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BLOOD

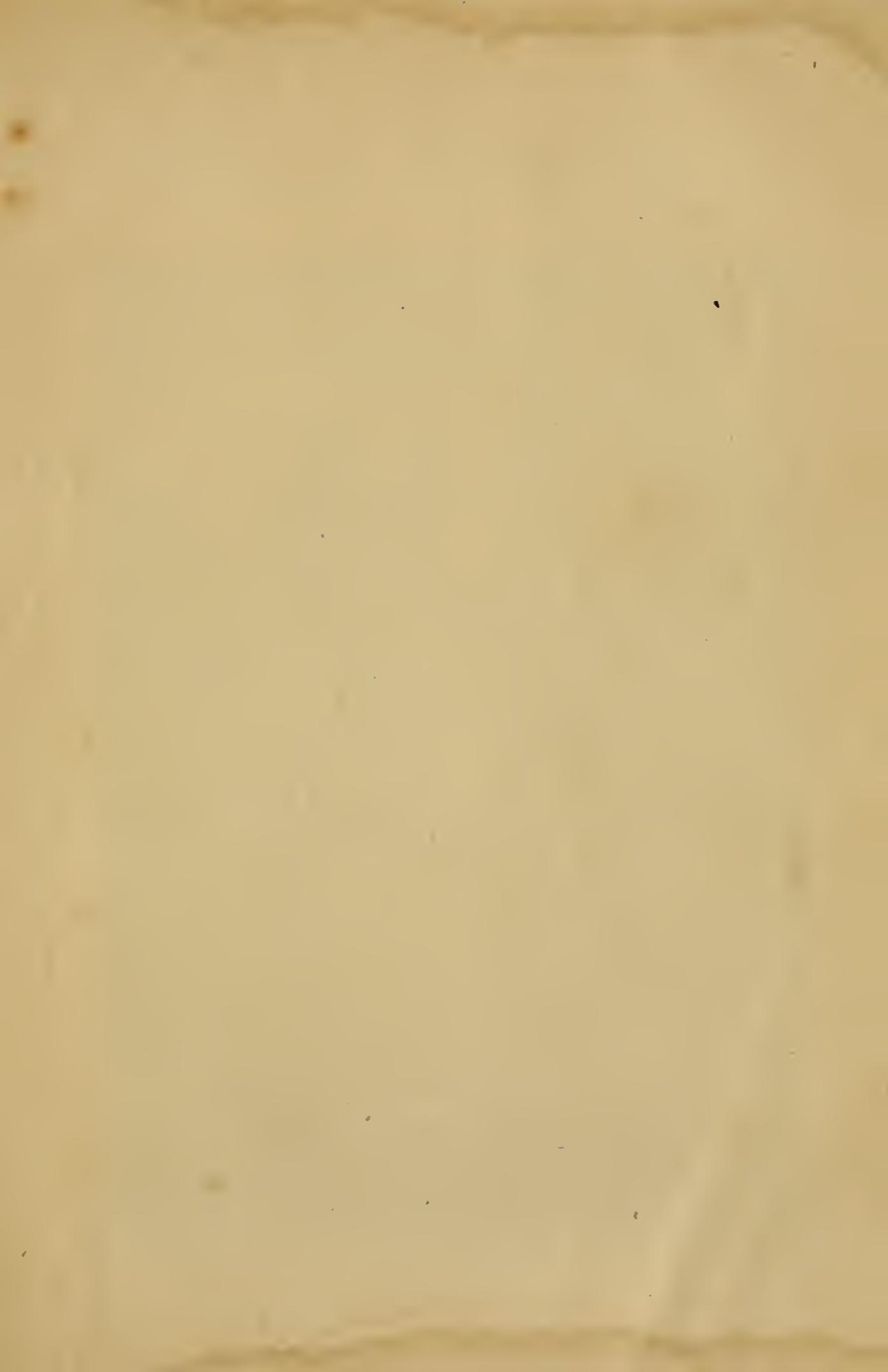
The title "BLUE BLOOD" is rendered in a highly decorative, gold-colored serif font. The letters are filled with a fine, stippled texture. The word "BLUE" is on the top line, and "BLOOD" is on the bottom line. The letter "B" in "BLOOD" is particularly large and ornate, with a vertical line extending downwards. The word "BLOOD" is partially overlaid by a large, intricate floral flourish that starts from the right side of "BLUE" and extends across the top of "BLOOD". The entire design is set against a dark, textured background.

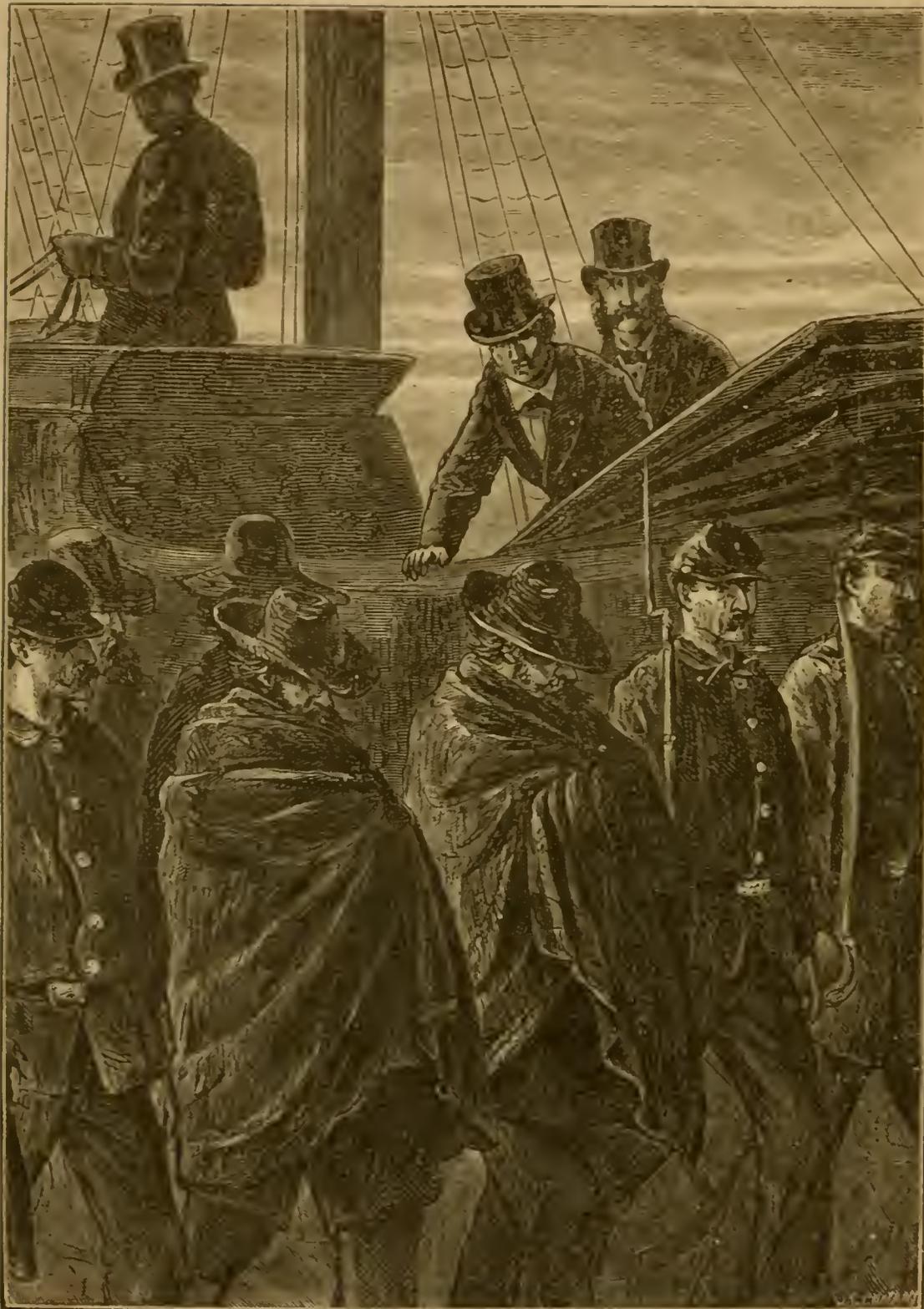
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TIMES REVENGES.

BLUE BLOOD;

OR,

WHITE MAY AND BLACK JUNE.

BY

LEON DANDE.



BOSTON :

HENRY L. SHEPARD & CO.

1877.

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1877.

WHITE MAY, AND BLACK JUNE.

CHAPTER I.

YOUNG Haywood had just returned from the races. He had thrown the reins of his panting horses to the groom awaiting him on the pavement.

The haughty clash of his heel on the heavy staircase rang through the lofty hall, and as the double step of his companion and himself approached his chamber, the door opened widely, as if in instinctive obedience to his desire.

It closed after them; its oaken violence restrained by a hand that guided it noiselessly to the threshold.

The waxed floor stretched away to the small squares of sunlight which had found their way through gables, dormer windows, towers and turrets, — and at last lay sleeping on the polished surface.

Ralph's petted hounds stretched their weary limbs to rest, half buried in the mossy roses of a rich rug just spread for their use, and young Lord Malvern speedily settled himself in a high backed easy chair.

"Damn this belt!" rang out on the stillness. "March! take these pistols!"

"Yes sir! pardon! here are letters sir." And the faithful servant took the pistols with one hand, while he proffered, the letters with the other.

"O Jupiter! and all the gods of Olympus! — letters! March are you mad? Bring wine before letters! — Fill the brimming goblet! *Ensuite* the dressing room, and then *mon valet-de-chambre m'apportez mes billets.*"

Ralph addressed Lord George deferentially. "A gentleman of the turf needs have his nerves braced by the spirit of the vine, before he undertakes the literary career of perusing missives from 'Vaucluse,' and Pedee plantations. Take a bumper yourself, my lord! This wine has seen age! One should be wiser as well as wittier, for its potations!"

Glass after glass was drained to its purple depths, till its effervescence gleamed in their glowing cheeks. Weariness and fatigue were chased away, by the insidious balm which crept through the veins, and lulled irritability of nerves. Ideas such as only rank and chivalry can sport, were advanced and discussed.

These floated forth on their winy breath like blown bubbles, tinged with all the hues of the Iris. The young English lord, and the American cavalier had become the Autocrats of all vulgar destinies. Races, operas, theatres, universities, thrones, governments, principalities and powers were brought upon the docket, and each in parliamentary turn were laid on the table."

"Betting ran high to-day," said Ralph. "A mint of money changed hands."

"Yes; the day was fine, and the track in good order. These races were gotten up by a few mutual friends, not so much for the purpose of speculation, as to enjoy a little hearty recreation."

"*Au contraire*, the stakes amounted to twenty-five thousand dollars; single purses from two to five thousand dollars."

"Doubtless; after a few heats, blood is up! Races and purses are married facts; but who is the owner of that spirited silver grey stallion in the three mile heat?" questioned Lord Malvern.

"'Greylock' is mine! I am happy to acknowledge myself the master of *mon bel arabe*," replied Haywood, proudly.

"He has fine spirit and action. He passed the winning post a full length ahead of his competitor," said his companion, flatteringly.

"Aye; my lord! and 'Greylock's' rider has a superior system of jockeying. An English jockey from Epsom races. If money would have purchased his swarthy Arab master for 'Greylock's' back, I would set the world at defiance.

"Is he true Arabian blood?"

"Pure as the dews distilled on Hermon. Last winter, after

being dubbed 'Savant' at *L' Universite*, and packing books out of sight, I took a trip over the Mediterranean to Alexandria, Cairo, and the Pyramids. I brought back the beauty, fairly tearing him from one of the chiefs of the desert!"

"'Dusty Bay's' owner was an American?"

"Yes; a Georgian. 'Dusty Bay' was shipped to my friend from California — fine blood; trim, flinty limbs; contesting every inch of ground. Lapped 'Greylock' on the outward stretch, but broke badly on the home run."

"Both came in at a killing gait; but Ralph, my friend, did you observe the dodge of 'Dusty Bay's' jockey? He is a live Yankee! He gave 'Greylock's' jockey a sly, sharp cut over the head, as he passed at the draw gate."

"Holy God! where were my eyes? That cursed Austrian called my attention with his rattling tongue; else the 'live Yankee' would have fallen from his saddle as a blasted fig falls from the branch. That would have been his last race!"

"But your fleet Arab might have fallen."

"Nay, Lord George! my pistol never misses aim. Have had experience on the plains, and among the marshes of Carolina! Have brought down slave-runaways on the leap, as easily as your best hunters mark deer in English parks! Trained to it, you see! We Southerners must be good shots! Sharp gunnery is one of the defences of our 'peculiar institutions.' That kind of practice *makes* a man a shot!"

"You have steeple-chases in America, then, with some purpose in view," interposed Lord George.

"We have rare game to lure us to pursuit. A sort of African hybrid, which has no particular cover peculiar to itself, such as other animals have."

"The loss of such game, I suppose, is not merely the loss of a haunch of vension, or a tidbit for an epicurean table; but the loss of so much funds invested?"

"Ah! There you have it, my lord!" and Ralph paced the ringing floor with consequential strides, every step giving emphasis. "There you have it! Slave-hunting in South Carolina among the piny woods and brier-jungles, is like hunting gold in water-courses, or diamonds in Brazil. Every capture puts in your pocket a cool *one*

thousand, or fifteen hundred. Mais, pardonnez-moi! I remember the British are being converted by the cant of one Wilberforce, and, perhaps to your English ear, my lord, a conversation on deer hunting would be more *au fait* to the times."

"Ah! as to that matter, have no delicacy in expressing your sentiments. Every nation to its taste; but, by the way, do you in America, number deer hunting among your field sports?"

"By the gods! Diana herself could claim no richer hunting-ground.—You should see some of our forest pictures! You should see the deer standing in groups beneath our splendid live oaks, tossing their antlers among the long grey moss curtaining their coverts; or coming in pairs to drink in some shadowy pool of water; or bounding away amid thickets of vines and fan palms!—It touches my heart, I swear, to hear the hounds baying after the graceful things!"

"What are your game laws? How do you protect game from your negroes and other trespassers?"

"Game laws and negroes? Why, my lord, we have no necessity for game laws. Slaves have no arms, neither do they leave their quarters without passes from their masters; and as to poachers, there are none. Southerners never trespass on each other's rights; and when strangers come among us who are not in sympathy with our institutions, they are ordered out of the State.—March, you scoundrel, bring more wine!"

The two greyhounds, roused by the animation of Haywood's manner, rose from their bed of roses, and at unequal distances sleepily followed his walk up and down the long floor, stopping at every turn to look him in the face, as if to question his mood, and say, "what next?" The long mirrors on the four walls of the room repeated the scene, till the multiplied master and hounds appeared like the gathering in court of some ancient feudal castle, preparatory to a grand gala-hunt.

"Flash! *ma belle!* Dash! *mon brave!* take your rug! If the race had been decided by your fleet limbs, I should have swept the stakes. Rest!" and obeying the gesture of his hand, with a whimpering cry of satisfaction, they trotted back to their couch again.

Ralph walked on, repeating with an absent air,—

“My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free.
For that’s the life is meet for me.”

The patches of the sunlight crept farther up the floor, and lord Malvern, ready to depart, stood dallying with the fresh blossoms of the “jardiniere.”

“Haywood, shall you go to the French opera to night?”

“What is the programme?”

“*La Dieu et la Bayadere*; then, a new star upon the boards! The first dancer of the world!—a childish creature!—Looks not more than fifteen.”

“Have you seen *Mademoiselle la dansuese*?”

“Twice. You would go into raptures,—figure perfectly rounded,—feet and hands of delicate, artistic proportions,—fresh as an apple bloom, and timid as a half-tamed gazelle.”

“What is her motion?”

“Language fails! She swims before you like a wreath of mist ready to float away at a breath—yet so unconscious of her rare powers, and with such innocent purity in every look and attitude, that one grants her respect and admiration. I will drive round, for the pleasure of your company.”

The door again opened under the dexterous hand of March, and his visitor departed. Ralph took the opposite direction to the dressing room. followed at a respectful distance by the faithful servant who should now attend the master’s caprices in that department.

At five o’clock, the door of the little dining-room was gracefully opened by the same dark hand, and young Haywood passed through. At table, he was unusually irritable and fastidious. March, accustomed to the uneven temper of his master, served him with attentive silence. The meal leisurely over, he repaired to the drawing-room, and ordered the letters, which were brought to him on a silver waiter. He broke the seal roughly, and in-

stantly recognized the familiar chirography of his guardian uncle.

“‘*Ubique patriam reminisci*’ is forced upon me. Here in this folded paper is *lex terrae,—lex talionis*, in due form. I like the latter, by Jove!” and he made the swift motion of crushing the letter. Thinking better of it, he said, “No, I’ll read. *Loyaute m’oblige.*”

The letter follows :

Pedee, S. C., Nov. 18th, 183—

MY DEAR RALPH,—Your letter of July last was duly received. In that, you give the time of the closing of the University, and coincident with that event, will be the termination of your student life. After so many years of absence, our hearts are waiting to welcome you to our homes and social festivities. The broad lands which are your paternal estate, are awaiting their future master and possessor. South Carolina, the proud State of your ancestors, claims you as her son, and calls you back to your native soil for the maintenance of her honor, and defense of her life against the plotting of fanaticism, and narrow-minded Northern sectionalism.

A few agitators, and incendiaries of Boston, New York and Philadelphia, have recently engaged in some highly reprehensible measures. These wretches speak in open derision of the principles and measures of the American Colonization Society. They profess to be agitated by the benign spirit of Christianity, and advocate immediate emancipation, while they are fiends in disguise. They have brought upon themselves the condemnation of the great mass of the sober friends of gradual emancipation in those very cities, and in the North generally. We have pleasing evidence that the North as a class are with us. We are growing stronger on every side; and in future years these visions of Emancipation will be only myths of the past.

A convention has recently been held in Tennessee for amending their State Constitution; and one *amendment* is a prohibition to the Legislature to abolish slavery. I send you an extract from our *Charleston Courier* of July 21st last past. That paper watches with an “Argus” eye every interest of our beloved State, and therefore its opinions are considered reliable. It says “Public sentiment at the North in reference to *Southern interests* was never in a sounder state than it is now. The language of the Northern press is cheering in the extreme. The feeling in favor of the South and against the Abolitionists is deep and almost universal.”

Still, my dear fellow, as a son of the South, it is necessary you should fortify yourself with a knowledge of the civil and political status of your country. I will therefore state a few facts for your consideration.

Since the abolition of slavery in the Northern States, the whites have discovered to their sorrow the innate, abject character of the African race. Their social and political condition is below the level of that of the slave; but yet their nominal freedom only aggravates the condition of those in bondage. Among the Northern industrial classes these free negroes form the lowest stratum, performing the most menial service, destitute of education, integrity, virtue

and religion. They fill no seats at the free schools. They have no churches of their own, nor do they sit in the sanctuaries of American Christians, who draw down from the Supreme Being all national blessings. Without moral character, through licentiousness on their own part, and the Northern mania for amalgamation, they are fast degenerating into a mongrel race of mulattoes, hovering between the two races,—the scum of both. With this warning before the eyes of Northern statesmen and philanthropists, the wise course of the "Colonization Society" is cordially adopted,—that of freeing the country of this intolerable stigma by sending the free negroes out of it, and keeping the remainder of the race within the wholesome restrictions of slavery. As I said before, these earnest and sober-minded men, guided by religion instead of fanaticism, are putting down these new-fledged Anti-Slavery societies, deeming their action as treason towards the government

On the 6th of March of this year, the "Colonization Society" of Middletown, Conn., passed this resolution: "Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting it is the duty of every philanthropist to discountenance and oppose the efforts of Anti-Slavery societies." The Hon. T. Frelinghuysen of New Jersey says in a speech, "We owe it to ourselves not to remain silent spectators, while this *wild fire* is running its course. We owe it to those misguided men, (the Abolitionists), to interpose and save them and their country from the fatal effects of their mad speculations." In the organ of the "Colonization Society," a friend of the South writes, "Is it possible that our citizens can look quietly on, while the flames of discord are rising? while even our pulpits are sought to be used for the base purpose of encouraging scenes of bloodshed in our land? If we do, can we look our Southern brethren in the face and say we are opposed to interfering with their rights? No, we cannot."

A collection of earnest men, to the number of three thousand strong, proceeded to vindicate the honor of the American name by assaulting the residence of Lewis Tappan, an accursed Abolitionist, in New York City. They attacked it with bricks and stones. The doors, windows, blinds and shutters were soon demolished, after which the furniture was broken up and a bonfire made of it in the streets; a blaze which may well enlighten the understanding of Tappan and his co-workers. Afterwards they proceeded to the churches, dwellings and school-houses of the city negroes, demolishing them with commensurable zeal, thus affording a just rebuke to these nascent disturbers of the country's peace.

There, my nephew are the favorable signs of the times; and although this new race of Abolitionists possesses neither rank nor fame, still, like the insignificant worms which slowly eat out the strength of many a noble hull, if left to their insidious workings, these vermicular souls may work leakage and danger to our ship of State, till its now harmonious and beautiful proportions topple over, forever. One contemptible fellow, called Garrison, leads off this rebel crew in Boston. Let him once come to Charleston. The gleam of a thousand bowie-knives would light his way to Hades! Georgia has already set a price upon his head. GARRISON WILL NEVER SET HIS FOOT UPON THE SHORES OF CAROLINA.

I will mention another movement auspicious to Southern interests. The State of Louisiana, owing to the extension of sugar cultivation, and a demand for more labor, has repealed the law prohibiting the importation of slaves from

other States. She is now importing multitudes from Maryland and Virginia. Soon after the repeal of the law, two thousand were offered for sale in New Orleans in one single week. These border States, overstocked with a surplus of negroes, will now find in their exportation a source of revenue which will place them in a condition of the highest prosperity. Spite of the declarations of Jefferson, of the emancipation sentiments of Patrick Henry, and of John Randolph's assertion that Virginia is impoverished by slavery, these states, with this new outlet, will suddenly rise to new wealth and power. You will also be pleased to know that Georgia has lost no jot or tittle of the high-toned self-respect which marks her record in the past. The *Augusta Chronicle* says, "We firmly believe that if the Southern States do not quickly unite and declare to the North, if the question of Slavery be longer discussed in any shape, they will instantly secede from the Union. That the question must be settled, and very soon, by the sword, as the only possible means of self-preservation."

So furbish up your arms, my boy. They may yet glitter valiantly on the field of battle.

Now, Ralph, as I have not time to remark further on the policy of American affairs, a slight allusion to another subject may be no less important, and perchance agreeable. Your early friend and playmate, Grace Mowndes, has budded into charming girlhood; and when your name is mentioned the most delicate rose-tint imaginable springs to her cheek, telling all too plainly the sweet secret of her heart. Surrounded by admirers, she turns from them all indifferently. No one has gained the light of her eye or the truth of her smile. Your white rose is drooping. Come home, my boy. Transplant it to the fair halls and love bowers of "Vaucluse," to be your joy forever. Aside from this view of the matter, Grace's marriage dower added to your estate would give you a princely income, and raise you above all future anxieties and misfortunes.

This is a long letter, sir,—but comfort yourself that no reply is demanded—only your presence as soon as your affairs in Paris can be brought to an honorable close. You should receive per this mail a letter from your bankers, Messrs. Kershaw & Lewis, forwarding your quarterly remittance, with a sketch of the present condition of your crops, lands and incomes. Wishing you a prosperous voyage, I am, as ever,

Your affectionate uncle,

EDWARD LA BRUCE.

Ralph still held the open letter. "There!" he exclaimed, with a gathered frown, "I've waded through that damned labyrinth of politics, slavery, emancipation, rose-colored lilies and domestic responsibilities, neck-deep!"

His head sank back on the easy headpiece of the fauteuil in which he sat; his boots still rested on a chair opposite, indenting the satin seat, gay with woven *fleurs de lis*. His hand fell by his side, still grasping the hated document which would transform him from the man of leisure to a plotting, scheming landholder, on the secluded banks of the Pedee.

A graver look than was his wont, settled upon his features; his

dark eyes peered fixedly forward into a future so wonderfully mapped out on that single sheet of paper. Thought flew over the water. He stood on the verandah of his childhood. The stately rustle of glossy magnolia leaves fell on his ear. The long rows of negro quarters peeped through distant corn; he listened to the rich, sweet swells of wild melodies from voices that came nearer, and then died away in the woodlands. He hears the busy working of the rice-mill, and sees the snowy heaps of clean grains in the storehouses. Hounds bay among the oaks, and his father's light-drafted sloop lies by the river pier, while stout black figures, clad in homespun, roll heavy tierces aboard.

He stood in his mother's room—but he stood alone. Father and mother were gone. A subdued expression softened his face as he thought of the exchange they had made for this luxurious home. No voice welcomed him but the low, obsequious tones of those who obeyed his commands. No tender pleading persuaded him to stay; but the silent language of unshorn hedges, straggling vines, and dilapidated bowers implored him to return.

The wild rover was beginning to feel a reviving fondness for the old place, when the sharp bark of 'Flash' fell across those soft memories with such a stinging power, that sense and irritation returned. His feet dropped to the floor, and the dreamer stood again among the bewildering reflections of the chandeliers and mirrors of his foreign drawing-room.

Lord Malvern also stood before him, fresh from his evening toilet, *a la theatre*, saying in finest humor,—

“Ready, Haywood? *Voici! des lettres!—une autre charmante divinité?*”

“*Divinite!*” growled Ralph. “*C' est bien!* but wife!—the superlative of *divinite* is damnable!—*Je pense*, to be the responsible companion of trunks, bandboxes, ‘fuss and feathers!’—to be a compulsory actor in the scenes of married life!—My soul revolts! Women *à la theatre—au salon—à l'opera!* Dryads, Nymphs, Nereids for me!—More aggravating still, I am called home from this festive, fascinating France, to become a pillar of South Carolina?”

„With Slavery and State Rights for your pedestal,” rejoined his companion, “and with your liberal foreign culture for the Cor-

inthian Capital, I suppose.— But really, Haywood, you chafe like a war-horse! Examine the other letter — that may prove an antidote for the first.”

Ralph had received too many remittances not to recognize the superscription of his bankers and factors. He was secretly glad to show that an American aristocrat, with his toiling slaves, could exhibit an income approaching that of a titled Englishman with his hereditary domains. He broke the seal and read aloud :

Charleston, S. C., Nov. 2, 183—

RALPH HAYWOOD — Sir,— Enclosed, you will find bill of exchange for your last remittance of five thousand dollars, for the current year, as desired. Also, a hasty sketch of your income and its sources, as follows :

From dividends and interest on bank shares,	\$10,000 86
Amount collected from bonds,	3,942 30
Amount of negro wages,	1,059 70
Lease of “Rose Hill” plantation and negroes,	4,000 00
Lease of “Honey Horn” plantation and negroes,	3,500 00
Net proceeds of 500 whole and 300 half tierces rice,	16,112 00
	38,614 86
Deduct plantation expenses,	8,612 86
	30,002 00

Your most obed't servants,
KERSHAW & LEWIS.

P. S. The pussilanimous monarch, William Fourth, on the first of August, set free every slave in the British West Indies. Return to lend the fire of your patriotism in defence of this same institution, which shall yet make our Republic the glory of the world.

The indignant blood of Lord George mounted to his brow at this unworthy thrust at his king: but with the cool air of good breeding, he simply remarked,—

“Take this last letter as an antidote to the other, my friend; the horses are waiting.”

March stood by, with Ralph's hat and cloak, silently awaiting his pleasure. The two passed out, the prancing of hoofs was heard, and the carriage rolled away.

CHAPTER II.

MASSACHUSETTS, forty years ago, kept her Sabbaths. They were holy days ; seemingly let down from celestial airs at stated septennial periods, and again drawn upward from the old Commonwealth, at the approach of the first hours of the sinful, earthly week. Closed library doors grimly stood guard over their coveted treasures. Flowers bloomed without admirers. It was the privilege of believers to shut their ears to caroling birds, and sighing breezes, and to listen only to the droppings of the Sanctuary. None but church-going wheels traversed the highways, and the few pedestrians walked with sanctified air.

The village of Alderbank lay dreaming in this same Sabbath stupor. Its beautiful river babbled over its rocky bed, to deep, still coves beyond. There it rested, and fancifully dressed itself in the semblance of the steep wooded shore ; borrowing sprays of hemlock, aspen and chestnut to wear on its sheeny bosom.

The dwellers at Alderbank might listen in vain, for other hymn of praise. than that singing river ; they might look in vain, for other brocade richer than its coves ; for, no church laid its foundations there — no spire rose through its unhallowed atmosphere. Avarice had its shrine there, and its sordid devotees.

The very river was made to weave its bales of cotton on other days. These days had their bells whose noisy swinging called alike its waters and its workers from sleep, before the birds began their merry songs, and dismissed them not, till darkness. To-day, this Sabbath day, these noisy mammon bells dreamed also.

In this seemingly Godless hamlet, one small shrine, at least, welcomed the presence of the Divine Father. That shrine was the childish heart of Fanny Beame. Her worship was the happy recognition of God, in all His works. Her most acceptable song of praise was the love she bore to every insect, tree and flower, to the drifting clouds, the sky, and the silver streams. With a wonderful bewilderment of gladness she learned His loving-kindness, and the strange glory of His beneficence, that crowned the natural sur-

roundings within her own narrow horizon. The breezy forest, the blue outline of distant hills, the gleaming shivers of sunlight, fractured to golden, purple and emerald atoms, in passing through a dewdrop, carried her thoughts into His presence, and fixed her faith in the more mysterious working of His plans, where the physical eye cannot follow.

Yet, Fanny Beame, in her innocence and simplicity, knew not that this was adoration of the Creator. She knew that outside of Alderbank, the gospel was preached with prescribed forms of worship, of which she had little understanding. She had read a few stray Sunday-School books, incidentally fallen in her way, of children, seven, ten, or twelve years of age, who had struggled fiercely with sin, and had wrestled daily with God, for justification in His sight. This, the trusting mind of Fanny received as normal truth, which added to an over-modest estimate of herself, seemed to demand an earnest struggle in *her* case, to make her "calling and election sure."

She had also read in "Pilgrim's Progress," of the load which "Christian" carried; and, through her very goodness and simplicity, concluded that her own shoulders should bear a similar burden. Then there was a "Slough of Despond," through which her feet must pass, aweary! Thus was she to set her busy self in following closely all those forms and paths laid out by Bunyan and all holy Christians, since his day. Thus would she find the favor of that Being whose beauty and glory she already, though unconsciously, adored.

These thoughts and inferences were quietly revolved in her private hours of meditation. The pale, dead saints of the past were sacredly set up within the radiant cloisters of her inner soul, overhung with memories of earliest spring blossoms, and shaded by sprays of autumn leaves, glowing with God's love. There, her false idols stood, in gloomy silence, amid a glorious *Te Deum* of bird-carols, brook-whispers, wind-voices, cloud-tones and insect-trills. To-day, therefore, on this Alderbank Sabbath, she would begin to serve God.

Already she had shut herself in a lonely closet, and read several hymns. She had prayed after the manner of those excellent children whose lives so far excelled hers. She had borne a burden of

depravity to the foot of the Cross, and, as usual, looked in vain for a great and sudden light which should be the token of her acceptance into the favor of Him she loved so well. Before leaving the closet, she lifted one corner of the faded curtain, and looked out upon fields gilded by the morning sun. The old happiness in the contemplation of nature, carried her rapt vision to the blue hills beyond. Then indeed, a "great light" beamed on her face, and flooded her eyes! Dropping the curtain, she reflected upon the darkness within, and the brightness without. Surely, she thought, the cause was her own "unbelief." Well, she would ally herself with God's people. Where they went, she would go. Where they sought blessings, she would join her petition.

Therefore, Fanny resolved to ask permission of her mother to walk over to the little brown school-house at the cross-roads, to "meeting." The day was dull and misty, portending rain; but while the other members of the family were absent, while Mrs. Beame was cooking breakfast, and while Fanny was setting the table, she said with a gentle voice, —

"Mother, may I go down to the 'Four Corners,' to-day?"

"Do you want to walk two miles and back, in the rain?"

"I thought it might clear up," Fanny meekly replied, "but we should worship God, if it does rain."

"It would be imprudent to allow you to go down there and endanger your life, to hear those young upstarts preach the duty of other people, when they don't know their own. You are growing more and more foolish every week, Fanny, instead of more sensible."

Fanny went on laying the table, with temper unruffled; cups and "tumblers" slid into their places, as quietly as before. No reply fell from her pleasant lips. During the past year, the Testament had been her daily study; she understood its plain, common-sense, work-day truths, and treasured them in memory, unencumbered by sophisms or expediencies; applying them to all times and seasons, as her judgment dictated.

Now, while her feet went to and fro between pantry and kitchen, she was repeating, —

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

Breakfast was over. Nothing cast a shadow over the moving

hours but the thoughtful face of that mother. She was asking herself,—

“Was she cruel to her only child whom she loved so tenderly? Why must Fanny, so quiet, so obedient, so satisfied with all other restrictions, why must she be so persistently obstinate in these religious vagaries?” She, herself, thought there were few Christians. Had she not suffered mostly from that class who were styled “followers of the Lamb?” Had not their slanders and false accusations made her as an outcast amidst her own friends, and meted out to her a future state of misery among unbelievers? — She had resisted, and would still resist such pharasaical pretensions to being “the children of God.” She was not an infidel! She believed in Christ, but in a more loving Savior than the Orthodox pattern. She believed in her Lord as he was — going about with soiled garments and dusty sandals; healing the sick; giving eyes to the blind; drinking water at the wayside wells; and selecting fishermen for His disciples. She did not believe in Him seated in state, in costly temples, pleased with the mocking worship of those who followed not one of His steps. Doubtless they were rejoicing over her own daughter, as a proselyte to that same false faith. She trusted that in her future life, Fanny would see with clearer eyes, distinguishing good from evil.

It was ten o'clock. Fanny had nearly finished the dishes at the sink, when her mother came past and said,—

“If you will wear my red shawl and green calash, and take an umbrella, you may go to ‘meeting.’ Do you want to go? You will be late.”

“Yes; I can be ready very soon, and walk fast, you know. Better late, than never!”

In a few moments the tall green calash was flying about the room on Fanny's head, while she was in search of her hymn-book. It rose high above the smooth brown hair; and by frequent pranks of falling back, and shutting up like a chaise top, it was seemingly unconscious of its solemn errand. However, by means of its long green taste bridle, now firmly held in hand, it was restored to a more becoming behavior. The large umbrella being held securely by the other hand, a soft “Good-bye, mother,” called the attention of Mrs. Beame; and as the grotesque costume went down

the steps, she laughed in spite of herself, but ended the matter by saying, "Good enough for *such* an expedition."

The raindrops stayed their purpose, while the little feet pattered onward. The red shawl was drawn up into smaller proportions, and the green calash was bridled into a more reverential form, as Fanny arrived at the school-house door.

"Meeting" had commenced. The house was filled, but room was made for the little Pilgrim on one of the high desks against the wall. The preacher was standing with right arm extended, over which hung the graceful folds of a heavy cloak, in most classical style. And why not? Had he not the best Roman and Greek authority of "Dogmah Academy," a few miles away, from which he had that morning emanated on a mission to this benighted people? In years, he seemed to be eighteen or twenty; while in piety, precocity and martyr-spirit he almost put to the blush, the old prophets. His figures and tropes excelled those of Ezekiel. There were wheels within wheels, with such an elaborate phantasmagoria of incident and scenery, as struck awe into the minds of those untutored youths, and sleepy, brown old farmers.

Poor Fanny began to think the heavenly way more difficult even, than she had supposed. Hope almost died within her, till from all that logic and learning broke forth this sentence, "Can you expect, my hearers, to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease?" Hope revived. Seizing upon that idea with her quick imagination and lively perception of the beauty of a "flowery bed," she arrived at the comfortable conclusion that she might be in the right path, as of course, nobody like her, with a green calash, a red shawl, and a large umbrella, could be sailing skyward on flowers. That hereafter she should always so dress that her presence would not be tolerated on *any* "flowery bed of ease." So much had she learned of her future duty.

The exercises were closed by the preacher's colleague, a pale, sickly looking youth, but with infinite strength of lungs, whose voice reverberated against the school-house ceiling, as if the kingdom of Heaven were indeed suffering violence. He at last announced that the "weekly Class" would remain after the audience had retired.

Here was to be a new trial of Fanny's steadfastness. To "speak

in meeting" was a great cross to her timidity, but she had heard, that to win Christ, that cross must be borne. She came off conqueror. She would not be ashamed to "confess religion." She would remain and speak.

Brother Hardstone was class-leader (a man who made his home so bitter, that wife and children were robbed of all peace). Rubbing his hands with zealous fervor, he began singing,—

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow,
The gladly solemn sound!
Let all the nations know,
To earth's remotest bound:
The year of jubilee is come;
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

When some had arisen and testified to their prevailing hours of darkness and dejection, during the past week, and to the soul-trying temptations that had beset their path, and when others had acknowledged the goodness of God in gratifying some peculiar request which had been long delayed, Fanny rose tremblingly, and with downcast eyes, said,—

"I am not ashamed to confess Christ. I desire to serve Him all my life, and I desire that you will all pray for me, that I may prove faithful to the end."

The usual ejaculations of "Bless God!" and "Amen!" having died away, her really heaviest cross was to sit passively and hear the remarks of "Father Hardstone," a leader in whom she had no confidence, and whose abused daughters were her especial friends. But in his usual coarse manner he brayed forth,—

"Keep on, sister. You'll win the golden crown;" and then passed on to another.

"I have no need of a golden crown," thought Fanny. "I only want to serve my Master, here."

After a few other "experiences" and uproarious exhortations, the "class" separated. Fanny's ideas of Christian propriety were somewhat shaken, in passing through a knot of men outside, and catching their conversation.

With the air and tone of satisfaction one feels when an unpleasant task is completed, Father Bradley remarked,—

"Fine prospect of rain, Brother Hardstone."

“Hope we shall get some,” he replied. “Terrible drought.—I’m afeard the corn crop ’ll be a failure.—My pertatur hills ur ez dry ez ’n ash heap.”

“Yes, yes,” chimed in Brother Brown, lugubriously. “It’s a pretty poor look for we farmers, when everything’s a dryin’ up.”

Little Pilgrim hoped to be invited to ride home in some of the rattling wagons, as the clouds looked more lowery, but the dusty work-horses trotted past, shaking their heavy harness, unconscious of any small “class-member” by the wayside. The great flapping blinders prevented a side view, and the pleasant perspective of even a very scant share of Sabbath rest for themselves, urged the tired animals homeward. Fanny walked on, casting loving glances at the mayweed and rabbits-foot throinging the narrow way, and meditating upon the conversation of those farmers at the door.

“Why did they fear the corn crop might fail? Why not trust in God, as they exhorted us all, to-day? How shall we trust him at all, if we do not believe He will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves? We cannot make one corn blade grow, but He can, and I am sure He will.”

Just then she reached a corn field. While listening to its musical rustle, and watching the nodding tassels over the zig-zag rails, a heavy step came up after her and chiming in with hers. She skilfully turned the green calash, and exclaimed,—

“Why, Henry! is that you?”

“Yes, Fanny. But I’m afraid you won’t think so well of me for having this basket of blackberries, to-day.”

“Well, I’m nobody, Henry, to think well or ill of you.”

“You are somebody to me and my Sue. You are the only real friend my children have.”

“Well, I meant to say there is one Lord over all. He sees things in a different light from what men and women do. He might not think it so wrong that you should get some of His blackberries for your supper, as people would.”

“Yes, Fanny, I know. I hope He is different from white folks in New England. If not, I can’t tell why I was made, or any of my race.”

“Why don’t you go to meeting, Henry? Perhaps you would be happier, then.”

"There's three reasons why, and good ones too; but you must not ask me now, for I am afraid its going to rain."

"No, it has not rained yet, and I don't believe it will. If it does, here is my umbrella, and you may have half. Walk slow, and tell me those reasons. I want to know. We are commanded to 'bear each other's burdens,' so let me bear part of yours."

"Burdens!" echoed Henry. "You want to help me carry this basket of blackberries? Me, a great stout man, and you no bigger than a sparrow. When it comes to that, or rains either, I guess you'll be *my* burden, and I'd tote you to your own mother's door and set you down on her steps, as dry as a pin. You're the wonderfulest girl I ever see. You make me laugh, if 't is Sunday, and if my blood *is* all in a boil thinkin' about 'meetins',' Christians and folks."

Fanny perceived her remark was misunderstood, but from an innate tenderness for another's feelings, forbore further explanation; so she said,—

"I understand. You shall carry the blackberries, and me, too, if necessary; but do, Henry, tell me those reasons. Why do you not go to 'meeting?'"

"Because I am black—because we are 'niggers;' and those Yankee Christians are worse than Christians that hold slaves; for I am told that down South the black people go to the same church with their masters, and have the whole gallery, to sit in. Susan and I went once to the Presbyterian church up town, because we thought our stayin' away from meetin' might be our own fault, after all. The people were handsomely dressed, and stood all about on the green before the 'meetin'-house.' There was Deacon Pierson, Farmer Fairly, and Farmer Harker, the man I had worked for and Susan had washed for. They didn't speak to us, and their children just stood and laughed at us, as we walked across the green. At the door, a man told us to sit in a little pew under the stairs. Nobody set near us, but they kept turnin' their heads and smilin' durin' preachin'. When we came out they still kept laughin', and I heard 'them niggers,—them niggers,' whispered all around. Nobody spoke to us, but when we got home, we both held up our hands and vowed we'd never go agin—we would go to destruction

first. They say there is such a place, and it's no worse for us to *choose* to go there, than it is for them to send us."

"Did you say Deacon Pierson and Farmer Harker, Henry? Why, they are missionary men. They collect money to send missionaries to foreign lands, to the heathen."

"Yes, I said them. Horse-jockies and rum sellers treat me better than Christians and respectable people. Yes, I know they are missionary men; for when I worked for them in hay-time, for eight dollars a month, and my children were both sick, they tried to keep back part of my wages, as they said, 'to send the Bible to the heathen.' But I had heathen enough in my own house; and besides, they gave me just half the wages they paid the white hired man, and I eat in the wood-shed at that."

"Well, Henry, I will give Susan my Bible. You can find what the Savior says. It will be a comfort to you."

"Why, bless you, child! neither Susan nor I can read a word. There is no Bible nor Heaven for us colored."

"I thought that minister, Rev. Mr. Pratt, in Connecticut, brought you up."

"He did bring me up, and that was all. He sent me to school two days, but the children hooted at me so, I couldn't stand it. The teacher sent word to Mr. Pratt that she wished I might stay away, I made so much trouble. Then he said he thought black and white ought not to go to the same school, and he believed there was a law against it. He was busy all day writing sermons and making calls; so I did all the plowing, gardening, and every other kind of work, and there was no time for learning, anyhow."

"It seems too much to believe," replied Fanny. "If there was a church in Alderbank, you should sit in our pew, and if they made sport of you and Susan, they should make sport of us, too."

"And so they would. If we *set* with you in church, you would be hated — you would be called 'nigger' as well as we."

"That would not harm us," said Fanny, bravely. "But, Henry, what makes you live in that poor shanty down by the brook? I'd save my money and buy a nice little land and house, and show the town that I had the same rights as they."

"I'll tell you why. In the first place we have to work for half wages. Then we take our pay in provisions and old clothes worth

not more than half what they charge. Then if we had money, nobody would sell us a pleasant or rich spot of land. We may put up a shanty in the backwoods, or down by some marsh, or on the side of some sand-hill, and that's all the foothold on God's earth we can get. There!" said he, turning to look at the sad, thoughtful face beside him, "don't ask me any more questions, Fanny. You won't believe me. I am sorry I overtook you. It makes me feel wicked to think of these things, but I have said nothing but the solemn truth, *before God!*"

Henry, in his earnestness, had stopped before her. To that Being who alone had any mercy in store for him, he raised his ragged right arm and helpless black hand, and slowly repeated,—

"Before God and His throne!"

Fanny halted also. Her white, awe-struck face turned upward, while that oath was being registered in the book of the Terrible Avenger.

Henry Hughes' arm dropped. The martyr-like heroism passed away from his ebon features.

"We are near Alderbank now," he said. "I must go."

"Let me go with you," said Fanny.

"No, dear child, you shall not be cursed for my sake. Good-bye."

His steps glided on, but a voice floated after him, "Give my love to Susan."

It reached his poor heart as a sunbeam strays through a stony casement and cheers the cold floor of a prison. A quick turn of the head, with a friendly wave of that accusing hand, and Henry was out of sight.

Fanny moved on slowly, occupied with those burning words, so unexpectedly dropped into her soul, along the lonely wayside. Out of the chaos of that day's events and conflicting teachings she endeavored to bring order. How could she account for it that the very persons to whom she looked as models, did such strange things? The anguish of Henry's face haunted her,—the hand raised to Heaven, and the solemn words, "Before God."

She descended from her spiritual hallucinations to life's real, earnest joys and sorrows. There was something to do now, besides speculating on the probable use of a "flowery bed of ease," and

how one should resist that tempting vehicle to the skies. The red shawl had fallen from her shoulders, and the heavy fringe swept over feathery grasses; the green calash seized upon this opportunity of Fanny's abstraction, and taking to its pranks again fell over backwards, and shut up as usual. Still Fanny went on thinking. One conclusion was reached,—she would love Henry, Susan, and the children, and all other black people, if ever she found any. The trembling lips were defiantly compressed, the drooping lashes were wet with tears which dropped upon her burning cheeks and upon her tightly clasped hymn-book.

At that moment a white cloud, rifted from the dark masses in the west, floated over the blue depths and dropped a benison on the bare auburn head. The cloud passed on, and Fanny Beame was indeed baptized of the angels.

Ah! little did that child imagine while in the brown school-house, and while so timidly saying, "I am not ashamed to confess Christ; I desire to serve him all my life," that she would so soon be taken at her word. Little thought she, when the farmer's horses trotted so indifferently past, that Christ would walk by her side and talk with her by the way. She knew it not, even now. That delightful surprise was left for the maturity and development of coming years. The far future was to unfold to her astonished memory the honor and glory of that hour, when her Savior walked with her in the guise of the poor and despised Henry Hughes, and she had given him all she had to offer—her love and her tears.

Wet with the holy sacrament of the cloud, Fanny was gathering up her garments to walk faster, when a voice from a top rail of the fence called out,—

"O Fanny Beame! I see you, I see you! You've been walking with a nigger, and going slow, and talking to him!"

This was the son of the agent of the factory in Alderbank; and Fanny answered,—

"No, Johnny, I have been walking with a man, with my friend."

"Oh! for shame, Fanny Beame! A nigger ain't a man, and if he is your friend you won't make a very respectable woman. He's a Sabbath-breaker, too, and a thief, for he had a basket of blackberries."

"Yes, he had berries; but they grow for anybody who chooses

to pick them, and Henry is poor. He has no land nor orchards, no apple or peach trees, and he wants *something* good. Where have you been, Johnny?"

"I've been digging 'saxafax' root down here in the woods, and I'd give you some if you didn't go with niggers."

"Oh! I don't care for any," replied Fanny. "But which is the worst, to pick blackberries or to dig sassafras root on Sunday?"

"To pick berries, of course! But I dig 'saxafax' on father's own land. 'Hen' Hughes might have land if he'd work for it. Father says all these free niggers in Massachusetts are lazy, and ought to be down South hoeing cotton, then they'd do some good, and we shouldn't have so many black 'shacks' round here. And I guess he knows — he's been there."

"Well, I never was *there*," was the indignant reply; "it is bad enough to be *here*."

Fanny walked on.

CHAPTER III.

PARIS was sleeping. The slant rays of a golden morning found no access through hangings of velvet and brocade. Blank midnight surrounded the luxurious couches of the revelers. High-born or parvenu, the gay devotees of pleasure, wearied with balls, games and play, were appropriating these fresh matin hours to the renewal of necessary vigor for repeated scenes of nightly festivities. Delicious south winds blew through magnificent avenues,—birds were gay and noisy in their undisturbed warblings,—trees seemed wading in a gilded mist. The clumsy and quaint architecture of palaces, churches, bridges and towers, took a definite and airy tracery from the flooding of mellow sunshine. Statues, flowers and fountains gleamed from fairy vistas on every side of the fantastic city. Gold fishes sported in a thousand marble basins, or followed the wake of white swans in their dreamy rounds. — yet scarce a footfall was heard in garden, on terrace or esplanade.

Contrary to his usual custom, Ralph was dressed at this hour, striding about his apartments, and making sundry hurried prepa-

rations. March was busy obeying orders in all directions; but upon either face hovered a sombre shadow, the sure reflection of gloomy thoughts.

At nine o'clock, Ralph, wrapped in his long Spanish cloak, was thridding his way on horseback over the deserted road of the "Bois de Boulogne," followed by a half dozen other horsemen. Nothing disturbed his mood of silence but champing bits, the muffled plunging of hoofs in the soft earth, and the annoying shafts of yellow sunlight which shot across his way between the shining boles, as if to search the secret of his melancholy. At length, the wood was passed; striking into a gallop, a few miles brought the party to a smooth lawn, by a secluded stream. A similar party was already in waiting. Grooms led away the horses into checkered shade. The parties exchanged salutations. Both then proceeded to arrange the preliminaries of that bloody Code which the reckless duelist calls "honor," and in which Haywood and a German class-mate were principals.

This was the last day of Ralph's stay in Paris; this act was the performance of his last honorable obligation.

Frederick Steinle had spoken unguardedly of the Southern institution of Slavery. He had taunted America's Flag as a pharisaical emblem. He had said the American Eagle fattened on helpless victims of the slave-holder's avarice and cruelty; that he whetted his beak on the poor African's bleaching bones, from the Chesapeake to the Rio Grande!

For this, the speedy bullet was to be his judge and jury this day. Frederick Steinle was no coward; yet, as the personal friend of Haywood, he had striven to avoid this collision. Further, he considered himself under no obligation to a foreign Constitution, which shielded the enslaver, and his deeds. He refused to retract his words, and thus proved himself a fawning dissembler.

For this, he had been bullied by daily threats of assassination, by insults in public places, and repeated challenges; till without other alternative, assent was given. He met his antagonist for the deadly *rencontre*, more in sorrow than in anger. His finely proportioned figure, full six feet in height, his silken hair and curly brown mustache, combined with a ruddy tint of health, contrasted favorably with the malignant, lowering brow of the South Carolinian.

Paces were measured — the seconds were at their posts. The word was given to fire. Steinle's pistol discharged in air ; but he, the truthful and brave, reeled, and fell dying to the green-sward. Those gathering about him, caught his last words. "Farewell, mother !" whispered from his pallid lips.

Haywood coolly mounted, and rode away, seemingly a Knight of the Middle Ages. This child of Protestantism, and citizen of a Democratic Republic, drawing his cloak about him, left his dying friend like a barbaric cavalier. Had he not been dubbed a son of Chivalry, by his "companions in arms" on the "sacred soil of South Carolina?" Had they not thrown over him the "Red Garment," which was to mark his resolution to shed his blood in the cause of Heaven? Had he not displayed the requisite keen sense of honor in his ruthless intolerance of this infidel and heretic? Had he not shown fidelity to his obligations, in all the strictness of the letter, disdaining compromise with friendship and circumstances?

The strongest tie of the chivalry of Slavery, —

"Brother be now true to me,
And I shall be as true to thee,"

was a sacred principle ; had it not claimed, and received the exercise of his valor?

Frederick's faintly throbbing breast was bared. It was past medical skill to call back that life. From the ragged wound ebbed the last crimson remnant of vitality, and the blood of another martyr to the American Inquisition, stained the velvet sod of France.

According to his directions previously given, the attendants drew from his pocket a letter superscribed with his name, a few damp curls were cut from his hair and enclosed within it, to be returned to the mother who sent it. Above the beautiful white face, manly eyes grew moist while reading, —

MEIN LIEBLING FREDERICK, MEIN SCHONER SOHN, — From the tenor of your last letter, it is the happy time for your return to that home which awaits the joy of your presence. My heart faints to see the long absent face. Come to your mountains, valleys and vine-gardens. Let them echo again to your voice in the old-time songs of Fatherland. We need your strength and care to take the place of your dead father, etc., etc.

Day wore away, this last day of Haywood's untrammelled life "abroad." Packages of costly *bijouterie*, and elegant fabrics; masterpieces from the artist's pencil, and sculptor's chisel, had been purchased, and lay strewn about the unpacked trunks. The familiar squares of sunlight crept steadily along the polished floor, fast losing right-angular proportions. The 'Knight of the Middle Ages' was tardily yielding to the half enlightened conscience of the Nineteenth century. The morning shadow on his face sank into his soul. Thoughts of another's trunks which should have been filled with precious mementos on that eventful day, but which now awaited the careless and sacrilegious hand of strangers, filled his mind.

Callous as were his feelings, from having been raised among scenes of brutality and outrage, and faintly as glowed the native light of conscience which the Hand of Omnipotence had set within, its dim flame had received a shock which sent its blazing gleams along every fibre of his being. He could blot out the life of a fellow mortal; but it was beyond his philosophy to extinguish those luminous rays destined to be quenchless.

Bent, however, on concealing these so called ignoble emotions, March was left to trunks and packages, while his master strolled out into the busy street, and finally sought the convivialities of a farewell, complimentary dinner.

Night found him ascending the marble staircase of one of the exclusive gambling clubs of Paris. His jeweled hand flashed along the gilt balustrades, as it carelessly sought support in his progress. Entering folding doors held by courtly liveries, exchanging salutations in English, French or German, he stood amidst palatial and princely splendors.

Colonnades of slender, graceful shafts, crowned with palm-wreathed capitals, rose to the lofty roof. Mirrors, blue and silver hangings, and carpets like woven gardens, stretched away from the fascinated vision. Beneath a galaxy of light that mocked the mid-day sun, the duelist paused, bearing in his own breast a phosphorescent sea of troubled thoughts that out-burned it all.

Down the far aisles, studded with groups of fair women, clad in the opulence of silks, laces, pearls and jewels, ran his ravished gaze; but ever and anon, there gleamed forth on his vision, the wan face of a prone and helpless figure. His heart yearned toward

the dead,—dead from his own guilty hand, that had so often with fraternal grasp, met the warm clasp of Frederick Steinle in the festive career of student life.

Sweet and tremulous music floated in with odors from conservatories, forming an enchanted atmosphere of exquisite delight; but a sound unheard by others, changed the mellifluous strains into discord. A well remembered death-shot seemed repeated in his brain, till he looked to see the players at the game of hazard fall from their seats, leaving himself living and alone.

He seated himself for the game. His hand held the cards unsteadily. With an air of indifference he saw the last of his remittance gathered up by fortunate and clear-headed winners. At length, turning from the gorgeous scene, haunted and desperate, he rushed to the carriage, whirled to his own door, and there cursed March, cursed trunks, voyages, and Paris itself, then sought quiet in sleep.

Ralph Haywood, like all other men, was only "clay in the hand of the potter," formed to tremble after such violation of every instinct of humanity and justice. He now suffered the inevitable penalty of his transgression. So the murderer could not sleep. The room seemed flooded with broad daylight, when black darkness veiled the earth. Abroad, mingling with the world, adhering to the strictest comities of life, he was considered a fearless, uncompromising, reckless aristocrat. But here, in his chamber, alone with his crime, and Omniscience, he was a mere child, a prisoner in a cell, an autumn leaf at the mercy of the winds.

Morning broke at length. Glad to be free from himself, Ralph completed his toilet by donning the mask of complaisance and gayety, that he might wear his laurels becomingly.

Mankind are easily duped. The ruse succeeded, and became reciprocal. Congratulations were the order of the morning. Students, snobs, cockneys, jockeys, sportsmen, with a sprinkling of "Lords," "Counts" and "Sirs" came in due procession before our high priest of the *Duello*. One remarked, on taking his hand,—

"Brilliant success yesterday, Haywood," although a secret horror crept to the roots of the speaker's hair.

"You're a dead shot," echoed another, booted and spurred.

“I should like your eye and nerve,” said a third, toying with a dog-whistle.

“Haywood’s hand and nerve have had a most perfect training,” replied a young Prussian student; and a cold shudder ran over him, also.

“The American Flag should command respect with such able defenders abroad,” said a young Count Petrovsk.

“Aye, aye,” returned Lord Sutledge; “the Republic has a well defined policy, and Mr. Haywood has carried it out admirably.”

This levee was short. As the others were retiring, Lord Malvern dropped in to make his adieus. When alone, Malvern said,—

“So you are indeed going? Why hasten in midwinter? You will have ample time to assume the responsibilities of plantation life to leave later.”

“What with delays in London and New York, I shall not see Charleston till the beginning of March. And then, my lord, Dame Fortune is inexorable. She deals an iron hand—spades are trumps, and hearts lead. First, rice and cotton fields. Second, that languishing ‘Grace!’”

“The ace of hearts, your intended, I suppose,” said his friend, “and you will follow suit.”

“Not a suit! I’ll trump! Curse the whole thing. I shall marry, doubtless, according to custom, set up an establishment, and pass for a most exemplary *conjux*. But, my lord, life in Charleston is a gay life. Married or single, a man may be a Sultan, and his house a harem.”

“Preposterous, Haywood! You have unsettled sober sense by too deep a potation. You run riot over connubial bliss. Are not the affections exclusive, and do they not instinctively cluster upon one fair object. Your assertions are too broad for belief.”

“Nevertheless, it is even so, my lord. The Southerner marries for blood and estates. The Constitution of the United States grants us no titles of nobility, but Slavery is crystalized within it; that gives us the absolute power of born sovereigns. Therefore, the best blood is carefully preserved uncontaminated, and estates are kept, by marriages, in the first families. For love,—that love which springs up naturally in every human breast, we select for ourselves from the browns and brunettes, one meets at every step. One has

only to choose according to taste ; and when love cloys with possession, the auction-block at home, or the cane-brakes of Louisiana prove an easy relief."

"And so, Ralph, you consider marriage a barrier to the seraglio-like freedom otherwise enjoyed?"

"*Mais une barriere petite!* — Things go on similarly, in that case. The only difficulty is a frequent *rencontre* in the conjugal department. Domestic tranquility is too often troubled by flashing eyes and arrowy words. It is inconvenient. *C'est tout.*"

"Hold! You are but a young man, yet you speak like one initiated. Your words have the ring of experience."

"By the infernal! Malvern, am I not initiated? Was I not born and raised among Southern customs? Have I not seen childish, harmless wives changed into jealous fiends by this same latitude of circumstances? The Carolina Turk does not go to Circassia *pour acheter des esclaves*; he finds them made to order at his own door. Quadroons and octaroons,— aye, and blue-eyed, fair-haired minxes, in whose veins flows the noblest Southern blood, still following the condition of the slave-mother, according to our considerate laws."

With a thoughtful and contemptuous expression at these cool revelations, Lord Malvern briefly replied,—

"Your land must be strewn with broken hearts, and paved with trampled affections."

"Nay, not so fast. Chattels are not supposed to have hearts; and if they should indulge in this forbidden luxury, there is one grand remedy. *That* sets all matters right."

"Pray what is that?"

"For the jealous spouse, indifference and travel. For the hesitating arrogance and useless tears of the harem, the work-house or cotton-field. A few days at the hoe in the hot sun, bring back sense and reason."

During this conversation, March had been busy arranging his master's travelling cases, but now he paused and stood forgetfully, with his back to the talkers. For some reason, both gentlemen raised their eyes simultaneously. The tell-tale mirror hurled back to their observation, the torture and agonized expression of the slave before them. He drank in every word of Ralph's confessions. His beating heart and reeling brain were swift witnesses

of the awful truth. Oblivious to mirrors, and to himself, memory went back into the dreary past. With hands clasped, and lips moving, his eyes were raised to Him who alone heard the cry of American bondsmen.

Swift as lightning springs from clouded skies, from the murky atmosphere of that room, darted forth the sharp voice of the slaveholder,—

“March, you devil! what are you doing?—Practising ‘Lot’s wife?’—A pillar of salt is less useful to me now, than a live servant. Take those keys from the trunks! Go, bring refreshments!”

The vision in the mirror changed aspect. Hands and eyes dropped quickly to the respectful, “I will, sir.”

Fruit, wine and cigars came in. The presence of March brought a frown to his master’s face. He was dispatched on a longer errand, both for Ralph’s relief, and to give opportunity for further conversatfon with his noble friend.

The glowing wine was poured. Ruby bubbles danced, and broke on its surface, while clusters of delicious grapes were made to yield up their amber hearts, and were then carelessly tossed upon the silver salver. The fragrant wrappings of oranges fell in fragments at their feet, and he resumed,—

“Yes, I hate him! There is a tie between us which cannot be regarded. His dark skin and my white face have relationship. March is my half-brother—my father’s son—and before his death, was his pet. He was given to me that his life might pass more pleasantly than in home servitude.”

“Does he know the facts?”

“Assuredly he does. But he as well knows that I am his master, and he the slave I take good care to make him feel *that*.”

“Yet he appears to bear his lot with magnanimity, and to render you the respect due from his position.”

Ah! *voici le trouble!* His very patience is execrable! His fidelity is no allegiance to *me*, but is rendered to a soft-eyed octaroon across the water, whom he calls wife.”

“Why an aggravation? That may secure his services to yourself, and bind him to return. Otherwise, he might take the freedom which France offers.”

“Because he came between me and my prize. Because he took from me, without an effort, what I strove for, and lost—which neither promises nor threats could obtain. By Jove! my lord, Flora was ‘*charmante*,’ slender, graceful, modest. Her dark melting eyes ravished me; her silken black hair fell into a wealth of rings and toying curls. And her teeth! *Mon Dieu!* they rivalled the pearls of the East. Being a house servant, I had nothing to do but follow her, and try to win. I could have called her mine, but for the presence of this cursed servant, March, and my father’s idiotic affection for him.”

“You spoke of the lash as a remedy. Did you bring that to bear in your favor?”

“Nay, my lord; but for no lack of will on my part. The hour was appointed, and the number was ordered, when my father interfered, and took Flora North, to wait upon my mother during the summer tour. Oh! it was madness to see that cheek flush at the sound of the quiet step of March. To see the eyes which never raised in *my* presence, lift their long lashes, and shed their full glory on *him*. Towards me, she was like a rock—firm as adamant. Sometimes I poured upon her a torrent of curses and threats. The only reply was, ‘Master Ralph, I must be faithful to March. I have promised him that, and Heaven is my witness. I am in your hands—God be my helper.’”

“And she was married?”

“Yes, as much as slaves ever are—went from the house to live with him in one of the quarters, down in the edge of the pines, filling them with the delirium of her song—‘*Prima donna*’ to all the mocking birds in the region. But I reckon some of the strings of her harp are unstrung. I purposely brought March to Europe.”

“How many years since, Haywood?”

“Four years, my lord; but it will be ten times that, before they meet again. Damn her pious cant! she shall see how God is her helper. My revenge will be sweet; she is sold to the cane-fields of Louisiana. I was out of pocket-money when about to cross the Mediterranean—sold five chattels for expenses; among them, Mrs. Flora! *Mon bel Arabe* was purchased with *her* price—a pleasant souvenir for me, Sir.”

“Quite a drama, Haywood, for one plantation, in which you

have been a leading and successful actor!" and Lord Malvern, holding in hand his last sparkling cup arose to go. Raising it to his lips he said,—

"Here is to your voyage, my friend! Let winds and waves be propitious."

Ralph stepped forward and placed his hand familiarly upon his companion's shoulder.

"I am under the necessity of holding you to your promise, Lord Malvern. On the night of the duel, the last of my remittance slid from my hands at the gaming table! Not a sous left! A loan of two thousand will carry me through. The hours have flown—I must be away."

"Send for it immediately," Malvern replied. "The money is yours at any moment you may chose to take it." A final *au revoir* left the travellers to complete arrangements.

CHAPTER IV.

IT was a New England winter at Alderbank. Snows had fallen over field and street; fierce northwesterners howling through the tree-tops had heaped the feathery depths to miniature mountain ranges along the various thoroughfares, and around the dwellings. Lumbering oxen, powdered with the pearly dust, plunged and wallowed through the great drifts. Streams wore glassy coats of ice and the village boys on skates, darted over them with the rapid evolutions of flies in the summer air.

The square tavern at the Corner sent forth from its bar-room, reeking fumes of misery within. Young and old; broadcloth and rags; the firm step, and the unsteady gait, came and went through its ever-open outer door. The blaze of its windows shone out on the frozen darkness, as if lighted by the flames of Tartarus. They stared out into the late hours of night, like fiery eye-balls, the blight, and curse of the fair hamlet and its inhabitants.

The old tavern, a burning blotch upon the morality of the town, was nevertheless considered a necessity to the community. None but a few so-called eccentric individuals had ever condemned

it, — those whose perverse views like straggling vines, would not be nailed to customs, but reaching over into the highways and byways of humanity, were forever blossoming into heterodox truths. The clergy, and other religious guardians of Alderbank contemplated this tavern with the utmost complaisance. They rather regarded the time honored institution as a useful commentary on the total depravity of human nature ; giving temper and point to that theological dogma. Like Vesuvius in the green heart of Italy, scorching and crisping the sweet valleys at its base, the old “village tavern” poured its lava over the the tenderest, and holiest hopes of the women and children in that vicinity.

This was an age, too, when every rural home was modeled on certain principles. “Minutes make hours ;” “Cents make dollars ;” and Catechisms make christians ;” were among them. Deacon Steele had an eye to the first two of these axioms, as he rubbed his cold hands at break of day over the hot kitchen stove, and hurried the family to “prayer,” while the hired man harnessed the horses. Corn had taken a sudden rise, and potatoes were in brisk demand ; and a lively penny required business dispatch.

The frosty air stirred the life and nerve of the Deacon’s handsome span, the very hills and valleys seemed to wake from their chill shrouds, and glide away past the flying sleigh. Hemlocks and pines muffled in ermine, and shivering oaks in russet, seemed equally intent on business, though in the opposite direction, and rushed by precipitately. Thin columns of smoke from the chimneys of the scattered farm-houses began to grow red in the tardy rays of the sun ; and the dogs, bounding out from warm sheds, bayed at the passing bells.

At nine o’clock, the bargain had been struck — cash for the corpulent corn-cribs’ — cash for the huge bins of potatoes in the cellar.

At ten o’clock, horses and driver awaited the Deacon’s pleasure, before the door of the square tavern in Alderbank. Quite natural that he should drop in to warm, and learn the news of the day.

In the course of this delay, a slight girlish figure, dressed in a cloak of Scotch-plaid, and a hood edged with swan’s down, approached the tavern corner. Her eyes first turned admiringly upon the horses ; drawing nearer, she raised them to the driver, still

bright with the love she bore the animals. Recognizing an old friend, she exclaimed.

“O Henry! is that you? What pretty horses!”

“Yes, its me, Fanny! and these are pretty horses; but this morn- is too cold for a white dove like you, to be out walking!”

“Not a bit, Henry.” By this time she was at the side of the sleigh, offering him her mittened hand.

“What a girl you are! to stop here in the street, and shake hands with me! The bar-room is filled with curious eyes.”

“Oh! I don’t mind the men! They have no principle. That is a terrible place, Henry! do you ever go in there?”

“Me? No! they are white folks! They would n’t have *me* in there! You don’t learn these things as fast as I do. But old ‘Tad’ the hostler, hobbled out here with a glass of sling — and gave me a kind word besides.”

“What did he say?”

“He said, ‘Here! drink this, it will warm you! Your coat’s nothin’ but a sieve for this nor’-wester to blow through, an’ they won’t let you in by the fire. Drink it! I paid for’t. I know what ’t is to freeze, and be kicked round under foot like a dog.’”

“Yes; I like ‘old Tad’ for his kindness to you; but, I don’t want anybody to drink even one glass. This place has destroyed many a man, young and old. Why did you not drive round to our house, hitch the horses in our yard, and go in by the fire, to warm? Susan comes quite often.”

The old sign on the green, swinging fiercely in the blast, creaked out in its highest key, as if to say, — “Why didn’t you go Henry?”

Deacon Steele came to the door, flushed with his brandy, and corn prospects. He exclaimed, —

“’Pon my word! Here is Fanny Beame! Well, well! the roses are blowing on your cheeks if they are dead everywhere else. ‘Hen!’ is she teasing you for a ride? Haul off them blankets! Tuck her into them buffaloes, and give her a ride round the square, home. Make ’em dance, ‘Hen’! let her hear the bells lively!”

Once in the sleigh, and ready to go, the Deacon called out, —

“Fanny! I forgot to tell you we are going to have a protracted meeting at our church, next week; and Mary says she shall have you to stay with her, so I’ll send ‘Hen’ after you.”

Pawing the snow, shaking their fiery heads and flying manes, the span tore away, glad to warm themselves again. Fanny tells Henry not to drive so fast, as she likes to ride slow, and admire them.

"Any way to please you, Miss Fanny, for I suppose the Deacon, once in that bar-room, would never know the time o' day any more. He 's one of the influential men of the town — those fellows in there flatter him, and he pays back in 'flips' and 'slings.'"

With a gay laugh, Fanny said, —

"Well! you have learned one big word, haven't you Henry? — 'Influential'!"

"Yes, I've learned several; but if I should undertake to use them all, I should fix them in the wrong places, I expect."

"Repeat them to me! Do! Just look at those ears! What beauties! Do you not love these horses?"

"I like horses better than men."

"Tell me the words, now;" she said — mixing up the serious and comical in a highly enjoyable manner.

"I beg you to excuse me, Miss Fanny. I don't like to offend you; you'll think me very wicked! They are what you may call holy words! Whoa! 'Sultan' — steady — boy!"

"How the snow sparkles in the sun! we fly through the drifts! What is the name of the other?"

"'Czar,' they call him. I'll bring him down: they are as gentle as lambs."

"'Czar' and 'Sultan'! Splendid! Do you think I could drive them, if you look after me?"

The reins were placed carefully in her hands; Henry saying, —

"There, hold them just so; pull steady, Miss Fanny;" and his dark face beamed with delight, as his hands rested on his patched knees.

"Now tell me the words?" She asked again, looking straight at her beautiful charge. "I don't think you are wicked!"

"Well; I know 'depravity,' 'piety,' 'under conviction,' 'edified,' 'justified,' 'pearly gates,' 'golden crowns,' 'despair,' 'darkness,' 'experience'; that is, I know the words; but I don't see how they mean anything, they never helped me, nor Susan, nor the children to get bread and clothes."

“Perhaps so, Henry. But these words don’t mean ‘bread and clothes’—they are holy words—church words. Me! how their feet throw the snowballs against the dasher! going up this hill. Can I turn this corner?”

“Yes,” said Henry. “Draw this rein a little. There! easy on the bit.”

With a few spirited springs up the declivity, they stopped in the yard. His hand was quickly on the reins; and Fanny, after patting their glossy necks, entered the house.

“Quite aristocratic for a plebian! Dashed up in fine style! A matched pair, and black driver! Ah! Lady Fan! Would not do to send you South!” exclaimed her brother, sitting on the comfortable settee, surrounded with Greek and Hebrew books.

“Hush, Richard, Deacon Steele sent me home. I had a charming ride. Henry is no servant—I drove myself. But he has been waiting a long time before the bar-room door, and is nearly frozen!”

Henry entered meekly, and was seated by Richard Beame, near the stove. He said to him dryly;

“Take care, Henry! Do not allow this sister of mine to rule you, she is a bit of a tyrant.”

“I am too happy to serve her! She never makes me feel my nothingness, like many others.”

“She makes me feel my nothingness in theology,” said Richard; “however, after a little more Hebrew, I think I can measure lances with her. But Fanny, you should pour a cup of coffee for our friend, and look up some lunch also, for that compliment.”

The coffee-pot was steaming on the stove; and while Fanny was preparing the refreshing beverage, Mrs. Beame said,—

“I cannot imagine, Henry, how you keep warm, with such clothing. Have you no other coat?”

“No other, Madam; my wages barely keep Susan and me and the children in food. I could get a good second-handed coat; but the church ladies are getting together all such things, to send in a box to the missionaries among the Indians. They bring them to Mrs. Steele’s to be packed.”

“And you are too modest to ask for one?”

“I suffered so much with the cold, I was obliged to ask; but I

offered to pay for it. Mrs. Greene, one of the ladies, said I could have one for five dollars — that it cost thirty when it was new. I asked Deacon Steele for the money, but he said it was pretty well used up now ; so I lost the coat.”

“I am not surprised,” replied Mrs. Beame. “I have observed the ways of the church for years. They will be eaten up by Cannibals abroad, rather than follow Christ at home !”

Then Fanny, always fearful, lest her mother should speak too strongly, mildly interfered, saying, —

“The deacon is a kind man ; you know he sent me home in his sleigh.”

The mother replied, —

“He is a man who will carry pretty girls to ride as long as he lives ; but who ever saw his horses prancing up to the crazy doors of our six or eight black families in this town, to carry comforts for their destitution ? and you well know my daughter, how great that is. Who ever saw him carrying those forsaken people to the protracted meeting, to save *their* souls ?”

“My dear mother !” said Richard, “you know this is not the custom. It does not affect the value, or truth of our religion, that its professors do not live ‘up to their privileges.’ We will try to do our duty, and throw the mantle of charity over the faults, or shortcomings of others. I believe that with the right kind of teaching the people will yield to the fraternal doctrines of the New Testament, that mankind is one great brotherhood !”

“My Son ! listen to these words ; ‘Ye shall know them by their fruits,’ ‘Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles ?’ Now according to my observation, the churches are beds of doctrinal thorns and thistles, over which the naked feet of the poor and oppressed cannot walk, and from which we cannot look for grapes and figs, for the refreshment of individuals or communities.”

“Mother, your assertions are sweeping, and apparently based upon the scriptures. But our present church is the blossom of more than three centuries, it has been watered by holy martyr-blood, it is entitled to reverence by believers, as their only ark of trust and safety.”

“More martyr-blood must fall somewhere ! You and I agree that the negro is an outcast ; and I warn you that the religion of our country *makes* him an outcast.”

“Yes ; I acknowledge him an outcast ; but let us do something for Henry. Can you not spare the over-coat that was father’s ? For three years it has been kept sacred to his memory.”

“Yes, Richard ; it is wrong to keep it longer ; Henry can have it. Fanny, you will find the coat in the closet, up stairs. There are mittens, and a comforter also folded in a piece of linen, in the upper bureau drawer.”

Henry begged to refuse, saying he should not feel right to wear them.

“I am used to cold — some other one should wear them.”

Mrs. Beame took the carefully preserved relics, saying, seriously,—

“If I keep them from you, it is robbery ! We can rob our fellow creatures as well by with-holding from them what is our power to bestow, as by taking fraudulently, what they already have. Who is better than you ? The Lord pleads your cause. He will spoil the souls of those who spoil his poor ; I dare not keep them with your want before me ! Do not offer thanks, I am verily at fault for keeping them so long.”

Henry took the clothes from her hand without a word, except a humble “Good-morning.” In closing the door, he heard Richard calling,—

“Here, driver, take these boots. They are too large for me, and heavier than I need, at present. *Keep up your heart. Trust in God for better days.*”

Going to the sleigh, Henry carefully rolled his gifts together, and placed them under the seat ; lest, if seen through the befogged vision of that bar-room, they might call forth unjust reflections upon his friends, as well as himself. He drove back to the tavern, and waited for the deacon.

The twelve o’clock bell of the factory rang. The operatives poured from its six stories like bees from a hive — small boys and girls, youths, men and women. The black horses and the black Henry before the bar-room door drew immediate attention. They swarmed up the various paths past the tavern, with the great American instinct, “negro hate,” in full play. Here the boys found their native element ; and like unfledged ducklets, plunged in. They ruffled their feathers — they glossed them down again.

They huddled and twaddled over the precious opportunity ; they ha, ha'd ! jeered, pointed their fingers, and waved hats with rims and without rims, till some one of the young mob cried out,—

“Who painted you so black ?”

Henry, stung at last into a reply, rang out,—

“God ! you little heathen !”

The boy, supposing “heathen” a foreign word, uttered a broad laugh ; but the expression of some older faces lost the look of derision, settling into something like shame. Another called out,—

“Halloo ! nigger ! How you sell rags a pound ?”

Henry coolly replied,—

“Don't sell in this village. Sell my rags to Bible Societies, to make paper to print the gospel on.”

Finally, amidst a fusilade of “nigger ! nigger !” and a last “Good-bye, Thundercloud,” they went to dinner.

A few words floated into the bar-room — but they were all right there. Profanity and Bibles were as much mixed there, as rum and water.

At two o'clock, Deacon Steele came to the door to go home. Stepping down, he lay prostrate upon the snow. Winking and blinking in the bright sun, he stammered out,—

“What's the matter, Hen ? Has it been rainin' and freezin' ?”

After much slipping and rolling he gained his feet, and called out,—

“Start along the horses, Hen. Don't you see ! That sign-post is on a whirl ! that painted wolf up there'll slap their ears ! There, that's it. We'll get off afore she comes round again !”

The horses had not yet lifted a hoof ; and an observer would have seen a curious smile lighting up Henry's eyes, as he extended his hand to the deacon, who by this time was burying his head in the buffalo robes on the floor of the sleigh, with his boots balancing in air, as if he intended to shake off the dust of his feet against the dancing frivolities about him.

Henry respectfully raised the deacon, who took the front seat, bareheaded, saying,—

“I'll sit with you, Henry. I want to talk with you goin' home.”

He picked up the deacon's hat, also remarking politely,—

“This is a very high wind, sir.”

After some swaying to and fro, as the runners bounded in and out of the "cradle-holes," Deacon Steele said,—

"Put your arm round me, Hal. I feel the weakness of the flesh. Drive slower. It's early in the morning, you know; we shall get home before eleven o'clock,—time enough to measure up the corn before night."

The strong arm steadied the deacon's motion, and he said,—

"Don't forget, Hal, to go after Fanny Beame next week, when our protracted meetin' begins. She's a purty gal."

"No, sir; and when I drive down after her, can I have a bushel of your corn to carry to mill for my Susan?"

"Your Sue? yes. She's another purty creetur — she's trim built. She may have a bushel of corn at the market price, to-day. Speakin' of that meetin', Hal, it's goin' to be a solemn time. Sinners will be converted from the error of their ways, and God will be glorified. We shall have ministers and prayin' Christians at our house. It will be a good time for you, Hal, to look after your soul. You know your soul is as precious as anybody's."

"I expect it is of some account to its Maker. They say so; but it takes me all my time to look after the body — and three other bodies waiting upon me. I never thought my body or soul to be of much account, anyway."

"Did you ever experience religion, Hal?"

"Yes, sir, I've experienced a good deal of white people's religion, one time or another."

"Did you ever have family prayers, and draw the blessing of Heaven in that way, and draw down the holy, sanctifying power of Divine Grace, to keep you from the contaminating influences of a depraved world, and — Hold on to me, Hal! I'm weak in the flesh, and this runner cuts deep."

"All right, sir. These horses are in a hurry to get home."

"Hold 'em in, Hal. At our last protracted meetin', we made a vow to talk with all the sinners that came in our way, on the salvation of their souls; and then, at the next, to count over the converts we had made; and—"

Unfortunately, at this moment, the sudden check brought the whiffle-tree to Sultan's heels. With a fiery bound, he upset the equilibrium of the sleigh, and of the conversation. The deacon

went flying out over the hard crust, like a rolling plume loosed from its fastening. The hat took another airing. Czar was nearly on his knees — Sultan was rearing in the air. Henry could render no assistance to the flying deacon, but waited for him, calming the excited animals. After much sprawling, the hat was captured. With an equal amount of “pigeon-wings” and “military salutes,” into which some interjections were thrown, not found in Bible or grammar, the good man reached the road, and fell in among the robes again.

Moving forward, and trying to catch the thread of his unravelled discourse, he asked,—

“What subject was I speakin’ on?”

“Family prayers, I believe, sir.”

“Well, Hal, do you have family prayers?”

“No, sir ; it would almost be out of the question, for I am scarcely ever at home with my family. We are poor, you know, sir ; poverty separates us. If I should pray at home, I should pray straight against the laws, and straight against the churches and Christians ; so it don’t seem to be of much use for white people to pray one way, and black ones to pray entirely different.”

“God forbid that an infidel should find shelter under my roof. Hal, you can’t read ! Where did you learn it ? not in books ! — Prayer moves Heaven, it besieges the golden gates ! It brings God down to earth, and takes His divine will by storm ! Don’t you ever pray, Hal ? ”

“Yes I pray generally in the streets, among mobs. I prayed to-day in your sleigh, down at Alderbank.”

“Well ; I am glad to hear it. I trust, through my efforts, you’ll be converted ; and you’ll become a star in my golden crown, which I shall wear upon my glorified head. Halloo ! what’s the matter now ! why don’t you go ahead ? ”

“We’re home now Sir, and here’s a fine turnout waiting at the gate.”

“Yes, yes ! ‘Angels are strangers unawares.’ Somebody’s got money that rides in that cutter ! Such harnesses as them ain’t found in this town ! ”

Mary met her father at the door, placed a chair for him and remarked, —

“Your rheumatics trouble you again.”

“Yes, Mary, some ; but that aint all. I’m sort of stiff from holding up Hen. He will drink at the tavern, he leaned over on me. But he’s a poor creetur ! I’ve been talking to him on the way home, and trying to have him get religion, if he ever gets into Heaven, it must be done through our means.”

“Yes, father, these long rides always increase your rheumatics ; but guess who has come ? ”

She drew him gently to the sitting-room door. He replied,—

“Some Grandee ; I guess, by the cutter and horses in the snow out there.”

The deacon rushed forward to his long absent brother, for so the late comer was. Mutual congratulations, the cheering influence of warm rooms and a generous supper nearly effaced the work of the bar-room. They sat down to compare memories and events. That was a pleasant room, after a day of cold and drifts. On the mantel, above the high Philadelphia stove, two whale-oil glass lamps burned: The scarlet and green plaids of the home-made carpet glowed fresh as ever. White curtains, edged with netted and tasseled fringe, shaded the windows. Circular mats, braided of gay-colored woolens were spread before the stove and entrances, wooden chairs, shining black, without a mote of dust, kept their proper places around the walls, with a polished cherry table, covered with “driven white” linen, fringed also with tasselled netting, the accomplishment of those days, into which meshes, rosy farmer girls netted their youthful loves and hopes. A gilt framed looking-glass overhung the table, upon which solemnly reposed “Scott’s Commentaries,” “Baxter’s Saint’s Rest,” “John Calvin,” “Watts’ Psalms and Hymns,” the Assembly’s Catechism, and “Missionary Herald ;” like grim monks of old, keeping guard over the spiritual interests of the household.

Two plain wooden arm-chairs, cushioned and frilled with gay-colored chintz were drawn to the stove by the brothers. Distance from the stores had delayed culinary preparations for revival week ; and the father had brought home various elements of that art. Therefore Mrs. Steele, with her two daughters, Mary and Dorcas, remained in the kitchen to further the baking.

This kitchen joined the sitting-room. The door between them

was left partially open, that the social current might not be broken, and a tacit regard for their guest might be expressed. The tidy, neat floor, painted brown, and dotted with mats; the papered walls; the "dresser," with rows of shining tins and quaint pieces of crockery; the hot stove rubbed to a gloss, and roaring up its pipe with a fierce business air; the old clock in the corner, like an embalmed Pilgrim of the Mayflower; the spotted yellow and white hound, Foxy, sleeping on the hearth; and the box piled high with wood made a cosy cooking-room at all times. The chatting of the busy women over flour, butter, yeast, apples and spices; the clatter of plates, measures and mortars precluded the possibility of their hearing conversation in the adjoining room.

The deacon and his brother had the evening to themselves. Henry's chores were faithfully done. Czar and Sultan under warm blankets, stood knee deep in fresh straw, pulling wisps of hay from the rack. The oxen chewed their cud safe in the stanchions. Every barn and shed-door firmly closed, the lantern was deposited in the usual place. Henry sat by himself, unnoticed in the shadow of the angle formed by the half open door and the wall against which his chair leaned. He sat silent and thinking,—thinking. No one questioned his thoughts—they were of no consequence. It would have been an insane act to go out to the barn and look in the calm eyes of the oxen for troubled thoughts, with the intention of uttering a soothing word, even if that day's work had marked their patient sides with the cruel goad. No well-balanced Christian in Cloudspire would belie his God-like image in that manner.

So here was black Henry in his stall. To look in his eyes by candle-light, or any other light for the purpose of reading that day's cruel humiliation, would be the height of folly. A creature almost born in Africa—a lineal descendant from Ham's accursed race. It was sufficient that he had his supper, standing at one end of the sink,—that his pewter plate was garnished with fried salt pork, Irish potatoes, and rye bread. The first table had been loaded with savory viands, chicken, roast beef, mince pie, raised cake, cranberry, and other preserves. But these were considered necessary *only* to the fine, delicate fibre of Saxon brain. The "Commentaries," "Saint's Rest," and other products of that organ on the cherry table in the sitting-room, were probably written under the

divine inflatus of such ethereal stimuli. So Henry and Foxy were both benignly allowed to be comfortable by the roaring stove, on this frosty winter night.

The two gentlemen in the sitting-room were now ready for conversation. William Steele, the deacon's youngest brother, left the blue hills of his native State, Massachusetts, five years before, and wandered to the rice fields of South Carolina. Both had been raised "strictly" in the faith of their fathers. William left college midway between the Freshman and Graduate, to seek means for prosecuting a course of theological study at Andover. He desired to become one of that body of New England clergy, whose watchfulness, like the great Chinese Wall, surrounded the land of the Puritans, and guarded its time-honored tenets from heretical inroads. Standing with one foot on Plymouth Rock, and the other upon the vanities of earth, he was to have become, at once, a burning light in her midst, and an honor to his ancestral record.

William Steele was a model of political consistency. Next to the Bible, he held the Federal Constitution. To both of them his faith and fancy clung with the tenacity of a bat among the stone-work of ancient feudal edifices. The double constructions and enigmatical passages of both were to him only so many dusty corners and dark corridors, in which he might remain safely ensconced in case of assault from the modern bowmen, whose arrows were beginning to throw confusion among creeds and precedents. He found Slavery in the Bible and the Constitution, and the rubber wings of his soul never bore him more gracefully than when he fluttered through either, in defense of this great national right.

In his view, it made no difference whether he stood a granite pillar of the church, defying the blasts and ice of New England, or whether he became a Corinthian shaft entwined with jasmine and roses, supporting the Constitution in the balmy airs of the South.

Thus, after a short residence in Carolina, he stepped upon his pedestal of "State Rights," and resolved that henceforth the great work of his life should be in defence of the American Eagle and the Federal Constitution. He exchanged his prospect of a pastorate, with confessed loyalty to God and man. He laid aside the clerical robes of black, and assumed the light summer suit and broad-brimmed straw of the plantation overseer, with an equal

obligation to principle. He put aside the sacramental symbols, and in their stead, took up the thumb-screws and driver's whip with a conscience void of offence. He believed himself still in the field, upholding an identically righteous cause.

"Well, now, what brought you North in February, William?" questioned the deacon.

"I have just finished the last year's crop; sent away the last tierces of rice."

"Why not have left before the year's work was finished? We Northerners never wait till all our produce is sold, before making a journey."

"Of course; but we carry on planting interests in a different manner. The small farmer can recall at any moment from memory the number of his bushels of corn, rye and potatoes. He can go down cellar and count the barrels of apples; can keep on a slip of paper in his pocket-book all the wages for hired help. Our landholders in Carolina are rich. Their field hands are counted by fifties and hundreds. One plantation may extend over from one thousand to five thousand acres. Let's see, how many acres in your farm?"

With a touch of injured pride the deacon replied,—

"You used to know every foot of it — one hundred and eighty acres."

"Yes; that is considered a 'right smart chance' up here, with a fourth of it hill pasture, one half bowlders and pulverized rocks, and about one-tenth rolled out into grass meadows. There, one planter has from three to five plantations, with a residence in the city, and any amount of stocks and bonds."

"How many plantations has Mr. Fairland?"

"He has five — two rice, and three upland cotton, 'mostly.'"

"Do you oversee all these farms?"

"Bless you! no. I am manager for the two rice plantations,— am sole overseer to the one named 'Le Grand Palais,' with two hundred and fifty acres rice land. The other, called the 'Nile,' has a low-bred cracker overseer. The other three cotton places. 'Staple,' 'Success,' and 'Snowfield,' are under two crackers, and a splendid fellow from Connecticut."

“On which one does Mr. Fairland reside?”

“His winter residence is ‘Le Grand Palais.’ In summer, stays in town, or at watering-places when in this country. But, as I wrote you, he is still in Europe — has been there some four years with his family.”

“It must take a good income to go these rounds: better than we farmers get, up here. But I should suppose all his business would go at loose ends while he is across the water. You must have things pretty much your own way.”

“Well, not precisely; they know the average yield of the places. But, better still, they know their annual net incomes to be expended in luxury and travel. They have no more care of their own accounts than children. All business transactions are performed by factors or agents, in Charleston. The crops of rice and bales of cotton are sent to these factors who dispose of them at their discretion. The planter writes his demands for so much of his funds as he chooses; the factor remits it, informing him from time to time how much he has remaining for the current year. Frequently the factor will make advances upon the strength of the prospective crop, if accounts from the agents or overseers are favorable. Most of our Southerners live like princes — royal in their tastes and pursuits, and generous in hospitality.”

“Well, William, I hope our small farms, small houses, and plain living won’t drive you back too soon. I suppose you take charge of the Fairland mansion, and live like a prince, too. By and by you will be marrying one of Fairland’s daughters.”

“Don’t think so. I prefer a pure-hearted Northern girl. To confess the truth, I am here on just that errand — to marry in this very town. Have but a short time to stay, and must take my prize back with me. What success, in your judgment?”

“Success! why, the trouble will be that you will scarcely get away with but *one*. You will be beseiged. Your name stands high in the church since the present of the costly Bible and the ‘silver font.’ Everybody, that is, all the members inquire after you, and pray for you, since that. And I tell you, William Steele,” (and here the deacon warmed, as his palm came down on his brother’s shoulder), “we have girls in this town as pretty and as trim-built

as ever sat in a pew. When you look at their cheeks you'll forget that it's winter and think it's cherry time."

William stroked his beard in a satisfied abstraction, and with a half smile he said,—

"So my gift to the church was acceptable?"

"It is the envy of neighboring churches; but I was thinking you should keep your salary a little closer. That solid silver basin must have made your pocket light. You'll want your own plantation, with the slaves to work it. A penny saved is as good as a penny earned. What did you pay for the font and the Bible?"

