heart to that poor slave-woman.

I found that the stage for Alexandria had left, and no alternative remained but to spend the Sabbath in travelling, or in Washington. I chose the latter. Saturday glided away agreeably, almost imperceptibly. You suppose that I sauntered about the Capitol grounds and saw all the wonders, having found a guide to show me the lions of the place. Not at all. I kept my room all day. I was so weary seeing new faces, that it seemed a luxury to be alone.

Sabbath morning came; calm, clear, cold and sunny. I was thinking how pleasant to go to the house of God, and trying to settle in my mind the propriety of my attempting it. The thought of going alone was far from comfortable. I found the courage I had assumed when starting on my lone journey, very sensibly lessened by so long a jaunt. Suddenly, in the midst of my thoughts, dark Maria, who was putting the room to rights in a loitering way, turned to me and asked,

"Is you goin' to church to-day, Miss?"

"I am not sure, Maria; why do you ask?"

"O, nothin', Miss; bein' it's so clar, I thought mebbe you'd go, of course;" replied Maria.

Maria's question struck me somewhat singularly. And her reply was no less strange; it was the only speech she had made during our acquaintance—her necessary answers having been heretofore briefly mumbled, "Yes," and "No, Miss;" saving which she was as mum as the mummy which she, in her dusky, wrinkled visage, so much resembled. Now she had all at once put on a familiar garb, greatly to my surprise.

Having occasion to open my trunk, I looked for the key on the linen frill of the toilet-cushion, where I had constantly kept it. It was gone! I had locked the trunk from mere habit while travelling, and, perfectly unsophisticated in Southern proprieties, had placed the key not one half hour before in plain sight. I had not left the room, and no one had been in the room save Maria and myself. I was puzzled.

"Maria, did you see my key while dusting the toilet?" I asked.

"No, indeed, Miss; not I!" was the reply.

From the circumstances, and from her manner, I was convinced, much against my inclination, that she had taken the missing key. I was positive there could be no mistake, and she wished me to go to church that she might pillage my trunk! I was both grieved and indignant, and said,

"I would not have believed this of you, Maria. Will you give me my key, that there may be no further trouble?"

"Indeed, Miss, I hasn't got your key!" replied she, with bold effrontery, and instantly her eye flashed, as if an inventive thought had struck fire, and she continued in the same breath, "I's hearn tell, Miss, dat dis yer room is hanted like; ever since a woman died here dat uster steal, her ghost comes and goes and takes a heap of things."

"Nonsense!"

I saw that I must take decisive measures, and stepping quickly to the bell-rope, put my hand upon it, and said, "Maria, you can give me my key at once, and I will say nothing about it; but unless you do it this moment, I must ring for the landlord."

The poor woman fumbled in her pocket, feigned to be looking around the room, and finally, raising the cushion of the rocking-chair, handed me the key. Were my sentimentalism and sympathy at fault? At any rate, I was sad and heart-sick.

I left Washington at seven o'clock Sabbath evening, and took the steamer down the Potomac, nine miles to Alexandria. The boat was all night making the passage, and such a grating and groaning in getting through the ice! It seemed as if all imaginable discordant sounds were summoned to aid, excepting, of course, that perfection of squealing, the inimitable car-whistle. A fat negress presided over me and my baggage with care truly motherly. She had such a lofty, queenly air, I had no thought that she was a slave, but I

have since learned that she was hired of her master to go as chambermaid. She was the very incarnation of easy comfort, and evidently considered herself the principal personage on board.

At four I was awaiting the stage, beside a smouldering coal fire in the little parlor of the Alexandria Hotel. Presently the stage horn announced the arrival of the Fredericksburg coach and four.

"Halloo, Sam!" said the landlord, bustling through the hall.

"Yes, Master!" replied the owner of the monosyllabic appellative, coming up the steps, lantern in hand, "Yes, Master."

"Sam, is the Senator ready?"

"Senator, Senator, what Master mean?"

"Why, are you drunk?—the gentleman up stairs!"

"O, yes, Master; I reckon so. I done called him right smart while ago." And quickly Sam was heard knocking at the door of a chamber overhead, and calling out, "Stage ready, sir!"

A confused floundering, shuffling and jarring above preceded about fifteen minutes the descent of the heavy legislator, into whose care, by the way, the landlord kindly deposited me, saying, that, as there was no regular conveyance from Fredericksburg to Port Royal, I would need some friend to get me a chance to go on. Senator T. was not more than half resuscitated from sleep, but appeared affable and princely, for all that. In a moment we passengers, four

in number, were shut in the vehicle, and the impatient driver giving the rein and lash to his chafing steeds, away we went.

The road grew more and more rough; in fact, it has the reputation of being one of the roughest roads in the Union, at this season. But the driver urged on his horses with about equal disregard of their comfort and ours.

"Can you not give us a little less jolting?" asked Senator T., out of breath.

"Can't, possibly" shouted the coachman, whipping up afresh; "it's an urgent case, ye see, gentlemen and ladies. I's got the government mail, and must be in Fredericksburg at four, precisely."

"How far is it?" asked the lady passenger by my side.

"Sixty miles," replied the driver, cracking his whip.

"Sixty miles!" said the Senator, "and such a road!"

"Sixty miles!" echoed Dr. G., a distant relative of the Senator, who sat beside him; between five and six miles an hour over such a heaped up road as this! Bless me! every bone in me will want setting before we are half way there."

"Can't be helped, can't be helped," said the driver, a white man, who seemed amazingly resigned to the state of things.

An hour more, and the coach stopped at an inn, and the driver got down to water his horses. It was daylight, and we saw another coach with panting horses quenching their thirst.

"Halloo, John!" called out our driver; "thought I couldn't come up with you, eh?"

"Halloo!" said the other, "that you?"

"Nobody else, you better believe; and now the way I'm in for racing horses over this ere scary road, is a caution." And they both went into the bar-room.

"What'll you lay I won't be in Fredericksburg first?" said driver John, as he poured a pail of water into the watering trough, after they had finished their duties at the bar.

"A V.," said our driver.

"Done! it's a bet!" said the other.

We passengers heard this with some trepidation, I suppose, judging from myself. I half suspected, however, that the driver was trying the experiment of making the Senator uncomfortable for the delay which he had caused.

"This ere is a mighty bad road," he began again, while the horses were drinking; "it's a case, and no mistake. There's more accidents happens on this road than on all the rest in the States."

"A large story," muttered the Doctor.

"What does the fellow mean?" asked the Senator.

"I never makes a practice of turning over the stage, nor anything o' that sort," said the driver, coming with another pail of water, "but I *have* come nigh upon having some mighty bad accidents happen. I've driv within half an inch of them are precipices yonder, many and many a time, and never went over. Can't say I never *shall*; but then I'm a whaler at driving, and no mistake."

"Be under way lively!" shouted he as the other stage started off; "your horses must have considerable lightning

in their heels to keep out of my way;" and he raised a careless whistle.

"It is my opinion," remarked the statesman, with an impressive nod of the head, as the driver was gone for another pail of water, "that that scape-gallows is in for frightening us. We have only to keep cool."

Before starting, the driver again went to the bar, and the Doctor went too. I was sorry for this, for it seemed to me that at such a time, at least, we had need of cool heads; but the Doctor, as I afterwards learned, thought as little of quaffing his liquor as of lighting his cigar. I must slightly sketch Dr. G. for you. He is of medium height, though he seemed to be a small man alongside of the Senator; rather thin and pale, notwithstanding his habits. He has also a well-turned head, blue eyes, dark brown hair, and a physiognomy open and sincere. He dresses neatly, seems thirty-five or forty, and his general appearance is at once diffident and gentlemanly, without the slightest trace of *doctorial* bearing.

It was now six o'clock, and we were dashing on, almost jolted to jelly. The driver was as good as his word, giving chase to the coach ahead, which, as it had only two passengers and a light baggage, found no difficulty in maintaining its distance. Whenever obliged to walk his horses, in the spirit of giving classic interest to the scenery, he would point out the various spots where the stages had gone off, and all the passengers were killed; but as no one present had heard of these shocking accidents, each new story was unanimously voted a ready-made hoax, or a traditionary

bugbear. Not that there was no danger;—a peep now and then into some ravine at the left, was all the logic we needed on that point; but our driver, we wot, had no more partiality than ourselves for fathoming its depth; besides, the carriage road wound not very alarmingly near the edge. As long, therefore, as our driver was not more than one-third drunk, we concluded we might safely dispense with fear. About seven we came rattling down a long, winding hill into a village, where we took breakfast, and then, away. The country soon became more level and uninteresting, the road far more tolerable, and the gentlemen more sociable.

"Let's see; I think you were in the Florida war," said the Senator, taking off his hat, and displaying a fine head.

"Yes," replied Dr. G., "I served as surgeon six years in that war."

"Ah! indeed! I had forgotten that you were there so long. It's some years since the war, and I had lost sight of you. Have you been in this country of late years?"

"Well, yes and no," replied the Doctor. "I have been sky-larking round the world; making the tour of Europe, and all that; and as you may suppose, I've spent quite a little fortune, and now I'm going to reform, economize, marry, settle down, stock my plantation with slaves, and lead a good, useful life."

"Ah, well; that'll do; that's commendable;" said Senator T., with a sunny smile. "I'm glad to hear it; you'll do well, I doubt not."

"Why, you see," said the Doctor,—whose tongue moved

glibly, for he had drank after breakfast as well as before; and so had the worthy Senator; but one could not perceive that it affected him,—“you see, sir, I'm getting in years; I'm thirty, thirty odd, and it's high time that I became a good member of society.”

"I'm glad to see you take such sensible views of life. Most of our young men, the Senator was sixty, I'm sorry to say, are sadly wanting in reflection. They seem to think that, if they lead a gay, frolicksome life, without any special object, save to please themselves, all well and good. But I take it a man is responsible for his influence on those around him. You have done good in serving the wars of our country, and I can hope that you are destined to still more honorable distinction. You were speaking of a plantation."

"Yes, sir; I have a tract of ten thousand acres in East Florida, the garden of the world, and my present business is *buying slaves* to stock it," replied Dr. G.

"Ah, indeed! I'm glad to hear it," said the Senator.

"East Florida is the country of countries, sir," continued Dr. G., for a moment suspending the puffing of his inseparable cigar. "California is not to be mentioned the same day with it, sir. Not in respect to gold, precisely, but as it regards all that makes valuable farms."

"I suppose it is indeed a very fine country," remarked the Senator.

"The finest in the world, sir. I wouldn't take millions for my tract of ten thousand acres; money would be no temptation. Fact sir, it's a young paradise—or will be, when

I've expended a few thousands for servants and other fixings." And the Doctor complacently puffed his cigar again.

"You are a lucky fellow, sir," said the Senator.

"Why, I think so," said the Doctor; "it's true we had a hard tug of it exterminating those Seminoles that were so obstinately rooted into the soil; but then it pays, it pays. We get our fee; at least I do. I reckon I never told you how we poor soldiers fared some part of the time in that campaign. Why, sir, there were times when those villanous Indians cut off our supplies, and for weeks together we were on a short allowance of crackers and pork—crackers and pork, sir, if you'll believe it. We used, however, to crack jokes on our living, for the sake of digestion. One morning a witty friend of mine came into the tent; 'Ah!' said he, 'how are you, Doctor? how are you? And what do you have for breakfast this morning?'"

"'Crackers and pork!' I replied.

"'You do?' said he, 'why, we have *pork and crackers*.'"

"Hard living and *hard* joking that," said the Senator, smiling; "but you have the consolation of knowing that your hardships were not in vain."

"Exactly," said the Doctor.

"I maintain," remarked the Senator, "that this country is like the land of Canaan, which the Israelites were commanded to subdue and inherit. The God of heaven has decreed the extermination of the aborigines, and the establishing of the Anglo Saxon race; and the warriors in this strife have won laurels in a noble cause."

"Exactly;" chimed in Dr. G.; "that was the grand principle of the Florida war; we were the Israelites, and the Seminoles the heathenish Canaanites."

We now drew up before a watering trough.

"Miserable country this!" exclaimed the Doctor, looking out of the window; "the land is worn out and worked out, till it is scarcely better than a desert."

"Yes, sir," replied the Senator, "that is one of the unavoidable evils of our system. Overseers have pay in proportion to the crops, and little regard is had to the extra wearing out of servants and farms, in the process of filling their pockets. You see, sir, just what these miserable scamps have done. These lands are ruined;" pointing to large tracts of level, sandy, exhausted lands, extending as far as the eye could reach, "utterly ruined, sir, by those merciless wretches, who care only for their own profit. And the owners of these acres have been beggared in the process, and their children, with very few exceptions, have found their level with the poor whites. Overseers are a nuisance—a necessary nuisance it may be, but an intolerable nuisance." And the Senator looked grave.

As we passed along, the country appeared no better. Miles and miles the eye rested on exhausted corn-fields, where nothing would grow save dwarfish pines.

"This is a sad case," the Doctor continued; "a sad case. It really makes one melancholy. Can you suppose the day will ever come when my East Florida plantation will present such a death-like appearance?"

"That depends on whether you employ overseers:" replied the Senator, emphatically.

"Well, of course I must have overseers. What could I do overseeing a force of three or four hundred negroes? Why, I'm a broken-down constitution, as you may say, sir — a broken-down constitution — and I must have overseers. It really makes me feel blue to think of it; that my glorious tract of fertile everglades, rolling prairie, rich hills and valleys, and flower-inwoven forests, should be made a sterile waste by the plebeian tribe. I'd much rather the Indians had it; fact, sir."

"But you will doubtless enjoy it well all your life. Those rich lands will bear many years of overseer management," said the Senator.

"Yes, sir; yes, sir; there is some comfort in that;" replied the Doctor. "But what is to become of the Old Dominion, if things go on at this remorseless rate of exhaustion?"

"Ah, that poser — it might take a wise head to explain. Give these old lands to the Yankee farmers, and they'd make them 'bud and blossom as the rose,' by the second year, at farthest. 'If you want a thing well done, do it yourself,' is their motto, and a very good one it is, for those who have been inured to physical labor from childhood. If Virginia continues to depreciate in landed wealth at the present rate, I cannot say what will be the result. She would have been bankrupt long since had it not been for the resource of raising slaves for the Southern market. This

has most *providentially* saved her. I should be a beggar this moment, had I not been able to raise slave-stock, to balance the depreciating process on my plantation."

I looked at the Senator with a surprise not easily concealed. I had seen few Northerners more noble looking than he. He had naturally a clear head and a kind heart, and I inly anathematized the system, while I pitied the man.

"I was not aware," said the Doctor, "that our State owed her pecuniary position so much to this trade with the South."

"Certainly," replied the Senator; "I have not in mind the precise statistics on the subject, but Virginia has received a great many *hundreds of millions* for slaves, for the South and Southwest. In 1836 forty thousand servants were sold from this State, at an average price of six hundred dollars per head, making twenty-four millions in one year by this traffic."

"Ah, indeed!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"Yes, sir;" resumed the Senator, "and I can hardly suppose the sales have been less since. The fact is, we are obliged to grow slaves, to meet the demand of the rice-swamps and corn-fields, and about the same number are wanted annually, take one year with another."

"Have you any marketable slaves on hand that you wish to dispose of?" asked Dr. G.

"Why, yes; I reckon so; I reckon I could spare some; although I made quite a sweep from the cabins last spring when the drover came along."

"I want some good, sturdy chaps that will go into the work with a relish," said the Doctor.

"Ah!" replied the Senator, "you cannot expect the poor fellows will have much *relish* for work in a new country. My hands dread to be sold. I do not know why it is—most planters do not have such trouble at their sales, but, fact, sir, I have to harden my heart to stone." And the tears actually came into the old man's eyes. In a moment, recovering himself, he went on—"You cannot expect the poor fellows will have much *relish* for work, as I was saying; you must remember that they are exiles."

"O, of course, of course;" said the Doctor, evidently puzzled.

"My neighbors tell me that I should have no sort of fuss sale days, if I would only pursue the severe course with my seryants. But it isn't in me to be crusty and cross to those always toiling and broiling for me, year in and year out. I should be an ungrateful dog to treat them cruelly."

"Why," said the Doctor, in great surprise, "you talk of your servants as if they were really human."

"Of course I do, sir; and I am a believer in that doctrine. Human! they have all the characteristics of human beings, save position in society; and why not class them as such? I should be a poor reasoner if I did not," warmly remarked the Senator.

"Bless me!" exclaimed the Doctor, "you must make hard work of being a master of servants."

"Exactly; it is so;" said Senator T. "I am frank to own,

had Providence given me existence at the North, I would have been far happier. But what is one to do? Here he is—he finds himself the proprietor of a vast estate and some hundreds of slaves inherited from his father, and it seems fitting that he take care of his patrimony and keep matters as nearly straight as he can. Now one cannot provide for his own household without now and then making sales: it's a necessary part of the system. And, sir, I maintain, *as things are*, that it is no true benevolence for a kind master to *free* his slaves, dependent as they are. Why, what can the poor creatures do? They can never rise above the level of the poor whites! They cannot take care of themselves; and we all know that free blacks are a perfect nuisance, unless colonized."

"Well, well," said the Doctor, "how many boys think you'll let me have?"

"Cannot possibly say now; a dozen, perhaps. Call around at Grove Hill, and we'll talk over the matter. How large a force do you raise?"

"O, about two hundred, more or less," said the Doctor.

"Well, well, call and see me, and we'll talk it over," said the old gentleman; and the Doctor looked out of the window, for we were descending the beautiful hill near Fredericksburg, and the scenery was delightful. We ladies looked out too, and had the first view of Virginia's noblest river—the Rappahannoc. In a few minutes I found myself ushered into the Fredericksburg Hotel.

Senator T. inquired respecting a conveyance from Fred-

ericksburg to Port Royal, distant twenty-two miles, and learned that the mail stage ran only once a week, and I would be obliged to wait four days for it, or avail myself of a private opportunity. Dr. G. was going to Port Royal, having obtained a horse and carriage of a friend, who was to send a negro boy to take it back. The good Senator introduced me to the Doctor as Miss P., from Connecticut, and added he would do him a great favor if he would give me a seat in his carriage, and see me safely in Port Royal.

Dr. G. bowed, and said that he would do this with a great deal of pleasure.

"And now, my little friend," said the Senator, shaking my hand, "good bye! God bless you!" And a moment after, he took his seat in the ——— stage, bound in a westerly direction. I felt sincerely sorry at parting with the good old gentleman, although he had not spent ten minutes talking with me on the journey, yet he had kindly looked after my baggage, and given me all the attention that I needed. I could not for the life of me avoid regarding him as a fatherly or grandfatherly personage. I also heartily pitied him, since he was a slaveholder by destiny, and longed to learn how he would carry himself on his arrival home, in making selections for the coming sale. "It may be," thought I, "that I shall somehow hear about it, as Grove Hill is not one hundred miles from Port Royal, and he being a prominent and eccentric man, his sayings and doings will be likely to be current there." And comforting myself with these thoughts, I ran to my room to busy myself until the hour of

starting. Meanwhile, my head was filled with plans of usefulness, to be put into operation on the way to Port Royal. I would picture to the Doctor the state of things at the North. I would tell him about our great cities, thriving villages and happy homes; and that we owed none of our prosperity and happiness to slavery. I would ask him to point out a slaveholding section of country which God blessed as he did New-England. I would remind him of his East Florida paradise, which he was about to make desolate as a desert, by slave cultivation. I would ask him, why not employ Irish or German emigrants, &c., &c. In short, my string of posers was as long as the Catholic's rosary, and I almost fancied that I should nullify Dr. G.'s present purpose of slavetrading.

The carriage came to the door, and Dr. G. and myself were soon beyond the boundaries of Fredericksburg.

As we passed along, and I was thinking how and when I should introduce the conversation I had planned, the Doctor pointed with his whip to this, that, and the other residence, telling by whom they were occupied; this by a cousin, that by an uncle, and the other by a very particular friend; and detailing peculiarities of each in the management of his estate. One thing, however, struck me as very singular; if I asked a question, he went straight along with his recital, just as if he did not hear me. I felt not a little confused by this. I remembered how our stern father used to tell us, "*Children should be seen, not heard,*" and I had a dim consciousness that the Doctor might be of the same school, and

disposed to recall the offending girl before him to the sage old maxim.

At length, after a long harangue, in what seemed to me an unnecessarily loud tone;—subject, the folly of certain courses of plantation management,—the Doctor made a pause. After thoughtfully snapping his whip for a few moments, he said “*Ahem!*” loud enough to clear two or three throats, and thoroughly wakened me from a little reverie-nap into which I had fallen, in my wondering if he was an average specimen of Virginia gentlemen.

“*Ahem!* my friend, Mr. T., said you were from the North.”

“Yes, sir,” I replied, in a clear, distinct voice.

“What did you say?” shouted the Doctor, as if I had been a deaf mute.

“Yes, sir,” replied I, more distinctly than before.

“Be so kind as to speak a little louder,” said he; “I am a *little deaf.*”

Conceive my consternation! All my plans of doing the poor man good dashed in an instant! Alas, for the uncertainty of all sublunary things! I had manifestly “reckoned without my host.” The Doctor must needs be the talker, and I the listener. For what with my feminine voice, and what with the rumbling of the carriage over a December road, I was quite in despair. I now remembered that while talking with the Senator, the Doctor sat very near him, and inclined his head, and that the former spoke in a loud, sonorous tone.

“Do I understand that you are from the North?” persisted Dr. G.

“Yes, sir,” replied I, as loudly as possible, nodding.

“From Connecticut?”

“Yes, sir,” as before.

“Ah, indeed! Why, you have a world of courage. You’d make a good soldier if you lived in revolutionary times, and if your size were equal to your courage. I reckon you Northern ladies,” continued he, stentorianly, “have more courage than our ladies; why, when they journey, they wait six months for company.”

“It must require something more than courage to wait so long,” replied I; “they must have great *fortitude.*” I saw that my remark did not reach the Doctor.

I felt disappointed that I was not able to reason at all with this man. I feared if I kept silence, that I should lose ground in firmness of principle on the subject of freedom, and, ere I was aware, sympathize with the oppressor. With a jealous eye, I peered into my heart to see how it stood affected towards the poor slaves; and I will confess to you, dear S., that I found it less sympathizing than formerly! I was musing on the cause of this phenomenon, and calculating how long a time, at the present ratio, would suffice to make me an advocate of the enslaving system, when the Doctor outspoke:

“Do you see those Lombardy poplars, yonder?”

I nodded a yes.

“My good friend, Col. S., lives in the mansion pointed out

by the poplars, and those are his people that you see at work there."

I looked, and saw for the first time slave people at work in the fields. There they were—men, women, and children—whole families hard toiling, and for what? For the same object as the horse and the ox—for the master's good. Leaving the rank in which God made them, they are forced to be put on a level with the brutes, and serve their fellow men, albeit of "one blood." Col. S.'s "people," as the Doctor called them, were clearing up brushwood and repairing fences. Some of them turned to look at us as we passed. They were not near enough for me to read their faces, but I felt my heart glowing with tender pity for them.

"How think you'll like our slave system, Miss?" continued the Doctor.

"Not much," said I, loud enough for the deaf man to hear.

"O," replied he, pleasantly, "you Northerners always say so when you first come among us; that is, generally speaking; but after a while you come to like it as well as the best of us. I grant you there is an acclimating process to be gone through with in regard to it. Why, Miss, I have my eye on several Northerners, now residents of the South, who, when they first arrived, were dissatisfied with our domestic institution; they did not say so in so many words, perhaps, but we Southerners understood how they felt. And where are they now? Why, they have fallen head and ears in love with the system; they are among our most arrant slaveholders. You see, Miss, our domestic arrangements are

vastly convenient for the master, as well as for the servants. I maintain, the latter find their level scarcely above the ourang-outang tribe—being a connecting link between the animal and human races. It's a mercy to keep them where they are, in my opinion."

"Downright horrible!" said I, shaking my head.

"I see," replied the Doctor, coolly, "that you have not been educated into the system; but, my word for it, you'll be charmed with it yet. It will recommend itself to your good common sense; and Port Royal, of all places, is the place to form a favorable estimate of our institution. There the servants are fat, sleek and well-fed; they lead an easy, contented life. You will think them a free-and-easy, jolly set, I make sure. Your feelings won't be outraged by the harsh plantation treatment occasioned by those necessary nuisances—overseers. And, by the way, your Northerners make the hardest overseers in the world; they have not one jot of mercy for the servants. I would not have one of them on my plantation, if he'd serve gratis; he'd waste more bones and sinews than he was worth. Fact is, Miss, your Northerners go a notch higher than we do in the *brutality* of the thing." The Doctor paused, and I was silent, wondering how this could be.

"If I were a Yankee," said he, after a while, "I should *guess* that directly you would be delighted with our domestic system; and furthermore, I should *guess* you'd marry some wealthy planter before a twelvemonth!" Dr. G. said this

with an arch, mischievous look, that annoyed me exceedingly. I replied, shaking my head, "See if I do, sir!"

"Ah," he continued, "you Northerners come among us, and directly you tack round and become the very best Southerners in the world. All very natural, of course. You find you've been mistaken in your estimate of things in this country, and you must needs change your opinion. It goes to show that you are a sensible people, and I admire you for it. I always did say that the whole nation of Yankees had most admirable tact. They have one more faculty than other people—the faculty of adapting themselves to every nation under heaven. But, bless me! here we are, right upon Port Royal."

I saw a little village of forty or fifty houses, with a church,—the spire of which was surmounted by a cross,—and an academy.

"Is this Port Royal?" I asked, with some disappointment.

"Yes, Miss. You are surprised to find it no larger. It has two hundred white inhabitants, and perhaps four hundred servants; yes, it has a population of full six hundred. We call this a large village, *southernly* speaking; quite a large village, Miss. Why, it has some little commerce of its own to boast of, although it is not, like its overgrown, strapping sisters of the North, given to manufactures."

"Why not?"

"O, it isn't thought quite expedient. We do not think it a safe investment. Servants are servants, and not to be trusted overmuch, you'll find. It isn't *healthful* for them to

be too much herded together; when collected in gangs, they are inclined to ferment, to get riotous and rebellious; in short, Miss, to rise against their masters, and all that."

I pointed to the Rappahannoc, on a bluff of which beautiful river the village is situated.

"Water privilege! Ah, yes; and I do suppose you Yankees would improve it more than we lazy Southerners do. Yes, yes; you'd convey the water around in canals and flumes, and turn old Rappahannoc into a cloud of mist, with your perpetual-motion water-wheels, leaving the steamboats high and dry. And then these same managers would straightly have a railroad chartered to cut up and ravage our plantations, to wait on their factories, forsooth! The very Goths and Vandals are these Yankees. Should they swarm down upon us—bless me!—we should fare worse than the old Romans."

"I grew scarlet, and poured forth a perfect torrent of words, in vindication of my abused people. The deaf Doctor heard not a word, however; for, in my zeal, I forgot to raise my voice to the required pitch to make an impression on his obtuse tympanum. He saw by my heightened color that I was vexed, and said, apologetically,

"I beg your pardon, Miss. I did not intend to be personal. I regard you now as a Southerner; you'll be cordially received, never fear. You'll find us a generous-hearted, hospitable people. We, first-families-in-Virginia, are all cousins—linked together like a chain. I'll speak a good

word for you, although there isn't the least need of it; you will be your own passport."

And I found myself at the door of a conspicuous-looking house, having arrived at my destination.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER II.

IMPRESSIONS AND REALITIES.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Dec. 20, 18—.

DEAR S.—As I rang, a bevy of slave children darkened the hall, scudding hither and thither to tell massa and missee that "de young lady done come!" Franck Cameron himself came to the open door. Although he had altered much, and had reached the very respectable height of six feet one inch, yet I recognized him at once, he was so like dear, good Aunt Clara, his Quaker mother, whom he had left behind in New-England, half heart-broken, because he would wed slavery in winning a wife.

"How are you? how are you, little coz?" he exclaimed, catching me up as of old, and landing me on the elegant parlor sofa. It was evident cousin Franck had not yet become the courtly Southerner, if he had married three plantations.

"Tom, Dick and Harry! d'ye hear? Tell your mistress that Miss Pocahontas is in the parlor." And half a dozen bare, black feet hied away.

"I must show you my Regina," continued cousin Franck, nodding graciously. Then, chancing to recollect that there was such a country as New-England, and that some of his

kin dwelt there, he asked after you all with a genuine gush of affectionate interest.

Soon a superbly-dressed lady gracefully swept into the room, and I was presented to cousin Regina—Mrs. Cameron. She is of medium height, with a finely-rounded head, a forehead neither high nor low, but fair, and significant of intellect. Her luxuriant hair of dark brown, eyes blue as the sky, with black fringes, and her clear rose and white complexion, claim your admiration. At once I half forgave cousin Franck that he, when only a poor tutor, had the audacity to fall in love with “the most fascinating lady in the Carolinas,” albeit she was a widow with two daughters, and a retinue of three hundred black adherents. The next moment cousin Regina’s two daughters made their appearance; Ruth and Rosalie, seventeen and nineteen. Ruth is a plain, little, humped-back thing; would be tall, were it not for her sad deformity. Rosalie is as tall as her mother, and greatly resembles her; as we were introduced, I fancied that she quite looked down on my slight figure.

Mrs. Cameron and daughters, as well as cousin Franck, were dressed for an evening party; they expressed themselves in the most cordial terms, quite happy to be detained on my account; of course, I found no difficulty in prevailing on all to go, save Ruth, who was heartily glad of an excuse. Poor, dear Ruth! I wish you could see her; you could not help loving her. She is more delicate-looking than Rosalie; her hair is darker, and her face paler. Her eyes, like true soul-lamps, are lit up with the fire of intelligence, and shining

out from under the heavy, perceptive brow, defy you to decide whether they are blue or black. There is a softened, mellow light about them, that tells of long years of suffering. Her mind is of a high order. After the first surprise, one almost forgets her deformed figure; her dark, rich tresses, with the aid of a cape she is never without, partially concealing it. I found her a charming companion for the evening. After tea, passing through the folding doors, she conducted me to the farther parlor, where, seating ourselves on the sofa, we had a pleasant, cozy chat. At length, after divers discourse highly interesting to ourselves, like two sleepy children as we were, putting the cushions on the middle of the sofa, and our heads together on them, we went fast asleep.

How long we had slept I know not, when we were aroused by the return of the family. They seated themselves in the parlor, and I soon heard Dr. G.’s voice. He had accompanied them home from the party, and was talking of slave purchases as ladies talk of shopping.

“What say you, ‘Squire Cameron,” hallooed the Doctor; “Can you sell me a score of niggers?”

“Ahem—well, really, sir, I guess we must try and accommodate you. How will it be, Mrs. Cameron?”

“We’ll see, we’ll see!” the lady carelessly replied, but in a tone loud enough for Dr. G.’s ears; “we’re *overstocked*, and if we can agree on the *price*, I think we may *trade*.”

I looked at my new friend to see how the idea of trading men, women and children as *cattle* affected her. She had raised her head from the cushion, and was listening as if for

dear life. Her eyes were lit up with intense feeling, and her cheek was blanched with anxious fear. Had she herself been a slave in apprehension of being sold, she could hardly have exhibited greater emotion. I perceived that she trembled, and knowing that she must be very frail, and fearing the effects of excitement, I tried to soothe her by expressing sympathy. I just put my arms about her neck, and gently kissed her, whispering, "Dear, dear Ruth!"

She embraced me with great affection, and looked into my eyes with those beautiful soul-orbs of hers, and in a moment our hearts were one, as if cemented by the friendship of years. It was the work of a moment, during the little pause in cousin Regina's reply to Dr. G. She continued in the same extra tone:

"I am not quite sure now, Doctor, which of my people I can best part with. Shall we waive the subject until morning?"

"As you please, madam," replied Dr. G.

The conversation became general, and again we pressed our heads on the sofa-cushion. Presently Madam Regina passed into the farther parlor, where we were making believe napping, and exclaimed,

"As I live! here are the young ladies fast asleep! Cleopatra, where were your wits, that you did not see them to their rooms?"

And the dark, statue-like figure that had stood in waiting in the corner, with folded arms, moved slowly and mechanically around us, and conducted us to our chambers. The

apartments of Rosalie, Ruth and myself, connect with each other, Ruth's being the middle one, much to the satisfaction of myself, I assure you. I am older than Ruth by two, almost three years; and yet she is so matured by her peculiar sufferings, that she thinks and acts with the strength and discretion of a strong-minded woman. I cannot fail to improve in her society. Of Rosalie, I will tell you more anon. I must, however, say, that "the *inclination* of my belief" is, that she is a belle, selfish in the ground-work of her nature, but still amiably generous in her impulses.

Madam Regina seems the calculating lady-owner of negroes, whose husband is only a convenient supernumerary, a master *pro tem.* in the absence of the mistress.

Quite early in the morning, before sunrise, while as yet none but the servants were stirring, Ruth came to my room already dressed. She had had a sleepless night. She came to my bedside, and after asking of my welfare, and apologizing for her early call, said:

"You do not think that mamma will sell nurse Selma? O, it will kill me if she does."

"Who is nurse Selma?" I asked.

"The dearest, best soul in the world—*our own nurse*," replied Ruth. "She is very intelligent—a Christian, a member of the Episcopal church—dear mother's *sister in the church*. If mamma sells her, my heart will break."

"Hope for the best," I said.

"I cannot bring myself to bear the thought that any of the servants should be sold," continued the dear girl, weep-

ing. She at length went on. "All the servants mamma has with her she brought from North Carolina; the negroes are a most affectionate race, and it is like death to them to think of being sold from each other. Their lot is but sorrowful at the best, and this rending them asunder is so inhuman!"

"It must be heart-breaking," I exclaimed.

"O, it is," Ruth replied; "and when I own slaves, as soon as I am of age, there shall be no chance to have them sold; I shall certainly free them. Rosalie says she makes sure I shall think very differently when I have people in possession; but *what right can I have to own a fellow-being?*"

I was astonished to hear this, knowing, as I did, the prejudices of her education, and I said:

"You are in the right, dear Ruth, but I supposed all Southerners united in upholding slavery."

"Far from it, very far from it," she replied; "every one who will listen to the 'still small voice' speaking to his spirit, cannot help feeling that *holding property in man* is wrong. Many do not thus listen, and I might not, had not many lone hours of suffering taught me to feel for those in 'bonds as bound with them.'"

"And is it only those whom God afflicts, that have just views on this subject?"

"O, no," smilingly replied Ruth, "there are the outspoken natures, those who, braving consequences, freely speak their minds; these are few among us, however. Virginia has so far depreciated from her old renown, that her sons have not the courage to be truly free in thought and

expression. But then we can point you to Kentucky, which Virginia is proud to claim as her own daughter—a fine-grown child, skilled in all Western accomplishments—we can point you to Kentucky as she is even now, expressing her own and her mother's opinion of slavery."

"Yes," I replied, "the battle is there, to some extent, being fought on slave soil."

"It is the same with us," Ruth replied, "only less openly. We have many more discussions than you suppose. The subject is ever obtruding itself, let us dispose of it as we will. The final disposal is not yet made; meanwhile conscience is at work. A fear of encouraging Northern agitators in their incendiary efforts, our Virginians say, is the reason they have swerved from their habitual frankness, and stifled their convictions on this subject. But this excuse shows the moral cowardice of those who frame it. And the disposition to cling to the evil by throwing the blame on others, fills me with foreboding. The truth is, we are in a sad case. As I have often heard the more reflective of our planters say, 'We are on the brink of a volcano.' All are satisfied of the difficulty we are in, but the safe extrication is the problem. And what increases the fearfulness of our situation, is the sin involved in it—'we are verily guilty concerning our brother.' Merciful Heavens! what will become of us? It seems an easy matter to me to free myself from the guilt of slaveholding, as soon as I shall become the owner of slaves; it will be by giving them that liberty which is already their own by absolute right."

"And would you not have some misgivings, when you thought of the consequences to them and to yourself?" I asked.

"Consequences! what is the danger of doing right, compared with the danger of doing wrong? And as to the effect of emancipation on the slaves, look at the British experiment in the West India Islands; how has its success put to flight all the croaking that prophesied of its dire consequences. No, no, my dear friend; I am but a poor girl, I know, but I have looked at this thing a great while, in the light of conscience, and in the light of reason, as a question of principle and as one of policy; I have pondered on it in hours of solitude and suffering, and reflected on it more coolly and dispassionately amid the every-day scenes of life, and it is my full and settled conviction, that to emancipate is a duty, and that it will prove a blessing to all concerned. I have some little talent; there is my music and drawing, and I delight in teaching. And even should this resource fail me, I fancy I have enough of the inventive and constructive faculty, with a little practice, to make me a successful milliner."

"Then you would not shrink from self-maintenance?" I asked.

"Why should I, coz?" said Ruth, with beautiful earnestness. "I'll tell you, the happiest people on the globe are those who 'eat their bread in the sweat of the brow,' as the great Father of men designed. Look at your own prosperous and happy New-England. O, how I wish I had been born

there! I would never have wandered thence, and set foot in the slumbering South, as you have done. No, no; but I'm so glad you have come. Now I have some one to open my heart to, and it is overflowing with thoughts none of my family can understand."

Thus we discoursed, I know not how long, until towering Cleopatra, Ruth's maid, came in, saying,

"Why, hi! if de young ladies isn't dressed an' waitin', widout old 'Patra's help! Father's life! ye's right smart lively, dat is a fack! An' now ye can go right down mejuntly, for dey's totin' in de breakfas' rapid."

"We shall be in good time, then, Cleopatra," pleasantly replied Ruth.

"Dat you will, Miss Ruth; and you alla's is. You're a 'markable *seasonable* young lady, dat you is, if it *is* old 'Patra dat say it. Now, if dis shere new young lady is a mate to you in helpin' herself, and not makin' servant trouble, wont we have *easy* times? I reckons Mistress 'll let me be maid to ye both, and den I'll be bound every-which-way. I'll be too much 'count to be sold dis shere crop." And the tall woman looked inquiringly at me, as if to satisfy herself what sort of a person I might be.

"We shall have *easy* times, I makes no matter of doubt," continued Cleopatra, putting her arms akimbo, and looking complacently; but isn't I glad I ain't Miss Rosalie's maid? Hi! she de most particularist body livin', and turn every-which-way; dey's no suiting her."

"Hush, Cleopatra, said Ruth, "you know I do not like you to speak evil of any one."

"No, Miss, dat you doesn't, Miss, and I love you for't. I wont do so agin, see if I do. You don't want 'Patra to be biting de backs of dem dat isn't prisent, and I wont do so, indeed I wont. But how 'mazing different you is from Miss Rosalie! 'Pears like ye can't be any kin, no how, ye is so ontirely contrary!"

"Hush! hush!" said Ruth.

"Dat I will, Miss, rapid. Wy, Mima has more strouble dressin' and undressin' Miss Rosalie, dan if she was an infant baby, I makes sure. And den dares all de waitin', and traipsin', and totin', and tendin'."

Thus Cleopatra's tongue continued to run, as we, obeying the summons of the bell, ran down stairs to the breakfast-room.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER III.

SLAVE TRADING — CONSCIENCE.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Dec. 22, 18—.

DEAR S.—As to Dr. G.'s errand, his deafness, and the consequent volume of voice with which he has been accommodated, "has released Grimalkin from the reticule," or, to speak in more vulgar phrase, "has let the cat out of the bag." Every slave in the house knows it, and the confused hurrying hither and thither would remind you of the consternation in a bee-hive at the invasion of a caterpillar. I doubt not that the negroes, one and all, would like to imitate the bees' method of disarming an enemy, and embalm the dear Doctor at once, rather than he should carry off any of their number.

Hannibal, the dining-room servant, was in a perfect fidget during breakfast. When he passed a cup of coffee, his hand trembled so that he well nigh swamped the waiter with slops; and then he was so absent! I might have thought these things habitual with him, had not his mistress raised her delicate hand, and rolled up her eyes after the manner of a new astonishment. Like his illustrious namesake, Hannibal is not to be despised for his looks; and much I doubt if he has as dark a brow as had the hero of Carthage. He is a quadroon, not more shaded with sable than most Spaniards,

Italians and Greeks, to say nothing of hundreds of millions of Asiatics. If color be the criterion, he has certainly *three-fourths of a right to himself*. Indeed, if he were a Spaniard, he would be called very distinguished looking, and would be turning the heads of half the girls with his appearance and address.

But Hannibal's eyes glowed on Dr. G., now and then, as if fires were burning within. Nevertheless, the conversation at the table went on just as if such a *thing* was not present. Cousin Franck and the Doctor kept up quite an animated talk on various subjects, all more or less connected with the Florida plantation. Madam Regina presided with an easy grace, and her self-complacent countenance certainly did not betray any special commotion within, akin to that which had made sleepless the pillow of her Ruth.

When we were nearly through breakfast, Rosalie made her appearance, — punctuality at this meal not being a point of etiquette at cousin Franck's.

On returning to my room, I found Cleopatra highly excited. She had just been quarrelling with Mima, Rosalie's maid, and, once under way, she knew not when to stop.

"It's one ting to feel mighty cranky, and anoder ting to be it; dat tis, Mima. Eber so many folks in *dis shere* worl' tinks dey's mighty big concerns, like de swelled up toad, and dey's jest as good for notin'. Ony to tink, dat lazy hussy, Mima, dat neber arnt de salt in her pone, tinks I'll be sold afore her? She tink, too, dat Hannibal takes a heap of shine to her, jest as if she wasn't as black as de chimney

back. I makes sure sich gemun as Hannibal won't have much to say to sich hussies as Mima!" and Cleopatra stopped to observe herself in the glass, and directly felt in better humor, as all people do in a fit of complacency.

I seated myself by a window that looked out on the kitchen. A Southern kitchen you have never seen, and I will slightly sketch the one before me. It is a small, one-room building, entirely detached from the house, some three or four rods distant. It is sixteen feet square, perhaps, and its chimney is on the outside. Its style of architecture is not very ornamental, it must be admitted, but it is quite convenient, nevertheless. There is a fine, large fireplace, also an oven within, thus rendering the apartment more roomy by turning the chimney out of doors. By the way, the Southerners think us little better than savages, because we have not adopted their custom of excommunicating the kitchen from our dwellings.

Although it was chilly, I sat down by the window, open for the morning airing. Mine is a corner room, one window looking into the kitchen yard, and one into the garden. I noticed, through the half-closed blind, a "*quantity*" of children, liable to be sold, earnestly discussing the question that so agitated the laborers of the household. They vividly reminded me of Irving's bellipotent Dutchmen, as, with warlike demonstrations, they jabbered away under my window.

"Ut you gwine do, ef dey sells you, Tom?" asked Dick of the great man of the company.

"Do! dey'll see ut dis nig 'll do, I reckons! ef dey comes

nigh me; 'pears like, dey'll cotch ut ain't good for dere healths!" bravely said Tom, fistifying with all the eloquence of a stump-speech orator, one foot resting consequentially on a dilapidated wash-bench.

"Dey'd better be done, if dey touch me," said little, tattered Harry, whose greasy lips suggested that he had made acquaintance with some unwatched fry-kettle of the kitchen.

"I say now, boys," said chubby Jupe, "dat ar Ductar orter be ducked in de river; dat's ut I votes for."

"An so he hab, a deffee cold un, make his teef go chatte, chatte," added little Effie, rubbing her pretty hands, and dancing up and down, for the sake of her half-frozen feet.

"Yes, boys, dat's de go!" exclaimed chubby Jupe, who seemed to rival Tom as political leader, "dat's de go! Bless me! I wish a heap dat some ob de hus people ud be right smart libely, an hab him under; 'pears like it's high time."

"I wish so a heap," said half-clad Johnny, shivering.

"An' so duz I,"—"and I,"—"and I," replied half a dozen echoes.

"De case is, young uns," gravely remarked Tom, seeking to call attention to himself, "'pears like de case is, that dat ar Ductar is gwine to tote us off to Clorida, an' de case is, young uns, 'pears like he'd orter be right smart sick abed," and the fat paw of the little pleader came down on the wash-bench with a very valorous emphasis.

A murmur of applause buzzed through the group.

"Dat's de go, Tom!" exclaimed Jupe; "sposin de bench, shere, be de Ductar, wouldn't he kotch it?" and he gave it a

kick and a thump, and directly the whole troop kicked and thumped the old bench, until, if it had been the Doctor, he must have been pretty thoroughly mauled. At this stage of operations, however, cousin Franck's "right hand man," Philip Augustus, seven years old, issued from the back hall door, and whip in hand, began:

"What you up to now, you —— nigs?" using an adjective we may not quote; "you thought your master wasn't on hand, eh?" and as the little flock scampered, some for the kitchen, and others for Aunt Selma's white-washed cabin, the lordly boy ran, too, hitting now one and then another with his stinging lash.

The two little girls, Effie and Jule, who were too terrified to keep out of his way, were mercilessly chastised for the offence of the whole company. The poor things screamed as if badly hurt, and half frightened out of their wits; but the promising young slave lord continued to apply the lash until they came in sight of Aunt Selma's cottage door, in which stood the dear soul herself, looking at Philip Augustus as if she would bring him to account for his cruelty. On seeing her, he appeared ashamed, and, attempting to raise a whistle, slunk back to the house, beating his boots with his whip.

"Well done, Phil, that's a man!" called out cousin Franck, who was promenading the hall, in conversation with Dr. G., having witnessed a part of the prank just performed; "you are father's brave boy, that you are. Here, Doctor, is the boy for you; he was born to rulé; the reins of government

are his by inherent right. He'll make his niggers stand round, one of these days; he knows how it is done. Why, sir, if any little difficulty arises among the young servants, I've only to send Philip Augustus, and, like another Napoleon, he straightens matters at once."

I had just closed the window, and, seating myself by the fire, was shivering an accompaniment to the chilly blast without, when a knock, and cousin Rosalie entered. She looked sweetly, in her neat, would-be-negligent morning dress—her studied dishabille, and I knew that she had come to make me a friendly, unceremonious call, as she brought her embroidery. Taking her seat on the sofa, which I had wheeled to the fireside, she said, "Mamma is very much engaged this morning, Ruth is indisposed, and father and Dr. G. are monopolized with business affairs, so I've trotted in to keep you from getting lonely and homesick."

I thanked her, and thought it very kind, of course.

"O, we had such a delightful party last night at the M.'s!" she exclaimed, with animation, "you ought to have been there. Everybody in the village was there, and some distinguished strangers, and we had such a lively time! Nothing but dancing was wanting to make it as agreeable as possible. Margarette M., who is very religious, and has been confirmed of late, did not wish a dance. O, but you ought to have been there. I should so admire to present you to my friends; they'll be calling on you soon. As for the young ladies, you'll not think them very beautiful, when I tell you I stand the acknowledged belle among them. I win my laurels for

looks by lamp-light. It ought always to be evening for my sake."

I smiled, and said, "Then you do not love the sun?"

"Ah, no," she affectedly replied; "the gairish day—it has no sentiment, no poetry about it; and then it is so unmerciful in exposing sallow complexions."

"I thought everybody and everything praised the sunlight," said I.

"No, indeed," said Rosalie, knowingly, "you are mistaken there, my good cousin. Dyspeptic and nervous people hold it in abhorrence. It's too plain-spoken in the matter of their looks, dear. Once it was all the same to me, until I became belle, and, studying my looks, found that I was far more beautiful at evening than by daylight; since then, I have regarded that part of the twenty-four hours with contempt." And the spoiled beauty actually worked her lips into a hearty pout, as if vexed that the sun itself was not her obedient slave. Nevertheless, she plied her needle most zealously—she was embroidering a pair of slippers for the minister—and my thoughts wandered, wondering which of the people would be sold, and how they would bear up under the affliction. O, how my heart panted to save them this brute fate! Rosalie broke in on my meditations, by saying,

"Our Rector, the Rev. Mr. Brincherhoff, was at the party, cousin."

"Ah, indeed!" said I, half absent.

"Yes; and he is such a devoted man! He is wholly absorbed in the interests of the church. He lives the life of a

saint, and makes most delightful parochial calls. If any one reaches heaven, I make sure he will, he is so holy."

"By his good works?" asked I.

"Yes, measurably, as mamma says. He fasts, and goes through the prayer-book every day, and I'm not sure that he does not do penance. He has made the tour of Europe, spent some time at Rome, and his mind is stored like a picture gallery. He is charming in conversation; he calls us young ladies young sisters of charity. I do hope you'll hear him discourse on the Apostolic Succession, he is so clear and conclusive in his delightful way of reasoning. Of course he is orthodox High Church, and an intimate acquaintance of Dr. Pusey; indeed, if I do not mistake, he graduated at Oxford some fifteen years ago. Ah, he makes religion so attractive to the eye, the ear, and to the sentiments of the heart, that one must needs fall in love with it. Indeed, one must be very wicked not to be religious."

"He must be a very eccentric minister."

"Yes, indeed, one of the excellent of the earth. He is a widower, and ever so many are quarreling for him. I think him too good for anybody on earth—

"Bless your heart, my dear little Ruth!" exclaimed Rosalie, interrupting herself as Ruth entered, "how pale you are! Are you playing ghost? What ails you, little chick? Come, puss, do tell us what's the matter?" But Ruth silently seated herself between Rosalie and myself.

"Ah, I reckon I read you!" exclaimed Rosalie; "it's *the prospect of a sale* that's eating out your life. Now, sis, be-

fore I would be so extra foolish! What do you care for the stupid people? the more sold the better, I reckon."

"O, Rosalie," replied Ruth, "how can you talk so? How would you like to have me sold, for example?"

"You! of course not; you are my sister. Indeed, I should make a poor living without my good little Ruth," said Rosalie.

"But it would be no harder for us to separate, than for the servants," pleaded Ruth.

"Nonsense, puss!" said Rosalie, lightly, "how sentimental! It's not comfortable to think of our servants as having human feelings, so pray dismiss such a prosy thought. But who ever saw the like? What a hubbub there is among them this morning! One would think they all expected to be sold. What's got into them? Let's go and call on nurse Selma, and see if she is as calm as ever."

"O, yes," rejoined Ruth, "let's go at once." And away we went, to call at the good nurse's cabin.

As we reached the landing at the foot of the hall stairs, the parlor door being open, we could not well avoid seeing Madam Regina, sitting by the centre table, signing a bill of sale. She looked up a little apprehensively as she saw us, and as we hurried along, I noticed that Ruth was quite pale, and Rosalie just excited enough to have rosy cheeks.

"It cannot be that mamma will sell any people to-day," said Ruth, evidently trying to sustain herself with that hope.

"Why not?" said Rosalie, with the semblance of a careless air.

"She promised me as much, not an hour ago," replied Ruth, "when we were giving out things from the store-room. She begged me not to distress myself—she would not sell any people at present."

"And she told me, directly after breakfast," responded Rosalie, "that she must sell half a dozen, at least; her purse is getting light, and it is impossible to make a decent appearance in dress and entertainments, unless it is replenished by sales now and then. We have often had servants sold, and you never so took it to heart. Why do you now?"

"I am older, and can reflect better," replied Ruth.

"Then it's plain you ought to be more reasonable, and not grieve mother," argued Rosalie, "it's her business, not ours."

Ruth received this reproof of her elder sister in silence, save a sigh. As we passed out the open hall door, (a Virginian's doors, by the way, are always hospitably open, in winter as well as in summer,) we met Hannibal, bringing in a hod of coal for the parlor. It was plainly to be seen by his expression, that he was enlightened respecting the state of affairs. He bore himself, however, very much as one of our Yankees would have done in the like case. He looked aroused, on the alert, and enterprising, as if contriving for an emergency. I trembled for him, for I felt sure that if he should be on the list to be sold and transported to the far South, he would be desperate.

Nurse Selma's cabin, which we found just beyond the farther garden gate, half hidden from the house by a haw-

thorn hedge, is superior to anything of the kind in this vicinity; it has two rooms, and is comfortably furnished. The regular nursery is an apartment in cousin Franck's house; but for the sake of quiet to its inmates, Selma takes the children to her little hut by day, and returns with them to the nursery at night. Little Clara, six years old, and Washington, five, constitute the nursery gentry, and two noisier children never thrived. Selma received us with great cordiality and propriety, and she is evidently a superior woman. You could not look into her genial, beaming, dark eye, without wishing to look again. Her glossy hair is prettily arranged beneath a matronly cap, made by Ruth and Rosalie, who vie with each other in making her presents. You would pronounce her absolutely handsome; she is no darker than some of our Northern brunettes. She was sitting in a small rocking-chair, little Washington in her arms, Clara at her feet, and six or eight little negro children, belonging to different cabins, clustered around her. She is the point of attraction to the children, black and white. Master Philip Augustus has *measurably*, as the Southerners say, got beyond her care by day—happy riddance, no doubt—but at nightfall he is as glad of her motherly help to put him comfortably in his little nursery bed, and sing him to sleep, as Clara and Washington. Ruth and Rosalie call her Aunt Selma; indeed, she is everybody's aunt, although not as old as Madam Regina. It was just twelve, and nurse Selma had no indications of breakfast. You must know that twelve o'clock is the servant's breakfast hour; they are not supposed to have

the leisure to be hungry until after their morning work is done. After kissing Aunt Selma, introducing me, and chatting a moment, Ruth said,

"How is it, Aunt Selma, do you live without eating? I see no breakfast."

"Dear child, no," she replied; "I have all I need—I am not hungry this morning."

"Now, Aunt," said Rosalie, "you needn't make believe fast, because you think trouble is in the wind. You'll not be harmed; you are too useful; we prize you too much for that."

An unutterable look of anguish was Selma's only reply.

"You must have some breakfast," exclaimed Ruth, "I'll run and get you some;" and she was gone.

"Now do tell us, Aunt Selma," said Rosalie, "what is the matter? Are you afraid of being sold?"

"*My name is on the bill of sale,*" she calmly replied.

"It is? I cannot believe it!" replied Rosalie. "Why, what can mamma be thinking about? There isn't another servant on the land can quiet the children but you. We shall have pretty times, truly. The nursery will be all over the house, and the children will be screaming from morning till night. I shall be ashamed to have any gentlemen call; I shall, indeed." And Rosalie, with the greatest simplicity, showed the exact depth of her heart, and her capacity for sympathizing with a fellow-being in distress. Ruth now came in with a cup of coffee, slices of cold bacon, and hot

muffins, and placing the waiter on the table, begged nurse Selma to eat.

"Thank you, child; you are very kind, but I do not need to eat now," she replied.

"What is the matter, dear Aunt Selma?" said Ruth, putting her arms about her neck; "will you not tell your own Ruth?" The nurse whispered a word in Ruth's ear. "May God preserve you!" she exclaimed, greatly agitated. "I cannot believe it—I'll go directly in and ask mamma;" but she was nearly overcome, and, trembling from head to foot, needed the support of Rosalie and myself to leave the room. Meanwhile, the valiant little negroes, Jupe, Johnny, Tom, Dick and Harry, with Washington and Clara, were skirmishing for the choice muffins and bacon. The little girls, Effie and Jule, stood apart, the former wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron, and the latter, with one finger in her mouth, seeming sadly puzzled.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed cousin Regina, as we entered the parlor; "are you ill, Ruth?"

"Please tell me, mother, what names you have on the bill of sale?" said Ruth, glancing on that document, which lay exposed on the centre table.

"You can read for yourself," replied Madam Regina, haughtily.

Dr. G. was sitting on an ottoman, every now and then saying, "Ahem!" Cousin Franck, with his hands in his pockets, was striding to and fro across the room, unconsciously whistling, "Hail Columbia."

"Oh, mother, is it possible?" asked Ruth, in a grieved tone, after she had read the bill.

"Yes, child, it is possible," replied the lady, with an effort to be self-possessed. "I have thought the matter over calmly and collectedly; I have looked at it in every light; I have solemnly prayed over it, and am positive that it is a *Christian duty* to sell the servants you see described in that bill."

The Doctor inclined his new ear trumpet so as to catch the earnest words being spoken, and added, as cousin Regina ceased,

"Yes, indeed, Miss Ruth; you surely will not object to me as a master for some of your servants. I assure you they shall be well cared for. I am a physician; if they are sick, who so well qualified as myself to administer relief? You know that I am proverbially humane. I do suppose, if your father, mother and myself have anything to answer for in relation to servants, it is in being humane overmuch; spoiling our servants by indulgence."

Ruth burst into tears. Rosalie sank into an easy-chair, and swayed to and fro quite comfortably.

"Daughter, I'm sorry to see this, very sorry," said cousin Franck, stopping opposite Ruth; "I must say, I'm very sorry to see you so intent on getting up a scene."

"Yes, daughter," added Madam Regina, "anything but a scene at parting with a few people! It is shockingly unlady-like, and I really must apologize for you to Dr. G. I must say, that I never brought up my daughters to sentimentalize

in this way. It is purely original with them, purely original."

"With Ruth, please," interposed Rosalie, slipping her shoulders out of any responsibility in the affair.

"Miss Ruth is not so much to be blamed," said the Doctor; "she is evidently very kind-hearted, and fond of pets, like many young ladies I have met, who have a passion for cats; they often get so interested in these animals, as to delight in nothing so much as in their society, and if one chances to stray off, or get killed, then you may be sure there is a lamentation! But what I would now suggest to the young lady is, that she emulate her worthy mother. I take it you are a member of the church, madam?" Cousin Regina complacently nodded assent. "I would suggest that the young lady notice how her mother's *religion* helps her decide in the case, and come to a like decision, according to the dictates of her good taste." But Ruth still wept, seemingly little comforted by this stentorian harangue.

"This is most unprecedented, I must declare!" ejaculated cousin Franck, putting each arm akimbo in the arm-pits of his silk-velvet vest. "I would never have believed that our little Ruth could profit so little by her religious training. Why, child," exclaimed he, suddenly pausing before her, "are you not aware that you are breaking the very first commandment with promise, 'Honor thy father and thy mother?' Do you not perceive that you call in question the wisdom of our judgment in the case? Haven't we a right to dispose of *our own property* as we will?"

"Religion is certainly a very fine accomplishment in a young lady, in my opinion," remarked the Doctor, for Ruth's edification. "It is useful in rendering her mild, meek and quiescent, when the affairs of this life are not precisely to her mind. I shall certainly require religion in the woman I wed. Why, its influence is invaluable in teaching a lady her place in the domestic circle. Dancing, drawing, embroidery, French and Italian, are certainly very desirable—they go to make the lady; but, bless my soul and body, religion is the great accomplishment, after all! Am I not right, Madam Cameron?" And the Doctor looked very sanctimonious, as if his tolerant views of religion had come in mortal danger of making a pious man of him.

"Quite right, sir," responded cousin Regina, faintly blushing, as if she feared that Ruth might be as far as ever from conviction; "quite right, sir. It has ever been my aim to inculcate the principles of the Bible in educating my daughters. Ruth knows very well, that I have taught her that it is excessively unladylike not to reverence one's superiors; and that it shows great want of refinement, nay, that it is the height of vulgarity, to cherish a sickly sympathy for servants, or to interfere in the least in their disposal." Cousin Regina said this with an air of great dignity, that would have frightened away every whit of a benevolence less audacious than Ruth's. But the dear girl lifted up her head undauntedly; the sterner the storm, the stronger her heart. She had come to plead that men, women and children might

not be sold as property. Her heart was full, and out of its abundance her mouth spoke:

"Let me be earnest this once, I pray you, dear mother. I beg you not to sell any servants. I will teach; I shall delight to do it; and we can plan a thousand ways to economize, and avert such a dreadful necessity." * * *

Just at this moment the Rev. Mr. Brincherhoff came in, without ringing, like one of the family. He at once entered with interest into the scene, and, after two or three inquiries, appeared to understand just the state of things. He seems about forty years of age, is rather stout-built, is something of a student, and, it may be, is a faint specimen of a Jesuit. He looked at our little Ruth with ponderous gravity—with one of those mill-stone looks which dignitaries sometimes put on, the better to sink lesser people into confusion.

"Young lady," slowly and solemnly spoke the oracular divine, after an awful pause, "you must learn the teachings of the church on this subject. There is a sanctity in the fundamental institutions of our civil government and religion. Holy and sublime associations cluster about them, and in this dim state of imperfection it is the consummation of presumption for the unhallowed to interfere in the spiritual arrangement of affairs, which, however confessedly disturbed to our vision, present to the eye of God only harmony." Rosalie whispered me, loud enough for the reverend man to hear, "Isn't he eloquent?"

"I take it, sir," said cousin Franck, industriously whittling a stick, "you consider it belongs to the high and sacred

offices of religion, to adjust the affairs of the social fabric?"

"Exactly, sir," replied Mr. Brincherhoff.

"Ah, yes, indeed," added Madam Regina, "we should make but poor progress without that regulator, religion."

"There is one thing in relation to the servants I am buying of you, madam, I had like to have forgotten," suddenly interposed the Doctor, in his thundering way.

"Ah, and what may it be?" blandly asked the lady.

"I wish to inquire, madam," said the Doctor, "if these servants enumerated on the bill are of the pious kind. It occurs to me, that it may be somewhat to my advantage to have a *tender conscience*, an indispensable requisite in servants, that they may not desert me. You see, madam, if I may be allowed the figure, I want them salted with religion enough to keep;" and the Doctor laughed heartily at his witticism, in which laugh the clergyman and cousin Franck joined.

"You ask if they are religious," said cousin Regina, resuming her gravity; "as a lot, I may say they are *measurably* so; more so, doubtless, than the fair average of salable people in Virginia. The owners of people prefer to retain the religious, and sell those less trusty. As I told you, while negotiating the bargain, I part with Selma, as with most of them, at great self-sacrifice. She has more *genuine religion* in her heart than any servant I ever knew. She has religion enough for the whole gang; by this I mean that her religion will *influence* them all, and effectually prevent the fatal result you fear. Indeed, sir, I am not sure that I do right to part with

this inestimable servant; I am a little confused this morning in regard to duty. I partially promised my Ruth, here, that I would waive selling at present, but on reviewing the subject, I find myself compelled to yield to an imperative necessity; and as I wish to part with as few as possible, and you offer twelve hundred dollars extra for Selma, I have consented to have her included in the lot. But my daughters will never forgive me, I fear, for parting with the best of cooks, housekeepers and nurses."

"Ah, how's this?" said the Rev. Mr. Brincherhoff, taking a seat beside Rosalie, and condescending from the throne of his dignity, "are you a little fanatic, too, in your views of selling servants?"

"O, no, indeed, not I," replied she, laughing; mamma might sell them all, and I'd not care, if it would not make it so inconvenient. Selma is our main stay, and without her I make sure everything will go to wreck and ruin. But see, sir, I've got your slippers nearly done," she added, displaying her embroidery.

"Ah, indeed! you are a very Dorcas," said the Rector.

Ruth, as yet, would not be comforted, and cousin Franck, evidently desirous of diverting her, turned to Mr. Brincherhoff: "If you please, my good sir, indoctrinate this young lady into the truth. I assure you, we have a task like Sisyphus. As soon as you are gone, she will be telling me that it is wrong to hold and sell servants, and quote old Dr. Fuller's remark, that 'a negro is the image of God cut in ebony;' or, likely enough, remind me of Horace Smith's

declaration, that 'the task-master is the image of the devil cut in ivory.' Our Ruth will be cogitating and running wild on these things, and a few 'well-chosen words' from yourself, may restore the equilibrium of her excited imagination."

"Yes, my dear sir," replied the Rev. Mr. Brincherhoff, with a peculiar smile, "I am glad that you remember the apples of gold and pictures of silver. I will briefly say to the young lady, Ruth, in the words of a Christian brother, that, 'after sacrilege, there is nothing more profane, than with rash and unbidden hands to meddle with the fundamental institutions of civil government and religion.'"

"I pray you, sir," Ruth at length found voice to say, "if you were convinced that slavery was sin, what course would you take?"

The Rector frowned darkly, raked his fingers through the black, sedge-like thatching of his head, and exclaimed,

"Bless me, child, what an idea! What should I do? It is most irrelevant and presumptuous in you to ask, but in one word you shall know. I would pursue that course best adapted to such an exigency—the course best calculated to do good. The pulpit must not indulge personalities, but preach against those 'depraved dispositions' of the heart, which are the soil in which sin takes root and springs up like the baneful Upas." And with the air of one who has settled all controversies, the clergyman arose to take leave.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER IV.

THE "PURCHASES"—OLD JOSEPH.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Dec. 26, 18—.

DEAR S.—The skeleton scythe-bearer has quite outstripped me, I find, by glancing at his progress and my journalizing. Merry Christmas & Co. are passing right cheerily to some, and quite drearily to others, in our cozy little village. Ruth obtained a promise from the Doctor, that there should be no breaking up of families until after the holidays. Indeed, Madam Regina wished this proviso, it being exceedingly inconvenient to fill the offices made vacant by sale of the slaves, at a season privileged in bringing its own bustle. So the Doctor's recent purchases had time to look about them and take breath, before saying their farewells. These purchases were Selma, Cleopatra, Hannibal, fat Pomp, Rafe the coachman, Jerry and Jo, let servants, whose lease had just run out, and six or eight others from Willow Creek, cousin Regina's adjoining plantation. It is mournful to see them struggling with the dreadful prospect of separation. Selma suffers as only a woman of exquisite sensibilities can suffer; and Ruth, whose heart, by some mysterious tie,

throbs in unison with hers,—poor Ruth! Hannibal moves about his household duties moodily and mechanically. Cleopatra's indignation glows intensely.

"Dis sher is what 'Patra gits for toilin' and traipsin' all her bressed life for dem dat's a heap better able to work dan she be! I ony wish dey's in Africa, sarvin' my people a piece, an' see how dey d like it!"

Fat Pomp, who, if stationary in a huge niche, might easily be mistaken for a bronze statue of Bacchus, is evidently troubled. He looks absent and dejected, as he sits in a corner of the big fire-place of the kitchen, where he resorts, when his tasks are done, to avail himself of the sympathizing presence of his brother, Prince, who rejoices in the office of chief cook. Pomp is naturally an easy, contented man, and would seem never to have been seriously troubled before. He is just one of those people, *if white*, who would think a world of himself—of his own sayings and doings. How graciously would he do the honors of the landlord—play the affable "mine host," and jog along the smooth highway of life, complacently "sucking the paws of his self-importance." Prince, on the contrary, is tall and energetic; but both are *valuable*, as they turn off work with a peculiar knack.

"How you reckon dey'll work de ship widout me, Prince?" asked Pomp, in a sad, half-tremulous tone, as he was helping in the Christmas cooking.

"Fader's life! dat's what I's studyin' 'pon!" said Prince. "'Pears like dey's makin' a great distake in s'lectin' you,

Pomp. It'll use me up, an' I s'll be of no arthly use. Ye see, Pomp, dis sher new strouble wakes up 'membrance ob de pass strouble, an' it come rollin' an' beatin' agin my heart, an' I has sich a smotherin' feelin', dat 'parently I s'll be o' no arthly use; I can't live long, no ways."

"O, Prince, don't talk, don't talk!" said Pomp, as the tears coursed over his cheeks.

"Talk," replied Prince, "I makes sure I s'll go 'stracted, ef I don't. It was jes' so dat ole Massa in de vault tore our poor mother an' de res' ob de childers from us, and sole dem off to de trader; you was ony a little boy, den, a mere infant baby, ob tree years ole. You don't 'member it, as I do; I was amose grown, but dis sher new strouble tears open de ole sore of my heart, an' I can't stan' it long, no ways." And Prince, dressing the chicken by the fire, sobbed audibly. This was too much for dear Ruth, who, having gone to the kitchen to give some directions, had, on hearing the colloquy, stopped at the door unobserved; in an instant she was by his side.

"O Prince, do not cry! I'll do all I can for you."

"Bress your heart, Miss Ruth!" exclaimed the cook, "ony to think, now! But it'll be o' no arthly use: what ken be done, when de bargain is struck, an' put down on de bill o' sale?"

"O, I'll try," replied Ruth; "I hope I can do something for you."

"De Fader grant you may; but I has mighty little hopes ye ken," said Prince.

"Ye see, Miss Ruth," added Pomp, "it'll be very onconvenient workin' de ship widout me."

It was the evening of the twenty-fourth—Christmas Eve—and all the week we had been decorating the church for the festival. Rosalie, Ruth, several other young ladies and myself, had made festoons of leaves to our heart's content; and a variety of evergreens, tastefully arranged, made the beautiful little chapel look charmingly. The exercises would not commence until seven o'clock, and meanwhile I had time sufficient to run in to a slave prayer-meeting, incog., of course, disguised in a black hood and old cloak.

Twilight was deepening with shadows, as I seated myself in a dark corner of Rafe's cabin. The coachman sat on a log that projected from the fire-place, with his face buried in his hands, now and then groaning as if some mortal agony possessed him. His wife, Martha, a spruce, lively little woman, sat near him in a low chair, holding her frolicsome baby, looking at her stricken husband, and wiping the tears from her beautiful, bright eyes. Only three or four had as yet dropped in; there was scarcely a whisper to be heard in the little group; all seemed subdued to silence by a sense of the great sorrow that swept so darkly over poor Rafe.

An old man now came in, "leaning on the top of his staff," the beau ideal of a patriarch, at once humble, dignified and venerable. Martha arose, and led him to the best seat the cabin afforded, her home-made easy-chair, saying,

"Sit here, father."

I perceived that he was blind, and knew at once that he

was old Joseph, whose praise was in everybody's mouth. He belonged to one of our near neighbors, a very kind and humane man, who, now that Joseph had become old, and blind, and worn out in his service, being labelled "old and useless" in the inventory, did not leave him to die uncared for, but comfortably fed and clothed him, *without the least expectation of reward*. Indeed, a favorite old race-horse could not have been more set by in his master's household than was Joseph. In the village he was known as the old patriarch. After the blind man had groped his way in, the cabin was soon filled. He seemed to know that Rafe was sobbing, moved his chair beside him, and, putting his hand on his head, said,

"My boy, don't, now, don't take on so. 'Member dere is no strouble dat de Fader can't cure. If we has nothin' but 'fictions in dis sher life, let's see to it dat we lays up streasure in heaven."

"Dat I will!" sobbed the broken-hearted coachman, "but how ken I go way, an' neber see Martha an' little Charley?"

There was scarcely a dry eye in the room; grief gushed spontaneously from every soul. My own heart ached to bursting, as if the wrongs of a race were crushing it. There was an interval of weeping, and at length blind Joseph, summoning his remaining strength, slowly arose and said,

"Childern, de 'house of my pilgrimage' is de house of bondage, yet I do praise de Lord. De Fader doeth all tings well; he oberrules all tings for de best. It 'pears like ony a few years full o' strouble, since I was a little child, in my

country, playin' under de palms. One day, very suddin, de stranger come an' steal great comp'ny of my people. Dey tore me from my ole fader and moder; I neber see dem more. Dat was my first grief; since den my life done been full of grief, an' full of mercy, too. De trader did not mean it for good; no more did de bredren of Joseph, dey reads of in de good book; dey didn't mean it, but God done oberrule it for good. Childern, I done hear of de worl' beyon' de grave; I done hear of de blessed Jesus. I'se no house, no land; I'se bery poor; I'se nottin' in de worl' dat I ken call mine; but Massa Jesus bery rich; he own ebryting, an' he done promise dat all his people shall live wid him in de heavenly mansjons. In a little while I shall go an' dwell wid him. Den my joy 'll be like de riber; I shall share de riches of heaven, if de Lord be my portion, at de end of my journey.

"Dere is some on you like me, when I was grievin' for dat I couldn't help. I mourns wid you; your grief is my grief; but while I mourn, I cry to de Fader, Oberrule, oberrule for good! Ebryting look bery dark in dis worl', but it'll be bery bright at de judgment of de great day. Dere all will be made plain; de crooked will be made straight; ebry dark ting will be made light; dere we'll know why we have so many stroubles here.

"Childern, I can't comfort ye no ways, ef I don't lead ye to de Man of sorrows, who was 'quainted wid grief. His heart throb for his suffrin' little ones, an' we can go to him like de little child, an' tell him all our sorrows. Ef we done

have no kind Saviour to go to, den indeed what sorrow would be like our sorrow? But he stan's wid outstretched arms, sayin', 'Poor slave, come to me! Come to me, poor slave! I died for sinners like you! Come to me, weary and heaby laden, take my yoke an' learn of me, an' ye shall find res' to your souls.'"

And the blind old man then poured in prayer his full soul of burdened thoughts into the listening ear of the compassionate Saviour. He seemed to approach very near to him; it was as if he had Mary's place at his feet; as if in earnest pleading he had caught hold of his robe as he was passing, and detained him; and his glorious presence, so near to the humble, contrite, fervent petitioner, made the place of prayer a hallowed sanctuary. It was good to be there. I almost felt as if I had never heard prayer before, as the child-like, trustful words of love, adoration and entreaty, overflowing from the heart, burst from the old man's lips. Evidently he was no ordinary child of God; he was endeared to his Saviour by his patient following in his steps, by his meek endurance in his baptism of suffering. Evidently he was one of the innumerable multitude *coming* up out of great tribulation, who at last triumph so gloriously. And he a slave! A member of the body of Christ enchained! By those, too, professing his name!

Blind Joseph ceased, and one and another continued to commune with Him who 'is no respecter of persons.' I said in my heart, "Happy people! happy in your nearness to the 'High and lofty One, who dwelleth with the contrite and

humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.' " The hour in the cabin had sped like a moment, and as I hastened back to the house, it was with the prayer that I might never be left to enslave my Saviour, in the person of "one of the least of his brethren."

I was just in time, and, hastily laying aside my disguise, proceeded with cousin Franck's family to the church, which was already brilliantly illuminated for the celebration of Christmas Eve.

Groups of well-dressed people were on the way to the church—well-dressed, not gaily; Virginians think it *irreverent* to appear in the house of God in the costly and attractive attire suited to a soiree, or a place of public amusement.

The consecrated house was like a vast arbor. Innumerable wax candles lit up the fairy paradise with their silvery sheen. Waves of jubilant music rolled and surged amid the branches of evergreens and pines, that, with their thousand needle fingers, had long swept so plaintively their harps of air. But all this Christmas paraphernalia startled me with its contrast to the dimly-lighted, meagre hut I had just left; and as the exercises for the evening prayer, as detailed in the prayer-book, were performed, excellent and beautiful as those incomparable forms are, there was an irrepressible outgoing of my heart for the petitions in that soul-moving slave prayer-meeting. As the congregation reverently responded "with one voice," like God's people beyond the hoary ages, before the holy mount, saying, "All that the Lord hath said

will we do, and be obedient," I heard as if I heard not; another voice was sounding in my ears, like the pleading of the souls under the altar, saying, "How long, O Lord, how long!" It was the prayer of the crushed slaves, and it seemed to me to outstrip the stereotyped formalities of the proud worshippers, and to enter the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER V.

CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST AND DINNER—THE SOIREE.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Dec. 26, 18—.

DEAR S.—Alas, for our Christmas breakfast!—The merry greetings had just finished their rounds, and Hannibal passed Cousin Franck's cup, when the latter exclaimed, with the first sip of what was meant for coffee, "What under the canopy is this? Herb tea, and muddy at that!"

"Surely!" echoed Madam Regina; "Hannibal, send for Martha, directly." The little woman soon made her appearance with a troubled air, and with a musical, low voice, asked, "What mistress please want?"

"Want!" replied cousin Regina, severely regarding the trembling servant, "I want you to attend to your business. A pretty fuss we are in this Christmas morning; no coffee!"

"No coffee, Missis! I done made de coffee!" said Martha.

"Ridiculous! You quit calling this smoky, muddy slop, coffee; it isn't fit for the pigs. I'll teach you better than to send such stuff to the table, I will, indeed!" exclaimed Madam Regina, the thermometer of her feelings rapidly rising. "You poured the water in ice-cold, I'll lay you did,"

CHRISTMAS—THE SOIREE.

69

continued the lady, with her keen, reproachful eyes still fixed on Martha.

"Indeed, indeed, Missis, I made sure de kittle biled."

"Way with you! take the mud slop and pour it into the yard; don't let any living thing taste it. And mind, you quit taking on about Rafe. I told you expressly, when you were married, you could not expect to live together long. Since then it's two long years, to my certain knowledge, and yet you have the ingratitude and insolence to repine. Remember you let me see no more of this nonsense!" And Hannibal, with a pitiful look, passed the doomed coffee to Martha, who, with sobs smothered in her heart, but with streaming eyes, left the apartment.

"The biscuit is no better," said cousin Franck.

"Upon my word, no better," echoed his wife, cutting one, and conveying a bit to her mouth with her silver fork, "heavy and sour, as I live! Is Prince, too, snivelling over the sale?"

"I guess most likely," carelessly replied cousin Franck.

"I make sure nobody ever had such trials of servants," said Rosalie, poutingly pushing her plate from her, and leaning back in her chair.

"The poor creatures!" said Ruth; "I wonder how much better we should behave, if we were in their case!"

"I do hope," said Madam Regina, addressing Ruth, as she was turning the tea just brought in by Hannibal, "you will shortly dispense with your silly, childish notions about servants. I am getting quite out of patience with them, I

am, indeed. Servants have an appropriate sphere to fill, and it is for their interest and happiness to fill it acceptably to their owners. And, daughter, you, too, have a sphere to fill, as the mistress of servants; and I must say that your present course in regard to them gives me great uneasiness. If you should be as indulgent as you now promise to be, you would not only ruin them all for service, but you would make yourself the greatest slave among them."