"Really they cost me nothing. It was a side speculation." Here he arose, ran his fingers through his hair, buried his hands in his pockets, and walked the floor, yawning either evasively or consequentially, one could scarcely tell which. He came back to his chair, and leaned towards his brother confidentially. "I had a salable article on my hands, and a rare opportunity to dispose of it, which I did. Out of respect to my good fortune, I resolved to fulfill a duty to the church of my early vows — to lay on its altar a thank-offering for the great blessings and success of my life."

"How was that? Let me share the joy of your prosperity. That South is a far-off country; let me know something of it."

"Let all I say, then, remain between us as men. Women can't understand bearings beyond their sphere. What I sold was not purloinings of rice and cotton. I detest such meanness. That plain and pointed lesson of boyhood's days, 'Thou shalt not steal,' taught in our Sabbath school, is indelibly impressed upon my moral nature. I disposed of what was my own by right, not another's."

"About six months after my arrival at 'Le Grand Palais,' Mr. Fairland's factor sent up five slaves per order. Messrs. Kershaw & Lewis purchased them from the auction sales at Charleston. One of them, an octaroon girl of tall and elegant figure, was in bad health — what we term 'unsound.' She seemed dejected and broken-spirited. Mr. Fairland favored Isabel by taking her into the 'Great House,' as lady's maid for his wife. But Isabel kept her look of abstraction, and grew daily less active. Her mistress drove her from the house, ordering her to the field."

"The next day, when the driver's horn rang along the quarters, the octaroon went down to the rice swamp with the gang. The

morning was hot. She was not used to the hoe, any more than one of Fairland's daughters, and lagged behind the others. The driver drew his whip across her shoulders, the blood reddened her dress, and she fell fainting. I was riding along the banks at the time, and ordered her brought out and laid under a live-oak. During the day I had an interview with the master, relating the circumstances, and advising that she would be a dead loss to him if kept in the field; that to put her in the hospital as nurse, to take care of the little 'pickaninnies,' would be to his pecuniary advantage. The nursery was down by the quarters, and he consented. She went into a fever, and for six weeks was no better than dead. The physician raised her at last.

"Not many weeks after, the master and mistress left for Europe. Of course, the authority was in my hand. I ordered Isabel to come to my house to cook for me. I took some pains to wean her from melancholy, assuring her I stood her defense from the lash in the future. I even carried her flowers in my own hand — placed them in her raven hair. Good heavens! she was lovely! I gave her the same food as she cooked for me; and that was cooking. If she looked at flour, butter and eggs, they were transformed into the most delightful compounds. I gave up bacon and hominy, and made old Mauma 'Rue,' my former cook, fowl-minder."

Here William Steele forgot himself — forgot the half-open door and the inmates of the spicy kitchen. Unobservant of his surroundings, he was lost in the sweetest memories of his life. In imagination he was now overseer at "Grand Palais." He was sitting in his own room; tangled skeins of gray moss festooned the windows and doors; sprays of English ivy shaded the mirror; jasmynes and roses scattered perfumes; two plates, with two china cups and saucers on the white cloth, awaited his tea-hour; Isabel, silent and martyr-like, slowly glided in and out.

Wrapped in the delicious dream he proceeded, forgetfully raising his voice to its natural tones.

"Her health never became sound. In the course of time she became a mother. I gave her my bed to make her more comfortable, and for two months it was her resting-place. Then she died. I sat by her in her last moments, and held her thin hands in mine.'

“What killed her? What was the trouble?” bluntly asked the deacon.

“During the two months’ sickness, I drew from her these facts. She was brought from Savannah. Her father was a French Consul, her mother a quadroon, the slave of the Governor of Georgia. A young blood named Dentelle, son of a planter, bought Isabel when about sixteen, set up for himself an establishment in that city, made her the partner of his bed and board, surrounded her with elegance, and lavished upon her the luxuries which Southerners so freely dispense. He clothed her in silks and laces, equal to those which adorned the ladies of his father’s household. He wore a curl of her hair in a locket hidden about his neck. He called her his Sultana. Isabel adored him. If Dentelle made jaunts to Louisiana or the North, he wrote her the tenderest of letters. Thus her slave life floated by for some years. She had borne him three children. He brought her to Charleston as he had frequently done before, and went North.

“Two or three days after he left a guard took her to one of the slave marts, where she was sold on the block to Mr. Fairland’s factor for our plantation. She wept, and begged for her children incessantly, till the annoyance became intolerable. Then they told her the children were sold to Mississippi.

“Well, as I was saying, Isabel died. I had her well buried in a black coffin, under the magnolias by the river. I gave the child, named Lillian by her mother, to Mauma Rue to raise till I saw further. I concluded to sell her. She was Fairland’s by law, but she was mine by parentage. She was highly marketable, and would sell for a good price. Her curls were flaxen, and her eyes deep blue. The only stain upon her waxen skin was a mark on her back and shoulders, like small streams of trickling blood, dripping into heavy red drops. Isabel said it was a complete copy of the blood on her own back, after that cut in the field. Lillian would take the fancy of many a Southern gentleman of leisure with a full purse.

“When the child was old enough to run about laughing and chatting, a trader came through on his way to New Orleans, making up his gang as he went. He camped in the pines three miles away. I jumped on my horse and rode over. The gang was chained to-

gether, and the covered baggage wagons ready to leave the next morning. I called the trader one side, and bargained for the child. I wanted just about one hundred and fifty dollras for the old church here, and I took that amount, although much lower than her value. He agreed to meet me half way at midnight, and take her to the wagons. As she had slept with me for three months, I could easily take her to him myself. The night was dark. It was dropping rain, and no discovery could be made. The next morning I gave out word that Lillian was stolen by the slave trader, which was entirely satisfactory to Mauma Rue, as that was the habit of the traders."

"What did you pay for the Bible and the font?" asked his brother.

"The pastor of Antioch church was going down to Charleston, and I commissioned him to purchase. He paid one hundred dollars for the font. It was brought from London for a special use, but for some reason was not taken. As he was to pass through New York on his way to Mapleton in this State, he bought the Bible at thirty dollars, and I spent the remaining twenty for Sunday school books for your church."

"Well!" said the deacon, "quite interesting; you must be thirsty;" calling Mary at the same time to bring in apples, hickory nuts and cider, adding, "you have come at the right time, William—protracted meeting will give you a good look at all the girls."

Henry was aroused from apparent sleep, in which his head had been thrown back against the hinge-opening of the door. He cracked the nuts, drew the cider, and withdrew to his garret over the wood-shed. The bit of candle was extinguished in the open blast before reaching the stairway. Entering the low room in darkness, he rushed against one of the rafters, and finally threw himself on the bed. A tempest raged within his breast.

"Bought and sold! Chains and manacles for us everywhere, either of iron or custom! Wronged, mocked and spit upon! Who was Ham? What did he do to curse his race through everlasting ages?"

He hated every white face North and South, and continued to soliloquize,—

“An overseer takes the price of his own little blue-eyed daughter, and purchases a basin with it for the baptism of other children, ‘in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’ The church hunts *me* down — I will *not* pray those wretched prayers.”

He came nigh to cursing. By accident his hand brushed the bundle of clothing given him that day. Richard Beame seemed to call him again, and say, “Keep up your heart. If you cannot trust in men, trust in God for better days.” Then Fanny’s mitted hand seemed reaching to him, as at the sleigh the other day, her face

“of innocence and of prayer,
And of love and faith that never fails;
Such as the fresh young heart exhales
Before it begins to wither and to harden.”

He slid down upon his knees, the heart more than the lips asked that if indeed he was made in the image of God, it might not be blotted out; that he might trust as Richard had said; and that he might leave the wrongs of his race to a wiser keeping.

“God listening must have overheard
The prayers, thus without sound or word.
Our hearts in secrecy, have said.”

Sunday came and went. The gospel was preached; besides, some other very pleasant tidings were disseminated. That Sabbath sun went down convoyed by the rosiest of clouds. A rosy light filled the town. William Steele, the handsome, rich Southerner, had arrived. He was at church, and between morning and evening services Mary and Dorcas moved about like May queens with royal suites, whispering to all that he had come to select a bride.

Sunday evenings, to the young men and maidens, was the one glory of the whole week. It was the time of

“Brilliant hopes all woven in gorgeous tissues,
Flaunting gayly in the golden light;
Large desires with more uncertain issues,
Tender wishes blossoming at night.”

Bearded and beardless aspirants for connubial honors combed

the manes of the horses, put on the new harnesses, arranging with their own hands the gay rosettes at the ears. They spread *buffaloes* over the backs of the sleighs, tastefully arranging the scarlet Indian borders. They fastened the strings of noisy bells and sped away, listening to their pleasant tintinnabulations.

Nothing in Nature appeared unusual. The Sunday evening moon shed silver rays ; Sunday evening stars shone calm and holy ; Sunday evening parlors, warmed and bright, conservatories of all blooming graces, appeared to be waiting for their evening bells. From one end of the town to the other, glistening runner tracks shot across each other, weaving the gossamer web of hope and trust. Rosy girls received their expectant lovers at the doors as usual ; but within, a sort of subtle, indefinable change chilled the evening enjoyment. Hopes seemed poised on uncertain wings, torturing the precious hours. Allusions to the protracted meeting were frequent,—the annoying coolness might be attributed to that. So thought the young farmers who found this evening differing widely from its predecessors ; never dreaming that the magician who had poured gall into their cups of nectar, was a Southern slave-driver in search of a bride. Witches were evidently in the air—the elfish creatures were covertly distilling wormwood during their frantic moonlight revels.

Fanny Beame read her Bible that Sunday morning in the room with Richard and her mother. Thoughts occupied her mind of those who could not read its pages—of those who bowed to idols in distant lands. A strong desire to become one of that “self-denying band” who wander

“to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,”

as messengers of mercy, was daily gaining strength. This wish was expressed to her brother, and also the troublesome doubts of her ability to reach the coveted goal of missionary labor.

Richard soothingly replied, that if India or Birmah were to be the scene of her future labors, and if the offering of herself should prove acceptable to Him who guides us all, He would open a path for her feet in due time. Fanny’s troubled look wandered over the waste of snow. She seemed only to behold Juggernaut crushing

hapless victims, and pagodas filled with heathen gods. Mrs. Beame caught the expression of commiseration, and said,—

“Banish this idea from your thoughts. There are heathen enough in our own country — heathen at our very doors.”

Richard replied for his sister,—

“We are commanded to ‘preach the gospel to every creature ;’ and I must say, dear mother, that the wants of heathen lands have seriously impressed my own mind.”

“Well, my son, learn first all that the schools teach of the mysteries of God and man ; then let me hear if your sermons show how to follow Christ on earth. If so, then your services will be required in your own land, as much as in Asia. India has *one* Juggernaut — America has many. There is the old tavern at the corner. One stands on the river bank turned by a water-wheel. Another rolls its bloody wheels, dripping with human gore, through the Slave States ; and the Hindoo Shastra with its atrocious American cruelties is deduced from our Bible, and incorporated in our Constitution.”

“Ah, mother ! if I study theology with you I shall be hung before your eyes for my pains. After taking the course at Andover, I shall be able to handle the proper tools for the pulling down of these strongholds.”

“Time will show, Richard ;” then, turning to Fanny, she proposed that her missionary labors commence immediately, as Susan, Henry’s wife, was to all intents and purposes in a heathen condition. She should visit her with a basket of comforts.

The Scotch plaid pelisse and the blue silk hood were in immediate requisition. Carrying a basket well filled, containing also her little Polyglot Bible, Fanny was soon on the way. Gilded pagodas took the form of rough slab cabins, and the Ganges lay a frozen, harmless river along her path. Cocoa-nuts and palms turned to shivering oaks with clusters of dried leaves, rustling in the breeze. Down in the valley, rising the brow of a hill, hidden by hemlocks, out in the glade, listening to the crunching snow, and fondling the shaggy head of Winter, her Newfoundland, she was soon at Susan’s door. The small dwelling was on the south side of a hill, a few rods from the river. It seemed to have sprung up in the forest, like a toad-stool at the foot of tall, naked trees. Craggy branches

overhead rattled against and interlocked with each other in the fierce winds, like huge antlers of contesting stags. The cove spread out before it in a broad, glassy sheet of ice; and regardless of holy time, the lithe, swaying skaters were upon it.

Fanny knocked at the rude door, and received a most affectionate welcome. Susan gave her the best chair; looked at her feet, if perchance they might be wet; drew off the bootees and placed them to dry. The children leaned on her lap, and looked up joyously in her face.

“How nice you look here, Susan,” said Fanny.

“I’m glad you think so; I try to do my best.”

“So you do, Susan. Mother sent you something in the basket. Let us see what.”

Susan sat down by her. Fanny took out the articles.

“I can never repay your mother for her remembrance of me,” said Susan. “Here’s clothes for the children and me. See, my feet are out, and here’s new bootees, and food besides; just what I needed.”

“My mother does all with a free will, and she bade me ask if you have bed covering enough for these cold nights.”

“I am sorry to have it to say that we need more; but I can’t ask it of Mrs. Beame.”

“Why not, Susie? I will bring it. Your arms are always full of washings, both ways, when you go to the village.”

Willie chimed in, “I s’leep told, Mish Fanny.”

She caught him up on her knees, gave him a frolicsome toss, and bade him say his verse.

“Supper lily chilen come me,” he lisped, laughing gayly.

“Say the rest;” and she gave him a kiss. “For of such,”

“Such kinnum Heben;” and then, with a loud, triumphant laugh, he threw his arms about her neck.

Susan begged her visitor to take supper with her, saying merrily,—

“I’ll give you some of my rye bread, and some ham left from that you brought me before, with a few eggs from my fowls. I will finish with tea and brown sugar. Will that do? I can get it ready while you teach the children. Say yes, Fanny, it will give me so much pleasure.”

“Yes Susan! it will give me pleasure also — only, I cannot think it right to diminish your scanty store.”

Addie brought her book, read her lesson in one syllable, and said her verses. Fanny read over the next lesson to her little pupil, and heard Willie’s A, B, Shee’s. Tea was ready! Susie had three earthen plates, one whole cup and saucer for her guest, and a broken one for herself. There were two knives, one without a handle, and one fork — but every thing had a wholesome neatness about it. The bit of plain home-spun table cloth was white as frost and rain could make it. Susie served the plates from the bright old sauce-pan on the stove, which in its turn was cracked in various directions. The rye bread was excellent: a small bowl of applesauce, made from a pocket-full of apples that Henry brought home, served for dessert.

The children ate contentedly their mush and molasses, placed on wooden trenchers, each having a piece of ham of the size of a dollar, for a relish, and an occasional sip of tea from Fanny’s proffered cup.

Winter ate a dry crust with evident enjoyment, and with much wagging of his plummy tail — although he would have sniffed his nose disdainfully at so humble an entertainment at home.

Fanny brought out the little Bible, saying, “Now Susie, shall I read?”

“Yes, I believe the Bible when you read. It seems like a bit of Heaven come in at my door, just as the sunlight comes in on summer days.”

“But Susie,” replied Fanny, looking serious, “You know the Bible is the word of God, whoever reads it.”

“I don’t think so. I heard it once in Cloudspire meeting-house, and it appeared as if God and man both mocked at my color. I came home worse than I went. When I go to wash and iron at these church people’s houses, they call me to hear the Bible, and prayers, and then pay me in old things worn threadbare; as if Bibles and prayers were meat and drink. But I can’t live, and keep my children alive on them.”

“Susan, they do not know how destitute you are. They would scarcely believe me, if I told them.”

“Why don’t they know? — as well as Mrs. Beame and Fanny

Beame? I never saw a white woman's face in my house, and speaking to me as if I was human, but yourself and your mother. They know the wants of savages thousands of miles off, why not know mine? If I lived in Africa, and was a wild Gollah, I should have fine ladies and gentlemen at my service." Then she laughed contemptuously, and said, "Such a religion is ridiculous." But she requested Fanny to read on, saying, "I believe in you and your Bible."

Fanny, between her mother and Susan, was taught some hard lessons that day; but her faith in the "stated means of grace," and the "ordinances of the church," was yet unshaken. These lessons, like some seeds, were to lie dormant for years before germination.

Winter and his young mistress took another route home, in order to call on old black Letty, as the people called her. They ran, jumped, and slid upon and beside a half frozen riband of a brook looking for "shiners" in the open pools. Letty's house was set in a ravine, between two pebbly ridges rising higher than its chimney.

It was built of slabs with bark on, and one side of it burrowed in the gravel bank. Two small windows looked into the other bank, not a tree or bush grew near it; and the only loving, lovable thing in the ravine was the purl and babble of the tiny brook running through. It would have green velvet borders, spangled with early dandelions; and it would give its cup of cold water to the cowslip. It never despised labor. It washed, and blued, and sprinkled, and clear-starched with the other inhabitants of the gorge; it was part and parcel with them.

The ground on which her poor hut stood was leased to them by a godless, profane old sinner, in the teeth of the strongest remonstrance and indignation of the respectable part of the community, all of whom he shocked with a blasphemous indifference to their objections.

"Damn it! let 'em live," said he, "I expect they are God's critters, they wont make *you* black."

But in cooler moments he compromised the matter, by locating the building out of sight of the road, giving the poor outcasts two glass windows, to admit what no one cared to stay, the light of the heavens.

Aunt Letty held Fanny's hand for some moments, brushed back

her wide cap border, saying, "I believe you are my girl, you don't forget me. Sit down my child. Did you bring your Bible?"

"Yes, Auntie, and that's all I brought to-day. I came to see how you get on. Do you want anything?"

"Oh, I'm in a peck of trouble! Squire Flinn sent Lizzy to jail 'cause she had too much drink when his wife wanted her to wash."

"Why, he sells rum himself, in his store; and his own son Alonzo died from hard drinking."

"True, he sold it to her himself; but we are all black, Fanny. I don't know what to do. They say she'll stay there three months. I can manage the washing at home, if I could get the 'biler' mended, it leaks so."

"Let Nancy's Jim bring it down to our house to-morrow; Richard can mend it. He mended something for mother, the other day. Can you get wood, and keep warm?"

"That side of the house in the bank is warm; but the slabs is warped on the nor'west side, the wind blows through there powerfully, and the snow too."

"I will bring some strips of old cotton cloth to paste over the cracks; and I saved a large roll of paper for you, that came off from our rooms. I will bring that with a pail of paste, and help you put it on. Richard will give Jim something to go in the woods, and drag out dead branches for you. That old man that swears so, owns the woods; won't he let you have it?"

"He knows we get dead wood there, winters, he leases the hollow to us."

After a moment or two, Fanny spoke up, "Auntie Letty, I've just thought, I can tell Mary Canby to send you a bushel of rye. I shall see her at protracted meeting. You know her father is dead, and she can do as she likes with her share of the grain; she is eighteen now."

"That would be a great help: it would keep off hunger a good many days; but I must ask you for one thing more. Have you anything to cover my shoulders, when I stand down to the brook rinsing clothes, and when I sit here? Rheumatics pester me in my old age."

"Yes, Aunt Letty. Mother laid by my green cloak with fur round it. Now you must think of me when you wear it, won't you?"

I will bring you some tobacco too. Have you any?"

"No, my darling! I'm a most crazy for a smoke; but I haint a cent in the world,"

"How many caps have you now?"

"This one on my head," said Aunt Letty, laughing.

"Then I will make you two this week."

Fanny read the seventy-first and seventy-second Psalms, commenting upon the verse, "For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper." She also remarked upon the prayer of David; "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth;" and concluded, "He is good, Aunt Letty; if you can trust Him, it will be a comfort to you."

The sun swung low in the west. Winter and Fanny hurried home. Mrs. Beame called her daughter to her knee, as she had done for years past, at the Sabbath evening sunset hour. Fanny was slight in figure, and not burdensome. The details of Susie's supper entertained both listeners. Rye bread, broken crockery, and even the lame old sauce-pan, appeared dipt in rainbow hues, as seen through her description. Mrs. Beame drew Fanny to herself, speaking in a low voice; "My daughter! do you know I think your supper with Susie was a sacrament, *a remembrance of your Lord?*"

"No, mother, the sacrament is partaken in the church; it should be blessed and distributed by the minister and deacons. None but Christians are admitted to communion."

"I know that is the custom," replied the mother kindly, smoothing the brown hair; "but customs are not religion. Remember, I call that supper more holy and acceptable, than many of those communions, so ostentatiously commemorated in churches."

"Now sing with me my favorite hymn in this twilight;" and for more than the hundredth time, their voices blended in the dear old melody, —

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?

Amazing pity ! grace unknown !
And love beyond degree !

Fanny and Richard had learned every word of it from the mother's lips long ago. At its close, they observed a strange look of calm on the usually spirited face. A solemn hush pervaded the room, as if the group were in the immediate presence of Calvary's Cross.

CHAPTER V.

THE Northern mail had just come in. All Charleston was astir. A pile of letters was laid upon the desk in the office of Kershaw & Lewis, factors. These contained orders and requests of all kinds from England, Scotland, France, Italy, and every other resting-place of the wandering pleasure-seekers from the opulent homes of South Carolina. The increasing hum of business, on East Bay, had culminated in a tornado of noise, crashing over the pavements with a deafening din. The hand of the senior partner held an open letter, while both awaited a lull in the tempest of cotton laden drays.

He ran over the contents silently, and exclaimed ; " He's coming now — Ralph will be here the last of March, dangers of the sea excepted ; —tardy a month."

" Coming then, at last ! " replied the other ; " he was to have written his orders weeks ago from New York."

" New York is *another* Paris, you know,—young blood is up. See here ! we must be doing. City house to be opened, servants to be bought, the larder filled, carriage and horses to be in readiness. He takes passage on the sailing packet ' Sumter '."

" A proud day for Haywood," said Mr. Lewis, " when he steps from the ' Sumter ' upon his native soil, to fill his father's place in sustaining the rights of our superb old State."

" True, sir ; and a proud day for Carolina when she welcomes back, and enrolls among her noble sons, the name of Ralph Haywood. Never an ignoble stain has fallen upon the laurels of his ancestry."

Aye, aye ! His character has the old Roman ring. A second

Horatius. His towering strength will easily cope with any three of those rabid abolition Curatii, forcing them to bite the dust. How much time for filling orders?

"Three weeks. That is short enough. Now for the memoranda. First, servants; how many? We must look about for A No. 1's."

"'Bram,' the old family coachman, will have the horses in charge. He will handle any pair; let him remain. His, wife, old Jane, is washer. She will suit her young master's caprices better than another."

"Well then," replied the other, pencil in hand. "Say cook, butler, footman, chambermaid, and gardener. His body servant will arrive with him. Ralph will manage to put the chains on him again; although you know March and Ralph had the same father."

"Yes," answered Mr. Kershaw: "and apropos to this matter, I just noticed in the *Courier* a chambermaid for sale. Here it is:

By A. TOBIAS, on Tuesday next, precisely at ten o'clock, will be sold before my store, without reserve, a LIKELY MULATTO WENCH, a good seamstress and house servant. The above servant may be treated for at private sale previous to Tuesday next.

"Look sharp! You are aware what points will satisfy our patron. And here's another advertisement."

UNDER DECREE IN EQUITY.

Will be sold at the Custom House on Tuesday, three negroes — Andrew, aged 40, a well-trained butler. John, aged 45, a complete gardener; and Hagar, aged 20, a valuable house servant.

Terms: For the negroes, one-half cash; balance in bonds, payable with interest one year from date, secured by a mortgage of the property, with personal security, if required.

JAMES W. BRUIN,

Com. in Equity.

"There now; if these answer, we have all but the footman, and cook. Can buy a prime boy at any auction sale, but a cook must be provided of warranted character."

"Next, the horses. Old 'Kentuck' brings a drove over the mountains from his own State, next week. Told me he should bring a pair of chestnuts fit for the carriage of a prince,— fifteen

hands high ; fiery and elegant ; price one thousand dollars. Better purchase soon, that Bram may have them well in hand when his master lands."

"I observed also," replied the other factor, "that a new invoice of carriages has arrived from New York — must make that selection intime for the horses. The supplies for the house are mere trifles. Better direct the liquors purchased at Vieil & Petray's, the French importers."

It was near nightfall, when the "Sumter" stood outside the bar, looking over the perilous gateway into the bay, lying between herself and the city. Blinding rain swept her shining deck. Angry waves ran like hissing serpents along the shallow sands. Grim, murky clouds rushed down to the very waters, as if seeking a hand to hand contest with the billows. The gale blew heavy and fierce ; a fleet of small fishing craft scud through the yeasty foam like sea-gulls, beating landward.

"No pilot to-night!" roared the captain ; "we shall 'lay to,' outside." Raising his trumpet to his lips, he hailed the last boat, and bade that word be carried to "Kershaw & Lewis," on East Bay, that the "Sumter" would be at the wharf at sunrise.

March stood at his post near Greylock. The spirited creature was worn by the long voyage from Europe, and now became fretted into ill humor by the persistent, aggravating roll of the vessel. March examined the girths and supports that kept the Arabian on his feet. When a sudden lurch of the vessel caused him to lean heavily against the padded sides of his stall, he smoothed the silken flanks with a petting caress, stroked the mane gently, or patted the straining nostrils.

"Most home, my beauty, most home!" At the sound of his voice, Greylock's hopeless eye caught a gleam of brightness. In the lulls of motion, the strong hand of the watcher passed down the trembling limbs of the imprisoned animal. Then he broke the silence by talking : "Tired feet will rest again, plenty of green turf, and soft sands this side the Atlantic. Patience, boy, patience. I'll lead you to a gentler hand than mine." Improvising verse and melody, he sang,—

"Flora's glossy curls of jet
Shall lean against your mane, my pet ;

Greylock's fiery eye will tame,
When my Flora calls his name,"

Ralph, accustomed from his cradle to see all obstacles to his imperious will removed by others, or to overcome such obstructions himself, was thoroughly exasperated at beholding the liquid barrier between him and his destination. The insolence of those breakers, jeering in their thundering gambols at him and the captain, was taunting to the highest degree. Their sarcastic contempt for any allegiance to man savored too strongly of freedom for his arbitrary will. So, after some futile ebullitions of anger, seasoned with high-toned oaths, drinking and smoking, he "turned in" for the night.

March had commands to stand by Greylock while the packet rolled; and as we have seen, faithfully executed those orders. Keeping the watches of the stormy night so near the land of slavery, revived all its bitter associations. A wilder and fiercer symphony swept the chords of his being than the piping of the mad winds outside, among the wet shrouds. The weird plantation songs of the past that forever moaned through the fields and woodlands, surged up among his memories with almost supernatural power. The creaking of ropes, and the rattling of anchor chains suggested hand-cuffs, and slave gangs. The snapping of the streamer in the wind at the main-top, brought to mind the painful, but familiar sound of the lash.

He stood up erect, as if the better to sustain the terrible pressure upon him. The left hand clasped an upright plank of the stall, above his head. His white shirt sleeves were rolled to the elbow. His right hand, large and well-formed, rested upon his hip. Above the medium height, his broad shoulders and muscular figure were developed into a faultless symmetry. An observer would have felt an instinctive admiration for the sculptured repose of his attitude, and the kingly calm resting on his features. He questioned himself.

"Why did I return to America? France, Paris, freedom and manhood, all are back over the waters. I have left them forever. Why take upon myself again this terrible bondage? Why stretch out my hands voluntarily, for manacles that lead to the shambles? To be classed with Greylock; to be bought and sold with

cattle ; to be counted with senseless chattels ; to be the creature of a master's power like a spaniel at his feet? Yes, I am black. This color was a matter of Gods's omnipotent pleasure — not mine !”

Casting his eyes into the pitchy night ; he went on. “One half of all Time is black — black night. Only one half of life is white day. The black night is Time, nevertheless. I am a man, nevertheless. What is that one drop of honey in this bitter cup, for which my soul thirsted, for which I was willing to barter all else?” An indescribable look of tenderness softened the dark, calm eyes. “Cruel thought! What is liberty to me without my dear Flora? I would cross a thousand oceans, wear manacles and chains, or endure the heaviest stripes for her sake — for my precious wife who turned from the most fascinating temptations that man can devise, to my poor love.”

The last farewell, so long since taken, flashed up before his vision. He recalled the rich crimson of the flushed cheeks, with tears upon them, like deep crimson roses wet with the splash of rain-drops. He remembered the dark coral lips, trembling with the burden they could not utter ; and he felt the pressure of the fond arms that would fain have held him for aye.

Greylock was lonely ; he whinnied low and pitifully, like a neglected child. The swash of the waves again filled the ear of March. “Still at sea,” he said, and went on soothing his companion. The climax of his hour of agony melted away before the love he bore Flora. She was the sun of his blank existence, and she had arisen full above the horizon of his sickening future. The rays of her love gilded the grave of his manhood, which his own hands had prepared. March Haywood was a slave again.

He fell to improvising, mournfully crooning his lines, interrupted only by the spectral shadows of the sailors silently gliding to and fro. He took up the broken thread of his idyl to Greylock, the substance of which is embodied as follows :

Flora, darling, waits for me,
Flora waits for me and thee ;
Nothing but this stormy bar,
Keeps me from my love so far.

Dear to me is Slavery's chain,
So it leads to thee again ;
Sweet to me are prison walls,
When within, my Flora calls.

All these long and absent years,
Haunted through by cruel fears,
I kept the look of thy sweet face,
Fresh as in our last embrace.

Human vultures sweeping o'er,
Clutch at my low cabin door ;
If my lamb be snatched away,
Woe to me, O God ! that day.

Then the trader's flying trail —
Then the block — the auction sale ;
All the tears of cruel awe
None but Master Jesus saw.

Bless thy letters ! precious things !
White as sea-fowl's snowy wings.
They came o'er the stormy sea,
Bringing hope and peace for me.

All that writing seemed aglow
With a love that hushed my woe,
When they read, Thy curls of jet
Waited, waited for me yet.

Listen, Flora, to the breeze,
Creeping through the piny trees ;
Listen to the news they bear,
When they lift your rings of hair.

They will whisper, March has come,
Never more from you to roam :
This, young master promised me,
O'er the blue Atlantic sea.

Darkness fled at the approach of one of those beautiful dawns born from Southern waters. A majestic tide had engulfed the hissing breakers of the previous night, and still rolled landward, invoking the "Sumter" with its deep-mouthed voice to ride westward into the bay on its sun-gilded billows. The pavilion of the rising sun, borne to the very edge of the Eastern Ocean, rested on

the rim of the waters, awaiting, apparently, his royal will. He had not yet stepped forth upon his azure path up the heavens; the glory within, lined and fringed the ash-colored curtains of velvet cloud that still screened his presence. Borders of dazzling orange and translucent amber folds rose against the sky, and spread a golden radiance over the broad expanse of eastern waves.

Dancing pilot boats offered friendly aid, and thus convoyed, the the "Sumter" brought to the quay the returned scion of one of the noble families.

Bram, in the dignity of a green livery and silver-laced hat, held the chestnut span in hand close to the gang-plank.

The newly purchased footman, Dick, a springy brown boy of about fifteen, held the carriage door, steps down, for his new master.

The blue satin curtains of the carriage, fringed and tasseled with white, waved a welcome to their proud owner. The horses curvetted and threw foam on the by-standers.

Slaves of all shades doffed hats to the "young massa jes done trabel." Old maumas with gay turbaned heads, and baskets on their arms, dropped respectful courtesies on all sides of the carriage. Some dear old aunties, who had been taught Sabbath days from the enlightened pulpit, and on week days by the whip-lash, that the white race was formed in the wisdom of God, especially to enslave the African, ejaculated heartily and piously, "De Lord bress ye!"

Bram, who had driven "heaps ob de Carliny lady and gentlemen," was highly elated at being once more officially reinstated. Drawing up the reins in his white gloves, he espied a small piece of ebony and ivory "scrape de foot" at him facetiously; whereupon he gave the tiny jester a touch of the snapper of his whip, and the low-spoken but high-toned warning, "Get out de way, dere, you s'nifican' nigger!"

The carriage dashed forward across the Bay, through Meeting into Broad street, and drew up before the iron ancestral gate. Massive high stuccoed walls concealed the yard, garden, and half the house from view. It had the air of a prison; and a stranger would have called it so, except for the other walled-in residences everywhere seen. Here and there along the top of this grim en-

closure clusters of pink and purple bloom peered into the sunshine, hinting at the paradise within. Through the iron gate, held by Dick, along the black and white diamond walk, up the flight of broad white marble steps, with March following closely after, the young master found himself in the lower hall, encountering a small regiment of bows and courtesies from his assembled servants. Dick ascended the staircase with Ralph, and ushered him into his own apartments.

“Send March to me,” said Ralph. “Lay the breakfast at ten.”

The windows of his chamber opened to the floor; the cool, shaded piazza invited him out. A colonnade of white fluted pillars rose against the blue day. Between these were seen gleams of the Ashley river, and the feathery tops of island pines beyond. The left corner of the house wore upon its shoulder a trailing mantle of dark green English ivy. Climbing roses looked over the balustrade between the pillars, or swung in sprays carelessly therefrom. Below, a parterre cut into shell walks, and gay with many-hued flowers, still glittered resplendent with its dew-drop jewelry. John, the new gardener, bought at auction before the Custom House, proved a fine investment. Well-shorn hedges extended their velvet walls each side of the marble walk from the gate to the house, and along the divisions of the grounds. The exuberant foliage of the trees seemed perennial — not a fallen leaf littered the shell paths beneath.

Ralph’s mind was running along the links of old associations, when March, stepping to a respectful distance at his side, said, “I am here sir.”

“Wash and dress me for breakfast.”

March bathed and dressed the master with the care of a parent for a child, with a deftness and celerity that made the toilet no interruption to Ralph’s flow of thought. His cogitations went on in a turbulent elementary chaos. Kaleidoscopic views revolved swiftly. Grace, marriage, crops, plantations, club-houses, summer tours, Newport, hounds, Paris, Greylock and Flora slid into marvelous figures, and glided into other forms as quickly.

Intently absorbed, he stood like an automaton, receiving from his valet the last touches of neatness. The only trouble March had with him, was in drawing on one of his boots which was entirely

too small. A sudden kick threw it out of March's hands, and across the room.

"Damnation, March! do you know who I am? Draw that boot on easier, or — I'll send you to Hades!"

A dash of carriage wheels and a sharp ring at the gate, ushered in Lewis Dentelle, of Savannah, Georgia. Three steps at a bound, up into the dressing-room he tore. He laid a light tap of his cane on Ralph's shoulder with the familiar greeting, —

"There, truant! By Jove! you're home again at last. Heard you came in the 'Sumter.' Put the horses over the course to arrest your French Highness, before you might go out."

"Haven't got in, yet," replied Ralph, "but I'm deuced glad to see you, Lew. I feel the loss of Paris already. Ah! that's the jewel of cities,"

"How does Charleston look to you now, Haywood?"

"It looks as if I had arrived in a young desert just planted with a few houses and nursery trees. It is too small and huttish. Why don't they pull down these wooden hovels on every street, and build up with suitable structures?"

"What structures, Ralph? such as *Les Tuilleries*, *Notre Dame*, etc.? When we secede, and set up a throne, we can remodel Charleston royally, *à la Paris*."

"Three cheers for that sentiment," replied Ralph enthusiastically. "Come down to breakfast, Lew, *ensuite, nous verrons*; then, lifted on the exhilarating aroma of our Habanas, let our souls commingle."

At the table, March took his accustomed place at the back of Ralph's chair, pointing Dick to the chair of Dentelle. The silver breakfast service and fine old porcelain of the former household, graced the occasion.

Andrew, the butler, brought in fresh fish from the bar, venison from the forest, duck from the marshes, eggs, corn-cake, and the ever-present dishes of rice and hominy. This old servant's movements forward or backward were one continued series of obsequious bowings and scrapings. He was the very essence of humility; often saying he was only "de dus' ob de eart; not fittin' for white man to wipe he foot on."

March served his master's plate at the side table and placed it before him.

“Take that cursed plate hence ! bring venison and duck with rice. Dentelle, I have been pampered too long, to return to hominy ; I object !”

“Well, I swear Ralph, that same hominy is the breath of my life. In Germany, at the University, I ordered barrels of it from Savannah. Students called me the Bald Eagle, because I fed on American white sand, as they termed hominy.”

“Try this duck, Dentelle ; it lacks the old, delicious flavor, somewhat ; cooked too soon. Andrew, how long since the ducks were shot ?”

Bringing back his foot, and bowing profoundly, “Tree day, sah ; couldn’t say ’cisely when de ship come in.”

“Hereafter, let the duck hang till the neck is ready to part, and the joints yield to the slightest touch. That’s the kind of living for an epicure ; hear ?”

“Heah, sah ? Yes, sah,” bowing again.

Dentelle, with a loud laugh, asked Andrew if he was born in the Court of France ?

“Neber see France, sah ; born Gollah country ; king fam’ly, sah.”

“What brought you here with your Court manners ?”

“I trabel, sah ;” a scrape and a bow ; “see dis big country, and de gran’ masser.”

“All right, Prince Andrew, bring your best from the wine room,” said Haywood ; Madeira, sherry and brandy. Read the names, old fellow ?”

Bowing, and drawing back his foot, —

“Yes, sah. Marsa Peyton larn me in old Virginny.”

“It is against the laws of South Carolina and Georgia for you to read.”

“Dunno, sah, I read for de gentleums ; don’ read for self.”

“What can you read ? the abolition papers ? That’s dangerous work.”

“No, sah, I reads de barrel and de demijohn ; reads wine, ’Dary, shary whisky, brandy. Tuk long time to larn, sah. Marse Peyton take de black whip, den I larns de English, sah.”

“How do you read wine ?” interrupted Dentelle.

“Lettle word, sah. Begins wid two wine glass techin’ de rims, when de marsa drink health.”

“How do you read Madeira?”

“Long word, begin wid a leetle garden gate, and hab star ober him.”

“Sherry?” said Ralph.

A low bow and hands clasped over his white apron ; “Begin wid de rattlesnake, sah, an’ eend wid de fox-tail.”

“Brandy? you college-learned cuss.”

“Begin with fat ole mauma, and eend wid de fox-tail.”

“All right, Prince Andrews, go to your books in the wine room, and bring as ordered.”

A smart pull at the bell preceded the clattering of canes and brisk heels up the sidewalk,—six figures darkened the dining-room door. Hilarious greetings and noisy mirth followed.

“Ten thousand pardons, Haywood, for this apparent neglect.”

“No apologies are needed, gentlemen,” replied Ralph. “I am hardly in a condition for companionship myself. After a few hours of recuperation, I shall be able to hold my own with you.”

Andrew just then placed the wine upon the table, of which all partook freely. The clinking of glasses chimed with repeated demonstrations of welcome. Sentiments were offered and boisterously drunk to common objects of interest ; to Carolina, king Cotton, Free Trade, and State Rights, subjects ever upon Southern lips.

In the midst of these bacchanals, the light step of a woman crossed the piazza. She was of brown complexion, tall, slender, and wavy-haired. Timid parted lips and snowy teeth enhanced her charms. A thread of scarlet velvet bound her head, corals depended from her small ears. Her tasteful dress and white apron fluttered quietly past. Not an eye missed the vision.

“That was a handsome purchase ;” said one. “Buy her here, Ralph?”

“Mars! the goddess Diana couldn’t outdo that,” said another ; “worth the money, whatever the price!”

“Want to sell, Haywood?” said another. “Here’s my check for two thousand.”

“I protest against robbery of that kind,” interposed a third. Let wood-nymphs, sylphs, and fairies welcome South Carolina’s son. “Let us drink to Ralph’s exclusive possession, in the sentiment which our poet laureate will offer.”

As readily as a bird carols his wildwood song, the poet, with glass in hand, repeated,—

“Drink, comrades, drink ! this Lethean balm
 Will yield a gallant, generous calm ;
 Drink to these angels in disguise :
 Drink deep and drown your tender sighs :
 Drink to this lovely, dark quadroom,
 Drink to the vision lost so soon.
 Drink to her beauty, and his joy,
 Who holds her charms, so rich and coy.
 Drink deep to women of all lands ;
 Caucasian first, for LEGAL bans.
 Then, drink, with thought and fancy free,
 To brown, or red, as chance may be ;
 Drink deep to woman’s love — the same,
 Whate’er the color, race, or name.”

A hearty response followed. Deep draughts sanctioned the sentiment.

The troop clattered down stairs, out upon the marble walks, leaving the clanking iron gate closed after them, and Ralph to his coveted repose.

Ralph and Dentelle resumed conversation in a more serious and confidential manner. They lounged in luxuriant easy-chairs drawn upon the piazza, fronting Ralph’s chamber. This piazza commanded the charming river, and James Island beyond, swimming in the delicious haze of a spring morning. The idly sparkling waters of the broad Ashley breathed an indolence in lordly contrast with the busy strife of commerce, which made northern streams the handmaids of industry, and the crowded thoroughfares of enterprise and trade.

A crystalized silence held the river, the islands, and piny groves, No stranger keel ever cleft its blue surface. No stranger foot unbidden, explored its vassaled shores. The feudalism of the middle ages made a mournful pilgrimage to the New World ; and here had been set up a mutilated idol for the worship of knights untitled, and squires unspurred. There remained to it only its arrogance, isolation, and oppression.

Ralph and Dentelle were as fair representatives of this condition, as could well be found. They were the genuine offspring of a miscegenation by the glittering lance of chivalry, and the broad plan-

tation hoe. They were the true resultant of the barbarism of the past, the Christianity of the present. They had been intimates from the cradle — had hunted deer together through the deep forests of their broad lands. They had traveled together and in divergent ways, till now, they met again on the iron threshold of manhood.

“So you are married, Dentelle?”

“Ah, yes, Ralph, some time ago.”

“What fair being was the honored recipient of your love?”

“My love?”

“Yes, of course, your love, Dentelle. Surely what other motive would link you for life in the indissoluble bonds of our Southern matrimony?”

“Your irony hath a sharp edge. There is no lack of motives for marriage. My motive was the reparation of beggared finances. Repeated losses at the races, tables of chance, etc., rendered me nearly bankrupt. Something must be done. I had made some acquaintance in Philadelphia with an old captain of a slaver, formerly bringing cargoes of negroes to our shores. I took pains to ascertain his abilities to replenish my ruined coffers, and found that bonds, bank shares, and ready money to a satisfactory amount, awaited his only daughter’s nuptials. I made haste to air my knightly graces, wooed and won the magnificent dower, and brought my wife triumphantly to Savannah.”

Ralph’s brow clouded. “Why go to the North, Dentelle, for a wife? Why bring a bride to sully the blue blood of the proud chivalry of Georgia, by an alliance among the ignoble and base-born?”

“Not so fast, my friend. To command a slaver, should in our heraldry, be a sufficient reason for conferring blue blood. My factors were harassed with daily demands which could not be answered, and my father frowned.”

“How does she take to our Southern Institution?”

“As if she were to the manor born. *Mi esposa cara* takes off her slipper, and punishes delinquents in genuine Southern style. You should see her wearing her raw hide, and using it too, about the pantries and kitchens.”

“What became of your love alliance with the entrancing octaroon, Isabel?”

“Dentelle answered thoughtfully,—

“The why, the where, what boots it now to tell?
Since all must end in that wild word — farewell.”

He walked away to the clustering rose-vine clinging to the balustrade, pulled a stem of the tiny yellow things, and twirling them absently in his fingers, came back to Ralph. “My graceful tender Isabel was sold. She could never have endured the knowledge that I was living with another. I did that most grievous act of my life because I could not witness her distress at my apparent abandonment. She would not have believed that circumstances made a marriage imperative. Her heart would have broken; it is all over now. My happiness was bartered for my wife’s gold. It is all over, Haywood. I am now fairly entered upon the race of life, married by law, and custom, bound to all Southern issues, an unflinching adversary to Northern aggressions, and a sworn supporter of our Federal Constitution.”

“What are the pressing issues of the hour? By Jupiter! I also am a true son of the South, and love her to my heart’s core. But to emerge from the bower of the Arts, the seat of the Graces, adopted Paris; to become a Nestor in the sectional contest with the Northern barbarians of the Republic! I swear it is anything but agreeable.”

With a resolute air, Dentelle stretched forth his hand, and made a gesture of dismissal to such trifles, and replied,—

“Away with these voluptuous regrets! The deuce, Ralph, you are made of sterner stuff! You inherit, *nolens volens*, the virtues, pluck, and integrity of a blooded line. Think of our venerable Agamemnon, our Calhoun! You can but follow his glorious leadership.”

“Well, the impending issues?” demanded Ralph.

“They are — well; Free Trade, Nullification, State Rights, Calhoun’s Balance Power of, or Extension of Slave Territory, Colonization of the Free Negroes, and Abolition. How’s that, formidable? Courage, my friend! You will soon be initiated. Our whole people are agitated with the discussion of these subjects, like forest leaves in a tornado. Our ladies even, are polished statesmen. At

every social gathering you will hear words of wisdom dropping from their lips."

"What about this Free Trade, or Tariff, or what the devil it is called, Dentelle?"

"*Ma foi!* Ralph, let me explain. The South will have no tariff. The North and West are encouraging Home manufactures, and insist upon Protection. England is *our* great purchaser, and consumer. She buys of us over three hundred million pounds of cotton a year, of the four hundred and sixty millions we produce, averaging over two hundred pounds exported, to each slave. Now this tariff on British exports, (which, by the way, is mostly received at the North,) will induce retaliatory measures on the part of the English. Retaliation will fall on us. England will not only demand a revenue from our cotton, but will be led to look elsewhere for her supplies; to Egypt, to the West Indies, and to South America. In the language of Mr. Hamilton, of your State, in a speech at the Walterborough dinner, 'unmitigated ruin must be our portion, if this system continues.'"

"How stands McDuffie on this Northern legislation?" enquired Ralph.

"Ah, Ralph! South Carolina has political leaders with whose giant stature the Northern and Western States cannot measure strength. McDuffie stands shoulder to shoulder with Calhoun. Against this Northern policy of Protection, he has even fought many a duel with its radical advocates. His eagle eye pierces cant and hypocrisy, his voice warns our people that this protective system is intended to precipitate upon us the moral and political catastrophe of the emancipation of our slaves. Hear! Ralph! I repeat his prophetic words; 'Any course of measures which shall hasten the abolition of slavery, by destroying the value of slave labor, will bring upon the Southern States the greatest political calamity with which they can be afflicted. For I sincerely believe, that when the people of these States shall be compelled by such means to emancipate their slaves, they will be but a few degrees above the condition of the slaves themselves. Yes Sir; mark what I say! Whenthe people of the South cease to be masters by the tampering influence of this Government, direct or indirect, they will assuredly be slaves.'"

“Slaves!” cried Ralph. “Preposterous!” His haughty eyes gleamed defiantly. “Slaves!” he cried, starting from his chair, his tall, fine figure looming up ominously. “Slaves! To whom?” as if the North and West lay cowering at his feet, beneath his outstretched arms. “Slaves to those who, from the first, have submitted their will to ours? Slaves to those who are already *our* slaves? Ha! ha! ha! by the gods! Slaves to hirelings who till their rocky soil, to send sustenance to our negroes? Slaves to men whose hostility to Constitutional measures embitters every Southern breast? To minions who crouch with repeated compromises to our demands. Slaves? when, and how? I ask. Let him who dares, answer.”

With vehemence his right hand clutched a silver hilt, and drew a bright blade, quivering to the light, from a hidden sheath. He held it steadily, as for a fatal plunge, and repeated,—

“I know where I will wear this dagger! then
Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius!”

He folded his imperialism gloomily about him, like a Roman garment: with knitted brow, and folded arms he strode stiffly back and forth — the Cassius he quoted. His *confrere*, Brutus, struck by the Roman fire, replied,—

“If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honor in one eye, and death i’ the other,
And I will look on both, indifferently,
For let the gods so speed me, as I love
The name of honor, more than I fear death.”

The curtain fell — between the acts they rested, took refreshments, smoked and drank.

“Dentelle, what of Georgia? what of her championship?”

“*Aut vincere, aut mori*. The pulses of the cotton-growing States throb with the same beat. All deprecate Northern manufactures, and internal improvements. All insist upon the return of the North and West to agriculture, in order to furnish stock and provisions for *us*. Georgia steps to the same music with Carolina; and she has taken *one* step in advance of your State, Ralph. Georgia has proven valor against that Northern ‘Jack o’ Lantern’ tariff, and a tenacity of purpose, which will not know defeat.”

“What step has Georgia taken in advance of South Carolina?” enquired Ralph, whose State pride seemed a little wounded.

“In a large public concourse, she passed this resolution :

“‘*Resolved*, That to retaliate as far as possible upon our oppressors, our legislature be requested to impose taxes, amounting to prohibition, on the hogs, horses, mules, and the cotton bagging, whisky, pork, beef, bacon, flax and hemp cloth of the Western, and on all the productions and manufactures of the Eastern and Northern States.’”

“Bravo!” cried Ralph. “But tell me, Dentelle, was that Georgia resolution ever carried into practice? Were these taxes on Northern products ever levied?”

“Ha! ha! ha! No. There was no necessity. But it had its legitimate effect, in demonstrating to the supporters of tariff, the kind of temper they would have to deal with. Such acts, with South Carolina’s courageous step toward secession, wrung from the Government Henry Clay’s ‘Compromise Tariff.’ After we obtained that concession, proposed by the bland Kentuckian, and carried by Congress, which reduces the tariff from forty, to twenty per cent, we were appeased. Thus we triumphed over the Pilgrims!”

“And ever shall. Curse their cringing souls!” cried Ralph, between his teeth, and striding excitedly the length of the piazza. “We can mould them as easily as our cooks manipulate dough on the board. They fear us; and their insipid adulation of a Southerner is disgusting to the last degree. It is patent—in Washington, at the watering places, at hotels, and everywhere. However, it serves our purposes. Too poor themselves, in us they worship means. We travel in Europe. They stay at home and plod. In the enjoyment of our summer leisure, we distribute our gold among them, while they toil and sweat on a par with our slaves. They call this *welcome and subserviency to us*; Christian Union, or some such infernal thing. I stigmatize it as base sycophancy.”

“That’s the spirit!” answered Dentelle. “You will soon shake off your Parisian lethargy.” Then looking at his watch, he remarked, “But there is a necessity for closing this conversation for the present, as I have an engagement at this hour.”

“An agreeable interview,” courteously observed Ralph. “I suppose I cannot understand our status too soon.” Then grasp

ing with warmth the hand of his early friend and associate, he bade him a short adieu, till they should meet again at the dinner hour.

CHAPTER VI.

PROTRACTED meeting opened with favorable weather. Arrivals from neighboring towns were numerous and encouraging. Smart young theologians, with a sprinkling of venerable clergy, had reached the scene on the Saturday previous, to lighten the burdens of the resident pastor. The latter superannuated class, grown gray in the service, were skilled anatomists of the soul. They could place a finger on every fibre of the human heart. They could play upon the emotions with the facile skill of a Mozart or a Bethoven, on ivory keys. They buoyed weak souls to life and hope, or dashed them to despair. They settled accounts for the laity with the terrible God, and gave them satisfactory receipts from His upper courts.

Sleighs of all kinds, with curious varieties of lading, dashed up to the double green doors of the church. Rawny pairs of work-horses tore up, panting, and throwing their heads from side to side, as if they brought the sins of the town.

The long sheds were at length packed with quaintly painted sleighs, double and single; bob-sleds add pungs. One looking at the scene, within and without, would say a German *Schutsenfest* had been inaugurated in the wrong era, and blossomed in the wrong season.

Drifts of Carries, Lotties, Emmas, Minnies, Katies, Lizzies, Bellas, Etties, Amies and 'Rias sifted in around the great box stove. There was a breezy tossing of ribbons, arranging of furs, and sinister glances at others' toilets. Blue eyes, black eyes, and hazel, flashed covertly athwart the square old pews up to the lumbering galleries, in quest of Willies, Charlies, Georges, Thodies, Joes, Sammies and Harries, whose melting orbs were reciprocally prepared for this expected battery. Magnetic influences quivered in the air at this early opening hour, which already auspiciously bore a confused semblance to the very gate of Heaven.

There came also, in quilted hoods and heavy cloaks, the real church lights ; some from other towns — holy women, who have an eye single to God's glory — Patience Leving, from Windboro : she buried her lover in boyhood's grave, and had rarely smiled since. Prudence White, from "Society Hill ;" she had served the Lord faithfully ten years in the Feejee Islands, till her husband had fallen a prey to the unnatural climate ; and she had seen four little graves under a bread-fruit tree, in which her own heart had been buried four separate times. By this heavenly discipline she was prepared "to work for God" the sole remnant of her days. Finally, Charity West — a monstrosity of tears, prayers and sighs — cut out for an angel about forty years since, and fully developed according to the popular pattern, by a life of single blessedness.

These three were on the ground to uphold the hands of the priesthood, in their proper sphere *outside* of the public altar. They were gifted in prayer, and resolute in grace. They could conduct female prayer-meetings when the clergy, fatigued with other labors, were refreshing themselves over mugs of hot sling and cider, and discussing the interests of Zion in a more general and comprehensive manner. They could also lead in singing, carry hymns through alone in shrill voices, amid the sobs and tears of those under their charge. They understood symptoms at the different stages of conviction and conversion ; they gave the proper warning or consolation at each point of progress. Being of thin, wiry figures, they bent more easily over the despairing to cry, "Believe ! believe !" Without discomfort, they could stand for a longer period persuading the more contumacious to "keep nothing back from God," but to "give Him all." These helpers received hospitality at the houses of the minister and church officials ; rarely with the laity.

There is an aphorism, "A work well begun is half done." On that principle, this revival was already a success. The attendance was large. During the two sermons and noon prayer-meetings costumes and faces were mutually scanned, and a tacit understanding of the status of each individual was established. At the close of the day's exercises, Claras were assigned to Lizzies, Lotties slipped home with Bellas, Etties claimed sweet Minnies, lovely 'Rias embraced and bore away gentle Katies.

In the second series, Willies were invited home by Harries,

Charlies put up with Eddies, and Joes drove their own "teams" up to the doors of the Georges. Patience Leving occupied a chamber at the doctor's, a few steps only from church. Her lungs were delicate. Long cold rides comported not with her duty.

Prudence White, the bosom friend of Mrs. Steele, was "sabined" off by that lady.

On Tuesday morning, Henry, Sultan and Czar called at Mrs. Beame's for Fanny. He brought a note to Richard, from Edmund Stone, a former classmate, now at Andover. The note begged Richard, for the love he bore to souls, to come up to Cloudspire to labor with the "impenitent."

Richard's interest in the great gathering was increased by his sympathy for his deformed "chum." Edmund was a hunch-back from birth; and the intensity of his piety was in an inverse ratio to the square of a hunch-back's distance from upright humanity. Therefore, he seemed not to belong to this rolling sphere. His meditations and speech were of the next two worlds. His visions were telescopic; and the church militant saw his tent of observation pitched upon her loftiest watch-towers.

Among Fanny's anticipations, since the invitation, had been the ride to Mary Steele's, and the daily going to, and returning from the church, a distance of three miles—and the very essence of these anticipations, was the proud beauty of Czar and Sultan.

With that thought, she asked Richard's permission to sit on the front seat with Henry.

"What now?" he replied. "The horses? go on then. I can sit by myself."

In silence and happiness beyond words for a time her eyes saw no other objects; their figures, movements, nimble feet, graceful limbs, their glossy manes blown in the wind, and their curving necks were to her evidences of the attributes to their Creator. She made more intimate acquaintance with the divine Artist, from that living, moving sculpture. She asked herself,—

"Of what likeness was He? What power was that, to fashion such beautiful animals, and endow them with this exultant life? Surely those creatures must be sparks of His own mysterious nature; they must be the embodiment of His own royal thoughts. What splendid toys for an indulgent Father to bestow upon His

children. How she adored Him. What could she do for, such a being?" An inner voice answered, "Nothing but love Him." That she did love and adore Him, she was sure. He seemed so near to her now. She was in His very studio. Everything that met her gaze was sacred, from His touch and finish. She would now set herself to learn from God's people how to serve Him acceptably.

Richard, scanning Henry's thread-bare coat and tattered sleeves, broke the reverie by asking Henry why he did not wear the warm clothing Mrs. Beame gave him?

"I am waiting for Miss Fanny to come up."

"What has that to do with it, Henry? See, your hands are nearly bare."

"I did put on the overcoat and boots Sunday morning, after the horses were harnessed; but when I came in the kitchen, the deacon and his wife questioned me about the way I got them. I explained it all; but they said I must acknowledge that I took them from the missionary box when the ladies were away."

William Steele, the Southerner, said,—

"A thief would lie, and it is as much the nature of niggers to do both, as for birds to fly in the air."

"I went to my room and put on my rags again, till the witness comes. I am poor, and ignorant, sir; I cannot help that. But I am not a thief; I can help that."

"Oh me! that was too cruel!" said Fanny, as she sat sidewise to look from one to the other. "That spoiled all your comfort in the clothes, Henry."

"It didn't anger me, for I'm used to such ways; don't expect nothing else; but I'll drive you to meeting in them, to-morrow morning."

"Yes, you will, that is quite sure! or Fanny Beame don't go herself."

"Fanny," said her brother, with a bit of chiding in the tone, "Charity covereth a multitude of sins! Zeal in morals may overleap the mark, and the motive be very good withal."

"But they won't *let* our charity cover up their sins. Mother and you gave the clothes, but they won't allow him to wear them. Henry is forever ragged, forever cold, forever called a thief and a

nigger. What kind of charity can cover *such* sins?" and her hand flourished before her brother, with a wonderful oratorical display. "And as to zeal, Richard," she continued, "you always say *my* zeal must be tempered with knowledge."

A triumphant nod ended that sentence. A suppressed smile warmed up the would-be reproving face of Richard, at the sharp-shooter's aim. To free himself from her quizzing eyes, he said,—

"There's Cloudspire church, Fanny. Turn about now; the bell strikes for afternoon service."

Reverence for God, and His worship, hushed all vexatious thoughts. She walked meekly to the deacon's pew, scarcely lifting her eyes, whence every trace of indignation had disappeared. "This is His house," she reflected, "I have come into this glorious Presence." Humiliation was a pleasure. Yet the brown square pews, the bare aisles, the naked, staring windows, gave her the painful idea that the gifts of the church to the One who robed the earth in all its beauty, and who was Beauty himself, were penurious in the extreme. He should have a magnificent temple, adorned with gold and precious stones."

Her eyes caught sight of the "Steele" Bible, clasped with gold, lying on its purple velvet cushion, and the heavy gilt tassels dropping from the corners. That was as it should be — right royally planned, as became the great King. By association, the silver font came up in her reflections. She had never looked upon its marvelous workmanship, but had heard its praise from many; of the three angels brooding over the flowery rim, and gazing into the water it contained, as if to change its nature to the wine of everlasting life. Also of their wings, spread as if they had dropped down, in their celestial flight through the upper blue. She was moved by the reverence that such sacred and appropriate symbols should inspire. She longed for the hour when the water from this sanctified vessel of the Lord should seal her acceptance with Him, and establish her communion with his people.

The usual stirring among the women, of cloaks, shawls, and footstoves; a flutter of white handkerchiefs among the girls; and a round of hems and haws from the men of the assembly, announced the ascent to the pulpit.

The Rev. Augustus Johns, from a neighboring city, preached from

Joel ii. 1. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion: sound an alarm in my holy mountains: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." In the exordium, the attention of his hearers was powerfully arrested. A shuddering attention hung upon his sentences. He pursued the frightful tenor of the chapter. He portrayed the terrible quakings of the earth, when lofty mountains, piercing the skies, should be siezed with spasmodic convulsions; when long ranges of towering peaks, should rock on their bases, and jostle against each other, like storm-swept waves; when whole cities should totter on their foundations, and with one grand, reverberating crash, lie level with the ground. He depicted the ocean, loosed from the restraint of its natural laws; the thundering of its clashing tides; the lashing of its angry billows against a "day of darkness," a "day of darkness and gloominess;" "a day of cloudiness, and thick darkness," when "the sun should turn to blackness, and the moon, stricken by Almighty Power, should turn to blood." He dilated upon the trifling effort of God's wrath, necessary to the swift annihilation of worlds; worlds which He had created with a breath; worlds which His word of command had willed out into space, as easily as soap-bubbles are blown into the air. He drew forth his watch and held it in view of the astounded audience. "What are the sun and moon? In one of these briefest moments of time called into existence; in another of these briefest moments, extinguished, erased."

He took breath. He wiped away drops of seeming agony from his face, harrowed by these direful contemplations. He raised a glass of water to his lips, ran his long fingers through a standing shock of red hair, which seemed to have caught the spirit of flames; the reflection of a terrific conflagration of all things earthly. In a low, guttural voice, like muffled thunder, he proclaimed this day of the Lord near at hand. "It may overwhelm you, this very week! this very day! Who can foretell this awful hour? Seasons and events are in His hands alone, whose omnipotent finger first moved the great pendulum of Time! The inhabitants of the land should tremble. You, my hearers, should abhor yourselves in sackcloth and ashes. You should fall upon your knees, and supplicate pardon, which the knell of Time will render forever too late."

The lineaments of his face became distorted; he wrung his hands

over the audience. He cried with hideous incoherency, "This day of God's wrath, how near! Think of an offended God! Think! I beseech you. He taketh vengeance upon His enemies. In this disruption of worlds, breaking upon us, even as it were at this moment, there will be no Savior. His atonement will have ceased."

This frenzied peroration brought his subject to a most appalling close. The congregation bowed with terror and gloom. Sobs, groans and tears, dolefully mingled. The great actor himself, shaken like a leaf over his own work, stepped down from the pulpit, weeping.

Fanny, wondering at herself, remained unmoved. There were no tears in her eyes, nor fear in her heart. She doubted the propriety, of selecting a text from the Pagan past, for the conversion of a quiet country people, in these days of Christian grace. Her nature recoiled from the picture of savage ferocity, with which the Rev. Johns endowed the loving All Father. A small rebellion, arose in her soul against the speaker, his oratory, and even against his Judgment Day; which ended by her saying in her heart, "I don't believe it. I doubt if he believes it himself." To her, the old church looked dreary. The glorious Presence had departed. She felt alone in a prison-house, among panic-stricken companions.

The inquiry meeting followed. Sanctimonious women convoyed hesitating relatives to the "anxious seat." Middle aged men, who had audaciously "held out against the Lord" for years "went forward." The action of natural forces impelled others. They arose in pairs "affinities." Harry of Windboro, descended from the gallery walked slowly up the aisle; and Katie of Cloudspire, left a pew below, following. Minnie stepped from her father's pew by the stove, with her veil down, and a handkerchief to her eyes; simultaneously, Eddie, from Society Hill, arose in the north-east corner, and passed on with drooping head to a seat beside her. Lottie, lingering nearly to the last, arose, slender as a calla lily, standing undecided by her seat, with disheveled curls, and downcast eyes; till Rev. Luther Winfield, the "lovely young minister," came from the altar, and in his own pleading hand took hers, leading her, half blinded by confusion, to a comfortable seat. It was his official privilege to retain that hand; to sit beside her, pointing to the "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." While rendering

this professional service, however he fondly believed in his heart no sin had ever stained the purity of her blossoming soul.

Thus the seats were filled. Tears flowed afresh. The Deity was solemnly implored, to look upon the depraved and agonized group at His altar. His vengeance and mercy; His hatred and love, His jealousy and forbearance, were learnedly rehearsed before Him, as if God, were an enigma to Himself. The implacable Jehovah, was flattered, cajoled, admonished and reprimanded. The "mourners" were presented to the Throne, as divine images, and as reprobates; as immortals, and as dying worms; as penitents, and as incorrigibles.

At intervals, the plaintive wailings of old Bangor, China, Funeral Thought, and Judgment Hymn, surged over the stricken company, like voices from the tombs; as if the very dead, were calling from their graves.

From these incongruous elements, there came forth a grotesque variety of those singular *curiosities* of the age, denominated "Christians." The conversions formed a genus, of which the species differed as widely, as the legerdemain tricks of the prestidigiator, although produced by the same, or a similar art. There are eggs fried in a hat, cooing doves soaring from a boiling pot, handkerchiefs extracted from a loaf of bread, and stolen silver coin dropping from the sleeves of honest men. Thus, each species of the gems "conversion," possessed certain peculiar characters differing from each other. They were conformable to no model, or draft, except to the mysterious credenda of the illimitable space, and the eternity beyond human ken.

"Remarkable conversions; said a gray-haired gentleman to another; chafing his palms together with exultation. "The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save."

Simon Link, the drover, lifted his weather-beaten face, and said calmly, "Peace! all is bright as the sun." But this was not the work of Rev. Augustus Johns. Fear had no place in Simon's heart—he had driven his herds in the face of uprooting hurricanes; he had slept soundly on the ground o' nights, when the black earth was chained to darkness by jagged lightnings. His joy was the effect of Sunday's pastoral sermon, by good old Father Lanson, from the text, "I am the good Shepherd." Since then,

gentle undefinable thoughts of being folded himself, filled his reflections. He would rest somewhere, the "green pastures," and "still waters" of God's love appeared to him incomparably beautiful.

A few low, delicious tones of tender enquiry in Lottie's ear by the Rev. Luther Winfield, was answered by glad tidings, *I am very happy,*" a striking coincidence with his *own* feelings. This gratifying fact, he duly proclaimed *for* her; as woman was still subject to Paul. Then taking the dear hand in his; he led her to her father's sleigh in waiting at the door.

Eddie rose up, and spoke for himself, expressing the assurance that he had found Christ; that he should now renounce the world, and its deceptive pleasures. He closed by asking prayers that he might be a bright and shining light, and lead many souls to Heaven.

The Rev. Stone inquired the state of Minnie's feelings. He bent over her, and received the whispered reply, "I think I have found the Pearl of great price;" whereupon he declared this additional trophy with devout satisfaction. Minnie was nearly fainting; he advised her to retire. Eddie offered his sleigh and himself, to take his new-found treasure to quieter scenes. It was a millennial sight, the manner in which his strong arm supported the young convert, while her head drooped upon his regenerated shoulder, on the way home.

It was conceded throughout Cloudspire, that the greatest triumph of grace was seen in the conversion of the rich Mr. Budington. It had been devoutly wished for years, that he might be enrolled among the church, as in that case, his great wealth would be sanctified to evangelical purposes.

To their great joy, there he stood; enveloped in his fur-lined broadcloth overcoat — "a monument of divine mercy." In his own words, he had revolved the subject for two years. During recess to-day, in a providential interview with William Steele, from South Carolina, that gentleman's wide Christian experience had opened a way for his feet. He should with thankfulness regard him as the more direct instrument in the hands of God, of his clear and satisfactory conversion.

Mr. William Steele was then called upon to offer the closing prayer, after which the old brown church was deserted.

Dr. Clarendon lived near the "meeting house," just across the green. Both he and his wife desired to do honor to the town's distinguished guest from the South. Therefore, Mrs. Clarendon begged the favor of Mr. Steele's company for that night; suggesting that he should not be too partial in his visits among the town's people. He accepted with the finished courtesy of the Southerner, whose manners he studied to imitate, at once offering his arm to his hostess. The doctor's wife was but slightly impressed with the solemnities of the week; therefore her intercourse was marked by her natural gaiety.

The professions of Medicine and Theology in Cloudspire were two aristocracies; each with its distinct armorial bearings, and separate as the "houses of York and Lancaster." The doctor declared his supremacy over the church, by saying;—

"They can neither live nor die, without me. I have to bring them into this world, and see them safely out of it. Furthermore," he added, "believers profess to remove mountains by faith and prayer, when they cannot remove mole-hills without my ipecac and paregoric."

A loud, hearty laugh followed these flippant assertions, accompanied with the winding of his nasal horn in a red silk bandana.

Dr. Clarendon's halls and apartments were more tropical in furniture than those of their neighbors. Warm, bright colors mingled in carpets. Massive shining brass andirons, and scalloped brass fenders, adorned marble hearths. Curtains, red as poppies, were caught up on milk-white glass rosettes. Mirrors leaned over the mantels, which were copies of Egyptian marble.

Lucy, the only child, was the pride of her father. Her home was her Paradise; for between her and the young people, there was a great gulf. There was no approximation of familiarity or affection. On their part, they were icebergs, loosed from their moorings; and Lucy was a violet palm island in a sunny sea.

A contest of ribbons, and colors was secretly carried on in the dressing chambers, and band-boxes of the town-maidens, said dressing chambers, and band-boxes being ever on the defensive against Lucy, the aggressor. In the spring, the hue of her ribbons

and dress was borrowed from the dandelions and apple-blossoms, with the delicate greens of a new-born foliage. By the time these colors were fairly in a successful reign, and the church of a Sunday seemed one grand spring bouquet, Lucy walked up the aisle in midsummer, habited as if a piece of heaven's blue had fallen upon her, coloring gloves, streamers, and dress. Chambers, and band-boxes fell out again with the doctor's daughter, and took to practising wicked extortions from missionary funds and savings-banks, till the church lawn and square grim pews blossomed in the coveted cerulean. In autumn, Lucy's golden browns, crimsons and dusky greens, baffled jealousy. She was scarcely distinguishable from the brilliantly tinted leaves that showered about her morning and evening walks.

The mill-owner's son, down at Alderbank, had her name on his list, and drove his prancing turnout past the doctor's on many a summer day, yet never drew a rein. He frequently saw her face framed in the arch of the red curtains, like a saint, set in the stained glass of cathedral windows. Its purity rebuked him; and he only carried that picture away, in his memory.

The doctor was a dread to the unlearned; inasmuch as, like St. Peter, he jingled the keys of life and death. He dealt in technicalities; he hurled Latin and knotty physiological terms about him with overwhelming effect, chuckling with enjoyment over his frightened patients. Formidable and unheard of diseases held high carnival in his circuit.

Thus, between the doctor's playful, and bombastic ambiguity, and the war of the band-boxes, his daughter was left to waste her sweetness on the Cloudspire air.

Supper awaited the arrival of the master of ceremonies but a short time. A dose of volubility, studded with uproarious laughs, set every patient right. Without recourse to saddle-bags for drops, or powders, pain was soothed, and nerves were calmed. The doctor put his patients in good humor, bade them take a good night's rest, and returned home.

The supper was a true New England institution. Roast turkey, roast pig, a round of beef, sweetmeats, pickles, boiled custards, loaf cake, cream and mince pies.

Hester, a very black woman, and her son, a bright-looking

brown boy, waited. Roland was bidden by Mrs Clarendon to stand at the back of Mr. Steele's chair — a surprise and an honor quite pleasing to that gentleman. Roland changed Mr. Steele's plates, stepping back to his post every time with the precision of a cadet ; while the doctor himself passed the viands to the others. Roland handed coffee and dessert with a bow, and was duly rewarded by that personage with, " Splendidly done ! my fine fellow," a pat on his head, and a silver half dollar. At the close of the meal, Mr. Steele again gallantly offered his arm to the lady hostess, and the dining-room was left to Hester's care.

Roland was allowed time to admire the bright silver piece, which he turned first one way, and then another, in the light of the tall pink wax candles, still standing on the table. He held it over his head, dancing round and round upon one foot, till a jealous chair tripped him up. The floor caught his treasure from his hand, and the thieving ashes hid it. He hallooed lustily, and rescued it from the brigands, whirling it upon the table to hear its warbling ring. He said to Hester, —

" Mother ! what's this bird on here, with sticks in his claws ? "

" That's the American Eagle, my son. It means freedom ! "

" What does this woman hold on her cane ? A cap ? Why don't she put it on her head ? "

" Oh ? that's a cap of Liberty ! A woman must not wear that. She holds it for the gentlemen. "

" How much will this money buy, mother ? — a pair of shoes for me, and a shawl for you ? "

" No, Roland, it would not buy even a pair of shoes for you ; but its a nice present. You earn money faster than I do. I have to work three days and a half for a half dollar. "

" Where are your half dollars, mother ? — I never saw one before. "

" You have one on your back, the price of an old coat, to make over for you. Then, there's a little tea and sugar in the paper at home, and a small piece of soap ; there's another fifty cents — and so on. "

Perfectly happy, and unconscious of the curse awaiting his pretty brown face — merely because it was brown — he took up Hester's poor, sorrowful words, and sang up and down the house,

“And so on, and so on, and so on;” and then out doors he sang to the stars, “And so on, and so on, and so on.”

Entering again briskly, he said to his mother,—

“Shall I wait on the gentleman to-morrow? and if I do, will he give me more silver money?”

Just then the burly doctor, preceding Mr. Steele, and grand in the spasmodic curves of the upper lip, stiffened to the highest degree, passed through the dining-room to the office — a little green blinded box on the south-east corner of the house — wherein a stove kept up its purring noise through the winter days. A large arm-chair, the dread of aching teeth, embraced the pompous master. A red lounge, whereon were accustomed to recline the pains, debilities, derangements, nervous, and other complaints, acute and chronic, put on its state manners, and gracefully surported Mr. Steele.

The doctor wound a nasal horn in the red bandana, kept his eyes on the polite lounge who dreamily followed the smoke-rings of his cigar, and thought it would be pleasant to dissect a Southerner. Yet he was awkwardly aware, that to make a “natomy” of that subject required a metaphysical manœuvring, for which he doubted his own ability.

There is often a strange similarity between currents of thought in two individuals. William Steele was arranging initiatory steps for analyzing the doctor. “Why should I hesitate,” he thought, “even on this, my first visit?” I knew the family, before I left the North. Pshaw! it’s no more than a business transaction. I have made merchandise of human nature too long, to halt now. I have trafficked in just such beings as make up that protracted meeting, with only the difference of color.— By Jove, I like color! Lucy, can’t come any nearer an angel than my Isabel. But that’s neither here nor there.”

He puffed the smoke of his cigar slowly; the rings were perfect.

“I have come North for a wife; and if my coming has not been preceded by John the Baptist, it has been heralded by a baptismal Font; which in Cloudspire, is the same thing. I know my prestige and power, and will proceed at once with my purpose.”

Lucy Clarendon answered his requirements. She was fresh and fine looking; her features bore the impress of culture and thought.

She was not foolishly shy, nor awkwardly confused. Her style was dignified, and distinguished by a lady-like self possession. On the whole, she would reflect credit upon himself, on his return to 'Le Grand Palais.' He regarded woman as one of man's earthly possessions, and accordingly, began his negotiations.

He led conversation adroitly up to this question, "Will you permit me, doctor, to call your attention to a subject, which weighs heavily upon my thoughts?"

"I am at your service, sir," replied the genial host.

"Pardon my abruptness; but it seems best to begin at the root of the matter. I came North with the intention of marriage; to carry back with me as the solace of my loneliness in that state, a companion. I have made my choice, and with frankness, I entrust you with the happy secret, — you, as the proper, and lawful guardian of the one I hold most dear. I bring my suit before you first. Most unwittingly perhaps, your peerless daughter Lucy, has taken me captive. If you have objections, sir, to my presenting the subject before her, I shall most sadly obey. If my preference meets with your approbation, I shall impatiently await the hour to learn my fate from her own lips."

An immediate use of the bandana; a short, well timed silence, and the doctor replied,—

"I must acknowledge, Mr. Steele, you have divulged a delicate state of affairs. I am at a loss what to answer to this sudden summons. True I have always remembered that the time would probably come, when my Lucy's affections must be transferred from myself to another, and I have desired that when my arm should cease to shield her, she should be doubly protected by that other. In yourself, sir, I see an eligible offer, so far as report goes; personally, I have had no information as to your prospects, although I have every reason to believe they are more than desirable."

Mr. Steele rose from the lounge, and paced the floor as if in a mental chaos of hope and fear. He drew from his pocket-book three papers, and extended them to the doctor, that he might judge for himself of his financial outlook.

The first paper was the agreement as overseer of the plantation, "Le Grand Palais"

The doctor read,—

sand Eight Hundred and Thirty——. and in the fifty—— year of the Independence of the United States of America.

MORDECAI HEARTSON.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of
JAMES JESNEY.

[Seal]

The doctor, not the least wearied, unfolded the third paper, and as he read silently, his upper lip took on a spasm of importance and gratification. The document was a bill of sale of Binah and her two children, Flora and Sarah. It was the deed of William Steele's property, lawfully certified and registered, in the proper official department at Charleston. It read thus :

Bill of Sale.— Printed by P. Hoff.

The State of South Carolina.

Know all men by these presents, 'That I, Edward M. Doom, for and in consideration of the sum of one thousand dollars, to me in hand paid, at and before the sealing and delivery of these presents, by William Steele, (the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge), have bargained and sold, and by these presents do bargain, sell, and deliver to the said William Steele, Binah and her two children, Flora and Sarah, to have and to hold the said slaves, with their future issue and increase, unto the said William Steele, his executors, administrators and assigns, to his and their only proper use and behoof, forever. And to the said Edward M. Doom, my executors and administrators, the said bargained premises unto the said William Steele, his executors, administrators and assigns, from and against all persons shall and will warrant, and forever defend, by these presents.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal. Dated at Charleston, on the twenty-sixth day of September, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty——, and in the fifty—— year of the Independence of the United States of America.

EDWARD M. DOOM.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of
THO. N. GARDNER.

[L. S.]

After a careful perusal of said printed documents, which gave an air of stability, of law and order, quite pleasing to the reader's mind, the doctor remarked,—

“ I am more than satisfied, sir, with the papers ; I regard them as the corner-stone of your future independence.”

“ Thank you. You observe in the last paper, the ‘ Bill of Sale,’ that the future increase of Binah and her children are mine also.”

“I have heard,” said the doctor “that the race is prolific ; and if so, that must be a source of rapid income to owners.”

“Yes, that is true in the main. Binah has already brought me a fine male child ; and perhaps before my return, will add still another. Binah is of a superior breed. She was imported from Africa, direct from the ‘Gold Coast.’ Came over in the slaver ‘Black Cruiser,’ in the last part of the year 1815. She is hardy and docile, seldom needs the whip. and works like a mule.”

“What is the value of children, Mr. Steele ?”

“Usually, fifty dollars, as soon as born ; according to size and soundness. At a year old, one hundred ; and so on. The oldest girl will soon yield me a profit in that line. In less than one year’s time she will be fourteen years old ; I got her age from her master. She is a mulatto.”

“I suppose you have not yet purchased land. How then do you dispose of your slaves ?”

“Hire them out, sir. Binah works rice for sixty dollars a year, and supports her own children. I am at no expense whatever. They must continue to clothe themselves. Marquis I purchased in Charleston, on the ‘table.’ He’s worth twelve hundred dollars ; but owing to a suspected partiality of his mistress for him, he was put up for sale, and she was taken to France. He is a fine mulatto fellow, and a prime mechanic. I rented him on the spot for twenty dollars a month.”

“I am convinced,” said the doctor, “that no part of our Union opens such avenues to wealth as the South.”

“That is my opinion, sir ; although a man starting without means may not often be so fortunate as myself. I have the full confidence of Mr. Fairland, who leaves all his affairs to me, and therefore grants privileges which in other cases would be withheld.”

“You make the most of Yankee calculation, I see,” remarked the doctor, with a consequential laugh. “Marquis brings you two hundred and forty dollars a year. Binah and daughter at two births a year, two hundred ; and Binah herself, rented at sixty, makes a net income of five hundred dollars a year ; and then there is no toiling, or sweat of the brow over such revenue.”

“I confess I have nothing to complain of, in adverse fortune ; but doctor, material possessions do not satisfy the heart.” Here

William drew his snowy handkerchief covertly across his eyes, as if tears were expected. He sat down with well dissembled humility, adding, "I look upon the pure home affections as the desideratum of man's happiness. Without these, man's life is a desert — a barren Sahara, which may be traversed by camels, bearing the gold of Ophir, and the pearls of Indian seas. It may be one grand thoroughfare of Arabian spices and perfumes, and remain a desert still, the pathway of gold, and pearls, and spices effaced from its sands by the sighs of solitude and discontent."

A flourish of the doctors bandana sufficed for the exclamation point. He assented to the truth of Mr. Steele's remarks, observing emphatically,—

"Marriage is a divine ordinance. Its blessings are the rarest that Heaven bestows upon a fallen world. In marriage, the affections become anchored. The fruits of that union are the highest pledges of man's happiness on earth. The unselfishness of parental solicitude for children is a source of unadulterated joy."

This harmonious flourish of sentiments brought a benign expression to each face. Mr. Steele resumed,—

"You understand me now, sir ; my early days — my present finances ; and as to principles, why 'Cloudspire has ever had my moral and religious nature under inspection. I shall not remain longer than one week from next Monday. There is a necessity for an early announcement of my wishes. Shall I meet mercy, or refusal?"

Both gentlemen sought appropriate refuge in silence. The doctor resolved to meet this urgent request with becoming dignity ; although a glow of exultant joy was creeping to the very tips of his fingers.

"Surprising !" he said to himself. "Lucy to marry ease, servants, mocking-birds, magnolia-blossoms, and orange-groves ! Lucy to travel far away to these possessions in waiting ! Lucy to become the white lamb of Mr. Steele's manly and tender care."

His lip took on its old, important curl, and he finally gave the suppliant his hand.

"I do not feel at liberty to refuse my daughter the free exercise of her own feelings in this case. You have my warmest wishes, and unqualified assent. However, allow me to meet her first with her mother, to prepare them, sir, for this unexpected proposition.

If your appeal meets with favor, I will leave you to press your suit with the dear girl herself."

Dr. Clarendon pressed the hand he held warmly, and returned to the parlor.

After a few moments the office door opened, and Hester glided in unobtrusively to the stove. She replenished it with wood, and began brushing up the hearth, quietly kneeling before her work. Suddenly she felt her head drawn back; a pair of warm hands, one on each side of her head, held her in that position; a pair of glittering black eyes bent over her; a black beard swept her forehead, and a swift kiss was left on each cheek. Then a strong left arm glided round her waist, raised her to her feet, and held her there in its encircling clasp. Before her eyes, in William Steele's right hand, there shone a silver half dollar. Bewildered, she neither accepted nor refused it. While releasing herself from his embrace, he again lifted her chin, and flashed his glittering eyes into hers. Kissing her forehead, and he said,—

"Take it, Hester. A touch of your velvet face, and a look into your soft eyes, is worth double the money."

With her hand upon the latch of the door, she spoke angrily, regaining her strength.

"I am poor and needy, sir; but I have lived long enough to understand insult! I am not a slave, sir! I entered this office by Mrs. Clarendon's order. Shall I expose this treatment?"

"Of course not," he replied eagerly. "These affairs are not to be spoken of. If you love your young lady, Miss Lucy, you will preserve silence."

"I do love and respect her," said Hester.

"Then take this money and go," he urged hurriedly.

For an instant she thought of her poverty, took the piece, and immediately left the room.

Soon after, the doctor looked into the office, and simply said,—

"This way, sir."

For a half hour, the family group in the parlor discussed the revival; Edmund Stone, the hunch-back; the climate of South Carolina; and the bills of mortality in Charleston. Finally, Dr. and Mrs. Clarendon withdrew, leaving Lucy to the charming of her lover, Mr. Steele. It was evident to that lover, that he must

“charm never so wisely.” A false step would imperil his plans. Lucy’s color glowed and paled like changing rubies. Restraint somewhat stiffened her manner ; her eyes burned hazel in the fire-light. The Douglas plaid of her dress lacked the waving sheen of her natural animation ; it froze into statuesque folds. A book of engravings was open on the table at her side.

William asked coolly,—

“Are you fond of pictures, Miss Clarendon?”

“Quite so ; but in landscapes, I should prefer the originals. Nature herself is more attractive to me than her representatives.”

“Pictures are a fine substitute, when means and leisure are wanting for travel ; and they also preserve the inspiring lineaments of the noble and beloved. I think I have learned to esteem them more highly, by the study of Mr. Fairland’s gallery, at ‘Le Grand Palais.’ Our small town here, offers no works of arts. Her hills and rivulets were all I had previously studied.”

Lucy began to feel more at her ease, and asked,—

“Does your forest scenery South, differ materially from ours?”

“Very materially. Our Carolina live oaks, veiled with moss, are objects of great attraction — intensely unique in their growth. Our pines are tall and sparse — one may ride in any direction through the forests. At this season they are filled with warm hazy sunlight, and bird-songs, instead of chilly snows.”

Forgetting shyness in thought of sun-lighted pines, her eyes raised in the old manner, and she remarked, smilingly,—

“How delightful these must be.”

“They are so, I assure you, Miss Clarendon ; but to me, they lack the charm of companionship. I have been led to say with Selkirk,—

‘O Solitude ! where are the charms,
That sages have seen in thy face.’

An appreciating taste, enlivening, and directing my own, would be invaluable.”

“You have the society of planter’s families, I suppose ? I hear they are a highly refined and cultured class.”

“Yes, truly so ; but, Miss Clarendon, pardon me, I referred to a nearer interest than that of the neighbor or casual visitor. Allow

me to say, that such a mentor as yourself would make celestial bowers of live-oaks; elysium of pine forests."

A slight trembling of the hand on the book, a rapid look into the firelight ensued. Lucy observed, "I am not accustomed to such compliments, Mr. Steele. I feel myself totally unworthy."

"Far more unworthy am I to indulge such an aspiration, for one who is grace and purity itself. But there are moments in life, when the human soul is fearless — when it risks self-respect, and the golden opinion of another, for a purpose which hurls every other suggestion to oblivion."

He gently laid his hand on the white tremulous thing, nestling among the pictures. Scarce knowing how, or why, she withdrew her hand from its shelter.

"Oh! leave me not! thou white dove of hope!" he murmured piteously. — "Return over the troubled waters of my spirit, and bring the green olive branch! — "Tenderly he raised the hunted hand to his lips. No word of hers relieved the silence — like a frightened bird, which cannot raise its wings, her speech was paralyzed. He knelt before the maiden upon one knee, and bowed his head despairingly. He begged permission to lay before her the exquisite torture and felicity of the present moment. "Would his entreaties offend her? — Might he dare to unveil to her the uncontrollable tempest of his soul?"

Lucy gathered strength from his weakness, and found in her heart, strong sympathy for his distress. She bade him rise — she would hear all! Then her brain whirled, and for a moment, the firelight darkened. She supported herself upon the table.

His chair was beside hers — he held her hand in his.

"Miss Clarendon! I am an humble suppliant for your sweet mercy! Since I first gazed upon you, I have been your captive. I am soon to return South. Here to-night, I must learn from your lips an unspeakable joy or an utter despair. Through all this week, although I have endeavored to lend my aid in the great revival of our church, you have come between me and God. — While I knelt before Him, my spirit bowed before *you*. The dear image of *your* beauty rose above all else. Wherever I walked, *you* flitted on before me. Wherever I sat *you* were beside me."

His voice sank into humility itself. "Alas! unfortunate omen!

— the light of your countenance turns from me — my vehemence pains you. Oh! how heedlessly have I crushed the flower I would fain gather to my breast!

Again he reverentially raised the hand to his lips, and retained it more lightly, still clinging to it however, as a drowning man might grasp helplessly a white water lily — his only safety. He said no more, but sat apparently repentant. Lucy had turned partially away to rest her forehead upon her other hand. At length she addressed him, —

“Mr. Steele, I am rather a suppliant at your hands — I am speechless before you! I am not a coquette, to utter lightly false, and wounding words. Grant me time to reflect.”

“God bless you for this! — that you do not strangle, at once, my nascent hopes!”

He relinquished her hand and arose, saying, —

“My cruel impetuosity has unnerved you. — I will retire for a time. But there are many reasons why I venture to beg, that at an early moment I may receive some assurance of your favor. If my stay could be extended for days, or if I were to reside here months, your own sweet will should be mine; — if indeed, I might look upon you every week, and feel that your dear presence was near!”

He went out beneath the cold starry sky. Never before in her life had Lucy felt so lonely as when the door shut William Steele from her sight. And wherefore? — She was a riddle to herself. — She seemed suddenly to have come upon a Celestial City, whose gilded turrets, and graceful spires were bathed in serenest blue; an amethystine gate seemed left ajar for her to open. She longed to enter the purple portal amid the glories beyond. But how could she swing the precious barrier aside! She felt herself a mere child. What enchanting words she had heard. How exquisitely delicious did they still echo in her ear, thrilling her with rapture. But ah! it could not be a reality. She was accustomed to an insidious coldness outside of her family, coloring courtesies and civilities. Why did Mr. Steele select her among a world-full of other attractions? Could she leave father, and mother, the home of her childhood, and depart with a stranger, hitherto? Did she love him? She could not analyze this new

array of emotions ; this spell of his presence causing her to tremble like an aspen leaf ; this oppressive sense of desertion in his absence ; this unaccountable longing for his return. Visions of her forest walks, her favorite wild flowers, the purling brooks, and her rocky seats flashed into memory. Could she leave them to go so far away ? Strange ! they appeared desolate now, unless his footsteps should wander there with hers. Yet, she could not expose her perplexity to him ; and he had besought an immediate answer. The tumult of her thoughts, hopes, and regrets would not be stilled.

She placed the brands together on the hearth ; smoothed her hair before the long mirror on the mantel. Whom did she see there ? Surely not Lucy Clarendon. In the place of the animated self-poised features that ever before had been reflected to her view, there were tearful and pleading eyes — a physiognomy from which every shade of pride and spirit had vanished, and given place to a saintly abnegation of self. To an observer, there would have been an indescribable charm in the softened, saddened light that overspread the face.

Still wandering among these distracted thoughts, marveling at the change, and the revelations of the evening, another face took its place in the mirror with hers.— Mr. Steele's entrance had not been noticed. A sudden flash of pleasure thrilled every nerve. She suffered herself to be led to the sofa — a pleading voice again besought her decision. The amethystine gate was ajar, awaiting only her touch. She hesitated, trembled, and pronounced her fate.

If you consider me worthy your esteem and confidence, I am only too happy in that choice."

He caught her to his breast. He kissed her brown hair, exclaiming,—

"Thank God ! mine forever ! Ah ! my darling Lucy ! true love sees no unworthiness, it hears of no blemish, asks for no extenuations, has no doubts, or fears. All these are incompatible with its Divine effluence. Blessed hour ! which consummates my fondest desires. *Do you consent to leave all for me ? to become the light of my far off Southern home ? Repeat it, my sweet angel ! is it indeed a reality ?*"

"I shall find home and happiness in your presence, wherever that may be."

William Steele tenderly raised the drooping head of the trusting girl; wiped away her tears with delicate tenderness, murmuring in broken sentences, "Thank God! Joy unspeakable! Mine forever!"

In the season of ecstatic stillness which followed, the leafless lilacs outside, groping with benumbed fingers against the house, said to her heart, "Stay with us! stay, stay." The red-berries, bobbing against the window-panes, warned the fascinated girl, by their mysterious knockings, "Go not, Lucy! — no, no, Lucy! — go not."

Wednesday morning opened a new era in the Clarendon family. A genial complaisance shed a mellowing grace over words and deeds. At the breakfast table, Roland officiated, as usual, at the back of Mr. Steele's chair; receiving another half dollar. Smoking hour in the office, resulted in referring all arrangements to the judgment and wishes of the honored guest.