"Yes, indeed, daughter Ruth," added cousin Franck, making the best of some very dubious corn-cakes, "I think I can see the whole plantation stock running over you, like sheep over a wall."

The dinner fared not much better than the breakfast. Hannibal had forgotten numberless things in making ready the table; and after we were seated he was several times despatched from his waiting, to get napkins, spoons and castor, which was the more mortifying, as his new proprietor, the Doctor, dined with us. Three other gentlemen, happening in Port Royal for the holidays, were also among the guests: Mr. Ames, a tutor in some family within fifty miles, Col. Cutts, an overseer who presumed on cousin Franck's hospitality, and even put himself on the level of relationship, from his being formerly from the North, and Mr. Taliaferro, or Toliver, as the name is pronounced—an elderly, affable Virginia gentleman.

The roast beef was barely passable. As for the turkey, had it been living, it would have gobbled merrily, at the comfortable warming with which Prince had seen fit to favor it.

The omelet was browned to a bitter black; and the chickens fricasseed to a crisp; in short, *overdone* and *underdone* expressed the dinner, and had there been a general conspiracy among the eatables to be as disagreeable as possible, they could hardly have made the entertainment worse. Cousins Franck and Regina, however, were evidently annoyed as much by the presence of Col. Cutts, as by the failure of a dinner. This worthy was a square-built, stout man, with a head devoid of all phrenological pretensions to reverence and benevolence, perched plump on a pair of broad and pitched-up shoulders. His hair was black, coarse and wiry; his small, gray eyes were given to certain restless jerkings in their sockets, as if on the alert for the main chance; while his hook of a nose said as plainly as nose could say, "Money, money, by hook or by crook."

Caleb Cutts was originally a Down-East Yankee. He started in life with an old-fashioned, common-school education, which, in young men of his stamp, included a smattering of reading, writing, the first four rules of Daboll's Arithmetic, and a profound knowledge of swapping knives and other nicknacks. Geography and grammar were among the abstruse sciences, which he religiously avoided. Caleb's father used to say, that "the beatenist way to larn jography was to travil;" and accordingly, when his hopeful son, at the age of sixteen, had given undeniable indications of genius by out-jockeying his schoolmates, he set him adrift on the world, peddling with a tin trunk, stocked, as Caleb expressed it, with "needles and thread, and sich groceries," to the amount

of five dollars. The young hero soon learned so much of geography as to know what routes paid best, and at what houses there was the most available gullibility. In process of time he became the proprietor of two well-filled trunks, the contents of which, when disposed of, made him think of aspiring to the elevated station of master of a tin pedler's cart. After two or three years' successful driving in New-England, he invested a portion of his savings in Connecticut clocks, and, crossing Mason's and Dixon's line, began to practise on the Southern form of unsophisticated simplicity. It has been more than hinted that he took with him certain nice little seed parcels, duly labelled, "Very best *cucumber seed*, EXTRA, Spoonville, Ct.," manufactured of goodly pine. It has also been strongly suggested that Caleb was the veritable Yankee that first introduced the famous wooden hams to the Southern market; so goes the Virginia joke, but it is difficult to ascertain the precise fact, as the Colonel, when interrogated, puts a broad grin on his face, his hands in his pockets, and his creaking boots in rapid motion. When pressed by Mr. Taliaferro, at cousin Franck's, with

"Come, confess, now, are you not the very Yankee that served us such tricks?" he replied, as if highly complimented,

"Now don't, Mr., don't make a feller go to braggin' of what he's done in his day; 'twouldn't be perlit, right here afore all these ere ladies!" and he looked around upon us with a complacent, comical drollery, certainly highly medicinal to the blues.

"I pray you, sir, keep to the point," said the elderly gentleman, laughing; "I shall not let you off in that direction. Tell us, now, are you not the very man guilty of these fraudulent practices? I reckon, Colonel, you are a case—a case for an indictment."

"Wal, Mr.," replied the Colonel, parrying the laugh from himself, "I guess if we do make them are wooden groceries, we know where to look for customers, I guess."

During dinner he was very loquacious. He was evidently much elated with his success as overseer, which post he has filled for the last few years. He wore a drab surtout, quite large and weather-defying, and the remainder of his dress was in keeping with his rough, heavy boots, capacitated to wade creeks and rivers, without the detriment of a drop of water to the wearer. His cowhide, symbol of his honorable office, was ever at hand, ever in hand, more correctly; he did not even part with it at table; it was reverently laid on his crumb-cloth handkerchief.

"Wal, 'Squire Crameron, this ere is a leetle mite better livin' than some folks is sure on at the North—no reflections," said Col. Cutts, as he was miraculously disposing of roast beef and turkey. "It's putty gin'rally granted us Yankees go ahead of all the rest of creation in the peddlin' business, inventions, an' all that sort o' thing, and as to the eatin', we can afford to be outdun by them that has servants to git up the fixins. I putty much consider myself a Southern native now, as well as you, 'Squire; you may be awar,

I've an establishment of my own, at Rokesby. I am well taken care of, you may depind."

"Do you keep house?" asked Mr. Ames, the tutor.

"Of course, Mr., I keeps house; all us overseers does, single or double," replied the Colonel. "Ye see, I manages the plantation for four hundred dollars *and found*; my house, barn, garden, cows, hoss, hins, turkeys, and pigs, besides four as good servants to wait on and 'tend me, as is to be found, is no small help to a poor man like myself. Ye see, Mr., I jest lays by the four hundred dollars, and puts it out to interest, for the 'found' makes inds meet. Then I has butter, pork, eggs, hins, and other vegetables to sell, besides I keeps a small store with whiskey and sich 'pothecary stuff for the poor whites, so that it makes my place pay handsome—putty respectable handsome."

"I am decidedly opposed to you Northern overseers," said the Doctor, with a frown; "I would not have one of you on my plantation, if you would serve gratis."

"Then I guess you don't git your work done," replied Col. Cutts, laying down knife and fork, and looking up from his plate.

"If the principal thing be to use up servants, at the shortest possible notice, then I reckon we don't get much work done," replied the Doctor, as loudly as ever.

"Wal, ye see, if I gits a good crop, it makes my gov'ner feel rich, an' he forks over the tin plump on pay-day. So, yer see, common benivolence makes me go for the big crop. I'm a Yankee, yer know, an' I alwuz has ter git along by

calculatin' snug. I jest calculates, in cool blood, as they say, jest what a nigger is wuth, an' how long he'll last on the hard-drive plan. He'll putty gin'rally last a half dozen year, more or less, an' so I puts 'em right over the road, in a quiet hurry, you may depind."

"Ah, yes," echoed the Doctor, "that's the trouble."

"Niggers don't take much comfort, no way," continued the Colonel, "and it is about the most marcifullest way to let 'em *wear out*. If they has a lazy time, they gits to studyin' their misfortins, and they *rust out* most 'mazin' doleful. You'd hear 'em complainin' over and agin, when they'd never think ont if they was only kept hard driv. It's a marcy to keep 'em at it, day in and day out, and never let 'em stop to count over their troubles, poor critters," sighed the Colonel, as if he thought himself the most considerate driver in the land, and overmuch afflicted with pitiful emotions.

Mr. Taliaferro, cousin Franck and the tutor, looked shocked at the Colonel's mode of distilling religious sentiment out of sheer barbarism, and the first gentleman said,

"Indeed, sir, my lands shall go untilld, before I will employ such a heartless hand as yourself to drive my people."

"Sho!" said the Colonel; "I aint the least mite purtielar—it's all the same to me. I'm engaged, and couldn't drive yer people, if you wanted me ever so plaguily. But I see ye don't git the hang of my sintiments. Now if you could only jest hear them are dear critters pray, for instance, a few times, as I has, you'd understand what I'm up to. You jest happin to one of their meetins, and hear 'em pray and

exhort, and talk over the comfort they 'spect to take when they gits to heaven. Tell you what 'tis—it makes me feel that I've done 'em putty considerable sarvice, in helpin' hurry 'em on to their journey's ind, which they hanker arter awfully. You may depind, that's the ony giniwine marcy in dealin' with sarvants, arter all."

"Barbarous!" exclaimed the old Virginian; "bless me! I almost begin to think it's a sin for us to intrust the training of our servants to you Yankees, I do, indeed. Bless me! what are we coming to, friend Cameron? Here is a man that not only wears out servants by the wholesale, but who glories in his shame. Do you not know," continued he, addressing the Colonel, "that you are rendering yourself liable for deliberate swindling? What an unheard of loss of property is this; the same as sunk, utterly sunk."

Col. Cutts, of course, defended himself by affirming that there was an equivalent rendered for the property lost by the increased crops, which question was discussed until the hour for the soiree at Gen. Ringgold's, to which we were all invited, with the exception of the Colonel. This was all the same to him, however, and, availing himself of the custom which prevails, of going to parties in families, or the young and middle aged mingling together, and considering himself in the light of one of cousin Franck's family, he smuggled himself in, duty free; for, *being an overseer*, he was a contraband article.

Rosalie was struck aghast with genteel horror, when she discovered that the knight of the cowhide was bent on parad-

ing to the party; for parade he would, with provoking coolness, wherever he went. Like most overseers, he essayed to ape his employer, and in doing it, caricatured the planters, as well as the Northerners.

At all events, he was on hand to represent Rokesby at the soiree.

"O, Ruth," exclaimed Rosalie, drawing on her gloves, "what *shall* we do? That insufferable, vulgar Yankee overseer will escort us to the party. If I had not so many strong reasons for going, I would stop at home. What is to be done? I am in a perfect panic."

"O," replied Ruth, gently, "we cannot help ourselves. We must remember that he belongs to our system, and be as patient as possible. If we human monkeys will make a cat's-paw of the Yankee, I see not as we can entirely avoid his acquaintance."

"I wish I was a philosopher, like you, Ruth," said Rosalie, musingly. "I make sure I should have fewer crushing troubles. But what will Gen. Ringgold think? What will Mrs. Ringgold say? How the Sommervilles will laugh at us! There will be no end to our mortifications. I wish overseer Cutts was landed in Jericho, indeed I do!" Poor Rosalie's afflictions were in no measure mitigated, when, as we walked over to the General's, the Colonel took his station by her side, awkward and ungainly in his step, and uncouth in dress and appearance, swaying his cowhide, field fashion.

Among the strangers present at the soiree, was the good

Senator T. He soon spied and greeted me, and introduced his beautiful and accomplished daughter, Isabel. Rosalie was eclipsed for the evening by the fair young lady, who seems as good as she is beautiful. She is an intimate friend of Ruth, and the two often visit and correspond. Ferdinand T., Isabel's brother, was also present; he has much refinement of manner, and is evidently highly cultivated. He is more intellectual in appearance than beautiful, and as a proof of his discrimination and good sense, I must tell you that he is an ardent admirer of our good little Ruth. The attachment is mutual, and only two obstacles appear in the way of their union. The first is, the difficulty the young gentleman will find in persuading the young lady to become the mistress of slaves; and the other, the difficulty she may find in influencing him to give up property in persons, and remove to a free country.

The reception rooms at the General's were very attractive. An indescribable air of refinement pervaded the tasteful disposing of rare paintings, family portraits, choice plants and elegant furniture. The General and his lady had that acme of good breeding—the tact of making their company feel at ease; which, by the way, is characteristic of the Port Royal Virginians, the most agreeable and delightful people in society. They do not take you by storm, they subdue you by their delicate and easy attentions. Your wishes are studied and anticipated, and though a stranger, you are made to feel perfectly at home. Among themselves, so far as my limited observation extends, they seem to have no animosities; at

least, none discoverable. You hear each speak well of his neighbor, and there is no detraction until they descend the scale to the laborers in society's hive, white and black; of these the witty have funny anecdotes to relate, illustrative of their stupidity, and degradation.

As you may suppose, Col. Cutts attracted much attention at Gen. Ringgold's. In his overseer regimentals, he was the most conspicuous personage present. His outlandish, weather-proof surtout was absolutely horrifying to all delicate nerves; but it was all the same to the Colonel, who ever and anon stalked complacently across the room with plantation ease, the heavy tread of his creaking boots being scarce muffled by the costly carpet. He evidently set a high value on his imposing appearance, and independent bearing, and considered himself a rare chance for the most aristocratic lady in the land.

"Upon my word! did you ever?" exclaimed a pretty blue-eyed Miss, somebody's visitor, "did you ever see the like?" queried she of the little group of Misses around her.

"Most outrageous, I must say!" replied another young lady, the owner of the brightest of black eyes. "Say, Rosalie, who is he? He came in your train," added she, a little mischievously.

"Do not ask me questions I cannot answer," pettishly replied Rosalie; "I'm sure I don't know him from Adam!"

"I make sure he is one of the poor whites," disdainfully said a cherry-cheeked heiress, with the slightest perceptible shrug of the shoulders.

"Why, Puss Sommerville," exclaimed the blue-eyed, "what a young gosling you are! Don't you know from his dress, that he is an overseer?"

"Surely, Victorine, I know very well, but I did not think. I've seen papa's overseer, often and often, dressed in a drab pea-jacket."

"They are a distressingly looking set," said the black eyed, "it puts me quite out of sorts to see one. If I was given to fainting, I should become insensible the moment one came in sight. As it is, girls, you see I think it safe to be able to defend myself;" and the merry girl passed round her elegant smelling-bottle.

"Ah," sighed an affettuoso fop, a *petit-maitre*, a compound of cologne and broadcloth, who languished near the group, "it would seem that the dregs of society are rising to the surface."

"And discommoding the scum, hey?" outspoke a Blue-Ridge Virginian, who, arm in arm with the Doctor, chanced to overhear the remark.

"Murray Mackintosh," gaily said Gen. Ringgold, coming up at the instant, in company with Senator T., "I trust you left your wicked wit at home, among the mountains; we eastern Virginians are getting sensitive, and cannot relish your hard jokes, as of old."

"I am in earnest, uncle," replied the handsome Mr. Mackintosh, "and there is nothing sharper than truth's keen shears."

"Of course," replied the General, pleasantly, "and we

mean to humor your eccentric fancies; you must be indulged, certainly, as you visit us only once in an age."

"Thank you, uncle; you'll have need of some patience, for I am as plain spoken as ever," replied the Blue-Ridge man; "I *must* call things by their right names. But all I contend for is, that Virginians open their eyes and see where they are, and how they came there. The fact is, sir, our domestic institution is a moral cancer feeding on our vitals, literally consuming us."

"Something of an evil, we all admit," rejoined the General, a little piqued, "but far enough from being as hurtful as you imagine."

"Why, just look at it, uncle," said Mr. Mackintosh, "Virginia has been settled more than two hundred years—settled, too, by as noble a race of men as ever planted a colony, and what can she show of progress in education, literature, and the arts of life? All the world knows her younger sister States are far out-distancing her in these things. They, like smart buxom Misses, busy themselves about the nation's housework, beautifying, strengthening and honoring the confederacy by their noble industry; while Virginia, that might have led them on as a model matron, plays the part of the whimsical old maid, whose business has been for years and years to sit in the corner and pet the tooth-ache; and who, with hopes blasted and health ruined, works herself into hysterics whenever her sympathizing friends suggest the extraction of the cause of so much suffering."

"Bless me! is the boy wild?" asked Senator T., wonder-

ingly looking at General Ringgold. "Well, well, Mackintosh, boy, (said boy might be thirty,) go on, I like at any rate, to see a man in earnest."

"Allow me to ask you, sir," said Mr. Mackintosh, "if the Old Dominion, as we would still proudly call her in memory of the past, has not deteriorated within your remembrance?"

"You do well to ask an old man such a question," replied the Senator, smilingly. "I reply, yes; as an old man, I can scarcely say less; the days of our youth seem to us the brightest of our existence. It is a delusion natural to old men."

"You are doubtless correct, sir," replied Mr. Mackintosh, "but statistics cannot deceive us as to the precise place Virginia occupies at this moment. They inform us, that in about one hundred counties of our State, there are more than twenty-five thousand poor children, over five years of age, *without any means of instruction*; this is something like one-seventh of the white children of schoolable age. It is also estimated by reliable authority, that nearly one-third of the voters of Virginia can neither read nor write. So much, sir, for our educational progress. As to literature, you will of course acknowledge that we have little to boast of."

"Granted," interposed the General, "we do not make literature our profession; our pride is in our statesmen, whom we have provided for the councils of the nation."

"Yes, yes," added Gen. Ringgold, "it is glory enough for Virginia to have given birth to Washington. Whatever mis-

fortunes may befall our noble State, the confederacy can never forget that she owes her very existence to us."

"True," replied Mr. Mackintosh, "I do not forget Virginia's noble statesmen; her Washingtons, and Patrick Henrys and Jeffersons; but the aggravation in the case is, that the mother of such sons should have clung to such a curse so madly and so long, until her descendants have become degenerated, mentally, morally and physically."

"What do you mean?" asked the Doctor; "I make free to say, that I do not comprehend the drift of your remarks."

"Murray only maintains, as usual, that our slave system is a curse," explained Gen. Ringgold.

"Do you mean to tell me," asked the Doctor, "that the reason why Virginia does not lead in education, literature, and other 'Yankee notions,' is because of our holding servants? This is most absurd, sir."

"Yes, Doctor," pleasantly replied Mackintosh, "I mean precisely so. Certain inevitable consequences follow in the train of our holding servants, one of the most fatal of which is the opprobrium cast on labor."

"But I have always supposed," rejoined the Doctor, "that the cultivation of literature, of all things, required leisure. And how in the name of common sense are you to convince me that our servant system is a hindrance to literary pursuits? No people under heaven have as much leisure; and the fact is, we could exhibit as much genius in these things as other people, if we chose to."

"Virginians have genius enough, perhaps, but they are too lazy to exercise it," remarked the Senator.

"Well, sir, I'm not sure that you are not right," said Gen. Ringgold, "for I believe that men generally are about as lazy as they can afford to be, and I really don't suppose that we planters are an exception. We certainly have an admirable opportunity for the indulgence of our laziness. Murray is right, there; our system gives us very little *motive power*. We are sure, without exertion, of that wealth, influence, and ease, which are the incitement to all exertion in others. Go on, Murray," continued he, laughing, "I'm converted on one point."

"And that one thing comprehends everything, does it not, uncle?" replied Mackintosh. "If there is no motive for exertion, what can result but mental barrenness and moral sterility; in a word, social retrograde? It's no new experiment we are trying. Despotism is coeval with barbarism. And we have only to glance at history to mark the effect of absolutism on both oppressor and victim. How worked the feudal system, with the mailed baron and his serfs?"

"You do not intend to compare us to feudal lords!" exclaimed Mr. Taliaferro. "I take it we exercise rather more humanity than they did."

"We cannot thank our system, if we do," replied Mackintosh. "We may be cruel and inhuman despots, and never feel any twinges from the slave-code conscience."

"Ah," said Mr. Pettibone, the lackadasical hero before noticed, "I do so admire the romantic feudal times! Such

beatific visions of knights, and tournaments, and ladye-loves, float before my imagination, that really, ladies, I am quite enthusiastic. I often exclaim to myself, Happy, proud Columbia, since the umbrageous plant of aristocracy flourishes in thy borders!"

"Nonsense, Jef.," whispered Ferdinand T., "call it *Atropa belladonna*, deadly nightshade, and be done with it."

"I appeal to the ladies," softly said Jefferson Pettibone.

"In every point of view," continued Mackintosh, "we are the losers by this miserable business—this pestiferous slaveholding. The retribution of some sins seems to slumber, but not so with this; a portion of its punishment follows hard upon it. Yet on we dash, blindfolded and deaf; we will ride, at all events; we will be well mounted; and so we go, a merry, reckless set of cavaliers; a set of headless horsemen, trooping over crushed humanity; while the very grimest of devils are making themselves jolly over our shame."

"Hush, hush, Mackintosh, boy, not so fast," coolly said the old Senator, "you'll sweep us away together. But let us inquire a little. You speak as if slavery were a *sin*,—an evil in itself, as well as in its perversion. Now this is more than I am prepared to admit. Certainly, if it be so, I have yet to learn it; and my religious education has not been neglected. I have been trained up in the Episcopal church, and I am now a member of that body of Christians. If our system be a sin, I of course would like to know it; if it be not a sin, let me remind you, young man, that you display a little too much presumption, for one of your age."

"I take it," remarked General Ringgold, "the clergy must be our most reliable authority in this matter. And none of us can plead ignorance of their oft-reiterated testimony as to the result of their investigations. They uniformly declare that our domestic institution is *divine*,—having been sanctioned by such illustrious worthies as Abraham, and Jonah, and Daniel, and several other patriarchs, whose names do not now occur to me,"—and the General paused, as he saw a funny smile playing on Murray Mackintosh's lips. "I may have misquoted, but theology is not my profession, and, as I said before, the clergy who devote their lives to the elucidation of the laws of God, cannot be supposed to mistake on so vital a point in divinity, as the question, what constitutes sin?"

"If slavery is a sin," outspoke the Doctor, "it seems the church pretty generally endorses it; or at least grants it universal absolution."

"Yes; and we are such outrageous, hackneyed old sinners, that we have no conscience left to take cognizance of it, as sin, eh?" added Senator T. "Bless me! what a doctrine is this!"

"Now, Murray," said Gen. Ringgold, "it is most consummate nonsense in you to profess greater sanctity of sentiment than those whose province it is to teach religion. Give up your foolish, fanatical fancies, and be satisfied with the good old orthodox platform of your noble forefathers. Good men and true have stood there; such men still stand there, and you only make yourself ridiculous in thus exalting yourself above your betters."

"This appeal to the clergy and to the church," calmly replied Mackintosh, "reminds me of the real state of the case; if I mistake not, the true responsibility lies there; it is *the sin of the church*, and for which a God of justice and righteousness will hold the church responsible. A passage in the history of the early progress of Methodism may be in point. A few days ago, I chanced to take up Southey's *Life of Wesley*. Mr. Southey tells us, that 'Wesley had borne an early testimony against the system of negro slavery. Dr. Coke feeling like Mr. Wesley, took up the subject with his usual ardor, and preached upon it with great vehemence, and prepared a petition to Congress for the emancipation of the negroes. With this petition he and Asbury went to Gen. Washington, at Mount Vernon, and solicited him to sign it. Washington received them courteously and hospitably; he declined signing the petition, that being inconsistent with the rank he held; but he assured them THAT HE AGREED WITH THEM, and if the Assembly should take the petition into consideration, he would signify his sentiments by letter. They proceeded so far themselves, that they required the members of the society to set their slaves free; and several persons were found who made this sacrifice from a sense of duty. One planter, named Rennon, emancipated twenty-two, who were at that time worth from thirty to forty pounds each.'"

"What unheard of impudence, for those foreigners, Coke and Asbury, to go to Gen. Washington with such a petition!" exclaimed Gen. Ringgold. "Why, what was the old hero

thinking about that he did not kick them out of doors? Suppose, now, those miscreants, George Thompson and Charles Stuart, should visit me on a similar errand; their bones would be in some little danger, to say the least."

"But those old time agitators did not escape a share of opposition," said Mr. Taliaferro, who belonged to the Methodist Episcopal church; "Mr. Southey informs us that a lady owner of slaves offered fifty pounds to some of Dr. Coke's hearers, if they would waylay him and give him a hundred lashes, but he managed to elude their vigilance. The grand jury of one county found a bill against him at the instigation of the planters, when *ninety* persons set out in pursuit, but he again escaped. But I am happy to say," added the old gentleman, "Mr. Southey also informs us that on Dr. Coke's second visit to America, he was convinced that he acted indiscreetly, and *he consented to let the question of emancipation rest, rather than stir up an opposition that so greatly impeded the progress of Methodism!*"

"There we have it, in a nutshell," exclaimed Mackintosh; "the influence of the Methodist church then conspired to uphold slavery. And I take it she is not more guilty in this matter than are the other branches of the church."

"It augurs ill to hear a man talk against the church, Murray," said the Doctor. "I thought you were more of a Christian than that. I patronize religion, myself, of late. I think it's a fine thing in society—a mighty fine thing;" and a phase of sanctity settled down on the Doctor's countenance. "As to all your reasoning," he continued, "it fails to con-

vince me. The truth is, it is necessary to the very existence of society that there be gradations; we cannot all be top of the heap; every man cannot be the biggest toad in the puddle."

"If I understand you, Mr. Mackintosh," said Mr. Taliaferro, "you are advocating a heresy; you would equalize men; you would put them on the same level. Now, if I read my Bible aright, it expressly declares, that 'the poor shall never cease out of the land;' but I understand you to aspire to raise them from that grade in which Providence has placed them. You will take it kindly, then, if I warn you against the further indulgence of a presumption, so adverse to the inscrutable decrees of the All-wise Disposer of men."

"You misconceive me, my dear sir," replied Mr. Mackintosh; "I doubt not that the poor will ever constitute the majority of the population of the earth, but what I contend for is, that each man have his personal liberty; that no man hold property in his fellow-man."

"Well, well, sir," said Mr. Taliaferro, increasingly offended, "there are many other things, sir, in which you are decidedly wrong. Permit me to ask you in what sense we planters can be compared to a set of headless horsemen; answer me that, will you?" and the old gentleman, with heightened color, inclined his head with an emphatic nod, that plainly said, "You cannot do it, sir."

"I simply meant to illustrate our stupid way of blundering along in this suicidal, social experiment we are making,"

replied Mr. Mackintosh. "It amounts to precisely this: like a man bent on a course of sinful indulgence, we dethrone reason to begin with, that we may not see the danger in our course."

"But," said Senator T., "you maintain that we are losers in every point of view, by our domestic institution. Now, it seems to me, that the system has its advantages, as well as its disadvantages. Think of the leisure our young people have for improvement."

"Yes, sir, it is true, that by bestowing all physical labor on servants, young people have unbounded leisure for improvement, if *only they will use it for this purpose*," said Mr. Mackintosh. "You are a happy father; your children have done so in a surprising degree; they are, in fact, exceptions to the general rule; for, how few do we find who have the least idea of any mental exertion. It must be that you are a rare disciplinarian, sir, and have in a great measure saved your children from the ruinous influence of our system. Imbecility and inefficiency are the characteristics of thousands of our young people, who, if they had been born of poor New-England parents, with precisely the same faculties they now have, being thrown on their own exertions, would excel in honorable achievement. But O, the paralyzing effect of this degradation of labor! It comes to this: that we must have proxies to do even our brain-work for us." * * *

"Would you be enraptured, and borne away on the billows of sympathetic emotion, Miss Victorine," said Jefferson Pettibone, "I pray you read the 'Sorrows of Werter,' and the

'Mysteries of Udolpho.' Ah, Miss, how the beatific visions will float in your imagination! O, I do so admire to lose myself in the thrilling novel of the feudal times! I quite quarrel with Fate, ladies, that I was not made a knight."

"A right valiant knight you would have made, no doubt," said Mackintosh, turning his attention to our group. "But who do you suppose would have entered the lists with such a hero as yourself, my dear make-believe Don Quixote? Pray, measure yourself by some worth-while standard, and find out just what you amount to."

"Have a care, sir," said Mr. Pettibone, "you'll rouse my angry passions."

"I wish I might, indeed. It would be a relief from your slipshod sentimentality. And I hear you recommending your young friends here to the same swill-trough where you have so long swallowed the literary slops. Come, sir, wake up, and be a man; if there is any manhood in you; and no longer parade yourself as a living illustration of the curse of our system.—" But cousins Franck and Regina came at this moment to accompany us home; and Rosalie, Ruth and myself heard no more.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER VI.

AN UNCEREMONIOUS DEPARTURE.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Dec. 27, 18—.

DEAR S.—Nine o'clock, the breakfast hour, came yesterday, and no bell summoned us to the table; half an hour passed, and still no bell. Cousin Regina looked at her gold repeater;—"Bless me, girls, what are the servants thinking about? It will be too late in the day to go to Willow Creek, at this rate. Ruth, dear, ring for Hannibal." Ruth did as desired, but no Hannibal was forthcoming. Madam Regina, getting "nervous," as she expressed it, sallied into the dining-room, and found that the cloth even was not laid. "What does all this mean?" asked she; are we to live without eating? Where's that lazy Hannibal?"

"Dun know, Missus!" said little Jupe, peering out from under the table, where he had ensconced himself, for the sake of the unswept crumbs left by Hannibal.

"Don't know?" echoed his mistress; "well, you go find him, quick time; a pretty fuss we are in, this blessed morning—no breakfast!" and away scampered Jupe to parts unknown, glad to escape so easily. "And you, Johnny," added she to the little dark boy half hidden behind the

AN UNCEREMONIOUS DEPARTURE.

93

dining-room door, "do you march directly to the kitchen, and tell Prince to come here."

Prince soon made his appearance, with some trepidation, in his greasy cooking apron, his dusky hands motled with the morning's dough.

"How is this, Prince?" asked the mistress, "where is our breakfast?"

"In de kitchen, Missus. I done got it ready right smart while 'go—but 'pears like Hannibal mighty sleepy dis sher mornin'."

"Sleepy! is that all?" asked Madam Regina, with a searching look.

At this moment Pomp appeared, all out of breath in his quick waddle from the kitchen, and exclaimed, "O, Missus, I reckons I ken 'suade de run'ways to come back, ef I ken ony hab de use ob de swif' sa'al hoss."

"What runaways?" asked Madam Regina.

"Hannibal and Rafe, Missus. 'Pears like dey's tramped off, an' is gittin' mighty scars in dis sher d'rection," said Pomp, in spite of sundry winks, dry coughs and ahems from Prince.

"Please to b'lieve me, Missus; Pomp's fibbin', dat he is," said Cleopatra, hastening in from an adjoining room; "you clar, you Pomp," added she, with eyes flashing, "'sturbin' Missus wid your stehicky stories, dis sher bressed mornin'."

"How is this, Cleopatra?" asked the mistress; "you say that Hannibal and Rafe havn't run off—have you seen them this morning? Can you tell me where they are?"

"O, yes, Missus; I'se done seed dem over and often dis sher mornin'," earnestly replied Cleopatra.

"Where are they, then?" asked the mistress.

"Why, hi! Missus, how's I'se to tell? I'se had plenty to do every which way—how's I'se to tend an' foller dem ar sarvants 'bout? Rafe done gone to de barn, to fodder de hosses, I 'spect, an' Hannibal, praps he gone out on some yerrand or urrur."

"Well, Mima," said Madam Regina, as Rosalie's maic came in, "what do you know about this matter?"

"Me, Missus, I dun know nothing 'bout it," replied the dark maiden, with an innocent air.

"Have you seen Hannibal this morning?"

"La, yes, Missus; I done seed him over an' often. Wy, Missus, he done made de fires, an' clared up de parlor, an' a heap of work dis sher mornin'; but 'pears like somebody done interfar wid his 'rangements, an' he right smart late in totin in de breakfas'."

Madam Regina looked at Pomp inquiringly, who replied, "Dey's tellin' lies, Missus, dey is. Please to b'lieve me, Missus, dey's certainly rund off."

"Were there ever such servants?" exclaimed the mistress, impatiently; "one might as well hunt the needle in the hay-mow, as attempt to find the truth in you. Go about your business, every one of you."

"What you done told Missus for?" asked Prince of Pomp, in an under tone, as the former was bringing in breakfast.

"What I done told Missus for? Why, you see, when

Missus send for you, I makes sure she git on de track ob de mischief, an' I'se been studying 'pon't, an' 'parently it's no manner ob use, dis sher tryin' to blind Missus' eyes, so I study pon't, and try to turn it to some good 'count. Ef she send me arter de run'ways on de swif' hoss, praps I moughtn't be back right smart libely."

Cousin Regina conferred with her husband, and a thorough search was made on the premises, when it became evident that Hannibal and Rafe had absconded. This discovery caused no small commotion. Cousin Franck was greatly excited.

"The ungrateful dogs!" exclaimed he; "I wouldn't have believed they could do such a rascally piece of business."

"It is the strangest thing!" said Madam Regina, ringing for Pomp, who soon appeared. "Here, Pomp," added she, "take this line to Dr. G.; remember, you be lively, for once."

Notwithstanding all the delays attendant on getting breakfast, that meal was finished before Dr. G. made his appearance. Meanwhile, another messenger was despatched for him, and at last he came, accompanied by Mr. Taliaferro and Mr. Mackintosh.

"Well, gentlemen," said cousin Franck, after the first compliments of the meeting were over, "this is most unprecedented, I must say."

"O, no, my good friend," replied Mr. Mackintosh, "a mere every-day occurrence; one of the most natural accompaniments of our system. Gentlemen, we may hear the

voice of nature in this thing. Here are beings as truly made in God's image as ourselves; with as instinctive a love of freedom. Instead of wondering that now and then one acts up to the true instinct of abused humanity, I only wonder that every one does not forsake the detested vassalage."

"But what's to be done? what's to be done at such a crisis as this? What do you do when your slaves run away, friend Mackintosh?" asked the Doctor, tremulous from excitement.

"Do, sir? why, I let them go, with a God-speed on their venturesome journey. I do as I would be done by, supposing I were the slave, and had roused my energies for a perilous flight."

"Ah, but that is too fanatical a democracy for me, and besides, I cannot afford it," said the Doctor. "But what *is* to be done?"

"Here I am, Doctor, on hand, at your sarvice!" exclaimed Col. Cutts, swaggering into the parlor where the gentlemen were sitting. "What's the fust move, Doctor, in givin' chase? I'm an' old hound at huntin' niggers. It comes nat'ral; I like it a sight better than I uster huntin' coons. It's purtic'larly 'livenin' to the feelin's, an' it seems to boost a man upon the stilts of his ingenuity. Fact is, it 'fects his speerits, jest like good old Madeira, while he's on the track, an' when he gits the game, by jolly aint it a leetle the beatinest sport? Jimminy! it's like hearin' the poppin' of a champagne cork! What's the fust move, Doctor?"

"That is what we are considering," replied the Doctor.

"Affairs is puttin' on a seris face," said Col. Cutts, "an'

we'd better be stirrin', it's my opinion, if we mean to ketch them are runaways to-day."

"Exactly," said the Doctor; "but the first question is, how to proceed; this is new business to me, gentlemen, I confess, and I scarcely know how"—

"To start, hey?" interrupted the Colonel; "you feel like a calf under a new shed, don't you, Doctor? Wal, if 'tis new business to you, 'taint to me. I knows the way arter niggers like a book. Sakes alive! I'll be off like a gun, jist give me a fa'r commission. Ye see, Doctor, bein' as I's an old hand, I orter have a putty fa'r consideration, considerin', you know. I'll handle them are boys careful, when I gits my paws on 'em, you may depind. You don't ketch me a tearin' 'em useless, with hounds, an' a bringin' on 'em back wuthless discumbrances. I'll insure 'em safe an' sound, jest put on a fa'r commission. I'll keep a bright look-out for your interests, Doctor. I respects your feelin's. I knows you don't want your boys spilt; though 'twould be a sight easier ketchin' on 'em, ef I could set the dogs on helter skelter. I could afford to do the thing *dog* cheap, then, by hoky! But a marcifal man is marcifal to his beast, an' I knows you's so humane, you won't stand payin' a feller putty fa'r, for doin' up the business judgmatically."

"Well, well, we'll see, we'll see," replied the Doctor, frowning on the bartering Yankee, so officious in selling his services.

"Time is passing, gentlemen," emphatically observed cousin Franck, taking out his watch.

"Of course it is," replied the Doctor, a little impatiently. "Well, as you seem to understand this business, Cutts, I suppose I shall be obliged to employ you, and will give you one hundred dollars per head, if you will deliver Hannibal and Rafe to me alive; if dead, or badly wounded, half that sum must content you."

"Much obleeged, Doctor," said the Colonel, attempting a bow, "that is dog cheap, that's a fact. Wy, it'll be a hard pinch to make inds meet in payin' travellin' spenses, s'posin' I hafter go far; and thin thar's all the risk, Doctor, thar's all the risk. Howsomever, I'm bound to ketch 'em, by hoky!" added he, considerately taking a pinch of snuff from a snug little box, "I never *did* lose sich game yet, an' so I guess I'll take you up, Doctor."

After further consultation it was agreed, that the Colonel, and one or two neighbors, if they could be had, proceed directly towards Fredericksburg, while the Doctor and cousin Franck take another direction, and, if the fugitives were not taken at the end of twenty-four hours, advertisements were to be inserted in the Richmond papers.

Meanwhile cousin Regina, with characteristic zeal, had been engaged in the further ferreting out of the mischief, lest it become contagious. Poor Martha was tortured with a cross-questioning that would have done credit to an ingenious lawyer; all to little purpose, however, if one might judge from cousin Regina's appearance as she emerged from the cabin.

"If Martha knows what direction Rafe went, she falsifies,"

said she, in answer to Rosalie's inquiries. "I can get nothing out of her; she is a perfect mule this morning. I'd have her whipped, if I did not so hold it in abomination. I've been looking over Rafe's clothes, so I know precisely what he wore away; this will be of service in the advertisements."

"Yes, indeed," said Rosalie; "and now, mamma, now for Willow Creek; I do so long to have the house regulated once more. But what *shall* we do, when the Doctor takes away Aunt Selma? It is the strangest thing I ever knew you do, Mamma, selling her; there isn't another servant in the land equal to her. I wish to goodness he would take some one else in her place!"

"That would be very pleasant, no doubt," replied Madam Regina, "but, daughter, we cannot expect to have everything to our minds, in this world; we shall be subject to self-denials and sacrifices if we do our duty. How we shall get along with it, I cannot say; this sale certainly looks like a very trying affair for ourselves, as well as the Doctor."

"That it does," replied Rosalie; "I do so pity him; just bought those servants, and before they do an hour's work for him they must run away. And now, mamma, I am going to make Mrs. Gen. Ringgold a little visit of a few days, until you get regulated. I shall get incurably nervous, if I stay here in all this commotion."

"Just as you please, Rosalie," replied her mother, with a disappointed air; "although I must say, if I ever needed you, I do now. You could be very useful, if you remained, in helping me regulate affairs."

"*Useful?* O, mamma, don't mention it, please. I abhor the word—so vulgar and utilitarian. If one of us must be so degraded, let it be Ruth, please; she is the youngest, and it accords with her strange, matter-of-fact fancies, to be useful."

"Very well," said Madam Regina, in a tone contradictory to the words. In a moment after, she added more pleasantly, "Ruth will accompany me to Willow Creek, to select servants and teach them their new occupations. Thank heaven! I have one daughter who studies my wishes. Meanwhile I will put nurse Selma in housekeeper; she and Pocahontas will get along very well, I doubt not." Of course, I nodded assent, for I already loved Selma dearly, and longed to cultivate a further acquaintance.

Hearing the clattering of horses' hoofs, I looked out into the court, and beheld six men mounted for the pursuit. Among them were cousin Franck, the Doctor, Mr. Pettibone and the Colonel. The latter was examining a brace of pistols, and, having satisfied himself of their good condition, he deposited them in the broad leathern belt about his waist. Cousin Franck dismounted, and patted a furious-looking hound, saying, "Good fellow, good fellow, Hotspur."

"That's music!" said a rough-looking man, who seemed to be the owner of the pack of hounds; "there's a hound for you; he's death on niggers' tracks—the keenest scent in the pack."

"Now these ere dogs are just the beatenist critters," said the Colonel to the Doctor, an' I s'pose we might as well be

scatterin', an give 'em a chance to show 'emselves. It's my opinion, them are niggers will hafter have considerable lightnin' in their heels to keep clear of 'em;" and, whistling for the hounds appointed him, he put spurs to his restive steed, and, followed by two of the horsemen, he was on his way to Fredericksburg. The remainder of the company, namely, cousin Franck, the Doctor and Mr. Pettibone, were not long in completing their arrangements, and set out at the top of their speed for Richmond.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER VII.

SELMA'S HISTORY.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Dec. 28, 18—.

DEAR S.—The late sale, and the prospect of soon parting from the beloved Selma, have wrought great changes in Ruth. She is very pale and sad, and I cannot help foreboding the worst. Madam Regina has her fears, too, and watches over her with unwonted tenderness. Notwithstanding this matron's earnest, calculating, masculine traits, she has something of a woman's heart withal, not entirely perverted by the unfortunate circumstances in which her lot has been cast. She adopts the common Southern theory respecting the management of servants, which is, that they must be made to know their place, or be kept in subjection by vigilant sternness; and her habitual manner when chiding them is, of course, consistent with this theory. Like most people, however, she varies her mood with circumstances; when not excited by the perversities of her servants, she is apparently amiable, and her beaming face pleasantly enlivens the home circle, or the social party. But when the fond mother's solicitude softens her eye, as she gazes with deep affection on her frail Ruth, she appears really lovely.

Ruth would have preferred remaining at home, in place of going to Willow Creek, but she could not well excuse herself, particularly as her mother was quite sure the ride would have the effect of restoring the tone of her health. Her consent to go was quite gratifying to the latter, who proudly commended her, saying she was worth half a dozen Rosalies. As Rafe had taken "French leave," it was necessary to borrow a coachman of one of the neighbors. In due time the Cameron carriage drove to the door, and cousin Regina, with many careful admonitions, to the effect that I must not let the servants run over me, or run away in her absence, seated herself beside Ruth, and I was left alone, the mistress *pro tem.* of the Cameron mansion. Not having any special fancy for cutting flourishes at housekeeping, i. e., ordering servants about, I hied me to the library, where, I must acknowledge, the afternoon crept wearily enough. My wayward heart was in no mood for books; fly away it would, in spite of me, and seek the lone path of the fugitives, Hannibal and Rafe. Just then I would have given worlds to have been assured that they would escape the pursuer. But I seemed to see the pitiless hounds, and more pitiless fellow-mortals, on their track, and themselves, fatigued and famished, plunging into the cold, black creek, crossing and recrossing to deceive the dogs, and still pressing on—on—on—in their wearisome flight, their clothes stiffened to ice, and their hearts trembling with fear; and anon I seemed to hear this prayer from one and then from the other, "O God, be not far from me; O my God, make haste for my help."

But the tea-bell at length effectually dissipated the host of torturing conceptions which thronged around my excited sympathies; and a welcome sound it was; not on this account only, but because I had determined to spend the long winter evening with Selma, and draw from her, what I had greatly desired, some account of her life, which, I felt sure, contained a more than wonted interest.

Soon after supper, a knock at the nursery door was answered by good Selma in person, whom I affectionately kissed, after the manner of Ruth, and the promptings of my own feelings, and seated myself in Philip Augustus' well-stuffed rocking-chair, occupying a comfortable corner by the cheering walnut fire. The lordly boy was abed and asleep, as were Washington and Clara, and as Aunt Selma was knitting, I took my work from my reticule;—you must know that Ruth and I have organized ourselves into a benevolent society, and are knitting stockings for the little negroes.

"Do you think Hannibal and Rafe will escape?" asked I of Selma.

"The chances are greatly against them," replied she, shaking her head; "thirty are taken, we are told, where one escapes."

"O, is it possible!" I exclaimed, and my heart sank within me.

"I am glad you have come in to sit with me this evening," said Selma, after a pause; "you are very kind," and the tears came into her eyes.

"I am glad to come," I replied; "now will you please to tell me something of your history?"

"My history!" said Selma, with thoughtful surprise; "I fear you would not be as happy as you are, if you knew it. The life of your cousin Regina and my life have run side by side, and one cannot be given without portions of the other."

"Never mind, please tell me," I persisted, and after a little hesitation, she thus began:

"Master Henry Hartley owned a large plantation in Carolina, not far from the mountains. He had a fine house, a beautiful wife and children, and a great many horses and slaves, and was one of the most indulgent masters in the country. He was your cousin Regina's father, and she is much like him,—the same commanding figure, broad, high forehead, and blue eye. When he was pleasant, the clear sky of a spring morning was not more lovely; but when in a passion with his slaves, as was often the case, his eye flashed, and his brow was darkened by the tempest within.

"My mother was a mulatto, very handsome, and very singular in her ways. We lived in a pretty little dwelling, half bower, half cabin, just beyond the arbor vitæ hedge of the garden. An old weeping willow, whose branches swept the greensward, shaded it from the afternoon sun. Many climbing vines were encouraged to run over our cabin, by my mother, who had a great passion for flowers.

My mother was subject to occasional fits of derangement, and went by the name of 'Crazy Milly.' The same derange-

ment affected some of the Hartley family, and she inherited it from her white father, whose name was Hartley. Any great fatigue, excitement or contradiction was sufficient to cloud her reason for the time, and then the mad pranks she would play it is not possible to describe. Everybody feared her, even Master, for he was utterly unable to control her. If any one displeased her, she was sure to remember it, and play him some malicious trick when her mad fit was on. At midnight it was her delight to sing, scream or shriek in some almost inaccessible tree top. A less considerate master might have questioned her right to be insane, for many will hardly permit a slave to be sick; but our master had seen too many crazy members in his own family to doubt the reality of the disease in my mother. As she grew older, her derangement increased; she had more frequent attacks, and they lasted longer. She was much petted, and orders were given that no one should trouble or cross her;—in fact, when sane, she had nearly as much power as her mistress. She had four children: two boys, twins, older than myself, and a little girl, Fayett, younger. Never did a mother love her children better than Crazy Milly, when she was herself, and sometimes, when the fit came on, she seemed possessed with the idea that we were all to be sold, and would not suffer us to be out of her sight for a moment. She thought herself and children free, but was full of the most agonizing fears that we should be seized as slaves.

“When I was quite a little girl, I asked my mother, in one of her sane intervals, who was my father. ‘Why do you

ask, Selma?’ said she, fixing her large, bright eyes upon me. I told her that Regina called Master papa, and that he played with her, and called her his little rogue, and sometimes, when nobody was present, he played with me, took me up in his arms, kissed me, and called me his pretty little rogue, and I don’t know, but Master might be my papa too, only he don’t want anybody to know it.

“‘O, you are a bright little rogue,’ said my mother, catching me up, ‘you deserve to know who your father is, indeed you do;—Regina’s papa is your ‘pa too.’

“I cannot tell you what a strange effect the knowledge of this fact had on me. My little heart was filled with painful thoughts; for, from my earliest recollection, I had been given to Regina as her maid—I was told that I was born expressly to wait on her and do her bidding; now I could not understand why I was not her equal, as we had the same father. I finally thought it must be because my mother had crazy spells, and O, how I wished she would get well of them, for then my father would not push me away any more when people were by, he would let me call him father, and Regina would not have all the pretty playthings, and I should not have to run till I was so tired to wait on her.

“My twin brothers, William and Wallace, were noble looking boys; they were much like their father—for my father was theirs. He had no other sons, and he seemed inclined to love them very much, if only he dared. His beautiful wife could not endure the sight of them, because they were her husband’s slave children, and because they so much resem-

bled him; and she was always begging him to sell them, or send them off to his Alabama plantation. But he was deaf to her entreaties, either carelessly whistling a reply, or telling her she did not know what she was talking about. When they were eight years old, he took them into the house to be waiters, that he might have them near him, and that their tasks might be lighter than if they served him as field hands. But there was no end to the little and great annoyances and oppressions they got from Mistress. The very worst construction she always put on the little mistakes and mishaps that attended their labor; and the surest way for any servant to gain her favor, was to accuse them of some offence. It was but a sorrowful life that they led, now and then a little lightened by a smile and a few kind words from Master. These tokens of his sympathy and affection grew more and more rare, however, as Mistress would give him no peace, constantly urging him to dispose of those against whom her hate and malignity were so much excited. He looked very sad, and seemed to have no heart to smile, and as for kind words, it may be he thought they would only unfit his slave sons for the rough treatment they must meet in their life of bondage.

"But those dear boys bore their troubles very differently. William seemed to be sustained by a lofty faith—the faith of a Christian; and in my later life as I have read, and reflected, and compared him with others, he has seemed to me to possess the heroism of a martyr. Wallace was his opposite; his proud heart rebelled against his lot; he hated

those that oppressed him, and said William was a fool for praying for such bad people. Still they clung to each other with wonderful affection; the sorrows they shared so equally bound their hearts together, as well as the bond of their birth.

"The great fear of Mistress was, that Master would allow these sons to engage his affections—that he would dote on them, finally give them their freedom, and make them heirs equally with Regina. So she was unceasing in her efforts to divert his good will from them, and although she did not succeed in this, yet, moved by a desire for peace, in an evil hour he consented that they should be sent away the first opportunity.

"It was a pleasant summer afternoon, and as a sort of pastime from the confinement of house service, Master had given the brothers leave to join mother in pruning and trimming the hedge. Happy, happy was she then, with her noble boys beside her, and her little girls playing on the green velvet turf. William and Wallace begged she would sit down and rest, and let them do the little job themselves; but no; she loved too well to labor beside them. 'It was only play; many hands make light work,' she said, as she cheerfully tripped along, felling twigs and leaves with her pruning knife. The fragrant hedge row—for it was interspersed with sweet brier—was in order at length, and mother, leaving us to play 'hide and seek' in the clumps of flowering shrubbery, went into our cool, grotto-like cabin, to prepare supper. We had leave to eat together, the hour being so early that the boys would not be needed in the house, until after our meal.

In a little while she came to call us from our play, and there was an expression of sadness on her face, such as was sometimes seen before her crazy turns. We were hushed at once, and clustered around her as she entered the door.

"'Mother must be glad to-day,' said William, gently kissing her.

"'I have been glad, very glad,' she replied, in a sad tone, 'but I tell you, children, the dark cloud is coming;' and she shuddered with dread as she spoke. She sometimes had a presentiment of her derangement—a sickening horror slowly creeping over her—and so it was now.

"'I must pray with you before it comes,' she quickly added, and her tearless eyes glared on us like the noontide sun. 'May the Father keep me from harming my children! O, my God, keep me in the darkness! O, Jesus, save me!' were her agonized petitions. William kneeled beside her, clasping her hands, and praying with every breath; Wallace, half frantic, threw himself on the floor, and cried as if his heart was breaking, and Fayett and I clung to her in our fright. At last she grew calm; the peace of the Saviour fell on her stricken heart as the dew falls on the thirsty flower. She arose, and gently said a few words to us,—'It will all be well at last if we only reach heaven; strive to get there, children; Jesus will help you.' She then called us to the table, and silently and sadly we attempted to eat

"Suddenly there was a darkening of the sky and a dash of rain-drops, and a servant came to call the boys and myself to the house. A stranger had just come in; he seemed

to be a drover for there was a company of slaves, chained, two together, standing in the yard, and Master ordered that they be taken to the kitchen, and a good fire be made to dry them.

"Here, then, was a chance to dispose of William and Wallace. A bargain was struck with the drover; though Master seemed to act hesitatingly, and with real reluctance. I kept close watch of his movements, for, young as I was, I felt intensely for my dear brothers and my poor mother. I feared she would be utterly mad ever after. Master persuaded the drover to stay until after nightfall, that he might take the boys off unnoticed by Crazy Milly.

"I had hidden in the deep shadow of the multiflora that overhung the portico, and Master was taking leave of his slave sons. It was the last time I should ever see them, and O how my heart ached! How I longed to weep on their necks, and kiss them good-bye! but I must not.

"Master called them to him, and, taking a hand of each, told them to be good boys, and said he hoped the drover would treat them kindly, when they both burst into tears, and sobbed audibly. 'O, hush, boys,' said Master, in a husky voice, 'why, you'll never be men, at this rate! Bless me! you going to make a fuss now? O, fie!'

"'Master, you are our father,' pleaded William; 'O, please do not sell us!' and he knelt down and clasped Master's knees.

"'Yes, Master,' added Wallace, sinking down beside William, 'please don't sell us; we've always been good,'—

"'I know it, I know it,' said Master, quickly, his voice trembling; 'you are the best boys in the world, and it's a fact I'd about as lief cut my throat as sell you, but there is no help for it; it must be done!' and he took out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes.

"'Please let us stay with you,' said William, in a grieved voice. 'We'll work for you as long as we live,' said Wallace, 'O, father, please let us stay.'

"'Quit calling me father!' exclaimed Master, sternly, his brow darkening. 'If I am your father, you are none the less my slaves, I reckon. Up with you! Wipe up your eyes; you'll find it's no use to snivel!' and as they stood before him, still weeping, in vain trying to harden their hearts to meet their fate, he seemed a little softened, but, with an air of indifference, said, 'I shall always wish you well, boys, I shall always wish you well. Now, boys, you must go,' he added, for he heard a footstep; then, slipping a small piece of money into the hand of each, he delivered them to the drover, and betook himself to his cigar.

"My beautiful brothers, still weeping, were chained together and put into the drover's gang, Master merely intermitting the puffing of his cigar to say, 'Take good care of those boys, Mr. Drover; keep them in good condition—they are choice stock.'

"'Of course,' said the drover, mounting his horse, 'we'll take good care of 'em; that's our pufession. As ter their bein' any choicer stock than the bigger part of my gang, I dares any man ter say it. Fact is, I've got a specimen lot,

so ter speak, a specimen of Anglo-Saxon blood, I reckon they calls it; at any rate, I'm takin' ter market some of the best blood in the 'Old Dominion.' Curi's times, these ere is, 'Square; folks spekilates in a'most all sorts o' things. Ingenus, aint it, now, for a body to tarn a body's own blood to sich account. Now there's better'n a thousan' dollars I've gin you for these ere two 'sponsibilities.'

"'Come, come, sir,' said Master, 'you are getting personal. You forget the time and the place.'

"'Jes' so, 'Square, an' I'll be gwine,' said the drover, 'but seems to me, ef I traded away my own flesh an' blood, as some on you 'ristocrats does, I'd be a little more thankful to them as obleeged me by peddlin' it out. Jupiter Ammin! you treat us as if we was a mean set o' blaggards!' and he uttered a fierce oath.

"'Excuse me,' said Master, going up to him, and saying something I did not hear; but I caught the words, 'If I were you, I should think it safe to be going—Crazy Milly may do you more damage than your bargain is worth.'

"The drover muttered something in a low tone, and whistling for his dogs, gave the signal to the gang, who had been standing a few rods distant, when the whole company moved off at a rapid pace, and in a few moments were out of sight. No servant was permitted to speak to mother that night, and she did not know of her loss until the dear boys were far, far away. When she missed them, and found out that they were gone, then, indeed, her sun set in darkness. 'O that they had died, rather than this!' she exclaimed, and

her reason was hurled from its throne. She was a raving maniac, rushing here, and there, and everywhere, her brain on fire, alternately singing in wild glee, and shrieking in mad frenzy. She would spend the night in trees, which no one but herself could climb, and her shrill voice was heard, praying, shouting, singing and screaming until morning, when, exhausted, she sought her cabin and fell asleep. She continued in this state for a number of days; but one night she suddenly disappeared, taking my sweet blue-eyed sister with her. Immediate search was made, the streams were dragged, the woods scoured, but all to no purpose; no trace of her could be found, and at length pursuit was given over. Master's neighbors called to condole with him on his loss, and he replied to them as if he had lost a portion of his crops. No one felt for the maniac wanderer and her child; no one thought of the sufferings of the slave-orphan left behind. My cup was now full, and O, how bitter! My two lovely brothers had been dragged off to I knew not what horrors; and now my poor mother, crazed by her sufferings, had perhaps killed both herself and my sweet little sister, or, if alive, they were perhaps enduring, in body and mind, exposures more dreadful than death itself. The very uncertainty which hung around all, added ten-fold to my anguish. By night I was terrified with horrid dreams, and by day I brooded over the hideous pictures which my imagination painted before me with almost the vividness of reality. But there was not one human-being to whom I could utter a word expecting sympathy in return; nay, not one from whom

I should not have been rudely repelled. O, it was so crushing, that terrible conviction, that there was not one solitary being who cared for me or my sufferings!

"After my daily work was done, and I had waited on Regina until she went to sleep, I used to take a mournful pleasure in visiting all the places where my brothers and I had played together; and poor, dear little Fayett, I kissed the ground her feet had pressed. At last, indeed, I sought the old, lofty trees, in whose swaying tops my mother used to shriek and sing, and, as I sat on their mossy roots, I thought and thought in my sorrow, until it almost seemed my sick brain would turn.

"One chilly September night I had sat down under a lofty pine—my mother's favorite tree when her wailing mood was on—and was leaning against its shaggy trunk, now listening to the sad music of the wind singing among the leaves, and now catching glimpses of the moon and stars that flickered among the drifting clouds; I had for some time felt my heart hardening like the nether mill-stone; I almost felt inclined to doubt the being of a God, or at least to call in question his regard for his creatures. I know not how long I had sat there gazing at the stars, and laboring to reassure myself that there was a God, when I was startled by the rustling of the leaves, and a growl of a dog, followed by a low whistle; starting forward, I saw the figure of a man approaching, half hidden by the trees. I did not feel afraid, for sorrow had made me incapable of fear. As the man

came nearer, I thought I knew him; he beckoned to me, and I went a few steps to meet him.

"Is you Selma?" he asked.

"Yes," said I.

"Iv'e come from Milly; she wants to see you."

"My mother? Where is she? Let me go to her," I said, almost wild with emotion.

"It's right smart ways off," said the man, who I now remembered was gardener David, who ran off some time before my brothers were sold. 'It'll take two hours to go there.' But I begged to go to her, and taking hold of David's hand, tripped briskly by his side. After a fast walk of about an hour, crossing plantations by unfrequented paths, and beside hedges, we came to the woods that encompassed and walled up the mountains. As we passed along, I tried to mark objects with my eye, that I might find the way if ever I sought it alone. The way soon became steep, almost precipitous, and it was only by clinging to the tangled underbrush that we could ascend. At last, after clambering among rolling stones, briars, and bushes for a long time, David stopped before a thick clump of bushes, and gave a signal whistle. It was answered by a hand moving away some of the branches of the thicket, and a head peering out upon us. In a moment more I found myself borne into a spacious cavern, of which this thicket concealed the entrance, and in a sort of a rocky recess, before which pine boughs had been placed to complete the partition, I found my dear mother, asleep, lying on a bed of leaves. As David took me to her side, I saw

that she was very pale and emaciated, and that there were traces of tears on her cheek. My own tears gushed freely at this, and I would have thrown my arms about her neck, but David held me back, saying,

"Not now, Selma, let the poor thing sleep when she can."

"Is she very sick?" I whispered.

"That she is," replied he. "Bless the Lord, her stroubles is almost over."

"I sat down by my mother's leafy bed, and gazed at her as well as I could through my blinding tears; there was that sweet, pensive face I had so longed to see, and I knew that she was not now insane; but O, the bitter, heart-breaking pang to think that she must die—that I must so soon lose her whom I had found, and on whom I longed to lean and pour out the full burden of my heart. But where was my little Fayett? I feared she was dead, and dreaded to ask, when I saw a strange little figure clad in shaggy deer-skin coming towards me from a remote part of the cavern, led by a tall, dark woman, who bore a blazing pine knot. I sprang forward—

"Fayett! Selma!" and we were clasped in each other's arms, crying for joy. The first burst a little over, we sat down, her hand in mine, and gazed into each other's eyes, our hearts too full for utterance.

"My mother awoke, and feebly asked if I had come, and, hand in hand, my little wild sister and myself went and kneeled beside her lowly bed.

"I do bless thee, O my God!" said my own precious

mother, as she took me to her bosom and kissed me. 'It is you, indeed, isn't it, Selma. I have dreamed of you so much that I fear it is not reality; yes, it is my own child, and now I can die in peace.'

"O, mother, do not talk of dying,' I brokenly uttered.

"Why not, Selma?' replied she, calmly, her face beaming with a happy look, 'why should I not talk of dying—I shall be so happy when I reach my Saviour! If it had been His will, I would have blessed my boys before I go;—God will hear my prayer and restore them to me in heaven.' She paused, for her breath came heavily. It was a wild, strange scene—that lone cavern in the bosom of the mountain, the dying woman, the dark figures, clad in skins of beasts, gazing on her as they wept, and the brilliant glare of the torches lighting up the craggy walls of that moss-grown habitation. All wept, and I knew that they were friends.

"It is time for you to go,' at length said David.

"O, no!' I exclaimed, 'I cannot go back—I cannot leave my mother when she is dying.'

"Mother beckoned to an old woman named Hilka. The latter had been a nurse all her life; but on the death of her old master and mistress, to whom she was much attached, and the sale of the estate, she had fallen into such cruel hands that she had escaped to this retreat. Hilka, having felt the pulse of her patient, said she would live another night. As I kissed my mother a good bye, she whispered in a few words her wishes that I should faithfully serve Regina, and, leaving Fayett in the care of the kind friends she had

found sometimes come to see her, and bring her what food and clothes I could spare from the portions given me.

"David told me, on my way back, that a few weeks before, he found my mother and Fayett in the woods at the foot of the mountain, almost starved; and that, although crazy at intervals, she had been sane most of the time since living in the cave. It was her exposure in the sickly night air, her frequent derangements, and her sorrow at parting with her children, that had conspired to shorten her life.

"I reached Regina's room in safety before morning, and my absence was undiscovered.

"David was to come for me next night, and wearily enough I went through with the duties of the day. The vexations and annoyances of waiting on Miss Regina, as I was required to call her, seemed a hundred fold more intolerable than ever before; for I longed to be watching beside my poor mother. When it was dark, and my work was done, I hastened to meet gardener David, and was again led to the forest cavern. My mother was dying! Gasping for breath, she was sitting upon her bed, supported by nurse Hilka. With a serene smile she reached out her hand to me, saying, at broken intervals, 'It is almost over; I am almost free.' And again, 'Happy, happy,' as glimpses of heaven broke in on her vision. 'Love Jesus,' she said, gazing on me with her melting eyes; and, as I bowed my head and wept, I promised her that I would love him. 'O, God, bring all my children to thy fold!' were her dying words. As her spirit took its flight, filled with grief as I

was, I yet felt melted in submission before God. His sustaining arms had been about my mother in her dying hour, and I felt to praise him, that, so calm and radiant with peace, she had gone hence.

"Clasped in my little sister's arms, a passionate burst of grief swept over me, more for her bereaved desolation than my own. Who would care for her now? What place of safety was there for her in the wide world? If she went back with me, she must be again a slave; and I thought, better dwell in the dim old cavern, live on roots and water, and wear the skins of beasts, than return to such a fate. I would not go back myself, had it not been my dying mother's request, that I might help succor the poor people dwelling there, if they were like to starve. It was but a temporary abode; most that sought it, did so with the hope of escaping to the free States, and were waiting, some for clothes, and some for a favorable time to go. A few, in their despair, were waiting to die. The hour came again for me to return, and, with many tears, taking the last look of the dead one I so fondly loved, and tearing myself from my little sister, I sought Regina's room.

"It was a sad, weary life that I led. I was pining in grief, when Regina aroused me by the strange proposal, that I learn to read. As Master had no objections to the plan, I was soon diligently studying under the care of the family governess. Regina was a mature, intelligent child, but loved play better than study, and this proposal was a device of hers to gain time from her books. In the course of a few months

I could read Regina's lessons to her passably well. During this time I had frequently visited my little sister in her cavern home, and had wept on my mother's grave in the mountains. Old nurse Hilka had formed a strong attachment for Fayett, and, in her rest from toil, had so renewed her youth that she had planned a flight to the North, with my little sister and her son, who had lately escaped to the cave. It seemed like the bitterness of death, for me to part with the only one I now had to love, but she had found a nestling place in old Hilka's heart, and how could I utter a word to quench her faint hope of freedom.

"How well I remember the night I helped fit her off! I carried her some of my clothes, and food I had laid by from many a meal. I longed to go with her, but my absence would increase the danger of the three being taken, as search would be made for me. I saw them depart with a firm resolve to bide my time, for freedom seemed inexpressibly dear to me, and my loftiest earthly aspiration was some day to enjoy it. I had a dissatisfaction with the life I led, amounting to loathing. I lived under the same roof with Regina, we were children of the same father, we had the same studies, and yet how impassable the gulf that separated us!

"Mistress, fearful that the advantages Regina was so whimsical as to give me would spoil me, interposed various obstacles. She never wanted an occasion to find fault with me, and seemed firmly set against being pleased with anything I did. She declared I was proud, and Regina would yet rue the day she gave me a chance to learn.

"Yet, with all my advantages, I was nothing but a poor slave, liable to be sold whenever it would be for the interest, or would gratify the caprice, of those that owned me. I was motherless, and worse than fatherless; that most desolate of human beings, a slave orphan. Master's heart grew hard towards me after his sale of the boys; he drank freely, and never seemed like himself again.

"As the slow years crept away, Crazy Milly and Fayett had died out of mind, and the names of my brothers were never mentioned. Regina became the flattered belle. I, the slighted slave, longed for something on which to place my affections, and love and confide in as I had in my mother, my brothers and sister—some one to whom I could entrust the varied fears and trials of a slave life.

"Herbert Williams was a favorite servant of Master's; intelligent and active, grave and sedate in his bearing, and, like myself, mostly akin to the white race. With the aid of a few hints from me, he had become a good reader and writer, and Master, availing himself of his increased capacity for usefulness, employed him to keep his books, and sometimes to write his letters. Herbert was always kind to me, but such was the reserve of his manner, that I did not speak with him of my great griefs, until years after I had parted with all my family. At last we discovered that we loved each other, and consent being given to our union, we were married. Regina, saying that a lady's maid should be married like a lady, made us a little wedding in the parlor, lighting the astral lamp, and, what was strangest and best of all, we were married by

the parish clergyman. How his voice trembled when he said, 'What God hath joined together let not man put asunder!'

"Regina was united, about the same time, to a rich old bachelor in the vicinity, named Col. Moulton. When she removed to her new home, she, of course, took me with her, and my husband remained with Master; we were not allowed to see each other oftener than once in two or three weeks. Five years passed, and Regina was the mother of Rosalie and Ruth, and I of a beautiful boy—Hannibal.

"Some weeks had passed since I had seen my husband, and I got no satisfactory answers to my oft inquiries; at length Regina told me that he had been stolen by a drover. The terrible truth was revealed; *Master had sold him!* Again I drank the overflowing cup of anguish. I could only go to God with my heart-rending griefs.

"My darling boy, as he grew up so beautiful and noble, I almost feared to love, lest he, too, should be taken from me. And now he is gone, and I am sold to the far South."

"O, Aunt Selma," I exclaimed, bursting anew into tears, "don't weep, don't weep; it will all be well at last!

"Yes, yes," she replied, more calmly, after an interval of weeping, "all well at last, if God but interpose, as I have so earnestly prayed, for my brothers, my sister, my husband and my son."

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER VIII.

"POOR WHITES."

PORT ROYAL, Va., Jan. 6, 18—.

DEAR S.—It was almost night of the day fixed for the return of cousins Regina and Ruth. I had been looking out for them for some time, when the Cameron carriage drove up before the door. The driver dismounted, but instead of letting down the steps, gave a letter to little Jupe, who, as usual, was on hand admiring the horses. It was from Ruth, giving the information that a serious accident had happened. It seems that the horses had taken fright, and, being unused to the driver, could not be controlled, but had dashed away at a furious rate a great distance, and finally had been stopped by being reined up to a fence, in the doing of which, however, the carriage had been upset, and Madam Regina badly hurt, her arm being broken and ankle dislocated. The letter went on to say, that one of the poor whites, coming along at the instant, helped disentangle the horses and upright the carriage, and took them to his own little shanty, located in the mean settlement of Pison Fields. Ruth concluded her letter by requesting that Selma and I would come to her mother as soon as possible. I immediately sought out Selma, and ar-

rangements were soon completed for starting off at an early hour in the morning. Cousin Franck's horses were so scratched and strained that they had to be forthwith put under the care of Pomp, who, by the way, being given to quackery, is in truth no contemptible specimen of a horse doctor. A neighbor, however, very kindly offered his horses and driver for the occasion, and in due time Selma and I, fully equipped, set out.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached the rude settlement, composed of a few log huts scattered over a worn-out pine barren, which nobody claimed. The occupants of the huts are distinguished for their lazy, drunken habits, and their squalid degradation,—they being a portion of that great class called "poor whites," who constitute the worst excrescence and inevitable product of the slave system. They resemble the Blaggs of Eastern Virginia, the Clay Eaters of Georgia, and the Piney Woods people of North Carolina. It is not pretended that they approach the slaves of Virginia in respectability and honesty of character. The men rarely do anything for a livelihood beside hunting, fishing and thieving. The women are more industrious, but do as little as possible. The latter do all the ploughing, hoeing and gathering of the little corn they raise, which is their only crop.

The doors and window-holes of every hut were filled with heads when we arrived, and if staring had been devouring, we had quickly disappeared before voracious curiosity.

We found Madam Regina in one of the most decent looking huts of the group, but it was, after all, miserable enough.

Unlike some others, it had a chimney built of sticks and clay, for not unfrequently this is considered a superfluity that can be dispensed with, the smoke being left to find its way out of the hole in the roof as best it can. The little dwelling was divided into two rooms, the most comfortable of which had undergone a partial "claring" for cousin Regina's reception. I was surprised to find her accommodated with so comfortable a bed, but afterwards learned that it was borrowed from one of the nearest plantations.

Poor Madam Regina! how she wept when she saw us! "O, I'm so glad you have come," she said, when she could command her voice; "what have I not suffered?"

Ruth met us with a most affectionate greeting. I found her looking in better health than when she left us, although she had been assiduous in her capacity as nurse. The change and exciting incidents had diverted her mind from the morbid sorrow that was consuming her.

Dijah Gray's services and accommodations had plainly been furnished with at least half an eye to the pay. The sum he might reasonably expect to clear on this off-hand speculation, would go far toward the winter support of his half-famished family. He was a short, spare, meagre-looking man, complexion durable drab, with hair and eyes but a shade darker. He had a cross, currish way of speaking—a sort of human growl—and in his scanty, many-colored fur coat, to which cat skins were the principal contributions, he made altogether a most wolfish and forlorn appearance. His wife was a tall, gaunt, cadaverous woman, disgusting and ugly in the ex-

treme. She wore a tattered, checked, linsey woolsey gown, evidently the cast-off relic of some house slave, a dingy apron, besmeared with grease and dirt, and a filthy, calico nightcap, which vainly essayed to keep in subjection her uncombed, oven-broomish hair. On our arrival, her attempt at a look of good humor overcame her habitual surliness so far only as to get her countenance into a grim and haggard grin.

It was a strange relief to glance from the disagreeable parents to their children—little Tommy and Netty, ten and eight years old. The poor, thin little things, half fed and half clad, with their pensive, blue eyes, and curly, flaxen hair, had that peculiar, saddened look, that blighted blitheness of childhood, which long days and years of starvation and harsh treatment alone can produce.

"Dis sher yaccident makes us right smart out o' kilter," observed Mrs. Gray, apologizing to Ruth and me for the shocking developments of her housekeeping, as we were getting tea from the little store of things put up by the thoughtful Selma. "Tommy," continued she, elevating her voice, "come, be sry, an' sweep down them are cobwebs; an' Netty, you stupid dunce, why don't you hoe out the room?" Tommy, taking the hemlock broom, and Netty the wooden hoe, proceeded to do as bidden, while the indolent mother, having quaffed a dram of whiskey from a brown jug in the catch-all corner, lazily jogged herself in a screeching chair.

We had hardly seated ourself to tea in Madam Regina's room, when we heard the voice of Dijah Gray, who had just returned home.

"I'll be darned, old woman, ef you haint swilled down all the whizkey! Niver has anything comforable for me when I gets hum, you don't."

"I haint drunk it all up nither, as I know in my knowing, I say," replied the wife, "these ere young uns tarned it over, I reckons."

"The careless whilps! I'll whip 'em within an inch of their lives; I will;" growled out the father. "Come here, Tom! this way, Net!" and we heard the sound of blows. "Tarn over your father's whizkey, will you? Tarn over your father's whizkey? he must come hum in the cold an git no supper, must he, you carless whilps?"

"This is too much; I cannot stand this!" exclaimed Ruth, getting up from the table, and gently opening the door; "Mr. Gray, please do not punish the children, they did not mean to do any harm," she interposed in her own quiet, charming way.

"Wal, wal, Miss," replied Mr. Gray, in a changed tone, "ef you don't want these ere young uns slapped, wy then, Amin, so be it; but they is a mighty sight uglier than Cain, ef 'tis their father that says it. Jes' consider, Miss, what they're up tow," continued he, "spillin' my whizkey, ivry blessed drop. Its' jes' as useful tow me as so much raverent rum,—an' taint the fust time, nither, it's what I havter slap 'em for ivry day. Wy, Miss, it's 'nough tow make a parson swar, 'tis; go off tow work for my family,—sweat at it, work like a dog, come hum, an ivry blessed drop o' the whizkey



"What you drink my whiskey for!"—Page 129.

split, jist as ef 'twas only water! I 'peal tow you, Miss, ef taint too bad."

"I do not think Tommy and Netty meant to do any harm," replied Ruth.

"Wal, 'pon word, likenough they dint," said Mr. Gray, "there's no tellin' what the old woman *is* capable o' dwine. She's a high-stericky piece, an' I has my conjections she's up tow drinkin' the whizkey, an' layin' 'toff tow the young uns tarnin' over. I would'nt mind it, but whizkey *is* my main livin'—wy, Miss, a gallon o' whizkey 'll go as fur t'wards sportin' my family as a bushel o' corn. It's our staff o' life, Miss."

"I say, Sally," continued Mr. Gray, turning to his wife, who was all this while smoking her pipe, and screeching her rickety chair, "what the deuce you drink my whizkey for? Been tow work all day for my family, come hum, all the whizkey gone; *rinsequently*, nothin' for supper! I tell you what, old woman, you drinkt my whizkey."

"Wal, sposen I did," shouted Mrs. Gray, getting roused, "help yeself ef ye ken, Dijah, whose a better right? what's yourn is mine, an what's mine *is* mine, I reckons," and puff, puff, puff went her pipe in an angry, expletive sort of way. "Trate a body as you do me,—it's a mighty shame," puff, puff, puff, "always 'braggin' o' what you done to sport your family, when you won't niver arn the salt in your porridge." Puff, puff. "You know, you lazy dog, when you pertind you're dwine lots tow git victuals an' drink for me, it's only *pertince*, "puff, puff, puff," you're half asleep, day in

an' day out down tow Siah Tumpkins' liquor store." Puff, puff, puff.

"Now, Sally, don't now, don't git distrepus," said the chop-fallen Dijah, "I always work when I gits a job, don't I now, Sally? Ye see Miss," continued he, addressing Ruth, "what makes us such poor wretches is, we can't git no work no how; niggers cuts us out ivry which way; they're as thick as tuds arter a shower. Blast it! aint we in a putty pickle? No chance to git a *rispectable* livin', no how you ken fix it. There's a chance for eny most ivry sort o' thing but us poor whites,—we're at the bottom of the mountain, an' we can't niver climb it, ef we try ever so hard,—it's jes' no use tryin' tow rise,—we're down, an' we've got to stay down," said the man, in a sad tone.

"Pshaw, Dijah, don't you be so hypoey," replied Mrs. Gray, "it's all jes' as bad as you say, I know, but then it's no use knowin' ont, we'd better smoke an' drownd our troubles. I has my thoughts, Miss Ruth, poor, lazy, drunken body that you think I be, I has my thoughts when I sits here in my old cheer from mornin' till night, tyin' seins when I can get 'em to tie; I say to myself, it's a mighty big snarl of a tangle that things is got into, an' I should be glad tow know who's gwine to straighten 'em. Rich folks likes mightily tow keep us poor whites down, but, land o' massy! how'd they like to be in our place? An' they do say that some on 'em is comin' down to our relevation fast."

"Blast 'em! it's 'nough to make a body swar, 'tis, tow think ont," chimed in Mr. Gray, "livin' on the fat o' the

land, an' we, poor critters, enny jest a starvin'. I don't mean you, Miss, as I knows on,—you looks good an' kind, an' sorry for us, but the bigger part of the rich is mighty cruel hearted, an' there aint no need ont nither. But we poor whites is driv tow do some hard turns,—we don't bile an' eat our children, exactly, but I'll tell you, lady, we's sometimes driv to *sell 'em* to the nigger buyer. I done selled my oldest boy, right smart while ago, I did, jes'tow keep the res'on us from starvin'."

"O, is it possible?" exclaimed Ruth.

"Yes, Miss, an' his weepin' eyes has follered me ever since. He din't want tow go a bit, poor feller, an' I had tow harden my heart,"—and the tears really took the place of the man's words.

"How Charley did cry tow stay," said Mrs. Gray, in a softened tone, as she put up her pipe, "he was enny jist the best boy you ever seed, but we didn't know it till arter 'twas too late; he us'tow always run an' fill the jug, an' make the pones an' porridge, sweep the huss, an' keep things nice as a button. O dear me suz! 'pears to me I'd starve an' welcome, ef Charley was only back agin!"