In the parlor, Mrs. Clarendon met her future son-in-law with a warm maternal welcome. On his part, he was profuse in affectionate apologies for so suddenly robbing her of the light of the household.

Bedewing with a few becoming tears the smiles of her ill concealed pride in Lucy's triumph, she replied; "I am highly flattered, sir, by the honor of your choice. Lucy is our darling. But we have raised her with the usual expectation that her blossoming beauty was maturing for the joy and possession of another. She has been raised in the seclusion of Cloudspire, as the anemone springs up amid of forest shadows. Her mind is purity itself free from all taint of an artificial world; but whatever of natural and feminine graces may adorn her character, I most freely consign them to your keeping. They are her only jewels. When I yield her to your devoted tenderness, sir, I feel that she is dowered with what is more necessary to woman's existence, than aught else — a husband's faithful, and abiding love."

Les affiancés enjoyed the remainder of the morning alone, discussing the early marriage, and departure.

CHAPTER VII.

THE sleeper's head turned in the hollow of the downy pillows. Soft laces trembled, rose and fell, like snow-wreaths, wind-lifted from their native banks. A pair of dark eyes opened languidly on the pleasantly shaded room — eyes quiet as the chamber itself, clouded only by the drifting mist of vanishing dreams. The proud mouth gathered up its relaxed curves, and the spiritless voice called, "Zoè!"

Like a statue springing into life, the girl glided to the bed; her smiling lips replied,—

"I am here, my dear miss."

"What is the hour?"

The maid turned to the exquisite device on the marble shelf, and said,—

"Birdie holds 'ten' in his beak; he has just taken it, Miss Gracie!"

On this shelf — itself a fine relic from the "Eternal City," — was a clock, which measured the charmed air of the chamber into golden hours for its favored occupant. A bird of Paradise picked up from the heart of a rose, golden figures, indicating these hours, and dropped them successively upon the bosom of an azure sea, whence they floated from sight.

"Has mamma risen?"

"Two hours since, miss!" replied the attendant; then fell to adjusting the fine linen, and lace of her mistress' couch. "She has ordered coffee, with strawberries and cream for you, and bade me beg you to continue your rest and sleep, after."

A quick ring of the bell brought James to the door directly, with a silver salver burdened with the lady's own silver morning service. A dewy nosegay, freshly culled, lay beside the scarlet berries. James knew how to put together the morning bouquet, in a manner to suit the most fastidious of the family. The maid knew her duties as well: — the exact amount of Mocha to be poured into the

French china cup,—just the quantity of cream and sugar to be added to the strawberries.

When this was accomplished, Zoë carried the salver to the bed of her mistress ; offered spoons and napkins smoothed the inequalities and balanced the rebellious waiter, taking airs upon itself for high breeding. After the refreshment, she made the pillows more downy, gave their frills a lesson of propriety, and placed the roses thereon. She rang for James, met him on tip toe at the door, closed it noiselessly, and sat down again, a statue, till sleep should return to her young mistress in sweet visions and dreams.

Although a slave, Zoë enjoyed the luxury about her ; the elegant appointments of her mistress' bed-chamber were her pride. She felt an ownership with Gracie Mowndes in all the charming surroundings. The morning air, wafting in through the blinds sweet garden odors, was as pleasant to her as to Grace ; and the bird of Paradise held golden hours in his beak for Zoe as well.

She had not to sit long. She arose noiselessly, took a white handkerchief, passed it over marble tops here and there, and scrutinized it carefully at the blind. Faultlessly neat ! There was no dust upon it for Gracie's keen eye. She then began gliding about from bureau to wardrobe, and from wardrobe to bureau, rustling dresses here, inspecting ribbons and laces there, till an elegant morning toilet was laid out, ready at her hands. Finally, a small pair of satin slippers, with jeweled buckles glittering in the narrow sunbeam on the carpet, were placed by the bed, and Zoë dropped into her chair.

In a short time, the mistress called again, "Zoë"! There was more life, and crispness in the word this time. The maid gave a glance, a spring, and an answer in a breath ! "Miss Gracie ! birdie has just taken 'eleven' from the rose !"

"I shall sleep no more ! Dress me."

While both were yet in the mysteries and intricacies of the dressing room, there came a lively tap at the chamber door. Grace, after a merry laugh, cried,—

"Ah ! I know you ! Thrice welcome, Leonore ! Zoë,—turn the key !"

A young lady entered gaily, in a costly and elaborate walking-dress, of which she appeared not the least conscious. With a fore-

finger raised for emphasis, she paused before Gracie. "Ah, you naughty, naughty one! Not dressed yet? This is one of our most delicious spring mornings! *Me levante al salir del Sol!* Have you forgotten all your Spanish? The air is violet! The long vistas of our streets wear their sweetest haze. Oh, Gracie! I feel etherealized — ready to float away among the clouds."

"Zoë, attend upon Leonore," said Grace.

"Zoë! dress your mistress immediately!" was the quick retort; while she removed her hat without aid, and drew off her gloves.

Gracie uttered a little scream, raised both hands, and asked the hurried question,—

"Pray! what is that on your hand, Leonore?"

This brought out a peal of gay laughter from the person addressed. Leonore would laugh audibly, with naïve disregard to conventional rules. She answered,—

"Just nothing at all, Gracie! — slight scratches from the thorns of our rose shrubbery. I drove old 'Joe' out of the garden, and cut the bouquet myself. Mamma was shocked, of course — but you know, dearie, it is the style here, for every one to feel her nerves tingling at some unpropitious fancy or another! — Now, my love, how are you, after the ball?"

"Delightful! Leonore! of course the gayety and exhilaration of of such a pageant is ever pleasing; but more elevated attractions swayed the concourse of last night! — The god-like presence of our Calhoun! — the noble majesty of Governor Hayne! — the brilliant gathering of Southern statesmen from other States, were imposing to a Carolinian, or to any other true Southron, who holds our interests paramount. You know the ladies of the South do not lack patriotism."

"Yes, I know; but let me congratulate you on having had the honor of a promenade on the arm of 'Jupiter Tonens!' said Leonore."

"*Gracias!* The escort of any of the crowned heads of the kingdoms, and empires of Europe, would not have been so high an honor, as that promenade with Calhoun! — Kings and emperors but second the designs of their Cabinets! In national policy, Calhoun's foot ever treads the pioneer's path alone. His declarations are a law in themselves."

“My dear Gracie! you should have seen yourself, there! — I declare! I thought myself in Rome, in the days of her ancient glory. You seemed a ‘Vestal Virgin,’ wrapped in reverence, and devotion, — the guardian of the sacred Palladium of Southern Rights.”

“Ah!” replied Gracie with a sigh, “willingly would I become so. But it would be revolting to my nature to hold these continual controversies with that Northern people. They are of baser blood, and as persistent as all ignorance is. We are of honorable birth in the old country. These adverse elements will not assimilate. It was a mistake, this union of South Carolina and Georgia with the other States, after the Revolutionary War, at the framing of the Constitution. They should have seceded then, and there. They should have formed themselves into a separate nation.”

“Hold! Gracie. I *walked* over here this morning, and gave mamma another shock, because I would not order the carriage; I came purposely to have a cosy chat with my bosom friend. You must remember I am not an extreme Southerner. Do not allow your sweet self to be shocked now. No *tenemos tiempo de hacer ese*. Let us speak of other things.”

“*Es verdad, querida Leonore. Hay mil cosas cerca de las cuales queremos hablar.* I so wish to inquire about one of your partners in the dance last night. He was a stranger, was he not? He has not the air of *our* young men — he appeared somewhat confused.”

“He is a Northerner — I will frankly tell you — came as a teacher in Major Signal’s family on the Island. He is now studying law in uncle’s office in this city. There, dear, you are dressed; you are more a Vestal Virgin than ever. Is not that one of the white morning robes sent you from Paris? — Can you not dismiss Zoë?”

“Certainly. Zoë, go to mamma for orders.”

Leonore drew an arm-chair close by her own, looking very wisely, and saying,—

“Now, darling, sit by me — let me see your eyes.” After a prefatory, gleeful laugh, a shake of the head, and a solemn, reticent delay, she said, “Ah! my lady; I have a secret to confide! — Ah! will I? — No! — yes — a secret, so precious, so sweet, so divine? — Ah! you must share it. Just think of it! I came all this way on my two feet; and brought it without a carriage.” Raising the

fore-finger again, "Now this secret, like a chapter in a novel, begins with poetry, supposed to have some reference to what follows."

Mischief was in her eyes, and pathos in her voice, as she half spoke, half chanted the lines of Hemans,—

"Oh! ye beloved, come home! the hour
Of many a greeting tone,
The time of hearth-light and of song
Returns — and ye are gone!

Where finds it *you* our wandering one?
With all your boyhood's glee
Untamed; — beneath the desert's palm,
Or on the lone mid sea?

'Mid stormy hills of battles old
Or where dark rivers foam?
Oh! life is dim where ye are not —
Back, ye beloved! come home!

Come with the leaves and winds of Spring
And swift birds o'er the main!
Our love is grown too sorrowful,
Bring us its youth again!

Bring the glad tones to music back —
Still, still your home is fair;
The spirit of your sunny life
Alone is wanting there."

A tender mist veiled the eyes turned toward the speaker. A tremulous voice made answer.

"Thou syren, Leonore! Why stir the transparent depths of memory, and thus lure my frail 'hope deferred' to wrecking again?"

"Listen to the echo, Grace. *Es muy encantador!*

'The stately ship hath touched the quay,
Freighted with treasures o'er the sea!
But the rarest things it brought to land,
Were a faithful heart and a knightly hand?'"

"Prophetess! What do you say," ejaculated Gracie, as she seized the hand of her smiling guest.

“I am saying that — hearken! that Ralph Haywood — do not turn so pale — that Ralph Haywood has stepped from the deck of the Sumter upon his native shore.”

More pallid still, the listener fell back in her chair, clasped her hands, and faintly whispered,—

“When?”

Leonore applied restoratives, always at hand; stirred the fragrant air with a laugh, a fan, and light ridicule, till her friend besought her to answer,—

“When? When?”

“Never! till your color is regained, and you have taken a turn with me on the piazza. Then, dearie, I am at your service Come.”

Arm in arm these petted girls walked slowly up and down under the shadows of fresh spring leaves; stopping now and then, to pull a rose, or a cluster from the exuberance heaping the balustrade. Both were tall, dignified and graceful. The faces of both wore the untamed, commanding hauteur, incident to Southern breeding. Both stood rapturously upon the brink of that womanhood, which time, and custom have mapped out as the “*Ultima Thule*” of wandering maiden’s feet. Both peered over this brink into the purple distance, without foreboding, and without fear.

“Grace, dearie, you are restored; let us return to the privacy of your chamber.” They entered, were seated as before. “There! take this fan, and these salts. I will inform you ‘when’. The Sumter rolled outside the bar all last night; this morning early, she came to the wharf. Ralph is at the old family mansion, recruiting after the voyage. He will not go out to-day, so you will have ample time to rally yourself, and resume your usual self-control.”

“How were you so fortunate as to learn this?” asked Grace, reclining in her chair for support.

“Adolph De Bourbon from Augusta, called this morning. Ralph will positively not go out to-day.”

An interval of thought ensued; it was interrupted by Grace.

“Leonore, if our first meeting had already taken place, composure were easier. When I shall meet Ralph’s first glance, will it be one of unmingled joy on his part, or shall I detect a shade of

disappointed expectation, at any change which absence may have wrought in me? There are beautiful women in France. How shall I bear the comparison?"

Her face grew whiter. Such laughter as followed! It were a panacea for invalids. Such fearless, echoing laughter! Grace was forced to join, while gleaning, in broken fragments, Leonore's reply.

"Who would ever have thought this, that Grace Mowndes, the high-born, blue-blooded, refined, elegant, and accomplished daughter of this State, could depreciate her superb claims, as the 'Queen of Knightly Hearts.' Our gentlemen are not easily entrapped by the vulgar attractions of fleshly charms. We cannot all have features of approved Grecian mould. All cannot have cheeks colored after the latest rose in the garden. Reflect, dearie. Have you not packages of letters honied with Ralph's devotion? Do you think Ralph Haywood would swerve from his first love? Is he not a true South Carolinian? and would he cast the shadow of a pain upon one of her fair daughters? These troubled thoughts of yours are the inseparable attendants of Love. Cast them out, Gracie! There are no obstacles in your path, as there are in mine; and" she added resolutely, "there are none in mine, that decision and address will not remove."

If there were acerbity and sarcasm in this hopeful appeal, the listener failed to perceive it, and replied, "You are a strong comforter, Leonore. You are a flood of sunlight, suddenly poured from a cloud-rift. Let me put away my selfish joy, to ask you, dear girl, what is meant by obstacles in your path?"

"What will surprise you; Gracie; that which might as well be frankly confessed; for this kind of secrets cannot be kept; I await difficulty in more ways than one; however, I think myself equal to the hour. The blushing, confused stranger with whom you saw me dance last night, is the beau ideal of my imagination; more — he is the absolute, confirmed choice of my heart. A wayward heart you may call it, perhaps. Something like winds from far off lands whispered o'er and o'er to my soul his name, tuneful, and sweet, Gracie! this still prophecy has o'er-mastered me!"

"Leonore! Leonore! Why stoop so low? Why tarnish the bright record of your family name, by bestowing your peerless love

so unworthily? Can you not control your affections? Will not your undaunted strength of mind turn them into proper channels?"

"That is the question, my dear friend. What *is* the proper channel? Love is like those winged, or plumed seeds, which, with sails set, traverse the viewless air, and come to anchor in all manner of havens. One of these has stealthily lodged in my heart — has germinated — has sprung into green life. It has blossomed into admiration of the grand capacity, the noble virtues, and serene equipoise of the soul of Hubert Hastings."

"I am truly shocked at your words, Leonore;" grieved Gracie. She gazed long and pitifully into the inspired eyes of her reckless friend, as she mentally termed Leonore. With a sorrowful air she asked,—

"Is not this Northerner one of those adventurers who come among us so frequently, in pursuit of fortune? and with whom it is not our custom to form intimate relations? Is he not without wealth, or rank?"

"Alas! my dear Gracie! what are our customs, but blown and painted shells, filled with emptiness, from which no singing birds of joy can ever spring?"

She extended the thorn-marked hand at arms length, clenched the soft fingers earnestly, saying,—

"I crush them into nothingness!" She opened her hand palm down, and continued, "I grind them to powder beneath my feet!"

' The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
A man's a man for a' that!

Gie fools their silk, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that;
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that!

A prince can make a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Gued faith, he maunna fa' that!"

During the recitation of the last verse, she caught up Grace, and

the two went waltzing about the chamber, into the dressing-room and out of it, into the corners and out of them, and around the bright chairs, till a bloom crept into Gracie's cheeks, and both voices sparkled with mirth. They took seats, rosy and panting.

Leonore drew a long breath, from which flashed a smile.

"Gracie, nerve yourself now. I am going to analyze some of our customs, and with their fragments build fortifications around myself."

Zoë passed through the hall to the piazza, placed two tables and chairs, spread a lunch of ice cream and cake, tapped at Gracie's door, and invited the young ladies to refreshment.

"First take our marriages, — the most of them have blood, rank, or wealth, for their basis. The true instinctive love for another — this latent spark of earth's blessedness, struck from the throne of Omnipotence, and inlaid by God's own hand in every human soul alike, is often counted for nothing. The bond which holds these unions is the formula of the priest. The wife, fortified by her own sense of virtue, patiently accedes to these terms."

"Now, inseparable from these marriages, is the twin custom, granting the husband unrestrained freedom for unbridled passion; or, for the gratification of this love, which *will* sit enthroned in the human heart. With this most precious gift of existence, man endows the object of his fancy or choice. These are usually selected from his slaves; from our quadroons, our octaroons, or often from Africa's own children of velvety blackness!"

Hush! Leonore! — I pray!" shrieked Grace, holding up one hand as a shield from these daring asseverations, and fanning violently with the other, — "your language outrages every feeling of delicacy and affection a Southern lady may possess. Pause! my best friend; you are doing violence to the sanctity and holiness of Southern homes. Surely, the records of your family and mine have never borne so foul a blot! — I have no desire to contemplate a theme so horrifying and repulsive. My dear Leonore! some evil guest must have nestled in your breast, and undermined your childhood's faith in the spells of Home! — I conjure you,

'By the household tree through which thine eye
First looked in love to the summer sky;

‘By the shiver of the ivy leaves
 To the wind of morn, at thy casement eaves;
 By the bees’ deep murmur in the limes,
 By the music of the sabbath chimes;’

Dear Leonore! I conjure you to cast out these demons so abhorrent to the gentle trust of woman.”

She had risen, and now stood before her guest,

“And her proud pale brow had a shade of scorn
 Under the waves of her dark hair worn.”

Leonore rose also; and with each an arm about the other’s waist, they passed under the flowery lace-curtain through the window upon the piazza. With slow and stately step, like sisters of royal birth, they traversed its length again and again. Leonore’s auburn curls touched confidentially the glossy dark braids of her companion, while the conversation continued, —

“Nay, Gracie! my faith, or want of faith, is founded in the actual—the real. My source of information is reliable. You know my dwarf, ‘Toad’—my maid? Very well. She is fond of me, and I encourage her to speak freely on many subjects. ‘Toad’ has lived and breathed in the charmed circle of those very customs which so shock you. Her narrations of gentlemen who have a white and black wife at the same time, chill my blood! and she has shown to my surprise, the preference our single gentlemen have for black women over white!”

“I protest!” cried Grace. “How can you put any confidence in the deceptive representations of a slave!”

“Why, do you not see, that when what is related runs parallel with one’s own personal observations, one *must* believe? Let me convince you. You know that Alphonse, my oldest brother, is not married! That his friends constantly rally him upon his indifference to feminine charms, and upon his bachelor habits. At parties, balls, and social gatherings, you know with what polite but cool gallantry he meets the grace and beauty around him! Very well, again. The disclosures of ‘Toad’ set me to thinking. I have found, Grace, the shrine of his worship! I have seen him leave our elegant mansion, and enter the small humble house, where daily awaits him, the mother of his two children. I

have heard her glad laugh ring at his coming, I have seen her dark brown face — the same as are bought and sold at our marts every day in the week! Now Gracie Mowndes, do you suppose Alphonse does this from compulsion? He, whose will has never been crossed, whose desires have never been thwarted, ‘from the cradle up?’ What impels him to spend days, and nights with her? — to dress her with refinement, but this instinctive power of which I have spoken? I have seen his children, when ‘Toad’ has purposely delayed their nurse while giving them an airing in the street! Brown children! resembling their father! — decked with gay dresses, and children’s baubles! Gracie, this is truth. Why tremble? Ah! these are the weapons of my defence when I shall be called to an account for loving the intelligent, refined Northern student, Hubert Hastings.”

“I must decline to believe this, or reply. It is repugnant. Your welfare is dear to me; but now, seriously, is this the end of the noble Scotch line of Wallace? Does the Highland lassie, the scornful beauty, who has refused titled suitors of other lands, yield to the pretensions of a landless, toiling adventurer?”

“Oh! ho! my dearest, wisest monitor! Methinks the noble Wallace line became merged in African blood, long before this! And as to the ‘titled suitors,’ I never liked men: I had, and still have a decided aversion to their stereotyped compliments, and devotional exercises for every new girlish face they may meet. It belittles woman. It robs her of what scanty individuality she may possess. For this reason,

‘I said there was naething I hated like men;
The deuce gae wi’m to believe me, believe me;
The deuce gae wi’m to believe me.’

As to pretensions, Gracie, Hubert makes none. Truthfulness, modesty, and sincerity are his only jewels. He may have been a bare-footed boy, — gleaning life and virtues among the rugged hills of the North. I care not! — He’s poor, — I care not!

‘Oh, gear will buy me rigs o’land,
And gear will buy me sheep and kye;
But the tender heart o’leesome luve
The gowd and siller *canna* buy.’”

They entered the chamber. Leonore gave her friend an embrace frank and fresh as spring's early breath. She held her out at arm's length — showered upon her playful smiles, dimples, and glances, — demanding to know if her secret were safe? Then, answered her own question by saying, —

“Safe enough, I believe, darling! for now, at this sweet crisis, Leonore will find no place among the delicious dreams of Gracie!

Now I am going. *Au revoir, ma chere!*”

“Stay! How was Hastings admitted to the ball last night?”

“By the magic of Leonore, dearie! You know uncle sets me up, his idol — grants all my wishes. I hinted to him that no American should be debarred from the elevating, instructive presence of our statesmen; etc., etc!”

Leaving a fragrant kiss for Gracie, she fluttered away like a singing bird, lost amid forest arches.

Mrs. Mowndes hastened to her daughter's room to inquire for her health, after the ball. She stepped in through the lace curtained-window from the piazza, saying with solicitude, —

“My dear child! your lunch remains untouched!”

“True, mamma! we had forgotten it.”

Grace met her with unusual feeling. Mrs. Mowndes became alarmed, and endeavored to convince herself, that Grace was not quite well, — that Leonore should not have been admitted — that she should have continued her rest, and many other anxious suggestions, which Grace brought to an abrupt close, by throwing her arms about her neck, and saying, —

“You are mistaken my dear mother! you are mistaken! I am well, perfectly. Ah! I have gladsome news for your ear!” An overwhelming joy thrilled every word! She took the maternal hand, and led her to a seat, with the softened majesty a princess might exhibit towards a queen mother.

Mrs. Mowndes' eye ran over the perfection of the figure, the delicate complexion without a blemish, than which the white embroidered morning robe was scarcely fairer — the braids ravishingly glossy and soft — the large midnight eyes, dilated with the new-born transport which filled her whole being. She caught the glances of those eyes so wondrously lighted. Her gaze dropped to the jeweled slippers resting on the purple pansies of the carpet.

This last was a ruse, to conceal the proud pleasure which meteor-like, shot athwart the air of repose, which should accompany rank and good breeding. Recovery was the work of an instant. Long habit renders dissimulation easy. In her usual throne-like dignity she said,—

“Speak! my daughter! Your spirit overflows with a sudden sunburst of delight! What tidings move you thus?” The reply was a question,—

“Dear mamma! can you not surmise? Do you not know that but one thing could move me thus? What if I tell you a new star has returned to the guiding cynosure of South Carolina! one in whom the exalted emotions of patriotism, and the promptings of valor will find no superior. among our annals of public virtues! Ah! mamma, what if I tell you that such an one floated into port to-day, with the yellow radiance of morning! And, wait! What if I add that this distinguished voyager is not an alien! but that his name is enrolled among the most illustrious of our State!”

Her lustrous eyes kindled into new glory, while waiting for her mother to speak the cherished name. Her long lashes at first rose and fell triumphantly; afterwards, as if moved by the haunting fear expressed to Leonore, her lids dropped.

Mrs. Mowndes calmly took Gracie's hand, kissed cheeks and brow, and drew her to her bosom.

“My sweet! my darling! how can I fail to recognize the idol of her who is dearer to me than life! How can I fail to read the lovely signals of woman's holy trust! How can my breast fail to become imbued with the supreme happiness of this moment! Gracie, my darling, how deeply, indeed, does my heart reiterate your joy! What do I behold? Tears! my angel—tears! The hearts glad sunshine veiled in sorrow? Wherefore, my daughter! wherefore? Control yourself,—this is but the effect of overwrought nerves,—too delicate for a night of gayety!”

“No! no! I should be content if physical causes were the source of this agitation,—the remedy would be most easy and natural. You have seen our rice fields swept by alternate rolling billows of light, and shadow, when drifting clouds pass over the sun, mamma! Like the swaying rice fields am I! Shadowy apprehensions chase golden hopes, and my soul is strangely swept by both.”

“You startle me, my daughter! ‘Shadowy apprehensions?’ Pray, hasten to explain! These words prove as mystical as the falling tears! Come to your bed, my child! recline upon it. Your gentle soul is too cruelly tortured.”

This overture Grace steadily refused, and strove to allay the solicitude of her mother, by taking again a calmer manner, saying,—

“These tears are like the sudden droppings of a light scud, crossing the blue sky. They fall in the sunshine, and are exhaled in its rays.

“Mamma, you remember our visit to Lausanne during our last tour in Europe?”

“Certainly, my dear.”

“You remember Ralph joined us at Geneva? He had just returned from Egypt, whither he went to purchase an Arabian; he accompanied us as far as Lausanne?”

“Distinctly.”

“You call to mind also my persistence in stopping at the Inn, ‘Ancre’ on the shore of the lake, where Byron wrote the ‘Prisoners of Chillon?’—that together, we remained the same number of days as the illustrious poet had done before?”

“Yes, my darling! The spot possessed as much interest for me as for yourself.”

“Was I then — mamma — was I — beautiful? The magnificence of the scenery, the sunny presence and adoration of Ralph, were sufficient to cast out narrow thoughts of self. Since that delightful hour, I have made some advances in lessons of the world. Its hollow flattery is not to be trusted. Mamma, was I beautiful — then?”

“You were the centre of all eyes. Wherever your steps strayed, a gentle, queenly grace marked every motion. The classic mould of your features was the topic of all lovers of art whom we met, in our travels. You were Madonna and Sultana in one. Grace, my daughter, why this question of long ago? The present should most deeply interest you now.”

“Mamma, it was then, while strolling along the shores of the deep blue waters of lake Geneva, that Ralph made a declaration of his pure and faithful love. A few hours after, while my heart was

yet in a tumult of sweet hopes and delicious dreams, I sat in the very room where Byron wrote his immortal poem. Ralph entered, radiant in manly beauty; took my hand in his, raised it to his lips, and sportively said, 'I make you my Prisoner of Chillon!' He placed this upon my finger, and continued impressively, 'With this ring I bind you to the pillar of my changeless affection!' He pointed to the diamond, raised my hand again to his lips, and bade me remember that the sparkling light should be the reflection of the bright waters of lake Geneva,—a Bonnivard's window to my soul."

During this blushing confession Grace sat fixedly, contemplating the costly symbol of imprisonment. Her dark lashes suddenly raised to her mother.

"Mamma, you aver that strangers called me beautiful, *then*. Without partiality tell me—without the loving deception which would naturally color your reply—am I beautiful *now*? Am I changed? Am I less attractive in person or manner?"

Mrs. Mowndes with many caresses bade her daughter dismiss all uneasiness. She assured her that in graces of person, in symmetry of form, in that which pleases the eye and charms the senses, she was more voluptuously developed than at the time of parting with her lover at Lausanne. "But," she added, with increased dignity of demeanor, "in the intrinsic beauty of a noble and high-born spirit you have made great advances. This loveliness which is addressed to the understanding never fades or palls upon the taste. This it is which illumines and glorifies all exterior attractions. My daughter, it is quite humiliating to witness this distrust of yourself. Let a descendant of English Peerage on the one side, and of unyielding, independent Huguenot blood on the other, rather exalt, than depreciate herself. My daughter, does not the blood of these two ancestries blend in you? Dissipate, I pray, these unworthy fears. Recall your wonted composure. I give you joy for this day of ripened hopes."

She besought Grace to take a drive in the fresh spring air. She rang for Zoë, bade her dress her young mistress, and order the carriage at the proper time. The only obstacle to this arrangement was suggested by Grace; that Ralph might reverse his decision for retirement, and seek her at home during her absence.

Grace set herself to regain the complacency and winning vivacity so requisite to the conventionalities of evening dress and promenade. Now Grace and Zoë were much more familiar than was customary with mistress and maid. Zoë loved to dress and adorn her mistress, as the sculptor delights to chisel into life new graces from the marble under his hands. The fastening a bow, tying a sash, adjusting a long heavy plait of hair, were for her, pleasant studies. Both were of nearly the same age and height. Zoë's wealth of shining black curls were a match to Grace's dark braids. Her skin had nearly the same clearness, except that the blush of Zoë's cheek colored with a richer carnation than Grace's. Zoë's style and manner were the complement of the mode of her mistress,—it had the same aristocratic flavor. Many of Grace's partially worn and handsome dresses were given to the maid, whom they fitted at once. Perchance the pink and the blue, floating about Zoe were a shade or two lighter than those worn by Grace; but like sunlight and moonlight, the one seemed the reflection of the other—both were attractive. Their gayety was often reciprocal; and in their mingled mirth was heard no discord. Their voices were strangely similar—the natural pitch in unison, with this difference,—that one seemed to proceed from an instrument of subdued tone, and the other from one more brilliant. Wherever they moved, one following the other, Zoe appeared the soft shadow of Grace.

It was time for the toilet. Grace sat under the careful eye and skillful fingers of her maid.

“Zoë, dress my hair more elaborately than usual—give it elegance.”

“*De tout mon coeur, ma chere maitresse!* It shall be the admiration of all eyes.”

(They often spoke a bit of French together.)

“My lover has returned, Zoë—my lover from over the sea! Carolina's noble son! Dress me charmingly to-day! Have a care for every flounce and every fold!—Oh! my heart is throbbing! I cannot think!”

“Leave all to Zoë, dear miss. Bury yourself in happy thoughts. No lady in the land deserves a noble lover, more than mine.”

While speaking, she passed the comb admiringly through and

through the raven, wavy tresses that swept over her arm to the floor.

“Close that blind! It is too light!” directed Grace.

“There is enough of sunshine in your heart, Miss Gracie!” was the gentle reply.

“Do you remember master Ralph Haywood, Zoë, before he went to Europe?”

“Yes, mistress! as perfectly as if it were yesterday! I recollect his elegant figure; and above all, his unceasing attentions to yourself in his boyhood.”

Silence, and attention to the immediate demands of the moment, succeeded. Zoë knelt and rose, around Grace, like a priestess before the shrine of the Virgin, — retired a few steps — turned her head this way and that, to decide upon a certain effect — lifted a bow here, bent a flower there, raised a puff, smoothed a plait, wreathing every part of her task with her own smiles.

Grace paid no attention to Zoë's movements about her, nor manifested recognition of the soft artistic touches to her costume; being lost in the rapid visions of the blissful future. The very careless indifference of her standing posture, and her yielding unconsciously to any suggestion, was an evidence of her implicit faith in Zoë's taste, and of a perfect content in her sympathetic companionship.

Zoë threw a glance, from time to time, upon the golden figure which the bird of paradise held in his beak, and roused Grace by saying, —

“Now, my mistress, will you please step to the mirror! The carriage is ready!”

She had removed every obstacle in her mistress' way towards a survey of herself; and now gave the long glass reaching to the floor the right angle — observing carefully, at the same moment, her who gazed therein. A bright look of approval was a sufficient reward for Zoë. She opened the door, and stood aside for her young lady to pass out. Both tripped down the broad stairs, Grace's lovely shadow following.

King street was gorgeous with costly equipages, liveries, and the *beau monde* of the “City of the Sea”; the Mowndes' carriage, and spirited pair dashed into the brilliant thoroughfare. Courtesy and

recognition met Grace on every hand. Bevvies of sparkling beauties and belles sauntered slowly down the pavement, like troops of butterflies, hovering and balancing in the sheeny air. Gay streamers and delicate laces fluttered on the evening zephyr. Rich silks, from London, Paris, Berlin, and Canton, rustled along the walk, where ladies of selected blood chatted and smiled. They advanced, paused, waved jewelled hands, bowed, flattered;—murmured low and sweetly;—proffered elegant adieus, and swept on.

Grace alighted, joining the resplendent throng. Without command, springing hoofs, fiery eyes, and rearing beasts measured a fretful progress with her leisurely, light-footed step.

Zoë, full of busy exultant plans for her beloved young mistress, bethought herself of several duties to be dispatched during her absence. Among these, was the cutting superfluous sprays of rose-vines, thrust between, and over the balusters on the piazza, to the great detriment of her lady's dresses. The wisteria, also, climbing over the front end of the balustrade to the roof, had grown too familiar; it should be draped away, and trimmed into symmetry. She had just brought out her basket, and was giving the wisteria her attention. Her slender figure robed in white could be plainly seen from the street, amidst the tender green. Grape-like clusters of purple blossoms embowered her head, and toyed with the shower of soft black curls. The glow of excitement from the late toilet still lingered in cheek and eyes.

Steps upon the pavement below, caused her to turn stealthily to the street. The well-pleased gaze of a gentleman met her own. He held his hat raised, and proffered a courtly bow. Zoë turned her face quickly away, as if this act of consideration were not observed. While proceeding with her work, her color deepened, and her small hands trembled.

The bell rang,—the servant ushered in a visitor. Zoë finished cutting and training the wisteria, and moved on to the roses. Sounds of joyful greeting, as of those long parted, rose from the open parlor windows on the lower piazza. Confused exclamations of glad surprise, and regrets reached her; and the voices subsided into the lower tones of ordinary conversation. She questioned, who might be the handsome stranger? Could it be her young lady's lover, Ralph Haywood? If, indeed, it were he, what could

induce him to bow deferentially to herself? — to Zoë! — the slave of Grace Mowndes?

Zoë knew every word in the code of Southern morals. She knew the opaline hues of its lovely epidermis — the bitter juice of its full and rounded mesosperm. She knew it to the core — she knew the seeds of that core — that each one was a black and frozen drop of agony. The white slave knew her value, weighed with that “apple of discord.” There were times and places where she had received warmer attentions than a cold courtly bow from the street. Carolina’s sons, of blood as high as Ralph Haywood’s, had besought her smiles, and humbly plead for her love. Bejewelled hands had often been kissed to her soft, enchanting eyes. True! it was a matter of course: but this could not occur on the public thoroughfare — in the illuminating light of day. The sun never beheld it! no such insult was ever offered to his god-ship — in the face and front of wealthy, luxurious mansions!

A faintness at the thought of possible consequences of the fatal salute, and of the unreasonable jealousy of her mistress, changed the velvet bloom of her cheeks to pallor. She caught up the basket half-filled with plump clusters, tendrils and sprays; pinken white and yellow roses; thorny stems and leaves; threw in the scissors, stole into Gracie’s chamber, and fell into the crimson arm-chair recently occupied by her young lady during her interview with Leonore. Equally striking, both pictures. There were tears for both faces! disquieting anxiety, and fear. Both silently plead for pity and sympathy. A disinterested observer would have impulsively yielded it to the latter. Zoe clasped her slender white fingers together, and wrung them, till her nails grew red as the petals in her basket. She elevated them to an Invisible Friend; raised her pale face towards His viewless abode. She sunk back, with a long, low moan, and helplessly cried,—

“Thou, God, seest me!”

As if it were a relief to speak even to empty air, wringing her hands still, she moaned,—

“Oh! I can ask for no other aid! I am a slave. Stony hearts surround me! my wishes, my will, my truthfulness, my honor, my faithful services, are of no more account to them than the dust beneath their feet!”

She was startled by the departure of the visitor. She heard his adieus, heard his ringing steps down the marble walk, and out into the dead distance. She roused herself, strove to remove every vestige of disquietude, and awaited the carriage.

Grace first entered the parlor. Mother and daughter held a prolonged conference. Both came up to the chamber together. Zoe saw the storm approaching, but was grimly allowed to attend upon Grace, before it broke. She was then told to stand and listen, while they confronted her with her crime.

“So you have dared to assume the character of your mistress?” sharply questioned the matron.

“And you have dared to entice to yourself, the first greeting of my affianced husband!” chimed Grace. “A fine minx are you to have about me!” and the angry blood mounted to her hair.

“Believe me, my dear ladies!” meekly interposed Zoe. The first words of her justification were rudely broken off by the sharp, wild words of Grace,—

“Believe you! believe *you!* *you!* full of brazen deceptive airs! You slid like a serpent, among the branches of the wisteria, with the *purpose* of humiliating Ralph, and bringing gossiping disgrace upon this family”

Mrs. Mowndes came to her assistance,—

“I saw him salute you myself, at the parlor window. It was painful to witness his disappointment, when I assured him that Miss Grace was out taking an airing. He insisted that he had seen her at the upper piazza. Of course I would not explain to him what I knew to be the shameful truth. I assured him that his impassioned gaze had been subject to an illusion.”

“So, so, indeed!” cried Grace. “Because I once wore curls, you resolved to step into my shoes! play the lady! and — steal the mistaken homage of a high-bred gentleman! Aha! I will give you my shoes, which seem to fit you so admirably. Aha! I will teach you to remember the degraded race from which you have sprung. I will teach you to remember you are a negro!”

The proud beauty, panting with the vehemence of scorn and rage, snatched off her slipper, glided swiftly to Zoe, and slapped the panic-stricken, defenceless girl’s face, with the practised precision of an amateur.



THE SISTER'S QUARREL.

Zoe's hot blood burned, and flamed through her delicate skin, wherever the infernal instrument of torture wounded. Her pulses sprang into a wild tumult. A lightning flash darted from her hitherto appealing eyes! — Then it was, that her "Invisible Friend," saw her! — and gently withdrew His sustaining hand from the sources of her abused life. Her brain swam. *She sank senseless to the floor.* She felt no pain, no passion, no bondage. Well, that it were so! for blue blood slumbered in Zoe's veins — natural instinct might have stirred its dangerous depths in the maid, as well as in the mistress. Greek might have met Greek. Hot blood might have met its match in the same temperature.

The disheveled curls, flattened and tangled by recent blows, trailed upon the velvet pansies of the carpet.

Mrs. Mowndes pointed to this, and made a gesture to her daughter. Grace quickly understood the intimation, and caught the scissors from the basket of Zoe's green clippings. With the soft tread of a panther, the madam crept to the heap of insensibility. Wearing a malignant smile, she rapidly severed every vestige of a ringlet from the beautiful head! The shorn locks were indignantly thrown into the basket for burning; there, through their dead and severed rings, peeped forth the purple, pink, and white of the dying flowers. Zoe's white temples gleamed up stark, and unveiled.

Mrs. Mowndes and Grace, flushed with success, seated themselves, in whispered interchange of plans.

After a few moments, animation, unaided, returned to the prostrated Zoe. She arose feebly, weak and calm! seeming to have come from a far off land! a stranger to those present! She stood for a few instants, with lids cast down, striving with quickening memory; with the saddest of voices, she ventured to speak.

"My dear ladies! I do not deny that I was on the piazza, and that I saw that unfortunate act of politeness extended to me, your slave,— but I beg, Miss Gracie, you will allow me to say, I did not bow myself, and had no intention of taking your respect and honor to — me — your servant!"

"Hush!" retorted Mrs. Mowndes; "not another word from your treacherous lips! Another falsehood, and I send you to the work-house for twenty lashes!"

"Your punishment for the present," said Grace, "is to take off

your finery, go to the kitchen, and do the drudgery suited to your impudence and condition.— Go ! — Leave my sight !”

Zoe staggered to the stairs, and by the support of the friendly railing, was striving to reach the hall below. James, the footman, standing near, saw with a shudder the disfigured and trembling girl slowly descending: he took a rapid survey upward, set his foot on the second stair, sprang lightly up, and fairly lifted her to the floor. He took her arm, and lent her his strength to the kitchen door — laid his hand caressingly on the bare head, and flew back to his post, unobserved.

Zoe's mother, warned by the whispers of other servants in the kitchen, met her silently; caught her in loving arms, almost carrying her up the dark and narrow staircase, to her own room. She kissed o'er and o'er the half-blistered cheeks, and laid her upon her own humble bed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE was no flagging in the interest of revival week at Cloudspire. Edmund Stone, the hunch-back, fulfilled the promise of a sermon upon the abodes of the Blest and the Lost. A prophetic and solemn style of delivery, united with a wonderful perspecuity of description, presented the scenes of Heaven and Hell before the listener's eye with the vivid transitions of a moving panorama; inspiring unlimited confidence. His manner had the assurance of a tourist, who had made an official inspection of both regions. He laid the Heavenly streets like the walks of an ornamental flower-garden, and paved them with pure gold.

The yellow gleaming of a golden pavement was exceedingly pleasant to those stern heads of families, whose entire earthly existence had become a weariness to the flesh, in pursuit of the precious metal.

He next presented to view a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, running through the midst of this aerial abode. To the audience, this river was well enough in its way; but not so inviting a feature to New Englanders, as it would have been to caravan

travelers, in dry and torrid regions. Crystal waters are a very common incident—they pour over rocks—rush through the meadows—wash the feet of forests. The wheels of the hay-carts roll through them, dripping sunlighted drops, in showers. Many of the audience thought they had seen some beautiful views in earthly waters. Pictures of cattle, standing knee deep in the sheeny flood, flecked with green, leafy shadows, or flaming with sunset hues. The boys remembered the splashing of little birds, wading in shallow places—and the white pond lilies which they brought to the shore as soon as their height measured the length of a lily stem. They thought of the swimming coves, and forgot Heaven; thinking only of a green terraqueous summer; but finally dropped the subject by wondering if this “river of life” ever froze over hard enough for skating.

The preacher passed from the crystal river to the “tree of life.” He assured them its varied fruits matured afresh every month. To make it available for the millions of glorified spirits who might seek its allurements, he described it as a Banyan,—its outspreading branches dropping down light shafts, and taking root; which in turn again spread, thus extending over an immeasurable area. It would be the sacred privilege of the saints to pluck these delicious fruits, such as the scarlet apple, the luscious orange, the tawny pomegranate, the velvet peach, the melting fig and plantain; besides other heavenly varieties, never tasted by mortals.

His voice now ceased. He seemed to have gathered his audience around the celestial fruit, and left them.

In anticipation of his next division, he extended his thin hands over the people, holding them there, as if from his finger-tips distilled the same lofty satisfaction which filled his own thoughts. At length, vacant straggling smiles beamed forth at the impressive announcement, “There is no sorrow nor crying there!”—A billow of smiles passed over the crowd of upturned faces, as a wave of sunlight rolls over grain fields. Those of the congregation broken down by hard and struggling lives, and who had each dwelt from childhood in their own separate vales of tears, hollowed out by their own industry, this vale being almost their only earthly possession,—these felt a strong desire for the solidity of golden streets, and the smooth tract of that sea of glass which could *not* be in-

dented into "vales." Those worn women who had, through a tedious life, listened to crying of all degrees, from the early cradle, almost to the grave, looked up refreshed.

The climax was reached in the description of the foundations of Heaven — laid in precious stones; — jasper, sapphire, emerald, topaz, beryl and amethyst. He dwelt upon the dazzling brilliancy of each — rainbow-hued and perpetual. He showed the twelve gates — each gate of one pearl — "a solitaire."

The young maidens of these rural districts, who had never seen a diamond, or a pearl, except in dreams, and as appertaining only to royalty and rank, resolved then and there, that heaven should be their home; — they would go forward for prayers that very day. If, in the course of Providence, they had been denied the lots of princesses, with these perishable insignia of rank, in this life, they could at least win an ever-enduring palace, whose imperial walls and gates should glitter with gigantic gems.

Edmund Stone wept with joy over the recognition of friends, on high. Mothers would know their children — children would rush to parental arms — husbands would again enfold lost wives — and *vice versa*. The hunch-back rose on his toes, turned his eyes upwards, and spread his palms towards the ceiling; as if to clutch the hands of unseen spirits. Happy thought! Theologians had within a few years changed the locality of "babes and sucklings," from the burning pit to the more tender nursery of the "Saint's Rest." They had considerately and paternally placed their tender infantile feet on the golden streets, and plumed their tiny souls with snowy wings.

Hence the Rev. Stone, ever a hard student of contested doctrines, chose that infants should flutter on cherubic pinions to the pearly gates, like white doves, to welcome the arrival of long-lost mothers. Attenuated Mrs. Limpsey lifted her gaze upon the speaker with a filmy glow of joy in her pale gray eyes.

Dear Mrs. Limpsey had a claim upon this portion of the discourse that few others could boast. In her youth she began as far back in the Bible as the time of Noah, piously intending that her life should be an illumination of all its pages, to Revelation. But she had never found time or strength to get beyond the first command, "Be ye fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

Mr. Limpsey, her lawful husband and protector, perceiving this spiritual want of his wife — that of progress in the “Divine life,” — selected for her the most life-giving sentiment of Paul’s epistles. While stemming the tide of life’s cares and duties, he walked backwards towards his consort, ever holding aloft, above all minor considerations, this flaming torch of the ancient Scriptural Bachelor,—“Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands.” Thus did she ever feel herself supported in the fulfillment of both the old and the new dispensations.

Mrs. Limpsey had given the town and church twenty-one evidences of her obedience to the command given to Noah. Thirteen of these pious offerings were called back to Heaven at an age when no doubts could be entertained of their salvation; and doubtless they were now flying about the Golden City, awaiting her arrival. Blessed thought! A faint smile flitted in among the wrinkles, but flitted as quickly away.

Farmer Windham, who had parted sorrowfully at the graves of four wives, and was now living with a fifth — a thoughtless girl of eighteen, making sad havoc with his earthly possessions — cast a “wishful eye” upward — then bent his head, that he might more vividly anticipate the numerous rapturous embraces awaiting him in the world beyond. Thus over the old church, smiles, sighs and tears wreathed the high pulpit, and formed a halo around the head of the marvelous prophet.

The lizard changes color, conforming to the objects upon which it crawls. So changed Edmund Stone. A cloud of gloom settled upon his narrow, retreating brow. His lips compressed — his head drooped. Then the clenched hands lifted, the crooked form straightened; and in an agonized voice he shrieked,—

“Who among the congregation would be lost in hell?”

“Who would go down into the lake of fire and brimstone?”

“Who, amidst flame and torture, through eternal ages would cry, I’m burning! I’m burning! I’m burning?”

“Who would plunge into a never-ending eternity of torture, wherein the wrath of God will *never* be appeased?”

Who would be shut from the pearly gates of Heaven, and drop into the bottomless pit; where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up, forever and ever?

“No limpid ‘river of life’ in Hell, my friends ; not one drop of water to cool your parched tongues ! No tree for the healing of your pains casts its shade in these frightful precincts.”

Taking up the word “forever,” and dilating upon its length, he slowly disintegrated a mountain, atom by atom. He allowed a million of years to the removal of each infinitesimal particle. With impressive pauses interspersed, he guided the imagination from one mountain to a whole range ; and from one range to all the known ranges on the globe.

“And yet, my hearers,” said he, “these immeasurable millions of years are but the beginning of torment.” He pictured whole nations launched into this Gehenna ; communities and individuals, hosts unnumbered, writhing, cursing, and blaspheming in the sulphurous abyss. A fiendish carnival of moans, groans, shrieks, and curses, carried on in every language spoken by men. He continued :

“Over this gulf of endless death, this jargon of lost souls fetid with unforgiven sin, hideous volumes of black vapors continually lift themselves ; like funereal plumes overhanging the wailings of the damned. These deadly vapors, falling back whence they came, in stifling mephitic showers, kindle afresh with their noxious gases, the fires that never die.”

The hideous acme of success was reached. A glowing Tartarus had been uncovered, and its suffocating smoke ascended into the very nostrils of his congregation. Grim horror met his gaze on every hand. The pulpit seemed to rise up monumented from the midst of damned souls. There remained only one point to be gained, this frozen gloom must melt to repentant tears.

A ready tactician, as well as a deep theologian was Edmund Stone. With lowered tone as in subdued despair he cried,—

“No God is there, my friends ; no God is there ! The ineffable glory and mercy of His face are veiled from the sight of the Lost. Amid those lapping tongues of flame, He will not walk, as He walked with His servant Daniel ; your deepest prayers will never soften His terrible anger. Lost once, my hearers, lost forever ! Lost ! lost ! lost !”

This was Friday, the last of the active labors of this harvest week. Therefore, he chose the great moral engine of Fear ; which

should move alike the young and the old, the timid and the indifferent. He worked its levers with the power of a demon, and the sagacity of a connoisseur. He dragged the entire reason and will of his hearers after him by its sheer mechanical force, whether they would or no. He closed by giving the terrific shriek of an engine nearing the "station." His shrill wailing cry dropped into the square box pews and rose among the dusky galleries.

"Woe, woe, woe, unto you who live in this day of gospel light! if you turn not your feet from the black abyss of a yawning Hell. Choose ye this hour — this moment, your future abode? Will ye dwell forever in eternal fire? or will ye enter the pearly gates, and walk the golden streets? The great Jehovah is here, awaiting your decision. Will you let him depart, counting this day as your last opportunity? Behold your Savior, knocking at the door! He beseeches admittance! Come! come!" and with both hands extended, he descended to the area within the anxious seats, singing as he went. this hymn; entitled, "Hell, or the vengeance of God."

"With holy fear, and humble tongue
The dreadful God our souls adore;
Reverence and awe become the tongue
That speaks the terror of his power.

Far in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice has built a dismal Hell,
And piled her storés of torment there,

Eternal plagues, and heavy chains!
Tormenting racks, and fiery coals —
And darts to inflict immortal pains,
Dyed in the blood of damned souls.

There Satan, the first sinner, lies —
And roars, and bites his iron bands!
In vain the rebel strives to rise —
Crushed with the weight of *both God's hands!*

There, guilty ghosts of Adam's race
Shriek out! and howl beneath Thy rod:
Once they could scorn a Savior's grace —
But they incensed a dreadful God!

Tremble my soul, and kiss the Son,
 Sinners obey the Savior's call !
 Else your damnation hastens on !
 And Hell gapes wide, to wait your fall."

An appalling sense of the wrath to come, distorted the lineaments of all those who had hitherto remained unmoved. The seats filled quickly. No essential mention was made of their sins. It was an understood thing — this total depravity. They were to be saved then and there, by the acceptance of Christ. Sin was believed to be incorporated into their being. Sin flowed with vitality through every vein. Hereditary sin permeated every pore, and electrified every fibre ! — Sin in mankind, like the intestine fires of earth, was believed to be the dangerous core of a specious surface. Its proper manifestations were seen in overt acts, — it was known to exist by Vesuvius, or *Stromboli* deeds — of murders, robberies, assassinations, piracies.

The town of Cloudspire considered itself happily free from these volcanic phenomena. Nevertheless, the elfish depravity of Adam was believed to have been implanted in every nature.

Still, other moral phenomena of a less turbulent character, daily occurred — phenomena which neither gave offence, nor excited controversy, — which no more ruffled the religious complacency of the church, than summer breezes, or sifting snows.

There was the hard grasping hand of greed --- which wrung the wages of the poor to a mere pittance. There were those, who, when besought by famishing souls for the bread of love, and compassion, gave "a stone.". There was noble, earnest womanhood, crushed to the abject endurance and silence of "menials." There were those denominated in the New Testament as "thieves," who robbed girlhood of its innocence, and fair fame --- then left their victims by the wayside, to die of shame, and despair ;--- and then there were those, in the church and out of it, who "passed by on the other side." There were those who made color the fierce pass-word to gaunt misery, degradation, and crime --- and then thanked God they were not as black men were. There were tongues. forked tongues of scandal ; whose scathing fire equaled the "lapping flames" described by Edmund Stone, -- tongues which roused fraternal hatred into endless bickerings, and blackened everything 'green and beautiful," in life.

These things, and more, daily passed unheeded. They were regarded as the natural elements of society, and outside the radii of their gospel, and creed.

Cloudspire gospel was a Mosaic fossil --- as sacredly preserved as the bones of a canonized saint. Cloudspire creed was a venerable "antique." It was well rooted in the garden of Eden,--- it grew apace in the Ark of the Deluge. It still bore the sacrificial blood stains of the slain bulls and rams of Solomon's time, --- and the withered threads of Jonah's gourd clung in fantastic tracery about it. It was a grim old century plant; which blossomed only at centennial, or millennial periods. The pale green mold of ages laid upon its thick fibrous leaves. It blossomed last at the crucifixion of the Savior; and its vitality seemed shocked, rather than quickened, by that great event. Its growth ceased at the tomb of a dead Christ. Years were yet to melt into the past, before there should spring from its sluggish heart the inflorescence of humanity, charity, peace, and reconciliation, which should have been the first fruits of His death. The witchcraft of creed mummeries, had weirdly dabbled with His blood, obliterated the Golden Rule, and dazed the eye of conscience.

While the Rev. Stone, assisted by the congregation, was singing the aforesaid hymn, nothing remained to be done by those under condemnation, but to accept the waiting God, and Christ; or to turn their backs, and pertinaciously refuse them --- both of which high privileges were granted to these depraved creatures, by the received traditions of "the Fathers."

The harvest of souls that day was unprecedented! The hunchback was regarded with a shade of envy by the younger portion of the ministry; but was declared by his elders, a sanctified instrument of grace.

Night shades, and a heavy snow-storm were falling without. After the usual notices were read by the pastor, the Town Clerk rose from the singers' seat in the gallery, and from a slip of paper cried,---

William Steele of South Carolina, and Lucy Clarendon of Cloudspire, Massachusetts, intend marriage.

Consternation ensued. The hand of the Lord was surprisingly stayed, by the piping voice of the diminutive official. Flashing

indignation lurked in many a maiden's eye. Mothers bit their lips from chagrin, — and the astounded visages of hopeful fathers, fell with disappointment to the floor.

The matrimonial prize in the protracted meeting had been drawn, and the brown old meeting-house was left to itself.

The blustering snow-storm careering on the north wind, kept all at home for the evening. It roared in the cavernous chimneys, and howled at the window panes. Tumblers of "sling", and "hot punch" passed freely around the blazing fires. Tongues were flip-pant. The "Hill of Zion" was made to "yield" a thousand sacred sweets."

The clergy, and those of the laity without marriageable daughters, were unanimous in the praise of the Southern visitor, and of his efforts in the revival. He was evidently a "man of God." His talents and influence were greatly to be esteemed in any community. His departure from New England was decided to be a loss; but it was conceded to be a great gain to the South, where he had taken up his abode.

Fanny stepped out of the church into the whitened air, wearing a joyous face. Her spiritual yearnings were in a measure stilled. Within its walls, she had endeavored to yield implicit faith to the mysteries of a creed which held within it an angry, and implacable God, and a vicarious crucified Christ. She considered it a high privilege to meet with Their chosen people, to whose keeping, doubtless, was committed the redemption of souls.

The double green doors were closed, and locked upon the solemn arcana of creed, and the speculative faith of believers. The "Steele" Bible, the price of innocence, and the holiest affection, was folded in its linen vestment. The costly silver Font with the three brooding angels, rested in its velvet lined box, in a secure niche beneath the pulpit, guiltily guarding its dark secret.

Fanny carried nothing with her from the great Throne-room of the universal King, but her personal depravity. It was outside the church that the perfections of the great Creator had been revealed to her consciousness, and affections.

The deacon's box sleigh, with a tumble of "buffaloes" and blankets awaited them at the steps — Henry in his warm overcoat and mittens, sat on the front seat, soothing the fretfulness of Czar and Sultan.

“Deacon Steele!” said Fanny, “may I ask the favor to ride on the front seat with the driver, that I may see your beautiful horses?”

This flattering request put the deacon in an indulgent humor.

“Yes! yes! climb over there, you little horse jockey! but you’ll freeze, wont you?”

“Thank you, deacon, no! I like the snow!”

“Yes! yes! you like every thing under the blue heavens, I believe. There! let me tuck you in. Look out for her, Hen. Some of these ‘thank-ye-marms’ ’ll toss her out!”

Prudence White’s pale, sanctimonious face looked up to her and said, “Come down here! child. That seat’s the place for men! Now’s the time to think of something else, besides horses!”

“Tut! tut! Miss White,” curtly replied the deacon; ‘t won’t hurt the girl! She knows there ain’t such a span in town as mine. She knows it as well as I do.”

The high spirited creatures dashed away, round the old church, down the hill, through the swamp, among the dark green hemlocks cloaked with ermine, between fence rails trimmed as prettily as Fanny’s hood, with down.

“He giveth his snowlike wool; thought she. “His glory is above the earth, and heavens.”

She felt herself very near to Him who made the earth so transcendently beautiful. Every moment of this ride was spent in garnering up into her soul, the beauty about her. Henry ventured to bresk the silence in a manner which he knew would not be offensive to the deacon, and at the same time would interest his companion,

“Did you hear that, Miss Fanny?”

“The bells, Henry?”

“Yes, Sultan is proud of his bells, but the thick air muffles them. He gave that spring to shake the music out of ’em. Watch Czar, Miss Fanny, and he will do the same thing.”

“There he goes now!” she replied, with a burst of laughter. “What a shower of music he shakes out of his bells.” Snow-flakes were dancing in and out of their fluffy, flurrying manes, and clinging to their flying foretops.

Henry directed her attention to this, adding,—

“There’s a fresh drift across the road just ahead; keep your eye on them, now.”

He drew a taut rein, and braced his feet anew. With a rear and a snort, they plunged in, shoulder deep. The light snow flew like a cloud, powdering their silken coats from head to heels. Arrows of frozen breath darted from panting nostrils, as they went leaping and bounding on.

The deacon disentangled himself from the buffaloes, and stood looking over Fanny's head.

"How's this for sleighing? How's the horses now?"

"Handsome than ever, sir, and this kind of sleighing is delightful."

"But I mistrust that one half of your errand up here to this seat was to sit with Hal."

I am very glad if my sitting here is any comfort to Henry, for his life is lonely enough. A few pleasant words cost no trouble."

"I thought you might persuade Hal to go forwards for prayers. In this wonderful outpouring of God's spirit, we all hoped he would not forget his never dying soul."

"I did ask him to go, but he said he must be excused. He can pray anywhere, you know, Deacon Steele."

"That is true, Fanny, but when we refuse God's appointed means of grace, we are not apt to get his blessing elsewhere, in our own willful way. There was a nice place left for his color at the altar; he could have *knelt all alone by himself*. And God is no respecter of persons in His plan of salvation."

"Yes, I saw that empty seat," said Fanny in a sorrowful tone — "And I offered to go and kneel with him, in it, but he said, 'No, Miss Fanny: you don't know all I know.' So I didn't urge him any more, God is merciful, you know, sir."

"True! He's merciful, or he wouldn't receive such totally depraved beings as we are into His favor. But Hal should know He is a jealous, and avenging God also."

The horses were wallowing, springing, and panting in successive drifts.

"Let them go, Hal," said the deacon. "They like to frolic in the snow. 't won't hurt 'em."

The candles were already winking in Mrs. Steele's kitchen; inviting the cold wayfarers to enter. There was the usual stamping of feet, shaking of cloaks, hats and shawls, before entering the

room for supper. This was the kitchen — comfortable and tidy as ever. The old stove roared a welcome. The oval braided cloth mats around it invited cold feet. The tea kettle instituted a chattering cantata, entirely irrelevant to “revival week.”

The change from the desolate interior of the meeting-house to the papered walls of this room, was more than agreeable. The scarlet nasturtions, and blue bachelor’s buttons woven into its borders, suggested thoughts of summer and gardens. The “dark abyss of damnèd souls,” slid out of mind. The “New Jerusalem” on high, lost attraction before a bountiful spread table.

“This night is a stinger, mother,” said the deacon to his wife, who was lifting the warm viands to the table ;—but its worth while to be out in blustering weather, to hear such preaching as we heard to-day. Edmund Stone can’t be out-done in the terrors of the second death.”

“Was there many hardened sinners melted to-day?” she asked in her *sotto sostenuto* voice, which was most religiously reserved for this kind of topics.

“Yes, wife. Our work’s about done! It’s been a profitable and savin’ time.”

“Was your brother William’s intended at the meeting? — I mean Lucy. It wouldn’t be well for him to be nnequally yoked together with an unbeliever!”

The tone grew more nasal and puerile, still.”

“Yes,” chimed in Prudence White in a pitiful whine. “Yes! Religion should be the first consideration in a wife for William. His prayers should be strengthened by hers.”

“I believe Lucy ‘has a hope’ already — I am told so,” said the deacon. “William questioned her on it.”

“She ought to be under the guardianship of the church.”

“So I think, Prudence. There’s no safer place in the world than the church!” quoth Mrs. Steele, as she passed the tea to her guest. There! Prudence. I’ve made your tea as strong as lye; for I tho’t you’d be kinder nerved up to-night.”

“Yes, Miss Steele — the spirit is willin’, but the flesh is weak. I take my tea strong.”

It was time for the deacon to support the reputation of his brother; for it was not falling into honeyed mouths. He therefore came to the rescue.

“Well, we’re all one family, as it were ; and I’ll tell you what I know. William will not enter into the holy bonds of matrimony with Lucy, till she’s been baptized, and taken into the bosom of the church. He says them Southerners are the most religious people he has ever found,—and a person that isn’t a church-member can’t be reckoned among ’em. Take another cut of this roaster of pork, Miss White. The laborer is worthy of his hire. You’ve worked hard in the Lord’s vineyard to-day.”

“Without praisin’ myself, deacon, I’m never happier than when I’m in the Lord’s service. I’ll take another potatce, and a few spoonfulls of gravy, and a couple of onions — I’m very fond of onions.”

“I doubt if that old miser Conchlan would have taken one step from the wrath to come, without your persuasion, Prudence ; you fairly dragged him up to be prayed for.”

“Father, was it that rich old bachelor, you mean?” enquired Mary.

The canting twang was forgotten, in Prudence’s haste to reply. There was an unusual sprightliness in the words,—

“Yes, dear, the same man. His case seemed to weigh upon me from the beginning of the revival. I’ll take another cup o’tea, Miss Steele. These China cups o’yourn *air* rather small. Fanny, will you pass me the bread? I’m very fond o’light wheat bread ; Mary, give me a little more quince sauce ; I’m very fond o’ quince.”

Two kinds of cake graced the table. Both were passed to Prudence, who took a piece of each, and said,—

“You make such nice riz cake, Miss Steele ; and I am very fond of cup cake too.”

Two kinds of pie were next offered. Prudence regaled her weariness by accepting both mince and cream ; for mince and cream were the pies she was very fond of.

Hal and Foxey came in from the barn together. They were the best of friends. Hal took his supper from the small side table. A bit of the pork, several potatoes, a cube of rye bread, and a piece of mince pie, with rye crust.

Fanny added to the plain meal by transferring to his plate her piece of cake, which she had left uneaten. Mary and her mother “did up the dishes ;” then all repaired to the warm little parlor.

The others took their knitting, while Fanny drew from her pocket, Aunt Letty's caps, now nearly finished.

"What now Fanny?" asked the deacon. "Ruffles! ruffles! I think you're pretty enough without ruffles!"

"These ruffles are not for myself, sir."

"Who then?"

"They are caps for black Letty, down by the brook."

"By George! you're hunting up all the black folks! Hey?"

No glow of shame reddened her cheeks at this thrust; rather, the enthusiasm in her eyes intensified. "Do you know Deacon Steele, that I want to be a foreign missionary among people of their color? My mother opposes this desire. She tells me that charity begins at home. She says there is missionary work all about here, for every good Christian to do."

She held up her work.

"Here are my small beginnings."

A sacred frown "from on high," lighted on Prudence White's brow. She inquired if Fanny's missionary zeal led her to seek out the needy among the *white* poor, as well?

"There are none about us, so poor as the colored people, — and I must acknowledge, Miss White, my sympathies are strongest for the most destitute."

"My child! there is a Bible reason for this poverty. These children of Ham are under the direct *curse of God*, and they will be, for centuries to come. Fanny, they are 'hewers of wood, and drawers of water' — servants to us white people. That kind of labor always gets small wages. I never see a black face, but that text comes right up before me, 'Cursed be Canaan!'"

"Then it seems to me, we should be doubly watchful, that we may supply their necessities!" argued Fanny.

"You see, my dear, you are too young to examine these things, as I have. It has been the study of my life. What *is* to be, *must* be! They are to be poor, and despised. We are not to meddle with God's decrees, or his curses. It's dangerous work! This passage, 'Touch not the accursed thing', points out our christian duty towards them, as plain as a light set on a hill. It's the height of audacity to do it, and I've heard this question argued by the greatest divines."

For some time past, Mrs. Steele had vainly endeavored to bring

the middle of her seam needle in conjunction with the closing words of somebody's opinion; which event happened at this fortunate moment. Dropping the stocking on her knee, she assumed an air of as much sternness as she could command.

She resolved to add to the arguments against Ham and all his progeny. She would let her light shine, in rebuking this young girl's unworthy, and untaught zeal.

This dogmatical purpose, however, was but a comic mockery, — for, all fixed purposes, and stamina of character had been crushed out of her, long ago. In every dilemma of reason or judgment, the jaded woman had relied upon the authorities. "*My husband*," and "*our minister*", were the two lawful weights she threw into the uncertain scales of her enfeebled intellect. By these, she weighed the subtle essence of metaphysics, Mosaic law, and the Christian dispensation. If, in hours of her weariness, and nothingness, her soul dared to assert its natural right to growth, and its hatred to serfdom, "*My husband*" was thrown into the troublesome balance. Weariness, and nothingness kicked the beam.

If in contemplation of the gibbet, the scaffold, or the hangman's rope, any weak womanly chills of horror disturbed her peace, and joy in believing, she tied "*our minister*", to the victim's heels; and plumb through the drop, went both, together. After thus balancing affairs, she pursued the even tenor of the christian way. Since the arrival of their Southern guest, she felt that her sphere of reference was safely enlarged. There were now, "*Mr. Steele's brother*", "*My husband*", and "*Our minister*".

To return; the seam needle still held the others in abeyance. The deacon's wife raised her hand; the fore-finger was apparently directed to the eluding point to be made. Like the shadow of a vision, this point was melting away.

What a hand to confute the equality of Ham's race! — What a hand to fix the stigma of bondage upon color! No artist would have chosen it as a model of God's fair handiwork. That hand in marble would have shocked the sensibilities, and disgusted the tastes of woman's worshippers. Its natural proportions were destroyed — the palm broadened by hard usage — the once taper-fingers blunted and flattened at the tips — the nails once pinken as rose petals, now narrow, and awry — the edges broken into the

quick — the joints swollen and deformed. In texture, it was rough and horny — in color, begrimmed and steamed to redness.

The bent fore-finger made crooked aim at the point in question. She opened her lips and said ;

“ Yes ! Miss White ; you are right ; for Mr. Steele’s brother says he never was so solemnly impressed with the truth of the prophecies of the Lord, as he has been in South Carolina. He says the words of the Lord which he spoke through the lips of His servant Noah, ‘ Cursed be Canaan ! a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren ; ’ and this other text of Scripture, ‘ Blessed be the Lord God of Shem ! and Canaan shall be his servant ’, are wonderful ! Mr. Steele’s brother says it’s enough to make an infidel a Christian, to see how that curse is fulfilled down there, so many years after, in this Christian country ! ”

Oh, yes, Miss Steele ; we are a favored people, to live in an age when we see with our own eyes, the fulfillment of prophecy ; to see with our own eyes that our land is the *chosen* land, where God fulfills His written word. I hoped to have had more conversation with your husband’s brother ; but his selection of a helpmeet has taken him from us. What other information respecting this doomed race of Ham, has he given you ? I have a great desire to know how they bear this yoke of slavery.”

“ Well, Prudence, he says the white people and these black slaves down there, are as separate from each other, as the skies is above the earth. He says there ’pears to be a natural disgust for them, writ on the hearts of the white gentlemen and their families. They don’t know nothin’ but to plant rice and cotton, and a little corn. They can’t read a word, nor write their names,”

“ Miss Steele, how many of these children of Ham does one Southern gentleman generally own ? ”

“ My husband’s gone out ; he knows it all. But I believe he said one gentleman had five hundred sometimes — all living in rows of cabins away from the master’s house.”

“ Mother,” said Mary, “ every gentleman don’t have so many — some have one hundred — and some have fifty, and less.”

“ Law sakes ! ” cried Prudence, —

“ Now you don’t say ! a hundred and up’ards to work for you all the year round, for nothing ! No wonder them Southerners are so

rich! and Miss Steele, I've heard say that these Southern ladies don't lift their fingers to any kind of work; that their hands are lily white. So these Canaanites must work in the houses, too. Do they take to cookin'?"

"Tell her about uncle William's cook, mother; suggested Mary.

"Yes, child! Mr. Steele's brother had a nigger woman to do his cookin', and he lived as well as he could wish to. Let's see! what was her name, Mary?"

"Isabel."

"Yes, *Isbul*. She knew enough to make his bed; and he made her dust and sweep his room, as well as he could expect, down there."

But, Miss Steele, I don't see how William could bear to have the great black thing round in his room, handlin' things. It would put me out, dreadfully."

"Oh! she only came in *after he'd gone out*. He didn't *see* her. She cooked in a little cabin away from the house, and *slept* there o'nights, as they *always* do. Why, Prudence White! he's got a little nigger to wait on him. You see he brings in all the victuals to William. So he don't see that black wench, as he says they call 'em down there, *at all*. And this little nigger brings his horse to the door, all saddled, and stands there with his hat off, till William comes out. Then he always makes a low bow, and scrapes his foot back, out of respect to him. Why, Miss White! my husband's brother don't so much as draw a pail of water, or pull his own boots off."

Prudence dropped her knitting into her lap in astonishment, pondering upon the difference between her own hard working life, and that of the Southerners.

"I declare!" she said, "it must be an edifying life to live, especially when we know that to be waited upon without liftin' your hand to a stroke o' work, is fulfillin' the Scripiter, and was *fore-ordained by God*. A person would have so much time for meditation and prayer."

Mary agreed enthusiastically.

"That must be so! for father says Uncle William has grown in grace since he went South. I've heard a great many say that

Uncle William is more active in the advancement of Christ's kingdom now, than when he was in the Theological Seminary."

The deacon brought in the customary evening treat,—hickory nuts cracked, a tray of spicy reds, and a pitcher of cider. He said to Fanny,—

"Look up here! Hal has been to work, pickin' out a saucer of wa'nut meats for you. I don't know what that Hal wouldn't do for Fanny."

Prudence rolled up her knitting, and put the needles in the tin sheath.

"I've been expectin' these refreshments;" she purred. "I'm very fond of apples, and nuts, and cider. We've been havin' some edifying conversation while you were gone."

"Well, its a fact! You women can talk more religion, in half an hour, than we men can in a week. Religion's more nat'ral to women folks. St. Paul forbids 'em to speak and teach in public — but there's a broad field for women to practise religion *at home*, and in *their closets*. If we hadn't had so many prayin', women in our town, I don't think we should ever send out so many young ministers to p'int a fallen world to salvation."

"My husband's right," chimed in his wife. "I've been to them female prayer meetin's regular, for ten years; and most of our church-women have done the same. No rain, nor snow, nor sun, nor mowin' time, nor harvest ever kept us from meetin' at the throne of grace."

"And you had your reward wife.— Take another apple, Prudence; and another tumbler of cider."

"I'll try a greenin' this time." Then she addressed Mrs. Steele.

"Your reward has been in a blessin' on your prayers. If I remember, ten years ago you told me that you had took up William, and was strong in prayer for him. We've seen him with our own eyes; and witnessed how manfully he stands up for God, and His divine ordinances."

"That's true; as my husband says, we had our reward in seein' so many of our young men rise up to put down the 'man of sin,' and to gird on the armor of Christ — to fight valiantly against the powers of darkness. There was the widow Brown's two boys. We made them a subject of prayer, for a whole year;—but we

prevailed at last. My husband knows how bright they came out on the side of the Lord. They studied for the ministry, and went missionaries to the Greenwich Islands. But them heathen was cannibals. They took them two young laborers in the Master's vineyard, and roasted 'em, and devoured 'em. But we all felt that our loss was their gain ; and that we could still say, blessed be the name of the Lord.'

"Then there was that tall Hopkins, you know, wife ; he was a subject of prayer in your circle, and he's gone a missionary among the Jews."

"The Jews ! The Jews !" groaned Patience.

"I never speak that name without a cold shudder runnin' over me. Those crucifiers of Christ ! — and still a-crucifyin' him to this day. The Jews are worse than the heathen. The heathen never saw Christ, but the Jews have seen Him, and his works ; and yet refuse to believe in their Savior. They need missionaries !"

"Well, Miss White, the Jews have been well punished for their hardness of heart. They've been scattered over the earth like chaff, before the whirlwind of God's wrath."

"Yes, deacon ! They're under a curse, like the Canaanites, not only here, but hereafter, for they will fill the pit of despair forever !"

It was time now for Fanny's flesh to creep. She had never seen the points of Cloudspire's creed thrown into such glittering salience. Yet, if she had set herself to be a Christian believer, she must face His resentments, His towering wrath, His revenges on His enemies, His curses on the beautiful green earth, and His fiendish tortures prepared for a never-ending future, beyond the grave. She asked Prudence,—

"Do you think the Jews are all cast off from the presence of God, forever ?"

"Yes, child ; every one of them sink to the bottomless pit, prepared for the Devil and His angels, with the terrible sin of unbelief hung like a weight about their necks !"

"Mother, have you forgot Tim Ford ?" asked Mary.

"No child : I was just comin' to him. Timothy was pale and sickly ; he couldn't earn a livin' on the farm. We carried him before the Throne of Grace, with the especial purpose that he

should fight the beast with seven heads and ten horns. Our minister says this means the Catholic's — and sure enough, he's now preachin' to the Roman Catholics about worshipin' their idols made with hands, and about their wearin' so many beads, and crosses."

Here the face of Prudence grew fairly shriveled with abhorrence. Her thin lips trembled,—for the Roman Catholics were the bane of her life. She broke in,—

"Miss Steele, I'm glad to know you've sent out a spiritual David with a sling in his hand for the forehead of that Anti-Christ. I feel a righteous indignation at the very name! I hope he won't forget to rebuke them for lightin' up so many wax candles, and for fillin' their churches with that smoke they call incense. It must be a terrible stench in the nostrils of the Almighty."

"Tim Fort won't forget none of 'em," replied Mrs. Steele, confidently: "he abominates Catholics."

"Eanny, do you like Catholics too?" asked Mary.

"I know nothing about them, but by accident. I was lost once when a child, in the streets of New York. No one would listen to my grief, but two Sisters of Mercy. They kindly led me back to my friends. I confess I have ever since, thought it was a Christian act."

"Did you ever go to one of their churches, and see their idols?"

"Yes. I persisted in being taken there, after the sisters brought me home. Everything was so beautiful to my sight. The stained glass windows; the colored lights; the wonderful music, the like of which I never heard before; the dim seclusion; the splendid robes of the priests; the mysterious forms of worship at the altar; the solemn chants; all these drew me from earth and its sinfulness into another and holier sphere — like that which Edmund Stone described in his sermon, yesterday. It is a pleasant memory, and yet I may be wrong in all my thoughts about it."

"You *air* wrong! wickedly and sinfully wrong!" hastily exclaimed Miss White. "Your own feet arə standing on slippery places, and —

"No, no, Miss White. We must not be hard on Fanny. Her opinions are not formed yet. She is looking for light. You know

there are no means of grace down to Alderbank. I've known her to walk three miles many a summer Sunday morning, over to our church ; and to pay more 'tention to the sermon, than half the men in the congregation,—and then walk the three miles back. The Lord is leading her young mind right."

Mrs. Steele, who had been drawn under the surface in this sudden whirlpool of debate, now came up in the outer circle, to breathe again. The rough, knotty, smirchy finger rose to view. She reminded all present that there is but one door to enter the kingdom. (In her perspective, that one was the faded green door of Cloud-spire church . She reiterated,—

"There is but one door ; and 'he that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber ;' and Timothy Fort will tell them so."

"He'll do that, mother. He's a bold soldier of the Cross," answered her husband.

Before prayers, Fanny entered the kitchen to thank Hal for his remembrance and to speak a comforting word for his loneliness. His dark face kindled ; for there was no mistaking her friendship. His heart warmed towards her religious faith, which included him, Susan, and his children. When she said, "God is good, Henry ; I want you to believe it," he did believe *her* God to be good. When she laid her hand on his arm, and said in a low tone, "Wear the clothes that Richard gave you,—protect yourself from the cold ;" he felt there was warmth and comfort for him yet.

Her return from the kitchen was rudely greeted by the upbraiding voice of Prudence.

"Why, my child, I've been thinkin' more and more of your errors. Here you are, takin' up for the Jews and Catholics, just as you did for the sons of Ham. You are up in arms with the Lord, my child. Where He condemns and curses, you pity and excuse. You should go to your brother Richard for advice. He is learning *sound doctrine*. Let him guide you."

The deacon entered, saying,—

"I think the sun'll come up clear to-morrow morning. I hope Fanny ; for we are all anxious to hear Richard. He's a lamb of our flock."

"Oh ! yes," solemnly sighed the hostess, looking towards Pru-

dence. "If Richard follows in the footsteps of my husband's brother, we shall feel repaid for our our prayers."

CHAPTER IX.

THE sun hung above the plummy western woods on the "Main." "Nightingale Hall," on the north-west corner of the island, stood lifted airily from the ground, on its tall brick pillars,—so high that its mistress used to ride under the first floor, sitting in her saddle, without grazing the white plume of her hat. A long flight of broad stairs, hedged by fragrant myrtle and orange shrubbery, opened upon the piazza. This piazza, broad and saloon-like, surrounding three sides of the Hall, was shaded and embowered by glossy green magnolias, and the broad fanning leaves of the sycamore. Orange trees held their golden fruit along the high balustrade, so that the lounge had only to reach the hand over, or through the railing for their delicious globes. Tall oleanders scattered pink and snowy blossoms, side by side with the orange, along the balustrade, within easy reach of their admirers.

The view from the western piazza was one of characteristic Southern beauty. Beyond the gardens and enclosures of the Hall, the eye rested first on the low cabins of the negro quarters, stretching each side of a narrow street, and half hidden by low clumps of the fig; then a strip of soft grassy marsh, beyond which, still black and shining from the receding tide, sloped away a broad muddy beach to the river.

Sweeping around this beach, the swift current of the river, or rather arm of the sea, hastened back to the ocean whence it came, cutting its swift channel farther on through untold acres of golden grass marshes, as soft to the eye as satin flowers.

Beyond the river, low level lands rolled out into rice and cotton fields, dotted here and there by verandahed plantation dwellings. These faded into distant pine-lands, dreamy with the delicious purple haze, which only a Southern clime throws so charmingly over all its scenes.

In the north-west chamber of this mansion overlooking the view

just described, the windows were darkened by green blinds, nearly closed. On a bed drawn into the middle of the floor, lay the pale form of a dying woman. The lace pavilion was looped high around the carved mahogany posts, to admit the rising evening breeze beneath its canopy. On one side of the bed, a tall black slave gently fanned the sufferer; and on the other reclined a fair young girl. Her face rested in her hands on the same pillow with her mother; and she was shedding such tears as only one about to become an orphan, can know.

“Raise me up, my precious daughter!” faintly demanded the mother.

“Let me look out upon nature once more, before I go.”

Elsie slid her strong arm under the pillows, and raised her so that her eyes commanded the view from the window, then drew herself upon the bed, and held the invalid tenderly in her arms. Hattie, brushing the tear drops from her sight, threw open the blinds. The window was protected from the slant rays of the sun by the deep sheltering roof of the piazza. She leaned abstractedly against the casement looking dreamily therefrom.

“Come, Hattie, daughter. I have something more to say to you;” and as she approached the bed, her thin fingers clasped the small helpless hand extended to her.

Hattie’s grief poured forth afresh,—and as if awaiting a calmer moment, the dying mother’s gaze went out through the open window, over the river, the marsh and the purple woodlands. The blue eyes gathered brightness for a moment, till mournful thoughts exhaled in a mist before them and fell upon the pillow in tears.

“Hattie” she said, “I have always loved this island and this home, since I first saw them. I have had same sorrows in which you could not participate. But this dreamy tropical phase of nature has a balm in it, which has never failed to calm my soul. I have ever borrowed a sweet and heavenly tranquility from the unbroken level of these shores and the deep repose of these forests. I leave them to-day. If all be true that the wise have asserted, I shall soon walk by other waters,—by the River of Life. I shall soon look upon other blossoms, and gather the fruitage from the Tree of everlasting Life. Do not grieve, my darling,—death is the inevitable lot of us all. A few years, more or less on the earth, are

but a small spark of eternity. My only regret is for you, my orphaned child! but I can do no more than to bid you, when left alone, to trust in Him who is above man."

Throwing her arms about her mother's neck, Hattie asked in agonized shrieks,—

"Who will care for me now? Where shall I go? Oh! my dear mother, let me go down into the grave with you! I cannot live! I did not think you would die!"

She caught her mother's hand, crying,—

"Stay! my precious mother! Stay! I fear to meet this dreadful world alone! Oh do not go!"—and she rained imploring kisses and tears upon her mother's marble forehead.

"Do my dear young missus touch the bell!" spoke Elsie in a low and rapid tone. "For the dear Jesus' sake, be quick!"

Raising herself in haste from the bed, with a face ashy pale, she asked despairingly,—

"Oh, Elsie! tell me, have I killed her? Is my mother dead?"

"No, honey! pull the bell quick!"

She reached the rope, and fell with a heavy sound upon the floor. The chambermaid entered.

"Minnie," said Elsie, pour some wine as quick as possible, and put in a teaspoonful of that medicine in the bottle. Give it to me, and then throw cool water in Hattie's face!"

The blinds were drawn together; after a time, mother and daughter revived.

"Go now," said Elsie to the chambermaid,— "send little Friday to stand by the bell-rope, and tell Mauma Rose to come, when it rings."

"Now Hattie," faintly whispered her mother, "calm yourself. Listen for the last time. Colonel Ashland will kindly allow you to stay here. I have his sacred promise. I have laid by one thousand dollars of my earnings since I have been governess, South. It is securely deposited in the bank in Charleston. Colonel Ashland has the papers — he will acquaint you with the necessary details hereafter. It is all yours, my clothes and jewelry are yours also. If you should ever go back to my native State, visit, if possible, the scene of my marriage, and the grave of your father. Go to the little church where he officiated. Lay upon the green mound that covers all I

loved most in the world, a small chaplet of buttercups and daises, the wild flower wreath that his dear hands placed upon my brow, on that one happiest morning of my life — my bridal day. Kneel by his last resting-place ; and looking over the waters of Cayuga Lake, join us once more, by your sacred memories of my lonely Southern grave.”

The poor mother opened her arms. Hattie’s head fell upon that loving, fainting heart for the last time. The hush of death was broken only by the moans of the young orphan, still enfolded in that cold embrace.

Elsie motioned to Friday. Answering the bell, Mauma Rose came softly in, and perceiving the true state of affairs, unlocked the unresisting arms, and lifted Hattie from the bed.

Sustaining and holding her still, she endeavored to assuage the terrible tempest of her grief, that shook her young life.

“Hush, honey ! Don’t cry darlin’, de modder gone — gone to blessed Jesus, de moder sing, sing glory now ; lib wid de Lord ; hold de palm leaf, and wear de white robe. She neber cry no mo’.”

Drawing her towards the door, she went on,—

“Come wid Mauma Rose, poor Birdie ! Mauma Rose take care.” She took Hattie to the nursery, begged her to lie down and sat by, fanning, and hushing her woe.

At sunset, when evening dropped suddenly down, the clatter of hoofs up the avenue, followed by the yelping of hounds, and the discharge of guns, warned the household of the approach of the master from the day’s hunt.

Colonel Ashland, gratified with the day’s success, sat a while upon the high piazza with his English guest ; remarking upon the two slain deer lying on the greensward below, and engaged in mutual relations of English and American gala hunts, till supper.

A repast of venison, ducks, and fish from the river rendered him tolerably complacent, so that Mauma Rose, the only one whose presence the Colonel tolerated under all circumstances, was allowed to enter. She courtesied, and remained standing at the door.

“Here comes my black shadow ! well, mauma, what now ?”

“Muss tell de masser bad news !”

Long she hesitated. He arose from respect to his friend, and entered the hall.

“Speak now!” said he.

“De guberness be dead, sir.”

“Another funeral! Good God! Who’ll die next? I destest funerals!

“De Lord bring de fun’als, bressed masser.” with another courtesy.

“Well! If the Lord brings the funerals, I wish he’d carry them away, again. Damnation! My sport is ruined for to-morrow;” — pausing. “No, I swear by the Roman gods it shall not be ruined! I’ll hunt with the Bluffton Rangers, if a Death’s head hang on every tree! Mauma Rose, send Monday to me. I will give him orders for the grave. Send for the overseer’s wife to stay through the night. I shall be in the saddle at sunrise; you will hear the horns and the dogs,—after that, make arrangements, funeral at nine o’clock. The parson and the overseer’s wife will accompany Hattie in the carriage. Tell the coachman.”

Mauma Rose courtesied low, and said,—

“Will de bressed marser ’low me and Elsie to foller in de mule-cart?”

“Yes, yes, you black impudence! if you won’t ask me another question.”

The governess, knowing that her disease was fatal, sent some days previous to Charleston by one of the boats plying between that city and the island, for a coffin for herself, and a mourning suit for Hattie. This had been confided to Rose and Elsie. The next morning, old Parson Still officiated in the spacious hall. Around the open coffin gathered all the house servants, and a few field-hands who had gained the consent of the overseer. A wreath of white roses, still wet with morning dews, lay upon the coffin,—from the hand of Elsie. White buds and green leaves sprinkled the pure muslin shroud, and touched the light flaxen ringlets of the sleeper. Honora Hudson was as lovely in her white flowers, and the marble beauty of her last repose, as when she stood at the bridal-altar, crowned with buttercups and daisies — redolent in the flush of her young life and budding hopes.

True mourners stood about her. With calm faces and meekly

folded hands, they listened to the words of Pastor Still ; feeling deeply the loss that took from their chequered lives, the only joy and comfort of the Hall.

The procession, if such it could be called, moved over to "St. Luke's" — a lonely little church in the deep shades of sycamores and live-oaks by the road-side. It was a pleasant spot,—wild birds flitted through the branches, and filled the air with music,—light zephyrs gave animation to the trembling sun-tinted sprays.

A small cemetery carefully enclosed, was near by ; but the governess' grave was dug outside the palings that enclosed the blooded families. Within gleamed costly marble monuments, and head stones among roses — yews and palmy grasses ; but Honora Hudson slept sweetly outside the aristocratic grounds, under the deep shadow of a sweet gum, in the wild-wood. She had long since ceased to pay any deference to such accidents of life, as wealth or birth.

It was a picturesque group, that little band of slaves around the grave and its lonely young mourner, in the checkered light that sifted like a benediction through the tree tops. The parson lined a hymn ; their voices rose solemnly on the air, like sacred incense beneath green arches. There was a hidden resignation in the clear full tones, which had been garnered from the hopelessness of their own lives.

Hattie turned to Mauma Rose, who stood close by her, and whose dear old face watched every changing look of "her chil's," as she called her. She clasped her arms about mauma's neck, with one long moan of anguish. Mauma held her to her heart, and hushed her as she would hush an infant,—then half carried her to the carriage door.

Arrived at the Hall, the servants quickly removed every vestige of death's doings ; opened windows and doors — filled vases with flowers in the dining-room, halls, and sleeping-chambers ; till within and without, the very atmosphere was burdened with fragrance. The cooks in the kitchens kindled their fires afresh, and busily prepared for the evening's entertainment. The trusty butler gave orders, and a house-full of servants obeyed.

Silver candelabra for the tables and walls received the final touches, and held tall wax candles in their polished arms. Treas-

ures of family plates were unlocked, and disposed in showy magnificence on the dining-room tables.

Picture frames with faces to the walls were turned about, presenting views of the chase in English parks, and Scotch highlands, and over each were hung the huge branching antlers of American stags; some of them tipped with silver, and inlaid with a silver date of the day and year of its capture.

The row of stables was drenched with water and thrown open to the sun. The gardener trimmed truant sprays, and swept avenues and walks. Towards sunset, Virgil, a prime jet black boy, was sent to the outer gate of the grounds, with orders to "trow open de big gate wide; quick you hear de marser horn! Min' now! Listen boy! Cowhide comin'!" Virgil went to his watch, amusing himself meanwhile in jumping across the sandy road, whistling like a grosbeak, turning somersault, walking on his two hands and bellowing like an alligator.

Just as the sun dropped behind the western woods, a winding horn brough him to his feet. The broad heavy gates were swung backwards. Colonel Ashland, with a galloping troop of uproarious hunters, rushed through, followed at a little distance by another body of mounted slaves, bringing in the game, guns and hired hounds.

As he arrived first, he blew a long shrill blast on his horn, to hasten the movement of the rear. On they came; the black troop dashing after the heels of the first. Horses, negroes, panting dogs, champing bits, the rattling of buckles, guns and trappings,—the lordly commands of the several rangers to their footmen and the quick sharp reply of black menials, altogether made an enlivening scene.

Beds had been prepared for the "Rangers;" they were to receive the hospitalities of "Nightingale Hall." The six body-servants of the guests, mingling with the numerous house-servants, and all running to and fro at the master's orders, imparted a hum to hall, dressing-room and chamber. After the refreshing duties of the toilet, the party resorted to the inviting moon-lighted piazza.

Roasting viands in the kitchen evolved a savory odor. Now, the various "boys," as they were termed, although they might be gray

with years, stood like statues near their masters ; or glided up and down the long piazza stairs, like shadows. Brandies and wines were handed about on silver waiters, and drunk from silver goblets. Each hunter sat enveloped in the aroma of a cigar ; and, as is usual at such gatherings, the tide of discussion ran high on various subjects vital to South Carolina's domestic, and foreign interests.

“Major Pendleton, how are your negroes progressing in the ‘divine life’ under the new missionary *regime*?”

“Well, Major, I am not informed on that point, as religion is quite out of my line. However, I have built them a little church, and pay a Northern preacher a small salary per year. According to all advices, his instructions will relieve the overseer of some of his bloodiest labors.”

“Is this Northern preacher sound on the Bible doctrine of slavery?”

“All right, I can assure you, sir,—and if he labors as assiduously to show my niggers that they were designed for bondage, by the Creator, as he has labored to demonstrate the same to me, I need fear no insurrection at present.”

“When, and in what manner, originated this idea of furnishing religious teaching for our slaves?” asked Captain Mardyke.

“In the year 1831 — I think,” replied Major Pendleton, the Rev. Charles C. Jones preached a sermon on the spiritual destitution of our slaves, before two associations of planters in Georgia. He termed them ‘A nation of heathen in our midst.’ Of course, this stirred the public mind ; and the matter was referred to a committee of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia ; they reported upon the religious instruction of our colored population. In substance they report, that from the Potomac to the Sabine river, from the Atlantic to the Ohio, there are not twelve men exclusively devoted to the instruction of the negroes. They know of but five churches in the slave-holding states, built expressly for their use. They tell us that “in these years of revival, and benevolent effort in this Christian Republic, there are two millions of human beings in the condition of Heathen ; and in some respects, in a worse condition !”

“When was that report made, sir?” asked Prof. La Bruce.

“In Dec. 5, 1833, it produced quite a sensation in many states.

It was considered at first, you remember, gentlemen, as inflammatory sentiment, and a dangerous experiment."

"Yes! I remember," said Colonel Ashland. We have proved that giving information of any kind to slaves is like applying a match to gunpowder, in regard to our safety. The more we shape them to the grand ideas of our Institution which are labor, and a prolific increase, the more secure and remunerative is our ownership. But after much agitation and conference of leading Southern minds, it has been thought that churches for our slaves would make better workers, and prove safeguards for ourselves."