"Ye sec, Miss, dis sher's the way it happened," added Mr. Gray, commanding his voice. "Bill Tuggs, one of our nighest nabors down here, made a dive to rise in the world. He always had a dreadful knack at tradin',—he had a store in a little room of his huss, an' he'd cheat us all out o' our eyes afore we knowd it. Wal, he happened to trade with some of the overseers round, trading minx skins an' some sich,

an' they said 'twas too deuced bad that sich talents be hid under a bushel; so they gin him a lift an' made him a nigger buyer, an' tow pay for the hilp, he was tow gin them a sheer in his profits. Wal, Bill Tuggs would come hum once in a while, an' swagger an' strut round among us, dressed up like a peacock, an' there's no end tow the money he had; then he had a gold watch, gold chain, gold finger-rings, gold earrings, gold breast-pin, an' a great, big silk handkercher, as yaller as gold; an' says Bill, says he tow me,

"'Dijah, I've been speculatin', an' I've diskivered there's plenty o' money in the world, an' there's no use in a man's bein' poor, ef he'll only use the means Providence gin him. I'm a nigger buyer. I makes a *respectable* livin', an' so may you. All you got to do, is to sell off the stock you have on hand.'

"I asked him what he meant by that.

"He laughed, and said, 'Ah, Dijah, you're a little green, yit, a little green. I mean, man, sell off them are boys o' yourn, an' that are gal; fetch a good price, Dijah, a good price.'

"I was as mad as a March hare, an' I told him he'd better quit talkin' to me in that are style. But one day he comed in here,—Sally sat smokin', the children was cryin' for porridge, an' there warnt the matter of a spoonful to eat in the huss, no fire, and nothin' to buy whizkey with. Bill knowd he must strike when the iron was hot, an' so he begun countin' out the dollars for Charley. 'I must have that boy,' said he, 'I'll give you fifty dollars for him.'

"I never 'd seed so much money afore, an' I was amose crazy, I was so hungry, an' so I told him he might have him. Charley wanted tow stay, a dreadful sight, but it was no use tryin' to keep him, an' starve to death in the cold."

"I telld Dijah I shouldn't wonder ef he'd be better off," said Mrs. Gray.

"Sakes alive I hopes he is," said Mr. Gray; I'm 'spectin' we'll be 'bleeged to sell Tommy an' Netty yit."

"O, horrible! sell your own children!" exclaimed Ruth, and the little, dwarfish things came and stood close by Ruth, and, gently taking hold of her hands, looked upon her so beseechingly, as they said,

"You don't wanter have us selld, do you, lady?"

"No, no, dear little boy," replied she, the tears coming into her eyes, "I hope you and your little sister will never be sold."

"I wanter see Charley all the time," said little Netty, "won't he never come back?"

"Hold yer tongue, you little fool!" exclaimed the motner, angrily, "we don't want not anither word said 'bout it by anybody."

"So, so, daughter," said Madam Regina, as the former returned to her room, "so we get it on all sides; we are to shoulder the blame of these poor wretches' degradation, are we? I make sure, I do not know what we are coming to,—such a confused state the world has got into. These poor people seem to be the broken arm and disjointed ankle of

society; they are plainly a class that do not exist in a sound body politic; and while we feel pained at their miserable condition, we cannot avoid bewailing the accident that has brought them into it,—in my opinion, as things are, it would be better for them to become slaves.”

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER IX.

A DISCOVERY.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Jan. 7, 18—.

DEAR S.—Wearily enough passed the hours of our first night of watching with Madam Regina. She was in a deplorably suffering condition, aside from the pain she endured, being extremely nervous, and afraid some more dreadful evil was about to happen. “These poor wretches,” she reasoned, “are so destitute that they have sold one of their children; and when people get to that pitch of desperation, what is there that they will not do? Stealing and murder are small crimes compared with this.”

We endeavored, by being ourselves cool and self-possessed, to allay her fears all we could, but so great had been her sufferings, that she had no more fortitude than a child. Of the numerous little attentions demanded by the comfort or the notions of the sleepless sufferer, the most frequently repeated was, to look through the window niche for some indications of the morning. This duty was imposed as often before midnight as after, for Regina’s gold repeater was stowed for safe keeping in the bottom of her trunk.

How forcible seemed the words, “more than they that

watch for the morning," when, at length, a few beams astir, enabled me to return a more favorable report!

"Now, girls, if you only had some good religious tracts and books," said Mrs. Cameron to us when it was day, anxious for us to exchange the smoky hut for the open air, "you might turn tract distributors in earnest. A visit from hut to hut, besides furnishing you exercise and amusement, might do a great deal of good to these wretched creatures."

"But, mother," said Ruth, "I do not suppose that there is an individual belonging to the place that can read a word."

"Ah, indeed, that did not occur to me," replied the mother; "well, very probably there isn't; books would be of no possible use, then, I am sorry for it; but you and Pocahontas must manage to get up some amusement out of doors, or you will be down sick."

"Suppose we turn Sisters of Charity, to-day," suggested Ruth. "A good idea, daughter," replied Madam Regina, "and you may meanwhile be learning some lessons of practical wisdom,—for instance, that slavery is not the worst condition poverty can assume."

About nine o'clock we sallied out for our walk, each of us with a basket of crackers and cakes on our arm. No one seemed to be stirring in the cabins,—indeed, the poor people had nothing to get up for, and doubtless thought early rising in cold weather an expense they could illy afford. We had walked a half hour or so, and were returning to the cabins, when we met a little boy and girl, each with an armful of sticks. The little girl was blind of one eye, and the boy

was quite lame. Their clothes barely hung on them in loose tatters, and their little, bare feet and hands were purple with cold; altogether they looked so needy, forlorn and hungry, that the sight of them must have made the hardest heart ache.

"Is you got any cakes?" said the little girl, with an imploring look and tone. "Is you?" echoed the boy, before we could get out an answer.

"Yes, we have got some cakes, and we are going to give you some to eat with your breakfast," and the sad eyes fixed on us grew bright. "Where do you live?" we asked.

"Rightch 'ere, in mam's huss," replied the boy, and by stooping we entered the low doorway. The little, dim dwelling was so divided that the one door led into its two apartments, the partition approaching the middle of the entrance. One room was for the family, and the other was the "cuppen," or cow-pen, being the place where a pair of dwarf cattle were housed for the winter. Half a dozen families held stock in these half-starved beasts, and depended on them for their ploughing in the warm season. A sorrowful, mild woman came to meet us, with a look of diffident surprise. She was small and frail, with stooping shoulders, but was still in her youth as regarded years.

"O, mam!" said Joey, the boy, "dey's gwine done gin us some cakes!" The mother, saying, "O, hush, Joey," handed the only two chairs the room afforded. She soon learned from us that we were friends, and then the poor woman poured out her full tale of sorrows into our listening ears, as

if we were indeed her sisters. Naturally mild, timid and loving, her heart had been crushed by the circumstances of her condition.

"And your little girl," we inquired, "how comes it she is blind?"

"I'll tell you, ladies, ye shall know it all. One of my neebors had her little girl kidnapped and sold off to the trader, an' with all my sorrow an' starvin' I couldn't stand that no ways, an' so I put her eye out! I did!" and the poor thing's voice choked in the recital, with the thought of the horrid deed. "And I made Joey lame, too," she added, after a pause, "that nobody should ever want to make him a slave."

Another, another, and yet another hut of misery too profound to be sketched, we visited, and then came to a dwelling that evidently had some pretensions to comfort and even taste. It was built of logs, but they were covered with ivy, and in summer time it must have been really pretty, for there were traces of other climbing plants on its sides. Within there was an air of neatness and thrift, that strangely contrasted with the huts we had left. The walls were kept neat and clean with a washing of powdered stone, which had almost the effect of whitewash. Festoons of bright autumn leaves, mingled with evergreens, were hung on the walls, and about the niche windows, and had a peculiarly cheerful and enlivening effect. The floor was earthen, like the rest of the huts, but was almost entirely hidden by mats curiously woven of corn husks. The young woman that came to the

door to receive us, was as neat and tasteful in her plain tunic and short dress, as were the indications of her housekeeping. Her eyes were mild, serious and blue, her hair brown, glossy, and disposed to ringlets; she was erect and perfect in figure, and had a something about her whole manner so superior to the specimens of the human race we had recently met, that we could not think she rightly belonged to the settlement. In one corner, supported by a bed made of mats and pillows, sat a man who seemed to be her husband. He was a cripple, and, like the woman, appeared more sprightly, hopeful and intellectual than any persons we had found in the place. In the course of our conversation, we mentioned the cause of our visit, and the hope we had of doing the poor people some good.

"It'll be hard doin' the people here much good, there is so little honest work for 'em to do," said the man, whose name was Robert; "Fanny an' I gits along better than most of 'em; I weaves mats an' ties seins, and Fanny is a witch with the needle, but we want raised here," and I saw the large blue eyes of the wife cast on the husband, as if in reproof for the last statement. Before leaving, I carelessly said to Ruth, that it was time for us to return and take our places with Selma. At the name of Selma, the young woman looked up with an expression of intense inquisitiveness, and said, "Selma, who is Selma?"

"Selma is our nurse," replied Ruth.

"Ah, is she?" exclaimed the young woman, with an air of surprise, and with agitation which she evidently tried to conceal.

Although we were perplexed, we did not attempt to force an explanation. As we arose to take leave, however, she said to Ruth, "Will you let Selma come and see me?" Ruth replied that she should come that very day.

On our way home to dinner, as we chatted about the thrilling and curious sights we had seen, we agreed that Robert and Fanny were the most interesting and unaccountable persons we had met, and we longed to learn how they came to sojourn among a people whose superiors they were in so great a degree. As soon as we reached Madam Regina's room, we insisted that Selma should take the air, although her mistress thought it quite superfluous, alleging that persons of her condition in life feel no sort of inconvenience from close confinement. But Ruth had a winning way of saying, "Please, mother, let her go for my sake!" and without more ado the good lady gave her consent.

I followed Selma out, and as we walked along towards Robert's cabin, I told her that the young woman Fanny had requested her to come and see her. I then gave some little description of her husband and dwelling. Selma thought it very strange that she should be sent for, and was evidently excited by the incident.

"I have brought Selma to see you," said I, as we entered the cabin.

"Thank you," replied Fanny, coming forward to take Selma's hand. Then, the two having looked at each other with a searching gaze, Selma, in a voice choked with tenderness, and eyes suffused with tears, exclaimed,

"I know thee by my mother Milly's eyes—Fayett!"

"Yes, yes!" replied the young woman, "and thou art Selma;" and the happy creature threw her arms about Selma's neck, and the two wept mingled tears of joy and grief. The thoughts of years were in those passionate emotions; and, feeling like an intruder, I quietly withdrew.

Ruth was acquainted with Selma's history, as well as myself, and as soon as possible I managed to let her know that the Fanny we had met in the morning was Fayett. Everything now depended on pursuing a prudent course; for if Mrs. Cameron should learn of the whereabouts of one of her father's slaves lost twenty years before, she would doubtless think it *duty* to take measures to secure such an one with the chain of bondage.

The conversation happening to turn on money matters, cousin Regina spoke of some planter in the neighborhood who had owed her father several hundred dollars, but as the interest exceeded the principal before the debt was collected, it was outlawed and lost.

"Well, mamma," said Ruth, "it is a common saying among us that slaves owe labor when they run away from their masters; if they owe labor, that is a debt, isn't it?"

"Daughter," replied Mrs. Cameron, "use the term *servant*, instead of *slave*,—it is far more correct and genteel; indeed, it is the only term ever used in polished society. I reply to your question, that labor due constitutes a debt, of course."

Then why should not this kind of debt be outlawed at the

expiration of a certain number of years, as well as the other?" asked Ruth.

"Why not?" replied the mother, "what a childish question! Our legislators were wise men, and they, doubtless, had good reasons for framing laws as they did. If servants could outlaw the debt they owe to their masters after an absence of seventeen years, or so, why, that would be paying them a pretty handsome premium on their running away and on their successful concealment. Most servants would be inclined to play the game, and we owners of people would quickly be aground high and dry, with nobody to work the ship for us. A servant once, a servant forever, must be our maxim, or we help pull down our domestic fabric."

It was evident, from this conversation that Madam Regina was well posted up in all those theoretical and practical details which promoted the perpetuity of slavery.

When Selma returned, the traces of tears were plainly to be seen, and glad were we that the dimly lighted room hid them from our eagle-eyed mistress.

Our next visit to the huts included a call at the famous whiskey hut of Grilsa Griffin. It was formerly kept by one Siah Tumpkins, who, having burnt himself up with his own liquor, was succeeded in the emoluments of the stand by his cousin Grilsa.

Picture to yourself a low, dark-looking log cabin, a passable pig-pen, with a whiskey barrel in the centre of the room, on which sat Grilsa Griffin enthroned, when not busy in waiting on her customers. A mat of coarse, gray hair, in which

the process of tangling and intertangling had been going on, without let or hindrance, for years, crowned the old hag, as with a most hideous turban. Her face was long, with high cheek bones, and scars and wrinkles seemed to rival each other in disfiguring her tawny skin. Her eyes were small, gray and piercing; her flat and upturned nose formed no very agreeable feature; and in her faded linsey woolsey dress, and dingy apron, she presided like an evil genius astride the liquid poison. Had we not been armed with gifts of crackers and cakes, we certainly should have turned back from so miserable a groggery. As we entered, Grilsa was jingling coppers in her deep pocket with one hand, and seemingly chuckling to herself with a grim satisfaction. She looked down on us with brazen self-assurance, the startling reverse of the cowering manner of the people generally.

"Come ter trade, has ye? What truck yer got there?" she interrogated, in a harsh, loud voice, at the same time getting off the barrel, and reaching out her long, wiry arm towards the basket.

"We came in to give you some crackers and cakes," replied Ruth.

"Wal, that ar is quar; niver had a thing gin me afore! but ye'll take a swig o' whiskey for't, won't ye?" When we told her we did not want any, she rolled up her eyes in great astonishment.

"Ye's quar, ye is mighty quar. I reckons ye's them ar ladies as is stayin' ter Dijah Gray's." We replied in the affirmative. "Sakes alive!" she continued, "how fortunate!

"It's a piece o' news to telld ye. I mought as well gin the information and pocket the pay; one o' my nabors here uster be a slave, an' is a sorter sister to your Shelmy; she uster be your slave, I reckons."

Ruth asked her what made her think so.

"Wy, yer seed, when I observed yer sarvint gwine by here, I jist sint my Pol arter her tew see what she did; Pol is a staver at huntin' out a body's consarns; so she hides behind the door and hars all they say, an' comes right back an' tells me on't, an' I 'spect I'd better seed the mistress hersef, an' git my toll for findin' a slave."

We knew not what to say, and after changing the conversation, and giving her some cakes and crackers, left. Of course it would be of no use for us to try to persuade her not to say anything about the discovery she had made, for her tongue was bound to run, when it had an exciting theme. We returned home in no very enviable state of mind, and, as we feared, before the day was done, Grilsa herself forced her way into Madam Regina's room, to collect her fee. And there, as you may suppose, was a scene for a limner;—Madam Regina became extremely excited, and we coaxed the old hag away as soon as possible, in feverish fear of the results of her visit.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER X.

THE ESCAPE—ROSALIE IN TROUBLE.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Jan. 8, 18—.

DEAR S.—Although we succeeded in getting rid of Grilsa Griffin, yet we found it quite another thing to undo the result of her errand.

"I protest, girls," at length said Madam Regina, warmly, "that hideous object's story looks plausible, and had I the use of my feet, I would know all about it directly. How I *do* wish Mr. Cameron was here! Here, Selma, come to me; I wish to hear your account of this affair. I know you are veracity itself, and of course will deal truly with me. Have you seen Fayett? Is she in this place?"

"Yes, Madam," replied Selma, in a trembling voice.

"And Ruth and Pocahontas were knowing to the fact," said the lady, much excited; "I would not have believed it! How could you, girls, take advantage of my weak, defenceless condition, and literally attempt to *rob* me in this manner?" and the poor lady wept.

"O, mamma," exclaimed Ruth, "what can you mean? How can you thus afflict yourself?"

"Afflict myself, indeed! just look at it,—here I am, perfectly helpless, and you hear of the whereabouts of property

which belonged to your grandfather's estate, of which I am the rightful heir, and you seek to keep me in ignorance of the very existence of such property, that I may be perfectly sure to lose it. Think of the enormity of such conduct, my daughter. You did not intend it, perhaps, but it is neither more nor less than downright swindling; it is, indeed."

"O, mamma, please do not look at it in that light; we will do anything you bid us that conscience will permit."

"Conscience, indeed!" replied the mother, wiping her eyes; "I should make sure you had neither of you a particle of that faculty, were you not such paragons of perfection in everything else. And I do think, Ruth, you are more to be blamed than Pocahontas. You have had the advantage of an enlightened bringing up, as it regards this question of property in servants. It is not so much to be wondered at that Pocahontas should now and then mistake what is property and what is not property, brought up as she has been at the North; but you, Ruth, have had the thing defined to you from your earliest consciousness, and you sin against great light."

"Mamma," replied Ruth, "it seems to me *the danger of sinning* is all on the other side of the question."

"Yes, yes, I make sure you think so. O, why is it that a daughter of mine should drink in such fanatical sentiments? Daughter, you reverence the Bible?"

"Yes, mamma, I trust I do," replied Ruth.

"Well, then, let me convince you by that holy book," continued the mother, "I can have no moral right to waste my property, for we are expressly commanded by Him who

spake as never man spake, to 'gather up the fragments that nothing be lost.' Now, Fayette is my property, worth some one thousand dollars; if I neglect to secure her, or 'gather her up,' she, though quite a fragment of a fortune, is lost, utterly lost and wasted. What right can I have thus to trifle with and despise the good gifts of God's bounty? How can I render my account as a faithful steward, or expect the plaudit 'well done' to be awarded to me at last?"

"I fear, dear mamma, that you cannot, if you continue in slaveholding," gently said Ruth.

"O, fie, daughter! am I not treading in the same path in this matter that thousands on thousands of good Christian people have trod and are treading; how can you indulge so unworthy a thought?"

"Mamma," replied Ruth, "it does seem a clear case to me, that the teachings of the Bible are all against slavery."

"Nonsense, child! it is from the Bible we establish the divine right of slavery. Hark! I hear a carriage; run, Ruth, see if your father has not come."

Ruth caught her bonnet and shawl, and went to the door, and in a moment more cousin Franck bustled in, and went through with an affecting meeting with his wife.

"Such luck, such luck, Mrs. Cameron!" at length he ejaculated, "what are we to do? Spend the winter in these miserable quarters? We're cornered at every turn; and then our friend, the Doctor, thinks himself the most unfortunate man alive. Here is a letter he has just received from Cutts, full of dolorosities Pocahontas," he added, with a

droll smile, "you may read it aloud, if you can make it out." The soiled and crumpled document read thus:

"dere doctor. i Taks mi pen in Hand tew inform yew ime alive an Wel an hopes yew Injouys thee sam blesin. i be-
ginns this ere letur acordin ter Rule, but i Aint a Mite wel
nuther—ive kitched a blarsted hard Kold, an I cowf an
Wheiz awl the tyme an Evry boan in me Aikes fit tew kil.
Naious I spoze yewl wante no whats thee nuse. ime in a
curis piccle an kno mistak ime shot up in hartlund Kourt
howse jale Acused of bein a Runaway Salve! i tells em ime
kurnel Cutts rokesby overser but thair wont knoboddy bleeve
a word I sa. the galer is crosser thun a Pak ov mad dogs
an ime enny gist ded.

Yew ce Wen we got about haf wa tew fredriksburg the
houns kinder got on the Cent on anuther rode an we rid arter
em like smok fore hours. but Sikes he gin aout. he sed i
waz sich a Teem miSelf he want knedid an putty quick them
air dogs got on the Cent shur enuf an we follered em helter
skelltur threw the feels an over Phensis brighurs an bushes.
Wal Blossum an i kriskrossed an pambulatid about thair till
enny gist Nite. twaz aufull Kold an wede splashed rite
Threw thee kreek lickety split an aour kotes an Trowsiz waz
friz stiff enny gist. but we calkalatid we shud katch the
Gaim in leetle les thun kno tyme so we grined and bared it.
but i bleeve mi Sole we shud awl perrished efft hadent bin
fur them air branda Bottuls as waz in aour pokkits. we
hadtur tak a horne evrey fue minitts tew kepe aour Kurraje

up tew Thee Stikin pint, az Thee sain iz. Wal we got tew
a playse Aside the kreek whair twaz kinder Woodsy an the
iverGreens maid it kold az Grinland an we hadtur drink a
putty stif horne tew keep frum freezin an the houns Gott a
leetle mite a Head an arter a spel they yelped yelped so we
New they cum up with the Inimy, an Korkin up aour bottuls
an Spurin up aour hossis we Kantered rite up To em stavety
cut, like a howse afire, an sez i wheu u! wheu u! kurnel
Cutts an down with the Nigger Ribils!

but a Four i new it i waz poked Of mi hoss in konsiderble
of a Hurra an thair I waz kurnel Cutts on Mi bak an han-
hybal a houldin me down meditatin Reving, an sez I dont kil
me hannybal dont brew yewr hans in mi blod. i never
harnd A hare ov yewer hed awl iz, ise abayin the laws ov
Mi kountra ise only sarvin the Konstytushun an prasarvin
the Unyon. ye Ce i waz A leetle mite sli an tauked blarny
tew gane time till Thee Dogs rekivered an kum up when i
ment tew Riz an throttel the Skamp. but the dogs waz as
Stil az mise an sez i whairs them Air dogs? an sez Blossom
whoe Rafe had tide tort tew a tre kloze Bi, sez he thayse az
ded az nits. then i thort wede got tew di fort an it Maid me
az Week az warter an i boowoood rite aout for i waz num
with kold an mi hans waz tide. an sez i naiou You wont kil
me will yew Hannybal an sez he no Eff yewl kepe stil but
Eff yew tri Tew scape yewr A ded man, an he pinted tew
mi pisttuls in his belt. Arter a spel thay tide us On Thee
hossis an tuk us Tew an ole empte kabin whair The hog
tendur lived in summer, twaz only a leetle wais Of in thee

woods. thay maid a fire an dride aour kloths an then thee Raskuls maid us Swap suits won at a time so we coudent help urselvs. twaz a whappin Sham but we hadtur submyt ur di. Howd yew spoze i felt, kurnel Cutts drest up in a niggers ole duds! then Thay begun Tew hete iurns, an Sez i whaot naou? yew gwine tew kil us Arter awl! an thay toald me Tew be dun, an rite awa thay frized an curld aour hare tew make it nigry an then Thay smooched us blakern nite with birch bark an pine Nots haf burnt an put aout. Sakes alive we dint No One nuther frum niggers.

then thay mounted the hossis an brot us to this ere kourt Howse jale a Fore mornin. aour mouths waz gagged so we cuddent xsplane a wurd an The galers arter he was roused he tucked Us intew this Ere niggers hole higgledy piggedy an ime bound tew Sa A narstyer playse aint tew Be faound. the mud an filth is kne deep So ter speak an taint Fit fur ainy human krittur. we haint no chans tew Wash an the galers thinks wese niggers shur enuf kase wese Ser blak. help me aout rite of, dew doctur, ur i shall be dun fur this ere wurld. dont git nothin tew eat But corn Bred an Warter, an mi cowf Is tarin me awl Tew peeses.

The galers sez i haint no Grate shakes, he sez Ime master aleing an Aigery an he shall sell me in A weak tew pay mi jale fese. i wist i was saf bak tew rokesby I dew this ere Is a losin bizniss. Dew cum arter me tew wonst dere doctur, an ile dew az much fur yew The fust time i gits A chans.

Sarvant Sir,

CALEB CUTTS overseer."

Notwithstanding our pity for the Colonel's sad plight, we could not avoid a laugh at some of the comical features of his recital. Cousin Franck, as soon as he could articulate, said that he brought the letter along to extinguish the blues, and he considered it a beautiful specimen of Yankee literature. Selma laughed and cried alternately, and Mrs. Cameron seemed for the time to have forgotten her trials respecting the discovery of the lost property. She at length bethought herself, however, and with all the pathos of an aggrieved woman, gave her husband an extended account of the disclosures of the day relating to Fayett.

"Is it possible? Is it possible?" he every now and then uttered, and when she had completed her history, he added, turning to me with an assumed gravity and air of authority,

"That was most reprehensible in you and Ruth, coz, that mischievous deed of holding your tongues on a subject which ought to have been made known;—but where is Ruth?" And now, for the first time since the arrival of cousin Franck, was her absence noticed.

"Indeed, I do not know," replied Madam Regina; "perhaps she is sitting in the next room with Dijah Gray's family. Selma, go and see,"—and in a moment Selma returned, saying she was not there. Mrs. Gray's head was in the door in a twinkling.

"Bless yer," she exclaimed, "yer Miss Ruth's done gone ter hum I reckons,—she went off in the shay."

"Went off in the carriage!" replied cousin Franck, springing to his feet, "Bless my soul and body! and that was two

hours or more ago. She's gone mad, 'pon my word! What's to be done? What's to be done?"

"Run, run, dear; go right after her at once!" exclaimed Madam Regina, greatly excited.

"I go after her!" replied cousin Franck, "impossible! I've no horse here, and you forget my thin boots; I cannot set foot out of doors without taking my death of cold."

"Dijah, he'll go, I reckons," said Sally Gray;—"Come, Dijah," she said, as she went to her own room, "you be spry, rig up, an' be stirrin' arter that are gal."

"I can't, an' I won't, so there, Sal," he replied, in a dispirited and dogged tone.

"You ken go jest as well as not," replied the wife, "come, now, go 'long."

"Not by a jug full!" exclaimed the man, "it's a mose night, an' comin' on mighty cold. 'Twouldn't be o' no yarthly use,—persides, I'm sick, an' I've got more work tow do than you ken shake a stick at."

"That's jes' all purtince, Dijah, all purtince," replied Mrs. Gray, in a vexed tone. Cousin Franck now went in and addressed him.

"How do you do, Mr. Gray? I would be glad to employ you tō find out the direction taken by the carriage."

"Couldn't do't as I knows on," replied Dijah Gray, "starms a brewin', winter never rots in the sky," he added, shivering as he stood with his hands in his pockets, looking out of the half open door.

"Ye'll pay what's wuth, won't ye?" asked Sally Gray.

"O, certainly," replied cousin Franck.

"I reckons I shall hafter go," replied she; "women hafter do ivry blessed thing as is done. Always tow hot or tow cold, tow yarly or tow late for the men. Theyse a mighty weak an' scary set, and not a bit o' rependence for a body," and she tied her calico nightcap down over her ears with a strip of rag, and, coming up to me, said, "I'll jes' borry that are warm shawl of yourn," which I gave her, saying she need not return it, when she sallied out to make inquiries respecting the route of the carriage. She had left only a few moments when Grilsa Griffin made her appearance.

"Ho, ho, hum!" she exclaimed, as she stalked in, "tired as a dog; hafter work perdigus hard tendin' my customers! Been tryin' ter git in sher all day an' git my pay;—I 'spect you understand;" and she winked and nodded as if to establish her meaning. "Desperit hurry, cust'mers waitin', fork't over, that's all."

Cousin Franck told her that he would see that she was paid, and, taking out his pocket-book, handed her a bill which made her eyes glisten.

"My 'specks to you for dish sher; reckoned ye'd wanter make it squar right smart quick, bein' as ye'd toted hum yer slaves as I found. Yer gal there tooked 'em hum a spell by,—but I'm off with my 'specks ter you for dish sher;" and, crumpling the bill, she stowed it into the neck of her dress, and was gone. Cousin Franck and his wife looked at each other in blank amazement for a moment, when the former said,

"It cannot be, Mrs. Cameron, that Ruth has taken Fayett and her family home,—she would have freely consulted us in that case; doubtless she has given them the help of a ride towards the free States."

Sally Gray now returned, and the information she communicated confirmed cousin Franck in his opinion, and as he reiterated it, Mrs. Cameron replied, with a sigh,

"Is it possible? and yet I fear as much. What a strange child she is,—so dutiful in everything else, and so wilful and crazy on this slavery question. But I cannot think she would do such an audacious thing; I fear it will be the death of me if it proves true;" and Madam Regina turned very pale, and appeared as if fainting. The remainder of the day and night we all had our attention engrossed in taking care of her, as her symptoms were alarming and hysterical.

The morning after Ruth's departure was lowering and uncomfortable,—the sky being disfigured with the sulky frowns of a northern November, and the air eminently suggestive of ague chills. As I set out for the morning's airing, Sally Gray and little Tommy started for the nearest plantation with a note from cousin Franck, requesting the planter, Mr. K., to call on him immediately, and, if possible, lend him his carriage and horses. The people of the settlement were astir earlier than usual, as the events of the previous day were of an exciting character. Smoke curled from every cabin save the late abode of Fayett, and almost involuntarily I bent my steps thither. As I stood there, musing on the late strange occurrence, and its probable results, a tatterdemalion

of the place came along, in company with Grilisa's Polly, an overgrown, muscular girl.

"How'd you know they wint that ar way?" asked the man of Polly.

"Cause I asked the stable boys from Popple farm," replied Polly, in a loud voice; "they trades with marm a heap,—comes sher over an' often o' dark nights, with all the truck they can lay han's on, an' marm she buys it up, an' squars off with whizkey;" and the half-intoxicated girl burst into a silly laugh.

"I reckons yer knows 'bout de tase of yer ma'm's whizkey," said her neighbor, joining in her laugh.

"Sakes alive! I does so," replied the girl, with a brazen face. "Marm she says I'm a staver at it. I've drinkt on a bet afore now, I have. Marm she says it's jes all I'm good for is ter fish out a body's consarns an' drink whizkey, he, he, he; marm she gits huffy atween times, and says she can't afford it. Hei! can't afford it! we'll see, says I to mysef, ole woman's gittin' rich an' stingy; sometimes she hide de mug, an' what does I dew but take the birril on my knee an' drink out of the bung hole! It's plaguey good so, case I ken corner the ole un an' git a drink tew, he, he, he."

"Ole woman's gittin' rich, is she?" asked the man Jim.

"Reckons you'd think so ef you seed all the heaps o' money she got," replied Polly. "She's dwine rightch smart o' trade, you may depind; an' Sundays she trade smarter'n iver."

"Sun'ays? what's that?" asked Jim.

"Why hi! don't you know? The day rich uns goes ter meetin', dare sarvints comes over sher an' has a good time tradin' with marm; they gits a pass ter go a piece, an' comes sher; niver comes 'cept Sun'ays an' dark nights, when the patrol can't see 'em."

"Rich folks goes ter meetin'," slowly echoed Jim, "an' what's dey do dare?"

"Why hi!" replied Polly, "don't you know? You mus' be drunk. Marm she says dey goes dare ter larn how ter 'press the poor, an' I vows it's all they does go for. They purtinds they'se got 'ligion, an' reads the Bible, an' prays, an' all that ar, but it does me lots more good to har a body swar, than it does tew har 'em ar hypercritters purtind ter pray."

"Wal, Polly," replied Jim, as if wondering at her accomplishments, "you'se always studyin' on 'em ar tings,—you'se got larnin', I 'spect you knows."

"I 'spect I does so," rejoined the girl, "I'd knock you down ef you said I did'nt; I'd lay you flat, I vow I would; and she swung her arm with a threatening gesture.

"You're a ter'ble smart un, an' ef a body says you haint, he don't know nothin'."

"I'll knock 'em down as says a word agin me, I will so," exclaimed Polly.

At this moment her mother, Grilsa, appeared in the door of her cabin, and called to her to be spry, and come and help her.

"Won't stir a step, so thar!" replied the specimen of amiability. "Ole un begrudges me my whizkey, an' she may wait an' tend her crustymers hersef, for what I care."

Grilsa, seeing that her daughter was not disposed to come at her call, had recourse to coaxing. She displayed a red and yellow ribbon, and said,

"Come 'long, Pol, see what's I'se got."

At the sight of the piece of finery the girl's eyes glistened, and she started towards the whiskey hut; when she saw me, she greeted me at first with a vacant stare, and then, winking and nodding in a familiar way, said, quite patronizingly,

"Come on, Miss, let's see that are truck the ole un's got." Seeing little Netty Gray enter Grilsa's abode with the family whiskey jug, I was induced to go in.

"Halloa! have a cheer!" said Grilsa Griffin, handing me a rickety affair, plainly of home manufacture.

"Now, marm," said the daughter, sulkily, "ef you don't hand over that are ribbon mighty quick, I'll be in your hair."

"Come, Pol, you be done!" said the mother, "berhave yersef, now the lady's sher, for land's sake, dew; har's yer ribbon." Polly, having grasped it, exclaimed, with childish delight,

"Now, ef thish sher haint putty! I'll bet I'll dress up in this sher bran new, brindled ribbon ivry day; so much crustymers an' men folks a comin' an' a goin', a body haster dress up mighty cranky;" and she fastened the tawdry thing about her smutty neck with a thorn bush pin.

"I'll bet you won't dress up in that are nice, speckled ribin, ivry day," said the mother, warmly. "Won't have none such stravagancies in my huss, I won't."

"I'll dew as I'm a mineter, I'll bet a jug full, I will," exclaimed Polly, with an air of defiance.

"Wal, ef you haint a staver, an' a witch, to boot!" exclaimed the mother, and turning to me, "Now I don't spoze our Pol cars *no more* for her *mother*, as has raised her up an' hedicated her, an' gin her victuals an' whizkey;—she don't car *no more* for *me*, than she do for that ar cheer; not a mite nor a grain, she don't." Here the daughter began to whistle by way of verifying her mother's words.

The child Netty stood waiting, with the brown jug in her purple, little hand, in her gentle, patient, but sensitive manner—a strange contrast to the boisterous, uncouth creatures of the whiskey hut.

"Ho, hum! I mus' be movin', an' fill Dijah's jug," said Grilsa Griffin, with a hideous yawn. "I spoze he'll squar up a heap better now he's got the rich un's at his huss."

Netty had manifested much embarrassment on meeting me, and as the whiskey woman made this rough allusion to her father, she burst into tears.

"What's marm said tew make yer whimper now, yer little fool?" outspoke Polly, taking hold of her harshly, and shaking her.

"Now, Pol," said the mother, "you leave that young un 'lone! be done shakin' her rite sher afore thish sher lady!" and, handing the jug she had just filled to the little girl, she added,

"Make yersef scource, chillen aint wanted hare."

As Netty went out, I arose to go, notwithstanding the

very pressing invitation of Grilsa to stay a "piece," as she wanted to talk a "heap." As I took Netty's hand in mine, on our way home, she diffidently looked up in my face and smiled through her tears.

"What made you cry?" I asked.

"I was 'fraid you wouldn't love us any more," replied Netty.

I told her what Grilsa Griffin said would make no difference, and she seemed comforted.

During the morning the planter, Mr. R., came in his carriage, which he assured cousin Franck was at his service. He also brought a note from Ruth, who it seems, had stopped at his house on the way. It was directed to her parents, beautifully written, and to the effect that she had undertaken to help Robert and Fayett on their way to a place of safety; she begged they would forgive her seeming rashness, and suspend judgment until her return, which would be in a few days.

Mrs. Cameron proposed to her husband immediately to pursue and bring back Ruth, and those she had taken under her protection; but he would not be persuaded to do so. He said he had failed in his late expedition to recover Hannibal and Rafe, and he was tired to death, and should be sick abed were it not for her sad case,—and as to going on such another "wild-goose chase," he'd be hung first. So there was an end of the matter, and his wife now thinking of numberless comforts at home for which the carriage must be imme-

diately despatched to Port Royal, it was proposed that I take a furlough and accompany it.

On my arrival at Port Royal, I found Rosalie struggling in a sea of troubles.

"I am so glad you have come,—I should not have survived another twenty-four hours, if you had not," she said, as she kissed me on meeting.

"Why, what has happened? How ill you look!"

"And well I may," she replied; "such trials of patience as these aggravating servants are! I have come home, dutifully to *put things to rights*, and these servants are the most perverse things. Cleopatra is stubborn as a mule, and will neither do one thing nor the other. She will have it, that there is nothing for her to do when you and Ruth are away; besides, she says I can have no right to order her about, for she is sold to the Doctor. And Mima, too, is as contrary as she can live."

"She contrary! How does that happen? She isn't sold?"

"Of course not," replied Rosalie, "and the aggravation of it is, she is my own maid. I wish you would help me bring her round,—if she will not hear to reason, she must be severely dealt with,—there is no alternative."

"What is the difficulty?" I asked.

"The foolish thing got up an attachment for Hannibal," replied Rosalie, "and she makes ado enough to cry her eyes out. We've got two servants, Juniper and Sim, from Willow Creek, in the places of Hannibal and Rafe, and I tell her she may have her choice. I am determined she shall marry

one of them, and forget Hannibal. But the ungrateful thing turns up her nose at them both; she is full of her aristocratic notions, because she has always been a house servant, and they are mere tyros at the business. I feel injured and hurt to have her abuse my generosity in this way; but she will find when I say a thing I am in earnest. Things *shall* be put to rights now mamma is away. Mima *shall* marry Juniper," and Rosalie's eyes flashed, and her little foot came down with quite an emphatic stamp. In a moment she added, "And what is more, Martha must quit thinking of Rafe, and marry Sim."

I replied that time might work great changes in Mima's feelings,—she might lose the image of Hannibal, and learn to love his successor, Juniper.

"But she is to obey me, and do so at once," rejoined Rosalie. "I am set on having her married to Juniper, and I will not be put off in this matter."

The veritable Juniper now came in, with a fawning, simpering and insinuating air, bearing a hod of coal to replenish the parlor fire, by which we were sitting. He was tall and wiry, of three-quarters negro blood, slim, sleek and greasy; and as supple and subtle as a snake. Indeed, he had the eye of a very basilisk, and as I glanced at him and compared him with the agreeable and handsome Hannibal, I did not blame Mima, I pitied her from my heart. His hair was well saturated with pomatum, and from his ears depended a pair of very antiquated ear-rings, which the wearer seemed devo

tedly intent on keeping in motion by a jaunty and consequential swaying of his head. A fancy-colored vest diversified the somewhat threadbare apparel of this curious specimen of a serving man. As he glided out in his noiseless slippers, Rosalie looked at me and said,

"What think you of that piece of furniture? Isn't he the very pink of obsequiousness? and then so genteel in his livery."

I replied that he certainly did look rather fanciful.

"Ah, I see you do not like his appearance," replied Rosalie; "believe me, coz, it's your Northern prejudice. He's the finest looking servant I've seen in a long while; then he is so accomplished in serving,—he sets off our establishment, giving us such an aristocratic air! As for Mima, I've no patience with the little jade, not to see the advantage of such a match. We shall always keep Juniper, of course, and she would not be troubled with the thought of separation."

"Are you sure that Juniper has no wife?"

"Why, no, my good little coz," replied Rosalie, laughing, "I am sure of no such thing. I know very well that he has a wife at Willow Creek, and it isn't his first wife, neither. But these servants, we make nothing of their marriages,—we make them and break them at pleasure. Juniper has no objection to having another wife, not he; he would not care if he had half a dozen,—no trouble of maintaining them, you perceive."