"That is the true interpretation of the subject, Colonel," answered Major Pendleton. "We concluded that every church would stand for an arsenal, in our midst."

"We have fostered, and developed one quality in the African which will turn to our advantage in this new religious movement, — and that is, reverence for their superiors;" said Captain Mardyke. "They well know that God is the superior of all; — but as they cannot read for themselves, and consequently, can form no independent judgments, they will rely upon their white teachers, to unfold and construe the dealings of God with men. If this be done in a skillful, and proper manner, it will prove of untold advantage to our cotton and rice crops; as well as to the stability of our system."

"Certainly!" replied the rich, musical voice of Fred Warham; "and with the proper teaching from the pulpit, that *God ordained slavery*, — with a hell to intimidate, and a heaven to attract, it would be comparatively a much easier matter to hold our slaves in subjection!"

Fred Warham, a young sportsman of the first water, was the "one thing needful" in all the social gatherings of that section. In the clan hunts of the planters and gentlemen of leisure, his horse cleared every obstacle with a bound — from a fallen tree, or boundary fence, to a boggy ditch. At the races, his quick glance skirting the flying track, was the guide to grey-headed umpires. On all political subjects, his sagacity, and high toned enthusiasm in regard to the sacred Institution of his beloved State, won him admiring auditors.

His inquiring mind led him to search out the character, and at-

tributes of God, after the most approved theories of Theology in a Northern Seminary ; and he had received a diploma for his knowledge of the same. He was called the "Rev. Fred," — and when in Charleston, or other sister cities, of a Sabbath, he ascended elegantly into the pulpit, with the air of one who had sounded the depths of divine mystery ; and turning the full blaze of his resplendent oratorical powers upon clouded doctrinal points, illuminated the whole theory of the Christian religion. His versatile genius made him reliable reference. Hence, on this occasion, there arose around him a pleasant volley of applause at the expression of his quick perceptions.

"Right sir! Right sir! Right sir!" echoed on every hand.

"I believe the Northern churches are generally sound in the support of our institution and in the rights of the slave-holder ;" remarked Squire Meddleton.

"Assuredly sir!" replied Rev. Fred. "The churches stand like a wall in defence of slavery. Their ecclesiastical robes are unstained by heresy in that direction! Their unyielding patriotism is squarely based upon the Constitution! Why gentlemen! the spire of every Northern church, pointing with prophetic finger to the God whose word is our highest earthly authority, is equal to a regiment of bayonets! We should be weak indeed, without the church and the coëxisting protection of the National military arm! We own the slaves — they hold them! Really, we put on the manacles — the North rivets them. We give the word of command — they pull the trigger!"

"With their Bibles and bullets we have nothing to fear!" added Major Pendleton. "Emphatically so! sir ; and I desire to read you a slip which I cut from the 'Marysville, Tenn., Intelligencer'"

"We are your most interested listeners!" exclaimed the party. "Tom, bring a light ; these magnolias are impervious to the rays of the moon."

Major Pendleton read,—

"We of the South are emphatically surrounded by a dangerous class of beings — degraded, stupid savages, — who if they could but once entertain the idea that immediate, and unconditional death would *not* be their portion, would re-act the St. Domingo tragedy. But the consciousness, with all their stupidity, that a ten-fold force,

superior in discipline, if not in barbarity, would gather from the four corners of the United States, and slaughter them, keeps them in subjection. But to the non-slave-holding States particularly, are we indebted, for a permanent safe-guard against insurrection. Without their assistance, the white population of the South would be too weak to quiet that innate desire for liberty, which is ever ready to act itself out, with every rational creature."

"A truthful view!" echoed several voices, "The Northern clergy are our watch-dogs! We must place brass collars upon their faithful necks; engraved with the motto, '*No discussion!*' Without discussion, peace will prevail. Thus the clear rays of gospel light will neither be broken, nor retarded."

"But," said Colonel Ashland, "what of this Synod of South Carolina and Georgia? Why has it recently become so solicitous in its pious care of the slave? It laments over two millions of human beings in the condition of heathen and in some respects in a worse condition. Our niggers are not human beings! There must be some wolves there, in sheep's clothing."

"I assure you not, sir! They resolved unanimously, that, 'In the opinion of this Synod, Abolition Societies, and the principles on which they are founded in the United States, are inconsistent with the interests of the slaves, the right of the holders, and the great principles of our political institutions.,"'

"That is the right basis for operations," said Colonel Ashland; "but we may import firebrands into our midst, in the persons of these preachers; for you see they must be white men. We have no black preachers,—and if we had, they would not be tolerated. These shepherds must be white — and they must come from the North. We Southerners have other and better business than teaching the word of the Lord. Our own word is sufficient for us."

"There is not the least harm to be apprehended from this source," remarked Fred Warham. "The North turns out scores of ministers at her doctrinal schools. Their theology is shaped according to our National Constitution, and the Constitution was moulded by our own hands: Prof. Stuart of Andover, the leading theological mind of that section leaves the right stamp upon his students. He pronounces slavery *right*; and entitled to protec-

tion from all American citizens. I was educated there myself ; and well remember his sturdy blows at the increasing fanaticism about him. I have been thinking quite seriously of getting one of these preachers myself. I have written to one of my classmates. He went to Virginia after graduation, and has some experience in dealing with slaves ; which I consider a valuable acquisition. You know there are four hundred belonging to my estate ; and they raise the devil, generally. They shirk their tasks, steal, bear false witness, and get their backs cut up handsomely. But I must try some other remedy. If there is anything in the United States to tame them, it devolves upon me to find it. Speaking of this new shepherd for my flock ; I beg you gentlemen to listen to an extract from his reply to me."

He took a letter from his pocket and read,—

"Slavery is not only countenanced, permitted and regulated by the Bible ; but it was positively instituted by God himself. He has in so many words enjoined it !"

The ringing of the supper-bell interrupted conversation, and the party entered the dining-room. The pictures and flowers, the silver and glass, presented a brilliant array. By the light of the Briarian candelabras, the feasters were helped by their servants to venison, turkey, duck, and other wild game. The tables were burdened with the richest dessert Charleston afforded. The baskets containing it had been "toted" to the Hall from the schooner but a short time in advance of the arrival of the master. They ate, drank, toasted and cheered till past midnight.

"Old Holyrood rang merrily,
That night with wassail, mirth and glee,
King James within his princely bower,
Toasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summoned to spend the parting hour."

At length wine, the potent ruler of man's godlike intellect, took the throne. Wine installed itself master of ceremonies.

"The fiery flood,
Whose purple blood
Has a dash of Spanish bravado."

Still they held the cup,—

“ And bade the goblet pass,
In their beards the red wine glistened,
Like dew-drops in the grass.”

“ They drank to the soul of Witlaf ;
They drank to Christ the Lord ;
And to each of the twelve Apostles
Who had preached His Holy Word.”

The toasts were numerous and characteristic ; a few of which are given.

The first gentleman offered,—

“ The words of our illustrious General Hayne. ‘ Next to the Christian Religion, I consider Free Trade in its largest sense, as the greatest blessing that can be conferred on any people.’ ”

Another proposed “ Nullification and one of its Ordinances.” (Cries of Hear ! Hear ! Hear !) “ The people of this State will hold themselves absolved from all further obligation to maintain or preserve their political connection with the people of the other States ; and will forthwith proceed to organize a separate government ; and do all other acts and things, which Sovereign and Independent States may of right do. ”

The old slogan, “ Disunion ! ” “ Secession ! ” “ Sovereign State ! ” was the hearty response. In enthusiastic anticipation, goblets went crashing through the window panes,— a miniature tocsin of shivering glass.

Mr. Fred Warham’s figure was a fine type of manly perfection.

“ His form was middle size,
For feat of strength, or exercise ;
Shaped in proportion fair ;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye,
His short curled beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance
And firm his stirrup in the lists ;
And oh ! he had that merry glance,
That seldom lady’s heart resists.”

Wine, the magician had a stronger mental, and physical fibre to bend in Fred, than in some of his companions. The purple draught seemed only to have flashed sunshine into his brain.

He was promenading in the long, broad hall with Minnie, the chamber-maid. Together they swung in and out of the moonlight, like fairies; till her cheek grew tulip red, beneath its film of brown.

The watchword, "Nullification", arrested his light feet, as quickly as a shot fired across the bow arrests a cruiser. He entered the dining-room. He drank to "Nullification," and offered an additional sentiment.

"The sacred soil of Carolina! Woe be to its invaders! In the words of our distinguished defender: 'I recognize no allegiance as paramount to that, which the citizens of South Carolina owe to the State of their birth, or their adoption!'"

Bacchanalian applause interrupted. But a gallant wave of Fred's fair, bejeweled hand restrained the clamorous guests; and he proceeded in slow, impressive tones,—

"South Carolina cannot be drawn down from the proud eminence on which she has now placed herself; except by the hands of her own children! Give her a fair field, and she asks no more!"

Although wine and brandy had stupefied nerve and brain, this last monstrosity—Rev. Fred's supposition that South Carolina would be destroyed by her own children; that South Carolina, regal, haughty, self-poised, should die the death of a suicide; thereby excluding herself from the Mausoleum of an honorable fame;—that she should lie in a grave of disgrace;—these bitter thoughts roused the slumbering ire of their souls! The Spartan motto, "With our shields, or on our shields!" was the universal response.

Colonel Ashland conformed to the usual custom, on festive occasions; and proposed the closing sentiment.

"The fair Daughters of South Carolina! distinguished for their purity, beauty, and grace!" Glowing memories were awakened; and sacred names of mother, sister, sweet heart, were reverentially pronounced; till the air seemed hushed, and purified by the spell.

None slept in Nightingale Hall, except the children of Colonel Ashland. Their sleep was a deep oblivion which nothing disturbs.

In that room, Hattie sat on a low seat,—her head resting on

Mauma Rose's lap. Her eyes were weary, and sorrowful. This was the first high wassail she had experienced. The confusion and uproar caused a throb of fear. Mauma smoothed her hair with a slow, mesmeric hand — at the same time expressing her own bitter thoughts. These thoughts were not the hasty effervescence of an excited moment; — they had slowly crystalized around her heart during a life-time.

“Neber mine, chile! I'se heerd 'em hoopin' an' hollerin' eber cence I hear nottin' — de debbils! — drink! drink! drink! Dat all dey good for! ain't half so 'spectable as de hosses in de stable! Neber mine, 'em, young missis! De Lord git arter 'em bime-by! Jes sich noise in tousan' oder house in de Souf. Dey gwine to bed now, missis. Hear?”

A final peace was concluded. Each footman spread a blanket on the floor, and threw himself down by the master's couch; secretly thankful the day was over. The remnant of the night was left to the lonely hooting of a winking owl, in the magnolias.

CHAPTER X.

THE last day of revival week was dawning. When the bright yellow sun peered over the snowy brink of Cloudspire, he found himself belated in the morning business. It was plain that his majesty was not a revivalist; and that his royal heart was not in the holy work then being carried to its completion. It was glaringly evident, that he was not a believer, from the broad self-sufficient smile with which he saluted every farmhouse; and quenched the puny flames of its tallow candles; the candles on the smoking breakfast tables; the candles in the hands of plump dairy women, skimming rich cream in amber folds from waiting pans; the candles on side tables; where rosy maidens stood packing into lunch baskets, carvings of roast meats; slices of bread and golden butter; wedges of cake; pans of tawny doughnuts; and blocks of cheese.

In a hardened, unreflective way, he thrust his long tardy rays into the faces of the exclusive whale oil lamps, watching on the

parlor mantles ; and jestingly laid brighter lights on the gray, chestnut, and auburn heads of early risen guests. He pushed his way through half open barn doors ; and laid golden bars on the littered floors.

He found Henry Hughes,—extinguished *his* lantern ; and bade him walk on patches of the “New Jerusalem come down” into frozen barns ! He gilded the snow-shoveled paths to the stable ; and bade Hal’s ragged feet “walk the golden streets” — the sacrilegious, jocular old sinner ! that sun !

When the paths were continued about the house, to the buried road, Hal wrought with a golden shovel ; and threw up to the light, long massive heaps of the yellow ore.

Thus he went on ;—this god of day, thrusting his curious, impudent glances into bed-rooms, large and bleak, small and cosy,—“up stairs, down stairs, and in my lady’s chamber ;” but found no one napping.

Mary and Fanny patted and rounded two plump pillows, as the last touch of neatness to their bed. Fanny exclaimed, “There comes the sun ! the magnificent sun ! He shames the candle with his glory ! Let us roll up the curtains. Oh ! Mary ! do come and look out ! how beautiful ! The shadows of your maple trees look as if they were penciled on white velvet. See ! how delicately every twig is drawn !”

“It is pretty,” replied Mary ; “but I never noticed them before.”

“And Mary ! observe the windows of your neighbors’ houses, over the hill ! The panes are of molten gold ! How they flash !—and the pines are wearing fresh white robes, and mantles of down ! And look Mary, at the soft purple veil which the distant range of Green Mountains wears ! Oh ! it all fills my soul with unspeakable pleasure ! I can neither express, nor explain the emotions with which Nature overwhelms me ! There’s a divine glory about them, and an overshadowing presence of the wisdom, and goodness of their Creator, that is bewildering !”

“I cannot feel as you do,” replied Mary, regretfully. “Why are we so different from each other ? This morning’s sun illumines your spirit ! I wish, Fanny, you could see your own eyes ! They sparkle like the golden windows over the hill ! Snow is simply

white, and cold, to me. Summer is haying-time,— and dairy toil! The sun seems made to call me from sweet sleep, and its setting leaves me tired with day. I have no poetry in my nature, I suppose,— at least, Uncle William tells me so.”

“Neither have I poetry in my nature, Mary;” throwing one arm lovingly, around her friend’s neck. “There’s no merit in me for it, Mary. I really love these snows, these shadows, and blue mountains. They speak to me!—they calm and satisfy me. I cannot help being happy in their presence. Ah! there come the slow, patient oxen out of their stables! Their breath freezes on the sharp winter air. The brass buttons on their horns glitter in the sun; bless them! the great gentle things! There come Czar and Sultan to stir their blood!—there they go! rearing, and prancing! How grand and graceful they are! Do you know, Mary, I am wicked enough to covet those beautiful creatures?”

“Fanny, I imagine you and Lucy Clarendon are very much alike. She always looks content, and absorbed with something beyond ordinary vision; as if she were holding converse with invisible voices; and cared nothing for us prosy, matter-of-fact farmer girls, as Uncle William calls us. I believe I should love her; and Lucy might have some affection for me, if I could make her acquaintance,—for you love me, Fanny; although I cannot see why.”

“Girls! why are you standin’ idle at the windows! Breakfast is waitin’!” spoke a chilling, censorious voice, at the open door. “Fanny, I hoped to have found you on your knees, askin’ a blesin’ on your brother Richard’s efforts to-day. Although he is not ordained yet, he can bear his testimony for the Lord. Cloudspire has reason to be spiritually proud of its young theologian;—this town may truly be called the vineyard of the Lord.”

Prudence, for it was none other, motioned to her awe-struck companion: “Mary, go down to your mother, and leave Fanny with me. I desire to see her alone.

“Sit down Fanny, and let me give you some advice. I came in still, lest I should disturb your wrestlin’ with the Holy Spirit; and heard you admiring the hills, the dumb cattle, and the sun. Now Fanny, all these things are vanities. To worship them is to be like the heathen, who bow down to storks and stones. They are not made in the image of God, and have no souls. You should

meditate on the dark solemnity of lost spirits,—you should keep that view before your mind,—if, haply, you might be the means of pluckin' one, as a brand from the burnin'. The true believer has no time for gayety or rejoicin', in this vale of tears. I feel as if it was given to me to admonish the young, and to set their feet in the narrow path to eternal life. As I shall not see you after this mornin', remember what I have said respectin' the curse of Canaan. Touch not the accursed thing. I want to welcome you around the great white throne; but Fanny, remember, if you interfere and intercept the designs of Providence towards the lower races of men, if you give your love to the sun, stars, to trees and mountains and rivers; if you don't maintain a righteous hatred to the Jews; and if you don't turn scornfully away from Roman Catholic Cathedrals, an angry God will cast you from his presence forever! My duty is done! Pray that you may be saved from these destroyin' temptations."

Half-past ten approached. The church bell sent forth its clanging voice on the clear, cold air; drowning the strings of smaller bells which rose and fell over the hills, and slid into the valleys, which came from the North, the South, the East, and the West; which wound along the frozen brooks, or echoed past the leafless forests. Nearer and nearer they came; till jingle and clang, and clang and jingle proclaimed with riotous tongues, the gathering of the elect.

A glow of satisfaction beamed on most of the faces, successively alighting at the green church door. A bigoted devotee would have recognized this glow, as the new peace with God. A cooler scrutiny into hearts would have found its well-spring of gladness to be the near close of dreary revival week; that the avenging God was about to veil His dreaded face; that the wild sea of human depravity would cease to be dragged to its turbid depths, for dead and hidden sins; that the sulphurous fumes of an uncovered Hell were about to sink into a burned-out crater; thus ceasing to outrage every earthly aspiration; that at last they might go to quiet homes, yet left standing, amid the crash of worlds; and tread the usual paths of a terrestrial existence.

The only blot upon the morning landscape, and the only shadow upon the universal content, was Dr. Clarendon's house just across the

whitened common. Glowering and bereaved glances assailed its calm front, and red-curtained windows. There it stood, with the same ghastly effrontery as ever ; the tomb of Cloudspire's selectest loves, and most sanguine connubial hopes ; the very charnel house of skeleton marriages and nuptial bliss ; of projected journeys, of blasted orange groves, of the sweetest of maidens' prayers, and the most bewitching of girlhood's smiles. Within its detestable walls, William Steele had been inveigled.

The house of God, standing near, was the only asylum for stricken souls ; and resignedly these worshipers of the true God turned to its courts, as pale-faced celibate nuns, who have renounced the world, to enter solemn cloisters.

On the other hand, this revival week had a few substantial pleasures. Farmers had time and opportunity to discuss and compare the last year's crops, the average price of stock and farms, the outlook of politics, the stern policy of Jackson, the Nullifiers and the Constitution. Housewives gained new recipes for preserves and pickles, for coloring pale winter butter into an article as salable as the yellow rolls of summer, and the precise amount of otter which would convert a tough, pale, white-oak cheese into the hue of a golden aurora,—a conversion quite as thorough, and profitable as those supernatural changes wrought around the anxious seat. Thus were furnished subjects of thought and practice, for many a rapid month to come.

Gathered in clusters in the high-backed pews, they had counted over the increase of families — sudden deaths ; and marriages prosperous or otherwise,— they had analyzed their trying "complaints," whose name was Legion — compared hydra-headed symptoms, till it was a comfort to know that pain and debility are the common inheritance of woman ; to be devoutly endured as the Providential chasteners of their wayward spirits. All these points which the pulpit could not appropriately illumine, had been agitated ; and, aside from Lucy Clarendon's bold, outrageous assumption, the gain had been great.

The congregation gathered around Richard Beame. A subtle manifestation of confidence and pride was observable, as his hearers got into position, settled their garments and gazed at his young and earnest face. Was he not a plant of their own nurs-

ing? Would not the world be indebted to that church, for the gospel preached from his lips? Had he not been strengthened and sanctified by their prayers? Even so, it seemed in their sight.

The text appeared a wise selection; compound, but bearing upon the same point. It was from Gallatians, vi. 2, and Hebrews xiii. 3. "Bear ye one another's burdens;" and, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them." In Sanctuary parlance, there was no burden but sin,—mysterious, ever-present, all-pervading, undefinable sin. There were no other bonds, but the unseen, Eden-forged chains of depravity; imposed by no mortal, and from the power of which no mortal was ever expected to free those bound.

The mental interpretation of the text, was complimentary to the church. "Richard knows how we have labored with those in bonds during this whole week," ran through the minds of the audience, like an electric spark. For a time, the speaker seemed to keep to the old beaten track; holding up the example of the Savior of men, in seeking to save others; in going about doing good; but swerving somewhat, when he maintained, that the tenderest sympathies towards the suffering in this life, were among the first fruits of repentance. And when he proclaimed, that bread given to the hungry; clothes to the naked, and tears to those who weep, were the best evidences of conversion, a great apprehension went through the house. Alas! the promising bud of the text burst into a strange blossom!—of foreign scent—and nourished in a strange soil.

Nevertheless, Richard proceeded to show that the bonds which they should remember, were no ideal links which vaguely clank through vacant chambers of superstitious souls. The bonds which the speaker held up to their perceptions, were real, tangible: hard and cold. These bonds were veritable chains,—made by hands of flesh and blood! wrought from iron bars, heated to redness among the hot glowing coals of a blacksmith's forge! welded link by link on a smithy's anvil! where living, muscular arms, in sleeves rolled to the shoulder, plied stroke after stroke, and blow after blow, with the measured precision of a tolling bell! and often, too often, tossing in the sharp dissonance with the hallowed roll—both floating heavenward together.

These bonds which Richard pictured to public gaze, were iron manacles, hard and heartless,—shaped for wrists of flesh. They could chafe, and blister the skin,—and like hungry wolves, find the red blood beneath. These bonds were fetters, riveted by the workman; with his box of tools beside him, upon the ankles and limbs of fellow travelers to the great white Throne; and to the golden streets of the saints' abode. These fetters could corrode and canker the incarnate images of God! could eat into the tendons like cruel fangs; and make each step towards Heaven, infernal.

The bonds Richard bade them remember, were the chains, manacles, and fetters of chattel slavery. More! the burdens to be borne were the groans, tears, and the privations of the American slave. He averred that the exercise of the master's prerogative was wanting in every essential of Christianity.

Indignation and consternation seized his hearers. Each scanned the face of the other, for some plan of action. William Steele opened the way. He rose, gave his arm to Lucy, led her from the church to her father's, and returned. As he entered, Richard was recounting, with liquid eyes, the horrors of the auction block, the lash, and the chain gang. For a time, the inherent sovereignty of Truth dismayed, and held his mutinous congregation in abeyance. The overseer's hasty step was heard advancing up the aisle. This pillar of strength came to the front. With a rallying cry, his angry voice protested against the further desecration of God's Holy Sanctuary. He announced the words of the speaker a delusion, and a lie! "Richard Beame is a fanatic! a leader of sedition! He bears the torch of destruction to the fair fabric of our National Union, and to Freedom!" His enraged eyes surveyed and appealed to every part of the audience.

"Let him dare to utter those sentiments in Charleston, or any part of South Carolina, a dozen ready bullets would stain the pulpit with his traitorous blood! or, if he escaped therefrom, the bowie knife would find its swift revenge."

Springing upon a seat, with both arms extended, he yelled,—

"My brethren in the church militant! I call upon you to rid yourselves of this miscreant in sheep's clothing."

Confusion reigned; the clergy and leaders came to their feet.

Doors slammed after those rushing out. The tramping, and shuffling of feet filled pews and aisles; it came pouring down stairs, mingled with sharp, resentful voices. Above the din, like the harsh piping of the wind in a storm, Edmund Stone, the hunch back, begged to be heard.

"I desire to record my testimony against this innovation! Political and secular affairs have no place in the church. The church repudiates this sanguinary agitation. It incites the savage African hordes of our sister South, to insurrection and murder! I hereby free my skirts from joining hands with this unholy and misguided philanthropy."

Farther expression was overpowered. The Willies, the Eddies, and the Joes, who had just "accepted Christ," the young cubs of the lair, set up vehement roarings,—

"Put him out! Choke the abolitionist! Drag him down! drag him down!"

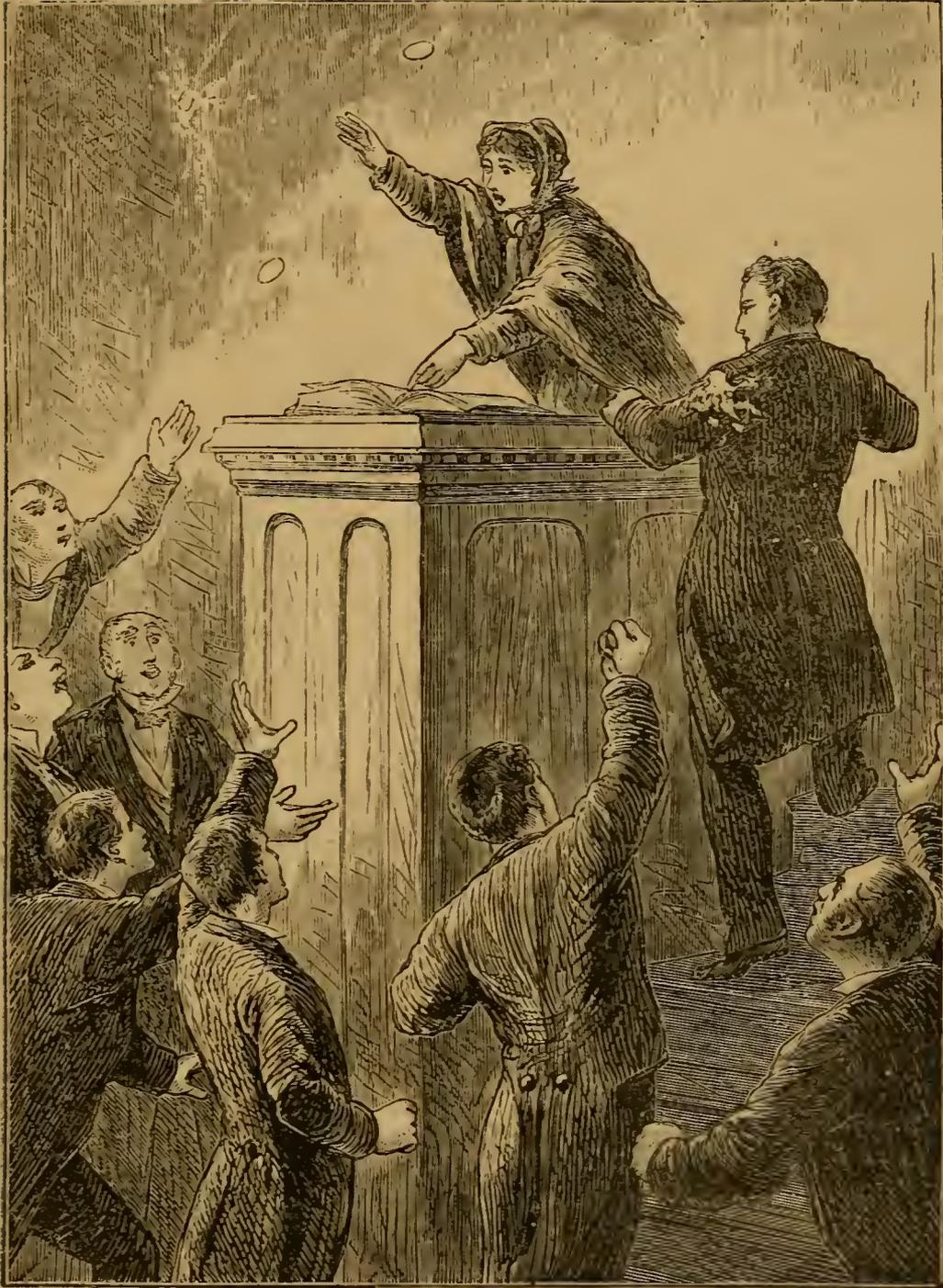
Women rose to their feet, despite the admonition of Paul, that they should sit still. They indignantly discussed in under tones, assisted by significant noddings and shaking of bonnets, Richard's unheard of temerity. From their discussions dropped these pearly words,—

"Niggers!" "Our daughters!" "Amalgamation!" "Marry!"

The ministers left the pulpit; Richard followed alone. The crowd obliged him to halt on the stairs—head and shoulders above them. Paleness and surprise froze his features. Something white and round shied over them, and struck him in the forehead. The snow-ball burst, blinding him with fine snow. Hesitating, and nearly stunned, something smaller struck him on the shoulder, and then again on the side of his head. A praying hand hurled these eggs. Richard's fine coat was stained and dripping with the strange offerings of brotherly love.

"Put out the abolitionist!" "Go home, fanatic!" "Take another!" "Amalgamation!" chimed in, with another storm of eggs and snow-balls, as handily as they would have sung "Old Hundred," or "The Lord into His garden comes."

Richard reached the floor; there, sheltered by the roystering crew, the pelting ceased. He could not advance, but remained standing. Not a friend offered sympathy or advice. The vocif-



“YE NEVER KNEW GOD.”

erations of deacons and laymen, of old and young, in vain efforts to be heard, clashed like broadswords. "Put him out! put him out!" rang through the house.

Fanny sprang from Deacon Steele's pew, down the aisle, around by the East door, where the crowd was thinnest. Working her way through to her brother, she put her arm through his, saying,—

"Let us go, my poor brother! Let us go home for safety. I will walk with you. Where is your hat, dear Richard?"

His head bowed to her ear.

"In the pulpit."

Up the stairs she flew; all eyes followed her; glaring upon this second superlative breach of decorum, but ferocity grew tame at the sight. In an instant, her flushed and tearful face looked over the open "Steele" Bible, reposing on its royal bed; and met the upturned gaze below. Stretching out one small hand and arm over their heads, she cried,—

"Men and women of the church of Cloudspire! do you dare to call yourselves the children of the Most High? Do you dare to insult and spit upon His young servant, because he has spoken to you this day, the Eternal Truth? Do you call yourselves the followers of Him whose name is Love."

Her hand went up in the direction where her faith still clung; and while falling tears gave a significant baptism to the guilty pages which received them, her clear and steady modulation, cleft the air; rang to the ceiling,—

"Ye never knew Christ! ye never knew God!" In another moment, she had glided down, given Richard his hat, and with her arm in his, was walking through the space, voluntarily opened for her.

Thus will weak, pusillanimous man yield to girlhood's attractions, what he refuses to Justice, and to Omnipotence itself.

They had nearly gained the door, when a quick hand knocked Richard's hat to the floor. Another caught it up, and threw it from the green door, rolling on the snow. Deacon Steele hastily climbed to the back of a pew, (under more concern for Fanny than for her brother,) and cried,—

"I protest against any further abuse, brethren! I shall take

that brother and sister in my sleigh. Let them depart in peace."

Like wild animals whose appetites have been whetted by a taste of flesh, there was no restraint. "No! no! no! He shall walk!"

William Steele fiercely caught the deacon's attention with a saving rebuke,—

"No compromise with amalgamation and infidelity!"

"No compromise! no compromise!" was taken up by a hundred voices; till the very air was drunken with the war-cry of their Southern masters.

They passed out: Fanny picked up Richard's hat, and they were allowed to depart without further molestation.

They took the middle of the road to Alderbank. It was not well traveled since the storm of the day previous; and every step plunged ankle deep in untrodden snow. They soon made a turn in the road, and a short descent. Just ahead, blocking the path, a sleigh waited. Expecting fresh insult and about to step out in the deep snow, to pass, the cheery voice of Simon Link bade them stop.

"Let me drive out a leetle, and then you get in here. You see, I slipped out o' that air meetin' house, when they was a fighting, and backed out o' that air shed, and come on here, a purpose to wait for ye."

"No, Simon; let us walk! I should be sorry to bring you into judgment with the church, for taking me into your sleigh! Fanny dear, you can ride. I will walk. A good soldier must endure hardness for Christ's sake."

"Walk or ride, I shall go with you!" decided Fanny,

"Git in here!" urged Simon, (thrashing his arms.) "What do I care for the judgment of such folks? It's the Lord that leads us beside the still waters and green pastures! It ain't men! Git in Richard! that's right! What a shameful sight you air! daubed over with them eggs, from head to foot! and wet through to your skin with them melted snow balls! I've took an extra buffalo to cover you up."

He tucked in Richard up to his neck, with the best robe, and threw the faded one over Fanny. He hopped again into the snow on her side, and drew the soft hay in a heap about her. "There!

bury your wet feet in that,—it's better'n nothing. This old buffal-ler's tore some ; but I know you won't see it, as long as Richard's warm, and there's a horse ahead." He was in again, knocking the snow from his feet, wrapping his old butternut-colored blanket about him, and gathering up the lines.

"I'll set so you can see Thunderbolt ; this ere sorrel's mine. You like hosses, Miss Fanny ; and he'll take you to Alderbank in no time ! He's of a long-stepping breed."

"You are so good, Simon ;" said Fanny. "Wall ! I ain't no better'n I ought ter be. I've knowed you two, for some years. I know ye both, through and through ; an' I ain't a goin' to see ye walk four mile in the snow, for anybody. Go on thunderbolt ! Show Miss Fanny your largest, handsomest tracks ! See that ? He skims over the road like a deer. I never struck him a blow yet, an' I never shall. Ye see, Richard, I feared what they'd do ! I've seen jes such carryin's on out West. I see a man took out of a hall ; carried to a place where they had a fire, and a kittle o'tar ; they stripped off his clothes ; shaved his head, an' covered him completely with the tar and a piller full of feathers. There was two fine dressed gentlemen there, standin' and lookin' on, and tellin' the rest what to do. Somebody told me they were Southern-ers from Georgia. One of 'em took his ridin' whip, gave the naked man some sharp cuts ; and told him that was the medicine for agitars. The poor feller ran for his life, nobody cared where. It was all because he told the people that slavery wasn't a Christian institution ! These two men called him an infidel ; and said they'd teach him to believe the Bible !"

"Did you ever know what became of him ?" asked Fanny.

"Wall ! I let my drove o'cattle lay over one day to rest. By one means an' another I found out a Quaker family about three miles off, took him in. That night I went there ; told 'em I was a friend ; an' they let me into his room. He was sick a-bed ; but them Quakers was as good to him, as if he was their own son. I had some money in my wallet ; I gave him what I could spare. Before the sun was up the next mornin', I was drivin' my cattle towards the East."

They glided on awhile in silence. Fanny knew not how to

frame words, either to condemn these barbarities, or to reconcile them with her preconceived ideas of the spirit of the church.

Richard also pondered upon the past few hours. Where had he been? In the body, or out? Had the lost spirits risen up from the pit of the damned, and in a dance of demons overthrown his reason, and driven him out with the mark of Cain upon him? Was he a sorcerer? or was the church a body of magicians? Had he been practising the "black art," or had they? Had he learned anything at the Seminary? What was sin, and where was it?

Simon turned about sideways. An angel seemed to address them. Love, mercy and compassion, irradiated his features.

"Richard, I like the poor hunted critters that our forefathers mailed down under the Constitution. I pity 'em."

That was the cordial both brother and sister needed. That was the good Samaritan who placed it to their fainting lips. It was the composing draught which settled perturbed ideas, and led reason back to its accustomed seat. It was the pure white manna from Heaven, on which their souls fed, and were refreshed.

Good Simon Link knew not the height, or depth of his own utterance. He knew not that he had spoken words for the healing of the nation; that the simple phrases, "I like the poor hunted critters," and "I pity 'em," was the Higher Law, straight from the Great White Throne,—supreme above all jurisprudence, and its crippled administration of justice,—above all man's complicated machinery for governing man, above all courts, above all juries, above all jails, above all penitentiaries. He knew not what a halo it set about his head, nor when or where it was written upon his spirit.

Did unseen seraphs whisper it in the winds from the mountain tops? Did he learn it from the dumb droves with which he journeyed league after league and year after year? More probably than from his own kind. Perhaps from the helpless bleatings of his tired lambs. Perhaps from the gentle, weary eyes of his oxen. Perhaps from the fidelity and affection of his beloved shepherd dogs. Simon Link had neither wife or child. He had never seen his father; his mother let go his hands and folded her own in her grave, while his little feet scarce toddled alone, and left him an unwelcome legacy to the world. That world tossed him up to man-

hood, as a burly teamster would toss a ragged bundle to the top of his well-filled wagon.

He was never supposed to be a child of God, till this revival week — and yet his lips dropped wisdom which wise men rejected. If Simon Link's words, "I like the poor hunted critters, an' I pity 'em," were chiseled on the gates of cities; at the entrance of commercial marts; over banker's and broker's doors; on college walls; and the desks of common schools; above the Presidents chair; and were emblazoned on the dome of the Capitol; it would have been the panacea for years of crimson wrongs and retributive woes. It would have changed the clashing of political creeds, the coarse mutterings of ignorance, the wailings for bread and the groans of oppressed races, into the harmonious music of the spheres.

Simon kept on talking with the kindly aim of keeping his two passengers from thinking on themselves. "There's a black feller out in York State that always helps me get my droves over the mountains. He's more a brother to me than any white man on the road. His name is Monday. He was a slave. His master took his wife, a black woman, and made her his own wife. There's yer high-blooded grandee with a black wife; stole from her own husband. He sold Monday's three children and hired Monday out; as we hire out hosses. Monday run away to the North. His story all told is enough to make a stout man's heart stand still. Them Southerners'll find a strong hand dealin' with 'em by and by for such iniquity. Here we are, at home. Miss Fanny, didn't Thunderbolt bring you quick?"

"Yes, Simon, he's beautiful, and he's good like his master! I cannot find words to thank you. Come in to a warm fire and supper."

"No, not now. I've a good many friends in my barn that have waited all day for me. I feed them before I feed myself. Good afternoon."

The church of Cloudspire, from open doors, crowded windows, creaking benches and tops of pews, saw Richard and Fanny out of sight, on their journey of martyrdom; with the feeling that good service had been done for God, Moses and the Constitution.—The mobocratic effervescence subsided. The clergy withdrew from the yet noisy faithful, and held a low conference—William Steele in

their midst. After this they ascended to the pulpit and were seated as before.

William Steele took a chair on the altar. The people assorted themselves out into their respective pews. Those who fled at the first mention of "slave," entered at different doors. Prudence White came from under the buffalo robes of the deacon's sleigh; whither she resorted as soon as the drift of the sermon broke upon her. She afterwards confessed to the deacon's wife that she almost riz right up to rebuke Richard on the spot. Indeed she had opened her lips for that purpose, and drawn her breath and got as far as "I;" when she felt the cold hand of St. Paul on her mouth; and she ran from the spot.

At the east door entered Lottie, looking pale and frightened; supported by Mrs. Clarendon's Hester; who walked with her to a seat; adjusted a shawl about her shoulders, and turned away to the negro pew, under the gallery stairs. Lottie had fainted during the melee; all were glad to take breath after the Holy War. The silence grew complete. Everybody's eyebrows were elevated,—everybody's eyes were religiously cast down,—everybody's lip's were tightly closed,—everybody's mouth properly drew down at the corners,—everybody's hands meekly clasped together.

The revered mouthpiece and representative of Southern Despotism, rose slowly from his seat on the altar.

"My brethren in the Lord: I did not expect during this short visit to my native land, to have so golden an opportunity of defending our holy faith, and our united National interests, against its rising enemies! I had not the honor of knowing your zeal in defense of the two anchors of our Union and Prosperity, the Bible, and the Constitution. Allow me to say, I am more than gratified at the development of your firmness in this house to-day! I shall bear your record of resistance to false teachers, and false doctrines to the gentlemen of my adopted State. I shall show them that your devotion to the institutions of our Country is as deep as theirs. Southern gentlemen have ample time for thought, and for weighing accurately in the political balance, the rights of each section of our Union. Their cool blood is never stirred by vulgar or inadequate impulses. They are not neophytes in na-

tional, or civil polity. But, my friends, they are sorely exasperated at increasing instances of Northern treachery.

Were these insolent, plotting traitors to our country within the sound of my voice, I would bid them beware ! beware !

‘ The knightly and the blooded arm
That holds the lance to-day,
Hath equal valor ’gainst a foe,
As in the ancient fray. ’”

Signs of commendation fell on his ear, footsteps gently raked the gritty floor, stiff camlet cloaks rustled, red bandanas shook out their wrinkles, noses gave forth victorious signals, throats cleared as if draughts of honey had been passed about ; or, if more pleasing to the reader, a quick touch of St. Vitus’ dance animated the joyful congregation. He continued,—

“ As I am about to leave, some counsel may be due you on the growing agitation which at present prevails all over our land. You may thus be spared the painful exercise of sympathy with an unworthy object. The negro, as you are aware, was imported to this country from Africa. He is of a different race from any other on the face of the globe. According to great and scientific minds, he is allied to the brute. In proof of this I will give you an extract from a late author in New York.

He drew from his pocket a note-book.

“ This book, which I would recommend to your purchase and perusal, is entitled, ‘ Evidences against the views of Abolitionists ; consisting of physical and moral proofs of the natural inferiority of the negroes. ’” He read,—

“ ‘ His (the negroe’s) lips are thick, his zygomatic muscles large and full, his jaws large and projecting, his chin retreating, his forehead low, flat and slanting ; and, as a consequence of this latter character, his eyeballs are very prominent, apparently larger than those of white men. All of the peculiarities at the same time contributing to reduce his facial angle, almost to a level with the brute. If, then, it is consistent with science to believe, that the mind will be great in proportion to the *size and figure of the brain*, it is equally resonable to suppose that the acknowledged meanness of the negro’s intellect only coincides with the *shape of his head* ;

or, in other words, that his want of capacity to receive a complicated education, renders it improper and impolitic that he should be allowed the privileges of CITIZENSHIP, in an enlightened country.'

"These are my views, my friends, and as you see, the general opinion; — except by a few late fanatics, who are making the vain attempt to bring these degraded creatures to a level with themselves."

A short, piercing laugh startled the riveted attention, and died out in a stifled giggle. It was a ludicrous little scream, apparently set going by something ridiculous, or surprising. It was contagious, for the young girls smiled, as their heads turned in search of the offender. It was contagious, for a sunny gleam flashed up in the eyes of the young men; and many a stiff-set sanctuary mouth lost its grimace. The watchful ear of the tithing-man guided his step to the pew under the stairs. All eyes followed him. There sat Hester, guiltily bending her face out of sight, under her sheltering hood, and holding one corner of her shawl to her mouth. She heard the feet stop at her pew, (it had no door,) and raised her head sufficiently to see his hand beckoning. She arose, her head still lowered, and came into the aisle. Hester heard the tart words,—

"This is the house of God! Go! Leave it!"

She passed slowly out, groping in her pocket for a handkerchief to clear away the few blinding tears yet left in her heart for herself, and her trampled race. Something caught in her handkerchief and fell upon the floor. A warbling ring of a silver piece disturbed the hallowed air. She stooped, picked it up, and restored it to her pocket.

Proof sufficient! It was hers — a fifty-cent piece! (Every farmer then knew the exact ring of a quarter, a half-dollar or a dollar.) A black thief doubtless! A case for the law! Pleading poverty! Begging old clothes for her boy! She should have no more! Destitute of veneration! of honesty! Head to small! Brutish in every particular! So ran exclamatory thought, till the man of law and order shut the door upon her.

Quiet being restored, the speaker read from his valuable notes.

'If we were constrained to admire so uncommon a being, (a

pious, highly cultivated, scientific negro,) our very admiration would be mingled with disgust, because in the physical organization of his frame, we meet an insurmountable barrier even *to approach* to social intercourse; and in the Egyptian color, which nature has stamped on his features, a principle so strong as to forbid the idea of a communion, either of *interest* or of *feeling* as utterly abhorrent.' ” (Afr. Rep., Vol. 7, p. 331.)

“This is the feeling of our wisest and best men. One more quotation from a high authority and I have done. Henry Clay in a speech, said of the free blacks; ‘of all the descriptions of our population and of either portion of this African race, the free persons of color are by far, as a class, the most corrupt, depraved and abandoned.’ ”

“Now the people of the South who have negroes under their control as laborers, are well informed respecting these abolitionists. They demand all friends of law and order to suppress discussion on slavery. They are resolved to ferret out these emissaries. They have formed committees of vigilance, who will punish by imprisonment and lynch law suspected persons. Georgia has already offered a reward of five thousand dollars to any one who will arrest and bring to that State, William Lloyd Garrison — a citizen of Massachusetts.

“These are a few facts, my brethren, which it will be well to ponder. Our beloved and Reverend minister will continue the subject, for the purpose of enlightening you still farther.”

The vigilance committee, the five thousand dollar reward, and the lynch law, proved an excellent counter irritant; and St. Vitus' enthusiasm cooled.

Rev. Augustus Johns next made a short, but pointed address from the pulpit, on the claims of the Colonization Society. He showed that there was no human power to counteract the causes which prevent the elevation of free blacks in this country; that Africa was their proper place, and they should be returned there; that the Colonization Society had this beneficent object in view, of transporting them thither; that it was founded in 1816; that the Legislatures of fourteen States had already passed resolutions in its favor; that it originated in Virginia, and of its seventeen vice-presidents, twelve were elected from Southern States; that the

Society opened an avenue in which they could labor for the negro, within Constitutional limits.

He recommended the organization to their earnest consideration ; and that they might the better understand its true spirit, read extracts from its organ, the "African Repository" ; and also from addresses of several States, in order that, as he said, "they might be established in their goings." These extracts from pro-slavery writers were the side-arms which were carried about for attack and defense. Bloodless weapons, to be sure ; but deadly to those unarmed with argument or moral courage. Hear him !

"I have made these special selections, my Christian friends, and bear them about me ; so that as occasion requires, I may cast them like oil upon the troubled waters of our beloved country. My first is taken from the Editorial of Af. Rep., Vol. 7, p. 196."

'The people of color must in this country remain for ages, probably *forever*, a separate and distinct caste ; weighed down by causes powerful, universal, invincible,—which neither Legislation nor Christianity can remove.'

The second is taken from an address of the Conn. Col. Society. He read with great emphasis and solemnity,—

"The habits, the feelings, all the prejudices of Society, prejudices which neither refinement, nor argument, nor education, nor *Religion itself can subdue*, mark the people of color, whether bond or free, as the subjects of a degradation, inevitable and incurable."

"Thirdly, hear my friends, the Kentucky Col. Society in their official address."

"It is against the increase of colored persons, who take a nominal freedom and cannot rise from their degraded condition, that this society attempts to provide.

"Fourthly, from the Memorial of the New York State Col. Society, to the Legislature."

"We do not ask that the provisions of our Constitution and Statute Book should be so modified as to relieve and exalt the condition of the colored people, *whilst they remain with us*. Let these *provisions stand in all their rigor*, to work out the ultimate and unbounded good of these people.'

"I could proceed much farther, enforcing these principles by the precedent of other States and eminent individuals ; but I deem it

only necessary to present a final authority to your judgment ; and to convince you that these opinions already presented, are based upon experiences fully coinciding with that authority. As an ambassador of Christ, I desire to present you the whole truth, and here offer the reference.

“ ‘The managers consider it clear that causes exist, and are operating to prevent their improvement and elevation to any considerable extent as a class in this country, which are fixed not only beyond the control of the friends of humanity, but of any human power. *Christianity cannot* do for them here what it will do for them in Africa. This is not the fault of the colored man, nor of the white man, but an ORDINATION OF PROVIDENCE ; and no more to be changed than the Laws of Nature.’

“It must be kept before the churches, that whoever persists in the agitation against slavery ; and in improving the condition of the negro in this country,— I repeat, whoever does this, sets himself against the Supreme Will.”

A whispered conference ; and Rev. Luther Winfield came up behind the purple couch of the Southern gift,—presenting to the gaze a mass of personal attractions. A waxen skin, rose-colored cheeks, sapphire eyes, and auburn hair, were the sweet and persuasive premises on which his arguments ever rested. He wished to say that the sentiments expressed by his colleagues vibrated through every fiber of his heart. But he proposed to turn to a more agreeable and exalted object of contemplation,—the Southerner himself.

“The political associations of the South differ essentially from ours. By this dissimilarity, as well as by birth, the Southerner’s character is distinctive. His alliances are ancient—with the Old World—aristocratic and royal. This noble, high blood has been proudly kept in the purest channels, so that the knightly courtesy of the days of chivalry is its inherent, and most brilliant quality. The Southerners are a people of rigid integrity, and a most delicate sense of honor,—an honor that brooks not insult, from subordinate or equal. They have the advantages of unstinted wealth, broad culture, and the polish of foreign travel. Their generous open-handed hospitality is baronial and world-renowned. They inherit the sunniest portion—the garden of the United States. To us is given the cold and rugged North.

“Their slaves are an inheritance of the past, guaranteed to them by our common Constitution, from which no human arm can wrest that guaranty. These slaves are happy and content; they sing every day at their work, and dance around their cabin fires at night. They desire no change in their condition; but are gratified to have been brought to a land of religious light and knowledge, where they may be taught to know God, and His dealings with men.”

He grew warm. Each cheek flushed into a crimson rose, and his lips into two twin cherries.

“What are the Abolitionists, I ask? A handful of idiotic dwarfs, raising their puny hands against this adamant wall of obstacles. A few years will witness their humiliating discomfiture!”

It were a school for a painter of that period whose particular genius portrayed girlhood and womanhood, to have studied the blushing, coquettish, sympathetic enthusiasm of the fair faces turned toward the pulpit at that moment.

The Rev. Luther closed by admonishing his hearers to study more critically the pure and noble Southern traits; to refrain from discussion which dangerously stirred chivalric blood; and above all, to assist in returning to Africa the free blacks about them; thus washing the fair escutcheon of our American Freedom from the dark stain of a monstrous degradation.”

Signs of ardent approval were conspicuous in the congregation.

Rev. Mr. Harstburg, the pastor, felt forced to raise his voice in unison with the church. He had clearer perceptions of the character of our Creator than he had found in the books. His course of thought was more independent than that of his colleagues. But he loved quiet, and avoided controversy. He had, in visits to Boston, seen and read the “Liberator,” edited by the pioneer abolitionist, Garrison. Its denunciations fell like hail-stones on the green paths his feet loved to travel. Its keen truths haunted his meditations, and came nigh freeing him from the enthrallment of bigotry, which the church had woven about him. But he wilfully closed his eyes, and stifled his conscience by his love of ease, and a fixed salary. He therefore advised his people to avoid the columns of that “inflammatory” sheet, the *Liberator*,— if, by chance, it fell in their way to turn from it; as it could but forment the unhallowed passions of the reader.

Permission was granted to any one in the body of the church to join the crusade against agitation. Mr. Buddington, in his fur-lined coat, for one, believed the Constitution was founded on Moses and the Prophets ; and urged subscriptions to the African Repository. He walked up to the altar, and laid down one hundred dollars for the Colonization Society ; proposing to remain, taking names, and money.

Among the throng, the mill-owner's son, who had driven up from Alderbank in his dashing turnout, to have one more look at Lucy Clarendon, before her departure, walked up with money, and name. Prudence White, Patience Leving, and Charity West contributed their mites for the general enlightenment. The collections and subscriptions were extensive. Under the auspices of their Southern visitor and the clergy, the "nigger question" was to be prayerfully, and scientifically solved.

The benediction closed the interesting exercises at a late hour. In the orange glow of a winter sunset, the numerous sleighs wound away from the green door, over hill, and out of sight, in a long procession. For this procession, awaited a welcome, a feast, a revel. Esquire Buddington's feet had been placed upon the rock Christ Jesus,—and this was his first social recognition of the clergy, the church, and its membership.

How his spacious house twinkled among the snows, that night ! It outshone the stars ! What noble fires roared on every hearth ! How they crackled, and hissed ! What queer, fantastic, mocking silhouettes on the walls, the flames made, of the strange figures, and faces ! The long tables smoked with the fraternal hospitality of the rich convent. Savory clouds floated to the upper rooms, among trifling girls, and hopeful mothers. Mr. Steele remarked to Lucy, that 'Squire Buddington's table matched the luxury of a Southerner's entertainment.

After supper, around the fires in various rooms, conversation was sweet. When the flagons of hot flip, and quaint tumblers of nutmeg spiced sling had circulated, converse grew sweeter still. They fell to rehearsing the doings of the Lord. There was no God like their God — none at all in all the lands ! glorious, girding on his sword, filling his quiver with arrows ! going from conquering to conquer ; till He shall put all things under his feet !

Eleven o'clock was fixed for the final separation of these revival laborers. No one present would infringe upon the Sabbath. Holy time would begin at twelve. Melting adieus closed the social festivities. The ghost of revival week floated away, among the spectres of things that were.

CHAPTER XI.

AFTER Ralph Haywood's arrival from France, he made many appointments to visit Vacluse ; but as often as March prepared for the journey to the ancestral domain, the idle postponement of his master changed his hopes of an early meeting with his beloved Flora, into the gloom of disappointment. At length the day for the union of the two powerful houses of Haywood and Mowndes having been settled, Ralph's presence at the paternal plantation mansion was deemed imperative, even by its indolent owner.

March took his seat on the family carriage, by the coachman, with happiest anticipation. He would fold his long-absent wife to his breast once more — he would see her gentle eyes kindle at his approach. He should hear her sweet words of endearment ; and feel himself sufficiently rewarded for entering again voluntarily into bondage. He repeated to himself the well-remembered passages of her letters which had borne her faithful love across the sea. In memory he saw the neat cabin as he left it long years ago,— he felt again her arms about his neck, and heard again her sobbing farewell. A joyful welcome was to banish a grievous absence.

His attentions to his master were cheerful and unremitting. Ralph even, roused from his lethargy, says,—

“March, boy, what's the matter? Your voice melts on this blue air ; and your black face has lost the sulkiness of a few years past. Don't become an angel too soon ! I swear I should be lost without the services of my slave !”

“We are near the avenue now, master ;” he replied cheerfully.

“Near the devil ! Curse the avenue of live oaks ! It leads into a trap ! The open sky, the wild woods and a pack of hounds is

better ! ” Yet the polished carriage roof was brushed by their brooding branches, and a heavy drapery of long gray moss curtained the green arch under which they slowly entered.

Up this magnificent live-oak avenue the horses walked ; the new master surveyed his patrimony from the carriage windows. A frown clouded his face, when he beheld everywhere the neglect portrayed by his Parisian dreams. It was near sunset — one of those gorgeous sunsets of Southern climes ; when the very air is golden.

The servants had been apprised of Ralph's coming. Beds had been aired and freshly made. Windows and doors were thrown open, and the aroma of the elaborate *cuisine* floated out to gladden the young pseudo lord. The house-servants came out in a body, led by the white-aproned butler,— the field-hands gathered on the opposite side to greet their young master with profoundest bows and courtesies,— to offer smiles and greetings, propitiatory to the evil genius that ruled his moods and deeds ; as some bird of the air had whispered them.

“ Glad ter see Massa Ralph,” was humbly offered on every hand. “ Do all we kin for yonng massa.”

March opened the carriage door with some parade, and ran his eyes eagerly among the crowd. Ralph alighted, and with haughty pride looked upon his vassals who stood with bared heads, battered hats in hand and bowing with abject homage.

“ Splendid ! tall ! hansum ! gran' ! fine ! ” ran round the admiring circle ; accompanied with servile bows, and courtesies, and another flash of white teeth.

“ By George ! a good looking gang ! ” vouchsafed Ralph ! raising his hat from his head and saluting.

“ Rice and cotton should grow here ! ”

“ A mighty smart chance, sir ! ” bowed the overseer.

“ March ! ” continued the new master, “ deliver the tobacco to the overseer. There's a ration for each,— and overseer, bring out the whisky ! serve them a ration all round to drink the master's health. Order the dinner March, and follow me ! ”

He strode into the verandah, under his own roof, and to his own chamber ; better satisfied with his reception than he had dreamed.

March attended to the master's dinner toilet ; drew on his own

official white gloves ; followed him down to the dining-room, and waited at the back of his chair. With unusual skill, he managed Ralph's distastes and relishes ; thus keeping at bay the usual imperious oath and fretful curse.

After a long sitting, with generous draughts of his father's wine, which he declared had grown smoother, and more delectable during his absence, he rose saying,—

“I am going to the piazza.” March followed with a lounging chair ; then hurried away for his accustomed cigars. A small selection of the silver had been taken from the vaults of the bank in Charleston, where it had been deposited for safety, and sent up by his factors. From this, March took a waiter of the old family silver—placed upon it all Ralph's Parisian paraphernalia of smoking ; and placed it upon a small table at his elbow. As he passed the lighted match to his master, he heard the welcome words,—

“Go now, March—find your wife. She is modest about intruding upon your attention before the new master. Go, now. Come back in the morning. My father's old servant will sleep on the floor by me. He will attend to my wants. Go, greet your pretty wife. A long absence you have had of it.”

March bent low, and uttered his thanks with visible emotions of gratitude and pleasure ; he turned away to seek his own packages, which he had secretly placed in the coachman's box in Charleston, with articles for the comfort and luxury of his master. They had all come across the sea, from the gay Paris that furnished Ralph's costly gifts to Gracie Mowndes. When alone, he removed a wrapper.

“How this will please the little beauty,” thought March,—and the thought blossomed into lively smiles upon his lips, which parted over his white teeth, in the anticipated joy. “How she loves blue ! and this is blue silk—glossy as any other.”

He unrolled it, held it to the dying sunset light

“Ah, my Flora in that dress will tempt the white bloods. But I have nothing to fear. She has always been the same faithful one to me. My father ! yes, my father, and Ralph's father ; my proud white father gave her to me forever. He gave me to Ralph, who very well knows I am his brother ; that his promise to me concerning my darling wife Flora, should be kept sacred ; and that

I, his son, might gather into my narrow slave life its few stinted pleasures."

He folded the Paris silk back into its envelope, lifted a pink gauze dress, a white shawl, earrings and necklace of imitation pearls. Then his brow contracted as he held the pretty baubles in his hand. Imitation, thought he, forever — imitation! I could have bought some pearls for Flora,— I had money for a few real pearls. Flora deserves them; put I dared not. The proud blue blood of master's bride, Grace Mowndes, would have boiled and bubbled in wrath against my little wife, that she should presume to equality with her mistress. "Aha! ha! ha!" in a light, melodious laugh, escaped on the evening air. Flora is of blue-blood parentage. That test of rank runs in her veins. I remember the time old master's white wife would have him buy the mother and child from Colonel Sachuse; and how all we house-servants saw Colonel Sachuse's face in the gay little Flora. He was her father!"

During this soliloquy, his hands were busy unrolling, and rolling again bright ribbons, embroidered handkerchiefs, and tiny gloves. He took from one package a pair of blue slippers; the accompaniment of the blue silk dress. He rested one upon each palm.

"Silver buckles. Number two. Mistress Grace must never see these. Her jealous rage would trample these under her feet, with the pearls. Then she would sell my wife on the auction block, as heartlessly as she sold her sister Zoë. Everybody knows that, in Charleston. Flora shall wear these, when the mistress is away. She shall wear them for my eyes to see! and they shall not sell my Flora. It was the command of the father of Ralph and me, that Flora should not be sold."

He went on arranging the packages in a pretty French basket, bought for her also. "She has not been to see me; though she knows I have come. She will not show herself to Ralph. Will he dare to take her from me, and make her his wife?"

An agonized thought shot through his heart like a barbed arrow. "Heaven knows what he will do! These masters take to themselves any and every one they choose!"

His white teeth ground the maddening thoughts between them; and a glittering dagger-light flashed from the calm of his hitherto quiet eyes. With a basket on his arm, containing the precious

gifts, he passed out west of the mansion, down, the road to the quarters; under the sweet gums, now almost leafless; past the shining green of magnolias, and copses of sweet bay; into the skirt of the piny woods standing darkly against the yellow evening sky. Just in front of him was his own cabin, where he left his chiefest treasure. He advanced rapidly to the open door. A brawny black woman, a field hand, wearing her coarse, short working gown, bare armed, and turbaned with a scant piece of her rude dress, met him at the door. Four little toddling, half-clad children clung around her bare feet, to see the nice gentleman at their door.

“Where is my Flora?” questioned March sharply.

“You’ Flora? Dunno, mister. I ain’t been raise here;” and in determined reticence, she leaned her shoulder against the doorpost. “I bin raise in Georgy; b’long to de massa Leshyur. He die — de hul gang sell in Charleston — agent buy we — tote we up here. Dunno, mister.”

“Oh! you know more than you are going to tell, till you find whether you are safe or not. Slaves never tell what they know to strangers. My name is March. I am Flora’s husband — been away with your master several years. I am a slave as much as you are. Tell me about Flora. Is my little, loving wife dead, or sold? Tell me! for you know;” and with a groan, he dropped, sobbing, upon the lower step of the short flight of stairs leading up to the floor.

The woman sat down upon the lower step, driving away her chattering children, to play in the woods.

“You is March! I heah ’bout March. Well den, I spec de same ting happen she, dat happen all we slabe. I heah March wife sole, and dis room look so neat when I come, like white lady room.”

The French basket rolled off the unconscious arm to the ground. March bowed his head over wringing hands, and groaned.

“How long since she was here?” he asked huskily. “Give me a drink of water!”

“Plant rice tree time sence I’s come; an’ I nebber seen her!” replied the woman, with the callousness of despair for herself, and all in her condition.

“Is old Prudy here yet?”

“Ole Prudy? yes; Prudy here; she tell me 'bout Flora; she know; Prudy tell youse all. Go see Prudy; lib right ober dare.”

March took up the basket, and turned from Flora's cabin, without a look within. The moon sailed brightly among the tops of the pines.

“Just as it used to look when Flora and I walked here. My heart must break; and I've a heart as tender as Ralph's. My Savior! had he a hand in this?” He dropped upon the steps of the cabin he sought, and called, Prudy.

“Who dat?” returned a broken voice within. “Who voice be dat?” She shuffled to the door.

“I am March, Prudy. Tell me where is my Flora.

“Lor a me, March,— dat you? Didn' Marse Ralph tell ye Flora done sole?”

“No, no Prudy; he dont know it himself. He sent me down to see her.”

She reached over, took him by the arm and said in a low pitying tone,—

“Come in, shet de doo', got lightwood fire.” She drew him in, to repeat the story safely — for Flora had told her all.

“Take dis same chair ole marse will, to Prudy.”

She brightened the flame by another piece of lightwood, and sat down on the bottom of a broken piggin herself.

“Now Prudy speak soft. You listen. Shutters all tight. Look heah. Hush weepin'. Weepin' wont bring nobody back. Hush! Young marse know ebry bit 'bout dis. He sen you down heah pu'pose. Dese debbel marsers. Dey sell ebry body; wife, childer an' dere own childer; *den look white like angels*. Marse Ralph lub Flora hissself — want her for he wife. He mad an' sell her. March, youse fool. What for you come back from France? What for you be slabe gin?”

“I was willing to be a slave forever with Flora; and master gave me a letter from her the very week we left Paris.” groaned March. “In this letter she said she waited for me, and begged me to hasten back to her faithful love.”

“Dat very debbel Ralph write de letters hissself, to bring you back to Carliny. She sole the nex' year you went way to France.

She wait for you de oder side, where Jurdan roll. Marse Ralph tell ye 'bout Flora fait'ful lub. No slabe woman *ken* hab fait'tul lub. She hab one husban' she lub. Marse come long, take her 'way — sell de husban' or someting — den make her take nudder husban'. De white men's got no fait'ful lub ; an' dey wont let no somebody else hab fait'ful lub."

"Did this overseer sell my Flora?" sobbed March.

"No, de oberseer dat youse know, sell her — obcose. Marse Ralph give de order — an' after dat he ship oberseer hissself — so he neber tell. Flora tell me dat same oberseer try to make her him wife. He whip her, shet her up. Flora say she die fust ; den he gib it up."

"How did they take her away, Prudy? Were they cruel to her?"

"No matter 'bout dat, March, she gone ; dat nuff."

"Prudy!" he gasped, "tell me the whole — I must know! Did they put handcuffs on her tender wrists?"

"What make you ask?" she hesitated "True March, dey did. She cry an' struggle — say dont do dat — I'll go myself. But de oberseer wid de debbel's face say, 'put 'em on.' Den I see de iron red wid her blood. Hush March. Somebody heah. Gib it up to de good Lord. Dat young marse Ralph cut you heart out, he fin' you blood. Take care."

"Prudy, do you call the Lord good, when He has the power and don't stop these things?"

"I spects Him good. I spects Him come down heah, and walk 'bout dese plantation sometime. I spects Him comin'."

"Which way did they take Flora to the boat?"

"Down de av'nue youse come up, under the libe-oak. Now heah de message. Prudy keep ebery word for you."

"One night, after de fust fowl crow, Flora come to me in dat ole bed dare, she kneel down and say. 'Prudy, listen. If dey kill me or sell me 'way, tell my dear March I lub him allers. Tell him I nebber no man wife but him. My heart is brake. Oberseer say I go fur as win' an' water can carry me. Tell March I leave my kisses in de air in dese piny wood for him. March an' me will nebber meet again, till we go up to de Trone ob God,' Den she cry and faint 'way. Hush March. Dont 'venge on marse. Gib it up to de Lord."

Suppressed anguish, and falling tears were her only reply. At length he spoke,—

“Prudy, will you go to the gardener and bring me a spade? I will return it to you before break of day.”

“What for you want spade?” she quickly asked.

“To bury my wrongs, and revenge, Prudy.”

“Den I bring it.”

When she returned and gave it into his hand, she said,—

“Go March, down to the old palmetto tree, where you an’ Flora use to pull de yeller jessmine. Flora pray for you dere de las’ time. Go down dere. De Lord waits for youse dere, de Lord wid de shinin’ robe.” She closed the door after him. In the flooding moonlight, with the French basket and spade, he staggered over the rough cotton field, under live oaks, past magnolias and clumps of laurel, through a fallow field waist-deep with withered grass, into the shadowy woods to the old palmetto, spreading out its huge fringed fans, and hiding its ugliness in the burrowed graces of a luxuriant vine. The spirit of death seemed to have preceded him, even here.

“Desolate, like me!” murmured March. He sat upon the same fallen log where Flora had so often rested, while he pulled the fragrant yellow flowers for her expectant hands. He threw himself upon the dried grass, and made a rapid retrospect of his past life. He lived over again its rare passages of sweetness, and came back to the bitter present. He arose with suppressed groans; took the spade, and carefully raising the brown grass turf, dug underneath a small, deep grave; within, he placed the basket, containing all the beautiful foreign gifts to his beloved Flora. The dresses, the pearls, the ribbons, the tiny slippers, and the embroideries. Over this he knelt, and dropped above them his streaming tears, and a prayer to be kept from executing the wild promptings of revenge, which seemed to rend his soul asunder. His weak, trembling hands threw back the earth, replaced the turf, and carefully added to the ground an undisturbed aspect; yet, forever marked to his own eye.

As he rose from his labor, empty-handed and broken-hearted, the song of a mocking bird poured forth from the topmost sprig of the jasmine, in the old palmetto. “Perhaps God has spoken to me

thus," thought March ; " or, is it the spirit of my lost Flora? It has flown. Farewell to all I love, or hope for on earth." He turned away with the spade, passed through the shadows of familiar trees, across the fields to Prudy's door. She was still hovering over the fire. She offered March an old blanket to spread upon the floor till morning.

"I cannot sleep. Let me rest awhile in this chair ;" into which he sank in a state of exhausted despair. Prudy resumed her piggin, and lighted her clay pipe. Laying on more lightwood, she turned to memories of Flora, and related her grief and loneliness, after March left America ; told how the dear girl mourned over the cruelties of bondage, where all that was allowed the poor slave in common with the free, was the tender upspringing of human attachment, but that as soon as it put forth its vitality in tender growth, the owner of the being cut it down with the same nonchalance he would reap the rice-field.

Relapsing into silence for awhile, the old woman rose to her feet with an exclamatory,—

"Lor a me ! I done forgot." She went to her box, answering for a trunk, and took therefrom a small paper box, securely tied by a fragment of blue ribbon. She returned to the piggin, saying in a consolatory voice, "Dare, March, open dat. Flora left it for youse."

He raised the box to his lips, and poured forth tears over it ; loosed the knot his wife's own fingers had tied, and found within two of her long, black, silky curls. He lifted them. Ring after ring dropped down in their native twining grace, which could not be surpassed. Both looked at them without words ; but the cabin was filled with low, heart-rending moans.

Prudy laid down her pipe, and quietly took the curls from March, replaced them in the box, wound the blue ribbon about it, drew up a coarse bench by him, and set it there. It was near morning.

"I must go, Prudy, to dress that man ; that master ; that brother of mine by the same father ! that murderer of my darling wife ! that lying villain ! that deliberate assassin ! Prudy, pray for me, lest I plunge his own bowie knife to its true home, and warm it in his life's blood."

"Prudy pray now. Kneel down heah, March, with Prudy."

"No, I can't pray. The good Lord offered me freedom and manhood once in glorious France; but I threw the great offer in His face, and came back to these plains and swamps, fouler with murderous deeds than with their deathly miasma. I came back to these chains, whips and miseries."

"Pray, March. De Lord heah."

"Prudy, how can I pray? He may hear you; not me."

"Pray, March," she repeated. "Kneel on de blanket, an' take dem blessed curl in youse han'." She pulled at his coat. "Pray March! kneel down! You's got de blue blood in ye! Kneel, March! you's got de debble blue blood! You's half old marse! You han' kin hole de dagger, like him. You han' kin fire de pistol, an' take de aim like him. 'Member, *you half old marse!* Kneel, boy, kneel!"

He did kneel in view of his danger. Old Prudy raised both her bony hands.

"Will de good Lord heah? Will de bressed Sabior listen to Him chile? See! him bow down! Him ask him Fader in Heaben to sabe him from vengin' him belubed wife, sole 'way. Him be de Lord's chile. Him ask to hab him own strong fiery right han' hold in de holler ob de Heabenly Fader han', so dat he do no murder. Bressed Sabior! walk close by de side ob dis poor boy, troo. de gret darkness ob him sorrow. Put dy pure white arm roun' him, an' walk wid him. Den, oh my Sabior! he will lib to praise Dy holy name."

An agonized groan, and the dropping of her uplifted palms, closed the prayer.

March, touched by the pathos, trust and prophetic fear of his old friend, grew softened. A strong peace stole over his thoughts. Prudy laid her hand on his arm at the door.

"*Will ye strike now, boy?*" she whispered. "Promise afore youse go."

"No, Prudy."

"*Will ye fire de pistol behin' de sweet bay bush?* Promise afore youse go."

"No, Prudy. I'll be an obedient slave."

When March entered his master's room, he found him still in bed. He called out,—

“Halloo, March! so early? Was Flora glad to see you?”

Contrary to the custom of slaves, he gazed steadily into the face of Ralph; and saw there the sly demon of triumph, leap to his accursed eyes. Had he obeyed the impulses of his nature, he would at once have sprung forward to the bedside and throttled the questioner, till he had acknowledged his crime and begged his mercy. Old Prudy's prayer still sounded in his ear; and he answered respectfully,—

“I have not seen her, sir.”

“Why not, boy?”

“She was sold, sir, years ago.”

“That must have been a cruel mistake of somebody's, by Jupiter! When was she sold? Dress me. How is Greylock? Have you looked into the stables this morning?”

“Greylock is well, sir.”

“Wait the dressing. Go down and order old Job, the hunter, to get dogs and horses ready for an early chase. Order the butler to lay an early breakfast. You appear deucedly heavy-eyed; better get a livelier spirit into your feet, boy.”

March gave the orders with a ready obedience,—dressed his master quickly in his hunting suit, and waited at the back of his chair with his usual docility. He had the care of his master's pistols and guns; and in the hunt rode after him. “How easy a matter,” said he to himself “would it be for me to pull a trigger with another aim, when others are firing at the deer, and the horses are running.” Yet he mounted and rode away unarmed.

At night, old Job brought back a trophy of the day's chase, in the shape of a fine antlered buck. On the return of the master, he met the force of carpenters and painters ordered at Charleston. Festivities and gay revels with the neighboring gentry were in order. Field-hands and house-servants met young marse with bows, courtesies and flattering praises. Gentlemen, whose families boasted the purest blood in the Union, hovered around Ralph; ate boisterous dinners, drank his father's wine, toasted him hilariously, toasted each other, toasted Calhoun and his hobbies, toasted their royal State and its royal power. This was repeated at the neighboring plantations, where the new master was made to feel his im-

portance on the roll of interpreters and supporters of the Federal Constitution.

March hid his sorrows and festering wrongs, as best he might,— abating not a whit of the subserviency due to his brother,— yet his manner was grave, thoughtful and patient. This carriage was not pleasing to Mr. Haywood. There must be no “Death’s Heads” about his board; no hidden skeletons to mar his rosy dreams. He said one day to March,—

“Here you Saturnine gloom! Take a word of warning; put away your blue devils or I will offer my assistance. Sunlight, gayety and the graces must be the attendants of my approaching nuptials.”

At length the paternal mansion of the new proprietor was rejuvenated. The ample piazzas of two stories, and its tall white chimnies among the oaks and magnolias and leafless sycamores vied with its vicinal houses. Rose bowers, trellises and grape-arbors rose on every side. The oval flower garden, for the pleasure of its future mistress, was guarded from vulgar feet by a low, white, scalloped lace-work fence. The gardener’s work in pruning, transplanting and laying out the grounds, went on with the work of the builders.

Ralph returned to the city and took with him his father’s serving man. This occasioned no surprise to March; as he knew the few weeks following were to be occupied with busy preparations for his master’s marriage. In Charleston, March was daily dispatched with notes to Ralph’s agents, to Grace Mowndes, to the furnitura dealers, and on a multitude of other errands.

Charlotte, Ralph’s chambermaid, bought for his house before his arrival from France, and of whom we have before spoken, was also busy with the new furniture of the rooms; and had more occasion to mingle with the other house-servants,— yet they all remarked her well-preserved dignity of demeanor; and that she artfully avoided familiarity with any. She glided over the house as if she were the mistress.

“Marse put dat in Lotty head,” whispered Prince Andrew to Jane, the washer-woman. “She no better’n me. I kiss heaps gals han’some as she; but I no kiss her.”

“Old men like you no business kissin’ the girls. You is a old goose, Andrew.”

Prince Andrew shrugged his shoulders, chuckled in his fat throat and said pompously,—

“Muss do what de white mens do, Mistress Jane.”

“Mistress Jane says old men are silly things, white or colored,” was the curt reply; and he walked off with his towel and waiter.

“Oh! my ears!” cried Dick, running into the kitchen.

“Wha’s matter?” asked the cook.

“Queen Charlotte cuff ’em, cause I tried to sport wid she! Marse needn’t git marry ober agin!”

One day when Ralph was yielding full rein to his Southern temper, he gave several orders to March; among them a note to the workhouse, for which he was to wait an answer. He was to attend to this note last.

March ran down the marble steps, crossed the long walk, and closed the iron gate after him with unqualified pleasure. It was one of those bright days, when Charleston seemed to swim in a transparent haze; like the moss in a milky blue agate stone. He was glad to escape from the irritation at the house; and felt his burdens lightened by the beauty around him.

A note to Ralph’s factors took him down East Bay street. His eye was attracted by the masts and spars of the ships, at their moorings.

He leaned against an awning post, and reflected.

“There went the little feet of my Flora, on her journey of Death! There she staggered up the gangway of the New Orleans vessel, with her bleeding wrists in the gnawing hand-cuffs; her tangled silken curls in disorder; and her dear eyes heavy with weeping. Down that misty harbor she was borne, heart-breaking, and filled with despair.”

The beautiful morning became dim; the very sun in the heavens eclipsed. Intense anguish still wrought upon his features when he arrived at Magazine street; but he presented the note to the gate-keeper at the workhouse. After some delay, an attendant returned to the gate, saying,—

“Come this way, to the master.”

March followed, and found himself entering the whipping-room. He had no fear; but removed his hat, and offered the usual salutation.

“Come in,” said the master; “and close the door.” He did so.

“Take off your coat and vest.”

“I? sir!” exclaimed March, with horror.

“Yes! to be sure, you! yourself! Take off your coat and vest; and strip your shirt from your shoulders!”

“For what, sir?” demanded March; drawing back to the door.

“You know well why clothing is removed in this room! you feigning hypocrite! Off with them!”

“I will not be whipped, sir.”

A coarse, derisive laugh echoed through the empty room.

“Sunday,” he said to the whipper, a tall, stalwart black, with sleeves rolled to his elbows, and spattered with fresh blood, “Sunday, call the assistants, Dan and Bill.”

At the same time, he drew a pistol from his pocket, and cocked it deliberately, saying,—

“Move, and you are a dead man!”

Leaving things in this attitude, let us survey this room, in which the creeds, sermons, and prayers of Charleston culminated.

As its type cannot be found in Moses, or its plan in the Evangelists, it must rationally be conjectured that its arrangements for torturing the images of God were a later sublimation of a more delicate philanthropy than *Moses* or *Christ* possessed.

The room was large enough to allow space and footing for the fearful resistance which might be made to this mode of moral suasion. Its walls were bare, whitewashed, and bespattered with human blood. In the centre of the room, a post, planted in the floor, reached the ceiling. At its top was a pulley for drawing up the arms of the victims; the wrists being previously tied together. At the foot of the post were rings for the confinement of the feet. Around the room hung whips of various inventions; the long black snake, the shorter cat-o'-nine-tails, with multiplied lashes, and whips with wire braided into the ends of the lash. There were also long, flat, wooden instruments, called paddles, bored with holes; so that the human flesh under its blows, was puffed into bruised and bloody blisters, healing slowly. A dirty cap made from carpet, such as hangmen use, hung beside these whips.

The floor, which was frequently washed of its gore, and sanded,

had been recently drenched, and the sand was wet upon it, but a whipping had just been consummated, and a drip of blood diagonally across it marked the exit of the punished one from the pulley to the door ; thence to the pump in the yard, whence a crimson rivulet ran into the street gutter, and along the thoroughfare.

Dan and Bill entered, grim and hatless, with Sunday.

“Take off your coat !” again reiterated the master. “Dare you resist the law, and the officers of the law ?”

March, standing firm, replied,—

“I have committed no crime, sir ! I will not be whipped without resistance !”

“Strip him, boys ! Tear off his shirt ! Can’t waste time in this way. There’s three more waiting to be served !”

“Stand off !” said March, bracing for defence. “I’ll die first !”

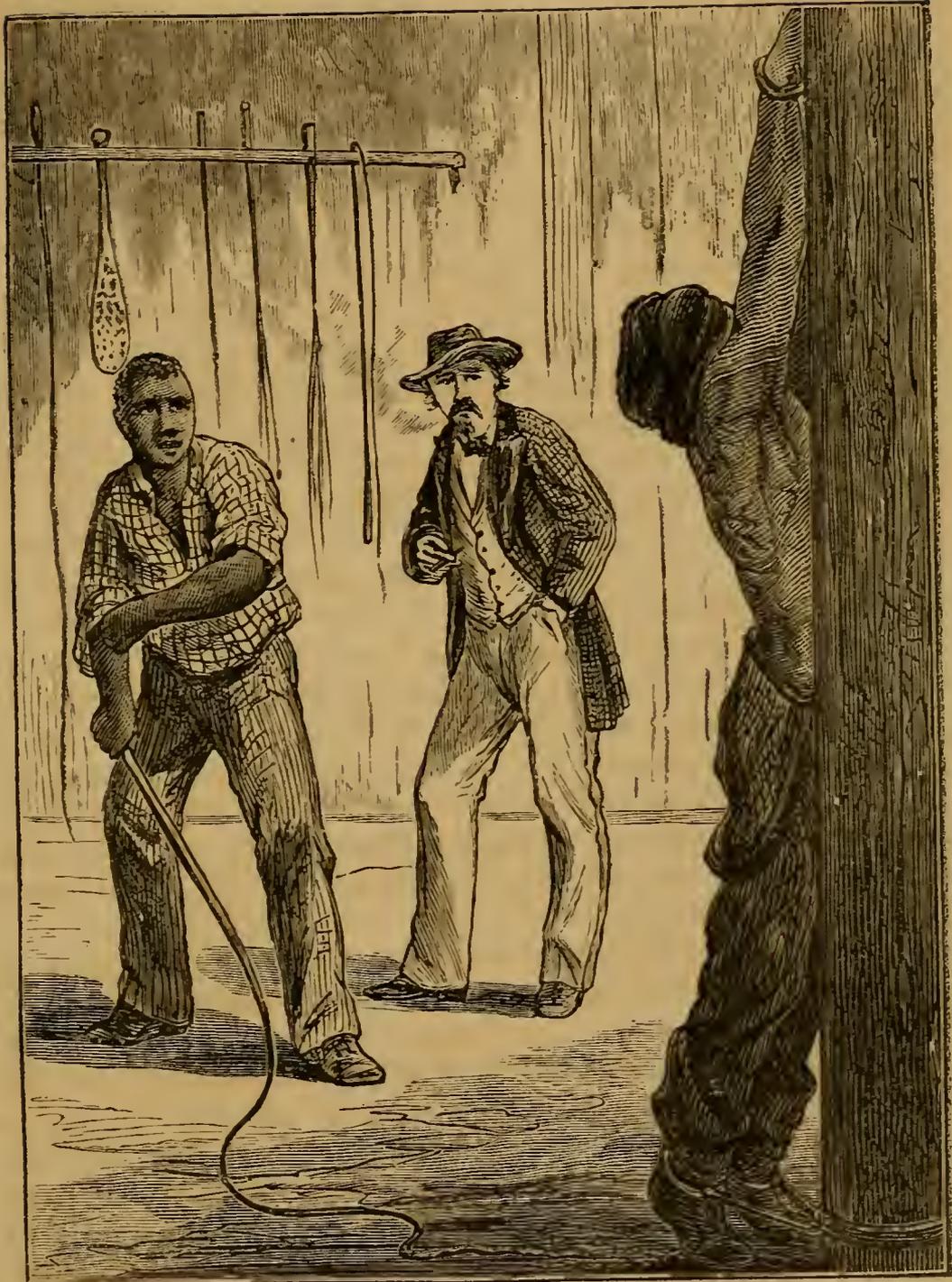
“Give up easy !” said Sunday. “Mus’ come to dat pos’.”

In a second, Dan lay his length one way, and Bill reeled another. Sunday came up with them next time, and the whole four went down to the sandy floor.

It was a happy thought on the part of the Southerners, to employ slaves to do the accursed business, that they might receive the blows of resistance which were dealt upon the officials,—for the law being death to the slave who dared to raise his hand against a white man, the master would have been subject to many losses of valuable property. So in the case of March ; he would have found his death before his captors dragged him, tied feet and hands, to the pulley at the post.

After the second repulse, the three in the attack overpowered March by wariness and iron-muscled force. His clothes were torn off, his back and shoulders stripped bare, and the rope of the pulley was attached to his wrists. Away they pulled ; every turn of the wheel yielding a demoniac scream at the dead weight it was lifting ; for March, in the struggle, had received a blow on the head, causing temporary insensibility. The dirty carpet cap was drawn ever his head and face, to hide the terrible agony of the human lineaments, while undergoing torture. His feet were secured to the ring and staple at the floor.

Sunday took down a heavy whip, rolled his sleeves afresh, and stood off, to give the lash a proper purchase. Hissing in the air



MARCH AT THE WORKHOUSE.



like a serpent, it stung across the bare back and shoulders of March, eliciting a sharp, responding groan. Sunday rested, as was the custom, for this branch of slavery was reduced to an art; therefore Sunday stood holding the heavy whip lax in his right hand, while the lash trailed upon the floor.

"Tame him, Sunday! Tame the infernal devil! That's his master's orders! Mind what I say, Sunday, or you'll be hauled up there yourself! Try it again, and stop between strokes. That was a good one! That's the right kind of a welt across his shoulders!"

Sunday gathered up the whip, and stood back again. With another hiss, it cut across the welt of the first stroke; like the serpent's fangs, it bit out a strip of flesh, and the blood trickled to the floor.

"My God! ejaculated March.

"That's it, Sunday!" grinned the workhouse master. "That's the talk!" and he promenaded up and down the damp, sanded floor, whiffing his cigar with a surly nonchalance.

Sunday took breath, and trailed the lash again. Thus the bloody work went on, till Sunday's sleeves were spattered with ensanguined stains; till March's life blood dripped from the gory lash; till a red pool lay curdling around the ring and staple confining his feet.

"Take him down!" ordered the master. "Can't exceed the law! He'll do!"

The pulley loosed, turned backwards, and uttered again its revolting shriek. March's feet were unfastened, and the cap was drawn from his face. Dizzy and faint, he sank down at the foot of the post.

"Call the constable with his buggy, to take him to his master, and come back and put on his clothes."

They drew on his tattered garments, without resistance on his part, and bade him go.

March reeled out, half crazed, and was helped into the buggy.

At Ralph's mansion, the new coachman met him at the side gate, and in pitying tones delivered the orders.

"Master Haywood says you must go up into my room over the kitchen. I will go with you."

Once there, the coachman whispered,—

“Bear up, March, I will take care of you. We can’t help ourselves. May be my turn next! Nobody knows!”

He laid him upon his coarse bed, and drew from a hidden corner a bottle of his master’s wine.

“Drink this glass full, and drink it every day. I’ll steal it every day for you ; and what I don’t get, Prince Andrew will, and so will Dick. All our hearts are breaking for you, March. But we shall have to dance and sing all the more, for this devil’s work ; or we shall be strung up to the workhouse ourselves. Now, March, when you hear us laugh and sing below, and about the yard, ’member our hearts are bruised for you. Don’t lay it up against us.”

He disposed March upon his face, and covered his gashed, bleeding back with soft linen pieces, ointed with healing salve ; gave him more wine, spread blankets lightly over him, and went to the stables.

The nuptial day was fast approaching. Ralph Haywood had just received the last touch to his dignity as a Southerner — the substitution for the dubbing of the ancient knight.

A mounted club had been formed. Several ancient and honorable companies were dismembered, that the choicest flowers of chivalry might fill the command proffered to Carolina’s brilliant son ; and that they might complete their martial career, under so distinguished a leader. Thus he accepted the accolade of Colonel of the Feudal Battleaxe Battalion.

It will be appropriate hereafter, to think and speak of him officially, as the gallant Colonel Haywood, and in ordinary life, to drop the boyish Ralph, and meaningless mister ; never forgetting that Colonel Haywood is the synonym for daring bravery, fearless patriotism, strict constructionism, inviolable hate, gentle affection, crystalized cruelty, knightly grace, State rights fidelity, pious sycophancy, blue-blood debauchery, popular integrity, and private artifice.

Two tasks yet remained to be accomplished, before he should bend his gracious ear to listen to the music of Grace’s marriage vow. One of these he set about in the morning hours, after a midnight revelry at the armory of the “Feudal Battleaxe Battalion.”

Dick, the coachman, and his father’s waiting-man, now acting in

March's stead, were awake to do his bidding, for they had attended him at the military rendezvous. When the coachman drew rein at the iron gate for the colonel to alight, he heard the order,—

“Build a fire in the kitchen, and await me there, with Dick.”

“What de debble dat for?” said Dick to the coachman in the barn. “What he want now? Had high livin' to-night, and ‘feaster flow!’ drown out in brandy and wines! What wese got to do? roas' turkey 'fore mornin'?”

“Hush!” answered the coachman. “Keep your tongue silent! You'll be the death of us all, yet.”

At three o'clock a knocking was heard at the carriage gate. Dick hurried down the dark driveway, and let in two stalwart black men.

“What yous come fur?” asked Dick.

“Dunno. 'Bey orders,” was the brief reply.

“Go in de kitchen; dere's good fire,” said Dick; and ran up to report.

Colonel Haywood followed Dick to the kitchen, and thus accosted the blacks,—

“So you're here, boys? Very well. Put that iron into the fire. Rake open the coals, so it will heat hotter than h—ll!”

He paced the floor impatiently, till it was nearly red hot. He turned to Dick, who cowered by the door, awaiting his pleasure.

“Call the coachman.”

He joined the others.

“Now, boys,” said the colonel, “my nigger March is to be branded. It's to be done on his right arm, below the elbow. There! you three are to hold him in the bed, while I apply the iron. Do as I bid, or I've something in this pocket for you.”

He drew a heavy pistol, saying —

“Do you hear?”

“Wese heah massa; we 'bey,” answered the deep voice of Dave.

“Give me the iron, Dave,” ordered the colonel. “Take the light, coachman, and move on. I follow.”

The nights of March, since the whipping at the workhouse, had been harassed with pain and wakefulness; and although his back and shoulders, cauterized by the lash, were in their tenderest and most sensitive condition, nature demanded sleep. He therefore

slept the heavy Lethean sleep of exhaustion. He heard not the subtle steps of the four men — saw not the candle-light. He dreamed that chains fettered his limbs — that handcuffs bound his wrists. He made a half-conscious struggle to free himself from their hateful pressure; and awoke in the steel-like grasp of men standing over him. He was as fast as if clasped in a vise.

In a second, the hot branding iron was seething and burning into the flesh of his right arm. A piercing scream rang out, which would have made the blood curdle in a human heart. But the ears of Charlestonians were accustomed to these shrieks,— the atmosphere was rife with them, as with the insects' hum. So none heeded. Dave, Bill and the coachman, kept a cowed, stolid silence. The room was filled with the smoke of charred flesh.

“Cut my throat at once, and have done!” cried March. “Do not murder me by inches!”

The master removed the branding-iron from his brother's arm.

“There, curse you! You're labelled now. That ‘COL. R. H.,’ won't wash out in a day! When you forget your owner, turn up your sleeve and refresh your memory. There's your French freedom! There's France! Cut your throat? No, can't afford to waste two thousand dollars. Take care of yourself. Remember, you are part of my estate. Your whipping was ordered to cast out the infernal spirit of gloom that hangs around you like night. It was to give you a shorter face; and for putting on airs of mourning for a wench you presumed to call your wife. Getting white a few paces too fast.”

Two days before the marriage of the young planter of Vacluse, he came earlier to dinner than was his custom. He passed through the hall where Dick was stationed and bade him answer all calls with “Not in.” “Admit a person at that door, boy, and you'll feel the raw-hide.” He strode up to his chamber, sat down to smoke and revolve events.

This last ante-nuptial arrangement should be accomplished to-night; and although a host of lackeys and factors awaited his word, only, this last and pleasant design must be executed personally.

“March has his quietus. He'll not madden me more by his eternally solemn face of mock despair. I've given him something for resignation now. D — n him! he's mine; mine by the Decla-

ration of Independence ; mine by the guaranty of the Constitution ; mine by the example of the patriarchs ; mine by the laws of Christianity ; as much mine as are the horses in the stable ; and the deer on my plains. Let him talk more of France and freedom if he dare ! Let a branded slave try escape. My name — the name of his owner, COL. R. H., will be the swift witness that shall return him to me.

“ I must see Charlotte this evening and settle affairs for her and myself. She’s the soft silver light that gilds this marriage of mine. Her dark, dreamy, liquid eyes melt into my fiery soul and calm its restless depths. Her placid, submissive manner puts to sleep the tiger within me. Her slow, swan-like movement about me, is poetry itself. With Solomon I say, ‘ Her teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn ; her lips are like a thread of scarlet, and her speech is comely ; her temples are like a piece of pomegranate.’

“ She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;
And all that’s best of dark and bright
Meets in her aspect and her eyes ;
Thus, mellowed to that tender light,
Which Heaven to gaudy day denies.’

“ By Jupiter ! Byron had a soul for the lovely and the beautiful. With Charlotte, life is romance. Her shy, timid love for me is more fascinating than the coquettish charms of Flora. Flora ! Well, I am avenged.

“ Grace adores me ; yet her love is tiresome,—like the overpowering fragrance of giant magnolia bloom ; it sickens every sense. *Eh, bien*, Gracie and her dower will be mine, *de jure*. Satisfactory, surely ; for the law of South Carolina, having once joined us, yields a right of divorce to death, alone. Charlotte is mine *de facto*. What union is stronger ? ”

He directed his waiting-man to call Charlotte, and then to take a recess from attendance, and go to the kitchen.

“ Bid her dress,” he added.

A half hour elapsed before Charlotte answered the summons in person. The colonel went on reflecting.

“ This brown girl answers the demands of my nature. What has

woman to do with the fierce impulses and ambitions of men? Why attempt to place her feeble strength and weak intellect, as irritating obstacles, in the way his will directs? Charlotte will not interfere: always confiding, gentle and compliant, she seeks to foster the tenderest element of my nature,— my constant love. That she has affection for me as strong as Gracie, I cannot doubt; and in her fidelity to me alone, I trust. There will be no bickerings concerning rank and possessions between us. Without questioning, without suspicion, without the look of a d—d drooping lily, she will ever throw her arms about my neck, with the same welcome after absence. She cannot read; and she needs to read nothing but my moods. *Par consequence*, she will not prate about literature. I shall have enough of that trash in another direction. The literature of Haynes and the Constitution is all that yields me one iota of interest.

“I shall be all right; for Grace *believes in the immaculate purity of man*— in their perennial constancy to the *de jure* wife. Her observations, restrained with angelic propriety to her father’s elegant parlors— to her own boudoir and her mirror, *have convinced her of this*. La, me, how celestial! I believe Grace is either an idiot, or her vaulting pride overleaps acknowledgment of sun-lighted truths.”

A step was heard.

“She is coming!” he said rapturously.

Charlotte entered, closed the door, and stood without advancing, as was the custom of slaves. The colonel rose to look at her. She was dressed with elegance and taste,— her drooping lids and long silken lashes veiled her eyes and rendered her coyness doubly irresistible.

“Come, Queen of my soul!” he cried, seating himself.

Slowly she advanced to his side, slid one arm about his neck, and bent her lips to his forehead. The reply to her caress was kisses upon her brown cheeks.

“Sit by me, Charlotte; I have something to tell you.”

She complied; and in her bounding pulses, she felt his silent, idolatrous regard, but saw it not beneath her drooping lids.

“Do you know I am to be married?”

Without a cloud upon her face, she replied,—



A MIXED LOVE AFFAIR.

“I knew of the marriage, but not the day.”

“It comes off the day after to-morrow, and this is my last happy evening in this house with you, Charlotte. Don't tremble so! This marriage is ex-more, according to custom. You have the keeping of my heart, and will continue to be its keeper, as long as you are faithful to me alone.”

He cast his arm about her shoulder, looking into her dark eyes.

“What am I to expect?”

“My faithful love to the last, master!”

“And in spite of the calm, sweet smile overshadowing her brown face, tears welled up to her spirit's brim, and plashed down upon her face.

He took the delicate handkerchief from her lap, and holding it to her eyes, said,—

“Hush! No more tears! My factors have secured a house for your occupation, on the street by the river. They have sent furniture at my order. I have been round to inspect it, to-day. You will live like a lady, as you are, and I shall see you there, without let or hindrance. It is but a few steps from here; and when I am in the city, my servant will market for you at the same time he markets for this family. We shall pass the remaining winter at Vaucluse, on the plantation. I want you there. I shall send down to my factors for a seamstress. They will send *you* up, Charlotte. Can you make yourself look ugly, to please me?”

The girl raised his hand to her lips, and uttering a silvery laugh, replied,—

“I will do all you require!”

“Then you must conceal that bewitching hair under a turban. You must leave at your home in River street, most of your charming robes, laces, and jewelry. You must wear plain, untrimmed clothes; and you must profess to belong to my factors, who will hire you to Mrs. Grace Mowndes.”

“Of course, I shall do all you direct; but you will tire of the plain, ugly-dressed seamstress, will you not? And then the world will be dark to me.”

“Tire of you, Charlotte? Try me, and see! You must treat me with perfect indifference, in the presence of others, and you must expect my gallant attentions will be tendered to Mrs. Mowndes.

But there will be times when you will learn that a plain turban can outvie the richest bonnet and plumes. To prove my sincerity, I propose that we pass this night in your house, that you gather your wardrobe together, in one of my trunks, and that my servant and the coachman take it round at nine o'clock. I will go first, to point the house to you. You will await me at the next corner, and follow. Afterwards you will go with the boys, to direct them, and remain. I shall soon join you there."

"Shall I go now, dear colonel?" she asked

"It is of no consequence how soon; for I shall join you immediately after the trunk. Can take refreshments there, as well as here. I will point the house to you now. Wrap yourself warmly, and go."

He soon went out at the side gate; passed her saying,—

"Come!"

At the door, he turned back alone, after giving her the key, and whispering,—

"Adieu, my brown dove!"

After a time, he heard her feet on the stairs; and then the slow, heavy steps of the servants, taking down the trunk; then the closing of the gate. Not a trace of Charlotte remained. His servant returned to his master's room. The colonel took up his hat and gloves, saying,—

"Make your bed upon this floor, till I return."

Charlotte's new abode was one of beauty and convenience. Furniture, carpets, and sideboard were the reflection of his taste, and formed an inviting bower for his chosen companion and himself.

The sun was high in the heavens, pouring his rays over the glittering waters of the Ashly; and the streets were filled with busy life, when Colonel Haywood passed in at his own iron gateway.

Dick opened the door for his master, and hastened to warn the cook, that "marse done come." Prince Andrew came bowing low, to inform the colonel that "Breakfuss am ready, sir."

"I have breakfasted!" was the reply.

Prince Andrew went to the kitchen, where were Jane the washer, the coachman, the gardener, the ironer and the cook, in secret

conclave. A significant smile played about his black face, and snowy teeth, as he announced with his deepest bow,—

“De colonel hab dun breakfuss, Mistress Cook!”

A clear perception of Prince Andrew's smile was quickly evinced by all present. The cook, holding a hot slice of toasted bread on her fork, caught the contagious expression, and complimented his grace of manner with a courtesy; saying,—

“We know whar marse done breakfuss.”

“That's true, cook!” remarked the coachman. We toted Charlotte's finery in one of marse's trunks last night to a fine little house in River street.

A nodding of heads signified entire approval.

“Marse get marry las' night, to him slabe bride. He marry gin, arter to-morrow.”

“Marse dun make wise selec',” giggled the butler. “Charlotte be splendid! should like Charlotte myself!”

“Trust the colonel for that!” said the coachman. “He's as good a judge o' women as he is of horses and dogs! But let me warn you all to keep back from your mouths, all you see, hear, and know. Your teeth should be the double gate, that lets nothing escape. Remember! we shall soon have to deal with *two* high bloods, instead of *one*. Remember March and the workhouse.”

He dropped the arm raised in warning, and went out to the stables. Prince Andrew broke the awe of the kitchen.

“Mistress Cook, I'll tank you for de dish ob toas' fur myse'f, an' I'll take half dat omelet, and half dat shad. You'se brown 'em 'cisely to my taste.”

“Don't you want all we to call you 'marse', besides 'ole Andrew?’” angrily returned the cook.

“Dat would be 'cisely to my taste also, Mistrèss Cook. Gib me gen'wine cream for my coffee.”

“Youse a gen'wine ole fool! Now clar dis kitchen!”

The Mowndes mansion on this day before the marriage of Grace was in a remarkable hopeful and cheerful condition. During the week past, its *posse* of servants had applied their labor and skill to the domestic exploits of exterminating every fleck of soil, every fibre of the spider's industry, and every atom of dust in the various compartments of the edifice, from the attic to the basement.

A choice force of skilled polishers had been manipulating the magnificent and costly display of family silver, for six whole days. Solid silver pitchers, wreathed with vine leaves and clustered grapes ; solid silver vases, for a profusion of flowers ; solid silver waiters, chased, and bas-relieved ; the centre piece, a mirror set in silver, and standing upon lion's heads ; stacks of silver plates, silver tea and coffee services, silver goblets, vine-entwined ; spoons and knives of varied devices, and for various uses ; silver cake baskets, and fruit receivers ; silver sugar bowls, and tall, Egyptian, urn-like cream-holders ; two massive punch-bowls, each of three gallons capacity ; rich, embossed silver ladles ; besides many other appointments of the festive board, were ranged in glossy rows adown the tables soon to be spread for the bridal feast.

Not a shade of discolor, or a dust of powder was discernible among the elaborate intricacies of embellishment. The spacious dancing-hall was receiving to-day its adornment of numerous and costly silver candlebra upon its walls, sheets of silver paper, and soft blue tissues were being cut into fringes for the reception of the wax candles, whose pearly light should heighten the enchantment of costume and complexion, on this coming important occasion.

Grace and her doting mother held conferences at intervals, on the parlor sofas, in Mrs. Mowndes chamber, or in Grace's boudoir. An observer would have read upon their countenances, in succession, the trustful, hopeful, joyful emotions of woman's soul, united with sweet anticipation, and a passive ecstasy in the present, in which each seemed to be transfigured.

"Ah ! my daughter is realizing the highest degree of earthly happiness to-day !" sinking down by her side, as if exhausted by a tour of inspection.

"True, dear mamma, my thoughts have at last found a delicious peace, that celestial peace which woman must ever taste, when sheltered under the pure and manly love of one formed by Nature and position to command unfaltering devotion. Such is Ralph, my Ralph ! who, during all these years of absence and temptation, has preserved my image, high above all others ; and who has borne across the sea, and back again, an unswerving affection for me,—an affection next the adoration for his God.

Mrs. Mowndes held her daughter to her heart, imprinting kisses upon her radiant face.

“Ah, my precious child! what unspeakable pleasure it gives me to hear the sacred words from your lips. Tempest-tossed by hopes and fears, as you have been, these years of Ralph’s absence, it is delightful to know that your happy trust is implicit, and that the pure maiden incense of your young heart has *not* been offered before an unworthy shrine. Soon you will take his name, and be his *alone*, and *forever*.”

“Everything moves on systematically and harmoniously. No item of preparation is omitted. The servants are in high feather about their “dear young missus’” wedding, as they affectionately name you. The silver is resplendent, and —”

The bell!

“Ah! the roses spring to my daughter’s cheeks. Ah! the sweet lambent light which plays through these trusting eyes!”

The waiting-man presented a waiter, with a card upon it. Mrs. Mowndes took the card, and presented it to Grace.

“As I thought. It is he. His footsteps turn hither, as the sun to its dawning. Hasten, my love.”

Grace flew down to the parlor. Colonel Haywood’s open arms held her to his breast, his lips murmured,—

“I cannot live so long without thee. Ah! the blissful to-morrow. To-morrow thou shalt be mine.”

The morrow advanced. The sun came up from the sea, veiled in a silvery, diaphanous haze, which concealed his burning glories.

“Observe, mamma,” cried Grace, an ecstatic thrill modulating her voice. “Observe, the very sky, atmosphere and earth, honor my bridal.”

“Surely my dear. A silvery opalescence pervades each, in harmony with the whiteness of these two lives, about to be united into one.”

“Adieu, Charlotte, queen of my soul!” said Colonel Haywood, as he stood in the hall, ready to leave her cosy nest, on River street. “Look up brown dove. This is my wedding-day. Be not dismayed. Once more, come. Let me fold thee to this warm

heart, that beats alone for thee, the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

With a light laugh, he caught her in his arms, and sung,—

"Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun ;
I will luv thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.
And fare thee well, my only luv !
And fare the well, awhile ;
And I will come again, my luv,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile."

CHAPTER XII.

COLONEL ASHLAND was glad and relieved that the governess was no longer a tenant of the Hall. He had resolved upon his future course ; and that this course of action was warped to his own selfish and supreme will, none can doubt. In a land of slavery, the will of the master is absolute law. The children of the slaveholder are allowed the full outgrowth of this arbitrary faculty, as indication of a tendency directly towards their imperial destiny. Therefore, the colonel was addressed as "young Marse Frank," while he lay muling and puling in his black mauma's arms, before even the white gleam of a tooth had set itself in his baby gums. His attendants, young and old, received upon their faces and persons repeated testimonials of his Napoleonic instincts, through his clenched fists and aggressive palms.

Throughout his boyish years, arrogance, the deadly parasite, sucked vitality from every noble faculty and genial impulse of his nature. Like the young "King of Rome" in an interview with Josephine ; his sovereign inquiry in a perplexing *contretemps*, or embarrassment of plans, was,—

"Why cannot this be, since my papa and I wish it?"

Colonel Ashland married in accordant with his own, and his father's will. He gave his hand and vows to blood, and a broad inheritance ; reserving his heart for love's conquests. The frail,

high-born wife had reposed in St. Luke's cemetery, two years. Her proud dust slept in state within its gates, beneath the splendors of the Ashland column ; sheltered by marble wings of cherubin and seraphim.

After the mistress' death, Honora Hudson guided the helm of household interests, in addition to the duties of teaching the children. In a sudden transport, at a certain golden eventide, musical with mocking bird's song, Colonel Ashland, forgetting his hereditary blood, once offered the fair governess his hand and name ; but her watchful eye was too faithful a sentinel for the colonel's pathway ; and she would not accept a hand, divorced from the heart.

Stung by the insolence of refusal ; enraged by the temerity that dared to baffle his designs, he still tauntingly pursued his prey. He felt himself wearied in the "insignificant pursuit ;" as he styled it. He was like the panting butterfly-hunter, when his airy and graceful decoy leads him into most humiliating places, and finally sails away into blue ether, out of reach either of net or voice.

The firm refusal of the governess became a thorn in his memory, and he would have nothing in "Nightingale Hall" to remind him of her once hated presence. What cared he for promises made at her death-bed ? Her requests were verbally granted, to shorten a disagreeable interview, and also to grant that satisfaction which none can deny to a dying petition.

The slow, hard earnings of the governess, saved for the daughter, had been placed in his hands ; but he had already handed over the amount to his own factors, where it mingled with his thousands, as rain-drops mingle with the sea.

Through his lady friends, he had secured a place for Hattie in a family of rank in Charleston, as a sort of governess and companion for two children. He had explained the anticipated change to the young girl in a favorable light,—representing the advantages of city life, as more eligible than those of their island home. She would there see more of society, become more polished in mind and habits by contact with it. Progress in music also was made an ostensible inducement for the removal. She should leave the next week, on the river schooner touching at his wharf.

Naturally timid, and rendered doubly so by the cold hauteur of

Colonel Ashland's manner, the lonely orphan withdrew from the interview with ill-concealed eagerness, and rushed to the old nest of Mauma Rose's arms.

"What happen now, chile? Pisen snake done try charm de young missus, an' you done run 'way fine ole Mauma Rose?" Claspng her more closely, and brooding the fair brown head with her own shadowy face, she asked tenderly,—

"All safe now den? Say, honey?"

"I must leave 'Nighingale Hall.' The colonel directs me to go to Charleston. I am to stay with a lady and take charge of two children. All will be strangers to me there."

As the wildwood jasmine clings to the black and flame-scarred forest pine, still strong in its living heart, so the fearful Hattie threw her arms around mauma's neck, crying,—

"Oh! if you could go with me, I could have one friend!"

Mauma fell to the old habit of stroking the fair hair, and with a gentle swaying motion, crooned an answer in a low lullaby tone.

"Ole Rose slabe, chile. Stole 'way from ole Guinea; pack we in de ship hole; chain we here; drive we; sell we wid de hosses. Can't go wid lily-bud. Marse tie dese feet. Ole Rose gots nottin leff, when her white flower done gone. Me one. All Rose lub dey steal 'way. All my chilen done sole."

"How many children, mauma?"

"I ben had ten chilen, Miss Hattie, fine soun' chilen. Isaac, de oles', tall, hansum, ole marse footman. He ben de sun in de heben to me; but dey sell him, put on de handcuffs in de dinin-room. Trader take him 'way,—cussin him an' cussin me, 'cause I foller, drag 'long on my knees an' beg dem leave me one chile,"

"Was Isaac the last one sold, mauma?" and Hattie sat looking at the sorrowful face, tenderly and unconsciously smoothing the bright folds of the turban on the stricken head.

"Yes, miss, dey sell de odders long fore. But I got suthin to 'member Isaac; dey can't steal dat."

"What have you, mauma?"

"Stan' up honey, dere, I show you."

The black, trembling hands begun to open her dress, and to draw it from her shoulders. Hattie assisted, ignorant of the rev-

elation in waiting. Suddenly her hands dropped from her task. She shrieked out,—

“What is it, mauma?”

“Dat where I ’member my poor boy. Dat where I mourn. Dat where I shed my blood fur him.”

For the first time, Hattie looked upon the human form, scarred by the slave-whip. Long welts of the thickness of a man’s finger, ridged her back, where the ugly ragged gashes had healed. Knots of scored flesh, interspersed with seamed patches, disfigured the shoulders and struck horror to Hattie’s sympathetic soul. Indeed, none but demons could look upon those bloody bas-reliefs, unmoved. Yet there were few in our young Republic, who even dreamed that these and other similar medalions of the slaver’s lash would ever call to Heaven for its unmitigated wrath, or a nation which stamped God’s image with such hellish dies.

Hattie made rapid interrogation. Mauma repeated the scene.

“Ebry day I cry, wring dese ole han’, can’t eat, grow tin, sick, pray God to die. Isaac tall — gran’ like Africa palm, gone out ob my sight. I neber see him mo’. Den dey cuss me, tie me to de tree, cut dis back up — Oh! Lor Jesus! till I die, faint ’way.”

“O mauma, how cruel! but they don’t treat slaves so now? I never saw one whipped.”

“Dey don’ want de Norf people ter know all dere debble work. You’ mudder here, Marse Ashland cut de people out ob sight ob her eye. But O Lor’! he whip dough. When you done gone, he tie ’em up to ebry tree in dis yard. Now, dear chile, heah ole Rose. You young. Don’ spect nottin. Ebryting in dis lan’ b’long to de slabe marser. He put him han’ on ebryting hansum, an’ call it him own. Ebrybody slabe but him. He’ll put dat han’ on *you*, poor lily-bud. I’s seen heap in dis country. Ole Rose know.”

“Mauma, I am a Northerner. I do not belong to the South; they cannot claim *me*. And besides, I have a thousand dollars to take me away, if I chose to go.”

“Jes what I tell ye, ’spects nottin. Dese yere Southerners hate de Norf people, dey ’spise ’em. I ben to de Norf wid ole marse and missus, when I nurse dis same Marse Ashland. Him wife, de missus, say all dem mean, low born Yankee; dey work jes like her slabe,— mock arter ’em, make gran’ sport arter ’em. Dey hate ’em,

I tell ye, honey. De Norf people treat des Southerners, like king an' queen,—kine to we. But dese 'buse de Norf gentleum an' lady dere, an' when dey come heah. Mauma Rose pray for her lily-bud ; but 'pears de Lor' done heah prayers out ob dis lan'."

In the cup now placed to Hattie's lips, the bitter and the sweet sharply commingled. Bitterly sad was the contemplation of parting from the scene of her mother's death, and the last look at her lonely grave. On the other side, Charleston, with rainbow sights and sounds, beckoned her away with syren hand. Some tears fell among the stores of her trunk in packing. During her twilight garden stroll, drops heavier than evening dews nestled into the hearts of roses, and plashed upon the leaves of the roses.

Colonel Ashland had now reached the acme of his wishes ; but he had not attained to this, through patient waiting for the fulfillment of a long-cherished desire. He had surveyed all barriers to this slow crisis, with the ferocity of an untamed nature. He was simply kept at bay by a hand and eye such as enters, unharmed, the cages of growling lions. Honora Hudson's wand of power, although it budded and blossomed like Aaron's, serenely swayed his instincts, and led him to perform many feats of gentleness and docility, quite foreign to his plans.

But now he was master of the field. Death came to his aid, and carried his keeper away. He was now sovereign of his own destiny ; and in his hands he held the destiny of every walking, living being at the Hall. He dispatched his footman to the quarters, with an order for Cleopatra to come up to the house at the expiration of a half hour.

Cleo's cabin had been given to herself and mother — unlike the others in the same negro hamlet. The room was a model of neatness. There was one glazed window looking out under the foliage of a broad-spreading fig. White curtains were looped away at the casings ; a new mantel over the broad fireplace held a vase of roses ; with various other fancy articles rarely found in slave cabins. A table with a snow-white cover, held piles of negro cloth cut into garments ; some finished, and others in process of making. The old black mother was spinning cotton, with her turban neatly folded about her gray head. Pieces of carpeting

covered nearly the whole floor. There were painted chairs also, and one that had evidently been brought from the "big house," as it rolled on castors, and had its arms and back stuffed with crimson covers. Its mates were still at the Hall. This chair was by the curtained window, and wore its white muslin cover thrown loosely over it, as a shield from casual dust.

There was also a carved bedstead, a counterpane, drooping with fringes, a pavilion also, looped neatly away, and pillows high, soft and inviting, with a pleasant bit of lace falling from the edge of the slips. The rough boards, joists and braces of the walls, pure and white with lime-wash, had a cleanly, inviting air. The split pine fence woven in and out of its upper and lower railings, concealed its rude structure by a veil of trumpet honeysuckle and fragrant jasmynes; while the walk from the gate to the humble door was fringed with snow-drops and daffodils which in early spring vied with the breath of English violets and hyacinth bells.

All these expressions of taste within and without Cleo's cabin, had a meaning. There were symbols which even the untutored minds of her sable neighbors easily deciphered. They knew whose feet walked to that door among lilies and violets. Without the aid of *belles-lettres*, they divined the poetry of the crimson arm-chair, and the chivalrous romance of the plump, white pillows, and the fringed counterpane.

Cleo received the master's orders with a quicker heart-beat; laid by the thimble and needle with her half-finished work, and employed the half hour in making her toilet.

She passed out of the gate, glided along the narrow footpath, and up the broad avenue to the Hall. Springing up the broad flight of steps to the piazza, and thence up another flight to her master's room, she entered and stood by the door, her eyes falling to the floor.

Cleopatra, like Queen Esther, "had put on her royal apparel," before "she stood in the inner court of the king's house." This evening, she chose a robe of white, with a deep embroidered flounce. Its trimmings and ornaments were of blue. A blue satin sash encircled her waist, and fell in long ends at her side. Blue ribbons looped up the full puffs of her sleeves, and fluttered down over a frill of lace to the elbows. Blue pendants trembled

in her small ears, and a match of bracelets clasped her bare, round arm.

She was "black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." The sun "had looked upon" her, and her soft skin was of velvety blackness. Her genuine African hair was combed away into soft masses, each side of her forehead; a band of blue velvet sinking in among the crisp, tiny, curls, gleamed out above the parting. The white drapery of her attire fell gracefully about her tall figure. Her long, taper, fingers were clasped patiently, and her dreamy eyes were hidden by drooping lids, and long jet lashes.

"But not once her lips she opened;
Not a single word she uttered."

A deep tide of joy crept through her pulses; but having been born and raised a slave, a ready self-control veiled every emotion, and she appeared as cold and statuesque as marble itself.

The colonel knew how to speak life into the immobile figure before him. He extended both his hands; in a tender, and almost supplicating tone, he said,—

"Cleo, come to me."

She came forward, and laid her dark hands in his. He drew her to a seat beside himself, looked at her smilingly, and remarked,—

"You have arrayed yourself charmingly, to-day. Cleo, you quite ravish me."

He retained one of her hands in his own, with the other he caressed lightly the soft masses of her jet black hair.

Oh! the transforming power of Love. By its divine alchemy, the earth is glorified. The vulgar are set upon thrones. The glowerings of adverse fate warm into the smiles of a kind Providence. Beneath the wand of the sweet sorcerer, the self-willed, supercilious, irascible Master Ashland, became pliant, complacent, and serene. His soul, gnarled and deformed by the inheritance of absolute power over an abject race, became beautiful as Apollo, in lifting up one of that race to an equality with himself.

"Like a man from dreams awakened,
He was healed of all his madness!
As the clouds are swept from heaven,
Straightway from his brain departed
Al! his moody melancholy!"

“Look up, Cleo! are you frightened? Where are your eyes? There, that’s it! Here’s the dimples! Now I have something to say! Going to listen?”

“Yes, sir!”

“Well then; this is the moment I have impatiently waited for; you will come to my room by stealth no longer; and I shall be relieved of the necessity of walks to your cabin. It is too much trouble! I shall have a change.”

Her eyes flashed full upon him. Brimfull of startled fear, she laid her hand upon his arm, and cried,—

“Oh! master! Shall I be sold?” My dear master, shall I be sold?” A groan of anguish followed, and her head dropped.

That harrowing cry was plainly heard in the yard, in the kitchen, down the avenue, and among the garden roses, apparently unnoticed. The old gardener plied his hoe, the servants went on as usual. The mosses in the avenue might have been gray stalactites, dripped from green, embowering caverns. To all intents, Cleo’s agonized scream might have been the casual trill of a bird, or the crisp rustle of a magnolia leaf, falling from the stem. Not an eye raised to the master’s room; and yet the deaf ears heard, stolid hearts thrilled with sudden pain, and low, short prayers in the forms of “O God! O Lord! O Christ!” floated upward. Doubtless, He who graciously heeds the

“Upward glancing of an eye;
The falling of a tear;”

gave His compassionate attention to these short petitions. Doubtless He comprehended their rare value as the crystalized language of intensest suffering. In the brevity of these appeals, He may have recognized the condensed virtue of a half hour’s conventional address to His name; if, indeed, the learned devotion of that era ever disturbed the courts of Heaven. On this immediate occasion, although these prayers may have been groundless, let us suppose they represented the general necessities and condition of their class, and were divinely registered accordingly.

Colonel Ashland’s own heart was shocked by that cry. He quickly took both her wrists in his hands, in order to draw her to himself, in assurance of perfect safety.

Again the dark eyes lifted full upon him the pleading helplessness, which only a slave can feel. Another agonized cry rose up among the magnolias, and echoed adown the still avenue.

“O my God! the handcuffs! O Lord! the handcuffs now?”

“Hush! Cleo, hush! I say. You will not be sold. Never! never!”

He drew her near to him. Sorrowfully, and lovingly he returned her questioning gaze.

“Cleo, listen! When you are sold on the auction block, they will bid me off, also. These soft, white hands of mine are all the manacles your wrists shall ever feel. Stop trembling, for God’s sake! Don’t look so much like a hunted doe. Get that terrific fear out of your eyes, girl!”

He allowed the wrists to fall; but with a clasp of his arm, he held her still. His lips touched her forehead. He held her from him, and studied the tumult in her soul, with the utmost concern.

“Sell you, Cleo? Why did you think it? The auctioneer that would barter you on his cursed table, would find himself suddenly disabled for his profession by my friend, here!” laying a hand upon the pistol in his pocket. “One of these bullets would give his soul an easy ride to eternity!”

For a moment, a fearful cloud darkened all the love-light on his face.

Cleo’s whole soul gladdened, with a sense of relief from what to her, would have been a living death. Like the wrecked mariner, she had been dragged from the drowning roar of breakers; her feet now stood firmly upon dry ground. A glad, appealing smile broke over her features.

That smile was a blossom of the master’s cultivation, as woman’s most approved smiles usually are. Man’s pride (may be unconscious to himself,) is to ever find his pleasure-gardens beautified, and perfumed with their efflorescence; constituting a flora of especial training, and sickly growth of shade, redolent with submission, humility, adoration, self-abnegation, tearful hope, and childish trust. Such was the grateful, adoring look of Cleo, which gave her whole heart into the colonel’s keeping. The cloud on his brow reflected the brightness of hers, and finally disappeared.

He well knew that he was her Fate, her protector, or annihilator. Although he secretly relished these flattering testimonials to his

power — the slave girl's agony, and servitnde,—love led him to act in the capacity of the former.

“Now tell me, Cleo, why you thought of being sold? Have I not passed hours at your cabin every day? Have I ever forgotten to bring back something to please your fancy, in my city goings?”

She did not reply, but caressed one of his fair hands in both her own, and raised it to her lips.

“Speak! tell me why! You shall say what you like, without reproof.”

“Pardon me! but I thought you might have won some fair, lovely Carolina wife, and when her proud step should enter these halls, your poor, black Cleo must be far away.”

“Pshaw! I married once in accordance with our custom. I married houses, lands, and Southern pride. My wife lies in St. Lukes' cemetery, and my Northern school-ma'am lies outside; where plebeians should; whence I trust she will never rise, till Gabriel's trump shakes *terra-firma*. I swear, I fear to blow my dog-whistle, lest she mistake it for that fellow's horn!”

“She was white, master; and had eyes the color of the sky.”

“Blue eyes! the devil! I'll have no more of them. Give me dark eyes! your eyes, Cleo! soft, and calm as the deep repose of Indian lakes.”

She continued caressing the master's hand; but asked the true meaning of those words, “She should come to his room no longer; and “It was too much trouble to go to her cabin.”

“Why nothing more nor less, than that my poor black Cleo shall come here to the ‘big house’, into the adjoining room, to live, to stay, to sew, to take charge of things, and to love her cruel master! How's that? How's the last clause, princess?”

“Do not doubt that my feet will fly to obey your wishes. Oh! I have dared to worship you! but it was because you first took such notice of me. It is too much to know that I shall not be cast away from your presence! I am too happy! I will follow your steps like your faithful Spanish hound ‘Reina,’ so I am only near you.”

She laid one hand on his shoulder, resting the other upon his knee. Her eyes filled with regretful humiliation. In an humble voice, she bewailed the absence of those charms, which she sup-

posed most acceptable to him, which would lessen the probability of a future separation.

“ I wish God had made me beautiful, so that you might keep me near you, forever! Oh! why did not my Maker give *me*, too, a waxen skin; cheeks and lips of rose-color, like Hattie's? Why could I not have had hair — ”

“ Straight as an Indian's, hey? Now if you had pink eyes, blue blood, and long waxen locks, you could not have *me*! Hear? Do you think, my dear Egyptian, that I was born in South Carolina, and cannot *choose for myself*? Moreover, that what my choice elects, I will not possess? Furthermore, we hear enough of ‘golden strands,’ and ‘auburn tresses,’ and all that threadbare nonsense; but I know

“ Hair of glossy living spray,
Tossed up from midnight into day;
Beneath which lies in hidden whirls
Infinitesimals of curls;
Meshed into eddies — into rings —
Like woven lace! — coquettish things!

And every coil so shyly meshed,
No larger than a dew-drop's nest,
Holds in its close and coy embrace
A marvelous, and pensile grace.
It is a dower of tropic blood,
That pours its glory like a flood.

Alike upon the Saxon head;
Or round the Indian brow of red,
Anointing *every other race*
With Beauty's most entrancing grace!
It weaves its wild enchantment through
The veins of Gentile, Greek, or Jew!

Where'er a soul holds Nature's trust,
That mystic power forever just —
The love that heeds no stifling call,
Which knows no autocrat, no thrall —
'There doth this dower of tropic blood
Unloose its dark, bewildering flood!

There do these tiny, clinging whirls,
Unfold and drop caressing curls!

Then, laughing waves, and rippling jet
 Show household heads, tiara set —
 Such wondrous beauty rarely falls
 To harem bowers, or monarch's halls.'

"There, Cleo, what do you think of your hair now, when poesy wreaths with fairy measure such a crown for you? What about these funny little dew-drops' nests?"

"Do not be angry; but I scarcely understand its meaning. It sounds like music. Please explain it. I can neither read nor understand. Oh! I fear the master will tire of Cleo, and desire other society for his happiness."

"Hush! Cleo. I can do the reading for both. Your understanding is comprehensive enough to know that I want you *true* to me. That is the beginning and end of it all. I can read poetry to you, and elucidate also. This little poem signifies, that in your blood lies a mine of beauty for the world; that wherever it mingles with that of another race or people, it laughs out in showers of long, falling curls, whether that race be White, Indian or Chinese. It's true as God is in the heavens, that my faded race finds a new baptism of strength, color and elegance, from just such as yourself; Cleopatra the Second."

"Now, let nothing annoy you; the premises are under my control. I shall have no other wife before *you*. Minnie is sold; she goes to-morrow. That may lessen anxiety on your part. The old nurse Rose, will retain charge of my two children, in the other wing of the house. I want always to see you in my room when I enter, or within hearing of the slightest call. I must hear your voice and step, first of all."

"Can I be heard on one subject, which is troublesome still?"

"Yes, Cleo, speak on."

"When your sisters from Mobile visit here, what if they represent me to you as unfaithful to your interests? Shall I lose your esteem, then? Shall I take the lash at their hands? Shall you allow them to separate us?"

"By Heaven! no! They understand me too well to cross my wishes. If they come, go on in your pleasant manner, wait upon them patiently, and quietly tell them all. *Who* or *what* shall dare to come between a man and his choice?"

“But I am only yours at your pleasure. There cannot be marriage between us.”

“Cleo, there is all the marriage between us necessary. In our State, there is the legal form of marriage without the soul; but the soul of marriage exists without the form. Ours is the latter. Have your bureau and the chairs brought to the house this evening; also the French bed, and place them in the ante-room. Hear, Princess? I go over to Major Regnal’s plantation for this evening; to-morrow morning to Charleston with Hattie. I shall bring dresses and trinkets for you. What colors shall your dresses be?”

“The colors and material that pleases you most, I prefer.”

“Very well, then. Leave it to me. Ring for the butler; tell him to bring my favorite wine and cakes from the pantry, with a cut of the old Northern cheese.”

When the silver waiter was brought, by a strange intuition, or under a more definite impression, it bore *two* wine glasses, and other twin etc. The butler retired with the gravest of bows, which covered a sly, comical glance at Cleo.

“Pour the ruby draught, Cleo. Touch my glass with yours — drink to me health, long life, and your own true heart.”

He rose, took a turn around the room, measured the falling sun, and sung in rich, rollicking tones an old refrain,—

“Now tip to mine your glass,
My bonnie, bonnie lass;
Then let their ringing chime
Float down the stream of Time.
We’ll drain these cups together
To love, and sunny weather.
To all life holds in fee,
Drink! Hebe, drink to me!

She filled the glasses, presented one to the colonel, and touched the crystal rim of hers to the one her master held. Then she raised the glowing symbol above the blue band in her hair. She besought Heaven to grant all his requests, and more, to the one object of her adoration — her master.

The declining sun carpeted the broad piazza floor with shadows, mottling it between the dark bars cast by the pillars, with dancing shapes of breezy leaves. The embroidered curtains, waving in and

out of the windows, admitted a slant beam full into the uplifted glass, illuminating its heart like a flame.

"See!" she said. "Heaven smiles, and the wine changes to a living fire!"

Her own eyes kindled, lighted with a deep joy, at the revelations of the past few hours. That scene was an inspiration for the hand of an artist. It was a picture, which truthfully transferred to canvas, would have given the flattest contradiction to the ever-vaunted prejudices against color, and the boast of blue blood. Copies of this unique bridal of the purest white, and deepest black—of power and lowliness; classed among other master pieces of art, or suspended in the Capitol side by side with Rolfe and Pocahontas, or illuminating the elegant periodicals of the day, would have shown this prejudice to be a fabrication, a myth, finding its futile form only upon the deceitful tongues or men.

Man has ever professed to love, in woman, gentleness, amiability, and a placid homage to his self-styled superiority. Slavery had molded Cleo into the most perfect type of Colonel Ashland's choice. His *desideratum* was,—

"Health and quiet, and loving words."

Pride of birth and statutes frowning, "Love is mightier than all." He neither could nor would, close his heart against his dark "Maud Muller."

"He thought of his sisters, proud and cold;
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold."

But he was one to tear away, like spider's webs, all the "*might have beens*" from his life.

There was a law in South Carolina, taking away from a slave the power to contract marriage. It ran thus,—

"A slave cannot even legally contract marriage. The marriage of such an one is morally good; but in point of law, the union of slave with slave, or slave and free negro, is *concubinage, merely*." Consequently, Carolina's "pure" and wise legislators, the guardians of her well-being, had instituted a system of concubinage, of as strong, matted a growth, as were the grasses of her plains and hill-sides. It sprung up in the very crevices of their hearthstones. It was destined to choke the roses and lilies of every pleasant spot.

Among the majority of her people, there could be no legal marriage. Therefore, in law, Colonel Ashland was entering upon a course of concubinage; but in the social practices of his State, he had solemnized a marriage "*morally good.*"

So together they both drank the wine of that sacrament, which the law declared morally good. She sat down by his side content. But her heart throbbed afresh, when she observed in his eyes the gathering gloom of thought, as he thrust their steely gaze into her own.

"What is it, dear master?" she asked.

"Well, every perplexity must be cleared up to-day. One remains — that is Aleck, the brown, lithe fellow that hung about you some time ago. What of him? I notice his face wears a dogged sulkiness, recently."

"He has not set his foot within my cabin gate for a year. His task work takes him far from here, on the other side of the plantation. I have no regard for him. Believe me.

"Still he waits for you, and does not give up the pursuit. He passes me with the customary salutation of a slave; but the haughtiness of his step and eye allies him to the Bey of Algiers! I shall sell him — take him to Charleston, to-morrow."

"Pull the bell for the footman, now. Bid him bring 'Brigand,' saddled, to the door for me, and pony 'Barefoot,' for himself. Have all arrangements made, during my absence, as you know I desire."

The long gallop of "Brigand's," and the patter of "Barefoot's" heels passed down the avenue.

The quarters grew noisy with the evening return from the fields. Plumes of purple smoke lifted in turn above the cabins of the toilers. Dusky figures, in short homespun skirts, passed to and fro, to the spring, bearing buckets of water upon their heads. The hand-mill which ground the evening meal from the corn ration, was turning busily; and while the crushed grain fell from the whirling stones, a low, sweet pathos of improvised song fell also from the lips of the crushed humanity which ground there.

Clear, strong, flute-like notes floated to the listener's ear, from loiterers by the river, in the pines, or at the still unfinished task.

The red sun hung over the western woods, and poured a flush of crimson light upon Nightingale Hall ; gilding its pillars, and making its windows burning jewels. It streamed in among the quarters, glorifying the cabins with a like impartial touch. His level rays also lighted up the lofty oaken bower over the avenue, and bronzed the lower swaying edges of the moss drapery within. Beneath this golden fringe which trailed over Cleo's hair and shoulders, she passed in and out of the alternate bars of sunshine and shade, formed by tree trunks, and the gilded drive. Her thoughts wore the same *couleur de rose* as the landscape. Joy gave elasticity to her step, and elegance to her carriage.

When she called Luke and Friday to make the removal to the "great house," their ragged brimmed hats were doffed, and their eyes glistened. With a deep bow, and a foot drawn back, they replied,—

"Sartin, for sure! Muss 'bey de missus. We tote 'em, right 'way!"

When the last article had been "toted," and Cleo had arranged all at the cabin, it was dark. Sauntering slowly up the avenue, wrapt in delicious musings, a tall form stepped from the trees to her side. The agitated girl placed her hand kindly upon the shoulder of her spectre-like visitor, saying,—

"Aleck! Aleck! do go away now! Leave me to walk on alone For your own sake,—for my sake, go!"

"I will *not* go, Miley! This is the last time I shall meet you! You are going to be the wife of Colonel Ashland! How can you do this? You do not love that white blood-hound, that makes your race dogs and slaves, Miley? Tell me no!"

"Aleck, I cannot tell you no! I do love Colonel Ashland. Before my Savior, I love him ; and before Him there are no races, no color, no rich, no poor, no slave, no free! Why did you not forget me, Aleck? I told you long ago to do that!"

"Why don't the mocking bird forget to sing? Does the magnolia forget to blossom? Why don't the spring forget to come? I waited for you, Miley, all this long time ; for I thought the master would throw you 'way, as all the white men do ; and then I might have you for mine at last. Oh! I hate these whites ; with their Bibles, and chains, and slavery! Miley, will you go with me to-

night? Before Brigand's feet come thundering back? I'll hide you where no tracks are left behind. Say you hate that white devil, and go."

"Aleck, I cannot stay here, it is not safe for either; but I must go to the house. If the colonel should turn cruel and hard, I should love him still. I cannot leave him."

"Then ask him to sell me, as far as winds and waves will carry me. With *you*, I could bear this cursed slavery,—the lash, or anything a master chose to put on me; but I cannot serve *him* now. Do one thing for me! Beg him to sell me; or, some day, when he think himself safe, this hand may throw 'way his life, as he has mine."

He grasped her other hand, which hung by her side. "Tell me, Miley, what is this other name your master call you?"

"He changed it to Cleopatra, and calls me Cleo."

"Thank our Lord that your own name, that is to me like the song of the Nonpariel, will not be on his lips. Miley, Miley, that is mine. I'm going! Good-bye, Miley, till we meet where there is no parting."

"He, the strong one and the manly,
With the vassal's garb and hue,
Holding still his spirit's birthright
To his higher nature true,"

strode away between the live-oak boles, and was lost in the masses of shadow beyond.

"God is love!" saith the Evangel; "and our world of woe and sin
Is made light and happy only, when a Love is shining in!"

Cleo moved slowly on to the house. The lights in the Hall, and in her room, burned, bleared and dazed. She saw them through tears.

Hattie was ready for the morning's departure; and by the advice of Mauma Rose, had sought her bed. The colonel's children also, through the sweet magnetism of her voice, and hands, had forgotten the day's vexations, and were reveling in gay, butterfly dreams. This placid state of affairs was not wholly fortuitous; it was the result of a whispered request of Minnie's, during the day,



MINNIE IN THE BAR OF LIGHT.

that she might have a cosy chat with her trusty confidant, Mauma Rose, that evening, as it was her last day at the Hall.

Minnie was glad when the master and footman cleared the avenue,—they would have the house to themselves. The faithful old servant left the door of the nursery ajar, and took her low chair upon the eastern piazza. Patches of star-lighted heavens were discernible above the oleanders, and between the out-reaching arms of the trees beyond. The breezy foliage rippled pleasantly over the senses ; the calm of nature distilled into the human soul, with falling dews.

It was an hour when the sweetest or saddest emotions, rise to their highest intensity,—that delicious hour when the flashes of wild romance, and longings for the impossible, which flame here and there among our busy day-thoughts, seem to settle into enchanting reality,—when the woes and wickedness of life seem to have gone down with the sun, and all that is pure and holy, to have been left around us.

Mauma had scarcely composed her spirit, and white apron, as Minnie glided round the corner of the piazza, out of the light of the south side into the darkness of the eastern verandah, and crossed the bright narrow line streaming from the nursery door. “Mauma Rose,” fell from her lips, like overflowing bubbles from golden chalices. Their iris hues of delight were felt by the aged listener ; and tremulous with tenderness was the reply,—

“Here, chile.” Silver bells, both voices—whose blessed chimes quivered nearer to the “White Throne” than the Sabbath peals of many others.

Minnie dropped down upon the floor at mauma’s feet, as was her wont ; laying her beautiful head upon her own arm, thrown over this ever-welcoming knee.

“What’s dis I smells, darling ? Is you turn into rose-vine ?”

“Oh, Maum Rose ! I told the gardener I wanted two of the white roses that master brought from France. He refused, but I insisted. He said, no ; but I shook my curls at him and said yes ; so I got them. When he gave them into my hand, he said,— ‘There ! don’t ask me again ; its agin de rule.’ Then I shook his old shoulders, and told him I was going where I should have more white roses than are in his care, and that I should wear them

morning and evening, without the asking. You see I wanted one for me, and one for Fred. Oh, I am so happy to-night. Here they are, on that side. This is almost my wedding day. To-morrow Fred will pay Colonel Ashland for me. I shall go away to him. *I am a bride to-night.*"

"Your weddin' day, my poor birdie?"

Minnie's head rose from her arm as quickly as a young fawn's, nestled among wood-laurels, when its ear catches the alarm of the hunter. Her eyes searched the darkness for Mauma Rose's face and expression.

"What is in your voice, mauma? It makes the chills run over me. 'Poor birdie.' That sounds like the grieving of a mourning dove. Why call me poor birdie? I am a happy bride to-night. Give me joy, Mauma Rose, give me joy."

"Mus' say what I'se tink, else don' say nottin'. I is ole, Minnie. I is seen too much, my day. Rose say 'poor birdie,' cause Minnie's in de net. Dere's no weddin', no bride for such like we. Dese white lawyer and minister make de law, dat we is all concubine, at dere marcy."

Minnie shook back her curls, as if they tangled thought and sight; and looked up to the starry heavens. They were to her the bespangled canopy of her bridal.

"Yes, they make laws against our marriage, I know, mauma, but they love us all the same. Their laws cannot prevent the natural exercise of their affections, and they do not desire that. I am not a concubine! I could not marry Fred, if I would; and the God that made me, knows I cannot freeze my heart against him if I would. The Bible says, 'What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.' God has joined *us* together by the love we bear each other; and the State of South Carolina puts us asunder, by not giving us the power to live together in a lawful manner. The sin is not on my part, it is on *theirs*. Mauma Rose, the attachment between Fred and me is the same kind, the same thing, as the love they call holy and sacred, among the white people. It is the same which is paraded before the altars of their proud churches, for a Divine blessing. It is the same love which wraps others in snowy white veils, and yet, O Lord! would wrap *me* in a mantle of shame."

“Hush, honey! dere’s a pain come in you young heart ’ready. We can’t help ou’self. We be in de han’ of de Flistines. Youse talk like de preacher. How you know all dis? Where you fin’ dis larnin’?”

“Dear mauma, I have no pain in my heart. Brides cannot have heartache, when their lovers are true like mine. The law makes me a chattel, but it cannot take away my power to think and reason. That silent power, hid from all but God, man’s arm cannot reach; and it is this thinking which gives me confidence and happiness to-night. Now let me tell you one more secret. I know how to read. There is where I stole the forbidden fruit of South Carolina. Mauma, mauma, I have read half the books in master’s library. State laws and all. Oh! there’s a way for a chattel to defy tyrants.

She gathered her amber-hued arms around the neck of her tried old friend, and caroled forth another low, melodious laugh.

“Fred don’t dream I can read, but he knows who was my father, and he says the polish and refinement of my conversation, and the choice language, was inherited from my father’s blood. He calls me, ‘Lady Highborn.’”

“Don’ know too much. Keep the book larnin’ ’tween you and de good Lord. De mens mus hab de larnin’ all to theirselves, an’ de women mus ask dem ’bout all dey ’pears to know. Does ye hear, honey?”

“Yes, Minnie hears, mauma; she knows how to follow her best of counsel, likewise.” Another subdued peal of bubbling laughter. You see, Fred likes to have me speak correctly what I attempt to say, and to call flowers, furniture and colors by their proper names. So I have taken pains to get our flowers at ‘Nightingale Hall,’ all right. I found master’s list of their names, and their place in the garden. These roses in my hair are the French *Perles de l’Impératrice*,—it means, ‘Pearls of the Empress.’ The gardener called them ‘Puddle Peartris.’ How I laughed!”—and the warbling, merry tones poured forth again.

Mauma’s rickety voice broke out in merriment with hers. This culmination produced unheard of hilarity.

Minnie arose and leaned over the balustrade. She caught her breath, saying,—

“Oh my! the stars are all dancing, and I have laughed till I cried.”

“Yes, darlin’, let us hush, or de chilen will hab dere eyes open, and —”

“Spoil our *tete-a-tete*, eh, mauma? That’s French. It grew out of my French blood.”

Then she bent over and whispered in her ear,—

“What a wonderful thing blood is, eh mauma? Oh! I must laugh again. No, I’ll sing. Hark! this came from one of our books.

“‘Oh, gaily in my glossy hair
I twine these roses, white and fair!
My lover, in his dreams to-night
Shall see me crowned with their pale light,
I am his bonnie dark-eyed bride —
The morrow leads me to his side.
O morning haste, my life to bless!
I’m pining for his dear caress.’”

“There, mauma, did you hear? The tune came from my own head.”

“Dat’s de mockin’ bird tune.”

“If I could learn to sing, Fred says I’d sing the larks to sleep; but I know he loves me just as I am. Mauma, give me your hand. There, pass it over my dress. Don’t you feel the gloss? It’s blue satin; he sent it to me to make up and wear when I go home to him; and watch now, where my hand goes in the narrow light. See that pearl ring? He gave me that, too. I call it my engagement ring. I’ve kissed it twenty times to-night. Go on tip-toe, Mauma Rose; open the nursery door just far enough to let the light upon me.”

“Yes, honey. I ’stracted wid you now. May de great Marser keep Marse Fred heart *troo to dis best love*.”

She opened the door without noise, far enough for the radiant girl to step into the bright flood, pouring from it. The tall, graceful figure — the costly satin drapery, falling in burnished folds, like the blue sky of day in its sun-gilded glory; the shining curls, falling over her shoulders to her waist; the two white imperial roses among them; the deeply flushed cheeks beneath the softening film

of brown ; the parted lips, revealing polished, snowy teeth between ; the proud bearing which was her birthright, all heightened by the rapt ecstasy which beamed on every feature, made up such a being as a any " admirer of woman " might have led exultantly to the nuptial altar.

The Rev. Fred would have taken that hand with the ring of pearls upon it, and fulfilled its sacred intent, but for the ban of his State's Heaven-defying laws, and the conventional, falsified manhood of those vauntingly called her sons. Well, Minnie, the daughter of a French Consul, the American slave-girl, the *affiancée* of her new master, still stood in the tide of light ; her jet eyebrows not so much arched as clinging to the Grecian contour of the forehead, and her eyes shaded from the sudden glare, by heavy silken lashes. The vivacity, firmness, sunny languor, sagacity, grace and hauteur of four nations centred in her. Indian, American, African and French blood, enriched and perfected this rare human blossom.

Look at her again, dear reader, and give her a niche in memory ; for Art, which styles itself divine, is still servile. Its brush has never yet caused the canvas to glow with such loveliness. The chains of Caste yet limit its transcendent powers.

Mauma Rose brought her hands together in a gesture of wonder and admiration.

Oh ! you is beautiful ! I'se seen many a white bride — none more gran' an' sweet, dan dis one !"

Minnie turned out of the brightness, kissed the dear old withered cheek, and with her arm around her, walked to the balustrade. Still embracing her, she whispered,—

" Oh ! you don't know what Fred is to do for me ! I am to go into the house at ' Breezy Bluff ', and have the entire charge of it. The old butler will stay, also the cook, and washer. O Mauma Rose ! " Again her caroling voice broke into a warble of laughter. " Fred says he will sell ' Jake, ' that handsome young footman ; he will take back old Sunday ! He will tell the old servant to look after me. Ah ! *Fred is so jealous !* "

" Ob course, honey ! you will nebbber cross him wishes. You mus' try keep him heart wid yourself. "

" Yes, mauma ; I know what pleases him. I'll do that. I'll string my hair with jasmines, I'll wear the dresses he likes best, I'll sing,

I shall lead his blessed feet over roses. You know, *ma chere*, that my father was the French consul. I have high blood, and our children, Fred's and mine, will inherit blue blood — Carolina blood!"

"De blood of all people's de same to our great Maker. De blue blood be man's dewice! You soul know mo' dan we poor slabe. You talk 'bove we all. Soun' like de white missus, dead an' gone. Come back, birdie, once mo' in de silber light! De angel mus' be hol' dere breat', to look on you dis night!"

Stepping forward, Minnie dropped on her knees in the light, saying,—

"Bless me, mauma! Bless your poor birdie!"

The shriveled hands of the old prophetess folded reverently above white roses and curls — the turbaned head dropped over all. On the dewy stillness of the night, this petition floated up among the stars.

"De Blessed Marser take one mo' lamb widin him lubbin fold! De good Lord feed dis tender blossom wid de sunlight! De dear Jesus keep dis precious heart in de holler ob Him han'!"

CHAPTER XIII.

"BOYS!"

No reply.

"Boys!"

Not a sound. The gray light of dawn straggled down the steep, narrow stairway, boarded on both sides, and leading out of Farmer Buddington's kitchen. The farmer stood there in his clean, white shirt sleeves, holding the chamber door open with one large, sun-browned hand. His bronzed face was turned upwards, and shaded by a straw hat as bronzed as himself. His pantaloons were rolled up above bare feet and ankles, weather-browned, also. He had been out in the dew, beading the tall grass; out to the old well-sweep, drawing tubs of water for the early washing, already commenced by his busy wife. Now, he had just come in from the barn — from the care of his horses and cattle.

Not a shade of vexation could be seen on his face, as he listened for a response ; but a look of regretful affection settled upon it, in the dim light of the low, half-story window, above. He called in louder, but gentler tones,—

“Thad! Alf! Come! Connecticut boys must be stirring before sunrise—growing late. Texas! Texas, is the watchword this week! Come, my men! Be down in a giffy.”

“Texas! Texas!” echoed enthusiastically from above. “Yes, father! we’re coming!”

“I’m going back to the barn. Come out there, when you’re ready. Don’t let the sun beat you, and get there first!”

There was much scrambling, a good deal of sleepy funning, several rounds of brotherly pugilism, and boyish laughter ; then two pairs of bare feet bounded down stairs, through the kitchen, out on the dewy greensward, across the broad, sandy road that wound around the house, and over the hard, narrow path to the barn. Both entered the open doors, at the same moment—one in a somersault, the other in a long jump to the middle of the floor.

“Father, we’re here! What shall we do first? We’ve beat the sun?”

“All right! go clean down the horses, then bring in the pails of milk ; at breakrast, I will tell you the rest. Thad, make ’em shine. There’s a lady in the bargain to-day!”

Mrs. Buddington’s kitchen was an inviting place for breakfast. It was long and spacious, looking towards the west, over a narrow brook valley, and green meadows, to neighboring heights, whose crown of orchards leaned against the sky. The well-scoured floor was neatly sanded. The oaken table, white as rubbing could make it, was drawn into the centre of the room ; with the usual dishes for the need of a farmer, who lived ten miles from the town market. There were slices of sweet home-packed pork, fried to a crispy brown, a pile of large mealy potatoes, with bursting jackets, fresh eggs, a plate of fried apples, and, waiting on the stone hearth by the broad fireplace, a nicely covered nappy of wheaten doughnuts, hot, crisp, and brown.

Mr. and Mrs. Buddington, Thad and Alf, seated themselves at table, with folded hands, and bent heads, for the words of grace ; after which, conversation on the morning’s plans commenced. Mr.

Buddington never manifested a glum, or morose spirit at home. He was genial and companionable in his family. His boys were encouraged to offer frankly, suggestions on all subjects; however wise, crude, or boyish their ideas might be, the father listened, and kindly corrected. His wife was not a drooping flower, crushed under a master's foot, speaking only when it might be mercifully raised. She shared in conversation as an equal partner in affairs, laughed heartily, pelted her husband with mother wit; and often remonstrated on certain objectionable courses; throwing her reproving glances full upon his own, without the slightest dash of anger on his part, and without the abused, hang-dog look assumed by so many men, from whom the wife dares to differ.

"Thad, this is the morning to go for the tailoress; but I find the wagon has loosened a tire. What is to be done now?" said the father.

"Likewise the roll of cloth is to be brought from the pulling-mill, for the tailors to cut and make up," added the mother. Her iron goose, and press-board are to be brought, also. There's a riddle for you to solve, Thad," she continued, casting a sly glance at the father.

Alfy, a boy not yet in his teens, hurried to say,—

"You can ride horseback, Thad, and bring the cloth.

Yes! I can take a long sack over the saddle, put the cloth on one side, and the goose and press-board on the other to balance. Ned won't flare up at that!" declared Thad, resting a hand each side of his plate, and holding knife and fork erect in the air; as if to dissect the quandary.

"Bayonets fixed! 'Gainst the rules! Look at your knife and fork!" said Alf, playfully clashing his own fork against them.

"The cloth, and other articles are all right," said the farmer; "but where will you put the tailoress? in the sack too, or in your pocket, Thad?"

This caused general merriment. Alf laughed till he cried.

"Here is a better way;" continued the father, smiling. "You ride 'Lone Star' and lead 'Ned.' Go for the lady first. She will ride him back, and you will ride 'Ned,' calling at the mill, on your return. The first part of the arrangement is right, as you proposed."

Alf didn't believe she could ride "Lone Star;" "for he always danced sideways, and reared up, so."

"Oh, yes, Alf, she can ride 'Lone Star!'" said his mother, smiling. "Filette Snow can sit upon any horse. I have seen her ride her brother's stallion, 'Fire-fly,' which very few men can manage, and she sat him as easy as a lark in a tree."

"I saw her too, mother!" cried Thad. "She looked like Queen Elizabeth, reviewing her army, in my English history."

"True, my son, she did," said Mr. Buddington, approvingly.

Breakfast over, the house was left to its busy mistress. Alf went up the road, between its wide borders of green, singing "Yankee Doodle" to the brindled cows which he followed to pasture. Thad guided 'Lone Star,' his father walking beside him, to the stone at the kitchen door, to say 'good-bye' to his mother, and to catch her look of pride, as he rode away. She came at his call, her sleeves rolled to her elbows; and exclaiming,—

O Thaddeus the Great, on his charger! Look out for those white feet! There's mischief in them, sometimes!"

"That's so, Thaddeus. Keep cool my boy; handle him gently. Don't get his blood up. Good-morning."

The sun tipped the tree tops, "Lone Star's" ears, and Thad's hat, as they traveled up the brown road between the velvet strip of turf, fringed with alders and yellow birches.

In due time, tramping hoofs drew Mrs. Buddington's attention to the door. She was just in time to see the proud horse, and his female rider sweep around the corner, followed close at her heels by Thad, with the tailoress' implements. The farmer's wife clapped her hands, and showered all manner of appellations upon the rosy rider still seated on the mettlesome animal.

"Hey day, Gipseey! Mrs. John Gilpin! take a turn up the road. Let me see you ride, you winged Mercury. Dear me! If we had a match for 'Lone Star' — your brother's 'Fire-fly, say — I'd mount, and we two would scour Connecticut's hills and valleys, till the good staid people should think the witches were out. Yes, and they'd tie us to some sacred post somewhere, and whip us along with the beer barrels that work on Sunday."

The ludicrous ideas of either supposition, caused her healthy echoing laughter to ring out on the morning air, till it reached the

hill-orchards over the narrow brook valley. There, the apple-gatherers, holding the golden, red and russet fruit in hand, paused on their ladders and baskets, to look over to Farmer Buddington's yard, where Filette was still wanted. A reflection of mirthful happiness touched their faces. They watched the group around the door; and when she reined her horse suddenly round to gratify Mrs. Buddington, they saw him rear and paw the air, they saw her whip come down smartly on his shining haunches, saw him shake his mane and come down to his work, galloping around the corner with her little page, Thad, at her heels. Apples dropped; men, women, girls and boys, clapped hands lustily.

They waited for her return; for country neighbors divine their neighbor's movements. They saw her darting like a shuttle, between the alders and birches, north of the house, and then his curved neck and white feet came slowly back round the house to the step-stone. Filette sprang to the ground. The fruit-gatherers cheered her again, and the unbroken air waves brought the sound to the house. Filette took off her bonnet, and swung it by the strings. Mrs. Buddington made a signal flag of her apron, and swung it aloft. Thad emptied the sack, and threw it above his head. Farmer Buddington arrived just in time, from an adjoining potato field, to join the pleasant pantomime. He sent the luscious roots which he had brought for dinner, rolling on the ground, and threw the basket to the house-eaves, several times. Wherefore, the apples on the hill, contrary to the philosophy of Sir Isaac Newton, gravitated upwards against the sky, in crimson and yellow gleams, till the party entered the kitchen door.

Filette caught up the roll of cloth, and entered the north room, where a table was already cleared for cutting. The farmer followed, to be measured for a whole suit, to be finished "this week." He said,—

"Can you accomplish it?"

"Of course she can with my help!" said his wife. "We have worked together before. My washing is long ago on the line, and my cupboards are full of pies and cakes."

"You are a 'gude wife,' my ain dearie, and I must set you on a richer soil than these hard Connecticut lands. So you see, Miss Snow," turning to the tailoress, "I am off for Texas on Monday,

one week from this morning. I must have these clothes to wear. Now I shall be over on the next field, at work; when there is any trying on to do, wife, call me."

Then began in earnest the sponging, cutting, basting and pressing. The hot iron goose hissed and fizzed along the wet seams on the press-board. Filette handled it with the same dexterity as she had subdued the plunging, foaming "Lone Star." It was a pleasant week for the two women. There were no peevish repinings at the failure of romantic hopes, no tearful aspirations after impossibilities. Both accepted the conditions of life. The old farm-house was full of mirthful industry, health and common sense.

When the work was cut and planned, there was time for other thoughts. Filette said to Mrs. Buddington,—

"So your husband starts for Texas soon?"

"Next Monday."

"Will he go alone?"

"No, his youngest brother, George Buddington, will accompany him. He resides in Cloudspire, Massachusetts; and will arrive here Saturday night."

"Is it your wish to leave New England, and settle in that new country?"

"Not at all, personally; but I have the interests of others in keeping, and what is for their benefit, should be my pleasure. My husband has received glowing accounts of the cheapness of land, and of the inviting soil and climate of Texas. His lungs are too delicate for our severe winters also. Then he has the future welfare of our sons in prospect. He thinks that after a life of toil in New England by all of us, he shall have very little to leave them, but the same entailed life of hardship as his own.

"Then he will buy and hold slaves, of course?"

"I expect that is one object. They are cheap now; but whenever Texas is annexed to the States, they will increase fifty per cent. Slavery has been my great objection to going. I do not believe in enslaving human beings."

"Neither do I," replied Filette, looking up from a coat sleeve, into which she was fitting the lining. I could never wrest the hard earnings of others, to surround myself with comfort, and

leave the toilers in destitution. Neither could I buy and sell my fellow-creatures, the images of God, as so much merchandise."

"Do you think a Southerner would acknowledge that a negro was the image of God? You would fall out in the premises, at the very first start."

"Very well, according to their own theology, none but the images of God can have souls to save, and they evidently think their slaves are possessed of that imperishable article; for they are beginning to show them a way to Heaven by various teachings and preachings."

"Filette, you should hear our minister expatiate on slavery. He says the African race was predestinated to Slavery, from the foundation of the world. He advises Mr. Buddington to go to Texas, take up land, and buy slaves. He says they are as much articles of commerce as any other means of wealth."

"I have made the acquaintance of the new minister." She said this with a short, knowing nod of the head. "I have made the acquaintance of Rev. Augustus Johns, from Hartford. I sewed at the parsonage last week. His language and manners pointed to my social inferiority. He may preach Christ crucified, but he cannot preach to me Christ the living Exemplar. Its my opinion he would make a good slave-holder, himself, and handle the lash with a relish."

"Would you express yourself so freely everywhere?" laughingly questioned Mrs. Buddington.

"Certainly, if called for. False ambassadors of Him who was a pattern in all that is just and humane, are less to be revered than truth is to be revered. His advice on emigration will prove a snare, I think. 'If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.' I am not learned, but I must yield to the dictates of common sense, and the plain teachings of the simple life of our Savior, so plain, that a wayfarer, 'though a fool, need not err therein.'"

"I sometimes think within myself," said Mrs. Buddington, "that the church 'worship they know not what.' Not God, the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent Deity, as a Being to be much loved or much feared; but in His stead, they substitute a round of rites and mysticisms, which only stultify our moral natures."

"Those thoughts appear to me wise. And further, what is not

already obscure, they either forget, mystify or reverse. Here is this straightforward command, 'sell all thou hast, and give to the poor ;' which does not convey the idea that we sell the bodies and souls of the poor, themselves — that we shall auction them to the highest bidder, and put the price in our own pockets. Yet that is the construction of the slave-holder, and of everyone who upholds him."

Thus the day passed in pleasant dinners and teas, light discussions. neighbor's evening calls, after the day's work was done ; and in talking over the journey and future prospects. All agreed that the farmer's life was a hard one ; but many preferred its honest ways to the necessary cruelty attached to a slave-master's leisure.

The suit of clothes was finished on Saturday, by sunset. Filette consented to remain over Sunday, to help on Mrs. Buddington in preparations for her husband's departure ; to work on the boys' clothes the next week, as well as to relieve the approaching loneliness.

Saturday afternoon, Squire George Buddington arrived from Cloudspire. Young, handsome in figure, well dressed, with the elasticity of hope and anticipation apparent in word and motion ; he inspired the household with new faith in the venture, and new vigor in its prosecution. On Sunday evening, which in those days was the beginning of the working week, a company of friends, including farmers of the vicinity and their sons, assembled by invitation, to get new views of the settlement of Texas ; as George Buddington had correspondence on the subject, and was to present information at that time.

They gathered in the large kitchen. The floor had been recently sanded ; the pleasant fire fizzed and crackled in the capacious fireplace. The well-scoured oaken chairs were soon filled ; others, snarter in paint and age, were brought in from various rooms. Men of bronzed faces were they all. Old and young were mostly clad in serviceable home-made cloth, spun and woven by their wives and daughters. Their hands were hard and calloused, homely to the eye, but true and kindly to the grasp. There were heads of gray, and shoulders stooped with labor ; chestnut locks, and figures of young, athletic strength. There were breasts enclosing the finest sympathies of man's nature ; men who never goaded an ox without

pain, and from whose hands their well-fed horses never felt a stripe ; men who, if suddenly brought face to face with the terrible scourging of the South, would have been appalled, and in a frenzy of compassion for the victim, would have hurled the sanguinary scourger to the stunning embrace of mother Earth. Yet these same men, in the determined equanimity of a stern patriotism, upheld the Constitution and its nest-egg, slavery.

They regarded the Constitution as the charter of American freedom ; the sacred instrument freeing them from oppressive royal edicts, and too dearly purchased in the Revolutionary struggle to admit confession of a blemish or suspicion of a fault. They looked upon slavery as indigenous in cotton-growing districts — sprouting into hydra-headed life with the germs of the cotton seeds — and having a duration co-existent with the cultivation of that staple.

“I expect you will have warm weather there, without snow or ice,” said one of them addressing farmer Buddington.

“Yes. Crops are cultivated there all the year round, you might say, there is no winter. Our grains grow there, besides many tropical fruits.”

“I believe Mexico was loth to part with Texas for any price,” said another ; “but the Southerners are in earnest, and when Mexico wouldn’t sell, they went over the border with their families and slaves, and set up an independent State of their own.”

“The South have made a splendid success, replied the Rev. Mr. Johns, who had just dropped in. “Since the ‘Boundary Treaty’ with Spain in 1819, which made the Sabine river the western limit of Louisiana ; and since the ‘Missouri Compromise’ of 1820, prohibiting slavery north of latitude thirty-six degrees, thirty minutes, there was very little land left for the formation of new slave states — not enough for more than two or three. With only this narrow area left to it, slavery would be doomed. In 1829, Mr. Poinsett, in behalf of our government, offered Mexico five millions of purchase money. She refused. He then proposed to loan Mexico ten millions, upon the pawning of Texas till repaid. He knew well that Texas once pawned, it was ours ; for in the interim, the country would have been filled with Anglo-Americans and slaves, and we could have held it afterwards, in any event. That loan was a fail-

ure. Next, he made efforts to obtain from the Mexican government, a stipulation to return fugitive slaves; for, you know gentlemen, Mexico freed all her slaves in 1829. This was a failure also. However, the South was resolved to possess Texas. Numerous emigrants have settled upon the lands, carried their slaves, and obtained control of the Legislature by a separation from Coahuila. They have declared their independence, so that our friends here, Mr. Buddington and brother, are leaving their own country for a foreien government."

"I saw by the papers," said another, "that of the fifty-seven signers of this Declaration of Independence, fifty were Southerners, emigrants from the Southern States, and *only three* were native Mexicans, and these three were greatly interested in Texan land speculations, with companions in New York."

"I recollect that, likewise," replied the clergyman; "and when we of the North see men so resolute for their own interests, it certainly devolves upon us to render them all the aid in our power. The bond of Union must be kept bright by these fraternal acts. True, her independence is *gained* and *acknowledged* by the United States; but every Northen emigrant will swell the vote for *annexation*."

"Annexation has been already proposed to our Government," replied Squire Buddington; "and although the proposition seems not to have been favorably received at Washington, we all understand that annexation is the Texan *ultimatum*. As to the ability of Texas to maintain her assumed independence, there is no doubt about secret assistance being rendered from the States, in arms, ammunition and men. Our Government would wink at such clandestine support to Texas, and bid it God speed."

"I understand," said the Rev. Johns, "if the Texans need protection, they will have it. They had it before their independence, which was gained by contributions and enlistments in the States. There was bloody work there then, between Houston and Santa Anna."

A young man, sitting silently by himself and leaning awkwardly upon the white oaken table, had fixed his admiring eyes at the first entrance, upon the younger Buddington and his fine broadcloth. After plunging his fingers several times into the short, sandy curls

about his ears, and impatiently throwing one knee over the other, offered a question to his notice.

“Will you inform me, sir, what first called your attention to a removal to that country?”

“With pleasure. My attention was called to Texas, by a Cloud-spire friend in my own State, who has become a citizen of South Carolina. Then, my brother here, has had an uphill course since his marriage. The mortgage still rests upon his farm; some change is necessary for him. I am young, and desire to invest where something more than New England profit will accrue. This friend, Mr. Steele, advised Texas, and sent papers containing Southern views.”

“Would you read some of those views, if you have the papers with you?” asked a tall, spare, deep-voiced man by the stairway.

George brought forward a bundle of Southern papers, and read aloud numerous extracts. He remarked, also, that Benton of Missouri, a few years ago, over the signature of “Americanus,” wrote a series of essays on the importance of Texas, and the necessity of its acquisition. He advocated and enlarged upon Benton’s assertion, that “one of the evils resulting from the retrocession of that country to Mexico, is that it brings a non-slave-holding empire in juxtaposition with the slave-holding South.”

He selected a Baltimore paper, commenting on the essays of “Americanus,” and read,—

“One of the reasons he assigns for the purchase of Texas is, that five or six more slave-holding States may thus be added to the Union. Indeed, he goes farther than this in one of his calculations, and estimates that nine more states as large as Kentucky, may be formed within the limits of that province.”

“You perceive, gentlemen,” explained the clergyman, “that Benton’s first calculation would give the South twelve more senators; and in case Texas should be cut into nine States, eighteen more senators. This course is absolutely necessary, according to Calhoun’s theory, ‘to preserve the balance of power’ to the South; that our national legislation may not be one-sided and thus dismember the Union; for the maintenance of the Union gentlemen,” with an emphatic gesture of his arm, “is the only safety of our Republic.”

“It is also necessary on our part,” remarked the bass voice of the first speaker, “to resist the encroachments of the abolition party, for one section of our country should not override the other.”

“Never was a truer word spoken,” said Squire Buddington ; “but my brother James and I must leave you Northern men to deal with the villanous abolitionists. We are going to another country, where Judge Lynch hangs them to the nearest tree. We shall labor for a larger representation of Southern interests in the Senate, by annexation. Mr. Johns,” turning to the clergyman, “your opinions coincide exactly with the sentiments of a Charleston paper in the package sent me by Mr. Steele.”

He selected it, strode to the fireplace, and read by the light of two candles on the the high mantel,—

“The acquisition of the vast territory of Texas, is denominated, ‘an enterprise which could not fail to exercise an important and favorable influence upon the future destinies of the South, by increasing the votes of the slave-holding States in the United States Senate.’”

Flattered by this distinguished coincidence, the ecclesiastical countenance brightened ; and he proceeded further to air, pompously, his intimate study of Texan affairs.

“Squire Buddington, you will not be disgusted by the poverty, ignorance, and crime of free negroes in your adopted residence, which I should consider an agreeable relief. The Texan Constitution dooms to perpetual bondage, ‘every negro, and every mulatto, now, or in future, remaining on the soil!’ The friendly offices of no Colonization society will be needed there, to remove such nuisances from the country !”

Farmer Walton, who owned a small number of acres in the west part of the town, and who sat leaned in his chair against the jamb, with gravely-folded arms, here threw more light upon this determined seizure of adjacent territory from a friendly power, by presenting one more Southern motive of self-interest. He observed that Mr. Gholson of the Virginia legislature in 1832, announced, “that the acquisition of Texas would raise the value of slaves fifty per cent at least !”

“That was natural,” replied Mr. Johns. “Virginia is a slave-

breeding state, and these new cotton and cane fields open a fine market for her peculiar productions."

"The Southern States are a unit, in whatever policy they propose!" said the deep voice by the stairway.

The young man reclining on the oaken table again ran his fingers through his sandy curls; his eyes fixed upon the squire while speaking. He thought it an unsafe experiment for a married man to settle among such a mixed population of Southerners—negroes, Mexicans and Indians. He thought young-married women would need constant protection, amid such lawlessness! His dear Jane Sophy, whom he had just ruthlessly plucked from a neighboring family, and made his own especial property, troubled his mind. He was thinking how pitifully she looked after him, at his sunset parting.

James Buddington, who understood matters, knowingly answered,—

"You see, Tim, we don't take our wives there. George has none, and mine must stay with the boys. But you come out to Texas when I get my farm of two or three thousand acres. I'll sell you a square close to my house, to build a ranch for Jane Sophy, if you'll bring her along!"

These rays from a dark lantern illuminated Tim's suggestion. The whole company indulged in a vociferous round of pleasantries.

"There's no trouble," said a short, square-built member of the church, by the buttery door; "no trouble, if when you go among the Romans, you do as the Romans do! Them slave-holders are fiery fellers, but don't hurt anybody that thinks as they do."

"Right! There can be no cause of apprehension, when one follows that aphorism," said the clergyman, walking stiffly up and down the sanded floor; meanwhile slowly buttoning up his fine black coat. "Tim! better sell out here, and migrate with these gentlemen. Buy slaves, advocate 'Southern Rights,' help hang the abolitionists, and your domestic happiness will be as safe in Texas, as it would be in the snows of Lapland!"

Thad and Alf brought tumblers, and the pitcher of cider. The Rev. Mr. Johns proposed prayer before parting; in which brilliant effort he took occasion to inform the Deity that He had made a world full of sinners, for His own glory; that He had ex-

alted this Nation; that the inexpressible beauty of American Freedom might be an exemplar to the extremes of the earth. He finally demanded of Divine favor, the perpetuity of its Institutions — a signal blessing on the present national effort, to extend our peculiar civilizing influences. Especially did he implore God's blessing to attend the steps of His two servants, who, in the journey about to be undertaken, would further cement the fraternal bond of union between distant sections. He closed by invoking rich lands, flocks and herds, abundant crops, and increasing prosperity to all within their tropical gates.

They gathered around Farmer Buddington, proffered good wishes and grave good-byes,—for he was beloved by his neighbors. The smoke of his chimney was a pleasant landmark in their busy goings to and fro.

One shook his hand, and said encouragingly,—

“Well, neighbor, I suppose you will be picking strawberries next January, when I am shovelling snow-drifts in great-coat and mittens.”

“And digging potatoes in February,” added another close by.

The short, broad-shouldered Roman shook hands roughly, and corrected the others.

“Buddington will not dig potatoes any more, nor pick strawberries, nor reap in the hot sun. His negroes will do all that, while he will sit in the shade of his orange groves.”

Rev. Mr. Johns, who had been speaking with the ladies, joined them.

“His cattle will in a few years be counted by hundreds. Like Isaac, he will have ‘possession of flocks, possession of herds, and great store of servants.’ He will not be forced to arise in icy mornings, before dawn, to feed the cattle in their stalls. They will run untended, over his broad grassy plains, all the year round!”

There was a little side scene. The sandy curls were very near the younger Buddington. He assured the latter, that in a short time he should join him. Says he,—

“I am married now, and if Jane Sophy finds it agreeable to emigrate, I shall emigrate. I am glad to make your acquaintance; for I should not like to set her down in an unprotected home.”

Rev. Mr. Johns shook hands last ; bidding them remember,—

“We all have one Country, one Constitution, one God.” Successively the wagons rattled away.

Candles glided about Farmer Buddington’s north and south room, long before day. One medium-sized seal-skin trunk was sufficient for both ; moreover, it could be conveniently carried between them, in changing from stage-coaches to boats, or other conveyances.

While sitting at the table for the last time, the husband and father gave some directions, yet unsaid.

“Drive the cows down the hill, to the rowen meadow, to-morrow, Alfy. Dig the potatoes faithfully, boys. Take good heed of all mother’s command’s. Be kind to Ned, feed him well, and treat him well. Uncle George will ride ‘Lone Star’ to town, to day, and leave him. He is sold. You boys will ride with me in the wagon that carries the trunk to the Red Tavern ; the stage stops there.”

Mr. and Mrs. Buddington tasted very little of that morning’s repast. They exchanged no sentimentality. Each heart felt the pain of the other, and silently bore its own. New thoughts, and strange, flitted in and out of Filette’s mind all that day ; thoughts not quite in accord with the general sadness. A long lingering clasp of a hand, thrilled her yet. A pair of hazel eyes haunted her in the dairy, in the kitchen, in the orchard. If she turned her glance up the lonely, green-bordered road, a young, handsome horseman seemed vanishing from sight,—seemed turning back to her, like a sweet memory, and waving a phantom adieu.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE toilet of the octaroon was receiving the finishing touches from her own hands. She was yet alone. A soft rustle filled the pretty apartment, as she turned this way and that, in order to bring every part of her gauzy dress under inspection, in the deep, oval mirrors ; and as she turned to the open boxes about ; choosing a trinket here, a jewel there, a necklace, and a

bracelet, to fasten about her neck, or arms, as the slippered feet stole across the carpet for a spray of pinken roses and buds, to fasten in the Grecian fall of curls, gathered at the back of her head, and as she parted the tangled profusion about her forehead.

The last effort was upon the broad, pink sash, that girdled her waist, and fell in waves nearly to her feet. Then flowers, jewels and laces were gathered quickly into their repositories, and a general survey of the room was taken, a few rapid steps, a few subtle motions of her hands about the curtains, vases and fresh-cut flowers, and she dropped into a velvet arm-chair, as if awaiting the coming of another.

Not a fleck of dust could be seen upon the solid mahogany furniture, not a thread or fibre upon the lily-strewn carpet. And while her left hand dallied with the fragrant bouquet, on a marble stand beside her, her right involuntarily sought her heart, crushing the light fluting above it, in an agonized pressure. In place of the radiant countenance reflected from the mirror, a sudden melancholy weighed upon her lids, till they concealed the dark eyes shrouded in sorrow. Her watchful ear caught the sound of steps upon the staircase, the right hand dropped by her side, a stifled groan, a despairing glance upward, and she approached the opening door.

The visitor paused upon the threshold with gratified surprise, exclaiming,—

“Superb! Pauline! charming!”

The old joy flitted back into her eyes; with a tender smile, as she led him to a seat, she said,—

“You are suffering from the heat. Let me stir the air.”

She took the elegant fan which he had brought her on his last trip to New York, and stood by him, fanning slowly.

One could not easily recognize in that tall, handsomely dressed figure, the coarsely clad and turbaned slave-woman, who came up the walk but an hour previous.

“Sit down, Pauline,” said her visitor, at the same time taking her hand and drawing her down upon the sofa. “You have stood at the ironing table all day. Where is your mistress?”

“Gone to the dinner, sir. The carriage left before I did.”

“Did old Jake, the gardener, give you those flowers without

trouble?" pointing to the bouquet on the table. "Bring them nearer."

"He said he 'shouldn't cut no flowers for me; but he 'spects *marse* must have his way.'"

"What about Zoë and her mistress, to-day? Where is the girl now?"

"She has had several cuts across her shoulders with the cow-hide. She is resting now on my bed at home. O master! Zoë is but a wreck of her former self."

"Pauline, can you not remember? Do not call me master again in this room. The cursed word has a scorpion's sting."

"Pardon, its not the heart, but the tongue which disobeys."

"But Pauline, you know as well as I, that in this retreat there is no master, no slave. It is the unconquerable love of years that draws me like a magnet to this room and to you."

"It is true," she said as she raised his fair hand to her lips, and then retaining it, continued. "Heaven forbid that I ever again thus wound or displease."

"Were there any threats for Zoë to-day?"

"Yes, she has been told that she will be sold as a plantation hand, to hoe and pick cotton in the burning sun."

She pressed the unresisting hand more closely, slid down from the sofa to the carpet, at his feet, and on her knees, raised her tearful eyes to his.

"Oh! remove this terrible dread from my heart. Tell me you will not sell our daughter, our beautiful Zoë."

"God knows the answer would be no, if it could be avoided."

"Why not, Colonel Mowndes? why not?"

Sobbing and half fainting, she bowed her head upon his knee. He rested his hand on her dark curls and said in petulant sorrow,—

"Pauline, you do not seem to understand my position. If you will but consider, a wife and daughter demand her sale, inexorable public sentiment demands it, opposing fates compel."

"But Zoë is of your blood. Zoë is your daughter. She possesses the same lofty, untamed spirit as yourself. She curses the day of her birth. She curses her terrible destiny. In her sleep, she alternately weeps, curses and prays. Now I ask you, her

father, what will she become on the auction block? Oh, listen! Zoë will be a raving maniac, bereft of reason, love and all the attractions of her charming girlhood. Is not the punishment sufficient, to be thrust from Grace's room among the kitchen pots and to be made a scullion?"

Colonel Mowndes raised the suppliant and placed her in the arm-chair, took from the side-board a glass of wine, and held it to her lips.

"Drink, Pauline, drink present strength."

After a few moments of thought, he began,—

"Do not upbraid me! Do not imagine there is no heartache for me, in this matter. I am the victim of the horrid gnome of Slavery, which broods over our land like a vampire. Zoë must be sold. Let us settle all preliminaries to-night, with mutual concessions, if need be. I will save her from plantation cruelty. Can you not find a purchaser?"

"Let me show you, my dear colonel," she said, raising one imploring hand. "There is a gentleman here in Charleston from Mississippi, who knew her before her hair was cut, and before she wore the coarse Osnaburg suit in the kitchen. He professed to love her, promised to make her his true and honorable wife, if you would sell her to him. I did not give it a passing thought. How could I part with my proud Zoë? How could I speak of selling from my sight that lovely blossom of my life, and yours?" She wrung her hands in agony, and with stifled moans, then continued,—

"Perhaps he will buy her now. Their mutual love will heal the wound of separation."

Has Zoë an attachment for this man? What is his name?"

"I believe she has, but she bravely cast it aside for me, and you, and Miss Grace. His name is Sillton."

The colonel spoke soothingly,—

"My poor Pauline! try to be calm and brave. Ordinarily, she would be sold from the yard, but as it is, my family will send her to the auction table. A sale day occurs day after to-morrow. Meantime manage to see Sillton."

"And if he buys my Zoë, where will she stay then, till he goes back to Mississippi?"

“After dark, she can come here. I will give you a pass to visit Zoë early, in the jail ; but instead, you can come here, and prepare to meet her.”

“And I will divide my clothing with her, that she may appear lady-like, as she was accustomed.”

“No, Pauline, not *your* clothes. I shall purchase a handsome ward-robe for her, myself. You shall have the pleasure of helping her make it up, here, in your own apartment.”

“I cannot do that, I have to attend to the fine ironing of Miss Grace.”

“True, Pauline ; but you can do what I propose — you shall do that ! I shall profess at home that your presence in the yard irritates me — that I will hire you out for ten dollars per month. So you will come here, and be always ready to welcome me. These apartments are so remote from my residence that you will not be discovered. Alphonse Wallace, Leonore Wallace’s brother, will give you kitchen room. I own this house, and he hires of me. We are on the best of terms ; and his boy will do your marketing. I cannot spare you to go with Zoë. I want you myself. Cheer up, now. Zoë may have an independent home of her own. You will hold intercourse by letters, telling each all about the other. No thanks, if you please. Bring wine and fruit from the sideboard. I am weary with all this planning. It is an uncommon stroke of exertion on my part.”

Pauline’s face grew bright at his kindness and pleasantries.

“It is my turn to revive now ;” and he threw himself upon the lounge.

His departure was made at a late hour.

“I shall go to the dinner,” he said.

“My pass ! Colonel Mowndes, have you forgotten it ?” She hastily placed pen and paper. He wrote and folded it. Pauline pressed the pass to her lips, went with her master to the stairway, and waved him good-night.

Left alone, the trying future flashed vividly before her. Pauline’s handsome features grew rigid with the great pain that weighed upon her thoughts.

“A bond slave !” she ejaculated, as she turned away, and threw herself in turn upon the sofa. “A bond slave forever !”

Colonel Mowndes loves me, I know. Yes, he has loved me from boyhood; loves me without marriage! And his own lawful marriage — what has it been? but an outrage, a mockery. Thank God, his wife knows it not; and I, the helpless accomplice of her wrongs. Am I guilty? Am I to be condemned for this love for him, which is the only thing that makes my wretched life endurable? What if I refuse to see him more? The auction table waits for me, and after that, what? O God! what? To be owned, soul and body, by a heartless being whom my souls abhors; compelled to drag out an existence to which death would be happiness. The sin was in his marriage, for he gave his hand to wealth and blood, after he had confided his heart to me. Blood, another mockery! My blood is blue. The proudest and purest of three generations is my inheritance; and Zoë, poor, dear Zoë's is bluer still, and her beauty more striking than her sister Grace's. Is it a sin to sell his own blood? Sin, O Jesus! is't a sin? Is there *any* sin, *any* wrong? Is there *any* injustice in this church-going city?"

A low, derisive laugh quavered through the chamber, succeeded by hysterical sobbing which lasted till the bursting heart was relieved. Then Pauline arose, slowly removed the ornaments, took the rose-buds from her hair, folded the pink sash, hung the gauzy dress in the wardrobe, and changed the pretty slippers for the heavy, slip-shod shoes she wore in her master's kitchens.

A few moments more transferred the superb Pauline into the coarsely clad laundress of Grace Mowndes. Again before the oval mirror she bound the plaid turban closely across her forehead, tucking up every stray curl. She arranged her long Osnaburg apron, caught up the precious pass, and glided into the darkness of the street.

The day after to-morrow came. Carriages, horses and pedestrians choked the street in front of the slave-mart. Curses and oaths mingled with the bustle and bidding. After several sales, Zoë was brought forward. She sprang upon the long table with a frenzied step, and walked up to the front, with the hunting stride of a Diana; scanning sharply the bystanders as she went. She still wore the badge of degradation to which Grace had condemned her — the coarse dress of the scullion, and her short hair frizzed wildly about her head. A hushed murmur of admiration ran

through the brutal crowd. The auctioneer stepped forward, to advertise her claims to a profitable sale.

"Gentlemen," he cried, "here is a prime article, young and sound. There are, however, certain conditions to the sale. This fine piece of flesh must become a plantation worker. She will be sold lower for that reason, as there will be some loss in breaking her in."

Defiance flashed from Zoë's dark eyes, as she sought earnestly among the sea of sensual faces turned towards the table. The bidding ran low from the conditions of sale. Two men, standing against the wall at the right, held a rapid consultation. One of low stature, prominent shoulders and humped, distorted spine, gazed up intently into the face of the other.

"Bid eleven hundred," said the taller.

"Bid for me, Mr. Steele," timidly requested the dwarf. The other bent his head, saying,—

"It wouldn't do for me, Edmund. My wife, Lucy, might hear of it from that dare-devil on the table, if you take her to the parsonage. Lucy's been South long enough to learn the ways. Bid yourself, Stone. That girl's just what you want in your house. She'd be an ornament and a companion for any clergyman; just what you want, Edmund. Bid."

"Eleven hundred dollars," said the dwarf.

"Eleven hundred," echoed the auctioneer. "A prime article! eleven hundred dollars, gentlemen! Going! going, gentlemen! going!"

The previous bid was one thousand, from a person nearly hidden by the crowd in front. At the sound of that voice, Zoë's eyes had dropped, and a slight flush suffused her cheek. Now she turned exasperated towards the standing place of the dwarf and his companion. Her fair cheeks glowed, scarlet as the roses in her father's garden. The blue veins of her white neck and temples swelled with a sudden tumult of emotion. She extended her small, white hands, exclaiming,—

"*Not going, gentlemen! not going!*"

Turning her blazing look upon the reverend bidder,—

"Not going, incarnate fiend! dwarfed representative of Satan! Do not delude yourself, that you will hold a blue-blooded daughter

of South Carolina to do your bidding! These feet will never walk the furrows of a cotton-field. These hands will never hold a hoe."

She took one tragic step forward, lifted a menacing arm and finger upward and cried,—

"No, by the great White Throne of the Almighty God! No, buy me at your peril! I'll cut this white throat before your eyes! I'll give this hunted spirit back to its rightful Owner, to Him who has no room for it on earth. Hear! ye cursed wretches! hear?"

A sort of terror fell insensibly upon auctioneer and buyers.

She went on.

"One man alone is present who shall pay a price for me. That one already possesses my heart. He has offered one thousand. Dare not, you devils, to outbid him, or I swear by the Savior of men, that you will pay for a lifeless corpse!"

She stood dauntless and defiant, panting with excitement. Colonel Mowndes at that moment crossed the opening in front of the table, and disappeared. He had heard his daughter's terrible words. A folded paper was passed to the auctioneer.

During the momentary hush of his reading the note, the heroic crisis of Zoë's exaltation was passing. The appalling degradation of her situation smote her fragile nature to a tottering sense of utter friendlessness and abandonment. Through tears, her grieving eyes sought the one face, on which she cared to read her fate. It was still there, pale and anxious, with his tender eyes fixed upon her. His white handkerchief clandestinely waved an "All right" to her inquiring gaze. The vender of God's images brought his hammer with violence upon the table.

"Sold!" he cried. "Bring on old David."

The summer sunset of that evening was arrayed in all its Southern glory. The skies over Charleston burned crimson, to the zenith. A broad path of shimmering rose stretched across the Ashley, from the low shores of its farther side to the city. A delicious violet haze filled every street and court and alley, enwrapping roofs and spires in a memory of the Orient. The whole city was out, enjoying its unrivalled beauty, crossing and re-crossing the bright streets, or vanishing in their purple shade.

Zoë sat upon the floor, in a dim room of the jail, amid a heterogeneous mass of men, women, and children, from every part of the

State — in all shades of color, and in every degree of squalor. Regardless of the groans, tears, prayers and cursings around her, she silently nourished the small flame of hope kindling within her dark destiny, and longed for the coming of the stars and her owner.

The apartment of Pauline was again lighted at an earlier hour than usual. She was in reception dress. The same Grecian knot of curls, with white jasmine and purple heliotrope, trailed from her shapely head. She had chosen white muslin for her toilet, with a brooch of amethyst, and a sash of the same hue. A side table, spread with delicate china, over which Spring herself seemed to have sprinkled bouquets of violets, graced the occasion. Cold meats, salads, fruits, and an ample iced loaf were concealed under snowy napkins. She whiled away the tardy moments listening to the laughter below of Alphonse Wallace and the dark woman he had chosen, and to the noisy romping of his children. The expected guests arrived. Zoë, half clad in the soiled garments of menial service, fell into the embrace of her mother.