"I have no patience with a system that throws such contempt on the institution of marriage," said I.

"O, pshaw!" exclaimed Rosalie, "not the least harm in the world. The poor things are not accountable for their loose notions of marriage,—they do not know any better, and it would be useless to try to teach them better ideas of it. Now Juniper looks as innocent as a sheep, but I really suppose he killed his first wife."

"Why, Rosalie! killed her, and for what?"

"For no reason in the world, so far as I can make out, except that she had more religion than he; yes, I suppose she was what you would call a sort of martyr. I will sometime tell you all about it; it would take too much time now. There's a letter, stating particulars, about the house somewhere. I'll find it for you. It was written by Mrs. Briarly, our housekeeper at Willow Creek, and is really very interesting. But we say as little as possible about it; we do not want Juniper to know that we ever heard that he did such a deed; he is very valuable, and we cannot afford to sell him to the nigger buyer, for punishment, and the whipping-post would be of no kind of use for him. We keep the matter from the servants here, but those at Willow Creek have got hold of it."

"Juniper, then, is a murderer!"

"O, no," replied Rosalie, "we do not employ so harsh a term,—his crime is scarcely so bad as manslaughter."

It was late, and I went to my tea, and immediately after, as I repaired to my room for the night, Rosalie called me into hers, and rang for Mima, saying to me,

"You just hear me try to convince that little jade that she should marry Juniper, and you second the motion, that's a good girl, please."

I had scarcely time to tell her that my conscience would not permit me to do so, when Mima made her appearance.

"Well, Mima," said Rosalie, "I suppose you have buried your old flame,—you're going to please me and marry Juniper; here's Miss Pocahontas, she has come just in time to see you married."

"I wish, Miss Rosalie, you'd please ter be done, I do," replied Mima, in a pretty, pouting way. "I has my own stroubles to bar; it's mighty hard totin' um 'bout, an' I wish ter goodness you'd please ter quit teasin' me 'bout dat ar dishagreeable Juniper. I wish he was funder, I do. I wouldn't touch 'im wid a forty foot pole, indeed I wouldn't."

"I am in earnest," replied Rosalie; if you do not put on a pleasant face, and agree to do as I wish, to-morrow, you shall be tied up, and Philip Augustus shall whip you for amusement."

"Please don't, Miss Rosalie; I'll do any urrer ting you bid me."

"Will you marry Sim?" asked Rosalie.

"La sakes, Miss Rosalie, he so crump back—den he *dat* ole,—he des' 'bout as ole he ken be. 'Pears like I'd marry my drandfader when I'd marry Sim," said Mima.

"Just as I supposed," replied Rosalie, "all of a piece. It is a miserable spirit of insubordination that possesses you,

and I shall curb it at once. You *shall* learn the lesson of *implicit obedience*. You shall marry Juniper to-morrow."

"Indeed, Miss Rosalie, don't mention it, please," said poor Mima, with tearful eyes; "couldn't think on't no ways. Please ter b'lieve me; I wouldn't marry 'im ter save 'is life. S'pose I tergrade myself ter marry inter dat ar fam'ly? Wy hi! Miss Rosalie, 'twouldn't be 'spectable to me, an' 'twould be mighty tegradin' ter you, have um say yer maid run down hill ter marry Juniper Numby. I'd see 'im hung fust, dat I would."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Rosalie. "What do I care for your aristocratic notions? I see no difference between you and Juniper; he is a house servant, as well as yourself."

"I know all dat ar," replied Mima, "he huss sarvant, dat is *evident*, but 'parently he's a mighty green 'and at de business, he's a fiel' 'and ony 'bout a yar ago, an' 'is fam'ly is des' no fam'ly 'tall; all de Numbys is bound ter flat out, an' turn ter notin', des' whar dey spring frum, dat is *evident*. Wouldn't speak ob 'em de same yar wid Hannibal."

"You silly jade!" exclaimed Rosalie, "you'll never set eyes on Hannibal again, if you live to be as old as Methusaleh. He'll never come back, and if he does, he's sold to the Doctor, and you won't see him."

Mima burst into tears, and sobbed violently, saying, brokenly,

"Don't see how ken live, no ways; never poor creatur had such stroubles as I'se got."

"You shut up," replied Rosalie, "you're the silliest thing alive. You do not know what is best for you, and without any more ifs or ands you shall marry Juniper to-morrow,—I will be obeyed."

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XI.

A MARRIAGE.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Jan. 9, 18—.

DEAR S.—"Fine mornin' to travel," said Cleopatra, as she came into my room the next morning, with "a turn of wood." This was her usual salutation,— "Fine mornin' to travel,"—being as common with her as "Good morning" with other people. Warm or cold, wet or dry, it was all the same to her—always a good morning to travel. She was ever thinking, what a good time to set out, but never getting courage enough to venture.

"Are you well this morning, Cleopatra?" I asked.

"Law no, Miss, I'se never well," she replied, in a depressed tone. "I'se *dat* crumpt up wid 'matic pains, I don't git no res' no way, an' den dare's my ear-ache; thought I done got shed ob it entirely, but it ache *dat* hard de bigger part ob de night. Don't see what's Is'e good for no way—Is'e *dat* ole, Miss, I 'spect I oughtenter been selld. I'se *dat* crumpt up wid de reumatis I can't do much. *Dat* Doctor made a losin' bargain on me, you may depend. Why hi! I ony des' creeps roun' now, an' de journey 'll intrude on my constitution a heap, an' Is'e 'll be des' no use at all. De new Massa 'll mark me ole an' useless, an' let me starve to death.

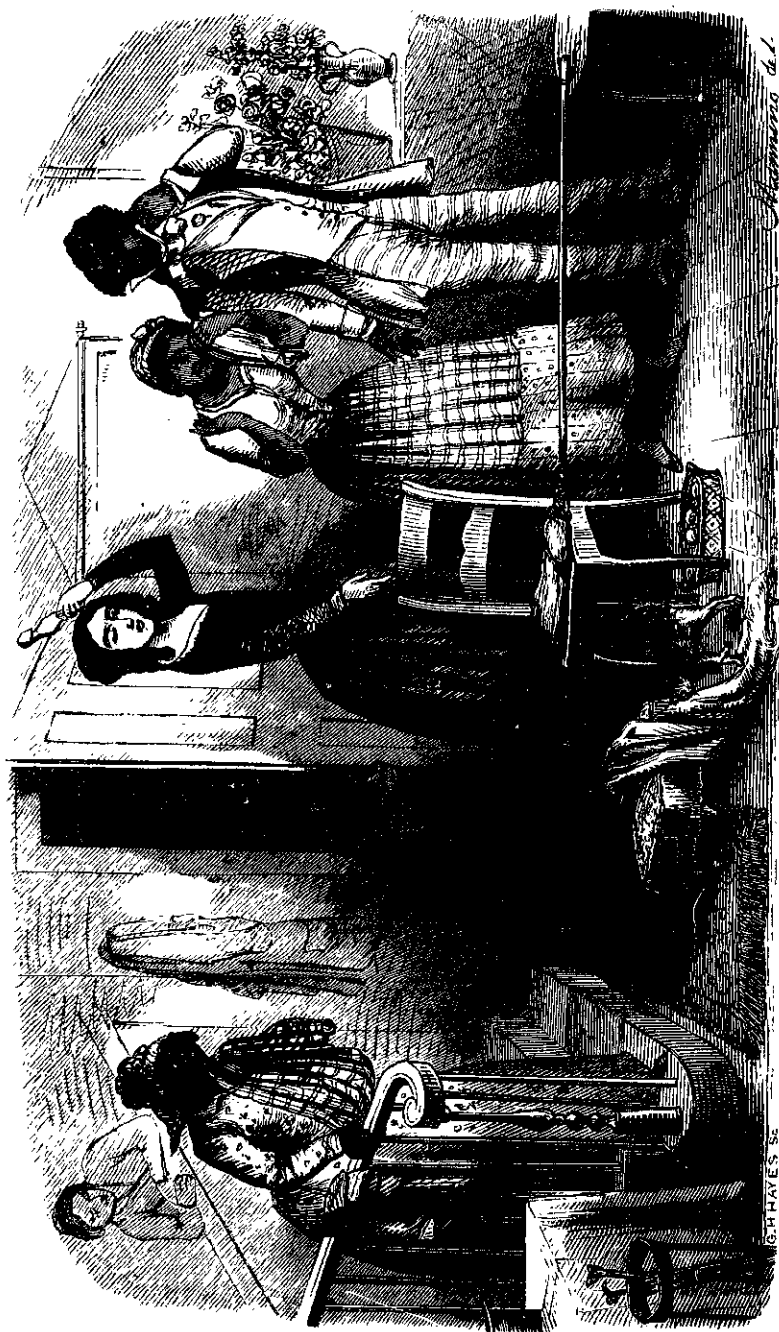
"I wist dey'd a let me stayed an' died where I be," she added sadly, after a pause. "I wouldn't stroubled 'em long; I'se amose worn out. It makes me feel so sick at my heart, studyin' an' gwine way off from all my kin to de South. Taint cole dare, but so miserable wet; dey do say it damp as de mischief, an' what's I'se ter do arter all my fatigument, gittin' the chills an' the agers a top o' dat? I'se 'll shake mightily gwine, I makes no matter o' doubt. I shall wish I had suthin' warmin' ter drink, to strike de top of de chills so dey can't git too strong a hold on me."

A bird alighting on the tree by my window, began to sing. "I dun know what de birds want to sing for, dis cole mornin'," said Cleopatra, in the same dejected tone; "if I was a bird, I'd done stay hid in de leaves, an' never open my mouth at all.

"Dis sher wood so 'bomible it wont burn, Miss," added she, after sundry attempts at kindling it; "dare, it smoke. I reckon it 'll burn when it git hot—'pears like it mought.

"I dreamed 'bout my husband dat's dead an' gone, last night, Miss; I dreamed he was singing so pretty! O, *dat* pretty, you may depend, I was mighty sorry when I wake. Dey say ef you dream of de dead, it's a sign o' rain.

"Don't see what dey wanten tote me way off dare for—I'se had stroubles heaped on top o' stroubles all my life long, an' I don't have no desirement to end off wid dis sher strouble of bein' saunt [sent] off south, dat I don't; I 'spect ef I stayed, though, dey'd strike up some new strouble ur urrer ter interes' [disturb] me all my days. Dares Mima,



The Marriage. "But you shall obey me." — Page 169.

she an' I'se had our little fallins out, an' now I'se gwine to be saunt off, an' she's in strouble, I'se mighty sorry. I pintedly telld her I wouldn't marry dat ar Juniper to save 'is life, an' dey mought make de mose of it. I makes no admiration [wonder] dat Miss Rosalie is consarned to put tings to rights for de fust time in her life, now mistress done gone, but I don't see what besets her to marry Mima to that snake in de grass.

"What's all dat noise down stars in de hall? I should admire to know!" So saying, Cleopatra left my room. I soon followed her, and directly found myself leaning over the staircase balustrade, eyes and ears intent on witnessing the singular scene below.

In the back part of the hall, near the door leading into the kitchen yard, two chairs were placed opposite, about four feet apart. A broom was laid across them, and there stood Juniper, and poor Mima, while Rosalie, with burning cheeks and flashing eyes, presided as master of ceremonies.

"When I say, *now*, you are both to jump," she said, very emphatically; then, in a louder voice, she uttered the signal "now!" At this Juniper sprang over the stick of matrimony with the agility of a cat, but Mima remained on the other side.

"What's the reason you did not jump, you silly dunce?" exclaimed Rosalie, greatly vexed. "But you shall obey me! there, take that!" and she boxed her ears with her slipper. "You are my maid. I should like to know what right you

have to think for yourself in this matter or in any other? You must learn to know your place,—your mind is to be implicitly subject to mine, and it shall be, if I have to whip you within an inch of your life to break you in.” Mima was silent, save crying as if her heart would break.

“Come, Juniper, try your luck again,” said Rosalie; and this time, as the shrill “*now*” rang through the hall, the mulatto caught his heartless bride, and bounded over the stick as lightly as before.

“Well done!” exclaimed Rosalie, “that was *well* done. There, now you are married, Mima, and I hope you have learned that I mean as I say.”

“It’s des’ no marrying ’tall, to jump over de broomstick,” sobbed out Mima.

“You shut up! It’s better than you deserve. If you had been willing and obedient, I designed to have made you a pretty wedding in the parlor, and would have called the clergyman in; but you were so stubborn that I was under the necessity of substituting this way, which is quite as good as any other for you servants, who are always being changed about.”

“Des’ so, Miss Rosalie,” simpered Juniper, “des’ so,—de common run of servants would think ’emselves mighty happy to git as much marriage as dis sher.”

“You clar, you nippety and junipy, or what’s your name?” outspoke Cleopatra, who had stood at the bottom of the stairs, smothering her indignation till she could smother it no longer. “I makes free to tell you des’ what I tinks,—

you is a sly, durable vilyun, an’ Miss Rosalie ’ll find you out some ob dese yer times.”

Juniper’s eyes snapped, and Rosalie, with a tried and anxious air, said,

“O, you quit this nonsense, Cleopatra; I’m tired to death putting the house to rights, I am, indeed. I wish my heart you were all landed in Africa.”

“I aint gwine to Africa,” replied Cleopatra, warmly, “’cause I’s bred an bornd here; I aint gwine to Africa, ef I’s as free as a frog, I aint gwine. If all my forefaders done staid dare, den I shouldn’t know anyting ’bout dis sher country, an’ now I doesn’t *prefar* to know anyting ’bout dat.”

“Cleopatra thinks they eat people there, Miss Rosalie,” suggested Juniper, with a sneer. “I reckon dare be right smart too many niggers dare for my use, entirely,—I should miss de society of de white folks mose ’mazingly.”

“You hush!” exclaimed Cleopatra, “I dun know who want’s to hear you gobble, gobble, gobble.”

“Were there ever such quarrelsome servants?” said Rosalie. “I wish to goodness you were all in Africa.”

“An’ if you was dare, too,” replied Cleopatra, “my ’thority ud be des’ as high as yourn,—not a bit bigger nor a bit less.”

“Be done this moment!” exclaimed Rosalie; “you are enough to try the patience of Job.”

“O, Job, indeed,” retorted Cleopatra, with unheard of independence, “Job couldn’t make no headway ’tall, in dis sher

times,—his patience clean gone entirely by de stroublesome people. Bress de Lord, he don't live in dis sher days."

"Be done with your nonsense, I say," exclaimed Rosalie, stamping her foot. "You think yourself quite sure of getting to heaven at last, I dare say, but you'll find yourself mightily mistaken."

"It's hard tellin' who'll go to heaven," replied Cleopatra "but I reckon if sich as you go, I'll stand a good chance. I'se a poor, sick, ole slave woman, an' I'se got to be saunt way off from all my kin, an' afore I go I will have my say. Des' as true as de sun is travellin' into de ilement, we shall both have ter go before dat great Judge, an' you won't have ter give 'count for me, nor I for you,—but you'll have ter give 'count how you've used me."

"I, what have I done to harm you?" asked Rosalie, in surprise.

"What's you hasn't done, dem of your color's done," replied Cleopatra, sternly. "'Twas your kin dat did it. Dey weard out my poor husband into de grave, an' dey made me ole when I was young, an' dey's always a tormentin' us poor slaves, a tearin' us 'way from each other every wick way, an' a saundin' us off to de rice swamps to die. All dese ere things 'll be inquared into at de judgment; dey'll all be 'membered."

"Preach to me, indeed," exclaimed Rosalie; "who ever heard of such impudence? I'll not bear it any longer; I'll send word to the Doctor to have him take you away this very day."

Prince, the cook, now opened the door, bringing in breakfast, followed by Martha, bearing the coffee, and Rosalie added, "Go to your morning work, every one of you;" then, turning to come up stairs, she caught sight of me, and as she joined me, affecting a gay laugh, she said,

"You must have been very much edified. I never was so vexed in my life. And what a prospect I have before me, as the mistress of servants! I make sure I shall be aggravated to death with their mulish ways."

"I would rid myself of such a burden and responsibility by freeing them at once," I replied.

"You would; perhaps so—but you would be liable to change your mind, if you had people in possession. The love of power is sweet—nothing can be compared to it. Who covets to be nobody and nothing, without riches and station? I am frank to own, I do not. And yet if I was constituted like Ruth, who seems to take pleasure in self-denial, I do not doubt I should be far happier to have nothing to do with owning servants. I should not get so horridly tried and aggravated."

"Can you tell me," I asked, "why it is that those who own servants get so 'horridly tried' with them, when they are amiable and long-suffering towards all other living beings?"

"Why, no, coz, I do not know as I can, but it is a fact," replied Rosalie. "Now I am not bad-tempered, you know I am not; yet when I attempt to regulate perverse servants, a fierce and ugly temper possesses me, and I feel sometimes as if I could kill them outright. It is vastly uncomfortable, I

assure you, and then I feel so wretchedly afterwards. I feel now as if I could cry all day, and I abhor the very thought of Cleopatra and Mima."

"I believe it has been truly said," I replied, "that the love of power is perhaps the strongest human passion. It intoxicates the mind just as alcohol does the body; hence you are not yourself when you attempt to regulate your servants."

"I should do very well," Rosalie rejoined, "if the servants had no wills of their own—if they would only take my will in the place of their own, I should feel amiable enough."

"And does not the fact that they have rational wills of their own indicate that they ought not to be degraded from the rank of persons to things?"

"Indeed, I do not know; I am worried to death, and my head aches. There's the breakfast bell,—come, let us go."

We breakfasted in silence, and the topic of the morning was not again broached until mid-day, when I sought Rosalie, thinking she might be rested, and that possibly I might influence her to reverse her severe decision respecting Cleopatra.

After a little unimportant chat Rosalie introduced the subject of my thoughts by saying,

"I do believe you Northerners think us slaveholders the cruelest people the world ever saw."

"O, no, indeed," I replied; "we think you are a remarkably kind people, considering the circumstances in which you are placed. You are legally endowed with the most arbitrary

power over a large class of human beings, and as the history of all ages will testify, the exercise of this power is corrupting to the finest emotions of the heart, and leads directly to cruelty. Just follow down the records of history, and see what have been the results of arbitrary power. Almost invariably has the despot distinguished himself by venting his ill-will on those beneath him, by some inhuman or atrocious deed. It is natural that those who injure others without cause, should hate them, and one injury only paves the way for another."

"But we are proverbially kind to our slaves; we make it a point to treat them well," replied Rosalie.

"I do not doubt it," was my reply; "it is not the *abuse* of the system we complain of, it is its *use*—the natural workings of the system. It is the denying that men, women and children are persons; it is the undoing what God has done in giving them souls, and transforming them into chattels. This is the great evil, compared with which the incidental cruelties of the system are hardly worthy of a thought."

"You may be right, for aught I know to the contrary," replied Rosalie, "but what are we to do? They are entailed upon us, are valued at so much, and if we free them we must part with our fortunes and become penniless. You cannot expect us to do that. Mamma calls it a dispensation of Providence, to which we do well to submit."

"I have one favor to ask of you," said I, "and that is,

that you will not report Cleopatra to the Doctor, and thus hurry her away from us."

"Ah, you are too late,—I despatched a note to the Doctor immediately after breakfast, and have received his reply. He is sick with the influenza; his drover will be along this afternoon to take Cleopatra in charge."

"O, is it possible?" I exclaimed,—"I am so disappointed,—I do not feel as if I could have it so."

"You seem to forget the aggravations of the morning very easily," replied Rosalie, with a displeased air. "If I did not make her an example by this decisive step, what could I do with the rest of the servants? It is absolutely necessary in the circumstances."

I returned to my room in despair. Cleopatra was there weeping bitterly; how bitterly none may know save those who can put their soul in her soul's stead. Need I tell you that I threw my arms about her neck, and wept with her as if she had been my own mother? After a long interval of bursting grief, she uttered,

"God will bless you, Miss, for dis sher kin'ness to one of his little ones. It help res' my poor, broken heart. Can't you read me a good, strengthenin' Psalm afore I go?" And as I read portions of the Psalms dictated in the depths of affliction and oppression, Cleopatra would now and then exclaim, at a passage,

"Dare, now, how good! des' as I feel at my heart." At last, as I closed the book, she burst out anew, sobbing, "If I could ony read, Miss, like you, and had dat book to tote mid

me, I wouldn't yally gwine so much; but I'se got no such comfort. I'se done been robbed of every chance to larn; de Bible isn't for me in my sorrow."

I tried to comfort her, by telling her that the compassionate Saviour knew all this, and he would be very gracious to her in her great affliction. Then, kneeling together, we prayed to him. Sweet, heavenly moments! I can never forget them.

As we arose from prayer, Cleopatra said,

"'Pears like I ken bear it all, if ony de Lord Jesus be wid me."

Mima now came in, weeping. She had been listening at the door. Cleopatra caught her in her arms and kissed her, saying, "Don't you lay up de hard tings I'se said, an' promise me you will love de Lord Jesus."

"I'll done try, I will," replied the poor girl, still weeping.

"It's de ony comfort us poor slaves has," continued Cleopatra, "an' you'll find him *dat* pitiful!"

The Doctor's drover now came with the carryall, and Cleopatra must go. Half a dozen slaves were already collected in the vehicle, and with Cleopatra they were to be taken to a plantation at some distance, and from thence, with a large reinforcement, perform the long journey on foot, being well ironed with manacles, and attached, two abreast, to the infamous cofle.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XII.

THE HOUSEKEEPER — INCIDENTS.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Feb. 12, 18—.

DEAR S. — I hasten to remove your apprehensions respecting my unwonted silence. I have indeed been ill, as you surmise; but am now, however, rapidly convalescing, indeed, am almost well. I ride out daily, and am delighted with the balmy air, mild sky, and the indications of an early spring.

Rosalie has been very attentive during my illness, and has allowed Mima to be with me almost constantly, at no trifling inconvenience to herself. Poor Mima! she is the image of despair,—looking so sad and heart-broken! Rosalie has no patience with her, and says she is wilful.

Mrs. Briarly, the Willow Creek housekeeper, was sent for the next week after Cleopatra left, as Rosalie found the care too great for her health. The latter insists that my sickness was caused by brooding over the fate of Cleopatra, and, indeed, by her frequent reference to the poor slave, it would seem that uneasy thoughts are not entire strangers to her own mind.

"What an idea!" she exclaimed this morning, in my room, "that object's telling me we shall meet at the judgment! Impudent, wasn't it?"

THE HOUSEKEEPER — INCIDENTS.

179

"I suppose she spoke the simple truth," I replied.

"You do? Then you think our servants have real, *bona fide* souls!"

"Certainly, I have not a doubt that they have souls as really as ourselves."

"Well, if I really thought so," replied Rosalie, musingly, "it would spoil all my pleasure in owning servants. But I do not believe people generally think so. Here, just let me read this advertisement in the North Carolina Standard:

"TWENTY DOLLARS REWARD.—Ran away from the subscriber, a negro woman and two children; the woman is tall and black, and *a few days before she went off I burnt her with a hot iron on the left side of her face; I tried to make the letter M*, and she kept a cloth over her head and face, and a fly bonnet on her head, so as to cover the burn; her children are both boys; the oldest is in his seventh year; he is a mulatto, and has blue eyes; the youngest is black, and is in his fifth year. The woman's name is Betty, commonly called Bet.

MICAJAH RICKS.

"Nash County, —, 18—."

"There, does that look as if people believed the blacks had souls?"

"It certainly does not," I replied. "One would hardly wish a dog treated so brutally."

"Certainly not," replied Rosalie; "but, coz, I hope you'll

remember we Virginians do not indulge in such cruelty. But see this, in the Wilmington Advertiser:

“\$100 will be paid to any person who may apprehend and safely confine in any jail in this State, a certain negro man, named Alfred. And the same reward will be paid, if satisfactory evidence is given of *his having been killed*. He has one or more scars on one of his hands, caused by his having been shot.

THE CITIZENS OF ONSLOW.’

“And here’s another like it, directly under it:

“‘Ran away, my negro man, Richard. A reward of \$25 will be paid for his apprehension, DEAD OR ALIVE. Satisfactory proof will only be required of his being KILLED. He has with him, in all probability, his wife, Eliza, who ran away from Col. Thompson, now a resident of Alabama, about the time he commenced his journey to that State.

DURANT H. RHODES.’

“Yes, yes, they are brutes fast enough,” said Rosalie, “if public opinion is any criterion in the case. In fact, coz, no one thing could undermine our domestic institution faster than the thought that our slaves really have souls.”

“As inconsistent as such a belief may seem with their practice,” I answered, “yet there can be no doubt our Southern friends admit that their servants have souls; but it does seem as if this thought, if seriously dwelt on, would, as you say,

undermine the whole system. For if they have souls, they should not be treated as brutes. If they have souls, they are moral and accountable beings; God is their Sovereign, and no one can with impunity come between Him and them. If they have souls, to them belong the offers of salvation,—for them Christ died, and they are as dear to him as any others of our fallen race. If they have souls, how fearful to withhold from them the Word of God, and cause them to grope their way in darkness down to the gates of death and eternal sorrow.”

“Do not moralize, please,” said Rosalie. “I do not wish to think they have souls. It only increases the difficulty to think so, for, if we are ever so conscientious in the matter, we cannot emancipate them unless we send them from the State, or colonize them. I see no other way than to put all scruple aside and live as we have lived.”

At this moment who should come bustling in, but Isabel T., the Senator’s daughter.

“I’ve run in to tell you,” she said, “that papa and I are going to Grove Hill the day after to-morrow, and we wish you to accompany us; you will go, won’t you?” addressing Rosalie and myself.

Rosalie replied that she should be too much engaged to leave.

“But Pocahontas is going,” said Isabel; “I’ve promised myself so all along. You are so much engaged, Rosalie,” she continued, “pray, what so occupies you? Bring your work along with you.”

"Curious work it is," returned Rosalie, laughing; "if you must know, it's *match-making*. I'm going to marry Sim to Martha."

"Pshaw, Rosalie!" exclaimed Isabel, "I wouldn't be guilty of such a thing! Do leave the poor things alone. What! marry old uncle Sim to young and sprightly Martha! Why, she is mourning for Rafe, yet. What do you suppose Mr. Mackintosh would say, if he knew it?"

"Why, to tell the truth," responded Rosalie, with her usual frankness, "I had pleasing him in my eye when I first planned it. You know when I was at Mrs. Gen. Ringgold's, he told me he fancied that I knew just nothing at all about housekeeping. I took it as a challenge, and ever since I've been studying to have it seen that I *am* a manager, and that the servants are to stand around when I am at home. I have only half completed my plans,—Juniper is married to Mima, and Uncle Sim shall marry Martha."

"Begging your pardon, friend Rosalie," said Isabel, "I do think your idea of housekeeping most ridiculous! Why, you seem to forget what housekeeping consists in,—that it is simply to carry the keys, and give out things from the storeroom! It has nothing whatever to do with arranging the servant's domestic relations."

"O, you quit instructing me, Bel," exclaimed Rosalie, pettishly; "you'll be bringing in your tuition bill, by and by. I understand what I am about."

"I beg pardon," said Isabel, a little hurt, "but you will go with us, please,—I've just received a letter from Ruth, via

Grove Hill, informing me that she will visit me on her way home. She is now recruiting her health at her uncle's in Lexington."

"I positively will not go," replied Rosalie, "if Ruth is to be there. I have no sympathy with her incendiary movements, indeed I have not. I will not see my crazy sister at present,—disgracing us all, and making herself ridiculous, offending against the laws of good taste, genteel society, and the laws of the State, even. I've no patience with her."

"O, never mind, Rosalie," said Isabel, gently, "people can no more think alike than they can look alike. But dear, good Ruth almost converts me every time I see her; as Ferdinand says, her theory is a very plausible one. But I must go;—I have to take leave of friends and prepare for my journey. The jaunt will be of great service to you, Pocahontas; I shall make sure of you, for I have your promise, and I am hoping that Rosalie will change her mind and accompany us."

"But we ought to consult Mr. and Mrs. Cameron," said I.

"O, that has been done," replied Isabel; "when papa and I visited them, I proposed it, and they approved." and in a moment the lively girl was gone.

Mrs. Briarly came in soon after, with her key basket on her arm; but I must introduce her by a brief description. She is somewhat short and thick, almost dumpy; in looks she is a paradox—homely, yet handsome. Her eyes, nose and mouth cluster a little too near the centre of her face, but then a peaceful, kind and genial expression lights up her features,

and deludes you into the idea that they are really beautiful. Her face is like a glass placed over her heart, and you feel that a single glance is sufficient to enable you to read her character.

She has come to occupy quite a place in my affections, and Mima tells me that the good lady "sets a heap of store by me." Her sympathies, like tendrils, run out towards every living thing, particularly if there is any suffering or deprivation in the case; and my own dear mother could not have watched over me with more careful solicitude than has kind Mrs. Briarly.

On this slave question she is the most enlightened person I have met, not even excepting Ruth,—having the result of forty years' observation and experience of the workings of the system, stored away with her common-sense reflections in her active brain.

When I inquired of her respecting the tragical affair at Willow Creek, the tears started into her eyes, and it was with some effort that she commanded her voice to reply.

"It is quite a little history from the first," she said. "I must begin by telling you something about one who was very dear to me. When I became housekeeper at Willow Creek, among the young servants put under my care to train for house service, was a pretty, quiet child, of great beauty, named Jane. She was delicate and sensitive, of wonderful quickness of perception, and from my first acquaintance with her seemed overwhelmed with the thought that she was a slave. It was not that she had been harshly treated—she

had been used as tenderly as any other slave, but, although only eight years old, she felt the galling chain crushing the blithesomeness of childhood. And in place of the frolic and play suited to her years, she had the air of a mature, sedate, and reflecting little woman. I took her into my heart, poor dove that she was, and cherished her with a mother's love, for I found her an orphan, her mother having died of grief when her father was sold.

"I taught her day by day, and soon she could read to me, and could sew skilfully. She excelled in whatever she did, and was so sweet and winning that my life became bound up in hers. I used to think, if I could know that she was a Christian, I should be happy. I knew that, being a slave, she could not look forward to *earthly comfort*, and hence I was the more anxious that she should make sure of eternal life, and store treasures in the heavens. But in this I was for a long time disappointed. She was all gentleness, and very attentive to what I said; she read her Bible daily, as I requested, but slavery was the stumbling block,—she could not get reconciled to her fate.

"At length, when she was grown, Juniper was sent on from the North Carolina plantation. His ingenuity, craftiness and address soon won for him a situation as house servant, although he had a bad name on the plantation South.

"As soon as he saw Jane he seemed resolved to have her for his wife; but I could not think of it, and watched and warned her accordingly. But my vigilance was useless, and my advice disregarded. My darling, on whom I so much

doted, who had for so many years nestled in my heart, she who had ever been so gentle and yielding, for once was firm; she was *fascinated*—she could hear me no longer in listening to the marriage proposals of Juniper.

“I never fully gave my consent, and when she became his wife, it was like the shadowings of death to me; I felt that my bird had fallen into the snare of the fowler and I could only forebode evil.

“It was not long before the insinuating Juniper treated her unkindly, and proved himself a tyrant. Then it was that poor Jane sought me in her grief and heart-brokenness, and wept in my bosom. She felt how bitter a thing it was to be *the slave of a slave!*

“But the new grief, so grievous to be borne, sent her to the Saviour, and in him she found peace. Juniper was almost beside himself with rage, when he found that his beautiful young wife was a Christian, and he swore he would root her religion out of her. I tried to shield her from the storm, and in my presence the wily man would make very fair pretenses, while the enmity was all the while rankling in his heart—for as soon as he had an opportunity unperceived, he would beat and torment his poor wife most cruelly. She could not give up her religion, and he grew worse and worse. He had been managed by an overseer who was eminently a man of blood, and, in his imitative zeal, must resort to bloody measures to gratify his hate. He threatened his wife, if he found her praying within the week, it should be at the peril of her life. But poor Jane could not forego her sweet sea-

sons of communion with her compassionate heavenly Friend, whom she had so recently found, whom she loved with all the ardor of a first love. Like the Hebrew captive, she sought Him as before.

“One day I missed her, and her long and unaccountable absence awakened my worst fears. Almost frantic, I rushed here and there, and aroused all the servants in the search. At length we found her hidden in the garden shrubbery, under the thick branches of a yew. She had been *strangled* for her faithfulness to her Saviour. Juniper was nowhere to be seen. The next morning, however, he made his appearance, as smiling and flippant as if nothing had happened. He is fearfully hardened in his wickedness, and it is not safe to have him at large. But my darling, martyred Jane, she is at rest in heaven.

“I have always felt,” said Mrs. Briarly, “that I would have no part nor lot in this matter. I will not own servants. My father had a great many slaves, and I could have had a portion of his personal property, had I chosen it, but I preferred a life of toil and poverty. At my request, he emancipated and sent to Africa some of the servants that would have fallen to me,—he would not be persuaded to free all of them.

“I was then young, scarcely of age, and yet I had a perfect loathing of the system. O, thrice happy the land free from this curse! But to see the system and its workings, one must put himself in the place of the slave, and make his deprivations and sufferings his own. O, I have seen so much,

so much to make me heart-sick of slavery!" and Mrs. Briarly paused and looked very sad.

"Will you please tell me some of the things you have seen?" I asked.

"I scarcely know where to begin," she replied. "But you would suppose that professing Christians, or, at least, the ambassadors of Christ, would be patterns of kindness in their treatment of slaves."

"Certainly," said I, "one would suppose that they would seek to mitigate, as far as possible, the evils naturally incident to the system, and render the lot of their poor, black brethren as comfortable as was consistent with their condition."

"So far as my observation extends," replied Mrs. Briarly, "this is far from being the case. For instance, there is the clergyman of the parish in which I passed my childhood. He was poor, having only his salary and the use of the parsonage. He did not own any servants, but hired four,—a cook, two housemaids, and a man servant. His wife was a model, every one said, and yet she was ever ready to find some occasion of complaint against her servants, and would exasperate her husband to punish them for the most trivial offences.

"One day, finding a little flour and dough left in the bottom of the bread-pan, she flew into a violent passion at what she called the waste of the cook, and belabored her with the keenest reproaches, and as soon as her husband returned home, hastened to fill his ears with the heinous offence of the

poor cook, and the consequence was, that he took her aside, and cruelly whipped her with a cowhide, saying, he'd cut her all to pieces, he would. This was a common threat with him. His poor servants used to say of him, that he whipped worse than an overseer. They were in constant terror, dreading to offend him.

"On one occasion, his servant having drawn a pail of water, at the request of a neighbor's servant, who was lame with the rheumatism, he whipped him severely, exclaiming,

"Your mistress has spoilt you. I'll teach you not to be a gentleman; you've run gentleman long enough."

"And yet one could rarely find more amiable, affable and generous people in their intercourse with their parishioners, than were this clergyman and his lady. There is, I am confident of it, something in the very nature of the system, which petrifies the kindly emotions of the heart, in dealing with the slaves. I do not fully understand it, but persons who are kind even to brutes, often prove perfect tyrants towards their oppressed brethren. They are elegant and accomplished, often, overflowing in hospitality to those of their own rank, and engaged in the enterprise of religion, but complete despots in their little realm.

"As to myself, I know that my native disposition is, on the whole, kind and sympathizing, but I have always been afraid to trust myself to be a slave owner, in view of such examples; I have feared that I should be even more despotic and cruel."

"But this clergyman and his wife did not own slaves," said I.

"It was all the same," rejoined Mrs. Briarly;—"they were slaveholders at heart, and did in fact purchase slaves as soon as they were able. I used to reason, if such people, with all their excellent qualities and Christian principle, were so perverted by slavery, how must it affect me? Such were my convictions on the subject, that it seemed to me that I could not be saved if I had aught to do with it."

"But you have servants under you, and unavoidably have a great deal to do with them," I said.

"Yes, but it is not from choice—I will not partake in the spoils of slavery—I will not be enriched by them. I merely have food and clothing for my supervision, and it is my daily prayer that in all my intercourse with the slaves, I may win the approbation of Him whose mission to this world provided so wondrously for the poor and the suffering.

"But there is no part of the system," she continued, "more cruel than the *trade in slaves*. Here all the ties of kindred and affection are disregarded, and the poor creatures are torn asunder as if they were indeed brutes. A neighbor of my father's had a house servant of great sprightliness and intelligence. Her mistress made a companion of her, and they appeared more like intimate Christian friends, than mistress and servant. When a young lady, I often used to take my needlework and run in and sit with them as they chatted and sewed in the little parlor.

"One day I was thus sitting with Mrs. S., the lady, and

Rachel the servant,—the babe of the latter was playing on the floor at her feet,—when a rap was heard at the door. Rachel ran to the door, and in bustled a business man in a pilot cloth pea-jacket,—a soul driver, with the ever-at-hand cowhide. He had a bill of sale, which he handed to Mrs. S. Rachel knew that it was all over with her—that she was destined for the Southern market, and fell senseless on the floor. Mrs. S. hung over her in an agony of solicitude, using means for her restoration; and when she was brought back to a consciousness of her dreadful fate, both mistress and servant wept in each other's arms.

"The drover curled his lip in contempt, as he saw the singular affection manifested for the doomed woman by the loving Mrs. S.

"O, Rachel, I cannot have you go!" she exclaimed. "O, my God, let this cup pass!"

"Don't, mistress, don't take on so!" said poor Rachel; "you break my heart—it doubles my grief to have you weep so. You'll be mother to little Henry, I know," she added, in her paroxysm of sobbing, as she took up her babe and kissed it again and again. "O, must I leave him forever?" and her bursting heart choked her utterance.

"Come, come," said the man, gruffly, "the sooner ye stop this ere tune, the better. You may as well know, miss, yer ole man is bankrupt, an' has been *obleege*d ter sell this ere woman. Come, be a movin'," said he to Rachel, at the same time giving his cowhide a threatening gesture. In vain Mrs. S. pleaded that he let her remain one day longer, that she

might take leave of her husband, and prepare for the journey.

"'Couldn't possibly do't,' said the drover; 'no object. I's got my gang all made out, an' I'm in a monstrous hurry. Besides, Miss, all your indulgin' 'll ony make matters wuss. She won't git no sugar tits with me,—but I'll tell her what, she'll git a wallop in' with this ere cowskin, if she makes a fuss.

"'Don't make her budget too big, marm,' added he, as Mrs. S. was putting up some little comforts for Rachel; 'she'll hafter travel right smart, an' I can't afford to have her tote much!'

"Meanwhile Rachel nursed her babe for the last time, sobbing in her broken-heartedness, her tears fast falling on the little creature's chubby cheek.

"'O, if I could only see my husband before I go!' murmured she at length.

"'Come, come,' said the man, 'I'm out of all manner of patience with these ere blubberin' works. Bless my soul and body! we never shall git off at this rate. Down with that child, you lazy wench, and come along!' and, suiting the action to the word, he gave her a cut across her cheek with his whip. Poor Rachel put down her babe, gazed at it a moment with a loving look of grief too deep for tears or utterance even, then, taking her little bundle, tied up in a checked cotton handkerchief, she passively followed the drover.

"Now, this is only one case out of thousands; just reflect

that thirty and forty thousand slaves have been sold from this State alone, in a single year! Such scenes of heart-rending woe may be said to be of daily, yes, *hourly* occurrence with us. Think you I would own a slave, and run the fearful risk of horridly trading in flesh and blood? But we need not go far to witness scenes of suffering caused by the sale of slaves," she continued; "you have not forgotten Cleopatra's case,—indeed, you were so absorbed in it, you knew very little of the griefs of Prince and Pomp at the time they were sundered. Come with me to the servants' prayer meeting to-night,—it will do us good to hear them pray. We must keep our hearts alive by constant vigilance, or a stupor will creep over us in spite of every principle of philanthropy and religion."

I gladly acceded to the proposal, and at the deep twilight hour we sought Martha's cabin. It was nearly filled; and finding a seat in the corner by the door, we seemed to be unobserved.

There once more I saw blind Joseph, sitting near Martha and her frolicksome baby. Rafe's place was vacant; it seemed as if each forebore taking it, remembering how his soul was bowed down and crushed when last he sat there at the hour of prayer. Prince was there, looking depressed and desolate, and, as before, it was the office of the good old patriarch to speak words of consolation.

"De days will not allus be dark wid 'fictions, chillun," said he, "'pend on it, if you belong to de fold of de good Shepherd, dare'll be a time of great joy. I knows, 'pears

like dat time great while comin', an' sometimes we be ready to give up an' say it wont neber come; but it will come; de Lord will done gader his people dat dey may lib wid him an' go no more out foreber. An' you fine some res' now in tellin' him your stroubles, an' in larnin' of him, an' he done give you *peace* when you done trust in him, like de little chillun trustin' in deir fader an' moder. Dis sher is ony a little sip of de foretase of de res' an' peace of heaven. You know right smart of de poor slave people, when dey can't done bai de chain no longer, dey tries to be free, or to fine a good, safe hidin' place. Des' so let us all done seek to be free in Jesus, an' hide safe in him, an' if we will ony be steadfast, all de worl' can't done be de hinderin' cause to dis freedom,—dey cant done tear us from dis clef of de Rock.

“Chillun, we has great many griefs an' 'fictions to bar,—dare be no dispute 'bout dat,—an' if dey lead us to 'bide in de blessed Jesus, dey'll be oberruled for blessins. My own chillun, dat's kin to me, gone, all gone,—*sold!*” and the tears trickled from the old pilgrim's sightless orbs,—“*sold* long ago! an' I'se lef' standin' like de lone fores' tree. An' I knows how to feel for you when your kin is torn 'way. It's des' like tearin' limb from limb—des' like cuttin' de quiverin' live flesh in half, an' de great Fader in heaven know all 'bout it, an' O, how he do pity his poor little chillun down here, who hab such tings to suffer. He lub us; if we be poor slave people, he think on us in de greatness of his lub. An' how it done grieve de pitiful Jesus—de Man of Sorrows an' 'quainted wid grief—how it grieve him at his heart, sein'

dem dat lub him sufferin' so many tings. But if dey ony cling to him, if dey steadfast 'bide under de shadow of his wing, dey'll be safe at las'. Neber mine, den, if dey has notin' dey can call deir own in dis sher worl',—dey's got what is a tousan'. tousan' times better—de portion in Jesus, an' de streasures in heaven. Neber mine if de massas be cruel here, an' whips, an' brands, an' hunts, an' shoots 'em here,—dare is but short time to de judgment, an' all will be made right dare. Neber mine if we's torn from each other here,—de fader from de chile, an' de moder from de babe, an' de husban' from de wife, de broder from de sister,—what matter if we is treated like de cattle, an' trodden under foot, an' our dead bodies no good coffins nor graves! if we sleep in Jesus, he'll call us up from de dust, as members of his body, at de las' trump, an' we shall be made like him—*jes' like de blessed Jesus—dat glorious!* Chillun, I done read it in de Holy Book. Den what matter for us? Don't mention dese 'fictions; dey isn't worth a thought in thinkin' of de glory beyon'; but *when de great Judge make 'quisition for blood, what will our poor massas do den?* How ken dey ever answer him? Weep for 'em, chillun! pray for 'em!” and, overwhelmed with the appalling thought, the voice of weeping was heard from the little company. Blind Joseph wept like a child; it was a long time before he could speak, and then, sinking on his knees, he poured out his soul in prayer, indescribably pathetic, reverential, and full of child-like faith and trust.

O, his prayers, like the strong wing of an angel, bear you
to the feet of the Saviour, and in the hallowed interview you
forget all else save the earnest petitions, and the Almighty
One who graciously bends his listening ear.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XIII.

AN UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATION.

PORT ROYAL, Va., Feb. 14, 18—.

DEAR S.—Our little village was enlivened to-day by the arrival of the Doctor and Colonel Cutts. They did us the honor to dine with us. A more crest-fallen knight of the cowhide would be hard to conceive of, than the Colonel when he came in. With a hang-dog air, he seemed thoroughly used up by his late prison privations. He is greatly emaciated; his sallow, withered skin cleaves to his gaunt cheek bones, so that it was with difficulty that we recognized him. Through dinner he was mostly silent, and could scarcely be prevailed on to open his mouth, save to bestow eatables, which he did at a most alarming rate. We were for the time indebted to the Doctor for the particulars respecting his rescue. It appears that he found him half fed, half clad, in a miserable pig-sty of a cell, designed for negroes.

"It's about as much as a man's life is worth to come in sight of such a place," he said, "and the only mystery is, how the Colonel managed to keep body and soul together." After giving a minute description of the Colonel's cell, a damp stived hole of filth and vermin, he went on to say that he

arrived at Hartland just in time to prevent the Colonel from being carried off by a slave-trader. It seems that Bill Tuggs was in the jailor's room, having bartered for the supposed runaway, when the Doctor entered. It required some skill and address to "prove" that the Colonel was not "property;" when that was done, it only remained to "pay charges and take him away."

"Bless my soul and body!" exclaimed the Doctor, as he recounted particulars, "I never was so shocked in my life—such cool work made of trading, as if the Colonel was a slave and no mistake! Bill Tuggs had him in his clutches, and I had my match to get him out. But here we have him at last, 'safe,' if not very 'sound.' I reckon you won't be in a hurry to hunt niggers for me again, ha! ha!" chuckled he, turning to the discomfited Colonel.

That individual shook his head, without raising his eyes, and muttered something about "making tracks for Rokesby in a little less than no time."

When at length he had "measurably" dined and drank off a glass of wine, his spirits seemed to revive a little, and he showed a disposition to be communicative. He began to feel himself something of a hero, and proceeded to enlighten us as to his adventures.

"I never was so dished in all my life," he began. "Ye see, yisterday mornin', as soon as 'twas cleverly light, I heered a master racket overhead, and putty quick I heered Bill Tuggs, jest as plain as day. 'Hello!' sez he, 'Mr. Jailor, got any stock on hand?'"

"'I reckon so,' said the jailor, 'I've got one putty likely specimen, some oldish, and a little mite ailin'."

"'What's the matter,—got the rheumatiz in the damp cell?' said Bill.

"'O, I reckon so,' said the jailor, 'but take my word for't, he'll git as limber as willer, come to put him on the road. What'll you give for him? come, make us an offer!'"

"'Leetle mor'n nothin',' said Bill, 'You see its putty resky business—this ere buyin' up old worn-out niggers; it won't pay. I've nigh upon swung my arms off, whipping up such old truck afore now; and I've heckelled 'em with cat's claws till they was all a gore of blood; but it wan't a bit of use; they'd hang back and hinder the gang, mighty wilted and limpsy like; and ye see 'twon't pay! It's monstrous resky business,—this ere buyin' up sick niggers; like as not they'll up and die on your hands, and that's a dead loss, you know. So I reckon on the whole I won't buy him,' said Bill, 'he'll be putty sure to die.'

"'No danger of that!' said the jailor, 'he'll tough it out, I'll warrant him; he's of the real durable kind, and all is, if he gives signs of failin', you can send him to that air Doctor's college they tells of, where they buy old sick niggers to experiment upon. They'd give you a hundred dollars for him if he was sick. Come, what'll you give?'"

"'Well bein' it's you, and we is old cronies,' said Bill, 'I reckon I'll take him as a venter, I won't stand about it, I'll give you ten dollars, or my old hoss, here?'"

"'Ha! ha! ha!' said the jailor, 'old rackabones alive

yet! Well, bein' it's you, I won't stand about it neither. I'll take the old hoss. We'll balance one old truck agin tother, and call it a bargain; though I shall have to whistle for my jail fees.'

"I must tell you,' said Bill, 'the old hoss has seen his best days—he's putty much done for it; he hain't got no teeth, an' you'll have to fat him on meal; then you can jockey him off for a good round hundred.'

"I shouldn't wonder,' said the jailor, 'an' uncle Cuffee down there, he's got the rheumatiz all holler, but you must dress him down well with the cowskin, and make him forgit the old pain in the new!' and the jailor yaw-hawed right out, and so did Bill.

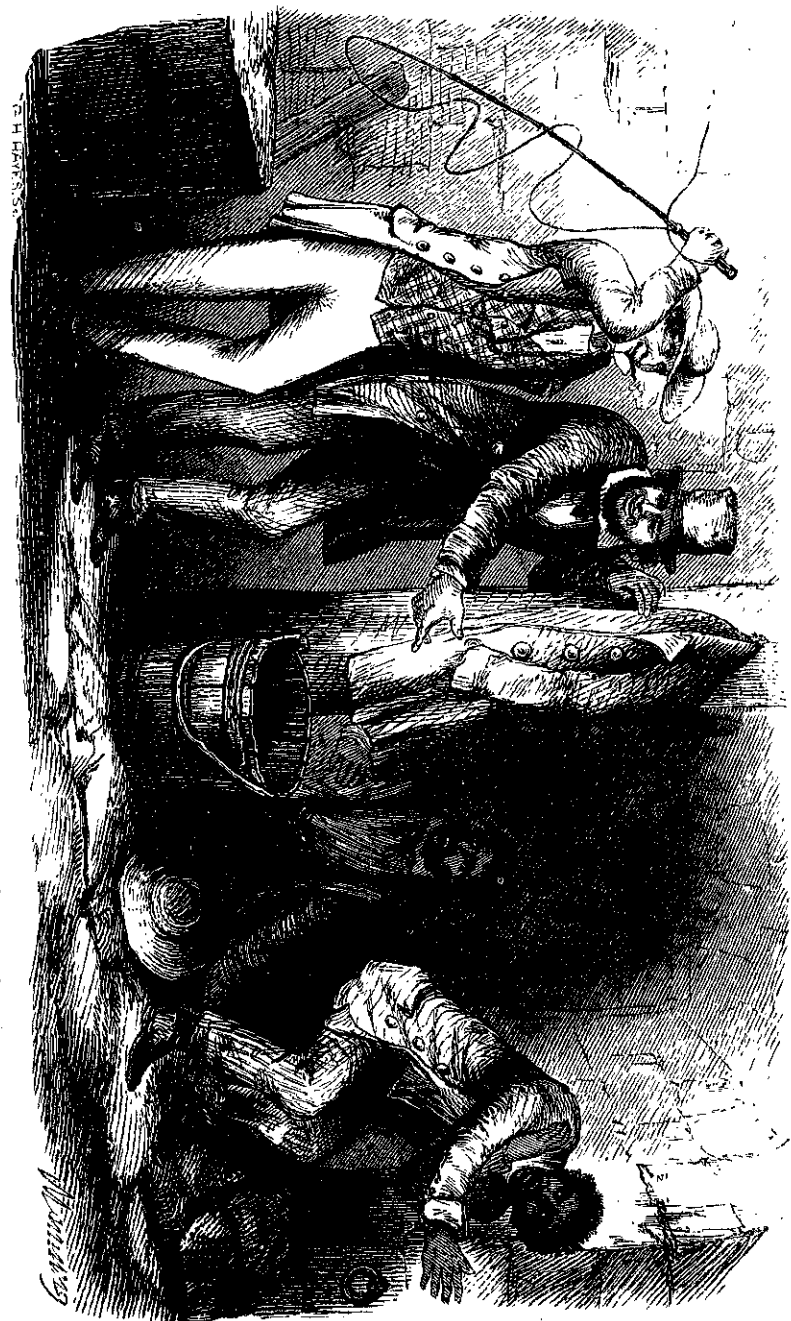
"Yes,' said Bill, 'it takes me to dew them are fixin's, I'll git him in a cowhide sweat; and wash him down well in salt and water, and I'll lay, he'll be glad tew travel.'

"Then Bill he comed down to my cell with the jailor to look at his new property. 'How d'ye do, Uncle Cuffee,' said he, 'how d'ye find yourself? Come, stir yer stumps, let's see how yer built,' and he gin me a blisterin' cut with his whip that made me jump for pain. 'Why hi! old boy,' says he, 'some life to you yet, I guess. Where's you raised; whose nigger be you?'

"When I tell'd him I was a regular born Yankee, an' nobody's nigger, he laughed fit to kill. And says I, 'I'm overseer Cutts, Rokesby, an' I've seen you a dozen times!'

"Wal, it's a fact,' said Bill, considerable struck up, 'if you warn't so nation nigg'ry, I'd vow you did look and talk like

"Why, hi! old boy, some life to you yet."—Page 200.



him; but, my sakes! I ain't gwine to believe niggers' news. Ennyhow, you're tussled in here, safe and sound, and if you *are* kidnapped, you'll find 'twon't make no sort of odds. So jest one day more, and you must pull foot for the South market. Be gittin' yerself well limbered between times—you'll hafter be as spry as a cat;' and off he went, to take a glass of brandy with the jailor. But in the midst of my despair, putty quick who should bustle in, but my friend the Doctor? and, sakes alive! I almost jumped out of my skin, for joy!"

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

P. S. February 15. The Colonel left for Rokesby this morning, and the Doctor for his Florida plantation.

LETTER XIV.

GROVE HILL.

GROVE HILL, Va., March 2, 18—.

DEAR S.— Since my last, I have taken a two days' journey to Grove Hill. Not to weary you with the details, I will introduce you at once to the delightful country seat of Senator T.

It is a fine, old stone edifice, built more than a hundred years ago, by an ancestor who figured in colonial times as one of the king's seven counsellors.

I am in no mood for tiring you with a systematic description, so just picture to yourself an English establishment of the olden time, composed of a lofty main building and two wings.

Let us start at the "coach ring," as they call the circular road in front of the court where the carriage turns. This coach ring encloses a grassy plat twenty feet in diameter, in the centre of which is a sundial, elevated on a stone pedestal. A flight of three steps, the topmost flanked with urns, brings us to the gravelled walk of the court, leading to the main building, while six or eight steps lead us to the vestibule, with its colonnade and mosaic pavement. Passing this, we

GROVE HILL.

203

enter the centre apartment of the building—a lofty, spacious saloon, extending to the back vestibule, which is precisely similar to that in front. Both vestibules resemble beautiful bowers, from the luxuriant multifloras trained within them.

The saloon itself, with its polished floor, mahogany centre table, four ancient sofas, and high-backed chairs, strikes you as unique enough, and then you notice that its walls are garnished with the Shaksperian gallery, elegantly framed, and old family portraits, some of them dating back two hundred years.

The parlor, that *home* room of the family, leading from the saloon on the right, is furnished with a large fire place, its polished marble hearth contrasting prettily with the brightly-burnished andirons and fender. High over the mantel, reaching up to the elaborately-wrought cornice, is displayed the family coat of arms.

Among the olden-time curiosities of the apartment, are ancestral portraits, a sideboard and a harpsichord. Isabel has an elegant piano in the drawingroom, but the harpsichord is retained in the parlor for its hallowed associations.

From the parlor windows we have a fine view of a portion of the extensive garden, with its terraces, walks, arbors, shrubbery, fruittrees, and adjoining greenhouse.

But what has charmed me most of all, is the park, with its choice, magnificent trees, mimic lake, and bounding deer. This part of the establishment took me quite by surprise,— I had not dreamed of a real park and live deer in this part of the world. I can never tire watching the lovely fawns;

they are so gentle, and yet half wild, lamb-like and bird-like. I often see two or three of them under my window, comfortably lounging on the new greensward, and after gazing at them admiringly a long time, I run down, saying, "Let me just pat your pretty heads, my beauties!" but they are up and away with beautiful disdain, untouched by my fingertips, in spite of my stealthiest approach and nimblest spring.

It is fun alive to see the deer troop through the old park in their wild glee, clearing the high fence with a graceful bound. In their greatest speed, when they approach the fence they seem almost to pause, as if to measure its precise height with the eye, and then they are over instantly, expending no more strength than just to clear it by a hair's breadth. They are very fond of the berries and leaves of the holly, and as there are quite a number of this choice evergreen in the vicinity of the mansion, it is amusing to watch them as they feed.

All the lower branches of one of these trees having been thoroughly browsed, a certain antlered deer, of great dignity, took this method to finish his repast: Standing under the tree, he jumped up and tangled his antlers in the thick branchlets and boughs, and in the skirmish necessary to disengage his head, quantities of leaves, berries and twigs fell to the ground, and presently his lordship was feeding at his leisure; and when this supply was gone, up went his sturdy antlers into the boughs again, with the same result as before.

I have been trying till I am tired, to solve a curious scene I witnessed this morning, but must own myself baffled: A

large company of deer, thirty or forty in number, formed a circle. They seemed to be engaged in consultation. Presently two of them, as if chosen out of the herd, started off on a race, and with incredible swiftness sweeping around in a wide circuit, came back to their companions. After a moment, two others performed the same feat. It may be it was a trial of fleetness, and that they award either gold medals or golden opinions to the winner.

By the way, Senator T. has a race course, where some of his horses are exercised and trained for the races. I do not know as he frequents the races himself, but he sometimes sends on his horses, and has been a winner, as the massive silver pitcher standing on the sideboard, testifies. It is not as customary as formerly for gentlemen to attend the race courses, but many forward their horses by agents or servants. One morning when the horses were exercising, Isabel and I took the race course in our walk. It is a circular road, just one mile in circumference, on a perfectly level space of ground. It was an exciting scene, three fine horses, side by side, roused to the contest with whip and spur, each straining every nerve to be foremost. The Senator was there giving directions, but it was only an every-day affair, and there were no spectators, save indeed the groom, Isabel and myself. At the first "heat" I was pleased to see the sport, but when I reflected that the fine creatures were forced to this combat of fleetness by whip and steel, and that horse-racing on a wager was no better than any other form of gambling,—that it lamed, maimed and killed outright many noble animals, and

encouraged indolence, profanity and intemperance,—I was glad to accede to Isabel's "Shall we go?" as they were preparing for a second heat, choosing rather to watch the deer at their play than the coursers at their toil.

Isabel and myself have each a fine saddle-horse whenever we choose to ride, and you may be sure we enjoy it highly. These horses are spirited, yet gentle, and so well trained that we can open and shut the park gates, while mounted, without the least inconvenience. Every fine day we scour the park, always finding something new to admire. Spring is now rising from the grave of winter. The leaves and flowers, imprisoned in their little scaly cells, peep out, like Noah's dove, to assure themselves if yet the cold that has prevailed upon the earth has disappeared. Violets and hyacinths are blossoming, making redolent nooks and borders, and grassy banks. And the birds—"you ought" to see and hear them. There is the Virginia Redbird,—*Tanagra rubra* I think is his name,—and a trim, soldier-like little gentleman he is, too, in his brilliant uniform. Mayhap he deems himself a king, for every morning quite early he stations himself on the finest holly, and rings out his joyous, merry note, which sounds much like—

"Singeth the spring time,
Happy am I!
Who of the songsters
Can with me vie?"

Perched on the glossy evergreen, whose leaves and berries contrast so beautifully, Mr. Redbird certainly shows his fine

taste in selecting such a site for the proclamation of his matin song.

Robin Redbreast, that fastidious little traveller who, like many others, demurs at our Northern winter, is now topping off hybernating with us. He is evidently getting uneasy,—no doubt visions of his Northern home float in his fancy. He remembers the shady maple where the breezes swayed the snug cradle-nest of his infancy, and often turning to Mrs. Robin, he seems to ask, in his twitter dialect, "Don't you think 'tis most time to go, love?" But day after day they still linger about the budding multifloras, and by the yellow jasmine, quite well aware that while Old Virginia is joying in its balmy air and bursting flowers, the fields and gardens of New-England still lie beneath the long winter's accumulations of ice and snow. The Senator will not permit a gun to be fired on his premises, or a bird to be killed. The blithe little songsters appreciate his kindness, and make ever so many happy homes in his shrubbery and shade trees. In the garden alone, I counted nearly forty of these pretty habitations, now tenantless, built last year.

Life on a plantation would soon get to be lonely and irksome, were it not for the occasional interruptions of company. You have become familiar with all the antiquities and curiosities within doors, and without you have only the voices of nature; and as these are repeated day after day, they seem like the sound of the ever-flowing brook, full of melody, but monotonous, and you long for something to break the sameness. In short, you long for nearer neighbors. But Grove

Hill seems to be a favored resort of company, considering its seclusion. Scarcely a week passes without visits from friends of the family. Among these visitors have been some Virginia gentlemen of the old school, and the Senator has appeared very happy in their society. Indeed, it does one's heart good to see how courtly, kind and brotherly they are. The fund of talk called forth on all sides is perfectly enormous. Ancestral recollections are among the most favorite topics adverted to, and, under the circumstances, one cannot avoid a deep interest in their recital. I will give you a rehearsal respecting Colonel Bird:

In the early settlement of Virginia, the James River planters were much more wealthy than those residing on the Rappahannoc. For instance, Colonel William Bird owned all the site of the present city of Richmond, besides a tract of country in North Carolina, extending twenty-four miles on both sides of the Roanoke. This Colonel Bird was a distant relative of the Senator's family. He was very handsome, courtly in his manners, and caused quite a sensation while visiting in England. When stopping in London, he was introduced to a club composed mostly of noblemen. They were gambling; and at length a certain Duke, taking a box of dice, said,

"Will any gentleman accept the bet of ten thousand pounds?" passing round to each one of his companions.

No one accepted the bet; the risk was too great. He came last of all to Colonel Bird, and, for form's sake, said,

"Colonel Bird, will you accept the bet?"

"I will," promptly replied that gentleman.

The dice were thrown, and the Colonel from the Virginia colony was the winner. This was duly announced, but the game went on just as if no loss had happened on the part of the Duke, until the company broke up for the night, when that dignitary, coming up to Colonel Bird, thus addressed him:

"I have not had the pleasure of seeing you here before.

"It is my first visit to your club," replied the Colonel.

"Then you may not be acquainted with our regulations," said his grace.

"That is true," replied the Colonel; "I know nothing of the rules of this club."

"Then, sir," said the Duke, "before further business can be transacted between us, it will be necessary for me to inform you that one of our rules is to this effect, that no one shall accept a bet unless he can prove that he possesses sufficient to pay it in case he is the loser; if one does accept a bet in these circumstances, if he is the winner, he forfeits the sum he would otherwise receive."

"A very just and wise regulation," rejoined the Virginian; "but I am not anxious that the business be settled to-night; any other time will do as well."

"You mistake me, sir," said his grace; "it is our invariable custom to despatch business of this sort on the spot."

"But," said Colonel Bird, "I am a stranger, and have no proof with me of my capability to discharge the obligation,

had I been the loser instead of the winner. My carriage and horses are not here, or I might send to the city to obtain evidence respecting myself satisfactory to you."

"My carriage and horses are at your service; send them where you choose," said the Duke.

"Thank you," replied the Colonel; "I accept your generous offer, and will forthwith write to my banker in London." Then, seating himself by the table, he penned the following note to his banker:

"Will you pay to Colonel William Bird, of Virginia, his order for £10,000 at sight?

"Answer by the bearer."

This was carried to the banker by the Duke's liveried servants, who found him in his night quarters.

After being aroused, and having read the note, the old banker, supporting himself on his elbow, wrote, on the back of the note:

"I will pay to Colonel William Bird, of Virginia, his order for £10,000 at sight, or his order for ten times £10,000.

"Signed, ———, Banker.

"West End, London."

The horses flew back, bearing the important information to the Duke, who, on receiving it, coolly wrote an order on

his own banker for the amount of the bet, and gave it to the Colonel.

This story the Colonel used to tell with great *eclat*, adding, "What times I had in England on that ten thousand pounds! Spent every penny of it, bless me!"

A. J. EU

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER ▲.

RUTH.

GROVE HILL, Va., April 18, 18—.

DEAR S.—At last, dear Ruth has come. Isabel and I have scarcely ate or slept for a week past; every ride we have hoped to meet her, coming; and the carriage has been despatched to the ferry, six miles distant, at stage hours, with the regularity of the mail, for several days. The dear girl, how she realizes my ideal of a heroine! She actually seems taller than before,—as if her beautifully-turned head were lifted up more princess-like by the lofty moral consciousness within. The hours have flown swift winged since her arrival, and I have almost forgotten to write; but of late I have observed, as we have rambled about the old park, and sought out its charming nooks and beautiful groves, that a deeper shade of sorrow has veiled the quiet gladness of Ruth's spirit. She evidently realizes more intensely than ever before, that she is in a land of heart-broken captives. She may truly be said to feel for those in bonds as bound with them; and I cannot doubt that her absorbing sympathy for the suffering has for a long time been undermining her health.

One mild, moonlit evening, Ruth, Isabel and myself were

RUTH.

213

sitting on the steps of the back vestibule, inhaling the fragrant breath of the multiflora, and now and then singing some plaintive melody, when a dark form was seen skulking in the shadows. I involuntarily drew back, Ruth remained sitting, and Isabel, drawing herself up to her full height, asked, in a firm, decided tone, "Who's there?"

"It's ony me," said a sad voice.

"Who? Patsy? Well, what are you doing here?" asked Isabel, firmly.

The dark figure approached. It was a slave mother, with a baby hugged close to her bosom.

"How's this, Patsy?" said Isabel, severely, "why are you not down to your cabin at the quarters?"

"Please to b'lieve me, Miss,—de overseer is *dat* cross; he done say I shouldn't nurse my baby but onct to-day, an' cause I done did it twice, he's gwine to whip me; an' de chile gits amose perished to death between times."

"O, you hush complaining," said Isabel; "go directly back to the quarters, and let me hear no more of this;" and the poor woman, seeing there was no appeal, pressing her baby yet closer to her heart, moved off with a languid and unwilling step. Isabel stepped into the house, and despatched one of the servants to the overseer, saying that he would be expected to call up in the morning for further orders.

"I shall tell him not to whip Patsy," said Isabel, as she returned to us; "and she shall nurse her baby twice a day. Poor thing," she continued, "I was loth to send her back; but she would get her death of cold in the garden this chilly

night, and besides, as papa says, the discipline of the plantation must be maintained."

"And *fear* is the only incentive the system has to incite plantation slaves to exertion," remarked Ruth.

"Yes," replied Isabel, "it is so; and if they do not cringe and bow just so low, these unmerciful overseers lash them until they do, and we cannot take their part, lest we encourage insubordination. But our house servants are in a measure moved by love and respect for us, although there are instances in which we are obliged to threaten with sale, and this they fear infinitely more than whipping. I do not blame you, Ruth, for helping Fayette and her husband to a free country. I'd like to do just such a deed myself; and if I had my wish, every slave in the land would be free. I am heartily sick of the system, although I make sure, familiarized as I am with it, I do not realize a tithe of its odiousness."

"I often think," said Ruth, calmly, "in view of the wrongs peculiar to the system, how exceedingly abominable it must be in the eyes of the righteous God, who loveth righteousness."

"O, Ruth," exclaimed Isabel, "if you were a man and a minister, how you would preach on this question! But no, I make sure that we should not let even you preach on this subject; we, good Christians as we are, would have to put you in prison for daring to open your mouth in favor of liberty to the captives. I don't see but you'd have to go North, and set up your preaching there."

"Well, that would not be so bad, after all," replied Ru

"for if the North was right on slavery, it would soon be done away in the South. And it is a lamentable fact, that a vast deal of work needs to be done, even at the North. There are many Christians and others, however, whose influence is on the right side. The Quakers, as a sect, testify nobly against it, and I learn that there is not a Roman Catholic bishop or priest in the United States, who owns slaves. I do hope those dear Christians of the different denominations at the North who have condemned slavery as inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, will stand their ground, that the leaven of their influence may speedily pervade the entire North. Were the North united in earnest remonstrance against the system, the Southern conscience could not hold out long. As it is, I am satisfied that, in spite of the prejudices of education, and the bluster of unprincipled men, it finds full work enough to do in repressing its own native instincts."

"I believe it's just so," said Isabel; "I don't know how it is, but somehow or other you always compel my assent to everything you assert on this subject."

"I believe I have never given you a sketch of my journey," said Ruth. "I did not at first think of going with Robert and Fayette, when I caught my bonnet and shawl, and went to the door to meet father. I had been planning and praying to ascertain what I could do for them in their imminent peril. As I lingered a moment on the step, the injunction, 'do unto others as ye would have them do unto you,' came suddenly to my mind with singular impressiveness. It could

hardly have produced a greater effect, had my Saviour appeared before me, and repeated this, his great command. Without a moment's further thought, I stepped into the carriage, was soon at their hut, and within five minutes we were on our way, at the top of the horses' speed.

"I should mention that, before we reached Philadelphia, I called on a friend on our route, who lent me money, without suspecting my errand; I merely told him that I had urgent business to that city, and it excited no surprise, of course, that I had servants with me. It fortunately happened, on my arrival in Philadelphia, I recollected the name of that excellent Quaker, John Parish, who has helped succor so many flying ones, and committing Fayett and Robert to his keeping, I sent the carriage and horses home, and journeyed to Lexington by public conveyance, thinking it advisable to recruit my health, and suffer my parents to become more calm before I appeared in their presence. Meanwhile I have written them, earnestly striving to show them that the course I have pursued is such as will bear the searching light of the great day of account. I would like to read you a copy of one I am going to send them next mail."

The letter was as follows:

"I cannot well avoid being grieved at those three severe charges. Sad, indeed, must be my condition, if I have disobeyed my parents, broken the laws of the land, and sinned against the institutions of religion.

"Permit me to suggest some few thoughts, which lead me to conclude that I cannot be in so bad case:

"The law of the filial relation is, 'Children, obey your parents *in the Lord*.' But does not this plainly imply, that such obedience is not required when we should thereby disobey a plain command of God? Do you not yourselves recognize this principle in every other case? Have you not taught me from childhood that our relations to God transcend and control all earthly relations? That duties never clash, and that all duties at once cease to be such when they conflict with the clear voice of God in his Word, and conscience. God ordained all the lower human relations, the better to help his creatures *serve him*; and if they at any time degrade their noble office, as 'handmaids of religion,' and command us to do what he has expressly forbidden, we may incur their frowns and bear their penalties, but we cannot obey them. God has conferred on neither the parent, the State nor the church, the power either to annul or suspend a moral law. And have I sinned against the laws of the land, also? But have I more than Obadiah, the steward of Ahab's palace, who, on the occasion of the royal edict, that all the prophets of the Lord should be slain, hid one hundred of them in caves, and ministered to their necessities? Some may pronounce him unfaithful to Ahab, and to the interests of the State; but does not the sacred record hold him up as most faithful to his great Sovereign, and as one whom no royal edict could deter from doing his duty. And at the judgment will he not be

among that select throng whom the Saviour calls, 'Ye blessed,' having ministered to his poor, despised ones? Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world. Fatherless and widows! and who are pre-eminently the fatherless and widows among us, if not those made so by the wearing out and the sales of our system?

"I have just opened my Bible at the tenth of Isaiah, and have been most forcibly struck by the four opening verses:

"'Woe unto them that devise unrighteous decrees, that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless. And what will ye do in the day of your visitation, in the desolation which will come from far? To whom will ye flee for help, and where will ye leave your glory? Without me, they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain.'

"Whoever these appalling passages were written for, they are certainly fearfully descriptive of those who are specially responsible for our iniquitous system. 'Decree unrighteous decrees,'—O, how many such decrees are summed up in slavery! Beings created in God's image, deemed, sold, taken, reputed and adjudged in law to be *chattels personal*, in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators and assigns, to all intents, constructions and purposes whatever. And having unrighteously decreed

an immortal soul into a thing, other almost numberless unrighteous decrees are added, for the purpose of regulating his market value. If he seeks to escape from the horrors of his lot, he is an outlaw, and the statutes make it doing God service, for any one to shoot, stab, burn, drown, or in any way to murder him.

"The 'unrighteous decrees' declare that he shall not learn to read,—that he shall not 'search the Scriptures,'—taking 'away the right from the poor of my people.' The decrees declare that what God hath joined together, man may put asunder; that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless,—making the trade in the souls of men a legal and profitable business.

"Yes, our poor slaves are whelmed and trodden down with grievousnesses, which the lawmakers write and prescribe in the form of statutes, and when I remember that justice is an attribute of the Holy One of Israel, I tremble for my beloved country. Our unrighteous decrees have long been the abomination of Him whose ear is open to the cry of the humble. His anger burns against us; and will he not arise, and devastating by judgments, make desolate our heritage? The punishments which are designed to amend, are inflicted with comparative vigilance and speed; those which are meant to destroy, are usually long suspended, while the devoted victims pass on with seeming impunity. I pray God this be not our fearful case,—but my shuddering heart whispers me that it is. O, that we might speedily repent and bewail our sins, as in sackcloth and ashes! O, that petitions might

speedily be made our rulers, to do away with the cruel enactments respecting the poor, despised people in our midst, whose rights we have 'gathered as a nest.' For if we turn every one from his evil way, and the violence that is in his hands, and cry mightily to Him, who can tell if God will turn, and repent, and turn away his fierce anger from us?"

As I heard Ruth's letter, I could but weep. I felt that it was God who had opened her eyes to see the abominations of the land, and to cry, "O, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" Many there are thus weeping in secret; but so long have the free pulsations of their hearts been enslaved, that they fear to cry aloud.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XVI.

DEPARTURE.

GROVE HILL, Va., May 4, 18—.

DEAR S.—Yesterday I attended church at one of the most ancient houses of worship in Virginia. It is a curious edifice, unique and antiquated enough in its style of architecture, rising in the midst of a grave-yard shaded with old oaks, and enclosed by a thick, moss-grown wall, four or five feet high. Were it not for here and there a fact like this, we of the New World might pardonably forget the identity of churchyard and grave-yard in our old English classics. In the palmy days of the glebe, the Virginia colonists in some matters patterned as precisely as possible after the "home" over the sea.

"As through the churchyard's lone retreat
My meditation led,
And walked with slow and pensive feet
Above the sleeping dead;"

said Wordsworth, if I misquote not, and I could not help whispering the lines to Isabel and Ruth, as we passed through the place of graves to enter the house of God.

To form some idea of the construction of the church, one

must conceive two oblong buildings crossing each other at right angles, thus giving four wings. There is a door with a circular window over it in each of the four fronts, and a Gothic window in each of the other eight sides. One of the wings is partitioned off for a vestry, and the pulpit is on the side of the house next this apartment.

After the exercises of the morning, as detailed in the prayer-book, were performed, came the sermon, from the text, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." In the development of his subject, the good preacher seemed to take it for granted that the ladies of his parish were cumbered about much serving; but for the life of me I could not see the propriety of it. Had his audience been the poor laborers who toil on, hot or cold, early and late, day in and day out, his remarks would have been somewhat more to the point.

It was Communion, and for the first time I listened to the Communion service. Elevated and beautiful it is; and as group after group successively knelt by the altar, and received the sacred symbols from the pastor, devoutly repeating, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life; take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart, by faith with thanksgiving;" or, at the giving of the wine, "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto

everlasting life; drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful;"—I wondered if ever the enslaved were allowed to come to the table of their Lord. Some time previously, I had asked the question of a slave woman, who replied, "O, no, Miss, dat's too high for us."

As I mused on the simple and sublime memento of the supper left us by our common Master, and grieved in an agony of tears that so many members of his body were cut off from participating in its blessings, the last group returned from the altar, and took their seats. There was a pause, and the stillness of death pervaded the house, when a lone slave woman, bent and bowed in the summer of her life, a childless widow, tottered down the aisle from her lowly seat by the door, and knelt to receive the holy emblems. She was evidently the only slave member of the church present, and it was a melting sight to see her all alone at the Saviour's table; but it was a thrilling thought that she was, perhaps, more dear to him than all who had preceded her.

There is an arched recess or niche in the wall of the saloon at Grove Hill, and this morning, as I inquired of Isabel its design, she replied, with her usual vivacity,

"O, that's the stand of the old-time, family christening bowl. It would have remained there to this day, had it not become so sadly defaced. We, presumptuous moderners, have hid it in the wing; but we confess to a mortal dread that some of our ghostly ancestors will yet be moved to leave

the walls and come down upon us in vengeful mood for our daring sacrilege."

"A family christening bowl!" exclaimed I, "do let me see it."

"With the greatest pleasure," replied Isabel; and away we ran to a lumber room of the right wing, and commenced rummaging the rubbish for the old relic. At length we succeeded in exhuming it from a mass of ruins. It was curiously sculptured from Italian marble. The bowl with its pedestal was nearly two feet high, the rim being about four feet in circumference.

"This same old bowl has witnessed some interesting scenes," remarked Isabel, as we were examining it. "Were you ever at a christening?"

"Never, save in a church," I replied.

"Well, you ought to hear some of the old gentlemen discourse of the christening of the olden time," replied Isabel. "It was really quite a joyful festival. All the friends were invited, and a great entertainment was made. After the ceremony was over, all made merry. In fact, if all accounts are true, they scarcely waited for a respectable finish.

'They were not always devout;
They thought of the feast of the christening,
The ball, the music and rout.'

"Yes, I dare say they had a merry time," said Ruth, who, by the way, had joined us; "many of the parsons of those days were great lovers of wine."

"Yes," responded Isabel, "old Parson Gubbins, for instance. Tradition hath it that he never visited Grove Hill without getting intoxicated; and his faithful servant, Peter, who always attended him, used to lift him in his curricie, tie him in, and carefully drive him home and deposit him in bed. This was of such frequent occurrence, that it came to be considered as a matter of course; if a peccadillo at all, one hardly more serious than the laughs and jokes it elicited from his flock."

"He must have been one of the sporting parsons," said Ruth.