“Saved, thank God!” cried Pauline. “The worst is over!” She held Zoë from her, and pondering, exclaimed, “One sister, dwelling in elegance — pampered with love and luxury! The other, the more beautiful, sold in the shambles! Jesus the Christ! let a curse follow those who cause these cruel distinctions! Let poverty and anguish be their final reward!”

Gratefully Pauline thanked Mr. Sillton, and begged him to tarry till she could remove those wretched rags from her child, and then led her to the dressing-room. Caresses and words of endearment interrupted the duties of the toilet. The shorn hair was laid in short curls about the white brow and neck. A white muslin, sheer as mist, and finished with fine laces, flowed gracefully about her tall form. A sash of white satin encircled her slender waist. The soft drapery of the arms was looped to her shoulders with falling sprays of white jasmine, and a knot of the same flowers was fastened among the light puffings on her breast. White satin gaiters encased the small ankles.

When these were brought forward, Zoë remonstrated; and asked,—

“Whence come these beautiful articles?”

“Rained down, my child!” answered Pauline, with a happy

laugh. She opened a small casket before Zoë's astonished eyes, saying, "Raise your arm!" and she clasped a bracelet of pearls upon it.

"Splendid, dearie! Now turn your head a wee bit for the earrings — a match for the bracelet."

Upon leaving the dressing-room, Mr. Sillton rose, and advancing to meet them, respectfully took the daughter's small white hand, saying,—

"Allow me to compliment this surprising loveliness! Do I address an houri from the bowers of Paradise?"

Zoë's lids dropped, and their black silken fringes concealed whatever of emotion stirred their loving depths. Her lips said,—

"I am your slave, sir."

"Voluntarily so?" he asked.

"The slave can have no will — can cherish no preference. The master wills — the slave obeys!"

"Then, my adored, the master speaks!" he continued with impassioned tenderness; "Zoë, my darling Zoë! I make you free!"

He hastened to take from the marble table, beneath the fragrant flowers from Colonel Mowndes' garden, a long silver box. On its cover, in relief, was a dove making her nest among lilies. He presented it, saying,—

"Here are your free papers — the deed of yourself — to have, and to hold uncontrolled, the noblest, purest womanhood I have ever met."

Dazed with doubt and joy, the full glory of her swimming eyes lifted upon her rescuer.

"It cannot be! Oh! no!" she said fainting, and making a spasmodic effort for support, she swooned to the floor. Mr. Sillton raised her to the sofa; and Pauline, bathing the pale temples, lavished every epithet of affection.

"Ah! my beautiful! hunted abused and crushed till reason, and life itself are dethroned! O Heaven! Is there no mercy for the oppressed? Is there no retribution for the oppressor?"

Her lover sat in silent distress, chafing the cold hands, till sensation returned. Then her languid eyes sought Pauline, with the question,—

"Am I free? Dear mother, is it true?"

“You are so! Be convinced!” She opened the silver box, took out the paper, and requested Mr. Sillton to read.

This he did; adding,—

“You are as free as you can be in South Carolina; but you are obliged to have a guardian, until you leave the state. I took upon myself that office—an act which I deemed the most satisfactory to you.”

“You paid a thousand dollars for me?”

“I did; and the money has already been sent to Miss Grace Mowndes. It was not one third of your value, as the market goes, but it seems that Mrs. Mowndes desired the indulgence of jealousy and revenge, more than money. Colonel Mowndes has washed his hands of the sale, as far as may be.”

“Can I go out and in at my pleasure, without permission? Can I travel to Columbia, or Savannah, or New York, if I choose, without a pass?”

“Your air of high-breeding and refinement, added to your fascinating beauty, will be a sufficient passport beyond this locality, at any time; but to one recently freed from bondage, there might possibly be treachery. I believe this kind of treachery is rife in certain states. While I remain in Charleston, you cannot have a fear, my beloved Zoë. You are as free as the white-winged bird that soars into the blue vault of day. Your will is your own, you can cherish and indulge preferences, as freely as any lady in the land.”

A delirium of delight lighted up her eager eyes, and flushed her pale face.

“Alas!” she asked, “how shall I find gratitude commensurate with this surpassing favor? What can I render for this inestimable gift? Nothing, but my poor thanks!”

“Thanks from those lips would be a large reward, but I will venture to say, this miserable heart of mine would fain ask more. It would seek a nearer relation than your lawful guardian by the slave code of South Carolina. It solicits the gift of your hand, prompted by the voluntary action of your love—for your hand in a speedy and honorable marriage, that no scandal should assail the purity of your new-found freedom, or mar the fame of your inherent virtues.”

He walked up and down the room for some time, and returned. Zoë rose, and without hesitation, laid her hand in his.

“Take it!” she said. “Take this unworthy and dowerless hand; and with it, the first possession I ever held — *myself*.”

“My life shall attest my obligation for this happiness!” he said, and raised her hand to his lips. “Will my angel grant her petitioner an early fulfilment of her generous promise? Pauline, let me entreat you to become my intercessor! that this eventful day may be consecrated by the holy ceremony, which will give me the power to watch over, and protect our beloved Zoë, till death. I will disembarass you of the constraint of my presence, and give time for considering my proposition.”

Left alone, Pauline explained what she had learned from Mr. Sillton during the day; that his stay could be prolonged only one week; that although the laws of the state prohibited marriage between white and any sprung from the colored race, he had an intimate friend, a clergyman, in the city, who would perform the ceremony privately, and that, beyond the narrow circle of Zoë’s acquaintance, no one would question her blue-blooded lineage.

“My dear Zoë,” she continued, “you would not risk staying here after he left. You would then be without a suitable protector. You surely would accompany him, then?”

The sobbing girl threw her arms about her mother’s neck, crying, —

“Am I to part from you so soon, and never to see you again? O mother! this freedom brings with it heartache and bitterness of soul!”

“But consider, dear Zoë! I am sure you are going to a happy home. Mr. Sillton is a Northerner by birth, from Ohio. His parents and other relatives are living there. As his wife, you will visit them, and be received by every member of his family with warm and welcoming love. Although I am left a slave, I shall have comfort, yes, even luxury, and the steady, unfailing affection of Colonel Mowndes. In a short time, I am to occupy this room altogether; to rest and employ my time as I choose.”

“But Colonel Mowndes may change, or he may die, leaving you to the mercy of those two women. And God only knows what your fate would be then!”

“Let us hope for the best, my poor child. It is better that one should be free, than that both should wear the millstone of slavery about our necks. We shall write letters to each other, in which I shall tell you all. The colonel will write for me, and receive yours. He has promised that.

Now let us speak of yourself, dear Zoë. You know Mr. Sillton left me to intercede for his marriage with you this evening. He desires to shield you from every shadow of injustice and wrong.”

Zoë's face was suffused with a soft maiden blush.

“Why not delay my marriage till the end of the week? I have not the wedding garments; and what injustice and wrong can be in ambush for me now?”

“We cannot tell, my darling. There is danger in the very air of this city. An eleven hundred dollar bid was offered for you, and you were destined for a cotton-field. What if here, alone in this room, one should enter with violence, seize your free papers, seize *you*, under cover of darkness, and hurry you out of the city, and put you, helpless and friendless, into other shambles? Search your memory and recall brown Margeret, who was sold to a young Alabama planter for his unmarried wife. After two years he died; and he loved her so faithfully, that he gave her free papers, and made arrangements that she should hold his house as her own. She, ignorant and unsuspecting, returned to his friends here, from whom she was purchased. They stole her free papers, made her a slave again, put her in the kitchen as cook, cut off her long braids of wavy hair, and besides, treated her cruelly. Do you not remember?”

“Oh! yes, I remember.” A shudder ran over her—the sweet blushes paled to whiteness.

“Then, you know also how old Auntie Mamy paid for herself twice over, and only got free in her old age.”

“I know, mother. I know. There is no safety here. Mrs. Mowndes and Grace are ferocious. They would be more than willing to put me to torture. I consent to the marriage. Speak for me, mamma. Beg my preserver to trust in my eternal gratitude. Beg him to doubt not the love of a heart, wholly and forever his.”

Pauline passed out of the glass door, to the piazza. After a short delay, she returned with Mr. Sillton. For a few winged mo-

ments, he held his lovely bride to his breast, amid the blissful silence and overflowing tears of both.

Pauline received her from him, with the smiling admonition to have all in readiness at his return.

“It will be a short farewell,” he said; and with hurried steps descended into the street.

Pauline proceeded to her task of dressing-maid with gleeful alacrity. Again, in the dressing-room, she exposed to Zoë’s astonished view, a fragrant profusion of cut flowers, and other bridal decorations. From a jewelry case she drew a pearl necklace, the match to her ear-rings and bracelets, from which depended a locket, studded with the same silvery spheres. The chief treasure was enclosed within — the picture of her affianced husband. As Zoë beheld the proud and manly face, she held it to her lips reverentially, saying,—

“Dearer than all else, mamma. Dearer than all.”

“No more tears to-night, my darling,” said the mother, in cheerful reproof, as she gently withdrew the bright circlet from Zoë’s hands and fastened it about her snowy throat. From another receptacle issued a bridal veil of gossamer lace, and from another still, a wreath of white jasmine ready formed, to which the veil was soon attached.

Zoë suffered the wreath to be placed upon her head, and the folds of the misty lace to be adjusted about her rigid figure, in silent abstraction. The events of the day, so strange, rapid and overwhelming, nearly palsied perception. Pauline went on with her work; tacking spray after spray of sweet white blossoms, and their trailing delicate pinnate leaves here and there upon the flowing veil.

Zoë, suddenly awakened to reflection, asked abruptly,—

“Who brought all these beautiful and costly articles here, mamma? Who can love me so?”

“The fairies, Zoë. Let there be some mysteries with to-day’s terrible realities.”

“Am I to question nothing?”

“Nothing to-night, my queen. It is sufficient that they are yours.”

After the veil, the long white gloves reaching nearly to the elbow

— then the delicately embroidered Paris handkerchief. Nothing was wanting. Pauline hastened to place vases of odorous flowers about the room in every possible place. She had scarcely taken breath, when Mr. Sillton, accompanied by a clergyman in black silk robes, entered. They were attended also by a friend of the bridegroom, as witness.

“Who would have imagined this apartment held such transcendent loveliness?” said the witness in evening dress.

“The fates have been propitious to you, sir,” bowed the clergyman. “Such beauty and elegance are rarely combined.”

With affectionate deference, Mr. Sillton took his place by Zoë’s side. The rites of the ceremony soon performed on the part of the minister, were completed by a husband’s embrace and his low murmur,—

“My beloved wife.”

CHAPTER XV.

IN the ideal of Mrs. Lucy Steele, the South had been a beautiful dream; fraught with fragrant bowers of perpetual spring, with laughing skies and balmy airs, with luscious fruits, and with a glad-some rest from the ever-recurring and perpetual cares of Northern households. The subject of slavery never disturbed the peace of the domestic hearth, or vexed her own thoughts. Their tranquility was never roused to a consideration of its moral claims upon the Republic, or upon the individual conscience. So there was nothing in the Southern journey before her to be feared, nothing to sully bright anticipation, nothing to mar the serene depths of love for the husband of her choice.

Her ideal dream of South Carolina has been more than realized; aye, enhanced by charming reality. She passed from drifted snows to perpetual greenness. She entered the overseer’s unassuming house as her future home, without surprise or envy, in its comparison with the lordly mansion of “Le Grand Palais,” standing in solitary grandeur at a proper distance, both from herself and the slave quarters. She sat down with a smiling trust among her black

servants, accepting their new and strange offices with content. She partook of the novel viands placed before her, without her direction, pleased with the picturesque change in her life, and glad for the time to revel amid the ravishing beauty without.

For her rides and walks with William, she suffered herself to be robed or disrobed, feeling the delicate gentleness of the black hands that folded her garments about her, and sensible of the tenderness in the voices that addressed her as "my dear young missus," innocently supposing this to be the charmed lot of all the ladies in that happy South.

The little, half-naked, unkempt children of the negro quarters, hovered about her out-door wanderings, sure to gain a smile or a kind word, by some rollicking prank or childish giggle; they flocked about her door, with hands full of sweet flowers for "Miss Lucy," till her rooms were a bower of perfume. The slaves in the fields, dropped courtesies, or quickly bared their heads as she passed by, to look after her with loving, thoughtful eyes, or standing in their cabin doors, said always,—

"God bless you, honey."

In the later spring, she went to the "great house" with her husband, to inspect the rooms and assist in giving orders for its preparation for the return of the family from Europe, in the autumn. Led by the old gardener, she strolled through the gardens, filled with wonder and admiration of the unheard of floral variety. She traversed the ample, double piazzas, overhung with climbing roses of all hues; and her eyes ran over the level misty view of field, woodland and river, in rapturous delight. Under the guidance of Dorcas, the faithful housekeeper, who, with a solemn bunch of gingling keys at her belt, unlocked drawers, pantries and closets, she beheld such costly curtains, rolled carpets and French china, as her eyes had never before looked upon.

"My young lady, this is nothing to their house in Charleston," said Dorcas, relocking the doors and drawers.

"When do they occupy this, and when that?" asked Lucy.

"Marse Fairland comes here in de winter, and stays in Charleston in de summer, when they don't travel. Have been gone long time now. If you stay here this winter, you will see gayety enough. Ladies, gentlemen, dinners, horses, hounds, guns and sports a

plenty. De silver is in Charleston in de bank ; box upon box of it ; tea and dinner service, plates, cups, ladles, pitchers, goblets, candelabra, everything solid silver. Come, my young missus, look in de silver closet."

With an air of family pride, Dorcas selected the proper key from the others, walked on with a more stately step than before, and threw open the double door. The walls and shelves were covered with crimson velvet ; there were grooves and niches, formed each to receive the separate pieces of the costly ware, lined in the same manner. She opened drawers divided into compartments, and glowing in the red covering.

"We keeps it here t'rough de winter, missus, ready for de grand dinners and balls. Then in de spring it is packed in de boxes, and carried to Charleston."

The face of Dorcas suddenly changed, a glittering gleam of hatred shot from her eyes.

"This silver closet is full of dead men's bones and living men's groans. It took more slave flesh and blood than I can count, to buy de silver that fills it. You North people don't know nottin 'tall about it. My grandmother was Indian. They stole her from our tribe when she was leetle girl. Her father was chief. I'se half Indian ; see missus, my hair is straight and long."

She drew out the comb, and let the black mass fall over her shoulders.

"These people talk 'bout their blood. Mine is de aristocratic blood, a part kingly blood. These lands you see here, missus, all these t'ousand acres were de Indians. They belonged to my chief and his braves. They were ours. De white men stole our lands, and stole us. Now I am slave. My mother was slave, and my grandmother was slave. Sometimes, my dear young missus, I feel like I wish I had a tomahawk with a shinin edge, and that with it I would cut my way out to freedom again."

Dorcas raised herself erect ; her right arm made the fierce motion of brandishing the aboriginal weapon to the right and left, as she uttered the last words. Her sullen and unforgiving oratory, sent a thrill of awe over the face of Lucy. Dorcas was quick to perceive this change in her listener. In a calmer tone she continued,—

“Don’t be frightened, honey. See, I have no tomahawk, nothin but the keys. Come away to de library and rest you. What I said is only what I sometimes think in here,” striking her breast. “In here, all to myself.”

In the library, Dorcas wheeled an easy chair covered with brown linen, to the window for Lucy.

“There, sit down and look at these books ; never mind Dorcas any more. You can read all here. I don’t know one word.”

“No, Dorcas, I cannot look at books now. Sit down by me and tell me what I desire so much to know.”

“I never sit down before white missus. I stand and hear de lady.”

“How old was your Indian grandmother, when the whites stole her?”

“Very young, missus ; but de white man promised to make her his wife. She was beautiful, tall, straight, wore a crown of scarlet feathers on her black hair ; wore fringed leggins of soft, yellow deer skin and moccasins covered with beads. Her mantle was made of all de bright feathers of de forest birds, which de young warriors shot for her ; red, yellow, blue, green. She had bracelets of beads, and strings of all colored beads about her neck. She was de chief’s daughter, Miss Lucy.”

“Did he marry her?” innocently inquired Mrs. Steele.

After a mocking laugh, Dorcas cried.—

“Marry her? De Lord bless you, no. He lived with her and had children ; some he sold, and some he kept as slaves. My moder was one. Don’t you see, dearie?”

“No, no, Dorcas. I cannot understand such cruelty !”

“My sweet missus, that was but one cruelty. All we colored women are de same here. De white men love us, live with us and never marry us. Sell our pappoose. Sell us if they chose.”

Mrs. Steele buried her face and groaned. The thought of such a separation from “William” was agony.

“Look up, honey, you can’t be sold ; and poor dear child, do not try to bear our sorrows. De good Lord knows it all. We can do nothin but pray to him. Hear ! Marse Steele call his wife now.”

Lucy rose, and her face brightened at the sound of his voice. Dorcas drew her back one moment.

Dear missis, never repeat what Dorcas has said, to any person — not to Marse Steele. We all at de house and on de plantation love Marse Steele's young wife ; we all trus' you. Promise dearie, you will be our friend."

"Your secrets are safe with me. I will never betray you."

Mr. Steele and the servants had opened the boxes from Europe, and taken out the paintings and statuary. Their exquisite beauty was enrapturing, and restored Lucy to her usual cheerfulness. They went on hanging the pictures of choicest foreign scenery, palaces and cities. That day and days after were haunted with their bright visions.

The summer was passed in the pine-lands, whither, every season, many of the white families resorted to escape the deadly miasma of the rice grounds. Here Lucy met her first experience of Southern caste. Mr. Steele's abode was built quite removed from the proud hamlet of rough white-washed board-houses in the heart of the forest. She learned there was intention in this. Although her dress and manner equalled the inmates of the village, no ladies called at her door or sent invitations for the frequent merry-makings of the summer resort. In her rides and walks, none accosted her or noticed her presence. She spoke of it to her husband. He endeavored to reconcile the slight, by explaining that they were all strangers, and the Southern people were slow to form acquaintance. So, in the freshness and nearness of her affection for him, the hot season glided away pleasantly in the grassy glades of the hazy pines, sweetened by her husband's daily return from the plantation.

Fall came. They returned to "Le Grand Palais," in the expectation of the early return of Major Fairland and his family. Lucy offered her services to Dorcas in setting the great house to rights.

"No, honey. I can do all. De carpets are down, and de curtains are ready to hang. I knows their ways ; I can suit 'em well. Shall be all prepared, when de carriage drive 'em up to de gate. But come over to-morrow, pretend to give orders, let Dorcas take you to her room — Dorcas has something to show de dear missis there."

After the departure of Mr. Steele to his duties as overseer, Lucy presented herself to the housekeeper, and was taken into an upper

room in the long range of kitchens joining the mansion. The chamber was neatly furnished, and contained various mementos of the favor of the mistress and her family. Dorcas received her with delight, and a waiting-maid's attention. After she had done all, and more than was necessary to testify her love and respect for Mrs. Steele, she stood before her, holding a box in her hands.—

“Shall Dorcas tell the young lady a secret now? Is missis rested?”

“You can tell me anything, if you will sit down by me.”

Dorcas courtesied smiling, and brought a chair to Lucy's side, insisting she could not learn to sit before a white lady. She placed the box upon her knees.

“Now don't be scared, dearie, there is no tomahawk in this! This slow, long-sufferin' African blood which runs with my own, and the dreadful power of the 'buckra,' puts out de Indian fire. It only flashes up 'once in a way,' and dies then, as soon. Oh! but my dear missis, I want freedom, and I want my pappoose to to have freedom! Does Missis Steele know about them?”

“No, Dorcas, except the two girls here; neither have you mentioned your husband.”

“True, misses. Aleck was coachman, he was kicked by one of marse wicked horses, and he died. You say husband, dearie, but we slaves never have husbands; we cannot marry by de law; they sell us any time they choose. But my white folks let me have de man I love, and I had six pappoose. Laws! My oldest gal was born when I was fourteen year old. She had straight hair, and de nex' one had straight hair. So you see missis, they keep them to make ladies'maids for de family. De oder four with curly African hair, they sell 'way!” She clasped her hands, and looked upwards, tears rolling down her sorrowful face.

Sympathetic tears also filled Lucy's eyes, which, Dorcas perceiving, she took the handkerchief from Lucy and tenderly dried them away; grieving that she was always doing wrong. Then forcing back the wild memories, she declared she should call back the smiles, after a little.

Dorcas opened the box with a small key which she carried concealed in the bosom of her dress. To Lucy's surprise, it contained money — rolls of bills, gold and silver coin.

"There, my dear missis! beg you will count all de money in this trunk correct! I earn heap since marse and missis been 'way to Europe. I must be free — and this money and more, will buy myself, and then when I own myself, I can work day and night to buy my children."

Lucy, who like most other women, had never seen or held large amounts of money, was pleased with Dorcas' success. She said gleefully,—

"Why Dorcas! you have more money than I. How did you, a slave, accumulate so much?"

"May be not so much, missis; but I made sweetmeats, jellies and marmalade for de fine ladies, and they pay me. Sometimes they give me some orange, and I buy little sugar and make it for myself to sell by the jar. When marse and missis are home, I pull down my curtains after they is all bed, and make marmalade — all de ladies buy. Then when we have grand company, the ladies give me pieces of silver, and every cent goes in this ere trunk. Sometimes, in Charleston, I buys the orange and sits up most all night, in my rockin-chair, watchin and stirrin the sugar and orange, and thinkin of the happy day when I shall hand the whole price to marse and get my free papers. Do missis count it *true*, and I will 'member how much."

She poured the contents on the table. Bill by bill the amount increased.

"Two hundred dollars in bills!" said Lucy. She ran over the gold, placing it by itself. "Thirty-five dollars in gold!" she added. "Twenty dollars in silver!" She placed the old heavy copper cents in piles of ten each, making sixty-seven cents.

"How much, missis?"

"Three hundred and fifty-five dollars and sixty-seven cents!" answered Lucy, smiling.

"Is that a heap, missis? Let Dorcas say! Tree hundred and ninety-five dollars, never mind cents."

"No! Three hundred and fifty-five! Three hundred — and — fifty-five!"

"Tree hundred and sixty-five!" repeated the housekeeper.

"No! not right yet!" patiently replied Lucy. "Fifty — fifty-five!"

"Tree hundred fifty-five! Tree hundred fifty-five!" repeated Dorcas.

Lucy answered in the affirmative.

"Is tree hundred and fifty-five a half of twelve hundred, dear missis?"

"Not a half, Dorcas, but well towards it!" unwilling to discourage her. "Is that your value?"

"Yes, missis. You see I'se sound, and good housekeeper, take all care from the ladies. They read, sing, walk, ride. I do all."

She replaced the amount in the box, locked it carefully, and returned it to a safe hiding-place.

"I shall get twelve hundred dollars if I have to wait till I is old. If I could have the wages of my two girls, I should make up my price soon. Madge is hired out for four dollars, and Dell for three dollars a month. How much is that for a year Miss Lucy?"

"Eighty-four dollars! nearly a hundred."

"Well!" she replied with a deep sigh, "old mistress has all that, and to them its only a drop in the bucket."

She presented Lucy's parasol, inviting her to go down to the conservatory and garden, to inspect the new plants in pots, sent from Charleston during Lucy's absence. The conservatory windows were all open to the air, and the bewildering array of flowers of every fragrance and color, occupied some time. Dorcas knew the strangers' names, and interested Lucy with their probable uses during the winter.

"Mistress will bring a Paris florist, who will force them to blossom in abundance for de great parties."

They entered the house, traversed the chambers and parlors, resplendent to Lucy's view, with carpets, curtains, pictures and statuary. At last Dorcas ushered Lucy into the small family dining-room. The table was set for one. Dorcas stepped to the chair, and drew it back, saying with a courtesy,—

"Be seated, dear young lady. Take some refreshment. Let Dorcas be happy in waitin."

After some laughter and parleying, Lucy took the seat at dinner. There was a brace of delicately roasted pheasants, a choice bouquet by her china plate, a dessert of floating-island, creamy Charlotte-russe, orange marmalade, coffee that seemed ready to filter

through the thin waxen china cup, small iced cakes and a glass of purple wine. Dorcas served, changed plates, went and came, ever taking her stand at the back of Lucy's chair.

"Partake, my dear Madam Steele, of all before you. Do your servant that honor."

"Do myself the honor and pleasure, rather say!" as she arose from the collation.

Dorcas detained her by the window, and remained standing silently by.

"What is it?" asked Lucy. "Is there another secret? Speak on, Dorcas," holding her dark brown hand between her own.

"No secret, darlin; but somethin that will surely come to pass! You will not 'low de truth to vex you?"

"No, Dorcas."

"Well then, let not your heart be troubled about this fam'ly when they come. They is so proud, so blue blood, so debble, that they will not notice you, honey, any more than their slaves. This dinner is your last one in this 'Grand Palais,' this winter. You is young and han'som, like a queen, but they will ride past you, and never see you. They will never 'low you to walk up the marble steps to the grand door, and you shall never come at all, except to wait on 'em. Never mind, dearie, never you be their servant. Don't look after 'em wishful, or cast down your proud eyes before 'em. Don't grieve for their pleasures, nor covet their possessions. There's a curse on 'em."

Indignant blood mounted to Lucy's temples.

"As to birth, or blood, as they call it, my pedigree will compare with any. My mother's lineage traces back to the 'May Flower,' and my father has the coat of arms of his English ancestors. But I have not yet learned that blood or wealth should exempt one from polite courtesy and civility to others. Dorcas, you have done me a favor. I shall be on my guard."

During the year, by the influence of Mr. Steele, Edmund Stone had removed South, as pastor to the slaves on the plantations "Success" and "Snowfield." He occupied a low-browed house on a high bank, sighting the river, and overshadowed by live-oaks. Soon after his arrival, the Rev. Stone's directions were received from his friend, Overseer Steele, after this manner. He rode over

to see the "man of God," settled in his queer parsonage, and wore a broad-brimmed planter's hat, and high boots over his pantaloons, carrying his long, black, field whip in hand. The Rev. Stone brought chairs upon the weather-worn boards of the roomy piazza, in sight of the early cotton-pickers in the whitening fields. Sinking down in the chair, his head almost lost between his shoulders, he rolled his prominent, servile eyes upon Mr. Steele, as upon his kindest benefactor.

"I never expected to see this interesting sight!" pointing to the cotton-pickers.

"I suppose you never would have seen it, if you had not given the right construction to the Bible and Constitution. This is your reward."

"I trust I shall ever be faithful to national, as well as religious interests."

"How do you find things? Like the climate, and this herd of black faces about you?"

"The climate is like wine to the weary; but these black faces are all alike to me. I cannot tell them apart, or scarcely the old from the young."

"It is often so; but they will come out in their strong individuality, after a time. Does mammy, the old cook, suit you?"

"Yes, I'm learning to like her bacon and hominy, with occasionally a fried chicken. She can't keep the house neat; she's too old; can't go about on her crutch."

"You must have a handsome young negro wife. You know you found marriage difficult North, amongst those dainty white misses. You must have a dark wife, Edmund; no need of marriage here. She'll tidy you up; and if she don't, why take the whip."

The pastor's astonishment became evident to the overseer.

"Oh, you'll get used to color soon enough. Amalgamation is the rule here. These Southerners cry out 'Amalgamation' against the North, but I always laugh in my sleeve when I hear it. Amalgamation is a Southern practice, not a Northern, and they knew it."

"I rode over to instruct you how to preach to your parish. I expect I know them better than a green hand."

Any suggestions will be thoughtfully received, William."

"Very well. In the first place, you need write no sermons. Use the simplest every-day words, when you want them to understand; also the shortest sentences. Preach hell-fire *strong!* Make the infernal regions *deep* and *broad!* Blow up the fires, old fellow, hot and red! Shake 'em over it, if they dare set up their own thoughts or wills. By so doing you will play into the hands of Fairland, the master, and render the overseer's task easier. For heaven, pile up the golden crowns and spread out the green fields, where each one will bask in the sun, and rest forever. Coax 'em with heaven, and drive 'em with hell. You know how to do it if anybody does," he added, with a loud, ostentatious laugh that the cotton-picker's heard.

"There seems to be a difficulty in singing the hymns, as they can't read."

"Of course they can't read! The devil would be lo pay if they could! Line 'em out, Edmund, line 'em out! Line out some new ones about the wrath of God and damnèd souls!"

"Certainly, Mr. Steele; my own memory will supply them."

"Another thing," resumed the overseer; "give them prayer-meetings — encourage them all to pray and speak. Let 'em shout, jump, or lose their strength,— anything to keep 'em up to religion. But mind one thing. Edmund, you must always be there yourself, for that is our law. There shall be no gathering of negroes without the presence of a white person. Do they bring you anything to help you live?"

"Yes; some articles out of their poverty."

"Poverty! Edmund. Poverty is their normal inheritance. They are property themselves. Make it a rule that they shall bring you so many eggs a week, and so many wild ducks and fowls; put the number high enough. If you have more than a supply, box them up and send them to Charleston, in exchange for coffee, tea and sugar. Your salary is small, but you can manage to lay up as much as you would in the North. There are no fashions to follow here — no company to entertain." Striking his host playfully with the black whip, "Old fellow, you will lead a roystering life here. Do as you please, and no sermons to write — so good day." As he mounted his horse, he turned to say, "Come over and see

us — Lucy will give you a welcome. Let one of the boys drive you over in the mule cart.”

After Major Fairland's family were settled at “Le Grand Palais,” Lucy, forewarned by Dorcas, set herself about making her own observations. Dorcas was right. Festivities of all kinds crowned the winter days. Gayety and mirth overflowed at the “great house.” But never an invitation, a call or recognition of any kind relieved the monotony of Lucy's solitude. Of a Sabbath, the elegant carriages of the master of the place, and those of their guests, driven by liveried coachmen, passed her haughtily on the roadside, without the slightest salutation.

She observed, also, that her husband seldom or ever entered the abode of Major Fairland. She had repeatedly seen William stand at the foot of the marble steps most obsequiously, with hat in hand, and with head bared like the slaves, holding the communications necessary between master and overseer. Once, she saw him stand for some moments in a dripping rain, in that manner, without an invitation to ascend to the shelter of the piazza. This act roused Lucy to an expression of long repressed indignation, and of the deep abhorrence she felt at his humiliation.

“William,” she said, “why did you stay at Fairland's gate bare-headed in the rain?”

“Because it is customary, my dear.”

“How can you submit to such servility? You are counted no better than an African slave.”

“African slaves do not have a salary, and I do. I buy and sell negroes myself. I could not do that North. It is a profitable business all round.”

“Profit will never heal *my* wounded self-respect. William, we are neither one of us considered any better than Mr. Fairland's bloodhounds, required to lick their master's feet. It is unbearable! Let us change our business, and leave this land of lords and serfs.”

“That would not be for my interest at present. It would be impossible. I should be obliged to sell Binah and her girl, and their two children. You see the children are getting more valuable every year, and you know I am getting sixty dollars a year

for their services besides. I should have to sell Marquis, and lose his wages every year — two hundred and forty dollars.”

“O William! I do not believe in holding slaves. It is cruel and wrong!”

“Take care, Lucy! You are on dangerous ground. Then you have lost faith in the Bible? Strange! You knew we were going amid slavery at the time of our marriage.”

“I had not witnessed the operation of the system personally, then, his wife replied; “and more, I did not expect we were to become slavish ourselves.”

William Steele had at least a respect for the uprightness of his wife. She was the only one whose judgment he feared. He replied soothingly,—

“Come now, Lucy, reflect. In a few years I shall own a plantation. You can have your servants, and perhaps your carriage. Let me explain to you how our matters stand now;” and he opened to her the secret of his possessions. She was surprised, but not satisfied; discontent was not allayed. Within her heart, William Steele had gradually lost ground. Lucy Clarendon could not love the crime that God abhorred, and from which angels veiled their faces. However, this was *her* secret. She settled into a quiet endurance of evils she could not remedy; and her husband was too much involved in his duties, and in getting, gain to probe her wishes farther.

As to the absolute cruelty practised on the gangs in the field, she knew nothing. When riding away from home, occasional screams reached her ears; but having a dread of suffering, she would ride away without investigation. Latterly, William came home with blood stains upon his cuffs and garments. To her inquiries he replied indifferently, that he was subject to attacks of nose bleeding; that his head found relief from it.

Thus the months and years glided on. It was their custom to visit Rev. Stone twice or thrice each season. Lucy rode her pony over alone, through the pine woods, dallying among them at her pleasure to gather either jasmine or holly berries. In the evening William came for her; they galloped home together. On one of these visits, Lucy had taken the route more leisurely, tempted by the cool greenness, the flowers and moss. Nearing the parsonage, a

thicket of beauty walled in each side of the sandy road. At her left, shielded by a yellow jasmine in full bloom, emerged a slender, dark brown girl. Half hidden by the viny curtains, she beckoned to Lucy, and then glided back to her retreat. Lucy reined her pony on to the greensward, around the tree into the green chamber, enveloped by the thick mantle of vines. The girl quickly threw her arms around her in the saddle, and raised an entreating look to her.

“Oh, my dear young missus! I hear you is so good! beg you to listen — beg you to help! I is libin wid Marse Stone. I is his black wife. He —”

“No, no, it cannot be!” quickly answered Lucy. “I have been to the minister’s house every season! I have never seen you there. I fear you are deceiving me.” For a moment she shrunk from her embrace, as from a maniac’s clutch.

“My sweet young missus, I is not decebin you. Do trus’ Rachel! see how my heart is brake.”

A flood of tears fell upon Lucy’s riding habit.

“Marse Stone dribe me ’way jes fore de lady come, tell me if I don’t stay out of sight till you is gone, he will gib me de raw-hide. ’Tis de trut’, my missus. Listen to Rachel. Had young husban’— tall, handsome, lib wid him long time. Wese lube one ’nother. Dey tuk him ’way, dunno where. Bring me here, me one all ’lone. Make me lib wid dat ugly white man, and —”

“Who made you live with him?”

“Marse Stone make me hisself. When I cry an’ grieve, he take de black whip. Look here, missus.”

Quick as thought she bared her shoulders; and for the first time Lucy looked upon scars and welts inflicted upon a human form. Rachel proceeded,—

“All dat did’n do no good. I grieve in de woods. I grieve when he don’ see me. I want you to buy me, dear missus. I can’t lib wid dat man.” Her voice sank to a whisper. “I hate him! I hate him!” She sobbed again, “beg you buy me, missus. Work all my life for you.”

“Tell me who brought you here?” demanded Lucy, a dark suspicion flashing across her mind.

“Don’t ask me dat, dear missus; neber min’ who.”

"Tell me, Rachel. I shall never expose your confidence. I am your friend. Tell me who?"

"One ob de oberseer."

"Which overseer? I must know. Do not fear."

"De oberseer at 'Grand Palais!'" whispered the frightened girl.

"Very well," coldly replied Lucy, controlling herself with a strong will, which of late had grown stronger. She leaned over in the saddle, and said in a low tone in her petitioner's ear,—

"Poor girl, I cannot buy you, but I can do something better. I can tell you how to free yourself. Follow the north star to Philadelphia. Travel by night, and hide by day. Heaven will open the way. Now hear, Rachel, and remember. Pretend to Edmund Stone to be content, satisfied; pretend to love him. Laugh and be merry. Get him to talk about the North. Lay your plans, and keep them in your own breast. After I have made one more visit to the minister, look in this hollow tree upon which the vine hangs. Money will be there. It will be yours. Take it to spend on your way, to buy bread, and to pay some slave to help you along, and go when you are ready. Now, Rachel, keep the secret, and be careful. Wait here till I turn the corner near the house, under the live-oak."

The dinner was waiting when Lucy arrived. Old mammy sat low down on the hearth before the fire, roasting and toasting and turning, to keep the viands hot. She hobbled about on her crutch as lively as possible, brought in fried chicken, roast ducks, hoe-cake, and a nicely browned pound cake from the safe. Rev. Stone cheerfully assisted.

While sitting at table, Lucy condoled the loneliness of Mr. Stone.

"You must," she said sympathetically, "be sorely tried with such poor help as mammy offers; although she doubtless does her best."

"Mrs. Steele," (he laid down his fork, and peered into her face with a brazen staring look,) "it has ever been my privilege and pleasure, to suffer for Christ's sake. I am alone with mammy, it is true, but my solitude is mitigated by the satisfaction of knowing that I am laboring in the Lord's vineyard, and that my life is dedicated to His glory."

“A comforting assurance, Mr. Stone; but you must be an excellent housekeeper, judging from the order and neatness of your rooms.”

“Years ago, in my scholastic pursuits, I gave personal attention to the arrangements of my rooms — for you understand, dear Mrs. Steele, that this deformity with which Heaven has been pleased to endow me, precludes the hope of the near wifely companionship, so dear to the Christian heart. I am a lonely and unloved man, and my own crucified earthly affections, I trust, are transferred to the safe and *only* keeping of my Savior.”

Lucy was seized with a sudden fit of coughing, and buried her contemptuous smiles in her handkerchief. After recovering, she suggested that a solitary life like his, might be conducive to greater holiness.

“Mrs. Steele, I would most gratefully acknowledged that as my experience. In a solitary life the passions are hushed to peace, inordinate desires are quelled, the sacred volitions of the pious soul go up to God untrammelled by sinful desire. It is sometimes good for man to be alone.”

The blood mounted to her forehead and temples, at such unheard of audacity. Again recourse was had to coughing and her handkerchief, in which she whispered to herself,—

“The hypocrite!”

After dinner, he was blandly persuaded by his guest to leave the table to mammy and herself; she, warmly pressing him to lay aside family cares for one short afternoon. Old mammy was delighted with her assistant; during an excursion to the kitchen, Lucy found opportunity to ask the needful question, under mammy’s turban.

“Does Rachel live here?”

The scared old soul threw up her hands, and groaned.

“Tell me!” reiterated Lucy, “does Rachel live here?”

Old mammy seized Lucy’s hand in her withered fingers, and whispered,—

“Muss say de trut’, dear missis,” nodding low and solemnly. She clung to her, moaning, “De pretty young missis wont tell on poor ole mammy?”

Again Lucy’s head bent to the faded turban.

“Is Rachel his wife?”

The old head nodded low and silently.

Lucy took a turn back to the table; found Edmund Stone's stump figure exercising on the piazza. Another errand carried her to the kitchen. She gave the crippled old slave a quick caress, and spoke in the negro dialect, close to her ear.

“Don't be afeered, poor old mammy! Lucy will never tell—safe in here,” pointing to her heart; and flew away to walk the piazza with the clergyman.

After Mr. Steele's arrival, the conversation became spiritual and ecclesiastic. The rapid growth of the church, North and South, was a subject of congratulation. Grace was said at supper, and devout thanks offered by her husband. Before mounting their horses for home, Edmund knelt in family prayers,—prayers for all nations, all persons in sickness, in bereavement, for those broken in spirit, for the destitute, and for those without any helper.

Lucy's smouldering scorn broke into fresh flames upon hearing these holy, gentle words, on his sacrilegious lips. She did not pray with them, but sent up her lonely petitions, winged by her pity and her tears, for the desolate, spirit-broken, dark brown girl of the jasmine covert.

The crucial test of Mrs. Steele's love, pride, womanhood and religious nature, was severe; but her crystalline quality of mind was not in the least muddled. In weighing the events of her Southern life, the revelations of to-day, right and wrong retained their value. The results were legitimate; authoritively deduced from the premises. She could not love deception, cruelty or despotism. With these, pride forbade compromise or complaint. Her own womanhood was trampled and debased in the person of Rachel, and she doubted not in the person of all the slave women about her. Her religious nature revolted at the subterfuges of the worshippers of Him whose throne is Justice and Truth. The tender trustful affection for her husband, like the purple bloom of ripened fruit, had been rudely brushed away; the true color of his depraved character became more and more apparent.

William Steele, intent on his profession, and grown more callous and brutish by daily acts, missed not the tender thrill of

his wife's voice, he missed not the light-hearted gayety from her laugh, nor the eager kindling of her eye that formerly met every return of his footstep homeward. He knew not that she had settled into a calm and silent detestation of his course of life, and her own surroundings.

Rachel watched the last flutter of Lucy's riding habit, as her pony parted the veil of moss depending from the live-oak at the corner; then threw herself upon the ground in her jasmine covert, to untangle the strange advice of her new-found friend. Rapid thoughts revolved confusedly. She had already forgotten the word "Philadelphia." She remembered "North Star;" and her gaze went hastily up through the tall pine branches, meeting only deep, blue patches of sky between their openings. She would ask mammy. All her secrets and sorrows were safe with that poor old body; and true enough, the memory flashed upon her that mammy had traveled "Norf" with her mistress many times in her young days.

She was also to feign attachment for Edmund Stone, and to draw him into conversation about the North. A suggestive smile played over her face. She would deceive him — why not? A slave's life was one tissue of deception from the nature of things. A slave must appear to love and revere his master, when hatred lay at his heart's core. A slave must sing and be merry, when a death sorrow tugged at his heart strings.

"I could do dat," she said to herself, "dough I hate him! hate him! hate him!"

Thoughts of her dark slave-husband, lithe and agile as a deer, straight as a pine and pleasant as the sunshine, drove all else from her mind. A flood of tears dropped upon the ground; her resolution to fly away and make herself free became firmer than ever.

The drama should open that very afternoon with William Steele, the heartless man who had torn her from all she loved. She knew that the way of his approach to the clergyman's abode, was in a different direction from that of his wife; that he came in a by path over rough fields, and returned by the pleasant piny road. Her last effort before going out upon her purpose was the usual wrestling in a rude prayer for aid in the undertaking.

"De good Lord show de way. De blessed Marster in Heaben

keep 'way de bloodhoun'. Tak' 'way de cloud in de dark night from de Nort' Star Merciful Sabior, don' let Rachel's foot git in de buckra net. Blessed Jesus, let de poor slabe go free. King Jesus wid de golden crown, 'member Guy, all I lub on dis cold eart'. Blessed Spirit, tell him I is gone, gone 'way."

Her prayer was mingled with groans, tears and agonized rocking of her figure, to and fro. She arose, dried her eyes with her dress. The wild bees' hum caught her ear.

"De bees busy. Rachel mus' busy too."

Keeping out of sight of the house, she went across the fields and woodland patches to Mr. Steele's bridle path, and waited his coming. At the sound of his galloping horse, she fell to pulling flowers; and met him with a courtesy, and a smiling "how d'e master."

"Hey! girl, you seem in better humor. Guess the minister's whip has made you sing a different tune. *Like* Master Stone now, hey?"

She dropped another courtesy, saying with a happy face,—

"Come to tell Marser Steele, I likes Marse Stone now. I pull flowers for his table."

"You like Marse Stone better'n Guy?" he asked.

"Better'n all, Marse Steele. Him nice gentleman," dropping her courtesy.

"So so, gal, you'll fare better then," he replied. "Better look after your soul, gal. Salvation's in the preacher's house,—get saved while you're with him, from the sinner's hell. Pray fast; and mend your ways." He galloped on.

During the intervals between visits, Edmund Stone was astonished by the change in Rachel. Attentive to his wants, and affectionate in her manner, she caused his days to glide by without a care. She arose singing with the lark, laid dewy flowers on the breakfast table, arranged his small theological library, and called him "an angel of de Lord." He doted upon her, calling her his "household angel." In his walks, she followed him like a faithful spaniel; drew him in at eve from the dangerous damp, and seating herself by his side, begged him to tell her all about his North people; how he learned so much wisdom. As she often stood combing his wiry hair, she would ask him how he could come

South to love Rachel and deal so kindly with her? She expressed contrition for her past sins, and desired to be saved by his holy prayers.

On Sundays, she insisted upon remaining at home, to superintend a roasting duck, a sweet potato pone, or the berry dumpling; and, as she said, to have them smoking on the table when he stepped over the threshold.

These were the opportunities in which she held secret council with old mammy — learned of Philadelphia and New York; besides various other suggestions of worth to a fugitive.

About the time for the next stated visit to the parsonage, Lucy learned that her husband and his friend Stone would make a journey to Charleston soon after. She wrote a pass for Rachel, in excellent imitation of the minister's chirography, and appended his signature. This pass ran for six days. She examined her purse. The bills and coin were all too large for the ignorant girl who could not count twelve. Dorcas' box of freedom savings came to mind. She stepped over to "Le Grand Palais," and exchanged twenty dollars for small bits and dollar bills. These she placed in a small purse attached to a long cord for the neck. Galloping away on her pony, her cheeks flushed with excitement, she neared the jasmine vine. She pulled a few flowers, and rode around beneath its shelter, into the open arms of Rachel.

"Muss see you 'gain, my dear missis, count ob de good news. I'se seen Guy, my Guy, my true lub! De blessed Lord sen' Guy, I sure!"

"Did Mr. Stone get an inkling of his visit? If so, Rachel, we are all undone. Do say quickly how and when you saw him."

"Don' be afeered honey! we is all saf't, You see one night when wese all bed, dere wer' great rappin to de doo', and a cryin,—

'Do bressed marster come to de rice mill! big Sam is mos' die! Beg de preacher of de gospel to pray ober him body! De minister be better'n de doctor. Sam be hoopin and hollerin on de floo'! rollin all 'bout. Wese gib de marster two duck — tree — ten — tirteen duck to come and pray de Lord for Sam!'"

Marse Stone dressed and went down. Den I hear a small voice at de window call "Rachel, Rachel!" She caught hold of Lucy's

riding habit, "Bless de Lord, O my dear missis, dat voice was Guy. I hurry out, he hold me in his arms, and cry as his heart muss broke. He trabel long way, swift as de deer to see me. I speak soft to him, and tell all ; how I gwine 'way, how I can't be minister's wife. Den he say he stay in de woods and go too. I say no ! Guy, wait ! I go first, dey will hunt both more dan me, one ! Den I give him corn-cake, bacon, two fried pheasant, and some of Marse Stone's brandy to keep him up when he trabel back dat same night. I promise to be nobody wife 'cept him, and I shall wait for him in de Nort' till I die. Den when I cry so, he kiss my eyes, and say 'good-bye.' Oh ! do, sweet missis, 'member Guy for poor Rachel !"

"Yes, I will ; but how about Sam, and Minister Stone ?"

"I find all out, honey. Sam made b'leve sick, to get de minister 'way, so Guy could see me. I went down to de mill, to come home wid Marse Stone, and I hear Sam hoopin long way off. Marse Stone pray, and all de rest shout. When I come, he growed better, said he was most cure. Said de preacher had work a meracle. Den he holler, 'Rachel, you mus' lub and 'vere Marse Stone.' Den turn his head, and wink at me."

"So we have nothing to fear. Mr. Steele and Mr. Stone are going to Charleston to be absent three days ; they go the day after to-morrow in the afternoon. That same night after bed-time, Rachel, leave his house, travel all night, look out for the patrol. Here is a purse of money that will last you more than all the way. Go to colored people in Philadelphia ; they will direct you. Your pass is good six days after you start. When your pass is done, change your name ; and do not expose yourself. Farewell ! my poor girl."

Lucy spoke in a tremulous voice, holding both Rachel's hands in hers,—

"God watch over you !"

She rode hastily away, lest the evidence of emotion should betray her.

Lucy observed that the apartments at the parsonage were more neatly arranged than ever before.

Mr. Steele arrived earlier than usual. The party took seats on the broad, low-roofed piazza, where glimpses of the blue river, and

of the green, lush waves of the rice swamps attracted the eye. Upland cotton-fields were set against a background of distant amethystine haze. Ancient live-oaks over-arched the weather-worn roof, and solemnly swung their gray beards of moss about the eaves and hard-trodden paths. The bland, caressing breeze wafted in the deep melancholy music of baying hounds, and the sweet pathos of a rich, flute-like African voice, extemporizing a mournful song.

These measured sounds formed an undertone to the brilliant *Capriccios* of mocking birds in the oaks; *Capriccios* embellished with trills, *appeggios* and inimitable *cadenzas*.

"What a paradise of golden sunlight, spontaneous beauty, and dreamy indolence this South is!" ejaculated Lucy. "Its sights and melody creep over the senses like balm, and lull them to a rapturous languor, beyond the power of language!"

"Glad to hear my wife express pleasure and satisfaction with the South, my dear," replied her husband.

"I was speaking of its *natural* attractions," replied Lucy.

"Slavery may well be considered one of the natural attractions of the South, for it is coexistent with its settlement. The very life of South Carolina is dependent upon it. In 1788, General Pinkney declared in the debate on the Constitution, that "South Carolina and Georgia cannot do without slaves, and the slave trade." These two States would have seceded then and there from the Union, without slavery, and the slave trade. They have improved and beautified the land, making it just what you admire."

"Then if the South cannot do without slavery, what would be its condition if sometime it should be abolished?"

"A preposterous idea, Lucy. It is imbedded in the Constitution, and Congress cannot lay a disturbing finger upon it. The meddling with it is exclusively a State right, and of course, no Slave State will cut off its own right hand, or sever the artery containing its life's blood!"

"But have religion and humanity nothing to do with a Constitution and laws for a republic?"

"My dear Mrs. Steele," earnestly interposed the host, "allow me to quote to you the judicial opinion of our god-like Webster, in a speech delivered at Niblo's garden in New York, and you will ac-

knowledge with Mr. Steele and myself, a justifiable pride in his majestic and impressive oratory."

He brought the speech from his study, and read,—

"Slavery, as it exists in the States, is beyond the reach of Congress. It is a concern of the States themselves; they have never submitted it to Congress, and Congress has no rightful power over it."

According to this lofty and candid judgment, the Constitution holds slavery "*in perpetuum*."

"But have religion and humanity nothing to do with drafting a Constitution, and shaping Republican laws?" she queried. "I appeal to you, Mr. Stone, as an expounder of sacred ethics!"

She said this with a conciliatory smile, at the same time extending her hand for the speech on annexation.

Ever taken captive by the smile of woman, his sallow face twisted into its sickly reflection, while he answered evasively,—

"Mrs Steele, a more religious people cannot be found than the North; and almost universally the church champions our Southern institution; and our Northern politicians, nursed in this religious sentiment, generally strive to propitiate the good will of the Slave States, by their adherence to Constitutional obligations. Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, when he first entered Congress, declared of slavery, that 'While it subsists, and where it subsists, its duties are presupposed and sanctioned by religion.'"

"But you know, Edmund, many Southerners sharply dissented from Mr. Everett; and John Randolph of Virginia said with keen sarcasm, 'Sir, I envy neither the head nor the heart of that man from the North who rises here to defend slavery upon principle.' You see the North must have every subject, institution and object decorated and garnished with some pious vine, which sprung from 'May Flower' seed. Their religion is a parasite—like this gray moss swaying about the piazza here, with this exception, that it draws *its* life from *every* kind of wood—from the apple tree to the oak and pine. Their pious excuse of brotherly good wishes swings in your face alike from the church spire and the gallows—from the flagstaff of freedom and the lash of the slave-driver's black whip. They chafe under self-inflicted torments about right and wrong,—then sanction black deeds, and mollify conscience by

prayers and hymns. I have come to the conclusion with Mr. Pinkney of this State, in the debate upon slavery in the Constitution ; that 'Religion and humanity have nothing to do with this question. Interest alone is the governing principle with nations.'"

"That is truth!" croaked the voice of Rev. Stone. "The true interest in the North produces the heaviest parasitic fleece of brotherly love for the South, and its domestic institution. They would be unwilling to lose the Southern market for their manufactures."

"My dear husband," said Lucy, laying her hand upon his shoulder,— "I too have read those Constitutional debates lent you by Mr. Fairland. There was one outspoken Southerner among them— Colonel George Mason of Virginia. He says— 'Every master of a slave is born a petty tyrant. They bring the judgment of Heaven on a country. Now hear!' he continues— 'As nations cannot be punished in the next world; they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins, by national calamities.'"

Holding one of her auditors by her palm, and the other by the pleasing gleam of her eye, she asked,—

"Is this a prophecy, Mr. Stone? Does it not become this nation to free itself from a crime, around which will swirl in a blinding storm the wrath of a long-suffering God?"

"Nonsense, Lucy," angrily retorted her husband. "Do you not witness the increasing prosperity of our country from that very day on which these venomous words were uttered? Lucy, I am startled. You are an agitator! a fanatic! On this piazza, your words are falling upon friendly ears, but I entreat you, nay, I demand that such inflammatory language shall never fall again from your lips. If you persist, the prison here, or immediate banishment will be your punishment. From either sentence, I, even I, could not save you."

He was excitedly pacing the piazza. Lucy rose, and with a merry laugh took his arm.

"Our social intercourse is not so extended that there is danger of a conflagration!" she remarked soothingly. "I should judge that the air of this State is foul. The atmosphere is inflammatory, not my language. Doubtless I should wear on my lips a wire

gauze protector, like that on Sir Humphrey Davy's safety lamp, used by the miners in the explosive gasses of the mines."

"Wear anything, my dear, that will muzzle or stifle the dangerous utterances in which you have just indulged. The South will not have agitation. Through Congress it has laid its silent hand on the lips of the North. Did I not read to you the resolutions of Charles G. Atherton of New Hampshire, which passed by an overwhelming majority?"

"I concluded, William, that concerned men, politicians — not women. They have slipped my memory."

"They imprison and banish *women* here," he replied. "Remember now. The climax of Atherton's resolutions is, 'That every petition, memorial, resolution, proposition or paper, touching, or relating in any way whatever to slavery, as aforesaid; that is, with a view of disturbing or overthrowing that institution, or the abolition thereof, shall, on the presentation thereof, without any further action thereon, be laid on the table, without being debated, printed or referred.'

"This is Congressional logic. Now every State has a right to make its own special provisions against agitation. Some of these provisions are bowie-knives, revolvers, the gallows, prisons, and rewards of five to ten thousand dollars for the heads or bodies of agitators."

Lucy stepped in front of her husband, and playfully holding him by both lapels, said archly,—

"I stand appalled! Henceforth I become a disciple of Sir Humphrey Davy! Allow me to retire from the contemplation of barbarism, to dressmaking for old mammy."

"A much more fitting employment for my wife, than striving with her delicate hands to loosen the corner-stone of the Constitution."

She flew away, and brought back to Rev. Stone a stout, new, gingham dress pattern, querying,—

"If the making of it for old mammy would be an offense to 'State Rights,' or endanger the Constitution? Old mammy is so good to you, keeps your rooms so neatly, I wish to reward her fidelity."

A hearty laugh followed, and tranquility was restored.

“Go look in Edmund’s bedroom,” suggested Mr. Steele, “and see what a blessing old mammy is to him.”

Lucy entered, and saw thrown over the foot of the French bedstead a pink gingham dress and a pretty white apron, — a casualty which she fully understood. There were snowy pillows and counterpane curtains gracefully looped, clean matting, orderly books, and a bouquet of sweet flowers in a vase upon the stand.

“Poor Rachel,” she soliloquized ; “a victim to ‘State Rights.’”

She stepped upon the piazza.

“Mr. stone, I congratulate you upon your home comforts. Old mammy deserves a new dress in return for her neat-handed care for you. Husband, you could not have procured a better house-keeper for Mr. Stone than mammy. Adieu.”

Left to themselves, Mr. Stone unburdened his troubled soul to his guest, respecting a letter which the boy brought from the post-office the day previous. It had been opened, and was enclosed to him in another envelope.

“How is this?” the clergyman inquired. “Can our letters be examined by prying eyes in this manner?”

The overseer took it for examination.

“The post-mark is Charleston on the outer sheet, and Alderbank, of Massachusetts on the inner. It is from Richard Beame, that rascally fanatic and disturber of the public peace. He arraigns your conscience, and entreats you to leave surroundings which callous every righteous aspiration, and brutalize every human emotion. He begs you to go back to your trust in the North. The infernal meddler. Haman’s gallows is ready for him here, if we could trap him to come down.

“Ah! he knows better than to visit these parts,” chuckled Mr. Stone ; “but how is it, William? Must all our letters go through this ordeal? and what will be the result?”

“Well, I can explain in few words. The South will not have insurrectionary papers and letters sent into their midst. Don’t you remember the burning of the mails in Charleston a few years since, and what a hue and cry was made in Congress about it? Jackson’s message favored a repression of incendiary matter by law. Calhoun had sagacity enough to perceive that if Congress could decide what incendiary publications *are*, they may next decide what

incendiary publications are *not*; and thus flood the mails with real, or covert abolitionism. He advocated this principle. 'It belongs to the States, and not to Congress, to determine what *is*, or what is *not* calculated to disturb their security.' Webster opposed this, as abridging the freedom of speech and of the press. Clay also opposed. Mr. Buchanan supported the measure, as '*demande*d by the necessities of the country.' The debate lasted for weeks. Amos Kendall, Postmaster-General, neither blamed or approved of an inspection of the mails; but he said, 'we owe an obligation to the *laws*; but a higher one to the communities in which we live; and if the *former* be permitted to destroy the *latter*, it is patriotism to disregard them.' He said the postmaster's 'justification must be looked for in the character of the papers detained, and the circumstances by which they are surrounded.'

Now, Edmund, how are postmasters to know the character of papers without opening and inspecting them? Your name at Charleston is a new one; you are comparatively a stranger; but being employed at 'Le Grand Palais,' whose master is a fire eater, they send you this letter opened, as a warning for the future."

"What will be necessary to allay their distrust of me?" timidly inquired the clergyman.

"We are going to Charleston, and we must explain to the postmaster. I shall account for you, and you must write a blood and thunder letter to that imp of hell — Beame. I'd like to put a bullet through him myself. Ah! we'll make it all right, old boy. If I can manage that irrepressible wife of mine, I shall be all right all round. Jupiter! we've managed adroitly to conceal from her your possession of a black wife. If she knew the truth, her foot would never cross your threshold; and I should be in hotter water by several degrees Fahrenheit than I am now."

"I should mourn her absence, for her entrance to my parsonage is like the dawn of a bird-caroling morning, or the flower-burst of an apple orchard. There is a breezy fragrance about her ways, and a crisp freshness in her independent thought and expression. I watch for her, till I hear the 'fleet step and joyous bound' of her pony, till —

'I see the jaunty hat, the plume
Swerve bird-like in the joyous gale;

The cheeks lit up to burning bloom ;
The young eyes sparkling through the veil.' ”

“ Ha ! ha ! has Rachel found a rival ? Perhaps it's time for the green-eyed monster to dash out in my defense.”

“ By no means ; don't trot out the monster yet ; no necessity. Rachel is the angel of my home. Rachel's presence is like an Indian summer, in whose idle haze my moody soul is lulled to happiness and rest. She has forgotten Guy ; and the warmth of her tropical nature is lavished upon me. My life is wrapped in hers. I shall buy and own her.”

Lucy's quick step arrested farther conversation. The ring of cups and table-ware, and the stumping of mammy's crutch announced the tea hour.

“ Look here ! I've read Daniel Webster's whole speech, and find that he says,” (holding up the paper and reading), “ Slavery has arrested the religious feeling of the country ; it has taken hold on the consciences of men. He is a rash man, indeed, and little conversant with human nature ; and especially has he a very erroneous estimate of the character of the people of this country, who supposes that a feeling of this kind is to be trifled with or despised. . . . But to coerce it into silence, to endeavor to restrain its free expression, to seek to compress and confine it, warm as it is, and more heated as such endeavors would inevitably render it ; should this be attempted, I know nothing, even in the Constitution or the Union itself, which would not be endangered by the explosion which might follow.”

“ Pooh ! the superstitious old thunderer ! Could you not estimate for yourself the quality of religious interest which Cloudspire church manifested on this subject, in the revival, at the time of our marriage ; when we mobbed Richard Beame, the vile agitator, and drove him from the church with eggs and snowballs, and forced him and his sister Fanny to walk miles home in the deep, new-fallen snow ? That's the kind of religious feeling for anti-slavery, which the churches propagate. As for breaking this Union, the South has been upon the verge of secession so many times, and yet coheres, that Webster's prophesied explosion may be denominated a political soap bubble,— nothing more.”

“Glad to hear your comments; they are assuring, William. I do not relish living on the crust of a Southern volcano.”

Old mammy appeared in the door, on her crutches, in patched apron and turban.

“My good marser, de tea be ready.”

The ride home along the southern skirts of fragrant pine forests, over the sandy road, checkered by moonlight and pictured shadows, should have been delightful to both; but a lingering offence lurked in William Steele's moody silence and short answers to Lucy's attempts at conversation. She resolved to manifest no irritation at his sullenness, but constantly brought before his mind the exquisite beauty of the evening — turning with tact to the virtues and self-denial of their friend Stone — bestowing upon him that mock sympathy and admiration, which she knew to be gratifying to her husband, and of which he had no reason to doubt the sincerity.

He was not placable. His tone relaxed none of its gruffness till their arrival at home. There, both hastened to the couch of their sleeping boy. Both eagerly interrogated the doting old black nurse who sat close by her precious charge, of his welfare during their absence. Was he well? Had he wept for them? Had she taken him out airing? Had he fallen? How long had he slept? To all, old nurse gave fond and satisfactory response. They lifted the pavilion, and studied the budding beauty with affection and pride. A few tender tears welled up from the fountain of a young mother's love.

William Steele gently lifted his precious child from the pillows, pressed him to his breast, carried him to the sitting-room, listened to his glad and innocent prattle, with a softened heart, and a fresh love upspringing for its lovely mother who sat by his side. He was mild, but abstracted. Secret memories took wing and fluttered through the guilty chambers of his soul.

From the same couch whence he lifted his little son with paternal pride, he had raised his daughter Lillian, to barter with the New Orleans trader. He saw again her flaxen hair, the innocent confusion of her blue eyes, wakened at midnight. He heard again her pleading voice, “Me sleepy, papa,” blazing along his memory like electric fire. The dropping rain of that dreary night haunted

his ear. Her little cry as she clung to him when he bore her into the pitchy darkness and mounted his horse.

“Dark, papa! all dark! me f’aid, papa, me f’aid!”

He heard the nimble thud of his horses hoofs on the turf through the forest. He saw the dim shape of the bellying canvas on the huge wagon which had been purposely removed from the campfires, where the chained gangs were lying. He felt the roll of bills clutched in his palm, which he took in exchange for his dead Isabel’s sleeping daughter.

He remembered the heartless trader’s words,—

“Plenty of pickaninnies in there — we shall start in an hour!”

Little Lillian’s last sobbing cry, as it issued from the receding wagon, “Papa, papa, papa!” pierced his callous heart with pain.

Little Willie, (he was named for his father) was gayly toddling about, from nurse to mother, with equal affection for both. The father sought the open air. A voice seemed calling from the magnolia by the moon-lighted river. It was Isabel’s. He turned to the stables; like the dying echo of a distant bell, the voice pursued his steps, till fascinated by the weird spell, he wended his course towards the river bank. The voice seemed hushed at poor Isabel’s grave. He paused by the green mound, beneath the shivering trees. A quickened inner sight pierced the earth above her breast and seemed to meet again the suffering face, the searching eyes and lips that moved to say,—

“Where is my child?

‘Oh! where is my child!
 My beautiful child!
 That I left to its father’s dear care?
 Say where do her feet —
 Her poor little feet —
 Go pattering, wandering — where?
 Does she live in the love,
 The bright, warm love,
 Of the roof where her life first began?
 Does she sing with the lark —
 The caroling lark,
 Where the sands of my life swiftly ran?
 Do you kiss her at night —
 The dark, gloomy night!

When her blue eyes look up to your own
Does she lie in your arms —

Your brooding, strong arms,
When she utters the low, fever moan?

Does she know Isabel?

The dead Isabel!

In her grave in the magnolia grove?

Does she call me mamma!

Her loving mamma,

When her runaway feet hither rove?’

The subject of his remorseful and disordered thoughts assumed the familiar form of the improvised songs of the slaves; nevertheless, his lashings of conscience were no less potent. Borne “Mazepa” like on the unrelenting past, whirling through sturdy memories cold and stark;

“The skies spun like a mighty wheel!
He saw the trees like drunkards reel!
His heart grew sick — his brain grew sore;
Then throbb’d awhile, and beat no more!”

The strong man fell prone upon the grave of his first and deepest love. Arrows of remorse had cleft the brazen armor of defiance in which he took up the gauntlet of life, after he had hidden the stricken Isabel and her darling Lillian from his sight.

At length, fanned by the cool evening breeze, and restored by the oblivious draught of insensibility, he gathered himself upon his feet, and strove to become master of himself. The haunting of sweet voices had gone. Mysterious Night studded with stars, and flooded by the “unclouded grandeur” of the moon, enwrapped the gurgling river, the quiet fields, the whispering magnolias, William Steele and Isabel’s grave. He said,—

“Night is the time for dreams;

When truth that is, and truth that seems,
Mix in fantastic strife!”

He cast one tender glance behind, and strode away cursing in superstitious self abasement.

“Am I a woman, to faint at ghostly sights and sounds? Fool!

coward! that I am!" and his clenched hands beat the hollow air. "The past is among the things that were. The present is the rock on which we stand. My boy, the legal fruit of marriage, claims the holiest trials of my strength."

He entered into the presence of his family with a busied air of nonchalance.

"Why, I expected to find you all asleep. Why watch for me, Lucy? You have had a fatiguing day."

"Baby is at rest; but what has happened, William?"

"Nothing! I went with the patrol over to the quarters to find a couple of the neighboring negroes; stopped to learn the news. The night is pleasant, you know."

Early in the ensuing winter, a gay company gathered at "Le Grand Palais;" among them, several young Southern ladies. In the fine mornings and evenings, a troop of ponies and horses were led to the stepping-block, and a laughing bevy cantered away with no other cavaliers than two or three black servants. Lucy's health, enfeebled during the summer, demanded by the physician's advice the same bracing wild riding. She took care, however, to choose an opposite direction, and a later, or earlier hour.

One morning, however, as she made a sudden turn into a bright glade, she had the deep chagrin of riding briskly into their midst. This created a panic among the high-spirited animals, and for a moment the whole party seemed enacting the brilliant *entree* of a mounted circus.

"Pardon, ladies," said Lucy, bowing low as she rode out of the arena into her own solitary bridle path, congratulating herself upon the happy escape from Caste, when a swift clatter of heels came after, gradually halting in speed as they came up abreast.

"*Bon jour, madame.*" spoke a cheery voice.

"*Bon jour, mademoiselle. Il fait beau temps,*" Lucy replied, as she turned to look upon a pair of vermeil cheeks, and glinting eyes.

"You have a lonely ride, Mrs. Steele. Shall I have the pleasure of accompanying you?"

"I shall be much indebted for companionship, if agreeable to yourself."

"Entirely so," replied Leonore; for it was none other than

Leonore Wallace, the bosom friend of Grace Mowndes "There is a picturesque little church in that direction, and a majestic orchard of oaks ; shall I be your guide ?"

The ponies walked while the ladies chatted. Leonore ordered Sunday, the little groom, to follow at a distance, so they might have the path all to themselves. Leonore, threading the turf among the trees, gave Lucy the trodden way. Soon coming into the open road, they struck into a canter.

"Do you hear, Mrs. Steele? The baying of hounds is music to a Southern ear."

Before she could reply, a tall, lithe, brown figure dashed from the coppice in front, and seized both ponies by the bit ; backing them suddenly.

"De hunters, missis ! De gun, missis, de gun !"

A deer bounded from the copse across the road to the field. Rifle shots followed across the way ; the deep-mouthed hounds were in full pursuit, followed by rushing horsemen, plying whip and spur. When the din of "sylvan war" was over, Lucy found herself standing upon the sward, her saddle girth broken, and her pony's head pulling wildly at the hand that held him like the grasp of a vise.

"So we owe our lives to you, my brave fellow," said Leonore. "What is your name ?"

"I is Guy, missis ; too glad to sabe you missis. I b'longs to Marse Fairland."

"Guy, can you mend Mrs. Steele's saddle girth? Let go 'Mahomet,' I can manage him."

"Ole hunter, missis ; might follow de houn'."

"Let go, Guy."

He obeyed.

'Mahomet' bent his fiery head to the ground, shook his flying mane in the air, and reared.

"Go on then, and take a turn about," laughed Leonore. He struck into a flying gallop towards the field, whence vanished the horsemen ; made a grand leap over the fences, clearing every obstruction, and neighing wildly half way across. Then he turned with a long sweep back towards the road. Guy gave Lucy's rein

into her hand, and tore down the upper part of the fence like a giant.

On the bold rider came ; her spirited eye and courageous hand guiding the hunter to Guy, chafing with disappointment, yet tamed to her wish.

“ Now his frolic is over, ‘ Mahomet ’ will stand.”

“ Fine rider, missis ! Set proud and beautiful, missis,” his splendid teeth showing white as a hound’s. He led him over to the bush, saying, “ De green leaf cool his foaming mouth, missis.”

“ You compliment me too highly, Guy. The riding is all in habit.”

Sunday arrived at the time. Lucy’s face was all aglow with delight.

“ My dear young lady !” she exclaimed, “ it is worth my whole stay in the South, to witness your horsemanship. It is better than medicine for me.”

“ That kind of exercise stirs the blood of our lauguid Southern lives. There’s health and exhilaration in a mettlesome steed. The other ladies refuse to ride ‘ Mahomet.’ However, he is my choice. We have had many a race ;” pleasantly responded the flushed rider.

“ I am reminded of Queen Dido’s steed in Virgil. *Ac fraena ferox spumanti mandit.*”

“ Now, Mrs. Steele, I confess myself worsted, and am obliged to ask for the translation. I have never lifted the veil from the beauties of the dead languages.”

“ I am indebted to the severe drill of my father. Mahomet ‘ fierce champs the foaming bits ;’ like the steed of the Carthaginian Queen.”

“ That is very fine. Those old Romans lived in the saddle ; they have sent down to us some choice word painting.”

Sunday drew up at that moment with a curious “ What de matter, missis ?” and Lucy took the opportunity of attending to the repairing of her saddle girth. Leonore’s restive horse cropped the leaves, walking away ; thus making the distance yet more favorable to Lucy for her design of fulfilling her promise to Rachel, to “ ‘ member Guy.” Suddenly he had been thrown in her way,— and she seemed to have ridden on Rachel’s errand this morning. Guy

addressed her in a low tone, with his eyes riveted upon his busy fingers.

"Miss Steele, Rachel neber come back?"

"No, Guy, never return; must be safe now in the North."

"I goin now, missis. De good Lord bring you here dis day. Where am Rachel gone? Dun fergot."

"Lucy stooped to try the girth, and pronounced distinctly,—

"*Philadelphia.*"

"I goin nex week," his eyes still on his work. "Fin' Rachel. Marse Fairlan' take bloodhoun ten mile 'way to de club-house; hab gran' hunt whole week. I go den."

Lucy walked around her pony, and delayed for Guy to come round and adjust the belt, and hand her upon the saddle. She bent to arrange her habit, and thrust into Guy's hand five dollars.

"De Lord bress young missis," was all she heard, as she sprung into her seat.

It was late. The visit to the old church was given up. Drring the ride home, Leonore led in a carnival of gayety—laughing, satire and singing, that sent the happy blood bounding through Lucy's weakened system. The exhilaration mounted to her cheeks, and brightened her lustrous eyes.

"Oh! madam is beautiful!" said Leonore. "A few hair-breadth escapes like ours to-day, would be an excellent tonic!" concealing beneath the careless words a heart full of sympathy. "But I shall soon return to Charleston."

Nearing home, she invited Lucy to come to Charleston, if her health grew more feeble, or in case any other event might render it necessary for her to go to the city; gave her the street and number, demanding a promise in the affirmative.

"If any unforeseen misfortune should fall, and you need a friend, come to me!" she said cheerily. "I am not a stereotyped Southerner. Make my acquaintance, my dear friend, as an exception to the species. When memory has no other bright image, remember Leonore."

Her parting hand sent a grateful and lasting warmth to Lucy's isolation. The balm of that morning's unexpected and unsought friendship lingered about the steps and occupations of Mrs. Steele for weeks. The airy laugh, the burst of song, the sisterly voice

broke upon the silent air, and caused her pulses to throb with an ecstasy quite alien to that of former days. The reflection that the tender mind of her darling boy must inevitably be molded by the very influences which her soul detested, that he must gradually become cruel and indifferent to the woes of others, by constant contact with slavery, that every divine and lovely attribute of his childish nature would grow to a tyrannical and thorny selfishness, were daily her most painful thought. Yet there seemed to be no remedy; a thick set wall seemed to hedge in her dearest wishes.

A few weeks after Leonore's departure, when the fires began to brighten on hearths in country and town, a new revelation dawned upon Lucy. Her husband often returned at evening with flushed face and angry eyes. Excited and irritable, he forgot the respect due to his wife; accosted her and replied to her mild words, as if she had no stronger claims upon his tenderness than the slaves he herded in his fields. His little son, the idol of his pride and expectations, often felt his father's harshness and fled sobbing to his mother. It was evident to her that the common habit of a morning glass of wine or brandy had grown to a giant, greater than he. If, in his cool moments, she remonstrated with him, proposing to remove the dangerous stimulants from the sight and taste of little Willie, he rudely answered,—

“Let him alone. Everybody takes wine and brandy, at least every Southerner. You would not be so squeamish, if you should once look into the vaults of Mr. Fairland. There's a hogshead of wine there for each of his children; put in there at their birth, to remain till they are married. Then there's every kind of liquor a gentleman need to have; old wines of every variety, the smoothest gins, rums and brandies for common use. Surely you must be ignorant indeed, when you don't know that at every high dinner old cocks give, and young cocks too, for that matter, half these grandees have to be put to bed by the servants.

My boy will drink toasts with the aristocracy. He'll drive blooded horses with his pack of hounds. I'm in a fair way to set him up. Willie Steele will be a politician, and politicians know how to drink. My Willie may go to Congress. And who ever saw a Southern Congressman who does not know by practice, the exact quality of brandies and wines. You are a woman, Lucy. What

woman understands the requirements of a public man? It is for me to dictate, and for you to acquiesce."

Thus the dull, dreary days ripened and fell like the bitter fruit of a blasted tree. Letters from home were frequent and affectionate, but they afforded her only superficial comfort. She had never unburdened to her parents her sufferings and regrets.

At the close of one of those rainy days when the clouds seem to drift bodily to the earth, drenching woodland and plain with shining sheets, Lucy ordered the spacious fireplace to be heaped with logs and light-wood, that her husband should meet its cheery blaze and pleasant warmth. Night shut down. The driving drops splashed on the panes with unabated force. The supper waited. The old black nurse crooned over her sleeping Willie. The cook in the kitchen basted the roasted fowl, turned the long-done sweet potatoes, anxiously lifted the lid of the rice kettle, and soliloquized,—

"Wud be spile!"

Lucy watched the fire thoughtfully, and when the illuminated room grew dim, had the fire replenished. Still Mr. Steele remained absent.

The mantel clock struck eleven. Alarm took possession of the household. Cook came courtseying to the door.

"My dear missis! where be de marser? ebryting spile."

Nurse laid Willie to rest, and suggested sending the boy to the quarters to ask old Fry. He went and returned with Fry, who, bowing low, knew nothing.

"See Marse Steele in de fiel' wid de mule-hands ploughing; de rest clean trench, in de rice fiel'."

"Take the lantern and go to the stables," said Lucy. "See if his horse is there, Fry."

Old Fry obeyed. He soon stepped hurriedly back upon the piazza, and dripping with pouring rain, answered,—

"De hos be dere, missis, wid de saddle on, stan' wid he nose on de lock; he wet as de groun'."

A premonitory fear of some impending horror paled her face and deprived her of speech. Old nurse, ever watchful, spoke for her.

"Go Fry! touse up de men in de quarters. Take dis lantern, an' git de coachman lantern ter de big house, an' go straight to de

rice-fiel'. Look sharp on de way. Mebby de hos stumble and trow Marse Steele, an' he break he leg. Tak' de pine torch for de man's. Look all roun'! Boy Bob, you 'tay here, by missis."

Turning to Lucy, she continued,—

"Beg missis to set dow' in easy chair; keep up de good heart. Ole Fry fin' marser soon. Bob, youse go in kitchen, tell cook stir up de fire. Marse want suthin warm."

The clock struck twelve. Lucy opened the door, and anxiously searched the darkness. The flaring torches and lanterns were coming slowly up the bank. She closed the door and dropped into her chair, stricken with dread. She heard a bustle in the yard, and then heavy steps on the piazza, as if they bore a weight.

Nurse motioned Lucy to remain, and stepped out, closing the door after her. The heavy breathing of the men reached Lucy's ear, and the sound of shuffling feet, depositing something heavily on the floor. She hurried out.

"Have you found my husband?"

"Beg de missis to go in. Ole Fry come in, tell all."

"No, Fry, tell now? Did you find Mr. Steele? Where is he?"

"He be here, dear missis—too muddy! Fin, him in de trench. Him can't speak, missis! mebby he faint way."

"She pushed the men aside, peered at the floor, and called,—

"William! William! speak to me! come in to the fire!" knowing not what she said. "Bring the lantern, Fry."

Nurse came after her, threw her arms round her mistress, and strove to draw her in doors. Old Fry had whispered the dreadful truth in the old nurse's ear.

"Come, dear missis; wait a leetie; com 'way; mus' not look now. Let ole Fry an' me ten' to marser. Come 'way."

Lucy tore open the old arms, caught the other lantern, and rushed to the spot where her husband lay. The glare of the light fell upon a stony face, besmeared with blood, and the mud of the trench. Narrow rivulets of blood and muddy water dripped from his clothes, and ran across the floor. She caught up his hand, cold and stiff, calling wildly again,—

"William! William! Dead! Oh! my Savior! Dead!"

The lantern fell from her grasp. The tender hands of old Fry and the old nurse, supported Lucy, moaning, sobbing and trembling

to the room, and laid her upon the settee. Old nurse directed Fry to go to "Grand Palais" for Dorcas.

"I stay here wid poor, dear marsers. Dorcas do all."

Lucy did not faint, but lay passively moaning and sobbing, her physical strength stricken away, her mental action intensified. She could see nothing but the stark, stony face of her husband. A continued chill seemed to creep from his cold and rigid fingers through her own, and settle with icy coldness upon the subtle springs of life. Old nurse held the trembling hands, stroked them with a soft, magnetic touch, and smoothed her throbbing head.

Dorcas came lightly in, knelt by the lounge, slid one arm under Lucy, and held her to her breast; murmuring dear and healing words. She then stole out on her terrible errand of robbing the dead for his eternal sleep. The women at the quarters saw the moving lights at the overseer's house, stole from their pallets, and crowded the piazza around the dead man. Dorcas and Fry hushed their astonishment and superstitious horrors to whispers.

They carried Mr. Steele to a vacant room in the kitchen building; the women brought water and washed from the piazza every trace that would "pain de dear missis eyes." Old Fry chose three of the best men, and directed the others to go to their cabins. Two women offered to stay "wid de cook." Dorcas was in the kitchen with them, when Fry called her. The dead man's coat and vest lay upon the floor, clotted with blood. Old Fry lifted the blanket that covered William Steele, and pointed to a gaping wound on his left side, over the heart.

"My Jesus!" groaned Dorcas. "Marse Steele was murdered. Who has dared to do this? to take this life?"

"Dunno," solemnly answered Fry. "Dese hands do no murder," showing both palms. "Ise wait de Lord time, howsomeber I's sufferin."

Cook crept in and looked with frightened gaze over Dorcas' shoulder, then shrunk back groaning, with her coarse apron to her face.

"Pete, do you know anything about it?" questioned Dorcas.

"Dunno, Dorcas, more'n Fry. Marse Steele has bin drefful wid we people las' fall an' dis winter. Cut up we back wicked."

"Dat so, Pete," said another of the three in a rich, powerful,

subdued voice. "Dribe, whip, cuss ebry day, till wese wear out. I know tree of de people lay stiff in de groun' now, wid de bloody flogin. But I dunno who stab dat big gash in he heart. My hand clean like Fry."

"Marse Fairland gone way," said Dorcas; "so the best to be done is to bind cotton on the wouud, that young missis shall not know to-night. Pete, you do hide dem clotted clothes, till Marse Fairland see."

In the kitchen, Dorcas confided to the cook, that "it was spoken by missis and de young ladies, dat de oberseer was too cruel, and de negroes might revenge."

"Well," replied cook, placidly, "we flesh an' blood too. Can't b'ar ebryting. Poor Miss Lucy, all 'lone now. She one. De Lord bless her. Marse Fairland do nottin for nobody, but hisself."

"I shall vise Miss Lucy to go to Charleston," whispered Dorcas. "Miss Leonore, so gay and so beautiful, told me to persuade her to go to her house, if anything happen." Drawing nearer to cook's ear, "I believe Miss Leonore know de oberseer in danger."

"I glad de young lady lub Miss Lucy," said cook. "Marse Fairlan' young ladies neber turn head towards her."

Dorcas had everything prepared for the body in Lucy's small parlor, and soon the heavy, shuffling steps of the four black men moved slowly past the door of Lucy's room, with the lifeless burden. Lucy noticed the sound, and clung closer to nurse, sobbing and moaning more helpless than before. Dorcas came in soon after, knelt again by the lounge, soothed the aching head of Lucy, informed her that her work was finished, and insisted that she and the nurse must take rest and sleep if possible. She herself would stay till late in the morning.

Lucy rose quickly, and proceeded to the room where her erring, but still beloved husband slept in death. Dorcas slid her strong arm about her waist, and walked by her side. The wife was struck by the fierce bitterness, frozen into his last expression. The white face lacked the calm, restful peace which often settles upon the beloved, and robs death of half its agony. Lucy laid warm kisses upon the cold, passive forehead, and upon the white, unanswering lips. The thought of this sudden and insidious approach of her adversity caused her to exclaim,—

“Can it be possible that I shall never hear his voice again? Is it true that William is dead? Dorcas! Dorcas! what could have been the cause? He was perfectly well this morning. He rode to the door and took little Willie in front of him, and gave him a short canter. He was in good spirits.” Breaking down with moans and tears, she exclaimed, “What can have done this?”

Dorcas adroitly veiled the truth, by showing how the horse might have become frightened, and thrown his master stunned into the muddy water of the trench, where he might have been drowned.

Old nurse, who had followed them into the room, raised her voice in comfort.

“Dear missis, mus’ trus’ de Lord. Him hab done all. Wese nottin but de rice stalk. Him cut we down when he be ready. Trus’ de blessed Jesus, my dear missis. Lay you griebin heart in his han’.”

“Come out to de fire,” urged Dorcas, gently drawing her away.

“And leave him here in the cold alone?” sobbed Lucy.

“Yes, missis must do that. You will get sick. Marse Steele will never be cold no more. De lamps will burn bright in this room till day, and I shall be often in and out.”

So the dear girl yielded to the loving care of her black friends, and laid her head upon her wretched pillow.

Rev. Edmund Stone officiated at the burial ceremony. Lucy, leaning on the arm of Dorcas, and followed by the overseers at “Success,” “Staple” and “Snowfield,” with a few of the men at the quarters, went down to the magnolia grove by the river, and laid William Steele in the bosom of the land he had chosen for his own.

Lucy now felt that the bond of her stay in the South was broken. She longed for home, and the social freedom of New England. The desire of removing her son from the baleful influence of a slave district, urged her departure. The financial settlement of her husband’s affairs demanded the advice and labor of an attorney. Thus she was compelled to visit Charleston, a city of stangers and high caste. The remembrance of Leonore’s strange request occurred to her mind,—“I am not a stereotyepd South-

erner, make my acquaintance," was a frank invitation,—yet she hesitated to comply.

Dorcas came to the rescue.

"Go to Miss Leonore," she urged; "she good; she want you or she never invite. Now Miss Steele, she told me to 'member and tell you to visit her whensoever you go to the city. Write note, missis; get anoder to-morrow. Write now. Bob carry it to de office right 'way."

The note was written. The next day post brought a warm invitation. Was received for a week; also information that Leonore's uncle, a lawyer, would undertake any business she might desire to place in his hands. Mr. Fairland allowed her to be driven to Charleston in a chaise. She arrived after dark. At sight of the brilliantly lighted mansion, courage nearly deserted her. A tremulous pull at the street bell brought the quick step of a servant down the marble walk. He seemed to have received instructions, begged to know if her name was Mistress Steele, and ushered her up the high-lighted staircase to Leonore's private room, where the brave girl awaited her arrival.

The Wallaces dwelt in the luxury of "Le Grand Palais." Amid the carpets, curtains, pictures and upholstery of her friend's elegant boudoir, Lucy felt herself an intruder. It was the tea hour. Lucy's dread of meeting the aristocratic glances at the family table, was relieved by Leonore's ring, and the appearance of her short, dwarfish maid.

"'Toad,' bring tea to my room for two; my friend is weary with a long ride. Toad, bring the tea hot, and plenty of goodies! remember, I am voracious to-night."

The black, stumpy figure courtesied, while her face warmed into an affectionate smile.

"Do all for missis."

"And for my friend, Toad," said Leonore.

A cheerful "Yes, missis" was the reply.

Toad repeated her mistress' order in the hall, and returned to draw two Chinese tables from their nest. These tables of shining black, were embellished with gilded pagodas, fanciful bridges, boats and fantastic trees of weeping foliage. Toad farther adorned with purest china and silver.

The tea was delightful, seasoned with the hearty welcome and consideration of the lovely hostess. Toad stood near and waited with evident affection for her young lady, and seemed to be in no wise excluded from her plans or discussions.

"Now, Mrs. Steele," said Leonore after tea, "I beg you to rest and feel as much secluded from intrusion as you desire. These apartments are ours. I have given orders to receive this week in the parlors."

"Your friendship and attention are grateful to me beyond expression!" replied Lucy, "more especially since my bereavement. I desire not to trespass upon your time, or the tastes of your family."

"Oh, my time is nothing, the house is full of servants, and my dear, you are not the guest of my family, but my own, and I have a darling old uncle who will meet you as his own daughter. I have apprised him of your coming."

Wisely avoiding the subject of her husband's death, Leonore inquired if Mrs. Steele intended to go North.

"I do intend to leave in the course of the winter, if my affairs can be adjusted in time. Mr. Steele held slaves, Miss Wallace. It is my design to take them as my portion of his property. I trust what I am about to say will give you no offence. I intend to free them, and take them North with me; or if it is better, to take them North and free them there."

"No offence whatever, my dear friend. I sincerely believe freedom to be the birthright of every human being. Our slaves are styled chattels, but that does in no wise change the case. They belong to the universal human family, and freedom is their inheritance, robbed of it as they may be. However, Mrs. Steele, I can do nothing. My dearest associations, my happiest memories, my home affections, my earthly possessions are held in the ghoulisn clutch of our 'domestic institution,' as it is termed. *You* are free to act. A Northern home, and a parental welcome await *you*. I most heartily approve of your decision. My Scotch blood bears with it a noble germ of freedom, but it can never germinate here."

"My way seems to have been prepared before me, in receiving the offer of your valuable friendship, Miss Wallace, and I assure

you it is most gratefully appreciated. How will your good uncle, the attorney, meet my proposition?"

"With entire approval, and all requisite assistance. He detests bondage as I do, and yet the very fibres of his life are entwined in it."

Toad provided a basket of oranges and bananas. While partaking of these, Lucy discussed with her friend a suit of mourning for herself. Leonore would have crapes, bombazines and bonnets brought to her room for Lucy's inspection and choice. She also insisted upon having her dressmaker come to the house, to cut and fit Lucy's dresses under her eye, that she might take them to the country for completion.

Lucy's faded eyes slowly brightened — a transient flush flitted often to her cheek. She felt a new, healthy hope infused into her spirits by the frank and genial manner of her young, high-bred hostess. A luxuriant, refreshing sleep also fortified her for the events of the next day. At an early city hour, the carriage, with liveried driver and footman, was at the door.

"Come my dear — shall I call you Lucy? — allow me, my dear Lucy — that is better. We are going to uncle's office; he will have more leisure for us at this hour."

Now Lucy's heart misgave her. Mr. Fairland's carriage had ever passed her and rolled scornfully away. To enter this elegant equipage, when custom, caste, and her own pride forbade, must be but a polite acquiescence in the wish of her friend.

The drive was animating. The horses dashed off, exploring the blue, hazy, level streets, turning corners briskly, clattering over pavements, or throwing sand from springy heels, in the suburbs. Mansions of American lords, and huts of their serfs, glided past.

"This is a long drive," remarked Lucy.

"Not too long," gleefully responded Leonore. "We must take an airing this lovely morning. You must see Charleston. This is not equal to our forest gallop at 'Le Grand Palais.' That was an eventful one. We rode into the jaws of death, and were halted none too soon."

"It was an eventful ride, especially to me, Miss Leonore. I cannot understand the promptings that led you to follow my lonely

path, or that induced you to offer hospitality to one reckoned so low in the Southern social scale."

"That enigma has an easy solution. I liked your face and appearance. I abhorred the foolish pride that would condemn you to years of ostracism, simply because you were the wife of an overseer. I discerned your worth, and resolved to pay your haughty neighbors well for their cold neglect. The ride proved my judgment correct. My dear Lucy, you should never have married in the manner you did. It was a misfortune. It has dwarfed the noble and lovely aspirations native to your soul. In yielding, you have felt yourself debased; yet with woman's patient tact you have striven to be happy—a desire which you could not accomplish. Am I not a seer?"

As these words were spoken, Lucy's eyes met the keen, respectful glance of Leonore. She hesitated in giving a reply that would lay bare to the eye of another the bitter dregs which lay at the bottom of this cup of marriage, of which she at first drank so eagerly, and later, so resignedly. It seemed that her husband's grave should conceal all past sufferings from mortal sight.

"Pardon me—have I wounded you?" asked Leonore. "It was not my intention; I desired to prove my sincerity in offering friendship."

"Far from it, Miss Wallace. I cannot doubt the sincerity of the disinterested friendship which you offer. But I have deemed it a duty to bury in my husband's grave the painful experiences of our Southern life. You have read my secret too well."

"My dear Lucy, do you not see? We cannot follow the divine injunction, 'Bear one another's burdens,' unless we know the nature and weight of those burdens. We cannot put forth the necessary strength. It is a relief to you to be well understood by the one who attempts to sympathize."

"Truly, my dear friend, your words are a cordial to my needs; and believe me, Heaven must reward you for extending to me in this most trying period of my life this unlooked for comfort and aid.

The carriage drew up before the office of the attorney. A stalwart gentleman, past the middle age, with a sprinkling of gray upon his head, hastened to the carriage steps, and met his niece with a hale, cheery welcome.

“Here comes my ‘Heather Bell’!” He extended both hands to assist her from the carriage, meanwhile quoting Burns in a sonorous voice.