"Yes, indeed," replied Isabel, "he was extravagantly fond of the chase. I have heard so many amusing incidents related of this old-time parson, that it almost seems as if I knew him; and he has been dead half a century, or more. He well represented a class of gay, dissipated rectors, for, as somebody says,

'They of the rosy, jocund face,
Paid homage to the cup,'

'They loved best to dine
Where flowed the best wine.'

The poor of the parish were seldom favored with parochial calls,—this order of priests were famous, not so much for 'training of souls,' as for 'draining of bowls.' The drinking propensities of Parson Gubbins, however, were not always particularly agreeable to certain of his rich parishioners. A story is told of a wedding at which he officiated. The parties con-

cerned, fearful that he would get tipsy before the hour of the ceremony, which was twelve o'clock, charged the servants not to get him wine or liquor of any kind until after that time. Nevertheless, by some means, the reverend man managed to get his ideas so much elevated by sundry potations, that he was ridiculously silly, and could scarcely go through with the marriage service. The wedding party were exceedingly annoyed, of course. After the ceremony, the parson attempted to kiss the bride; but the bridegroom interfered, and bade him desist, and this added not a little to the confusion of the scene.

"On a like occasion, after marrying a couple, Parson Gubbins made this announcement,—'I have pronounced this pair husband and wife, and I am now ready to marry as many more as will present themselves.'

"At this a Mr. Lee stepped forward, and addressing a Miss C., said, 'Miss C., will you accept my hand, and listen to the marriage service?'

"But Miss C., greatly shocked and abashed, shrunk back from so untimely a proposal."

"I am always interested in these old-time anecdotes," remarked Ruth, "and can we not argue from them that there has been some progress and improvement among us since? A clergyman as openly intemperate as was Parson Gubbins, would be scouted at in these times, as entirely ineligible for pulpit and pastoral duties. Public opinion has certainly advanced on the temperance question, and has it not also on the question of slaveholding? Many are being waked up by the

monitor conscience, to see the sinfulness of enslaving their brethren."

"But this old, musty room!" exclaimed Isabel,— "do let's have a walk in the open air;" and directly, arm in arm, "we three" were on our way to the garden. We found the strawberries ripe, and after regaling ourselves, sat down in an arbor near by, which was entirely covered by trailing roses in full bloom. It was a beautiful day of bright sunbeams and fragrant breezes, and we were deeming ourselves quite happy, when the thought of separation came in to mar our enjoyment. The time fixed for my visit to Virginia had nearly expired; two days only, and I must return to my Northern home.

"That is too bad," said Isabel, as I alluded to the time of my leaving. "I do not see how I can let you go just now, when Ruth is going home, too."

"And I must have you go with me," said Ruth.

"I am sorry to return so soon," I replied; "and were it possible, would remain longer; but that, you know, cannot be. Perhaps I may return in the autumn."

"I wish you'd arrange it with your friends to take up your permanent abode with us," replied Isabel. "I make sure you'd be a first-rate Southerner; indeed, I think you are now. At least, you won't go home thinking we Virginians are the worst people in the world, will you?"

"O, no," I replied; "I love Virginia and Virginians too well for that. I only wonder a people can be so noble and excellent, when they have been 'staggering' under the weight

of such a 'loathsome burden' so long. Such an evil, I fear, would have dried up all the kindly sympathies of the cooler and more calculating Northerners, long ago. But I shall always feel a sadness stealing away my pleasant memories, when I think of what Virginia has been, is, and might have been if disenthralled, like our free and happy New-England, which to some extent seems to say to her Southern sisters:

'We leave you with your bondmen, to wrestle while ye can
With the strong upward tendencies, and Godlike soul of man.
But for us and our children, the vow which we have given
For freedom and humanity, is registered in heaven;
No slave-hunt in our borders, no pirate on our strand,
No fetters in New-England, no slaves upon our land.'

"I like those spirited, noble lines," said Isabel; "I wish we could all say as much as they express."

A servant came with a message for Isabel, and we went in. As I hied me to my room, I was wondering how poor Cleopatra bore her sorrows, and if the rest of heaven would not be very sweet to her at last. And then my sympathies went out after lone Martha and her little one; and then I wondered if the husband's and father's heart was not yearning to see them once more.

And then I trembled, as I thought of Rosalie's marrying poor Martha to old Uncle Sim. And Mima, too! I knew she would rather be in her grave than the wife of that detestable Juniper. Selma! how I longed once more to put my arms about her neck, and weep with her! And blind

Joseph, if I could only hear him pray yet once again before I go!

Farewell, poor slave people! I have had but a glimpse of what ye suffer, and I may never hear from you in this world; but if at last we meet in heaven, amid the pauses of your golden harps, as ye sit on the banks of the river of life, will not your histories wake anew the strains of rejoicing melody?

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XVII.

WILLOW CREEK, ONCE MORE.

WILLOW CREEK, Va., Sept. 20, 18—.

DEAR S.—Here am I this golden morning, again a guest in the Old Dominion, at cousin Franck's country residence. Regina has almost recovered the use of her arm and ankle, and is beginning to think she can do without Selma. By the way, in her helplessness last winter she persuaded the Doctor to give up the bargain, as she "positively could not live without her." Selma is now fairer even than Regina, and, it is said, more strikingly resembles the Hartleys. Since Regina's long confinement, an inveterate nervousness having possessed her, she feels constant disquiet in the presence of her faithful sister-servant. At times, she is exceedingly petulant, and as unreasonable as a child. Poor Selma is the butt of her ill-will, and a burdensome life she has of it.

"Such a living annoyance!" exclaimed Regina, to-day, as she was reclining on the parlor sofa; "Selma is my shadow! I make sure she grows fairer every day. I declare, my complexion is getting bronze, it is, indeed!" she added, as she saw herself reflected in the spacious mirror opposite. Thereupon outspoke her *attache*, Franck Cameron:

WILLOW CREEK, ONCE MORE.

231

"Bless my soul and body! Mrs. Cameron, where are your eyes? I consider myself no contemptible judge in the case, and don't I tell you every day of my life, and fifty times a day, that you are looking charmingly?"

"What of that?" rejoined the amiable lady, "can I forget that my Carolina friends could not for their lives recognize me this summer, and that they mistook Selma for me? Tell me how I can forget such facts as these, will you?"

How cousin Franck would have met this poser I know not, as the colloquy was suddenly cut short by the entrance of Mr. Oglethorpe, our stranger guest. By the way, Mr. Oglethorpe is a very interesting person, and the whole family are in love with him. He is a gentleman of polished manners, bland and intelligent, with a delightful fund of general information. He is a Southerner by birth, wealthy, and has been for some years in Europe.

Rosalie is very innocently engaged in seeking to capture him as her lawful prize; and, it must be acknowledged, she is really a most fascinating girl, in her amiable moods. I do not wonder that she has won the attention of the dignified stranger. Wouldn't he be astounded to be behind the scenes, on an occasion like the marrying of Juniper and Mima!

Mr. Oglethorpe is somewhat an invalid. Cousin Franck and family made his acquaintance at the Springs, and at their earnest request he accompanied them to Willow Creek. There is something a little reserved and mysterious in his bearing, but this Rosalie interprets to his advantage. Ruth and I conjecture that he has met with some great sorrow, so abstracted is he at times.

He seems to regard Selma, slave as she is, with interest, and indeed I see not how he can help it, for she is a beautiful, a superior woman. Madam Regina has observed this, and added it to her other sources of disquiet.

Poor Regina! it would seem as if every breeze brought new irritation for the old sore. While Mr. Oglethorpe was still present with the family in the parlor, a pedler, half concealed beneath a slouched cap and huge green goggles, hustled into the room. You must know that the retirement of Willow Creek makes even a pedler welcome.

"Can I sell you anything to-day, gentlemen and ladies?" ran on the bearer of the tin boxes, with a peculiar brogue, and with the dog-trot monotone of his profession; "pins, needles, thread, combs, thimbles, cravats, laces, embroidery patterns and crewel to match!" But while he displayed his medley of articles, Selma chanced to enter the room, whereupon he addressed her with a low bow as if she were the mistress,—"Will you buy anything, Madam?"

"No, no," replied cousin Franck, "you mistake; she is only a servant!"

"Oh, ah," replied the pedler, "I understand;" then, turning to Selma, he added, "well, as you don't want to buy, I guess I shall have to give you a trifle;" then, fumbling for a moment among his things, he handed her a little paper box, when Mrs. Cameron with an indignant air bade her leave the room.

"There it is again!" began Regina ill-humoredly, after the pedler had left, and Mr. Oglethorpe had withdrawn; "as

I live, I am to be haunted with the intolerable idea. Selma is *myself* even in this poor pedler's esteem. I hate the very sight of her!"

"O, Mamma!" exclaimed Ruth imploringly.

"You hush, child," replied Madam Regina, in a vexed tone. "Pretty well, indeed, for you to make yourself without natural affection, forsaking your mother, and taking sides with a servant! I tell you, Selma's image is an unmitigated torment to me!"

Franck, striding the room, with hands sheathed in his pockets, whistled a short accompaniment to these words, and then added,

"Why keep her, then?—nothing easier than to dispose of her."

"The truth is, there is no living with, nor without her," replied Regina; "she is highly necessary, and with all my habits formed, pray, how am I to get along without her, and with my acute sensibility to suffering, how can I bear her hated image before me?"

"The more comfortable way would be to hate her less," coolly replied cousin Franck.

"You know," continued the lady, "Selma is no ordinary servant. I was foolish enough to have her educated, but aside from the aid she rendered me in my lessons, I have had only cause to rue it." Cousin Franck was silent, and Mrs. Cameron added, "Such impertinence in her to resemble me so strongly—to ape my manners, and carry herself like a lady! As if it was not mortification enough for her to be of

my family, she must be a living proclamation of it, having it written in face, figure, mind and manner."

"Ho, ho, hum!" yawned Franck Cameron, "well, anything for a quiet life. I guess we might as well sell her and be done with it!"

"We!" replied Regina, sarcastically, "I wonder who is *we*, you or I. It might be as well for some people to remember the conditions of the marriage settlement!"

"O, of course, I have no idea of intermeddling," replied the husband, "but it does seem a pity no plan can be thought of for your comfort. Why not dispose of Selma, and let some one else take her place?"

"Why not? that is the question I am ever mooting," replied the lady, "but I come no nearer a decision. The truth is, my misfortunes of last winter have so broken me down that I am neither one thing nor the other. I am afraid to take such a step, — I fear some new calamity will befall me if I attempt it. When I was young, father sold Selma's brothers, William and Wallace, and was inexpressibly wretched ever after."

"Bless me! Mrs. Cameron," interrupted the husband, "how superstitious! you are really getting nervous. I would not have believed you could be so weak as to run out such a notion. But come, cheer up, cheer up! We can manage the matter somehow; 'where there's a will there's a way.'"

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

P. S. Rosalie has all at once become an enthusiast in French, and declares she has a prince of teachers in Mr. Oglethorpe. She toils hard, almost denying herself of sleep, and really is progressing wondrously. I am puzzled to know which Mr. Oglethorpe likes best, Rosalie or Ruth. I dare say it's Rosalie, however, she makes herself so interesting, and Ruth has no other thought than to do her part in making his visit agreeable.

P.

LETTER XVII

SURPRISE.

WILLOW CREEK, Va., Sept. 29, 18—.

DEAR S.—Prepare yourself for a surprise. The box given to Selma contained a little note from Hannibal; and the pedler is no other than that hero himself! He found freedom too sweet to enjoy alone, and bravely faced that which he abhorred worse than death itself, for the safety of those he loves. A few evenings since Ruth discovered the secret of his arrival, and immediately set herself to work to give Selma an opportunity to meet him.

I should have told you before that Mima insisted so roundly to Juniper that she was no wife of his, and would die sooner than consent, and so intimidated him with her brave threats, that the craven was afraid to claim her, and at length divorced her with a kick and a curse, saying, very loftily,

“Prenty more fish in de sea waitin’ for to be cocht! Prenty more, a heap of store better than such as you!”

Hannibal found a hiding-place in an old forsaken spring house, in a woody ravine some distance from the mansion. Thither, Mima, Ruth and Selma managed to carry food. On his arrival he was sadly in need of rest, and in a most pitiable

SURPRISE.

237

plight. His plan was to take Selma and Mima, and escape on foot; but Ruth assured them the chances were few, if they attempted it, and proposed a plan she had herself matured, the obstacles to which, however, were formidable enough. Selma was constantly needed by Regina, and Mima was no less serviceable to Rosalie—how to give them time to get a fair start was the problem. Juniper, accomplished in low cunning, was ever on the alert, and we feared he already suspected Hannibal was secreted in the vicinity of the house, when we fortunately overheard the following conversation. We were sitting in the trellised portico, half hidden in the fragrant shade, and Juniper was putting the saloon to rights. Cousin Franck passing through the room, Juniper began with usual obsequiousness,

“’Pears like dese sher is very strange times, Massa; dese sher niggers *dat* ongrateful—run away p’r’aps—leave Massa in de lurks ’bout de work, an’ den come back p’r’aps an’ tote off some ob de res’ of dere kin—de ongrateful truck!”

“What’s that Jun, what’s in the wind now?” asked cousin Franck.

“Oh, nothin’, p’r’aps, Massa Cameron,” responded the wily serving-man, “nothin’, p’r’aps!”

“Then you may as well hold your tongue,” replied the master, “Come, what do you mean, you rascal?”

“Nothin’ in ’ticlar, Massa; only p’r’aps Hannibal haint come back, an’ he haint gwine to coax off no more niggers, p’r’aps, dat’s all! I dun know for sarten, but I ’spects I smell

him whereabouts. I'll jes' be done with dis sher dustin', an' den, Massa, you jes' come with me."

"Be lively, then," said cousin Franck, beating his boot with his riding whip.

Ruth and myself were in great trouble. The first impulse was to send to the woody glen, that Hannibal might seek some other place of safety. Whispering Ruth to manage and detain cousin Franck and Juniper, I noiselessly slid out, and tripping through the garden and field beyond, was quickly threading the woods in the direction of the spring house. When almost there I met Mima, and in a few words told her of Hannibal's danger. The poor girl at first was almost paralyzed with fright, but soon recovering herself, said,

"If he was ony safe in de holler tree, now."

"What hollow tree? where?" I eagerly asked.

"On tother side of de gully, over dare," pointed Mima, "ony a step off,—'parently he'd be a heap safer stowed 'way dare, an' 'pears like dey wouldn't done tink of lookin' dare for him."

Hannibal decided at once, when informed of his danger, to occupy the hollow tree; and Mima, hastily tying up a package of food, from the little stock in the spring house provided by Ruth, hastened with him to the tree, distant not half a dozen rods, while I remained to put the little room to rights. Raising a loose board from the floor, I hurriedly stowed away a quilt, blanket and pillow, also the remainder of the eatables. As I was replacing the board, I heard voices, and being sure that the pursuers were near, made the best of my way to a

quiet nook in the side of the ravine nearly opposite the hollow tree. It was an excavation in the bank, forming a sort of a cave, through which ran the root of a monarch oak, which root Ruth had nicely covered with mosses, for a seat. In front of the grotto, was a wall of shrubbery with a portable pine bough for a door. Reaching this retreat almost breathless, I was relieved to see that Hannibal was ensconced in his hiding-place, and a moment after Mima joined me, in answer to my beckoning.

The sound of voices became more audible, and in a few moments the spring house door creaked on its rusty hinges, and we heard Juniper say,

"Wy, hi, Massa Cameron, 'pears like him no here, arter all! him 'scaped 'parently, dat is clar!"

"Nonsense, Jun!" exclaimed cousin Franck; "you must be drunk! Hannibal is a thousand miles off; of course, the dog wouldn't come back!"

"Ob course, Massa, he no come back on his own 'count," said Juniper, "but 'pears like he come back an' tote off his kin, Selma an' de res'."

"Jun, you're a fool!" exclaimed cousin Franck, getting angry; "what under the canopy did you lead me on this wild-goose chase for? Look ye here, you rascal; if you are fooling me,—unless you can bring me some reasonable proof that Hannibal has come back,—I'll have you tied to the whipping-post and mauled within an inch of your life. I will not put up with your humbugging insolence, depend upon it!"

"Massa Cameron, de facts of de case is jes' here," ex-

plained Juniper,—and as we peeped through the leafy curtain of the grotto, we had a view of the master and servant; “de facts of de case is jes’ here,” continued Jun, consequentially resting one foot on a log, and rolling his tobacco quid to the other side of his mouth, “I’s been studyin’ ’pon dese times, an’ ’parently tings is come to a strange pass. ’Pears like ongrateful niggers is bound to run away, an’ den dat don’t done satisfy ’em, dey is bound to come back an’ tote off dare kin, dat is evident!”

“Come, now,” said cousin Franck, “be done with this beating about the bush, and tell me at once, have you any reason to think Hannibal is in this neighborhood?”

“To come to de p’int, den, Massa,” replied Juniper, “I lone overheered some of de servants sayin’ he had comed back; mighty sly dey was about it, too. An’ so what’s I’s to do but look roun’ an’ find him; and las’ night I peeped into dis sher spring ’ouse, when de moon was shinin’ bright, an’ dare was Hannibal sure enough.”

“Bless me! what’s the reason you did not tell me about it at once,” said cousin Franck.

“Please to b’lieve me, Massa, I was waitin’ for the ’velopments,” replied Jun; “I wanted to see who’d take sides wid him an’ befriend him like,—’parently dare’s prenty of straiters ’bout.”

“You’re a dunce and a fool!” angrily exclaimed cousin Franck, “and you ought to be strung up for your carelessness! What upon earth were you thinking about to let him slip through your fingers in that style?”

“Oh, Massa Cameron,” said Jun, “’scuze me dis time, an’ I’ll be bound I’ll find him if he’s in de land ob de livin’!”

“Find him, and I let it pass,” replied cousin Franck, “but unless you do, you shall answer for your nonsense!” and cousin Franck turned on his heel and was gone.

Juniper remained to explore,—we saw him enter the spring house, and seem to be busy looking for some trace of Hannibal. In trembling anxiety we bent back the shrubbery that we might better watch his movements. At length his quick eyes discovered some crumbs and lint, and with a malicious whistle and chuckle he began to caper and dance.

“Hoot, hi! takes dis chap to come de game! I’ll done have him right smart libely!” and he cautiously looked out of the little apartment as if he almost expected to see Hannibal, then turned back and commenced taking up the floor, to see if he was secreted beneath. He soon found the articles I had hidden there, and exclaimed, as he saw the roll of bedding,

“Hi! you nigger, come out there, d’ye hear? Putty well tucked up in blankets, aint ye? Thought I couldn’t find ye, eh?” and he gave the bundle a kick. “Hi! taint you, nuther!—what be ye?” and he pulled up and opened the bundle, rolling up his eyes in great astonishment, but hastily bestowing it again where he found it, said, “Stay dare, till I calls for ye!”

Having next carefully reconnoitered the outside of the spring house, he bent almost to the ground, and searched carefully for footsteps. These, however, were not so easily

found, the rocky footing being covered with moss. But at length our worst fears seemed about to be realized, for he started suddenly toward the tree, having doubtless perceived the moss to be most broken in that direction. Here he came to a stand, evidently not knowing that it was hollow; the entrance being in the fork of the tree some distance from the ground, it could not be seen without climbing. While he was examining the ground, in order to decide the course of the footsteps, a slave came to call him to his house duties.

"Wy, hi!" exclaimed Juniper, "haint done got half through de hunt? What Massa tinkin' 'bout?" but away he went, knowing that there was no appeal.

Active and anxious were our brains the rest of the day after the discovery of the spring house, as every moment was full of peril. After some deliberation, it was decided that Selma should take advantage of her looks, and journey North as Mrs. Cameron, with Mima as her maid, and that Hannibal should take passage at the same time in the character he had already managed so well, namely, as a pedler. The difficulty was to get them aboard the steamer which plied down the Rappahannoc and up Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore.

Night came; our night for work in good earnest. We were still in a state of excitement, although apparently calm and self-possessed; and one of the employments of the afternoon, as if in girlish frolic, was a candy-scrape. The boat would pass the nearest landing, at three o'clock, and as it was a three hours' drive to this place, it would be necessary to start at twelve. At half past eleven Mima gave the signal to Hanni-

bal. Cautiously leaving his retreat, he gained the stables, and quietly preparing the horses and carriage, very slowly proceeded down the avenue, stopping in the deep shade of embowering trees. Here he was joined by Selma and Mima; Ruth and myself also took passage for the purpose of taking back the carriage. To muffle as much as possible the rumbling of the wheels, the horses were walked until we were some distance from the house, and then away we went at as fast a pace as the fat animals could be urged.

The night was cloudy, and the moon mostly obscured; this was to us a good omen. But I cannot describe to you our suspense and excitement. Very often we fancied the clattering of horses' hoofs could be heard behind us, but as often hushed our forebodings, after a few moments patient listening, with the assurance that it was only the effect of our fears. But little was said by any of us, for every thought was swallowed up in anxiety for the result, and the fear which paralyzed our hearts to the semblance of stoicism when silent, almost unnerved us when we gave it utterance. We had gone over more than two-thirds of the distance, and were just beginning to be somewhat more hopeful as to the issue, when again we thought we heard the sound of a distant gallop. We listened in breathless suspense; our ears detected but too distinctly, the tramp of horses. It was a dreadful moment. What could we do? Hannibal, however, who had started his horses to their utmost speed, suddenly turned into an old corn-field, almost covered with pines, and after winding about among them, halted behind a grove.

"Now we may manage to elude them, if they have left the dogs behind," said Hannibal, "but we shall be too late for the boat. Let me see, however; yes, I know where we are, only two miles from the river across the fields, and we can easily walk that distance; we have no time to lose." With hasty farewells, Ruth and I bid them God speed on their journey. They had been hidden from our view by the pines only a few moments, when we heard the baying of the hounds. In an instant more, the three dogs sprang into the covert of bushes. Ruth and I had just fastened the horses and entered the carriage, when the dogs, with loud vociferations, smelt around the vehicle, and set off at full speed after their game.

Juniper's disagreeable whistle and chuckle now fell on our ears, and we heard him say,

"Dare, Massa, I done told you so! Lor', we'll grab 'em right smart quick!" then, looking into the carriage—for the moon now shone brightly,—"Wy, hi! if here aint de young ladies! Who under the canopy had the 'resumption to tote ye off here, now?" Conceive our astonishment when we discovered Juniper's companion to be Mr. Oglethorpe! You can judge how rapidly our former high regard for him changed into anger and supreme contempt.

The dogs soon yelped and barked, in tones that indicated they had come up with our flying friends, and we heard the voice of Hannibal, as he attempted to keep them at bay. It was heart-rending to think they must be taken, when a single half hour would probably have made them free forever. I could not feel reconciled. My heart was seething with

thoughts that almost consumed me, and Ruth was well nigh overcome with the intensity of her emotions. Mr. Oglethorpe came forward, and spoke to us in his usual gentlemanly manner, when we heard Mima scream, and begged him to see that the dogs did no harm. When we reached the scene of conflict, Hannibal, besides ordering off the dogs, had bound and disabled Juniper, and was ready for a start.

"Well done, well done! young man," exclaimed Mr. Oglethorpe. "You have won your freedom, and shall have it, and Selma and Mima too. But there is no time for words. The first thing is to make sure of the boat. Get into the carriage; you may yet reach the river in time." The horses were soon at the top of their speed. Mr. Oglethorpe entered fully into the plan of operations, and expressed the most entire confidence that Selma would readily pass for a Southern lady, travelling with her servant.

To us, the mystery of Mr. Oglethorpe's character was deepened by this new development. During the short, rapid ride to the river, not a word escaped him that served to solve it; and we had no courage to invade the sad reserve, in which he has always moved, as if in an enchanted circle. But it was plainly seen in his manner, and especially in his countenance, that powerful emotions were contending within.

On reaching the landing, the boat had not arrived, and was not due under about half an hour. Mr. Oglethorpe seemed much relieved, and exclaimed,

"Thank God! I shall then have time!" Then, approaching Selma and taking her hand, he said, with thick utterance,

"Years ago you had two little brothers, William and Wallace,—do you remember them?"

"Remember them!" exclaimed Selma, "my poor darling brothers!—the victims of the rice swamps!" and she burst into tears.

"Selma, I am William! your own brother William!" ejaculated the mysterious stranger, in accents that attested the truth of his words.

"My brother! My William!" gasped Selma; then, gazing into his face for a moment, she threw herself upon his neck, and wept as if the fountains of her heart were broken up. That deep gaze had read a brother's heart with the certainty of aroused instinct.

"My brother was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found," she at length recovered herself sufficiently to articulate. The first paroxysm of excitement over, hurried questions and explanations followed.

"Poor Wallace!" said Mr. Oglethorpe in reply to Selma's inquiry respecting him, "poor Wallace! his proud spirit could not yield to its servile position. He was literally butchered at the whipping-post, to break him in. About a year after we were sold, on returning at night faint and weary from the field, I found him in an old out-house, weltering in blood. As I called his name, he feebly opened his eyes and asked for drink. I ran for water. When he had drank he revived somewhat, and said,

"'They've killed me, William; pray to God that I may meet our dear mother in heaven.'

"I tried to pray, and Wallace joined audibly and fervently in the petition; but when I arose from the ground, his troubled spirit had fled. O, the desolateness of that hour! I was yet beside the body, when my master arrived from Mobile, his city residence, accompanied by a stranger.

"'Just what I expected,' exclaimed he, with a look of regret, when he saw that Wallace was dead; 'these overseers can't break the youngsters in, without killing them. But it's no earthly use to say a word; a man must take the world as he finds it. Come, Oglethorpe, what will you say for William?—the price we were talking about?'

"'Yes,' replied the stranger; 'and I regret I did not close the bargain before, and save the life of that boy.'

"I now found myself transferred to a new master, and was not long in discovering that it was a happy change. Mr. Oglethorpe was about fifty years old, and unmarried. He was alone in the world, having lost every near relative by death. His countenance was a true index of his kind and generous heart. He was like a father to me; and within a short time gave me free papers, subsequently adopted me as his son, and removed farther North, with the view to my education. In process of time I honorably graduated at the University of Virginia, and then accompanied my adopted father to Europe. Dying a few months ago, he left me sole heir to a princely fortune; unencumbered, however, with slaves, he having long since set them free.

"I can never be grateful enough to the overruling Hand that took me from the grasp of slavery; neither can I repay

the debt more properly, than by spending my income in freeing my enslaved brethren, and in educating and providing for them when free. But there is the steamer. We must part for the present. I shall soon meet you at the North, where a happy home, I trust, awaits us. Let me hear from you immediately on your arrival. In the mean while, take this purse; it will meet all present contingencies."

"There is hardly time to thank you," said Selma; "but there is a secret which you should know before we separate. Our father, Henry Hartley, remembered you in his will, having doubtless learned the fact of your freedom; but after his decease, Regina, discovering the supplement, destroyed the will, as she supposed. I found it in the grate, not essentially injured, and immediately enclosed it in a bottle, and buried it. You will find the bottle at the foot of the Willow tree that overshadowed the green cabin, on the east."

"It is of no consequence,—I shall never lay claim to any part of Mrs. Cameron's ill-gotten possessions," replied Oglethorpe, bitterly. "But how came Henry Hartley to remember me in his will?"

"People generally said he was deranged," replied Selma. At this moment the boat stopped at the landing, and he handed his sister on board, Hannibal and Mima following. In a moment more the steamer was on its way.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XIX.

THE WILL.

WILLOW CREEK, Va., Oct. 1, 18—.

DEAR S.—It was nearly sunrise when we reached home. Juniper was perfectly nonplussed, and did not venture a word during the ride. We all knew he would soon make up this want of volubility. Ruth and I were nervously solicitous that he keep silence, but Mr. Oglethorpe was quite easy on the subject. Indeed, the dark cloud seemed to have been lifted from his heart, and a sunshine let in to which he had before been a stranger.

"Juniper," said cousin Franck, as we sat down to breakfast, the morning of our return, "you may leave the room." "That servant," he continued, as Juniper disappeared, addressing Mr. Oglethorpe, with an agitation of manner that he vainly endeavored to conceal, "is so full of deception, that I never know what part of his stories to believe. Why, he assures me that he found Hannibal; that he started in pursuit; that you went with him to help take the fugitives; that, on arriving at the place where they were secreted, you joined hands with them, and leaving him fast bound, carried them to the landing; but of course I don't listen to such nonsense;"

and cousin Franck laughed faintly, as if he thought there might be some shadow of truth in it.

"He is mainly correct," said Mr. Oglethorpe, as coolly as if assenting to some metaphysical abstraction.

"I cannot believe it," said Regina, excitedly. Rosalie turned pale.

"In Juniper's eagerness to set out on so commendable an expedition," Mr. Oglethorpe continued, "what does he do, but propose to me to join the chase? I at once acceded, with the determination of doing a good deed,—of righting, as far as possible, a very great wrong. God do so to me, and more also, if I help not him that hath no helper, when it is in my power to do so."

Madam Regina's eyes flashed. Her profound reverence for her guest was plainly fast waning.

"Mr. Oglethorpe," outspoke Franck Cameron, "you are well bred in the usages of society; a guest in the enjoyment of our hospitalities; and yet, Sir, according to your own avowal, a —— I will not apply the epithet sir—but——"

"Allow me, Mr. Cameron, to explain myself and my conduct," replied Mr. Oglethorpe, with his wonted dignity. "My true name is not Oglethorpe, but Hartley. I am the son of the late Henry Hartley, of North Carolina."

"The son of Henry Hartley!" vehemently exclaimed Regina, half rising from her chair and gesticulating with her lame hand, "you lying imposter! my father had no other child but myself,—I tell you I am his only heir!"

"Did not your father have four slave children?" calmly asked Mr. Oglethorpe.

"What then, Sir?" exclaimed Madam Regina, with a dark frown, and an agitation that made her tremble violently.

"Your father, Mrs. Cameron," added Mr. Oglethorpe, "executed a will in favor of one of his slave sons. The attempt to destroy that will was unsuccessful; it is now in existence!"

At these words, Regina became ghastly pale, and swooned in her chair. Cousin Franck, Ruth and myself hastened to assist her. She was carried to her room, and soon revived. Franck endeavored to calm her excitement, and expressed his regret that she had allowed her feelings to betray her into rude language. "Besides," added he, "it is possible that we may be in Oglethorpe's power. I confess to some fears that that will may yet make us more trouble; for it is well known that such a will was left by the old man, and though the public voice pronounced him crazy, yet it might not be so easy to establish the fact, against a claimant of such ample resources. But can it be possible that that will is still in existence? Did you not assure yourself of its destruction?"

"Why yes, I supposed I did," replied Regina, in a tone materially depressed from its late wrathful imperiousness; "but I confess, that, beyond throwing it into the fire, I gave myself no farther concern, as I had not the least idea the matter would ever be thought of again. But what can this mean? Even supposing the will was not destroyed at the

time, what earthly possibility is there of its being in existence after this long lapse of years?"

"I will talk with Oglethorpe again on this point," replied cousin Franck. "But do you remain in your room. Your health requires rest and quiet."

Cousin Franck having returned to the diningroom, inquired of Mr. Oglethorpe if the will of which he had spoken was in his possession.

"It is not," replied that gentleman; "I have but recently learned its existence, and the place of its deposit."

"Are you quite sure you have not been hoaxed?" asked cousin Franck.

"Without more delay," replied Mr. Oglethorpe, "I will take measures to ascertain how the matter stands, for your satisfaction. I will start for North Carolina to-morrow."

"And if you wish it, I will accompany and assist you in your researches," said cousin Franck.

"I thank you, it will not be necessary," replied Mr. Oglethorpe; "if the document is in existence, I shall have no difficulty in finding it. Let me, however, assure you that I hold myself responsible for the full price of the escaped servants, at your own appraisal.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

LETTER XX.

RUTH'S SACRIFICE.

WILLOW CREEK, Va., Oct. 15, 18—.

DEAR S.—Two or three days after the escape of the servants, Ferdinand T. paid a visit to Willow Creek. Ruth was delighted to welcome him; but a dark trial has overshadowed the joy of the high-souled girl. Mr. T. felt that the time had arrived when he ought to receive the answer so long deferred. If she ever consented to marry him, it was his hope she would do so now. In entering upon such a relation, she clearly saw what was before her. She must become the mistress of servants for life; and although the struggle between conscience and affection well nigh rent soul and body asunder, her convictions of duty were triumphant. With a breaking heart, she told him that they must part forever! In vain were his endeavors to change her resolution. Ruth could not yield up her sense of right, and he could not consent to sacrifice his social position, by acceding to her wishes in the premises. Kind and generous as he is in many respects, yet in depth of conviction, and readiness to suffer, he is far enough from the martyr standard.

"Henceforth, life will be a desert to me," said he, as he

took her hand at parting; "it might have been a Paradise." Ruth ventured no reply, save,

"God bless you! farewell!" She then came up to my room, and watched him as he mounted his horse, and rode slowly away. She did not weep,—her grief was too deep for utterance.

Yesterday was Ruth's birthday; she being eighteen summers old. She has come in possession of her estate, in accordance with a proviso in her father's will. It is a time of perplexity and embarrassment, as her father-in-law, mother, and Rosalie are almost incessantly advising her to waive the purpose she has formed of freeing her slaves. Singular as it may seem, from a child such has been her determination, as soon as they were hers by law. The family interpose so many obstacles, that it is hardly possible to make a movement. She is, however, firmly resolved; only waiting a day or two, to be assured as to the most judicious course.

How refreshing it is to see one wholly intent on doing right! Ruth never seemed so fascinating and lovely as now. Her Heavenly Father is choosing her in the furnace of affliction. She has now relinquished one dearer to her than life itself; the approbation of her friends has long lain a sacrifice upon the altar.

"It seems," said she, thoughtfully and tearfully, "as if I now knew the meaning of the passage, 'sorrowful yet rejoicing.' With all my saddened emotions, I have great peace—a sweet consciousness of having done right. I shall free those poor people whom the law falsely calls *mine*. It should not be

deferred one day even; for should I die, they must wear their chains for life. Free papers must be made out at once;" and she left the room to see her resolution put in force.

Rosalie is in a very excited state,—the image of Mr. Oglethorpe is continually before her, and she loves to think of him as he stood in her esteem, before assisting the servants in their audacious escape. She insists he is temporarily insane, fancying himself the son of Henry Hartley. As for the will, that is only a fabrication of his diseased brain!

Cousin Franck has seemed to grow more and more dispirited daily. He often walks the room for hours together in moody silence. It is evident he does not care so much for the loss of his property, but every new trouble has seemed to render Regina more testy and overbearing, until the poor man is compelled to feel that he is only a convenient appendage to her slave establishment. His thoughts more frequently revert to the home of his childhood, to his excellent mother, whose feelings were so deeply wounded by his connection with slavery. I verily believe the old homestead farm, now looks to him like an Eden, and that it would constitute his highest happiness to spend the remainder of his days on its free soil, and amid its peaceful scenes.

Indeed, shall I proclaim my enthusiastic folly? Well, don't laugh at me,—but I have already written a letter to aunt Clara, suggesting the possibility that her misguided, but still loved and only son, might be induced to return to the North. How would it relieve me, if I could see Philip Augustus, Washington and little Clara, delivered from the de-

moralizing influences of slavery, and subjected to the plastic force of aunt Clara's firm but gentle hand!

We often hear from Isabel T.,—she is soon to be married to a wealthy planter. Her friends are generally delighted, and congratulate her on her brilliant prospects. I would rather a thousand times be in the condition of our dear Ruth

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS

LETTER XXI.

THE ADJUSTMENT—ITS RESULT.

WILLOW CREEK, Oct. 24, 18—.

DEAR S.—Mr. Oglethorpe returned three days ago. You may be sure the interest in our household was most intense. Even the servants participated in it. They had heard now and then a word dropped which set their combustible hearts on fire. Almost any change in the fortunes of the family is sure to affect their condition either favorably or adversely; and these poor creatures, like the unfortunate always, are too apt to feel as if a change necessarily involved a good. In the present case, however, their most sanguine anticipations bid fair to be more than realized.

For the first two days after Mr. Oglethorpe's return, he was shut up most of the time—the first day indeed until after midnight,—in close privacy with cousin Franck and Regina. Of course, I am not able to furnish the particulars of what transpired, excepting that the signed and crumpled will was produced, and a large pile of attested documents bearing on the case. During the first day, Regina, whenever she appeared, exhibited evidence of most intense excitement. Yesterday, though the excitement had not disappeared, yet she

seemed like another woman. In truth, my sympathies were strongly enlisted for her, her pride and passion which had towered so loftily of late, appearing so broken and subdued. I really think that her conscience has for some time been violently disturbed, and that her internal struggles have been the source of much of her overbearing and passionate demeanor. Her feelings have plainly been in a moral crisis. Of course, I cannot say how radical or permanent the change may be, but I hope for the best, for she now confesses to a deep sense of wrong, and has assented to cousin Franck's making such arrangement in relation to the estate, as he and Mr. Oglethorpe can agree upon.

In fact, matters have been definitely and amicably settled this afternoon, and in such a way as I know will give you as much joy as it has Ruth and myself.

Cousin Franck relinquishes the estate to Mr. Oglethorpe, with its debts and incumbrances, and receives in return a sum sufficient for the purchase of a first-rate New-England farm, — in fact, a full equivalent. Mr. Oglethorpe was anxious to bring about this result, as it would enable him not only to free the slaves, but to draw his sister Regina with her family from the pestiferous atmosphere of the South.

Adieu,

POCAHONTAS.

P. S. Oct. 26. I have detained this letter a few days, until I could communicate something definite as to our removal. Yesterday we received two letters from the North, —

one from Selma, giving an account of her safe arrival in Amherstburg, Canada, the house of Fayette. Our hearts, I assure you, have been made glad. Even cousin Franck and Regina sympathize with us in our joy. Do you wonder that I often find myself saying to Ruth, "Is it not all a delicious dream, cousin?" But the dear girl, so deeply religious in all her feelings and views, is calm in her highest joy, and loves to dwell on the words,

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

The other letter was from aunt Clara, inviting the family to visit the old homestead, and expressing the wish that they might be willing to make it their permanent home. It is already decided to leave for the North one week from tomorrow. Mr. Oglethorpe, however, will remain until he has settled up affairs here, and will then, without further delay, rejoin us around aunt Clara's hearth stone. The arrangements subsequent to that, you will of course know, without any further Virginia letters. I will just add, however, that wherever Mr. Oglethorpe fixes his beautiful New-England home, Selma will constitute one of its noblest attractions, and Hannibal, it is intended, shall be intimately associated with it.

Until I have the pleasure of introducing to you our peerless Ruth, Adieu. P.

FINIS.