“O my luv’s like a red-eed rose,
That’s newly sprung in June!
O my luv’s like a melodie,
That’s sweetly played in tune!
As fair art thou, my bonnie lass!
So deep in luv am I;
And I will luv thee still my dear,
Till all the seas gang dry!”

In his office, Lucy felt constraint banished, by his genial manners, by the heartiness with which he advised and entered into her plans. She could return to the country, leaving all in his hands. He would collect the dues for the hire of Marquis, he would make out the free papers for him, and for Binah with her children; he would arrange Mr. Steele’s cash deposits in the bank, so that it should await her order in New York. The passage ticket for herself and her freed slaves should be ready for her departure.

As she rose to take leave, he seemed to have observed the shade of anxiety on her face, and when he kindly bade her good-morning, he said,—

“Be of good cheer, lassie! Get the roses back to your cheeks before you meet your Northern friends. Have no fears concerning the course you have taken. Be assured upon my honor, that our interview this day will not reach the public ear, or subject you, fair lady, to the least inconvenience. I return you to the kind hands that led you here. Leonore is a bold defender of the right, and she’ll be as true to you as Jennie Deans.”

He turned to his niece with a look of fond idolatry, again repeating Burns.

“Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love and pleasure.”

Lucy drew a sigh of happy relief, when the dashing horses whirled away. The dreaded task was over.

“God bless him!” she soliloquized. “There are noble men and woman everywhere, if one but finds them.”

So say we, dear reader. God bless him! for he had poured the wine of his strength into the fainting spirit of his stricken *protégée*.

The nascent impulses of her being were springing into life, the harbingers of happier days.

“I am so glad it is all over,” she said to Leonore.

“I am glad for you, dearie,” replied the proud girl. “That uncle is a shield and buckler to the defenceless. I have done nothing for you yet. I shall set directly about taking my turn now. I shall call at the shops, and order your mourning suit sent home this morning. In the rest and quiet of our own room, we will select. I have already ordered Madame Le Rondé to send a dress-maker.”

The driver reined up several times to fashionable shops. The footman flew to his post at the carriage door, whence Leonore fluttered in and out, like a happy, careless bird from its cage. Curious eyes of promenaders cast scrutinizing glances between the curtains, upon the face within, but dropped them as quickly, or turned away with a respectful feeling of intrusion. Lucy heard one remark to another,—

“Faultless as Juno! High blood there.”

“That’s so,” replied the other. “You will find no other in the Wallace carriage.”

At home again in the lovely room of her hostess, Toad served a delicious lunch; iced cakes, preserved fruits, cream, flavored as usual with the bright words and delicate attentions of her Leonore. In the ante-room, a young and handsome quadron seamstress waited their pleasure. The goods arrived quickly; merchants and sewing-women appeared, bent upon pleasing this high-toned family. The remaining time of her stay, devoted to cutting and fitting, passed rapidly away.

One evening, as both sat before the glowing grate, conversation turned upon the pretty dressmaker, who had sometime before taken her departure.

“Is she not handsome, Lucy?” asked Leonore.

“I have often found myself admiring, not only her figure and features, but have been struck by her gentle grace and vivacity.”

“ True ; the same with myself ; but then I know she has a lawful claim to these singular attractions ; three-fourths of her blood is what they term the blue blood of the South. It crept into her veins from two of the most illustrious names of this State ; and yet she is but a slave ! subject to the vices of her condition ! condemned to labor for her scanty bread ! forced to accept the love of Carolina’s proudest sons, and to yield it up at their capricious mood, though her life go with it. I knew her father well. He was about to marry a Saxon wife, when he forbade this girl an entrance to his princely mansion, lest a chance sight of her should give pain to the fair, new claimant of his affections.”

“ It is to be hoped there are not many such instances of abandonment,” replied Lucy.

“ It is the general rule ; this girl may be multiplied by thousands ! These beautiful creatures of mixed blood have their horoscopes cast under ill-fated stars. Their wrongs cry to Heaven for redress.”

“ Leonore, you do not suppose these girls are chosen at the impulse of affection ? ”

“ Most assuredly I do. A Southron never chooses what he abhors. It is love — the same love that would lead a wife to the altar.

‘ Love, like death
Levels all ranks, and lays the shepherd’s crook
Beside the sceptre ! ’

“ Man molds law and custom to his own liking. For woman, he changes his divinest attributes to instruments of torture.”

“ And none shall say nay,” answered Lucy.

“ Not in this day ; but by the intuitive aspirations of my own nature, by the irrepressible indignation of my own soul, there must be a ‘ red-letter day ’ somewhere in the economy of progression for woman. There must be honor and justice awaiting her somewhere.

“ Lucy, I congratulate you upon your return to New England, to a more wholesome, social atmosphere than this. I should prefer Northern snows and ices, to flower-wreathed corruption. In enslaving the African race, we have become mutually enslaved ourselves.”

"I have not the courage of the Misses Grimke, who left homes of luxury and opulence, for the rough paths of Truth and Righteousness. It requires much self denial and strength of purpose, to leave this pleasant land, friends, luxury, and the ease of a life like yours, Leonore."

"Those two requisites the Misses Grimke possessed. The sacrifices of those two ladies in going out from all they held dear in Charleston, has no parallel, I am confident, in this country. They were delicately reared, followed by slaves from infancy, of excellent ancestry, and surrounded by the allurements of rank and wealth. They have lectured in the North, in New York and Boston. Have you ever had the pleasure of their acquaintance?"

Lucy replied in the negative, adding,—

"My life till marriage passed mostly in the quiet home-nest; the voices of reformers seldom reached us. This distracting Constitutional question of which I have heard and seen so much in this section, scarcely disturbed our peace."

"Very different here," said Leonore. "It is the subject of conversation at home and abroad. One would suppose our 'Southern Institution' was the axis on which the religious, moral and political destiny of the universe turned."

This was Lucy's last evening in Charleston; every word of this closing interview endeared Leonore to her grateful remembrance. She had not been presented to the members of the family, or the family table, except on one occasion, when the good uncle dined with the Wallaces.

Leonore's mother, after a long remonstrance against the vulgarity of admitting an overseer's wife to the family table, absented herself therefrom. The advent of this dinner was a cold one, but the father and brother yielded to the charms of their guest, and Lucy shared in the gallantry and etiquette due to her culture and attractions.

The servant and chaise of Mr. Fairland carried her back to her beloved child the next day. Dorcas took her from the chaise into her own arms; old nurse stood by with little Willie on her shoulder. The cook ran from her kitchen, breathless with warm-hearted "Howdies;" young Bob showed the handsomest set of

ivory ; and gathering his arms full of packages, fell into the rear of the procession into the house.

“De young missis look well,” they exclaimed.

“Look so better,” said the old nurse.

“Miss Leonore good frien’,” said the cook ; “make missis look hansum gin. Little Willie been good chile ; Dorcas tote him ebry day.”

The affectionate greeting of Lucy’s true-hearted friends was another draught of strength. Her boy had never been so dear as after this long absence. She held him to her heart, bestowing kisses upon his chubby face and dimpled hands. Surely, she thought, out of my barren life, one snowy blossom has sprung. “Oh ! he shall be saved from a Southern destiny. I will guide his feet into pure and innocent paths. He shall redeem his father’s errors ; he shall be my pride and joy.”

Preparations for her departure went steadily forward. According to her commands, Binah, her children and grandchildren, were sent to the house to make the acquaintance of their new mistress, and to get the confidence of little Willie, for Binah should be his traveling nurse.

One day when Binah and her mistress were alone, Lucy asked,—

“Do you like the North, Binah ?”

“Dunno missis ; dunno de Nort, missis.”

“Would you like to be free, Binah ?”

“Me no free in ‘Merriky ; me free in Afriky ; me free dere in de big wood ; free under date tree. Me free by de riber wid de gol’ san’. No free in ‘Merriky.’”

“Yes Binah, you can be free, and I shall make you free in the North, where we are going. Binah will be no slave there.”

“Dat can’t be nowhar ; mus bab de marse, de oberseer.” coolly replied the unbelieving voice of the African.

“Yes, it can be, Binah ; it *will* be. You will have no master, no mistress, or overseer.”

The articles she held in her hands fell into the box she was packing. Dropping quickly upon her knees before Lucy, she bowed before her even to touching her forehead to the floor, after the manner of a Moslem worshipper. Since she had been stolen from

the green labyrinths of her native country, she had learned a better name than her dumb idol or Fetich. She therefore called upon the new Helper; sighs and groans mingled with "Oh! Jesus, mine Jesus! Heabenly Marster! Binah free! Tink Binah chilen all sell in de Nort country!"

Lucy counteracted the mistaken sorrow by soothing words, bidding her rise to her feet. She was so perfect a slave, that to have undertaken to make her sit, would have doubled the difficulty.

"Now Binah, do raise your eyes and look at me while I make you understand all."

"Can't look 'buckra'! You be missis!"

Her eyes raised however, but raised wide of the mark.

"Now look me in my face," said Lucy, "you are looking to my right."

"Look to young Marse Willie," said Binah.

The ludicrousness of this first lesson in freedom struck both. Lucy could not restrain a burst of laughter. A frightened smile played round Binah's snowy ivory, whiter than the elephant tusks in her native jungles.

"Binah," resumed her mistress, "you must look people in the face, North, for you will work for them, and take the money in your own hands. It will be yours, and you can go to the stores and buy what you please with it for yourself and your children. Your children will be free also, and never be sold away. They will live with you forever. They can go to school and learn the book, like Mr. Fairland's children."

Binah moved not. Her hands and eyes were raised upwards. The smile changed into a look of intense and solemn adoration.

"Tank de Lord! Bress he name!"

Lucy recalled her attention.

"Do you understand, Binah?"

"Yes, missis! me dig sweet tater, tote rice, hoe de cotton in de Nort, an' hab de money me one; hab my chilen, neber sole."

Her weak conception could not grasp the full idea of freedom. She asked, looking away to the south window,—

"No driver whip dere missis for Binah back? No t'umb-screw?"

"No, no! no driver, no whip, no cotton, no rice, no thumb-screw, no overseers there."

“What Binah an’ de chilen do widout de cotton and de yam?”

“You can learn to scrub and wash, perhaps to cook. You will get plenty of work and heap of money; wash for everybody. Now you see we are alone in this room. I have told you that you will be free, so you can be happy on your journey; but Binah, look at me! No one here knows a word of it, not even old nurse. Can you keep it a secret? keep it in here?” pointing to her heart. “These masters might prevent it; do not tell one of the servants.”

“Me neber spoke one settle word. Me tell only Jesus in de dark night, when roll up in de blanket on de floo’.”

Binah went on packing. It was a happiness to Lucy, to witness the daily change settling upon the seamed and patient face of her slave; the mysterious elasticity which crept into every step; the quickened ear to catch the least expression of her mistress’ wishes, her tender devotion to little Willie, and her watchful reticence towards the other servants. The dull, apathetic bond slave became the quick, eager, active, sisterly woman, almost bearing Lucy in her arms through the difficulties of a final removal from the home of years.

One week had passed since she left Leonore. Little Willie, wild with infantile gayety the night previous, awoke in the morning, hot with the ever-dreaded fever flush. All day the pale mother held her darling in her tired arms. At sunset, his pulses indicated no improvement. The parish physician came, thought the malady might yield to prescriptions, and left.

The watches of the long, anxious night were kept with Lucy, by Dorcas, Binah and old nurse. She was forced to yield the charge of her boy to others, and to sink weeping and fainting upon a couch of rest.

Morning symptoms excited new alarm. His weak voice called deliriously for papa. “Papa! papa! papa gone!” thus innocently, painfully weaving Lucy’s past with the agonizing present.

The setting sun cast his crimson rays upon the marble face and white shroud of little Willie, in the same room where his father was laid. On a sofa, drawn close to the side of the child, reposed the white and scarcely breathing figure of Lucy. Her heavy eyes were fixed upon her lost darling, and no persuasion could separate her from him. Equally inflexible was Binah, standing hour after hour

at the feet of her bereaved mistress and the beautiful dead. Her hand hushed every voice and softened every step.

Two days after, a mournful procession move again to the shade of the magnolias by the river. Lucy's heroic fortitude failed at the open grave, prepared for the tender being which had nestled in her fondest affections. She sank upon the sod and embraced the tiny flower-wreathed coffin, as if to hold it forever from its tomb. Her moans and uncontrollable grief brought tears to every eye.

Dorcas and Binah wound their loving arms about her and implored her to return with them.

"Leave him wid his papa, dearie. See how de sun smile roun' him now. De Lord take care Willie; come 'way, dearie. Him angel now," whispered Binah, motioning to the others to let his coffin remain on the grass, till they had reached the house. They almost bore her there, to her apartment and to her bed.

A long, tedious sickness followed, in its terrible and debilitating course. Reason became dethroned and thus the two-edged sword of her calamity became blunted. Youth and a good constitution prevailed. She slowly recovered and calmly took up the thread of life, where it had been parted.

Thus perished the name of William Steele from the face of the earth. Thus, in the death of his son, did retributive justice demand payment for the fair and frail young life, which years before, he threw out upon the surging waves of a cruel destiny.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE library of General Terreciene was thrown open to the charms of the surrounding gardens. The general, with his four guests, reposed in various easy positions on the broad piazza, in front of the long windows open to the floor.

These were Dentelle of Georgia, Rev. Fred Warham from "Breezy Bluff," South Carolina, Colonel Ashland and Chancellor Mowndes from Charleston.

It was just after a luxurious dinner; continued conversation was

a fruitless effort, and each held a book or paper, reading, pondering or smoking, each to his liking.

Within, the glass doors of the oaken book-cases lined with green fluted satin, were either ajar or swung open, disclosing the costly treasures of the world of science and mind in their material dress of elegant bindings.

The air within and without, was perfumed with sweetness. The sun sank lower, till the slant rays of its setting so illuminated and vivified the floral colors and greens of the garden, that massive rubies, topazes, amethysts, turquoises and pearls seemed suspended among Aladdin-like foliage of beryl and chrysoprase.

Here and there, in the grounds, were evergreen divans and chairs, trimmed into forms according to French taste. There were evergreen tables ; from the centres of their clipped velvety plains, roses and clustered blossoms spring up as if a vase of cut flowers were placed thereon. There were roses of vivid, fiery-red, and carmine shaded with purple ; overhanging the arms of these leafy divans and chairs, climed Bourbon Roses for the pleasure of the fays and fairies that might sit there in the dewy moonlight.

The greenish-white "Bourbon Queen" here, and the "Glory of France," there.

Down at the end of a broad white, gravelled walk fronting the library, stood a white marble "Terpsichore," whose stony grace warmed to pinken flesh in the crimson evening rays. Her fingers rested on the strings of her lyre ; her bare feet and half nude limbs were in the attitude of an airy dance.

A tall, thrifty rose, the *Empereur du Maroc* appropriately shot up by her side, and laid a voluptuous blossom and bud of blooded carmine on her marble shoulder, and a royal cluster on her rounded arm. She seemed to dance on their velvety hearts, which bent purposely around and beneath her feet.

On the right of the walk towards the red sun, a glittering fountain threw up its slender jets, which broke into crystal spray and drops of rainbow hues, as they fell back in curves into the shallow marble basin, and dripped musically from its scalloped, shell-like border.

The carriage drive into this paradise of beauty and fragrance led from the dusty street, under an ornamental iron arch, festooned

with ivy, its hard track ran past the piazza and wound around the garden and fountain. From the piazza eaves, over the entrance to the library, dropped heavy yellow buds and blossoms of the "Cloth of Gold" intertwined with the tiny pink clusters of a more delicate climber.

Soon the glories of the garden in dusky twilight faded into beautiful phantoms, and the library was lighted by its gold-bronzed chandeliers.

Tier upon tier of crystal fringes around this corona of light, caught up the fragmentary rainbows of the fountain, and cast their fairy scintillations down upon the guests, now slowly gathering beneath its glory. Carriages rolled in, under the ivy-wreathed arch. Servants in livery waited on the piazza to welcome those arriving to the luxuries of Southern hospitalities.

Two spacious parlors in a line with the library, opened from it into one. The elegance and extravagance of the French furniture satisfied the most fastidious. Vases of living flowers scattered fragrance from every corner, table, bracket and other improvised repositories. The mossy carpet vied with the garden in roses, campanulas and *Eleur-de-lis*. These two *salons* were lighted by several massive silver candelabra, fastened to the walls. From their bases were suspended silver baskets of exquisite flowers, whose tall clusters shot up among the bright chasings or entwined the polished shafts, seeming to feed the soft flames of the waxen candles with their delicious aroma.

General Terreceine, the lordly owner of this palatial home in St. Louis, had never done a hand's turn of labor in his life. The extent of physical exertion from his childhood, was the conveyance of epicurean morsels from a china plate to his mouth; to lift to his critical lips crystal glasses of various-hued wines, from the most celebrated vintages of the old world; to inhale the indolent narcotine of tobacco leaves rolled in seductive forms; to rise, unaided from his chair and pass through doors opening at his approach and closing after him, without an effort on his part; to proceed to his waiting carriage and be driven with ease and swiftness to any point his will might dictate; to hold the papers of the day in his two soft white hands, and to gloat over Southern political successes, or to

stamp with fury under his feet, editorials and items hinting at any accountability higher than the American slave-holder.

General Terreceine's manners often attained to the address of the courtier; when occasion required, his sweetness of speech could not be surpassed. This evening was one of those occasions.

His *salons* were filled with the proud and gay *elite* of St. Louis. The fashion, beauty, wit and sentiment of his native city thronged the fairy rooms, or swept out into the broad and fragrant walks of the moonlighted gardens. Balmy as a morning zephyr, his voice attuned to the low, soft tones of an Eolian harp, the general glided among the smiling *dames* and *demoiselles* of Missouri's peerage.

It was well understood that the brilliant assemblage was called together in honor of his distinguished guests from the two Atlantic States, South Carolina and Georgia, Colonel Ashland, Rév. Frederic Warham, Major Dentelle and Chancellor Mowndes.

The introductions were unexceptional on both sides. Ladies vied with each other in bestowing marked favors upon these eminent sons of the South. The silver moonlight, the flower-fed candelabra, and the iris-hued chandelier paled beneath the sparkling brightness and the welcoming glances of Missouri's fair daughters.

The public prowess of Calhoun and Benton, their respective leaders, received the sweet-lipped homage of woman. Madame Archibald, the elegant and acknowledged leader of St. Louis ton, sitting near Colonel Ashland, congratulated him upon the public-spirited demonstration of the freedom-loving citizens of Charleston, in the burning of the Northern mails, holding incendiary matter.

Mrs. Lambelle, who had just entered from a stroll in the garden on the arm of the Rev. Fred, begged to be informed of the particulars; she had but just returned from Italy and knew nothing at all of the affair.

"Colonel Ashland, let us all hear. We are your most attentive listeners" echoed several voices.

"I am forced to say, my dear ladies, with much regret, that I was not present; but can refer you to my friend, Chancellor Mowndes, a Charlestonian and a participant in that scene."

With a slight motion of his hand, he called that gentleman from the library to the inquiring group about him. Mrs. Lambelle, still standing, preferred her request to the chancellor. She was the

most beautiful woman in that assembly ; youthful, and in the luxuriant bloom of those physical perfections, which are considered necessary to the idols of high-bred gentlemen of the world. Her skin was of satiny whiteness, with a color of palest apple-blossom tint. Her child-like, dimpling neck and rounded arms were bare, and glittering with diamonds — the insignia of rank in those days. Her abundant hair was the admiration of every beholder ; its color was unique. Neither sandy, that were too warm ; neither flaxen, that were too cold. It was not maize, but had a shade of each, something between the shining filaments of corn-silk and the pale gloss of wheaten straw. She came at sunset, to Madame Terreceine, wearing it in long, braided coils about her head, supported by a comb of Turquoise and diamonds. The madame, meeting her in the spacious dressing-room with an affectionate embrace, begged her consent to wear those braids unbound for the evening, as she saw it in a recent call at the house of her friend, with whom Mrs. Lambelle was staying.

“ Oh ! ” said Madame Terreceine, “ your entrancing vision has haunted me ever since that day. You shall be the goddess “ Ceres ” with the beautiful wheaten harvests of our Western land floating about your superb shoulders. *Mon Dieu ! ravissant !* ”

“ Since you desire it, my dear madame, I cannot doubt the propriety,” replied the fair Lambelle ; and calling Cossetina, her little Italian maid, brought from Florence, she bade her in Italian remove the comb and unloose the braids. The maid took from her mistress’ dressing-case, a diamond crescent, fastened it to a narrow band of blue velvet, and fixed it at the parting above her brow. Now, as she stood in expectation, leaning upon the arm of her escort, every eye was fixed upon her wonderful beauty.

Her trailing robe of pale blue gauze, sprinkled with silver, was gathered in one falling hand, and her figure had the graceful pose of inclination to the last speaker ; and the long, wavy, silken straw of her hair, fallen forward, veiled her rounded shoulder and the white arm at her side.

From lip to lip passed whispered praise.

“ Entrancing ! ” “ *Ravissante !* ” “ Perfectly unique ! ”

“ A lovely vision of mythology ” General Terreceine, an adept

in feminine charms, exclaimed to his friend standing in the window.

“*Quelle merveille!*” *Quelles tresses!*” To which the other quickly responded,—

“*Mon Dieu! c'est une ange! c'est une enchantement!*”

Chancellor Mowndes' egress from the library caused a break in the conversation, and the glances of several inquisitively followed. Dentelle was engaged in deep discussion of the turf and the chase, with a young Missourian of the same sporting tastes as himself. The latter, glancing through the folding doors into the parlors, said excitedly,—

“Juno! Venus! Calypro! and all the rest! Dentelle, look at that! Did she drop down from Olympus, or the third heavens?”

“Why, I suppose she must be the belle of St. Louis. I have heard high praise of your Western beauties. I am prepared to find our Charleston belles eclipsed.”

“Highly complimentary, my friend! Under many obligations! but I swear, Dentelle, that goddess is not a native of this city. I know every lady here that is worth knowing, and they're all under a cloud, now. By the gods! I must ask an introduction this night, and sue for favor.”

“New opinions differ on woman's charms,” said Dentelle. “I might adjudge the silver cup to your Western reigning belle. Is she here to-night?”

Bloodling, the young sportsman, sat erect, throwing a rapid look over the gay throng of the two parlors.

“Do not see her,” he said. “She is *petite*, however; is probably overshadowed by the majesty of those in front. *N'importe!* I am lost in the transcendent charms of this stranger. Gods! what tresses! It's a wheat-harvest woven of the sun's rays. Let us draw near the mystic circle.”

“Let us follow the chancellor,” suggested Dentelle.

“Precisely! I'd bolt the dem'dest, finest steeple chase in the world, for a smile from such lips.” He rose; his tall, slender form was a match for the Georgian's. “Let us go,” he urged, “or those pale yellow tresses will turn to Psyche's butterfly wings, and bear her heavenward! I adore horses, but woman, more.”

The chancellor had already begun his narrative of the burning of Northern mails at Charleston. As they drew near he was saying,—

“I was an actor in the scene. We had intimation that the mail of that day would bring to Charleston an unusual quantity of incendiary documents. You know, ladies and gentlemen, abolitionists take it upon themselves to send to leading Southern men such speeches, proceedings and arguments against slavery as they falsely suppose will appeal to our religious natures.”

“And soften our inflexible hearts,” added General Terreceine.

“There are no arguments higher than the Bible,” said Miss Nina Call, a young lady of the severe Minerva type.

“Very true,” bowed the chancellor. “It was that issue that called together the clergyman of our city in a body on the occasion, and also to show these meddling Northerners that our State Rights should remain intact. But, as I was saying, the reverend clergy came forward voluntarily, in a body, to assist in searching and rifling the mails of its dangerous elements; they tore open letters and papers, refolded and sealed business and commercial communications for their lawful destination. *All were as one man*; brokers, bankers, consignees and commissioners, received their mutilated correspondence, as sacred relics of a declaration of our sovereign will.”

Here arose an enthusiastic clapping of soft gloved hands, and a confusion of exultant cheers.

“Do inform us, my dear chancellor,” asked Mrs. Archibald, “what part the ladies took upon themselves.”

“True! what did their faithful patriotism proffer?” joined Madame Lambelle, at the same moment tossing back the wavy mass from her snowy neck and arm.

“My fair lady,” answered the speaker, “their sacrifices far exceeded ours. They voluntarily offered the exposure of the most delicate treasures of their hearts; their precious friendships, the delicious language of tender sentiment, the ardent vows of absent loves, every blossom of woman’s purest confidences. They gave all to the public gaze, for the public good.”

“Bravo! bravo! bravo!” tinkled forth voices sensibly affected by such lofty martyrdom; a few hands nervously clapped, and

many elegant bits of embroidered linen and lace were carried to tearful and downcast eyes.

After a short and respectful silence he continued, —

“When the search was concluded, there was a large pile of obnoxious matter lying on the floor of the post-office. These were gathered up and carried to the street. Every avenue leading to the spot was crowded by interested spectators of the Southern Holocaust; the fury of our people knew no bounds; they were frantic.

“They alternately cheered and cursed,—they bellowed forth threats of vengeance against Northern fanatics. The windows and roofs of surrounding buildings swarmed with applauding observers.”

“It must have been charming,” exclaimed Miss Call with enthusiasm.

Chancellor Mowndes bowed and proceeded,—

“A committee of clergymen and planters advanced with lighted torches. And when the lapping flames arose over the insurrectionary missives, consuming them to blackened ashes, from street, from pavement, from roof, from verandah, arose a prolonged cheer and a yell which proclaimed to the North, ‘*Thus far, and no farther,*’ Here let insolence be stayed.”

Tumultuous approbation, quite overstepping the conventional politeness of an evening party, prevailed

General Terreceine, the last to forget his impromptu blandness, rose fiercely, and with fervid gestures asserted his belief that the burning of that Charleston mail had been conclusive, that the smoldering flames of that cursed heap of fanaticism had broken out in a running fire from post-office to post-office, throughout our section. That step, united with the Southern threats which had already been promulgated against the abolitionists, would deter them from further interference in Southern affairs.

His face grew livid, his enunciation rapid. Pointing southward, he exclaimed,—

“New Orleans is wide awake! The ‘True American’ assures the Bostonians, ‘if those who have embarked in the nefarious scheme of abolishing slavery at the South show themselves in Louisiana, their backs will be spared lashes, but they shall expi-

ate their crime by being BURNED AT THE STAKE!" His figure moved ominously to the east, and vehemently shook as he exclaimed,—

"The dastardly poltroons dare not set foot on Southern soil!" Every lip murmured assent.

Madame Archibald related her experience in Mississippi after the burning of the mail in Charleston.

"The parish came together in a church. After a most touching and most beautiful prayer by the pastor, the people entered into excited deliberation; and finally passed this resolution.

"That any individual who dares to circulate any of the incendiary tracts and newspapers, now in the course of transmission to this country, is justly worthy in the sight of God and man, of IMMEDIATE DEATH."

"Madame Archibald's relation fully substantiated the sagacity of our honored host," observed Major Dentelle. "I also have the pleasure of showing that Georgia responds to that sentiment. The tocsin from Augusta is heard in these words. 'The cry of the whole South should be DEATH, instant DEATH! to the abolitionist, wherever he is caught.'"

"Let me speak for my native State," added Captain Bloodling, his eyes fastened upon Madame Lambelle. "Missouri is on the 'double quick' with other States. The 'Argus' has it that 'abolition editors in Slave States dare not avow their opinions. It would be instant DEATH to them.'"

Colonel Ashland thought with Henry A. Wise of Virginia, that the surest prescription for abolitionists, was "Dupont's best (gunpowder) and cold steel."

"The same righteous determination pervades every Southern State, I believe," remarked the silver-voiced Madame Lambelle, the apple-blossom color deepening, and the clear blue of her eyes lighting up with a singular fire. "I saw a communication from the Rev. J. S. Witherspone, an Alabamian, to the 'Emancipator' in New York, in which he says, 'If their emissaries cross the Potomac he can promise that their fate will be no less than Haman's.'"

"You are right, my dear lady," replied General Terreceine. "This determination is unanimous;" but, in a manner visibly

disturbed, he asked, "how her attention was called to the 'Emancipator?'"

With a bright smile and another sparkle of the singular light in her blue eyes, she replied with a most courteous inclination of her head,—

"By a Southern gentleman, sir, staying at the same hotel." Turning carelessly to Rev. Mr. Warham, she remarked, "The Northern people know very little of slavery; its real necessities or its demands."

His admiring gaze was turned upon the speaker by his side.

"Very true, Madame Lambelle; neither do they understand that they are meddling with red-hot coals, when they meddle with it and us."

"Nor will not, until their fingers are burned to blackened crisp," ejaculated the host in his usual defiant style.

"And yet, sir," resumed the lady, "I wish to exhonorate my own State, New York, from deserved accusation. Shall I take the liberty of doing so?"

"Most assuredly," was granted on all sides.

"Thank you. Not long since, those holding Anti-Slavery principles were to meet at Utica for the avowed purpose of forming a State organization. They were, however, driven from the Court House by a body of prominent and respectable citizens, who intentionally occupied that building beforehand. These people arrived to the number of six or eight hundred. They entered one of the chambers; there, they were met by a large concourse of citizens, who accused them of plotting the *dissolution* of the American Union. The abolitionists were driven from the church with denunciations and threats. The Honorable Samuel Beardsley, member of Congress, declared, 'the disgrace of having an Abolition Convention held in the city is a deeper one than that of twenty mobs, and that it would be better to have Utica razed to its foundation, or to have it destroyed, like Sodom and Gomorrah, than to have the convention meet there.'"

"All honor to New York!" said the sportsman Bloodling; "and thrice honored be the Honorable Samuel Beardsley," from several others.

While she was speaking, a bevy of guests from the bright gar-

dens drew around the doors and windows of the parlor,— five gentlemen and two ladies. One of the two ladies, about whom the others seemed to revolve, had features coldly Grecian, with the complexion of a brunette. Her eyes and hair were of shadowy blackness. On the left side, among her braids, glowed a bright scarlet rose, trailing its leaves and red buds down her Spanish shoulders to her bodice of cherry satin. Her trailing skirt of India muslin was banded and fluted with the same bright color.

She might have had a more imposing line of descent than others present,— running back to the Indian hills. Her ancestors might have gone up before the golden cherubim of "Solomon's Temple," and before the "molten sea," standing upon twelve oxen, the brim wrought with "flowers of lilies." She might have inherited that shadowy hair and eyes from the Moorish and sun-ripened blood of the hidalgos of old Spain. A few pages of Time, turned backward, *might have allied* the dark, fascinating hue that crept over brow, neck, shoulder and arm, to that beautiful paradox of American women, who, denied all lineage, denied a country or a name, never cease to captivate. A careful paradigm of her ancestry *might* have revealed this startling fact.

Leaving this doubtful point to the exactness of American Heraldry, we must be content to know that the person in question was none other than the belle of St. Louis,— the flattered, adored and caressed Miss Honoria Duel.

A young Louisianian, Lieutenant Azucar, son of a cane-planter led the quintette. He was upon her right side bearing her fan. Colonel Selman, an obese, gray-headed Mobilian, commanding the "Cherokee Artillery," moved up on her left, smiling, bowing and toying with Miss Honoria's gold-enameled vinaigrette. Following *en traine*, was Cadet Call, a smooth-faced, lithe Missourian, home on a furlough from military studies. He was elevated to the office of glove-holder, for he bore with knightly care Miss Duel's white kid amulet glove. Admiral Dane of the Navy, a corpulent, florid-faced widower of sixty, was also *en traine* as a gallant page, and blowing like a stranded porpoise, convoyed the belle's bouquet as stiffly upright as the mast of the "Warrior," his own flagship.

Thus they caricoled to the window, coquetting and jesting. Hearing but one musical voice, and observing the deep interest

upon the faces within, they paused and became listeners likewise.

At the conclusion of Mrs. Lambelle's eulogism, *la belle* Duel clapped her hands and cried,—

“*Vive New York! Vive New York!*”

This was a signal for her *suite*; they failed not to obey, and the demonstration became general. *La belle* set her cherry-slippered foot upon the low sill, declaring,—

“Aha! I see! just as I supposed. Madame Lambelle charms all hearts. She holds *tout le monde* entranced by the magic of her azure eyes.”

A soft flush suffused Madame Lambelle's cheeks, as she replied,—

“*Mi fa un complimento al quale non so che rispondere;*” and with a grace which rivited all eyes, she waved her hand to those about her, saying,—

“*No le credianio,*” at the same time pleasantly bowing herself out.

Rev. Fred conducted her into the fragrant air, upon the broad, carpeted floor of the charming piazza.

“*Faccianio un giro en el giardino,*” suggested Madame Lambelle.

Rev. Fred had once known Italian, had once spoken it in Rome and other Italian cities; so after some little hesitation, in searching memory, he replied,—

“*Faro cio che vorra!*” in the tone of homage to a divinity.

They passed out beneath the twining “*drap d'or*” climber, under the deep blue sky and unclouded moon, on to the fountain. They discussed objects and places of interest in the Old World, which were perfectly familiar to both, and forgot the unpleasant American subject—Slavery. Within the brilliant *salons* it remained a fruitful subject of conversation.

“Miss Duel, my dear, we have had a delightful narration of the burning of the mail at Charleston. Chancellor Mowndes has conferred a great favor in relating the interesting particulars. Miss Honoria, you should have been present. You have lost a great pleasure,” said Madame Terreceine.

“I beg pardon, madame,” interfered the chancellor in a complimentary manner; “but Miss Duel *herself* dispenses higher pleasure than the prosy relation of a stern *political* duty could possibly confer.”

"I am a daughter of the South, chancellor, and am, therefore, deeply concerned in her welfare. I have a great curiosity to know something of the contents of those letters. Were any of them saved, sir, or any of the pamphlets?"

"Miss Honoria would be pleased to hear them read," commanded Admiral Dane, still holding mast-upright that lady's bouquet.

"I shall be most honored to comply with Miss Duel's desire. There are two or three still in my possession." He bade his servant bring a certain package of papers. It was found, that through mistake, he had brought but one from the mail-burning, and one other, received since. The latter, he opened with the remark, that "this specimen alone, would show the audacity and stubbornness of Northern spirit; that as it was poetry, he considered it the very topmost shoot of their general sentiment."

"The name of the poet?" asked Cadet Call.

"Whittier; a more insidious incendiary than Garrison himself. Garrison professes to deal with facts, which he hurls with artillery practice among the horrified masses, while Whittier attempts to rouse those intellects which are moved only to the cadences of song."

The letter was passed to Colonel Selman of the "Cherokee Artillery," with the request to read. The colonel rose, and after glancing over its contents, complied. The rich bass of his sonorous voice rang out the flinty words against the iron wills of his listeners. The latent spark flashed along every line. His modulation was perfect. The daring, defiant language found a living beauty in its magical delivery. The poet himself could not have desired a more impressive rendering of the majestic grandeur of his

"STANZAS FOR THE TIMES."

"Is this the land our father's loved?
 The freedom which they toiled to win?
 Is this the soil whereon they moved?
 Are these the graves they slumbered in?
 Are we the sons, by whom are borne
 The mantles which the dead have worn?

 And shall we crouch above these graves,
 With craven soul and fettered lip?"

Yoke in, with marked and branded slaves,
 And tremble at the driver's whip?
 Bend to the earth our pliant knees;
 And speak, but as our masters please?

Shall tongues be mute when deeds are wrought,
 Which well might shame extremest hell?
 Shall freeman lock the indignant thought?
 Shall pity cease to swell?
 Shall honor bleed — shall truth succumb?
 Shall *pen* and *press* and *soul* be dumb?

No! by each spot of haunted ground,
 Where Freedom weeps her children's fall,
 By Plymouth's rock and Bunker's mound,
 By Griswold's stained and shattered wall,
 By Warren's ghost, by Langdon's shade,
 By all the memories of the dead!

By all above, around, below,
 Be one indignant answer; NO!"

He read the last two lines ending with its triumphant "No!" in deep, guttural tones, like the low moanings of distant thunder. During the reading, silence like a pall fell over the assembly.

"There's a challenge to accept," suggested Dentelle. "That last 'No' has the cannon's boom."

"Whittier is a Quaker," said another; "a man of peace."

General Terreceine's face grew dark and austere.

"Quaker or no Quaker," he said, "whoever flings that gauntlet in our faces needs wear the epaulets of war."

"Such Northern men are few," complacently observed Colonel Ashland. The Free States, as a whole, are most pliant and subservient to our demands. You are aware that the resolutions of the South, demanding that the Non-slave-holding States shall enact penal laws for the suppression of Abolition Societies, and making it also a penal offense to print, publish, or distribute anti-slavery newspapers, pamphlets or tracts, has been officially communicated to the governors of those States. Their requirements have thus been brought before the notice of their several legislatures with most gratifying effect."

"True," replied Colonel Selman, the Mobilian, "Governor Marcy of New York, and the Legislature, have declared themselves ready

to make almost any concessions to Southern allies and friends."

"But Massachusetts! — curse her! — fosters just such bandeleros as this Whittier. And her cursed Plymouth Rock is already half chipped away, making sling-stones for giants!" growled the tall Major Bloodling of the "Missouri Light Guards."

The chancellor, who sat thoughtfully turning over the papers in his hand, looked up at the young major with a smile, saying,—

"With true respect for your Southern enthusiasm, let me assure you that Massachusetts, with all her blemishes, is still an ally to the South. I was in Boston at the time when Edward Everett, the Governor of Massachusetts, made his response to the official demands of the Southern States, to which my friend, Colonel Ashland, just alluded. Governor Everett said, in his message, 'Whatever, by direct and necessary operation, is calculated to excite an insurrection among the slaves, has been held by highly respectable legal authority an offense against the peace of the Commonwealth, which may be prosecuted as a misdemeanor at common law,' and also 'that the patriotism of all classes must be invoked, to abstain from a discussion which, if not abandoned, there is just reason to fear will prove the rock on which the Union will split.' This part of the message was referred to a committee of five, of which George Lunt, a senator from Newburyport, was chairman. The anti-slavery society was roused to its own defence and to the prevention of any action against "Freedom of speech and the press."

Some of those men obtained a hearing before the committee. I was present, a curious and unmolested listener. Samuel J. May spoke first, and was followed by Ellis Gray Loring. He *denied* the right of the legislature to enact penal laws, and claimed the moral right to labor for the extermination of slavery or any other crime. Garrison followed, in an onslaught on the Union."

"This is exceedingly interesting," remarked Miss Duel; "dear me! You *did* see Garrison! that blood-thirsty instigator of insurrections?"

"Very interesting," repeated all the ladies. Do describe Garrison to us, if you please. Do! do!" said all.

"Ugh! I shiver at the thought of him," said Miss Duel. "He must be a monster."

"Will Miss Duel first describe the great abolition leader, from her imagination?" laughingly requested Lieutenant Azucar.

"We are eager listeners," joined several voices.

"Miss Duel said coquettishly, "You will see a gnome! an ogre! which I scarcely dare, myself, portray. My ideas are, that Garrison is dwarfish in stature, with wiry, unkempt hair, falling over a low, malignant brow; that his features are half hidden by a long fanatical beard; that his wild eyes glare, without one Christian expression; and that his hands and feet, ungainly in size and shape, complete a picture of ugliness, from the sight of which every right-minded person must turn away with horror and disgust."

General merriment succeeded, when Chancellor Mowndes came to her aid.

"Miss Duel, if Garrison's principles and acts were embodied, you have given us a fine drawing, but I am compelled to acknowledge, that in person and manners, he is prepossessing; has a fine head and features, and an agreeable, impressive voice. Were he in Congress, he would be eclipsed by few."

"Perhaps your audience would not be too much fatigued to listen to some of his oratory," suggested Colonel Ashland. "It will show that our determined threats of revenge and death to those of his ilk who may venture upon our soil, with our rewards for his own head, have had a satisfactory result."

"Let us hear, chancellor. Let us hear," said the host.

"Aye! let us hear," reiterated Commodore Dave.

Chancellor Mowndes resumed; "Mr. Garrison declared that the people of New England have two alternatives; either to consent to be gagged by 'Southern task-masters,' or to labor fearlessly on, till slavery should be blotted from the land. But here comes the point referred to by my friend, the colonel; I give it, in Garrison's own words."

"We loudly boast of our free country, and of the Union of these States; yet *I have no country!* As a New-Englander and an Abolitionist, I am excluded by a bloody proscription, from *one-half* of the national territory, and so is every man who is known to regard slavery with abhorrence. Where is our Union? and of what value is it to me, or to any one who believes that liberty is the inalienable right of every man, independent of the color of his skin, or the

texture of his hair? *We cannot enjoy the privileges of the Union. The right of free and safe locomotion, from one part of the land to the other, is denied to us, except on peril of our lives!* They who preach that slave-holding is sin, and that immediate emancipation is the duty of every master, might as safely leap into a *den of lions*, or into a *fiery furnace*, as to go into the Southern States!"

"Let us rejoice," said Miss Hanoria. "Garrison shall never set his foot upon *our* soil."

"We have accomplished something," said Dentelle, "when we have drawn a *dead line*, which these ruffians dare not pass."

"What was the termination of the hearing, chancellor," asked the host. "Were the committee convinced by the abolitionists?"

"Far from that, sir. George Lunt, the chairman, was 'true blue.' He became exasperated at the assertions of one Goodel, and said abruptly, 'Stop, sir! Sit down, sir! The committee will hear none of this!' He was proof against further pleading; said the committee had heard enough. Thus ingloriously was the excited audience dispersed."

"But one echo of Whittier's "NO!" has been heard from all the Northern governors to whom our official orders of repression have been sent," said Colonel Ashland.

"Pray, which one is that?" asked an excited feminine voice.

"Governor Ritner of Pennsylvania. He commented with Roman firmness and severity on 'the base bowing of the knee to the dark spirit of Slavery.' He counseled the State 'never to yield up the right of the *free discussion* of any evil which may arise in the land, or any part of it.'

"Thaddeus Stephens was chairman of the committee to which our Southern resolutions were referred: of course his report denied our right to claim legislation against free discussion, and it affirmed 'if the claim could be legitimate, the legislature and the citizen would be reduced to a vassalage but little less degrading than that of the slaves, whose condition they assert the right to discuss.'"

"The only remedy for Ritner and Stephens is 'Dupont's best,'" said Cadet Call; "but we shall bring these rebels to terms."

"It is only a matter of time," replied Colonel Ashland, confidently. The chancellor had returned to the papers in his hand.

"I have it," he said quietly, while a curious smile played over his face.

"Ladies and gentlemen, here is a sworn relic of the late Charleston Holocaust. Captain Bloodling, shall we have the honor of listening to you, sir?" at the same time extending to him the letter.

The amiable hostess begged him to summon her beautiful "Ceres."

"Madame Lambelle is so thoroughly interested in our political situation she will be most eager to hear."

A servant was dispatched to the garden; she soon entered, still leaning on the arm of her reverend friend. A general welcoming smile greeted her.

Bloodling nerved himself to the task of a finished elocution, that he might "do the heroic" as acceptably as his predecessor the colonel; but, as he scanned the unfolded letter silently, a visible change swept his proud face. Its mail clad look softened into pity first, and then contempt. He began to read.

"Happy Home, July, 183—

MY BELOVED FRIEND,— I cannot longer delay some expression of the unfathomable sentiment of gratitude which daily pervades my life towards you, the one to whom I owe all I have, and all I am. Nothing but the fear of endangering your safety has set the oblivious seal of silence on all this intervening time. I can never, for one moment, fail to bless you for your efforts in giving me that freedom which has grown so unspeakably precious with the yearly appreciation of its blessings. Ah! what would have been my condition now in Charleston, or sold perhaps, for other shambles, without your assistance in escaping from that terrible bondage. Perhaps it will be sufficient for you to know that I am well, happy, and being educated. This letter will bear witness, for my own hand pens it.

"Enclosed, you will find a small return for your inestimable and dangerous service to me. Accept it, with my daily fervent prayers for your continued life and happiness.

EVENING STAR,"

"That is a cunningly devised letter," remarked Mrs. Archibald.

"And gives no clue to the fugitive," observed the Rev. Fred.

"Its chirography is fine; Major Bloodling, will you do me the pleasure to pass it to the ladies, for inspection?" said the chancellor.

Miss Duel extended her gloved hand for it, ran her dark eyes over it, and pronounced it,—

"Beautifully written, clear and delicate as copper-plate."
Madame Lambelle declared it written in a woman's hand.

Rev. Fred agreed with her opinion.

"To whom was it addressed?" inquired the host.

"To Deiderich Weintze, a German, keeping a corner shop in the city."

"What was the small return, mentioned?"

"A bank check for a thousand dollars."

"Of course you gave the Teuton thief his well-earned remuneration?" questioned the general, ironically.

"Not precisely in money, general. We handed the thousand dollars over to the '*Society for the advancement of Christianity in South Carolina.*'"

"To have put the check in Weintze's hand, would have been paying a premium for a crime against the laws of the State, would it not?" inquired Madame Lambelle, turning her startled blue eyes full upon the face of her admiring companion.

"May I ask what are the laws of Carolina concerning it? tor surely, there must be some penalty attached to the loss of slaves in this manner, as well as for the loss of any other valuable property, I should suppose."

"Indeed, my dear lady, you are right," he replied. "By an act of 1754, all and every person who shall aid a slave in running away or departing from his master's or employer's service, are declared to be guilty of felony, and shall suffer *death* as felons, without the benefit of clergy. The inveigling and carrying away slaves, was a great and growing evil at that time."

"Deiderich Weintze was punishable under that act," remarked Colonel Ashland.

"But you recollect," politely interfered the chancellor, "that by an act of 1821 'whoever shall harbor, conceal or entertain any runaway or fugitive slave, shall be fined or imprisoned at the discretion of the court; not exceeding one thousand dollars fine, nor one years imprisonment;' and as justices and freeholders who try these offenders, can exercise such discretion as they think fit. Deiderich Weintze was sentenced to the whipping-post, to one thousand dollars fine of his own property and imprisonment. We made

an example of him, I assure you, gentlemen. I was in Charleston at the time."

"It was quite necessary," coolly continued the chancellor.

"He was seized at his store, carried to the public whipping-post amid an angry crowd, stripped as to his back and shoulders, and bound to it. We had previously sent for the muscular negro-whipper of the work-house. The air was rife with the same signals of approbation as at the burning of the mail. Cries of 'Kill the Dutchman!' drowned every other sound."

"How many lashes were considered sufficient remuneration," bitterly asked General Terreceine.

"The lashes were not counted, they were discretionary; but when he fainted he was put in a cart and sent to the work-house, where he has since been indulged with the pleasant recreation of the tread-mill."

"Had he to pay his fine?"

"His wife sold out his small store, and met the fine, I believe."

"You came out gloriously!" exclaimed Colonel Selman of the "Rifles."

"Gloriously! gloriously!" echoed other voices. Major Bloodling complimented Charleston, as the banner city of the South.

Miss Duel, reclining among the sofa cushions and zephyrs wafted from her fan, in the hands of the languishing Lieutenant Azucar, indolently declared,—

"All that is wanting now, is to search out and drag back the runaway to lashes and double tasks."

Before the sentence was wafted from her lips by the lieutenant's fan-formed zephyrs, sudden ejaculations and a startled clamor stirred the assembly. Gentlemen sprang to their feet, ladies clasped their hands looking pitifully, yet remained fixed in their seats, as if stunned.

The lovely Madam Lambelle lay motionless on the carpet, at the feet of her Carolina friend. The hostess first rushed to her side with tenderest epithets of loving endearment. Rev. Fred knelt reverently, and raised a cold hand between his own.

While he strove in vain to find the pulses which had so mysteriously fled, the little Italian maid Cossetina, who had been quickly

informed by the servants, came wildly in and threw herself down by her beloved mistress. She called to her,—

“*Cara Zaffiri! Zaffiri! Begli occhi! che avesti!* She drew back the ravishing tresses from her temples, caressed them, moaning over and over, “*Cara Zaffiri! a chionii sciolte!*”

Fred murmured low as if to himself,—

“*Bella a verdere! Bella!*”

Cossetina was frantic with grief. She clasped her hands, raised her eyes to the ceiling, passionately exclaiming,—

“*Bella Zaffiri! sul pavimento; sul pavimento! Sta mala!*” Rising hastily from the carpet, she extended both her hands to General Terreceine. and pleadingly cried, “*Il letto! Il letto!*” Then the English word came to her memory, “*Bed! Bed! Aiutatemi far cio!*”

The general advanced and lifted the still figure in his strong arms. Madame Archibald gathered the trailing veil of flossy hair, laying it upon her breast, then sadly followed the strange *cortège* up the stair-case, to the quiet of a distant chamber.

There had been music and feasting during the evening, which had been partaken with convivial zest by those well trained in the art of enjoyment. The dancing-hall, a handsome appurtenance to the Terreceine mansion, had been filled with the gay, changing throng. Its frescos, flowers, brilliant lights and entrancing strains, had in time drawn all within its eddying circles of pleasure, and these had turned again to the cool gardens and stately *salons* for the agreeable interchange of cultured thought. Authors and their works, artists and their productions were discussed as familiarly as those only can do whose time and means are unlimited. Pleasant memories and incidents of travel were compared; many a group sat again for a passing hour beneath the grandeur of the Alps,—in the shadow of ancient cathedrals, or in fancy trod again the imperial palaces of royalty.

It was the custom at every concourse, public or private, at the evening party, the crowded ball, at hilarious dinners, and even at the fashionable call, throughout the South, to discuss one unflagging topic of discourse. This was slavery, its enemies and supporters. On this festive occasion, when strangers from other Southern States were present, this home subject was presented with

deeper interest ; and because the sentiment of the group of conversationists is relevant to our purpose, their ideas have been given to the reader, to the exclusion of other subjects.

But for the occurrence of this last touching event, Madame Lambelle's calamity, the evening's attractions would have held fascinations for hours longer. But the strange malady which had stricken down the beautiful stranger, cast a gloom over the spirits of every one present.

Thought and conversation changed to her personal beauty, her high-bred ease of manner, her sprightliness of humor, the taste and elegance of her attire, the number and brilliancy of her diamonds, and above all, to the interest displayed in whatever pertained to the South.

Disquiet marked the usually calm faces of the servants as they waited for some order, whereby they might do loving service for the "dear lady," in return for the soft words and condescending smiles with which she greeted them.

Fred Warham sat silently apart, as if he had seen a divine transfiguration.

After a half-hour's suspense, a gray-haired physician, holding the respect and confidence of the circle, entered the *salons* from the lady's chamber. A volley of tender inquiries assailed him, to which he gave the pleasant information, that he apprehended no immediate danger ; his patient had opened her "bluest of blue eyes, as fresh as spring violets." She would fully recover from the effects of the swoon, in two or three days, "to the joy of us all," he added, with a bow and benignant smile signifying the dismissal of anxiety. He declared there was never such another "Rome in America" as that chamber. "Why," said he, "the little Cossetina fills the room with chattering Italian. The air is heavy with the soft language, as her churches are of incense ; yet with all her censor-swing of her native tongue, the only distinguishable aroma is 'Zaffiri ! Zaffiri ! Zaffiri caressed, Zaffiri moaned, Zaffiri wept, and Zaffiri adored.'"

A universal smile gladdened the dull *salons*.

"Zaffiri is a singular name," remarked one.

"Zaffiri is Italian for sapphires. It must signify her blue eyes," replied Fred Warham. "She is American born, however ; a native New-Yorker, of one of those opulent and travelled families,

which form so pleasant a counterpart to our chivalry and blooded descent."

"Ah, yes," said Miss Duel; "her husband brought the proper letters of introduction from New York. You know we do not receive into our social regards any strangers of doubtful precedent."

"Her husband dotes upon her," said the hostess, "and would not trust her health to the climatic changes of Texas, at present. He is equally interested with us Southerners, in that country, but will not take Zaffiri there until winter."

"A splendid fellow he is, too," said the general. "Nobility is stamped upon his face. I made his acquaintance on his way out here."

Carriages came one after another to the piazza, and rolled away, leaving love's tender regrets and regards for the invalid.

General Terreceine invited a few of the choice spirits of St. Louis to tarry in the library for a short conference with the Carolina friends.

Between the grand dining *salon* and library, white-gloved slaves glided about, bearing those refreshments which the company demanded. From the costly buffet, glittering with the cut glass paraphernalia of fashionable wine-bibbers, were brought on trays of solid silver, decanters filled with the blood-red, the amber, and the purple juices of rare vintages.

The sliding doors of the *salons* were closed around the conclave, and the polished mail of gallantry worn in the presence of ladies was rapidly doffed.

Belles, horses, women and hounds were brought upon the *tapis* together. Various degrees of eulogism, sarcasm or contempt, were bestowed upon the mingled array, and they were banished from inspection amid toasts, resolves, and responses drank in swift succession.

Tongues grew voluble and reckless. Short patriotic speeches were indulged in, flaming with vituperation and lurking revenge.

Cadet Call was of the opinion that Congress had the power, and therefore should control the diabolical Northern agitation. The Northern Whig vote of that body assimilated so generally with the Southern Democrats, that they could easily carry any resolution.

Northern States should be forced to make penal enactments for their agitators. In the very *faces* of these public disturbers, they should enact the *gibbet* and the *gallows*."

Colonel Ashland advised to declare to the North, if the question of slavery be further discussed in any shape, at any time, at any place, the Slave States would secede from the Union; they would show the world that the old saying,—“The pen is mightier than the sword,” is reversed, and that the South would abide only by the decision of the latter.

General Terreceine cried out hotly,—

“Drink, gentlemen, drink! to the sentiment. We will muzzle their foul, incendiary mouths! We will make bonfires of their moral convictions! We will grind their logic to powder beneath the upper and the nether millstones of our adamantine will. And the Constitution! Ah, we will hurl their printing presses to the bottom of their rivers, *a-la* James G. Birney’s, in the Ohio.”

Judge Pitts, a Missourian, roused to heroic remembrances by the name of “Birney,” held up his glass.

“To Cincinnati, the friendly watch-tower midway along the moat of our Northern border.”

A long hip — hip — hurrah! responded, and a drink all round.

Dentelle was complimentary. “I give you, my friends, Missouri, yet in her ‘teens,’ but the fair young mother of Texas, after the mother, Texas herself, the eagle’s nest, hatching forty-three Massachusetts-ess;” his brandied tongue slipping on the smooth termination.

Angry cries of “*No! No! No! By Heaven, no!*” accompanied by a heavy blow upon the table, and accidents among the cut-glass, interrupted the toaster.

Dentelle, intent upon his idea, and perceiving the rock on which he had split, reiterated,—

“Gentle’em, Texas! The house of the free and the land of the brave. Beg pardons-es. *Cut her up*—through—*Dam’me! cut her up!* into eighty-six senator-r-r-ors from elsewhere, and p’serve balance of power.”

More accidents.

The tall, lithe figure of Lieutenant Bloodling for a few moments overlooked the table and its surroundings. His right hand ran

through his disordered flaxen hair, and then slowly drew forth to the light of the chandelier a gleaming knife. He was still silent, but busied himself in so turning the blade, that its white, reflected light danced here and there on the walls and book-cases; and so that all could read the sanguinary words, DEATH TO ABOLITION etched darkly upon its surface.

Another "hip — hic — hip — hurrah!" welcomed its ghastly motto.

Bloodling flourished the blade, wildly repeating with furious voice,—

"By Calhoun's soul, by Bowie's blade,
By Southern blood of bluest grade,
By all above, around below,
Be our indignant answer; so!"

accompanying the last syllable by a portentous plunge of the dangerous steel downward.

"Our Southern Whittier," exclaimed a round of voices, the reward to his poetical effort.

Weapons of various shapes and powers slid out of their sheaths, and insanely brandished lightnings under the trembling prisms of the chandelier.

Bloodling's new style of knife was passed about, and gave general satisfaction. Its British manufacture, its excellent temper, its studied proportions, its fine, razor-like edge, and especially, its deep, threatening words "DEATH TO ABOLITION," along its blade, were each in turn subjects of comment and praise.

The gray-haired doctor stepped lightly in from the piazza, took the weapon in his soft hands, read the inscription, and pronounced it, "the greatest moral invention of the age." Returning it to Bloodling, he said,—

"Make good use of it, my young friend. In the sacred words of the Evangelist 'the fields are already white to the harvest.'"

"Doctor, how is your lovely patient, Madame Lambelle?" A general and subdued attention awaited his reply.

"I congratulate you, gentlemen, upon the success of your social

festivities ; but I came to say, with deep regret on my part, and I am sure with sorrow on yours, that the lady has just experienced a slight spasm, which is unfavorable. I therefore suggest perfect, unbroken quiet as a sovereign remedy. Her delicate nervous system will not endure the least shock."

The decision to adjourn was immediate and unanimous.

Bloodling offered in a parting bumper, "the health of the lovely Zaffiri." They drank it standing, in the sympathy of silence, each man's hand upon his heart.

The last carriage rolled out under the ivy arch. General Terreceine said to his Carolina guests,—

"We are to have a high old day to-morrow. I had forgotten to mention it. The officers are in pursuit of two fellows who are suspected of tampering with our slaves, and running them off. They have fled to Alton, and if they are caught, I invite you to witness their trial. Damn them! Good-night."

CHAPTER XVII.

"HOW delightful is the morning," said Fanny to her mother, as she came down from her chamber.

"And you are as rosy as the morning," was the reply. "I don't think there is a fresher looking girl in Alderbank." Passing to the open window of the dining-room, Fanny threw her usual look of rapture over the bright sky, the many clouds, the mountains, the white serpentine wreath of fog, along the base of the wooded hills, marking the course of the river, and over all with what her childhood was familiar. Her eyes were aglow with the happiness of the delicious reverie.

The voice of her mother, as often before, roused her.

"Come, Fanny dear, there is work to be done ; the clock has a story to tell as well as the landscape."

"That clock is my task-master ; but come here, mother. Do you observe that bunch of asparagus? It is heavy with the glorified spirits of precious stones. Red, blue, purple, yellow and green,

sparkle from every spray. Aladdin's cave had not more splendid jewels than these."

"The whole universe is an Aladdin's cave to you, Fannie ; come, take those rolls from the oven, fill the coffee urn and arrange the chairs at table. Richard has been reading two hours. This will be a busy day, for you know you have preparations to make for to-morrow, the Sabbath. As you have been propounded for admission to the church, and no one has made objection to your being received, I suppose you will take the vows of Cloudspire church upon you to-morrow. I cannot think you understand the course you insist upon taking, and I wish, Fanny, you could have consented to wait till you are older."

The countenance and tone of Mrs. Beame was grave and remonstrative.

"I am sorry to meet your disfavor, dear mother, but I am eighteen ; too old to disobey the commands of our Savior, and my own conscience. In matters between the soul and its Creator, each one must be accountable for one's self."

"Then, I think, Fanny, that Cloudspire church has a great weight of accountability resting upon it, which the simple act of eating bread and drinking wine will not lighten."

Do you think, my child, that the sacraments they have partaken, since Richard and their outrage upon him, was an outrage upon millions of oppressed in our land ; I say, do you think those sacraments have purified the church of this offense in the sight of that Savior they profess to follow ?"

"Not that act alone ; but, mother, they were mistaken then, and we should suppose that every heart can be softened by repentance. They have forgiven me for my fiery denunciation of their faith in the pulpit where I had no right to go, and overlooked my hasty anger."

"Fanny, the church will overlook anything, any sin, any crime, to obtain a new member ; however, it is too late to warn you now. You persist in following "conscience ;" your conscience is nothing more than an obedience to the persuasions of the new minister, of Deacon Steele and Mary. But let us say no more. We must hasten to breakfast."

"Yes, mother, we have to go down the river to Susan's house

to-day, and to cook up something to carry her and the children, for she has not heard from Henry for a long time."

"You have also to call upon the teacher, to smooth away the troubles that a wicked prejudice casts in the way of Susan's little ones. Have you not, my dear?"

Richard heard the question as he was seating himself at table, and asked another,—

"How is this? In the common school? What trouble?"

"You see, my son, it is simply the scorn of color: for Henry Hughes children are as quick to learn as any pupils in school. Fanny had them well advanced when they entered. They are always tidily dressed, but some of the white children daily torment them to crying; they take away their dinners, tear their clothes, hide their books, and taunt them with abusive names."

"The old story," he replied. "So, Fanny, you propose to take the part of protector of the down-trodden?"

"Yes, Richard. I cannot, by silence, 'pass by on the other side.' I may give offense, however."

"That does not lessen your obligation. Whoever passes by the abuses of that school, without rebuking its prejudice and the fruits of it, is partaker of the very deeds; and whoever neglects to inform himself that such deeds are enacted there, is also culpable."

"I was resolved; but, Richard, you give me new courage."

"Fanny, scatter truth always. Never a seed perishes. It may fall upon dry or rocky soil, but time and genial rains will cause it to bud and blossom. The whole district and the whole town even, may, in time, feel the influence of your words in behalf of the oppressed."

Fanny and her mother called at the schoolhouse about four o'clock, to take the children with them on their walk to Susie's. The path followed the river-bank; mossy, leafy, cool, and mottled with sunny spots. The children each held a hand of Fanny's. What a tide of joy and childish trust poured through her tender clasp into their little brown hands empty of aught else; empty of worldly goods, worldly honor, but most empty of human love. They ran away for blackberries and came back; they stopped on the shore to pick up the white pebbles for Fanny; they drew both ladies into a shady nook of hemlock to show a bird's nest with the

blue eggs ; they plunged into the dry leaves like partridges, after red berries.

A flat rock projected into the river under a broad chestnut. Mrs. Beame proposed resting, and all seated themselves.

“Now, said Fanny, “let us change works. I will peep into your satchels, and you shall peep into our pockets.”

Amid the children’s feasting from their pockets, Fanny examined progress in lessons ; turning over the books, she found many leaves had been roughly torn out.

“Addie, how came this ?” she said.

Addie looked troubled, and was silent.

“Addie, dear, how was it ?”

Large tears filled the child’s eyes.

“I’m afraid, Miss Fanny.”

“Oh, no ! you should not fear me. Tell Fanny all. Nothing shall harm you ;” and she drew the timid face to hers.

“Miss Fanny, won’t you tell ?”

“Not to harm you, darling ; tell Fanny all.”

She drew Fanny’s bonnet down to hers and whispered,—

“Do you know that big boy they call “Bully,” the tavern-keeper’s boy ?”

“Yes, Addie.”

“Well, when I spell right and get up to the head in his class, he tears out the leaf that’s got the word on it, that I spell and get above him. He says if I tell, he’ll come down in these woods and drown’d us when nobody knows it. He says *niggers* shan’t go up to the head of white folks’ classes. Don’t you tell, Miss Fanny.”

Willie saw a butterfly, jumped from the rock and vainly pursued it up the mossy path. Returning hat in hand, Mrs. Beame perceived a large, dark bruise on his forehead.

“O child !” she asked, “what is the matter with your head ?”

“The boys pushed me off the steps, on a stone, and it bled.”

“What did they say then ?” she calmly asked, stroking the shiny waves of his soft black hair.

“They laughed, and made fun of me, and pushed me again.”

“But, you know, Willie, some of the girls brought water to wash it,” said Addie, kindly.

They went on to the little cabin among the green shimmer of

tall trees. The cove embosomed in high shores, reflected their picturesque rocks and trees like a mirror. The homely hut, or cabin, with its open door and window, saw itself in the water, and the green sloping turf of the other, from Susie's door, kissed the other in the water. A snowy washing hung and waved on Susie's lines; they fluttered also on the lines of the river. Visitors stood at Susie's doorstep. Ladies and children stopped by the doorsteps in the picture, also.

"You have another settlement near to cheer your solitude," said Fanny, pointing to the cove; "are they agreeable neighbors?"

"Entirely so," said Susan. "There is no strife between us — the families in the two cabins are alike, humble and poor."

"Come in, both of you. No, stay; the room is too warm. I will bring seats under the trees. I'm so glad you are come."

She sprang up the wooden steps and brought out a letter, holding it up gayly for Fanny to read the inscription.

"Now we'll hear from papa, children. Will you read it, Fanny? I got it yesterday, and was to take it to you last night, but for the shower."

Fanny broke the seal. In unfolding the awkward half sheet of fool's cap, something fell upon the grass; swift as a mouse, Susan's hand glided after it, and caught it up.

"Just like him. Look Mrs. Beame. Look, Fanny. How good Henry is. I never had so much money before." Susan turned the small package this way and that, as if she read affection in the folding of the bank notes, and was gratifying her hungry heart with the love of her husband, first.

"Count your treasure, dear," suggested Mrs. Beame.

"I will ask you to count it for me. I have never done such a thing; for, as I said, never so much money was in this house, before."

Mrs. Beame ran it over.

"Twenty-five dollars, Susan; it will make you quite comfortable if care is taken in expending it. Better put it in a safe place till you need it. Now, Fanny, read the letter to Susan."

The writing was crude, and the sentences were ungrammatical. A rough hand had penned it from dictation, and it was mailed in New York.

Fanny read,—

“MY DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN,— Thank God, that with all our hard lot, this comfort and privilege of writing is left us. It is a long time since I parted from you at our poor door by the river. I have been in great cities, have seen strange things. I have seen marble houses, grand churches, and huts as poor as ours. I have come to believe that the poor are in every corner of the land. I have sailed on the ocean, and I have seen waves that would toss our house about, like an egg-shell.

“I have turned sailor. My last voyages have been to Havanna. That is a very hot country. Oranges and lemons grow there. I never forget you. You are by me night and day. The world is hard on me everywhere, but I have managed to save this money for you and the children. I never could have given you so much money if I had staid at Alderbank. Buy something to eat and to wear through the cold winter coming. I must try to help you buy a store by that time. Try to have the children go to school, and help them to put up with the treatment I know they will get there. I believe schooling will help them to get along better than you and I do. They will know then who is cheating them out of their wages and who is robbing them at the stores.

“I could write all night, but I shall tire this shipmate who writes for me. In any trouble of yours or the children, get the advice of Mrs. Beame and Fanny. God bless that family. Give them my best respects. I shall be in port two weeks. Get a letter written, and direct care of A. Z. Roy. schooner ‘Petrel;’ Box —

“Your faithful husband till death,

“HENRY HUGES.”

“P. S. The captain is kind and will not see his men abused.”

“Oh! thank you, Fanny,” said Susan; “how glad I am to hear from Henry; but he is so far away.” Her face saddened. “The ocean is so dangerous. He promised to come back in the spring. O, Mrs. Beame! life is such a hard struggle with everybody against you.”

“Do not look upon the dark side,” said Mrs. Beame. “The same God rules the sea, as rules the land. Keep up a good heart; out of the money, you shall have more comfort than you dreamed of—some clothing new and strong—that will not need to be patched at every washing, when you are too tired to hold a needle; and you shall have food and warmth.”

“And the children are already at school,” added Fanny.

“But for Henry’s letter, I believe they would not be at school to-morrow. I might as well confess the truth, I was angered. I cannot take insults all my life. No, I might bitterly endure them myself, but to know that my innocent children are buffeted at every

step forward, is tantalizing beyond degree. Addie comes home and repeats language to me, which none but savages would speak to her, much less Christian children. Her spelling-book, which I have taught the children to take such care of, has leaf after leaf torn out of it. Willie is covered with bruises; besides, I am obliged to go with them along the river path mornings, to the foot of the hill, and meet them there in the afternoon. Addie says she is afraid. I'm sure I don't why; whether her head is full of ghosts or what it is."

"Never mind it, Susan; all these vexations belong to the times — but the times will change. Truth advances. By and by, all these harrowing deeds will be buried in the past. The education of your children is for a living future. With books, study and the nurturing care of us all, Willie and Addie may rise to positions of happiness and honor. They may exchange this pleasant nest among the trees for ceiled houses amongst gardens and vines, and —"

Susan broke into a nervous, incredulous laugh, in which both visitors gleefully united. The adjoining woods took up the half joyful, half derisive laughter, till the green depths were alive with its echoing volleys.

Susie's unbelief looked out through the sunshine and rain of her eyes.

"O Mrs. Beame! do not, I beg you, speak to me of impossibilities. What am I, to plant one bright hope in my heart, dark as ignorance can make it. The only light *in* it — the pitch flare of our wretched experience. What am I, Fanny? Compare yourself with me. What am I but a washing-machine, that thinks, thinks, how or what? thoughts no wider than this cove, nor higher than these trees, nor deeper than the hollow of my potato hills, there; and my children —"

In a twinkling, as if she heard the cry of one drowning, Fanny tossed her bundle on the sward, and kneeling by the low seat of Susie, playfully placed one hand on her grieving mouth, and caressed her wavy hair with the other.

"Hush! Susie, hush! Don't think of it. Have a little hope. Henry, my mother and I, have paid you a visit in a most opportune time. Let us all fight together the good fight of faith."

“Faith for what, Fauny, and in what?”

“Faith for the future, dear,” said Mrs. Beame; “for the future in *this* world too, I mean. Persist in sending these children to the village school. Do your duty to them. We will help you. Some wrongs have been corrected to-day.” Mrs. Beame sent Willie and Addie out to pick a cup of berries, and resumed,—

“Fanny has had a conversation with the teacher to-day, about the abuses of your children, and she has promised to set about a reform. This will have an effect on the parents; ‘a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.’ A gentler, tenderer feeling towards colored citizens will take root.

“Susie, you asked, ‘Faith *in* what?’ Let me tell you; faith in the great Shepherd of us all. There is no Babel of wrongs so high that He cannot overturn it. He will set bounds to oppression; either national or individual. Who knows how soon those bounds may be reached? Trust in Him, Susie.”

She reached for the bundle, saying,—

“See there is something to lighten your burdens. She held up two new dresses for Addie, one blue, the other pink; two new aprons tastefully made; a summer suit of gray for Willie, and a pair of long-sleeved aprons, strong and new; besides, two sets of strong underwear for each; two new satchels, prettier than any others in school; ruffles for the neck of Addie’s dresses; bright ribbons for her hair; white collars for Willie; several small handkerchiefs, and a neat hat for each.

Susie’s face lost its melancholy.

“Now,” said Fanny, “put the clothing on the children, right away. Dress them prettily for school, and take courage. I am going from home for a few weeks, but I shall be content to feel that they are well dressed. I shall leave a new book for Addie, with the teacher, and as many more as they may need.”

“Next, promise me,” said Mr. Beame, “that every Thursday afternoon, you will bring the children, and eat a hearty supper with me while Fanny is gone. Richard is going also; I shall be alone.”

“Promise, Susan,” said Fanny.

“It will be a great pleasure, if we are worthy to sit at Mrs. Beame’s table.”

At the same time she was pulling sweet pinks, four-o'clocks, white lilies and mignonette for her friends.

Fanny took them from Susie with a deep courtesy, and said laughingly,—

“If the same hand that formed you, shaped and tinted these flowers, you should sit at the table of kings and be a princess yourself. We are going; walk with us, you and the children, along the river path.”

A companion party started at the same moment from the other cabin, mirrored in the cove. Fanny waved her handkerchief to the friendly “Undines,” and received an answering white wave of a handkerchief in return.

The morning of the morrow, the Sabbath morning of Fanny's consecration, the morning of the day in which she was to be set apart from the world, a chosen vessel of the Lord, dawned gloriously. Fanny, according to the pattern which she had drawn from pious memoirs, retired to her closet, and on her knees, repeated a formula of prayer, framed of fragmentary sentences, gleaned from the pulpit and the family altars of her religious friends, and which she deemed appropriate for the occasion.

A look of exalted martyrdom solemnly veiled her usual beaming vivacity, as she moved silently about her morning tasks. At the sight of this “Third Heaven” expression, her mother frequently turned away, and smiled; affectionately abstaining from wounding the mistaken ecstasy of her beloved child.

Mrs. Beame even accompanied Fanny on the long ride to Cloudspire, driving herself; she cheerfully sustained conversation upon the natural attractions along the route. She entered the double green door of the church by her daughter's side, and sat by her in one of the square, high-backed pews.

During the morning services, Fanny's glances towards her mother's countenance convinced her that the old spirit of unbelief was still triumphant,—a phase of spiritual degeneracy, most chilling to Fanny's thoughts. It caused a stab of pain to her own devotion; and beneath the shelter of her cottage bonnet she closed her eyes, offering a petition that she might not be separated from that dear mother at the gate of Heaven, to whose entrance she,

herself, expected to attain, through belief and the "perseverance of the saints."

At the commencement of the exercises of the Lord's Supper, Fanny's grief for her mother was cruelly intensified. The *elect*, and those about taking sacred vows, were requested to sit apart in a body. This seemed typical of the final separation of the faithful and unbelieving. Taking her seat in Deacon Steele's pew by Mary, Fanny saw her mother enter a pew near the door. She could not restrain regretful tears.

Standing in the aisle, with other candidates, and assenting to "Articles of Faith" clearly pronounced by the pleasant voice of the new clergyman, but vaguely understood by the candidates, Fanny felt that this act of earthly renunciation was the most acceptable service she could render to the Savior she adored. She believed this form of confession well pleasing to Him, but did not understand that her visit to Susie's cabin, the day previous, was rayed with a more ineffable glory than this Sabbath errand to Cloudspire. Nor did she imagine that when she knelt by Susan, and pityingly passed her hand over her stricken head, there was more joy in Heaven than when she solemnly and publicly assented to those cold, mysterious "Articles."

With bared head, her brown hair banded plainly back, and wearing the simplest dress of unadorned white, in pure and nun-like humility she approached the silver font, brooded by winged angels, and which contained the liquid seal of her union with the people of God.

Inexpressible stillness pervaded the church, while the water of consecration fell from the hand held above her head, and the voice of the clergyman said with fraternal gentleness,—

"Fanny, I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

It was over,—this long-desired and filial act of Fanny's life. she rode home with her mother, studying patiently how to set about the fulfillment of her church vows most acceptably.

At tea, Richard joined them. Like his sister, he clung to the church, its creeds and ceremonies. He had no doubt of its errors, but time and investigation of disproved claims would restore harmony between it and himself. He approved the step Fanny had

taken. Both were alike hopeful ; both considered the church the true germinating soil of man's salvation.

"Speaking of the errors of the church, my dear son," said Mrs. Beame, "one error destroys its infallibility, as a system to be trusted ; besides, *one* error supposes *two*, and a continuation of blunders, *ad infinitum*. The search for that plain path laid down by our Savior, so plain, 'that a wayaring man, though a fool, need not err therein,' has been an *eighteen-hundred years'* search, and the church has not found it yet, as you, Richard, learned at William Steele's revival. Fanny 'if the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch.' I charge you, my daughter, to make the example of Christ your study. Time will test for you both, the value of church fellowship."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE fiery glow of midsummer had passed. Carolina's "City by the Sea" shook the hot dust from her parched bowers, and began to put on her beautiful garments. The garden roses which refused their graces to the ardent heat, now sprung into new life. Trellis, bower, wall and *parterre* burst into beauty and fragrance. Tender folded leaves shot out from the hitherto dormant buds, and drank the exhilaration of a Southern November air. Charleston was in its second annual floral glory.

Mistress Valmonte stood at a table heaped with the odorous harvest, which Tony, the old black gardener, knew how to cut so well. Scilla, the lady's brown maid, was deftly arranging bouquets, under the eye of her mistress, whose delicate gloved hands only waved over the thorny stems, in airy oratory, directing harmony in color and combination.

"Tony, bring more of the white *I'mperatrice de la France*," said the mistress ; in whose words a new-born gayety was quite observable to the demure and statuesque ears of Scilla. "Clip also some of the half-open buds, Tony, and bring more of the mignonette."

"Bring all 'rectly missis !" turning to obey.

"Cut a few of those pale blue South American lilies at the

edge of the fountain, and a handful of white and crimson fuschias. Hear?"

"Sartin, my dear missis."

Soon the beautiful flowers were heaped upon the table, wet with dew-drops still.

Scilla held the second bouquet, completed. It was a marvel of beauty, as she turned it this way and that for the inspection of her mistress.

"Scilla, place this in the Roman vase, and the other in the vase of silver and alabaster, the one I brought from Paris for the parlors." Then pointing to a heap of roses white as drifted snow, she continued, "Make up one less compact of these '*Imperatrice de la France*,' and mingle here and there, these crimson bells of fuschia; make it light and graceful."

The lady stood by, her eye kindling with secret satisfaction, as Scilla brought it nearer to perfection.

"Now bring the Venetian vase; place it in that, carry it up to the guest-chamber, and leave it on the marble table."

It was brought. One would scarcely know which to admire most, the vase or the flowers. The sculpture was wrought from the finest marble, elaborated from the drippings of some European stalactite cave. It had three shades of a warm soft brown color. A maiden kneeling and clad in a flowing robe held above her bowed head an urn of green malachite, sleeted with pearls. The maiden herself was brown. Life like ringlets of a darker shade fell over her nude dimpled shoulders, and over the still lighter shaded folds of her loose classical drapery. One crimson bell of fuschia touched her exquisite head, another shaded the bare, brown, tapering arm raised to the urn above it.

"Put this away Scilla, in some place sheltered from dust, till the guest-chamber is arranged. Then put together a larger bouquet of white callas, and those blue Mexican lilies, with English ivy interspersed; place that in the alabaster vase, and let the ivy sprays droop over it. Also," the lady continued, waving her gloved hands over the fragrant clippings, "form another still, entirely of roses; mingle all hues, and varieties of odor."

"Yes, missis," meekly replied the faithful slave.

Mistress Valmonte was leaving the room, when suddenly arresting herself, she resumed.

“Oh, no, Scilla, throw them in water now ; come to dress me, and attend to the flowers afterwards.”

The lady entered her chamber, and with an air of fatigue, threw herself into a velvet arm-chair. She drew off her gloves nervously, joined her soft hands as if in the act of petition ; while she cast a languid glance about the handsome apartment. The walls were hung with mementos of foreign travel. Solemn abbeys, picturesque chateau, snowy peaks and sunny lakes, stirred the dearest memories of her proud heart.

Each view was associated with the voice and love of one whose presence had deepened the glow of the sunlight, and heightened the beauty of every scene. Electric thought flew rapidly back over every link of those associations, to the golden hour, when at the age of seventeen, she stood with that chosen one before the marriage altar, laid her jeweled hand in his, and took upon herself the vows of womanhood.

More slowly retracing the past, she paused at two more evenful moments, so hallowed to every mother's memory, when, faint with hope and fear, a tiny new life was laid upon her bosom, and committed to her future keeping.

The birthplace of her eldest, Ernestin, was commemorated by a quiet Roman suburb on the wall at her left. The spires of the Holy City, and the gilded dome of “St. Peter's,” pierced the mellow air. Around the ground of the villa, a dreamy dilapidation was apparent, excluding bustle and fashion, while it secreted and shielded the one great joy within — the birth of a son and heir to the rank and chivalry of the distinguished name of Valmonte of South Carolina.

The birthplace of Corinne, the younger, was portrayed by shaded windows, overlooking the Rialto of Venice, and its gay gondolas, skimming the liquid thoroughfares below.

The tender transcripts of a sainted past shed a grieved rebuke upon her morning's work — the intense light of her eyes faded into a subdued lustre.

Above the mantel shone the beautiful waters of Lake Constance, overhung by the silvery outline of the Alps Appenzell. On its

southern fertile bank, apart from clustered abodes, rose the white marble shaft, which marked the grave of her young husband, Francis Valmonte, near by the pretty Swiss cottage where their journeyings diverged forever.

Alas! the flowers desinged for the guest-chamber seemed to her for the moment appropriate garlands for that sacred spot.

However, Time, which covers reeking battle-fields with flowers, and which veils ghastly ruins with most inviting grace, was proving a most reliable friend to Mistress Valmonte. Three years of his healing art had restored her natural vivacity and her sparkling glow of health. Time had made green again the indefinable longing for that companionship, which should bring with it the fulfillment of all life's possibilities.

Theresa Valmonte was not one to be deterred from the prosecution of a well-arranged plan. Having once formed a purpose, it became the pole star of every motive. She was the conscious possessor of that triple dower, wealth, beauty and accomplishments; to which, in woman, the world pays obsequious homage. The second portion of her dower, her mirror, flatteringly whispered.

"It pictured a blonde with a superb cut of features, an abundance of braided hair, a shade darker than flaxen; a full, rounded bust; arms of perfect symmetry; and hands *petites*, on which could not be seen the faintest stain of industry.

She was weary of the sombre weeds of widowhood, and was determined to brave the time-honored custom of her native State — that of dooming herself to a solitary and widowed life.

Therefore, as the expected occupant of the guest-chamber was to arrive during the day, she would commence to lay aside those grave habiliments of grief which found no semblance in her heart or affections. Orders were given accordingly.

"Scilla, ring the bell for the chamber-maid; and lay out my gray carriage-suit."

The chamber-maid appeared, and received commands to dress the chamber with great care, using the embroidered, lace-frilled pillow-covers, and the fine frilled linen sheets; to loop up the lace pavilion with the white silk cord and tassels, and to have all completed by her return.

"Scilla, ring the bell for the footman and order the carriage at

ten. Now dress me and listen to what I shall say." While the dexterous hands of the maid drew on her mistress' bootees, and while she buttoned and smoothed the fine fabric to Madame Valmonte's form, while she adjusted the costly collar round her clear throat, and drew on carefully her close-fitting gloves, her lady continued,—

"While I am away, lay out my white dress, find my lace flounces, get them ready for my toilet at dinner. Lay out my set of pearls; have ready also, a few clusters of that small purple flower near the century plant; Tony knows where it is. Now bring my purse and the note which the footman brought up yesterday. It is ten o'clock."

Scilla followed the madame down stairs; opening and closing doors for her, as she swept on to the carriage. She even followed to the marble block, at the carriage steps, and held away her dress from the dust of the wheels, although that was the prerogative of the footman in attendance.

Before the door closed, the lady addressed her maid, speaking in a low tone.

"Tell that detestable minx, Harriet, to dress my darlings, and take them out walking for one hour."

The spirited grays dashed away to East Bay. They tossed their heads and flung their foam before the office door of "Kershaw & Lewis," the financial agents of her ancient family.

The door swung open—the lady entered the small carpeted room, prepared for such patrons. After the blandest of receptions, seating herself, she drew out a note. Cautiously glancing it over, she addressed the factor.

"I see, Mr. Kershaw, by this communication, that my funds for the present are already all drawn."

"I regret to say that you are correctly informed, Mistress Valmonte; especially if it subjects you to any annoyance."

"I confess to some surprise, sir. Doubtless, this was owing to heedlessness on my part. If you please, sir, will you inform me to what items I am indebted for this failure?"

"With much pleasure, madame."

He stepped into the office, and returned with her own ledger—a handsome book, bound on the back and corners in red morocco.

A square of the same color on the cover, bore in gilt letters the name, "*Theresa Valmonte, née Paisley.*" He drew a chair to her side, and on the marble table, turned the fateful leaves.

"There, madame, are the items which swell our credit column beyond its annual amount. Your trip to the North, this year, commenced earlier, and continued later than usual."

He traced the pages of the previous year, and compared those expenses with the present.

"You perceive this amount is three thousand dollars more than last year."

"Very true, sir."

"I would also direct your attention to the purchase of furniture, made at that time."

"Ah, yes, I recollect."

"That amount was two thousand dollars; also the excellent matched pair of carriage horses, purchased in New York, and the cost of transferring them to Charleston — twelve hundred dollars."

"Mr. Kershaw, I believe Dido was sold from my estate; I think last spring; just after my arrival in New York. I disremember precisely what her sale brought me."

"I will show you with great pleasure. Pray pardon me one moment."

He left the room again, opened a large, tin trunk containing the family papers and correspondence, took from it a package of letters and returned. Running rapidly over the pile, he selected one labelled "*Sale of Dido.*"

With a wave of her hand, she said,—

"Read it sir, if you please. These business details are exceedingly irksome to me." He read,—

"New York, 184 —

"MESSRS. KERSHAW & LEWIS,—*Gentlemen,*—I am compelled to call upon you again, for an addition to my funds in hand. I have recently met here the Rev. Mr. Luther Winfield, who is building up a church, as I believe in the interests of the gospel. He interprets the Constitution as harmonious in principle with our Holy Bible, in respect to slavery. Although born and raised in the North, he is not one of those dangerous fanatics, who constantly disturb our Southern peace; but is a bold standard-bearer for our time-honored Institution. His church is yet struggling in its infancy; I am reminded of my duty towards it.

"I have a slave, called 'Dido,' on 'Deer Park' plantation, which I beg you to have brought to the city for sale. Dido has a clear, brown color, and is about twenty-two years old, entirely sound. I wish to donate to Rev. Winfield's church one thousand dollars. Sell Dido for as much over that sum as possible. Remit to me the whole proceeds. I meet at this church a host of our Charleston friends. They are all quite well.

"Respectfully Yours,
"THERESA VALMONTE."

"This wench Dido, was highly marketable," explained the factor. "On the auction-table she brought eleven hundred and fifty dollars; but of course the one hundred and fifty above your charity was of little use."

"Ah, yes! The one-thousand dollars was a timely aid to the church; and the surplus of one hundred and fifty dollars I deposited in the private purse of Lottie, the worthy pastor's wife."

"So that the sale of the girl was of no benefit to yourself."

"Certainly not, pecuniarily — only in the consciousness of having added my mite in sustaining our Holy Church; but the disposal of Dido's price was not quite clear to memory. The letter, however, elucidates, and removes all obscurity relating to the transaction. I regret, Mr. Kershaw, to have given you so much trouble; and yet, to escape from this unforeseen dilemma, I have one more favor to ask.

"Demand of us any favor, my dear madame. It shall be our highest pleasure to serve you."

"Accept my thanks sir, for this consideration. I desire to give a mortgage on my footman, 'Ishmael,' for a few hundred dollars, and to sell him afterwards when I shall have provided myself with another."

"We will make the requisite advance upon him at any time you choose to designate."

"He is a prime, likely fellow," continued the lady, "sound and saleable. I have need of the money this morning."

"We are at your service, madame; how much is desired?"

"Whatever your judgement suggests, sir."

"Kershaw & Lewis" had dealt in the family histories of blue-blooded aristocracy for many years. They knew how these genealogical trees had been budded and grafted, and how these boasted

ancestral currents were wont to turn from their legal direction, and mingle with foreign vitality.

Mr. Kershaw, the factor, held the key to the mysteries of Doctor Paisley's family. He knew that in Ishmael's veins coursed the same proud blood, as in the azure channels of Theresa Valmonte's. He knew that Theresa, the mistress, and Ishmael, the footman, were brother and sister — knew it as well as Theresa and Ishmael themselves. A stranger would have been struck with the similarity in their mold of features, in the finely arched nose, in the level penciled eyebrows, in the fine chin, in the full-orbed eyes, differing only in color. Both faces, the brown brother's and the waxen sister's, wore the subtle expression of hauteur which distinguished the Paisley descent.

The factor also knew that both these before him, were the two poems of Doctor Paisley's life — the one, written in illuminated silver; the other, in rich, tawny gold.

The two mothers had each hidden her secret sorrows in her own grave, years ago — the one beneath sculptured marble and a lofty name — the other beneath the common turf of oblivion. Ishmael had been given to Theresa in her marriage portion, as a fitting little page for this queen-like daughter of the South. Her title to her brother was clear and legal. He was received among her goods and chattels, consequently was wholly at her disposal.

Besides this consciousness of power over him, other motives urged his separation from her family. The growing fondness which their gray-headed father manifested for this Benjamin of his heart, proved a thorn to Theresa's content. Ishmael must be ever about him, at morning, midday and night. She had seen her father's eye brighten with delight at his son's approach. She had observed the shade of anxiety which quickly responded to a casual cloud upon the boy's face.

Corinne, her youngest, whose yet infantine heart pulsated the unadulterated blood of two branches of Carolina's chivalry, and whose skin was waxen as a snow-drop, also loved Ishmael. The mother had met her child, dancing up and down the long hall by his side with her tiny hand in his. Corinne often nestled into his strong, gentle arms, peering into the depths of his dark, quiet eyes, and caressed his handsome face. She would climb into a chair

beside him, dally with his soft hair, and count its glossy waves in her sweet, childish prattle, till his thoughtful face beamed into a new happiness.

Madame Valmonte had resolved that this condition of things should exist no longer. She would tear him away from all these household affections, she would crush them root and branch. Hence Ishmael's mortgage and anticipated sale.

"Messrs. Kershaw & Lewis in the outer office exchanged a few confidential sentences, passed separately to the door, before which the "boy" waited by the carriage steps, returned to the desk and filled out a printed form of mortgage.

Mr. Kershaw presented himself to the lady, bearing the mortgage in hand and proffering a polite excuse.

"I regret to prolong the tedium of business ; but here is the instrument, Madame Valmonte, requiring your signature, and in virtue of which, we advance you five hundred dollars on Ishmael. Will you read it, madame?"

Again the gloved hand waved, the head slightly turned away, the lips said,—

"No indeed! I have full confidence in your fidelity, sir ;" and quickly affixed her name to the document.

With a smile of polite satisfaction, she received the five hundred dollars and placed it in her purse.

Ishmael held her dress from contact with carriage dust, and closed the door after her.

"Drive to the silk merchant's in King street."

Away they flew. When the liveried coachman drew rein before the merchant's gay windows, and he saw the lady herself alight, he secretly rubbed his hands with gratification. He offered her the obsequiousness that her rank and style decided proper.

Piece after piece of costly silks from every country where the mulberry grows, or the *Bombyx Mori* spins its shroud, were handed from the shelves. His counters glowed and glossed in rippling waves of lustre and brightness. He drew out separate fabrics to the best advantage. Hues of spring, summer and autumn, tints of blossoming orchards and ripened fruits, the glow of sunrises, sunsets and noonday skies were spread about in sheeny disorder.

This customer had no time to lose. Although her taste was

fascinated by rich satins and entrancing colors, a quick eye, prompted by warning memories, selected a delicate, amethystine gray.

"Chaste and subdued it must be," thought she.

The merchant raised it over his hand, drawing it up in folds.

"Ah! madame, that is superb! Allow me to commend your choice. The color is soft as the haze of summer; it has such a body that it stands alone. Such a silk the empress might wear."

Ishmael, who attended his mistress, took the package from the merchant's hands and followed Theresa to the carriage. The coachman's next direction was to Madmoiselle La Rondés.

Here the reception was conducted in the same servility of manner. The little French dressmaker acceded to her patrons' caprices with "*de largess plaisir*." She fluttered about among the patterns and the *beaux modes des robes*, repeating,—

"*Je suis charmée* to see Madame Valmonte *le matin*. I shall bring Mam'zelle Jeane *chez vous immédiatement*. I has plentee *nouveaux modes de Paris* voyez dis one."

Her jeweled fingers flew among the boxes, removing a dozen covers, and putting the counters in admirable confusion.

"Look dis *corsage* for *une robe de soie*." She held in her hand a doll dressed in Parisian mode.

"How you like, madame?" *Cette robe vous ira a merveille! a merveille!* Jeane, come to me dis moment."

After many little peremptory gesticulations and French ejaculations, she pointed to the doll.

"*Prenez la pour modele*."

She expressed to Theresa great delight, "*d'avoir l'occasion de vous etre utile*."

The final stroke of condescension was directed to Jeane, amidst sundry nods and smiles.

"*Sou venez-vous. La robe serait fine bientôt*."

The departure was followed up with persistent good nature. Madmoiselle La Rondés proceeded to the door, saying,—

"*Je vais l'ouvrir moi-meme*," chattering meanwhile the most charming *au revoirs*."

A short time after the return home, Ishmael answered the street-bell to the children and their young governess. Passing in, weary

and flushed with the heat of the street, she left her charge in the care of Issy for a moment, then came tripping down stairs to the parlor door — hesitated, and entered. During her absence, Corinne climbed upon his knee, drew his head down, confiding to his ear what seemed to her, important information.

“Issy,” she whispered, “we saw Major Measures on our walk. After he had spoken to Eddie and me, he complimented Hattie on her beauty, and called her a Northern lily. Mamma will be angry if she knows it, for she dislikes her. He is coming soon to call upon grandpapa and mamma.”

“So, so,” nodded Issey; “he did!”

“Yes!” and with her arms about his neck, and her cheek against his, she whispered her request,—

“You will not speak of it, Issy, because I love Hattie?”

“No, no! Miss Corinne. Issy will say nothing.”

The scene in the parlor might interest the reader. Hattie learned from Scilla that Mistress Valmonte was below, and accordingly hastened to the parlor.

“Mistress Valmonte, I beg pardon for the interruption, but I would like to ask if I can practice an hour upon the piano now, before dinner, and if Scilla will remain with the children in the nursery, meantime?”

A frown gathered on the lady’s lips.

“There will be no more practice this week. Take the children to the nursery yourself. At one o’clock, repair to my dressing-room and spend the remainder of the day in sewing. I claim your time. Colonel Ashland agreed that the daily routine of your duties should be at my disposal. I am harassed by this continued practice.”

“Colonel Ashland urged my coming to Charleston, for the reason that my musical advantages would be improved by an acceptance of this situation.”

“Colonel Ashland is a gentleman of veracity, yet your words are a contradiction of mine. Do not, Harriet, add falsehood to impertinency.”

Blank surprise marked the accused girl’s manner; yet after a little hesitation, she summoned courage to say,—

“I trust, Mistress Valmonte, you do not consider it impertinent

to consult you respecting my hour of practice. I am ignorant of any other impropriety. The accusation of falsheood wounds me. My mother brought me up in the love of truth, and in the fear of the Creator."

"I am not interested in your family relations," bitterly responded the lady. "On that head, I prefer silence. You are impertinent in replying *at all* to my commands, but the highest degree of ignorant impudence is in the assertion entirely opposed to mine, concerning Colonel Ashland."

"My explanation was truthful ;" said the weeping girl.

In a twinkling, the slap of a slipper stung each side of her face, causing it to burn scarlet. Before her terrified gaze stood Mistress Valmonte in towering anger, holding the Southern weapon yet in her hand. Swift bolts of wrath fell from the lady's incensed eyes upon Hattie as she cried,—

"Silcnce! audacity, silence! I command it. Leave my presence, thou base-born Northerner!"

Hattie fled to the hall without farther admonition, and took the children to the nursery. Now, indeed, she felt her utter desolation.

Accustomed to the eternal distance between her sufferings and the grave of her mother, she longed for the faithful arms of old Mauma Rose.

"Oh!" thought Hattie, "could I but lay my head upon her lap, and feel her soothing hand upon its throbbing pain!"

She pressed her temples nervously with both hands, and leaned over the sill of her chamber window, as if to catch sight of the dear old black face in the garden.

A nonpariel's carol in a crape myrtle, the lofty blue sky, a small white cloud sailing slowly past, and the bright flowers below, had a balm for her misery. She seemed to hear her mother's voice, sharing, as of old, in the lovely phase of nature. She seemed to feel her arm about her, and to hear her quiet words,—

"Be calm, my daughter. Endure!"

She sank into a seat, and peered into the fathomless blue, questioning if her mother were somewhere there; if in celestial robes she might be looking down upon her child; if she might know the events of this bitter hour? The silence of eternity was

her only answer. Dropping her head upon her arms again, she wept.

Corinne and Ernestin approached and leaned upon her.

“Hattie, what makes you cry?”

Corinne would wipe away the tears with her own little handkerchief. When Hattie said “Hush? children,” to their innocent prattle, Corinne insisted.

“I must talk, Hattie. I must comfort you, Hattie. I love you. Ernestin loves you.”

It was one o'clock. Scilla appeared at the nursery door, to take charge of the children, a signal that Mistress Valmonte inflexibly demanded Hattie's assistance in her dressing-room. Sustained by an approving consciousness of right, she entered the chamber of the mistress, and met her frozen, supercilious manner, with a forced serenity, equaling that of the lady. She received her task from a heap of laces, setting quietly about it.

In a few moments, Hattie observed through the glass door of the dressing-room, the entrance of a brown girl, who stood before her mistress with eyes downcast to the floor.

“So you have come back to your work,” said Mistress Valmonte. “Remember, girl, it is only by my kindness and pardon, that you are here. Go to the dressing-room, and attend to your work. Another delinquency will carry you back to the work-house for a longer stay, and a severer discipline. Go!”

The slave-girl glided into the dressing-room, and sat silently down to the table, opposite Hattie. Mistress Valmonte came in soon after, to give directions concerning the lace flounces and white dress, laid out during her absence, and passed out. Scilla entered to attend to her mistress' noon siesta.

Thus left to themselves, Hattie passed her hand over the table and gave her companion the benediction of a friendly pressure, which was recognized by the lifting of silken lashes, and a sad smile.

When the danger of discovery was probably lost in the sleep of the mistress, Hattie touched her arm and whispered the one word,—

“Work-house?”

The brown girl nodded assent.

“How long?”

“A week,” was the scarcely breathed reply.

“What offence?”

“Fell asleep over my sewing one day — had been awake nearly all the night before — and plaited mistress’ skirt wrong.”

After a safe interval, Hattie asked under her breath,—

“Any punishment?”

The girl left her seat, under pretence of picking up a lost spool, bent near Hattie, and whispered.—

“Ten lashes.” Then passing out of range of the glass door pointed to its treacherous panes, shook her head, and laid her finger upon her lips. Each plied the needle, occupied with her own thought.

Hattie pondered doubtfully,—

“What would be the next step in her destiny? How far would Mistress Valmonte carry her cruel prerogative over her? To the work-house? She had been slapped in the face like a slave. Might not the lash fall next?”

She bethought herself of flying North. Alas, her funds left by her mother, were in the possession of Colonel Ashland. He had proved himself false to her interests in her first efforts at self-help, he might again baffle her in the attempt to recover her money.

Thus sat the two girls, equally friendless, wretched and confused, each revolving the probabilities of release.

Towards evening, Hattie heard prancing hoofs, and a dash of wheels at the door. Issy brought up a card. Mistress Valmonte descended to the parlors, and was there met by the gallantry of Major Measures, who handed her to the sofa, lavishing upon her every compliment which the daughter of so noble a family as the Paisley’s could desire.

The lady received these subtle praises with appropriate grace, for Major Measures was Carolina’s proud son, and still a bachelor. His manner at “St. Cloud” was renowned for epicurean entertainments, and lavish hospitality to planters who loved the chase. His dogs and horses were renowned in the sport, his parks and forest were labyrinths of game. The names and number even of his slaves were scarcely known to him. He conferred privileges

upon them, exceeding law and custom — but woe be to the patrol who dared to contravene his reckless kindness. The inevitable “Marse Measures” pass was sufficient protection at all hours and places. Ever gallantly courteous to Carolina’s daughters, ever received with their most winning welcome, neither his heart or his hand had yet been ensnared.

The ostensible object of his call was to convey to Dr. Paisley the regrets of the Rev. Warham, that his arrival must be delayed until a late hour of the evening. He was on his way, had hunted at “St. Cloud,” the week previous; was now at “Le Grand Palais,” unexpectedly detained; all of which was listened to with a well-feigned nonchalance, concealing the sweet satisfaction she felt at the certainty of welcoming their guest at all.

In a flattering and very genial manner he mentioned his meeting on the street with the charming little Corrinne and the small cadet, Ernestin, in charge of their young governess.

“I congratulate you, Mistress Valmonte,” he remarked, “upon your happy success in removing those lovely buds of promise from the contact of an ignorant black nurse, to intelligent companionship. May I ask if their attendant is not of Southern blood, from one of our high-toned, but reduced families, who, through necessity, has found content in the intercourse of this protecting home?”

The honor of Southern birth, even conferred by supposition upon Hattie, fanned the embers of Mistress Valmonte’s rage against her pretty governess into a flame. Nevertheless, she was skilled in handling the reins of her ire, and replied composedly.

“Far from it, I assure you, sir. Her mother was a Northern governess in the family of Colonel Ashland. At his solicitation, I admitted her to our family. I considered it a charity to do so. It was all a mistake. I desire her dismissal, but as I cannot recommend her to my friends, (and I have relations with no others,) I find myself quite perplexed.” These last words were breathed with a sigh, in the spirit of martyrdom.

Major Measures, the other actor in this parlor drama, who on all occasions became the knightly defender of a lady in distress, donned his armor, and couched his lance for the redress of the governess. He evolved from his sympathetic lips the important

syllables, "hum, hum, hum," nodding his handsome head each time ; apparently with the weight of searching thoughts, he threw his earnest gaze upward into vacancy. At length he exclaimed,—

"Unpleasant! annoying! extremely. Mrs. Valmonte, would you accept my services in this dilemma?"

"With many obligations, I assure you, sir, although my ultimate object is removal. Her brusque assurance, the sure taint of Northern blood, makes a much longer stay objectionable."

"May I ask, how is this assurance manifested? As she has forfeited your recommendation, the points of this forfeiture must be plain, in order to define her future position."

"In various ways. When I request her to bring the children into the parlor for family enjoyment, she seats herself with them, which is all very well with ourselves only. But when the bell announces a call, she complacently remains. Our friends, all alike strangers to her, beholding her thus occupying a place of equality, extend to her the courtesies of society. This, I am obliged to correct, by the mortifying explanation that their new acquaintance is only my governess.

"She differs from my requirements, by her own reasonings, as if she were my equal, and to the manor born. She does not understand her place, and is resolved not to learn it ; she is incorrigible."

With this effort, the proud lady fell back upon the sofa, as if this state of things was not to be borne.

"Thank you," he replied. "I think I have a clew to your relief. I will call again with your permission, and make her acquaintance, in order to secure another position suited to her experience."

Doctor Paisley entered. Mistress Valmonte begged to be excused, and retired to overlook the work of her dressmaker.

Evening brought the welcome guest, Rev. Fred Warham. Mistress Valmonte's reception of him was entrancingly brilliant. Odors from flower-vases perfumed the atmosphere of the saloons, and the waiting silver tea equipage shone invitingly beneath the tempered light of chandeliers.

At the table, there was no other to contest her honors or attractions. Ah! thought she in her chamber as she took the last

survey of herself in the mirror, and saw her marble face, without a flesh tint on it,—

“All has happened so *a-propos*. The pink face of that childish governess is banished forever. I rejoice that she staid in her room to-day at dinner. I shall make no concession ; therefore she will not presume to meet me again at dinners or teas.”

In light spirits she fluttered down stairs, and ordered Hattie's meals sent up that evening, and thereafter.

During the evening, a shade of despondency damped her hopes. Rev. Fred's conversation being mostly held with her father ; reminiscences of the recent chase at “St. Cloud” and “Le Grand Palais,” were seemingly more fascinating to him than the charms of his fair hostess. Yet this cloud had a silver lining — for whenever he addressed her, or replied, the homage she so earnestly coveted returned to his voice and manner. Although she knew this homage to be a part of the Southern code for her sex and rank, she still construed his politeness as an uprising devotion to herself.

He soon pleaded fatigue, and with many regrets, sought the retirement of his chamber. There, he ordered his servant to place writing materials upon the table, sat down by the open window to inhale the sweet airs from the garden, and to indulge in the luxury of undisturbed reflection.

The influence of sweet memories stole over his countenance. By these were expelled every vestige of hauteur and ambitious pride. He seated himself at the table, where the kneeling maiden held the vase of flowers. He raised the statuette upon his palm, lifted the crimson fuschias from her brown arm and shoulder, gazing with wondering delight.

“Enchanting ! exquisite ! a copy of my darling Minnie ! The same bewildering curls, the same enchanting grace. Some other has loved like me ! Ah ! here is the model of that soul's passion. Speak to me, Sylph ! Fairy ! Nymph ! thou epitome of all my soul adores ! Remove thy burden of malachite and pearls ! Rise upon thy beauteous limbs !”

After this impassioned admiration, he soliloquized,—

“No, no ! Thou art stone ! No love light is in thine eye, no

kisses for the homesick wanderer are on thy lips! I will write to thy living ante-type. Be thou my inspiration!"

He seized the pen.

"Charleston, Paisley House.

"MY DARLING MINNIE, MY BEAUTIFUL,—How have the long days passed, during my absence? Has your silvery laugh ceased, because my step echoed not your own? Have the teardrops dimmed the bright gladness of those dark, loving, dreamy eyes, because your true love was not near to kiss them away? Has 'Breezy Bluff' seemed like a lonely prison, without its master? Have you feared that other endearments would lure my heart from yours? Did you imagine the attractions at 'Grand Palais' would outweigh those of 'Breezy Bluff?' Nay, nay! my lovely Sultana—none shall come between Fred Warham and his soul's life. Silken nets will be spread in vain. The wealth of the Indies cannot buy thee. Neither can the sighs or smiles of paler houris draw me from my heart's idolatry.

"Trust me, dear Minnie, a few more days, and I shall fold you in my arms and smooth these cruel fears with fond endearments. In the words of Byron, which I have often repeated to you at 'Breezy Bluff,'

"Oh! pardon that in crowds awhile,
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy memory!
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine;
I would not fool's should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*."

"Sweet thoughts of thee have hovered about me at dawn and eve, in the gay saloon, and the hush of the forest. When the hunter's horn has sounded, I have wished it could summon thee, mounted, to my side, and that we might scour the green depths of the dim woods together. I shall sleep to-night, while your precious image kneels upon my table, bearing a pearl-sleeted vase of flowers above her lovely head. I shall see her still kneeling by the morning light, and while I stay in Charleston she will plead for you though her exquisite beauty, the counterpart of your own,

"Adieu, till death,

"FRED."

He sealed the letter, superscribed his own name upon it, and gave his footman orders to carry it to the early mail.

During Fred Warham's stay at the Parsleys, the doctor gave a grand dinner to his guest. Among the invited, were Major Measures, and Colonel Ashland from "Nightingale Hall." The major and Theresa Valmonte had not met since the interview relative to

the governess. Each was ignorant of the other's motive, but both were surprised at the unexpected success of their secret wishes.

Sounds of festivity floated up through the halls, but Hattie sat in her lonely chamber. The man of all others, who should have inquired for her welfare, Colonel Ashland, made no mention of her name. Major Measures accepted the invitation to dinner, with the one sole thought of Hattie Hudson. He communicated the result of his efforts to Mistress Valmonte. He had found a family who could give her governess a small salary, and the change would be made immediately.

"An interview is necessary this evening," he said, "as I am about to leave Charleston, and would like to see the daughter of Doctor Paisley freed from this vulgar arrogance."

Mistress Valmonte preferred that he should meet Hattie in a private library on the second floor, and further opened the way by saying that she had given "the girl" a dismissal on the strength of his aid, and had informed her that a gentleman friend of the doctor's would provide another place.

Scilla was dispatched with the message to Hattie. The distinguished and caressed hostess returned to her sparkling fire-fly manner in the parlors, casting away further thoughts of the motherless Hattie, or of the possible consequences of placing her destiny at the disposal of strangers.

She bade adieu this night to the sombre hues of mourning, and for the first time since her arrival from abroad appeared in rich laces and pearls. She floated through the dances, airily as thistle down careering on the breeze. She promenaded on the arm of the Rev. Fred, lavishing upon him languishing smiles, while he in return bestowed upon her refined and ceremonious tokens of regard. This Fred performed with the natural exactness of a somnambulist, who walks and talks in sleep, really careless of her designs, and insensible to impressions; for, ever between them, walked or sat his beloved, and equally graceful brown Minnie.

The ever-green subject of the "Southern Institution," its relations to their prosperity, Calhoun's dogmas, the views of the North, hatred to abolitionists, and defiant threats against every form of opposition to Southern will, received their usual meed of attention.

The great event of the occasion was the inspection of a section

of rope, about four inches in length, possessed by Doctor Paisley. This fragment was enclosed in a gold-bound glass case, preserved as a precious relic.

"This," said Doctor Paisley, standing in the midst of an admiring circle, "is a part of the rope by which Garrison was dragged through the streets of Boston, by a party of freedom-loving citizens, in defence of Southern rights embodied in the Constitution. I was in Boston at the time. I could not refrain from participating in the patriotism surging through the streets. Impelled by enthusiasm in our cause, I stepped from the pavement, placed my hand upon the rope, and assisted. In memory of that day, I secretly cut away this fragment. It is one of my *priceless treasures!*"

It passed about among the throng. Such was the stimulus to patriotic fervor, that it amounted to murderous intent.

"It should have been drawn about Garrison's neck," said one.

"A few fanatical heads would be valuable relics!" said another.

"There is a head in New York," said a third, "which should surmount the gate at the entrance to Calhoun's estate!"

"We could give him no more fitting monument of our gratitude," ejaculated several.

Purses of various values were pledged at the moment, for the securing this unique testimonial to Calhoun.

"And I will give my pearls," added Theresa Valmonte.

"And I my diamonds," promised Mrs. Chancellor Mowndes excitedly, "if beneath this head there be inscribed, 'Arthur Tappan.'"

"Hold! ladies, I pray," begged Honorable Mr. Fairland. "Your self-sacrifice puts us to the blush. Allow me to offer the half of my plantations in your stead."

Hattie timidly entered the library, and found time to reassure herself before the entrance of Major Measures. She dreaded the interview, for she almost doubted all human kind. However, removal was imperative, and no other helping hand was extended but this, her street acquaintance.

Young hope prompted, "You must go, it matters little where, so you escape the arrogant contempt of caste in this mistaken refuge."

The door opened slowly. Major Measures bowed himself respectfully into the library. His courtesy awakened Hattie's self-respect, and she gave him a lady-like welcome. Her knowledge of society caused her to observe directly that he extended to herself the same deference as he would have done to Mistress Valmonte. Coldness and repugnance vanished. After a few agreeable phrases of introduction, he began,—

“I beg pardon, Miss Hudson, for this intrusion. I have been informed by your friend in this family, that you seek another location.”

“I desire a change, sir.”

“May I ask if you have yet determined where?”

“No sir. I have very few acquaintances.”

“Then I may have the pleasure of aiding you to re-establish yourself at any time you may prefer. There is a family nearly a day's ride from the city, which requires your immediate services. Your duties will be light. There will be no lady on the plantation superior to yourself. The household department will require your supervision; but there are a number of competent servants, that will only need to know that your eye is upon them.”

Pleased that she should not be forced into a state of peonage, gratitude covered her hopeful face with blushes. She remarked,—

“My mother occupied a similar position for some years. What are the ages of the children?”

“There are none in the house at present. You know, Miss Hudson, the Southerner travels much during the summer months. Whenever they may be placed under your charge, I will pledge you their affectionate regards.”

“Is that part of the country healthy?”

“Entirely so. The house is situated upon the skirts of extensive pine forest, and the land is high.”

“Is there a piano in the house, sir?”

“There will be soon, Miss Hudson; the master contemplates a purchase. There are saddle-horses in the stable, and a footman at your orders.”

With renewed blushes, and modest hesitation, she thanked him earnestly for his kind interest in securing for her a situation so happily combining all she could have asked.

"It is a slight favor, young lady. I am intimate in the family, and know what will be satisfactory. I am happy in doing a favor for them as well as for yourself."

Alas! the depth and meaning of that sentence. It took Hattie Hudson a lifetime to reward.

Colonel Measures rose. The very gentlest of manhood's emotions colored his manner, as he proffered his hand at leaving and said,—

"So, Miss Hudson, you accept."

Hattie laid her finger tips upon his hand. Looking at the floor, she replied,—

"With much pleasure, sir."

"Will you be ready at eight o'clock on the morning of the ensuing Monday? Shall the carriage await you at that hour?"

"I will be ready when it pleases you, sir."

There was a moment's silence; yet he did not relinquish the finger tips that still rested in his own. Hattie raised her questioning face.

His eyes were filled with sympathetic tenderness, the very tenderness her trampled life had so pined for, the very look her mother and Mauma Rose sometimes gave her. Found again, instantaneously it warmed her whole being, and wrapped her like a garment.

"Your pleasure is mine," he said. "Good night."

While Hattie listened, his descending steps on the stairway melted into the happy confusion below.

That Sabbath was marked "golden," in the calender of Theresa Valmonte. Doctor Paisley's carriage conveyed to the church Rev. Fred, who was to feed his hearers with the bread of life; and herself, who was to listen and adore. Robed in the silk of amethystic gray, the elaborate toilet completed by bonnet, gloves and shawl of white, for which she had mortgaged her brother Ishmael, she moved solemnly up the aisle, sank into the Paisley cushioned pew, and bent her head devoutly, as if for the divine benediction upon the deed of the past week. But really, it was for the purpose of controlling agitation; for in thus suddenly casting aside the long-worn weeds, she was facing the censure of a revered custom, that of perpetual widowhood.

Fred Warham, robed in sacred vestments, appeared with increased attractions to the *stainless spirit* of the devotional Theresa. His text, taken from Solomon's Songs; "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee," stirred a whirl of sweet hopes. She seized upon it as a veiled declaration of his unspoken love for her. She clung to its flattering sentiment, as one fainting grasps the vinaigrette. Nevertheless, Rev. Warham lifted up holy hands, and magnified the *church* according to Solomon's best intentions.

He constructed before his hearers, a church that was fair and without spot, purer than a palace of ivory and alabaster. He festooned her gateways, and garlanded her columns with the flowers of a tropical rhetoric. His sermon was a work of art, to which few could attain; and the congregation departed, grieving that the walls of Zion could not retain the Rev. Fred upon its towers; that talents so brilliant should be wasted in a sportsman's career.

The young clergyman held his preaching Sabbaths sanctified to the end. Therefore in harmony with his practice, he sat with Theresa and her father in the still parlors, speaking of churches and divines, thus mercilessly feeding the flame which he perceived burning for him in Theresa's soul.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE jail, or the rude building which answered for a jail, was surrounded by a noisy mob. It was a gala day for St. Louis. A day in which Southern Rights, Southern Policy and Southern Religion, could be emblazoned by the *alto relivo* of definite action, — of action which all the rest of the world, though a fool, might read and understand; action upon repeated threats of "cold steel, burning at the stake, scourgings, hangings, imprisonments," and all other modes of torture for the conscientious Northerner, who dared to assert that slavery was a sin, or was not a God-given institution, were to take body and form.

Carriages began to arrive, containing the freeholders, the wealthy, the respectable citizen. The meagre, the plump, the cor-

plulent, the rubicund, the white-haired, the impetuous youth, the fire-eater, the white-cravated clergyman, were there to give tone to the affair in hand.

The discretion of freeholders was to take the place of law and justice ; a motley collection prowled around the miserable prison holding their prey. Coachmen turned equipages aside, and sat waiting on their boxes. The jailer, a pliant tool of power, neither able to read nor write, clad in rent, slovenly garmens, and a half-rimless straw hat, beneath which his coarse, frowzy hair straggled about his stolid face, stood ready at the chain and padlock of the old door.

The arrival of the respectable freeholders called forth oaths, cheers and curses from the rabid crew awaiting them. They cried out for blood. Nothing less would satisfy their debased subserviency to the distinguished oligarchy of gentlemen present.

One of the leading class, of middle age, and high bred, bulky figure, closely followed by his black footman, stepped upon the horse-block near, waved his gloved hand to the ranting mob, and demanded silence. He wore the air of a monarch inflated with hereditary pride.

In the crowd, obedience was instinctive. The gentleman was well known as the richest slave-holder in the city, the owner of the fastest horses and the oldest liquors, as the hardest master, as the most profane and leading member of the richest church.

“Bring out the infernal thieves!” he roared to the jailor. The key turned, the chain rattled, the rickety door scraped backwards on the filthy floor. Out into the sunlight, emerged two men ; one, tall and feeble, dressed in a coarse suit of butternut ; the other, younger, dressed in fashion and taste. The garments of both bore marks of violent struggles, being grossly soiled, spattered with mud and begrimmed with dust.

“Advance before your judge and jury, ye thieves ! ye disturbers of our peace !” thundered from the horse-block.

Some distance intervened between the jail door and the rostrum, around which citizens of influence were assembled.

The prisoners were hand-cuffed so closely that their wrists were painfully swollen ; as they moved forward through the shrieking mob, it appeared doubtful whether they would reach the august fo-

rum, alive. Kicks and cuffs assailed them on every side. Boys, and men in rags spit upon their faces. Shouts of "Hang them!" "Burn the cusséd pilgrims!" "Felony and death!" assailed their progress to the dismal block."

This autocrat of the mob again commanded silence and was again obeyed. He addressed the victims consequentially, meanwhile dallying complacently with his fob-chain and seals, removing his smoking Havana from his lips, between the fingers of his ungloved hand.

"You miscreants, who now stand before us, know as well, and *better* than we, of what crimes you are accused. In the second place you are partizans of those Northern intriguers and agitators, who interfere with our domestic safety, under the canting hypocritical pretensions of levelling the superior white race to one infernal brotherhood with Niggers, Indians, Chinese or any other barbarous foreign progeny. In the third count, you are *suspected* of decoying away from their owners, and this State, three slaves; two prime, stout, black fellows, and a bright colored wench, whom, doubtless, *you* would call white. You have thus stolen property to the amount of three thousand dollars. The proper punishment for these diabolical purposes will soon be decided. Your nefarious guilt is sufficiently proven by your escape from the officers at Alton. That city hides no fugitives; you have been brought back for justice."

The younger, on whose weary face yet rested some hope, raised his manacled hands to his forehead, wiped the drops of agony away, cleared his voice, looked up to the frowning speaker, and out upon the crowd.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I claim the right of an American Freeman; the liberty of speech, to show you why this proceeding should go no farther."

"Defiant braggart, silence! you are in Missouri! Submission and *Death* is the legal penalty for abolition partizans!"

Hope was already extinguished in the pale features of the older one; and now, the hitherto untamed eyes of the younger, who had so nobly demanded his American birthright, fell to the ground. Incredulous hope changed to *dumb despair*.

He of the tribune, turned to the respectable citizens about him and asked for a decision of their fate. Ferocious demands poured

forth like rattling hail, both from the base-born and influential sections of the rioters.

"Hanging!" "Whipping!" "Hemp!" "The lash!" "The ropes end!" "Let 'em swing!" "No, two hundred lashes!" and oaths in every conceivable phase of the English tongue, were so commingled that he of the horse-block was like a rudderless keel borne down by the swoop of a typhoon. It was necessary to take a vote by actual count.

"Gentlemen," he cried, extending his gloved hand again, over their heads "Gentlemen, please divide, that there may be no mistake as to sentiment. Gentlemen in favor of hanging, on the right! Gentlemen in favor of whipping, on the left!"

Great was the hurry-scurry in passing from side to side. Servants in the *melee*, following close upon the heels of their masters, seemed to have been suddenly dowered with the gift of franchise.

The stormy curses of the advocates of either sentence, swelled into the habitual ribald profanity of the lower mob, as they swayed off the ground of the higher.

The teller passed through. He announced twenty-three, on the right, for hanging; and thirty-eight, on the left, for whipping.

The place for execution of sentence was *two* miles from town, in a grove. The voice from the horse-block gave concluding orders for the moving of the procession.

"Officers will mount and guard the prisoners to the place designated. Gentlemen will please enter carriages and repair thither, immediately."

There were various instruments of torture in the old jail, for St. Louis was fully up with her sister Southern cities. Among these, were the enormous long, black whip, which coiled like a serpent, and gashed the human form with greedy voracity. There was the cat, with knotted lashes, which fell upon the naked body, like a shower of fire. There was the paddle, a narrow board perforated with holes which bruised and blistered, scarcely breaking the skin. There was the cowhide, braided with fine wire which tore and hetchelled its gory way. There was also the heavy leather strap, giving the combined effect of paddle and lash. This resembled the Russian knout, and was the one selected for this occasion.

Several of these straps, heavy as harness traces, with a couple of black whips and some coils of rope, were thrown by the jailer under the coachman's boxes.

The two prisoners were compelled to march between the mounted guards. They were followed, on foot, by the vulgar, blood-thirsty herd around the jail, which swelled to twice its howling proportions along the route to the grove.

The elegant carriages and prancing horses of the clergy, and the aristocratic and respectable citizens, led the van.

The day was entrancing. The sky of transparent blue, with the exception of a few white, downy masses, sailing slowly over the unhallowed sight, like celestial spirits, wondering at man's inhumanity to man.

Towards the blue vault, the older prisoner frequently raised his despairing face; a few tears gathered and rolled upon his painful and purple hands.

In the grove, two trees were soon selected. The men were about to be stripped, when the elder raised his manacles and said,—

“Men of Missouri, hear me! We are brothers from New England, honest tillers of the soil of our fathers —”

“A curse upon your fathers!” ejaculated Colonel Ashland, who had ridden with his host to the grove and now stood near them, “and a curse upon the laborers of the North.” Infuriated, he continued, “South Carolina's governer says, ‘they are incapable of understanding or enjoying freedom; and that free laborers must be reduced to slavery, or the laws cannot be maintained.’ This is McDuffie's opinion; the legislature concurs. If you ever live to get out of this *alive*, do not go to my State, with your *sunburned, mulatto* face and hands, or you may expect to be sold at auction to the highest bidder. Take the nigger's lash to-day; that will answer for the present.”

The two men were stripped by slaves, and bound each to a tree. The gray-haired physician, who had so tenderly administered to Madame Lambelle, drew near, in order to test their fainting pulses from time to time; and to extend the imperiling ordeal to the utmost verge of their endurance.

The influential church-going citizens, sixty in number, arranged

themselves in a line, and moved slowly on. Each took the whip or strap in turn, and gave two blows as he passed, on the naked backs of their victims.

Long, piercing screams of agony rang up among the leafy arches, and wandered through the sunny glades. That was music to the savage horde. The sickening thud of stroke after stroke, fell upon the ear with military precision. At length their cries ceased; dull, heavy groans succeeded.

Fiendish eyes were glugged with the sight of Northern blood. Red streams dripped from the torn backs of both the helpless men, in a pool at their feet. The gentlemen whippers paused from fatigue, and almost satiety. The doctor advanced and made an examination of each. One hundred lashes had been given, and life still remained.

Footmen brought flasks of brandy from the carriages, for the gentlemen, while the lower rabble drank from bottles in their pockets. Cigars and pipes were lighted. A warm, social glow of satisfaction pervaded the grove. Southern honor was receiving vindication.

Two more bloody stones were ready to be cast upon the unsightly cairns of State Rights, already overtopping arsenals, church edifices, and even the dome of the National Capitol.

By the medical opinion of the doctor, the elder was unbound from the tree and laid senseless upon the leaves and grass hard by. The shock of measured lashes might drive out the fluttering soul from the mangled body.

The barbarous crew howled for more blood, and fifty lashes more for the younger prisoner were granted to their rapacity.

The gentlemen had been refreshed, and the line was again formed. Colonel Ashland was in this column as in the first, that, as he said, "he might give the damned Yankees a taste of South Carolina." Clergymen were in this round, and went back to their studies with blood spatters sealing their loyalty to Moses and the Constitution.

At last, all was over; the two mangled and bloody bodies were again hand-cuffed, thrown into a mule cart, and dragged back more dead than alive, to the jail in the city.

One charity was extended to them. They had permission to

remain in the State one week under the surveillance of the half-human jailer, and to have the advice of a physician, if they should defray their own expenses.

The next day a public meeting was held of the leading citizens. The concourse was unprecedented. The rostrum was festooned with the "Stars and Stripes." From a line stretched across the street, our National banner waved over the happy throng, giving *eclat* to the success of the previous day. Beauty and fashion lent brilliancy to the occasion.

General Terreceine filled the honorable seat of chairman, with an imposing array of secretaries and vice-presidents. Among the speakers were numbered the South Carolinians.

The ground of Southern complaint was reviewed. The growing evil of Fanaticism; interference with social relations; the state of Northern, Western and Southern cities; and how far the controlling influence of Southern interests moulded their general sentiment — were forcibly presented and debated.

The course of future action was resolved upon. Resolutions in Congress and out of it; salutary warnings to agitators, by death or imprisonment — or as warm a welcome as was given to the two thieves in the grove, were considered.

At this juncture, the director and judge in the "whipping" was called to the stand. In a high flight of oratory he recounted the harrowing particulars and ultimate success. Red in the face, and covered with perspiration, he was overwhelmed with tumultuous cheers. The audience rose in his honor. Fair ladies waved lace handkerchiefs, dispensed sweet smiles, and nodded congratulations to friends in various parts of the room.

Quiet again restored, an Alabamian, in a heated speech, fiercely deprecated the issue of seditious matter. Printing presses came under ban. Presses and offices should be demolished.

He extolled the course of Alabama, Kentucky and the city of Cincinnati, towards the recreant Southerner, J. G. Birney. He related the manner in which the disseminator of his doctrines had been silenced. Called upon all Southerners to imitate the planters of Danville, who held a mass meeting and afterward wrote Mr. Birney to beware of issuing the first number of his insurrectionary sheet, villainously styled "The Philanthropist."

“J. G. Birney,” he said, “was driven out by the strong will of the people. He took his press to a Free State — to Cincinnati. He dare not set a type there. True to their Constitutional Convention, the citizens would not allow him to tamper with national Institutions. Thus was he driven out again to the Quakers at New Richmond for a short rest. Thence, returning to Cincinnati to make another venture, when, true in action as in thought, the ‘gentlemen of property and standing’ in that city, resolved to suppress him and his sheet, *right or wrong, peaceably or forcibly*, therefore it was done. The printing press of the infatuated reprobate was hurled to the bottom of the Ohio.”

Long and loud cheering was renewed.

The chairman next had the pleasure of introducing Major Dentelle of Georgia. His theme was the discipline which should impend over the heads of direct sons of the South, those born to the patrimony of slavery, who should so far forget ancestral blood and moral obligations, as to join the ranks of the hard-fisted laborers and fanatics of the North. His opinion was, that “they should receive naught but ignominy and contempt.” That the names of such men should be expunged from the roll of every Southern office of emolument and Southern honor; that they should be expelled from official boards; commercial and charitable, or educational.

Cries of “Hear! hear! hear!”

“Do in every case as Alabama did, when the superior court struck from the roll of her attorneys practicing at her bar, the odious name of Birney. They should be driven from the South with the mark of Cain upon them to seek refuge and a name elsewhere, among the base-born of their own ilk. Never the chivalrous blood of knightly ages coursed in their veins. Let the vampires go out; they are not of us.”

“Drive them out!” “The vampire blood!” “Drive them out!” “Expunge!” “Expel!” encouraged the Georgian on every side.

The ladies approved; the festooned flags even tugged loyally at their fastenings, in the patriotic breeze. Evidently, other suggestions weighed upon the speaker’s mind, for he still remained standing, bowing and smiling amid the agreeable tempest.

General Terreceine, perceiving the dilemma, rose from his official chair, thanked the assembly for their enthusiasm, and made a complimentary request that they would listen farther. The distinguished gentlemen before them represented a State which had shown the valuable quality of her blood and pluck as far back as the outburst of American Independence, and the framing of the Constitution.

“The hand writing of Georgia and South Carolina,” he said “still glowed in flaming characters on the face of that charter of Southern liberties. By their inflexible resistance to the eleven other States, and by their adamant refusal to confederate, unless upon terms which should foster the growth of slavery, they secured to themselves, to us, and to our posterity, the franchise of *three-fifths* of the black chattels we merchandise. This singular franchise is under our control, as you well know, gentlemen. This *negro suffrage, in the hands of the master, is the masked battery of our civil defense.*”

“Georgia and South Carolina, secured also twenty years of the African slave trade, and by the former provisions, *three-fifths* of the living cargo of every slaver landed on our shores, became sturdy suffrage plants in our political nursery, in casting votes, opposed with *equal quality and force*, to as many suffrages of boasted Northern intelligence. They secured also, the rendition of our slave property by the Free States, whenever it may escape thereto. Whatever, therefore, secured the stability of slavery in the Constitution, was mainly graven there by the inexorable demands of Georgia and South Carolina, by forcing compromises and concessions from the shrinking and cowardly religious sentiment of the other States.”

Instead of restoring quiet, the chairman's short address called up enthusiasm to its highest pitch. They came to their feet, *en masse*, as if in the very presence of the genius of Southern liberty. Rounds of applause within and without, where the words of General Terreceine had been heard, testified to the hearty appreciation of the two States, which had so cunningly moulded Southern destiny.

They demanded Dentelle ; they would have borne him in triumph

on their shoulders ; they would have drawn his carriage to the house of his host.

Dentelle, repressing the marks of especial favor, remained constantly bowing acknowledgment.

The desired calm was greatly assisted by a new arrival within the hall. A lady of elegant presence leaning on the arm of the Rev. Warham, a stranger also, and accompanied by Madame Terreceine, moved across the crowded floor, to one of the many proffered seats. A chivalrous greeting of tender and delicate admiration met her every step.

Dentelle proffered his deepest reverence as madame passed. Her companions appeared wholly engrossed in the care of their precious charge, a little whiter, a trifle more ethereal, but wearing the same pure, noble, and enchanting air as before.

“What a singular, but exquisite taste that lady displays,” said one lady to another.

“She has the choice of a princess,” was the reply.

Zaffiri wore a brocade silk of the same pale wheaten color of her hair, sprinkled over with oak leaves wrought in brilliant, shaded, autumnal hues, over which drifted the frost-work of an embroidered white lace shawl. Her bonnet, a marvel of taste, was of white Italian straw, surrounded with a wreath of oak leaves of the same hue of her dress, with a small bunch of leaves and acorns dropping to her shoulder, like a plume.

The curiosity and interest of the assembly in the fair stranger, for a time, calmed excited passion.

The committee, which had been appointed to draft resolutions, returned. Colonel Ashland was among the number. In honor of the leadership of South Carolina, he was made chairman. This complimentary position he filled with *eclat*, by shaping and insisting upon the *third* resolution.

The first half of the second resolution is sufficient to be given here.

SECOND. “*Resolved*, That the right of free discussion and freedom of speech, exists under the Constitution ; but that, being a conventional reservation made by the people in their sovereign capacity, does not imply a moral right on the part of the abolitionists to

freely discuss the subject of slavery, either *orally* or *through the medium of the press.*"

THIRD. "*Resolved*, That we consider the course pursued by the abolitionists as one calculated to paralyze every social tie by which we are now united to our fellow man, and that, if persisted in, it must eventually be the cause of the disseverment of these United States; and that the doctrine of *amalgamation* is *peculiarly baneful* to the interests and happiness of society. The union of black and white, in a moral point of view, we consider as the *most preposterous* and *impudent doctrine* advanced by the infatuated abolitionist, as repugnant to judgment and science as it is degrading to the feelings of all sensitive minds; as destructive to the intellect of after generations, as the advancement of science and literature has contributed to the improvement of our own. In short, its practice would reduce the high intellectual standard of the American mind to a *level with the Hottentot*; and the United States, now second to no nation on earth, would, in a few years, be what Europe was in the darkest ages."

FOURTH. "*Resolved*, That the Sacred Writings furnish abundant evidence of the existence of slavery from the earliest periods. The patriarchs and prophets possessed slaves; our Savior recognized the relation between master and slave, and deprecated it not; hence, we know that he did not condemn that relation. On the contrary, his disciples, in all countries, designated their respective duties to each other."

"Therefore, resolved, That we consider slavery as it now exists in the United States as sanctioned by the Sacred Scriptures."

These resolutions were submitted to the audience, and passed by acclamation. It will be seen that they were but the reiteration of general private sentiment, the embodiment of social conversation in the evening saloon, in the formal call, at the conventional dinner, on the promenade, in the hotel, the family, the shop, and wherever men do congregate. But private sentiment in the form of public resolutions, becomes official. The presses which should publish *them* to the world, were *not* to be cast into the waters of the Mississippi or Ohio. So they went forth on the wings of the morrow, throughout the land.

Many a congratulation did Colonel Ashland receive for the wisdom and truth of the *third resolve*. The ladies, especially, regarded him as the knight of much domestic affliction. Undoubtedly, blue blood animated his perceptions; undoubtedly, a hereditary *moral sense* moved the South Carolinian to warn his countrymen against reducing "*the high intellectual standard of American mind to a level with the Hottentot!*"

Madame Lambelle expressed pleasure in being able to witness the proceedings, and declared,—

"The resolutions evinced a clear understanding of the situation; their adaptation to the times was most remarkable!"

In passing out, she rallied General Terreceine's partiality to Georgia and South Carolina, and yet she affirmed that "every word of his eulogium was charmingly chosen; they would remain forever, diamond points of truth."

She added archly at parting,—

"Ah! why am *I* not a Carolinian, *also?*"

CHAPTER XX.

RICHARD and Fanny were on their way to West Elms, in the freshness of a summer morning. A dreamy quiet rested on the woods and fields. The ranges of hills and mountains that stretched around the horizon, were veiled in a faint violet haze; their lovely serenity was reflected from the faces of both travelers. Profound content and curiosity hovered about the short ears of the dappled gray, as he took his own gait, walking up the hill, trotting off briskly, or halting in the cool patches of shade.

A few miles ride from Alderbank showed them the roofs and spires of East Elms. The town, crowning the highlands, and bathed in sunshine, overlooked a misty valley. Beyond the further shore of a shining river, the lowlands rolled out into velvety meadows, well-fenced farms, dotted with white, cosy houses, and tufted with orchards.

It was a scene to rivet attention and challenge admiration. Two mountain peaks raised their majestic shoulders in the gray distance

of the north, and the broad, shining river, spun to a golden thread among rolling hills and vales, lost itself in a soft perspective on the south. Both brother and sister felt the sweet spell which Nature throws so deftly over spirits in harmony with her moods.

Although the scenes were familiar, they received a glad recognition. The chaise drew up under the shade of a tree, whose branches offered no obstruction to the view.

“Let us sit awhile, Fanny,” said Richard, “and take a fresh baptism of the grandeur, serenity and beauty about us. Such scenes inspire ‘a power of thought, and a loftiness of sentiment’ that are scarcely to be derived from any other source, in this work-day world of ours.”

“No truer words were ever spoken, Richard; and in halting here, you have anticipated my unexpressed desire. Nature holds a mystic sway over the emotions. Whenever I contemplate this, or similar scenes, a deep joy invades my whole being. A calm tide of peace flows gently over every selfish and malignant feeling. I am speechless with rapture; my aspirations seem raised above groveling things, and poise themselves on heroic wings.”

“What harm can come of that, Fanny?”

“I am not sure, Richard. To be a dreamer, or weak enthusiast, may not be termed consistent with a Christian character.”

“Your doubts will bear criticism, not your enthusiasm, dear sister. A strong love of Nature — a susceptibility of being moved in its majestic presence, is a fine foundation for a Christian character. Bryant says of Him who created Nature,—

‘Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength and grace,
Are here to speak of Thee,’

“Furthermore, he says,—

The groves were God’s first temples. Ere man learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them,—ere he framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems,—in the darkling wood,
Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down
And offered to the Mightiest, solemn thanks
And supplication.’

“Now Fanny, mark the reason why.

‘For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences,
That, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray, old trunks, that high in heaven,
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
Of the invisible breath, that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bow’d
His spirit with the thought of boundless power
And inaccessible majesty. Ah! why
Should we, in the world’s riper years, neglect
God’s ancient sanctuaries, and adore
Only among the crowd, and under roofs
That our frail hands have raised?’”

“How beautiful!” exclaimed Fanny. “What an antidote to worldliness is the simple hearing of these words. Yet how much more elevating would be the holy tranquility of the reality. The scenes of Nature seem to me conducive to the purest devotion the heart can offer.”

“Doubtless it is the purest devotion one can offer to the great Creator, in the midst of His works, as sweet to Him as the breath of an infant to its mother. To a lively imagination and poetical fancy, this worship is almost spontaneous. But I imagine it is not the grandest or most acceptable devotion that can be offered to the great Searcher of hearts.”

“Explain this grandest and most acceptable devotion, Richard.”

“It is that which requires an effort of the will. It is the rising above the allurements of social position, above the blandishments of selfish affections, the trampling under foot the false ideas and the false customs of communities, to advocate truth, eternal truth, even to the martyrdom of all one holds dear on earth. To you and me Fanny, this truth is being gradually revealed. It is *this* devotion which you are earnestly seeking after; and for which your soul thirsts.”

“Shall I ever attain to the honor of a martyr?”

Her eyes glowed with incipient heroism.

“Probably not at the burning stake, my sister; but in due time, when you shall be held responsible for your sentiments and utterances, you will find at the hands of debased, antiquated and hardened

public opinion, *sufficient martyrdom.*" He continued. "Foster, then, this ardent love for Nature, and the pure devotion it inspires. Whenever you shall turn away with disgust from the weak inconsistency or thoughtless obstinacy of human nature, its insidious power will distill strength to hope, and faith to endure. It will be manna to your soul. Even the voluptuous 'Lord Byron' was recalled to thoughtful regret for his past by the calm waters of a lake. Hear, Fanny.

' Clear, placid Leman ! thy contrasted lake
With the wide world I've dwelt in, is a thing,
Which warns me with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters, for a purer spring.

thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet, as if a sister's voice reproved
That I with stern delights, should e'er have been so moved.' "

" You know Richard, I love more than groves and placid lakes. I am more deeply and solemnly impressed with giant mountains, rugged cliffs, frowning precipices, ample, unplowed solitudes, and deep sequestered valleys."

" You revere the mountains and their accompaniments, because they proclaim liberty. They whisper to your mind universal freedom. The dwellers among mountains ever exhibit a kingly intrepidity against oppression. Repeat Fanny, the words of 'Byrant,' on your favorite, 'William Tell.' "

Her gaze turned to lofty northern peaks, alternately frowning in cloud shadows, and brightening in the sun. Exalted by the contemplation, her voice thrilled with the sentiment of the poem.

" Chains may subdue the feeble spirit, but thee,
' Tell,' of the iron heart ! they could not tame !
For thou wert of the mountains ; they proclaim
The everlasting creed of liberty.
That creed is written on the untrampled snow,
Thundered by torrents which no power can hold,
Save that of God, when he sends forth his cold,
And breathed by winds that through the free heaven blow.
Thou, while thy prison walls were dark around,
Didst meditate the lesson Nature taught,
And to thy brief captivity was brought
A vision of thy Switzerland, unbound." ,

Her hands were joined, and extended towards the mountains ; and like a devotee before the altar, her face grew divine. She finished.

“The bitter cup they mingled, strengthened thee
For the great work to set thy country free.”

She turned the sublime fervor of her misty eyes upon Richard. His proud smile answered them. He said,—

“Those tears are more valuable than pearls, my sister. They express an indignant sorrow for America in chains, as well as for Switzerland, under the heel of Gessler. Can you longer doubt the Christian consistency of yielding ourselves to the grand and ennobling influence of the mystic love of Nature?”

“Alas! Richard, what are a few tears, and *woman's tears*, at that?”

“Do you remember the widow's two mites?”

“Of course, Richard!” with a tinge of impatience.

“Well, you also remember that Christ said she had given more than they all—more than the rich who cast in their abundance, because she offered all she had. Hush, Fanny, and hear me out. Your tears are all you have to offer at present. Man gives sturdy blows on the heated iron of controversy and debate, and thus slowly molds the destiny of nations. Dr. Channing says,—

“There is *constantly* going on in our world a conflict between good and evil. The cause of human nature has *always* to wrestle with foes. All improvement is a victory won by struggles.”

“Your woman's hands will yet be summoned to the conflict ; they will yet, with valorous strength, assist in the struggles. Be patient, then, be patient.”

“Iron Grey's head is turning round to us restlessly, and his ears are pointing to the watering trough yonder. I will be content with your prophecy,” said Fanny, pleasantly. “Let us go on.”

While Iron Grey's nose was plunging in and out of the cool water under the elms, Richard remarked upon the cheerfulness and thrift of the town about them, the pleasant homes of the industrious citizens, the busy stores, the neatly clad children of all classes wending their way to the public schools ; and the numerous church spires piercing the masses of green foliage.

"This is a cheerful sight, Fanny," he said; "and it is repeated in every Northern town, village or hamlet — wherever the free hand of labor plies its skill. A general comfort, plenty and intelligence pervades the whole North. Honor to the hardened hand of industry! Honor to the brow wet with honest sweat! It is the coronet of true nobility."

"Richard, you are eloquent on the industrious."

"One needs be eloquent, when, as Mr. Goodell declared before the joint committee at Boston, when he charged upon the South 'a deep and foul conspiracy against the liberties of the laboring people of the North.'"

"What 'joint committee?'"

"Why, you know very well. Fanny — the committee of the legislature, to which was referred the speech of Governor Everett on the impertinent demand of the Southern States, that the non-slave-holding States should suppress liberty of speech; and that they should make it highly penal to print or publish anti-slavery sentiments. Mr. Goodell referred to the assertion of Governor McDuffie and other distinguished gentlemen, that 'the laboring population of no people on earth are entitled to liberty, or capable of enjoying it.'"

"Preposterous and arrogant idea, that the laborers of the North are incapable of enjoying freedom! and not being entitled to liberty, should be reduced to slavery! Ah! what depths of malignant barbarism does that assertion unveil! Those South Carolinians not only enslave a race they term inferior, but they would enslave the North as well."

"Yes, Fanny, that diabolical assertion includes you and me; for whoever shapes a garment, builds a fence, plows a furrow, knits a stocking, or cooks a meal, or nurses an infant, according to Governor McDuffie, should put on the gyves of slavery!"

They were near the smooth, green grounds of the arsenal.

"Suppose we alight, and visit the interior. Have you ever examined the treasures of that spacious building?" pointing to one in the inclosure.

"Never. It would give me great pleasure."

"Or pain, Fanny?"

"Or pain, Richard?"

“Certainly, pain that a Christian nation should spend so much time and money, fashioning murderous weapons for the enforcement of moral obligations—obligations which our Savior sublimated in the simple words of the ‘Golden Rule.’”

They strolled up the broad flagging, past the long shops, where at open windows stood working-men in aprons, with shirt sleeves rolled to the elbows, manipulating the ingenious steel intricacies of gun making. Fanny made her own observations. She was struck with the general manly bearing and intellectual faces of the busy multitude. Turning to Richard, she said in a low voice,—

“And so those Southerners would reduce these men to bondage? to a level with the brutal condition of their slaves? Let McDuffie stand on this pavement where we stand, and *dare* to assert that they ‘*are not entitled to liberty, nor are capable of enjoying it!*’” With a gesture of indignation, she added,—

“He might well tremble for his fate!”

“I am glad to see, my dear sister, that you are making so good use of that speech. You are right. Lay this fact, and similar ones, away in memory; ready at your hand, that you may sling them like the youthful David’s smooth stones from the brook, at the giant Wrong of our land. I perceive that your woman’s arm will make dextrous throws.”

Her clear laugh caused many a pair of eyes to lift from the benches, over which they were bending; but the remark was for her brother’s ear.

“Thank you for the simile, Richard, although the compliment is somewhat equivocal. I am glad to think I may be adroit in *something* useful to progress. So then I shall set myself about collecting from the current of events small missiles to sink into the forehead of arrogant wrong. Is that it, Richard?”

“In the name of the Lord of Hosts, Fanny, not in your *own* strength.”

Fanny was happy in the companionship of her brother. This was one of her golden days. She listened with delight and trust to his ripened thoughts. Both realized that the necessarily divergent paths of life would render their pleasant communings rarer, year by year. They sauntered over the well-kept walks, till the

national flag caught their view above the trees, floating on its lofty staff against the morning sky.

A sudden transition of feeling seized Fanny; a tremulous rapture thrilled her voice. Her luminous face lifted to the flag's ample folds, while she repeated,—

“When Freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies!
And striped its pure celestial white
With streakings of the morning light.”

“Ah! tears again? forever tears!”

“Richard, shall I ever be strong?”

“Yes, as I said before, in due time. When by proper observation and careful thought, the moral and religious convictions are sufficiently disciplined, they will assume control of the heart, and offer other channels for your emotions.”

“That day seems to me too far away.”

“Then let us make some advances towards it now. You know you and I have adopted Truth and Freedom as our life-long rallying words. To distinguish these celestial principles from their constitutional, political, and religious alloys, will require a scrutiny earnest and severe. Let us consider that glorious symbol, unfolding its beauty, and complaining to the blue depths above. If divine Freedom still stood upon her mountain height, and after having unfurled her standard to the air; I say, if she still held the staff in her own sovereign hand, as the magnificent reward to the justice of this Nation, then tears of solemn admiration might fill *my* cool eyes, also.”

“Then, Richard, it would not be ours! It could not be the American flag.”

“Too true! It is ours only by fraud. It is an American falsehood. Its typical purity is stained by pirate hands, soiled by the foul huzzas of lying lips. It is polluted with robbery, sanguinary cruelty, the rust of chains, the shame of bondage, and fraternal hatred.”

Fanny met the indignant look of her brother with a startled gaze, and replied,—

“Richard! Richard! you freeze my enthusiasm, and trample upon my patriotism.”

“It is always a severe task to distinguish truth from error; but truth is eternal, and freedom is the birthright of man, twin-born with him. The grasp of tyranny holds that flag over slaves. Those stars are set in Mosaic darkness. Those ‘streakings of the morning light’ are borrowed from the lurid dawn of Paganism—‘its vaulted pure celestial white’ is but stripings of the blinding fog which veils our national moral vision.”

“Henceforward, then, you would have me cease to bestow either my love or reverence upon the proud banner. Henceforth you would have me raise to its hovering glory only looks of sorrowful reproof.”

“I would have you first deliberate for yourself, and then, if there be truth in what I have said, adopt it. As for me, I already regard it with shame for my country, and I shall continue to proclaim the wicked duplicity of its perverted interpretation, till, in the language of your poet Bryant, (and you will pardon me for changing his burning words to prose) till ‘terribly Freedom springeth forth, as springs the flame above the burning piles; and shoutest to the Nation, who returns her shouting, while the pale oppressor flies!’”

Fanny laid her hand on her brother’s arm, and with heroic hope exclaimed,—

“All hail to the triumphs of that day! Dare we, Richard, look for its early dawning?”

“I am not a seer,” he said. “Times and seasons are in God’s hands; but this I know of Freedom, in the past,—

‘Power at thee has launched
His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee:
They could not quench the life thou hast from Heaven.’”

They were now ascending the steps of the plain, quadrangular building used as a depository for finished guns. They ascended from story to story, walked up and down the long aisles of polished floors, between the shining stacks of arms. They wound around

the double-tiered, elliptical racks, filling each story, as one threads the paths of a flower-garden.

"Fanny, there are *ninety thousand murders* hidden in these polished barrels, within these four walls — ninety thousand death groans, within their throats! and when these guns go to the front, our religion prays for their success. The glorious flag out there on the green, leads the ghastly host. I have not time to say more. Exercise your free thought upon that fact; if you deem it worthy a place among your sling stones, drop it into memory with the others. Come, take my arm, Fanny. Let us leave this Golgotha, this place of skulls. Are you faint? your face is pallid. Come, let us descend to the green areas and sunny walks. We will repair to the chapel, and seek Truth there."

The chapel doors were carelessly open. They ascended a flight of unswept stairs, to the audience-room. A look of neglect and indifference pervaded the dingy slips and swinging doors.

"Sit down, Fanny," said Richard. "You are better, now. *Men pray here.*"

"How?"

"Constitutionally, I suppose."

"How constitutionally?"

"In accordance with its intent, in harmony with war, standing armies, and slavery. I find the steps of mercy, truth and brotherhood constantly blockaded by this 'stone of stumbling.'"

"Doubtless Richard, you judge the sermons and prayers offered here must necessarily have a martial ring — mostly omitting the humility and forbearance of the gospel,—and that, in addressing the Deity, it would, in harmony with these surroundings, be done by 'word of command.'"

"Assuredly I do. You wield the weapon of satire well. I ought; for I am fast learning — yes, too fast, the enigmatical character of churches as well as flags. On each side of this chapel are devised and fashioned munitions of war. War deluges nations with every pain, wound, privation, torture, groan and grief in the catalogue of human agony; with every species of disfiguring and maiming of the human body, which was the last and most perfect work of God's creation. It fills hospitals and homes with the mutilated forms of robust and stalwart life."

“The work of Christ, our Savior, was benignly opposed to the deeds of war. He healed the sick, restored sight, bade the lame walk, and even raised the dead,” replied Fanny.

“And this chapel was erected in Christ’s name!” exclaimed Richard; “and the empty mockery of His worship keeps step with the click of those hammers from year to year.”

“A strange hallucination seizes the world and professors of Christ, as well; at the words of incantation, war, troops, infantry, battalions, cavalry, banners and drums, the meek followers of Christ, so called, set up for themselves the Pagan standards of Greece and Rome; and girded with deadly weapons, march on to slaughter. Why is this, Richard? Is the church destitute of the power of reflection?”

“And then,” answered Richard, “on the battle-field, after the most shameless exhibition of the worst passions of men, amid the horrifying sight of the prostrate, wounded, dying and dead, they flaunt their green laurels in the frowning face of the all-searching God — the God of peace, love and mercy. No, Fanny; the power of reflection is *not* lost to the world, or the church, yet there seems to be none exercised. I must give in answer to the awful inquiries we are making, an extract from Doctor Chalmers, an eminent Scottish divine. It seems that his mind has been shocked by the atrocious inconsistencies upon which we are speaking. These are his expressions.

“I avow it. On every side of me I see causes at work which spread a most delusive coloring over war, and to remove its shocking barbarities to the background of our contemplation altogether. I see it in the history, which tells me of the superb appearance of the troops and the brilliancy of their successive charges. I see it in the poetry which lends the magic of its numbers to the narration of blood, and transports its many admirers, as by its images and its figures, and its nodding plumes of chivalry, it throws its treacherous embellishments over a scene of legalized slaughter. I see it in the music which represents the progress of a battle; and where, after being inspired by the trumpet notes of preparation, the whole beauty and tenderness of a drawing-room are seen to bend over the sentimental entertainment; nor do I hear the utterance of a single sigh, to interrupt the death-tones of the thickening contest,

and the moans of the wounded as they fade away upon the ear, and sink into lifeless silence.

“‘All, all goes to show what strange, half-sighted creatures we are. Were it not so, war could never have been seen in any other aspect than that of unmingled hatefulness; and I can *look to nothing but the progress of Christian sentiment upon earth*, to arrest the strong current of its popular and prevailing partiality for war.’”

Richard stepped forward to the altar before the pulpit, facing Fanny and the swinging door at the entrance. With an oratorical gesture and a sarcastic smile, he began,—

“And then, my hearers —”

His arm dropped — the smile sobered into a sudden look of perplexity.

“Continue brother,” whispered Fanny, uttering a light laugh. “Let this atmosphere be fully perfumed with the holy breath of Chalmers.”

Her head instinctively turned to the door, where, to their mutual surprise, a Quaker hat, and coat on well proportioned shoulders, were ascending. He met their inquiring gaze with a courtly bow, walked half the length of the aisle, and with an agreeable smile and wave of the hand intended to dispel distrust, he addressed Richard.

“Continue, my friend. I will become one of thy audience. I am a man of peace, as thou seest;” and seated himself in a slip.

Richard bowed pleasantly; and repeating the warning gesture, continued the quotation from Chalmers.

“‘Then only will an imperious sense of duty lay the check of severe principle on all the subordinate tastes and faculties of our nature. Then will glory be reduced to its right estimate, and the wakeful benevolence of the gospel, chasing away every spell, will be turned by the teaching of no delusion whatever, from the sublime enterprise for the good of the species. Then the reign of truth and quietness will be ushered into the world, and war, cruel, atrocious, unrelenting war will be stripped of its many and bewildering fascinations.’”

Richard left the altar to approach the stranger, who met him with extended hand. In pressing Richard's, he remarked,—

“There will be no necessity of asking a blessing from Heaven on this exercise, for I feel already its benign influence. Excuse me,” he bowed, “I listened to the whole quotation on the stairs. I am a visitor to this National Armory, myself.”

“Undoubtedly you find some objects of painful interest fostered here by our government,” suggested Richard, forming his judgment from the plain garb of the new comer.

“I find *all* so; and I may safely suppose this ‘two or three’ gathered here in this chapel are alike traitors to the policy here exhibited.”

“Really we are; but my sister here has scruples in favor of church and government. She has not yet the effrontery to declare against the faults of either.”

A flush crept into Fanny’s cheeks. Her eyes met the respectful look of the stranger. She bowed with a marked reticence of manner, in which her cottage bonnet was of good service.

“To thy companion,” replied the Friend, “the mystery of godliness may be still enfolded in its budding, and its expanded blossom may exceed in fragrance and beauty the present promise.”

Their glances met again. A deeper blush succeeded the first, as she returned a quiet “Thank you.”

To Richard he observed,—

“I know quite well, friend, the conventional restraint placed upon familiarity between strangers; but it seems there should be a limit to distrust under the favorable circumstances of our meeting.”

“Your impressions concur with mine entirely, sir,” replied Richard.

The stranger continued.

“There are other flagrant national wrongs kindred to fostering the atrocities of war, which are equally abhorrent. When Truth has once set her throne in the soul, it marshals all wrongs, all tyrannies, all superstitions to judgment. Perhaps, then, our sentiments may be in unison upon our American Institution, and its Constitutional supports.”

“I regard slavery as the ‘sum of all villanies’; and I claim the prime effort of my life to be its extirpation.”

“Frankly spoken, my friend,” replied the stranger, “and omi-

nous of thy future ; thou canst not afford to cast away proffered friendship." He pressed Richard's hand, saying, "I pledge thee my regard. I find myself actuated by the same determination. Remember," he continued, giving the hand of Richard a closer pressure, "Remember, the Southron and his relentless Northern allies are on thy track !"

The trio descended to the walks, into the delicious air without. Fanny found a seat on the edge of the lovely green. Richard sauntered away with the Friend. The birds fluttered down from the branches to the grass at Fanny's feet, they rustled their wings, cast bright eyes at her askance, and dropped sweet, broken notes, like pearls unstrung. Not a movement startled their tiny sports.

Plunged in rapid meditations, Fanny sat motionless as a statue. The few hopeful words so respectfully addressed to her in the chapel, were obscure — so ambiguous in meaning, that she was lost in the mazes of a solution.

"Mystery of godliness !" she said to herself. "Mystery ! why a mystery ?"

Her thoughts ran over the old struggles and doubts about her own conversion, her baptism, the silver font, with its three hovering angels, by which she was sealed to the service of God,—sealed to godliness. The solemn reverence of that hour returned and pervaded her heart. The holy satisfaction of that hour re-illuminated her dreamy countenance.

"And yet I have not arrived at the mystery of godliness, still enfolded in its budding. This mysterious blossom is *yet* to expand in fragrance and beauty. Alas ! again I stumble on slippery places. My feet are on the sand. More struggles, more doubts, more fears. I am weary. How and where, but in the bosom of the church, can I make my calling and election sure ?"

In this trouble of spirit, her hands clasped on her white muslin dress, around the bunch of wild flowers which Richard had gathered for her during the ride ; her lids dropped above the fluttering blue ribbons tied under her chin. Far away up the pale, azure depths, above arsenals, above the floating flag, above the empty, silent chapel, above battle-field and earthly carnage, a vision of the "great White Throne" opened to her view. She was before the footstool of her Omnipotent Helper.

In full faith of there obtaining the only proper guidance, she offered her voiceless petition.

“Look Thou upon me, for I am blind. Lead me with Thine own right hand, whithersoever Thou wouldst have me go. Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold the beauty of Thy eternal Truth.”

Her brother and his Quaker friend stopped before her. The heavenly messenger of Peace seemed to have left a witness upon her brow and eyes. This calm attracted the attention of both.

“Glorified, my sister?” playfully asked Richard.

“Mystified,” thought Fanny; but she arose quickly, and proceeded with her friends towards the chaise. A quick neigh, and a pair of short, pointed ears turned upon them; bade them hasten. Fanny stooped to the ground, pulled a handful of red clover blossoms, and flew along to obey the second summons. Iron Gray was appeased with caresses and clover.

Richard begged the stranger, who was evidently well trained in the elegant forms of society, to excuse the *naivetè* of his sister, remarking jocosely,—

“One would imagine she came from the pastures, herself. Her manners are as unrestrained as the summer winds.”

“‘Every natural action is graceful,’ says Emerson,” replied the Friend. “And, my friend, how

‘Does comeliness of words, or air,
With comeliness of deeds, compare?’

“If that scene were placed on canvass, the most fastidious could but admire.”

Hat in hand, the stranger made his adieus. The chaise rolled briskly away, leaving his white, broad brow and slightly curling chestnut hair bronzed in the sun’s glowing rays.

Iron Gray, bent upon making up lost time, proceeded at a smart pace down the long inclination towards the river. Fanny laid her hand on her brother’s arm, saying,—

“Drive slower, Richard. There’s a lady on horseback. Look! Do, Richard! She rides splendidly! Her habit almost sweeps the ground! And her horse, black as night, with four white feet, and

a white star under his flying forelock! Turn a little from her path. How beautiful!"

The charming equestrienne advanced, and when quite near, suddenly the proud animal went down. His fair rider, whose face at that moment was glowing with exhilaration, and had smilingly met the admiring gaze of Fanny, rolled over his head, like a ball, in the sand.

Quick as thought, Richard threw the lines to his sister, and stood by the bewildered girl, offering his hand to assist her in rising. Without prudery she took it, while disentangling her dress, and rose to her feet.

"Of dust we are; and to dust we must return," she remarked gleefully. "Ah! my pony."

He had risen also, with the handsome bridle-rein over his head, trailing on the road. Richard stepped towards him, but he turned away.

"Do not approach him, sir. He will fly from you. Wait, if you please."

She gathered up her long skirt in one hand, and went forward.

"Marmion;" she called in a voice of affectionate command, "Marmion, come, come!" extending her arm to him.

He turned slowly about; with shame-faced step approached his mistress, and laid his nose on her shoulder. Throwing the rein over her arm, she parted the heavy, black locks over his eyes saying,—

"Never mind Marmion, *mi querido! Todo el mundo comete yerro!*"

With an embroidered handkerchief she brushed the sand from his face and his knees; she patted his shining shoulders, led him back to Richard, and gave him the bridle. She stepped back upon the grass, remarking that her own plight was no better than her pony's. She removed her broad-brimmed straw hat of costly fineness, shook the sand from its green ribbons and bright, green plume.

She began beating her riding-dress back to its rich, invisible green, when Fanny begged her to accept a brush from her own satchel in the chaise. She attended to the skirt herself; and then placing the brush in Richard's hand, ingenuously asked his assistance. His heart and hand were a little tremulous, as he passed

the brush over her statuesque shoulders ; but his cool, Northern blood stood him in good service. He acquitted himself creditably, assuring her that the accident was doubtless caused by a rolling stone ; adding, that the surest-footed horses were liable to fall upon our pebbly roads.

Fanny ventured to inquire, from the chaise, if the lady had escaped without injury ?

“ Yes dear,” replied a sparkling voice, “ I am unharmed, except a dull pain in one wrist ; that will soon subside. I am very fortunate.”

She then looked about her, for some object from which she could mount. Finding nothing, she turned to Richard, saying,—

“ I am under the necessity of soliciting your aid, sir. Will you lend me your hand, sir, in mounting ‘ Marmion ? ’ ”

“ I fear I should be more awkward than agreeable,” he replied.

“ No indeed, sir. Place your hand so,” showing the distance from the ground. “ I will place my foot upon it ; then with a slight lift on your part, I will spring into the saddle again.

She placed one hand upon his shoulder, the other upon the pommel, and laughingly gave the word, “ I am ready.” As a bird rises from the ground, she vaulted to Marmion’s back. The fire of pride returned to his eyes, as he felt his accustomed burden. He waited “ with impatient stamping,” for the way.

She reined him to the side of the chaise, Richard following.

“ I owe many thanks to you, my friends,” looking from one to the other ; “ and I doubt not, to make other acknowledgment in the form of reward would be considered an insult. I have not far to ride ; but through your courteous aid, I shall arrive with decency.”

“ You are under no obligations,” said Richard. “ We are happy in restoring you to your queenly position.”

“ We are indebted to this event for a great pleasure,” said Fanny.

The lady had been busy unfastening a small, diamond brooch at her throat. This she tossed into the chaise to Fanny.

“ Take this dear, as a keepsake. Do not refuse. It lies on the carpet at your feet.”

A blush crimsoned Fanny’s cheeks as she raised the expensive jewel, and said,—

“Pray, dear lady, pardon me ; but I do not wear diamonds ; they do not suit with plain attire. Allow me to return it with a thousand thanks. I shall not forget this harmless catastrophe.”

The lady took it reluctantly. Bidding a smiling *au revoir*, she waved her hand to both, and galloped away.

The chaise rolled on in the opposite direction, down the hill, and on to West Elms.

“This is a day of events,” said Fanny. “We have made two unexpected acquaintances.”

“And those two are as widely different as the North is from the South — both in habit and principle.”

“You know nothing of this lady, Richard,” manifesting much surprise.

“Nothing personally ; but much by deductions from analogy and observation.”

“How ?”

“Ah ! Fanny, you are an unbelieving ‘Thomas,’ you must place your fingers in the ‘nail prints ;’ in other words, you will have logic. Well then, the premises learned by observation. Her pony with equipment, would safely be valued at three hundred dollars ; her riding-suit, including the fine laces, not less than one hundred ; and the diamond brooch, set in emeralds, with other jewelry about her, has a value of not less than two hundred ; her watch and chain set down at another two hundred — and I think that is under value, — total for one style of locomotion, eight hundred dollars.”

“Minus the watch, Richard ; that is worn everywhere.”

“No doubt she had about her articles worth as much as the watch, which do not enter into this calculation.

Premise Second. The lady’s high-bred manners, which, I confess, were the perfection of grace and propriety. Most conspicuous were the cool self-possession with which she met her disgrace, the ingenuous acceptance of my assistance, the absence of all prudery or coquetishness ; also, I might add, the proud cast of features and finish of language. She petted Marnion in Spanish.

Premise Third. Her rare generosity in throwing you the brooch as if it were a trifling gift. Did you not observe this Fanny ?”

“I did ; but I had only time to admire, not to analyze.”

“The result of that admiration was, my sister, falling into an

imaginary insignificance yourself ; feeling scarcely worthy to lift the trail of her rich habit from the earth. Learn to *analyze*, Fanny — it furnishes a basis for a grander nobility than the blue blood of inherited birth. This grander nobility has its escutcheon inscribed with Truth, beneficent Truth, in contrast with the feudality of the Dark Ages, which is emblazoned with the most ferocious instincts of animal tribes.”

“No heraldry is admitted in our Republic,” suggested Fanny.

“Not literally ; but the subtle spirit of rampant lions, leopards, bears, wolves and foxes, animates a portion of our Republic. The South places this unpalatable fruit of *effete* aristocracies to our Northern lips. The South would fain have us be its serfs.”

“But Richard, how can it imagine such an outrage upon fellow freemen, and how accomplish it ?”

“It imagines it by unconstitutional abridgment of the freedom of speech, and of the press ; it perpetrates the black deed through its minions in Congress, familiarly known as ‘dough faces.’”

“Nonsense !” ejaculated Fanny, indignantly, “there is no compulsion to a Northerner. He can remain a freeman, or sink into an abject serfdom, as his own will dictates.”

“Nobly spoken ; but there *are* Northern serfs. Charles G. Atherton, senator from New Hampshire, and Henry J. Pinkney of South Carolina, slave-holder, are of the same brotherhood. After Pinkney had succeeded in nullifying our power of presenting to government petitions, resolutions, propositions or papers relating to slavery, by ordering them laid upon the table without being printed or referred, Atherton took out his jack-knife, and whittled a gag for the mouths of Northern freemen, of more accurate dimensions. He added the words ‘*without being debated,*’ to Pinkney’s ‘without being printed or referred.’ And thus one of New Hampshire’s sons, born amid the mountains, would stifle the voice of conscience, choke all the utterances of Freedom to silence, and drive before him a herd of maudlin slaves ; he would take the contract himself in Congress.”

“Richard !” She turned her glowing eyes upon him. “Richard ! they will never gag *you* to silence, Pinkney nor Atherton ! they shall never drive me, a silent thrall, woman as I am, and nothing though I am ! So here let us cast away all thought of

these traitors to God and liberty ; thoughts which goad me to unrighteous wrath. Do not allow their viperous names to darken this golden day. Return to your deductions from the premises already considered. Our time is limited ; we are drawing near West Elms. Conclusion from premise first, Richard. That was the eight-hundred dollar outfit."

"Well then, from the outfit may be inferred that the lady is not a resident of these parts. Eight hundred dollars is enough to purchase a small farm, or to make a good beginning on a large one. Our farmers and merchants gather money too slowly to lavish it in that manner. None but those who live upon robbery, or the stolen toils of others, have such amounts at their disposal. I deduce that she is a Southerner."

"Now for premise second. That relates to her high-bred manners, grace and propriety, Spanish tongue, etc.," and Fanny laughed gaily. "Ah ! I fear she galloped away with your heart, my bachelor brother."

"I confess her learning was noble ; and softened by the condescension which enslaves man's adoration."

Her accomplishments denote the wealth, time and opportunity of what is termed high-birth, which includes reading, study, refined social intercourse, and travel. The proud cast of features must result from absence of sordid cares and the possession of power over inferiors. I observed the Southern fire flaming in her impetuous eyes."

"Deduction second. Marmion's rider is of blue-blood lineage."

"Let me hear about her rare generosity, in casting diamonds at my feet."

"What is your inference, Fanny ? You are a sharp logician."

"Why, that she has thousands at her command, and could easily replace that cluster by another more brilliant, or that she has others already."

"Analyze deeper ; and say that the unpaid labor of bondage buys diamonds. Say that the price of a little, prattling, five-year-old boy, or the price of a laughing, little curly-headed, two-year-old girl, sold from a broken hearted mother, perhaps, bought that diamond and emerald brooch. Then deduce that she who has rare generosity is a slave-holder."

Fanny replied with a shudder,—

“Oh! my heart aches to the core at the hideous picture. There are cruelty, tears, and blood in that brooch. Its touch is criminal!”

“The same stains are upon the pony, caparison, habit, laces and green plume, my sister; but here we are upon the long, broad street of West Elms. These stately trees arch grandly overhead; the sight of these abodes of peace, amidst ample surroundings of comfort, are medicine to perturbed thoughts.”

They soon alighted at the granite steps of the deep lawn in front of Mrs. Glenly's, and were met at the door by the outstretched hands of Mrs. Glenly and her two daughters, Caro and Ida. Over their shoulders shone the beneficent faces of the father and son, who had just returned from their farm labors. They were welcomed with that warmth of cordialty which those only know who are engaged in a saving controversy with sin-sodden, but time-honored systems; who, hand in hand, are engaged in the struggle for the sublime victory of godlike Love and Peace, over debased Passion; who calmly abjure worldly homage and distinction; who quietly exchange terrerrestrial dignities for public contempt; and who are at once the glory and scandal of neighborhoods and communities.

Such was the friendship of the Glenlys and their guests; its eager hand-shaking had nothing deceptive or superficial.

During the afternoon of the second day, there was another arrival at the Glenlys. Two men came up the walk, with heads bent, and conversing in low tones; one in Quaker attire, the other, marked by the easy carriage of good birth, combined with the despised American color.

“Why, girls! the white gentleman is Friend Sterlingworth,” exclaimed Mrs. Glenly.

“But the other is a stranger, mother.”

“True; you remember the sentiment of ‘angels unawares.’”

She met them at the steps, with the warm welcome which was the spirit of the house. Fanny had discovered that the Friend and dress were the same she had seen in the chapel at the arsenal, the day previous.

After a formal introduction to Fanny, Mr. Sterlingworth introduced his companion to each lady, under the name of Ishmael Valmonte. The young man met his welcome with a retiring bow, downcast eye, and blushes that were plainly seen under his light brown hue, offering a shy acceptance of the sympathetic hands extended towards him.

"Friend Sterlingworth, we rarely see you since our removal to Massachusetts," said Mrs. Glenly. "Doubtless you are here now on some errand of mercy."

"I am here at the command of both duty and pleasure. Under this roof-tree, I ever find rest and renewed hope in the cause of freedom, to which we are mutually devoted. I am now in pursuit of a home for Ishmael."

"Is he a fugitive?" asked Caro.

"No, Caro! he is a freeman by all the laws and codes touching his former condition. His master brought him to New York, sought the abolitionists privately, made out his free papers, and left him in their hands for future guardianship. I was in the city at the time. The friends of freedom entrusted him to my care. He is to be educated in New England."

"Fanny had never before known an American slave, and she made his words and manner a constant study. Strange enough, her previous ideas concerning one who had just come out of bondage were all at fault. There was no irrepressible outburst of the ecstatic gladness one should naturally evince in the early possession of liberty. Ishmael maintained an almost painful reticence on the points she so longed to ascertain, giving brief, but respectful replies to questions tending to elicit a history of his life. What might be his soulful emotions, she could not read, for the dark, downcast eyes were ever veiled. Conversation with him ran thus,—

"Ishmael, are you not glad to be free?"

"Yes, miss."

"Had you a cruel master?"

"No, miss."

"Were you ever punished?"

"I was never whipped, ma'am."

"Were your tasks hard?"

"I had no tasks, ma'am."

"What work was assigned you?"

"I did not work, miss; I was footman."

This system of questioning was repulsive to Fanny; and, much as she desired to learn of the working of a system which she abhorred, from one initiated, the door was closed.

Caro, Ida and Fanny found many pleasant strolls through the meadows to the river and to the berry fields. They were accompanied by the friend, who failed not to draw Ishmael along with them; striving, as Caro said, to charm away his embarrassment in a strange land. Ishmael always made preparations for the excursions with a quick step; but once upon the paths, he invariably fell to the rear, following at a short distance. If Mr. Sterlingworth, for any reason, became separated from the group, Ishmael walked after him, preserving a measured distance between them.

On one occasion, it chanced that the Friend and Fanny walked apart from the sisters. Fanny kindly called Ishmael to her side.

"Walk *with* us, Ishmael; do not remain ever alone."

Giving her a pleasant smile, he replied,—

"I will, miss."

A few moments passed, and he had fallen back to his former place.

"Mr. Sterlingworth," said Fanny, "why will not Ishmael talk with us? Do you not think he likes liberty?"

"I will tell thee, Fanny. Didst thou ever have a caged bird? a canary, or any other, to which thou hast opened the door of his prison, and said, 'Fly away to thy native skies?'"

"I had a tame, young robin, which I took from some pitiless boys, and kept through the winter. In the spring, when the air was thrilled with the songs of birds, he listened sadly, day after day, but sang not a note. I opened the door of his cage in the sunny woods, and bade him go."

"Where did thy robin fly?"

"He flew to a spray of a bush, and sat there bewildered."

"What next?"

"He essayed a high branch of an oak, but fell into a pool of water beneath; then I wished he were in the cage again, but he

fluttered out of the pool, falling and soaring, till he was lost to me in the woods."

"As I expected, Fanny. Thou seest robin's wings were not used to flying. Although he longed to perch upon the sunniest, topmost twig, he could not spread his wings, so long folded. A few days and weeks of trial were necessary to develope his natural buoyancy. Perhaps now he is careering through space, and pouring forth the sweetest songs of all his mates."

"I hope so; for granting his freedom seemed to me a cruel abandonment."

"Now, Fanny, compare Issy with thy robin. The poor fellow feels yet the pressure of his life-long gyves. The feeling has not worn off, nor will it for years. Fetters of all kinds, though encased in velvet, contract and indent. Every mental capacity he inherits (as I know thou believest) alike with the whole human race; but these capacities have developed no farther than the measure of his chains. I see! Thou hast thought to draw from him the burden of the past, and to share it with him. The time will be when his tongue will be loosed, and sympathy like thine will be as grateful as the dews that descend upon Hermon."

"I have been quite troubled."

"I have seen thy perplexity, and beg thee to be troubled no more. The better way, I think for Issy, is to solve the problem of liberty by observation, and his own method of thought, at least for the present."

"Why will he not walk with us?"

"Because he is accustomed to follow his master. He followed him all about the streets of New York, and while he was making out the free papers, Issy stood at the back of his chair. More than that, Fanny, Issy never sat in the presence of a white person before he left New York."

Nature bestowed golden days upon the week of Mr. Sterlingworth's stay at the Glenlys. To Fanny, every one brimmed with happiness; and from the conversations, her soul grew in the grace of the reformer. Ishmael anticipated every wish, and divined her every need. He raised her fallen handkerchief, he placed her chair, brought her bonnet and shawl, opened doors before her, and closed them after. He poured water from the ice pitcher, reaching

it before she could lay her hand upon it. Indeed he performed these duties with alacrity for all in the household; but towards Mrs. Glenly and Fanny there was noticeable partiality.

"Why, girls," said Mrs. Glenly, one day, "what will become of us when Ishmael is gone? We shall have to wait upon ourselves. We have suddenly put on the airs of Southerners."

"O mother! I like it!" declared Ida, ringing out a merry laugh; "this being waited upon at every turn is delightful. I wish Ishmael, or some other Arab could be my constant attendant."

"Ida Glenly!" remonstrated Caro, "you should be ashamed of such meaningless words. I am sure you have wounded Fanny by this reckless outbreak."

Fanny's cheeks flushed; and she replied seriously,—

"Ida, I believe every person is accountable for his own sentiments; girls, as well as women and men. Your sentiments are not mine!"

"Do those blushes tell a tale?" derisively questioned Ida. "Perhaps you cherish a tenderness for Ishmael's handsome figure. I confess his jet black curls are lovely beyond anything I ever saw, and he hides fascination under those forever drooped lids. Moreover, he has an aristocratic cut of features, if I, an abolitionist's daughter, can imagine what an aristocrat may be."

"Ida!" quickly responded the reproving voice of her mother, "you are incorrigible. I bid you retire to your chamber; remain there till to-morrow morning."

It was now her turn to flush; but obedience was the law of her parents. Ida, mortified and crest-fallen, withdrew.

Mrs. Glenly and Caro repaired to the kitchen; it was ironing day. A cloud still brooded over Fanny, when Mr. Sterlingworth and Issy entered. Unaccustomed to dissembling, her face was an open page to the Friend's observant eye. He seated himself near, and asked kindly if aught troubled her.

"Can I not assist to unravel perplexities?"

All undivined by Fanny, Mr. Sterlingworth often studied the lights and shadows that swept over her face; its pain, grief, sympathy, its childlike questionings, doubts, and illuminations. He had found these changes were produced by struggles with conscience, by a supreme adoration of nature, by a self-abnegation, or by other

causes equally worthy. He was sure now she would speak with the frank candor that ever charmed him. After some hesitation, to relieve embarrassment, she attempted to pour a glass of water herself. Ishmael was there before her; he poured and presented it, with a graceful bow.

She turned to Mr. Sterlingworth.

“*That* is the trouble — Ishmael *will* serve me as if I were his mistress. I have accepted his services as if I desired this servility, but I have reproached myself that I have not given him his first lesson on freedom by a refusal to be waited upon in this manner.”

“What hast thou to say, Issy?” asked the gentleman.

“Miss Fanny,” he said, “I have waited upon you with great pleasure, I assure you!” with another bow, retiring to his seat.

“Issy has rendered thee a love service!” explained the Friend, “not that of a menial. He has done this habitually for those who classed him with brutes. He cannot refuse these trifling attentions to those who acknowledge his manhood. He will be wounded if thou refusest. These habits will soon wear away. I fully appreciate thy fine sensibilities, Fanny, but banish these thoughts to the wind. Come into the orchard; I have discovered several early trees. Issy, bring the basket.”

“He seems so much like Richard,” thought Fanny, as they walked over the green turf. Shall I *ever* see things in their right light, without a guide?”

The short week soon came to an end. The departure of the Friend and his charge was followed down the long avenue of elms by the regretful regards of the family. Ishmael was to occupy the solitary passages of her visit. The strange effects of bondage, and the bewildering process of becoming free, were to become fruitful sources of reflection.

The Glenly homestead was situated at the head of the street, within the shade of the avenue below. The house was large, square and plain. Its lower apartments were spacious and airy. The tiers of chambers were equally commodious; their many open windows admitted the songs of birds and neighbor's voices. They presented also, views of the sweeping river, rich hay-fields, reach-

ing to its banks, sunny pastures well stocked with herds which would have delighted the eye even of Rosa Bonheur. On the south side, a hard graveled road wound round from the street to ample barns. Over this road, at morning and at night, were driven lowing troops of brindled and spotted cows, frolicsome calves, sleek horses, and gentle-eyed oxen.

These were the delight of Fanny; the tramp of their feet was a sure summons to the open doors or windows, till the dumb creatures seemed to grow conscious of her presence and love. Rural rambles, twilight walks, reading and social calls made time pass swiftly.

One golden evening, a card was brought to Mrs. Glenly, inscribed with a name which caused a shadow of serious surprise. She entered the parlor, however, with her usual smiling composure. Soon the girls heard across the wide hall a sprightly conversation, varied with bursts of polite gayety. The tones were of mutual satisfaction and pleasure. It seemed the affable desire of the visitor to please, and the agreeable willingness of Mrs. Glenly to be complaisant.

"O Caro!" said Ida, "what can be the meaning of this, the first call of Mrs. Donald?"

"You know Mrs. Donald has Southern relatives; her sympathies and ours are widely at variance. She has Southern company this summer; that is sufficient cause for coolness on her part."

"Her young lady visitor always bows to us when she is out riding; and I love dearly to see her sweeping by," replied Ida, in an animated manner. "I should like to make her acquaintance."

"But sister, you well know there is more cause for coolness towards our family on the part of that young lady, than is expected of Mrs. Donald. We believe in the very first breath that Freedom ever drew on American soil, her first cry of life, that all men are created free and equal; and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights which, to a Southerner, are no rights at all."

"And more," spoke Fanny. "We supplement that with the Scriptures; that God made of one blood, all nations of the earth."

"And therefore all nations are men, entitled to life, liberty, and

the pursuit of happiness," finished Caro. "The Southerners find *men* only in the white races; and a paucity at that."

"Southerner!" cried Ida. "Southerner! that walking phantom! that spectre, of which some people have a frightful dread! I should like their acquaintance. I should like to visit their pleasant land of fruits and flowers, to gather jasmines in March, and roses in December."

"You must be infatuated," quickly replied Caro. Many of us who live in cold, icy climates, would delight to breathe their balmy air, and to saunter amid tropical fragrance. But in the language of Garrison, '*To us there is no Union; a price is set upon our heads!*' March jasmines and December roses do not flourish in the prisons that await us! and you, my sweet sister, would as soon become a victim to these Algerine laws, as any other, because our father is laboring to 'establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and promote the general welfare.'"

"I prefer Northern ice and snow, to Southern incarceration!" said Fanny, with supreme disdain.

Just then the call ended; the lady departed, gathering up laces and silks from dews scarcely yet falling.

Mrs. Glenly entered the circle of outstretched hands, and allowed herself to be drawn down upon the sofa, in a nest of bright, inquisitive faces.

"We are ready, mamma; speak quickly," urged Ida.

"And what do you think?"

Each of her hands was suddenly imprisoned in a warm clasp, and three pairs of eyes twinkled about her.

"Well, listen. Mrs. Donald came to entreat the favor of an invitation for Miss Leonore to an afternoon *tete-a-tete* with the family; that is, with myself and daughters, Fanny included."

Ida's hands clapped with joy.

"Mrs. Donald assures me the young lady desires the interview, in order to converse with abolitionists; to learn from their own lips, views which she has heard so much deprecated. She desires also to form friendships with the young ladies."

"In other words," said Mrs. Donald' "she wishes to become Northernized."

In joyful amazement they listened to her words; declaring they

loved her already. They set about planning the day, the hour, and a dainty tea.

The next day, in one of the square front chambers, amid chatterings, suggestions and laughter, the three girlish heads of Caro, Ida and Fanny, bent over a delicate sheet of note paper, framing the invitation for the succeeding afternoon. Ida held the pen.

"Do not begin so high," advised Caro. "Dear me! such a giddy-headed thing. I'll warrant you will send regrets that you are not a Southerner yourself, before you finish."

Ida threw up her hands with nervous exultation.

"Well then, I will confess—I covet—I covet that white-footed pony. I covet the life of ease and travel a Southerner enjoys. I want to go to the Springs every summer, and to Europe,—and I would not object seriously to a few diamonds."

"Fie! Ida. Papa has a bad tare growing in his wheat, I fear. Let me write it. Fanny, seems to me this looks a little like subserviency."

"Not in the least," was the quick reply. "It is at her own request."

The note was sent by the hired man when he came in to dinner. The next morning filled the spacious apartments with another pleasant excitement. Fanny's chamber was to be used as the dressing-room of the guest, to which she would be first conducted. Joyful voices echoed across the wide hall. A panorama passed before the open windows, of beaming eyes, rosy faces, and hands filled with flowers.

"Three waiting-maids for one princess," said Mrs. Glenly, unexpectedly appearing among them. "All is ready below stairs."

"Three waiting-maids for Frederick Douglass, also, if he would honor us with his presence," replied Caro.

"True," joined Fanny. "Richard met him at the convention at Nantucket. Your father was there at that time, Ida. Frederick Douglass astonished his hearers by the intellectual power of his address."

"You know Mr. Garrison said in his speech following, that he was a living witness of the justice of the severest condemnation he had ever uttered of slavery. And yet, Douglass had been held at

the South, as a piece of property, a chattel, and had been treated as if he were a domesticated brute."

"Papa was delighted with him ; and when he comes, his waiting-maids will festoon the gentlemen's guest-chamber with flowers," said Caro.

Early in the afternoon, the young lady was seen walking up the green carpeted avenue, followed by a short, black servant, evidently on excellent terms with her mistress ; for both were smiling and talking busily. The ladies met her at the door ; Ida showed her up stairs. Her short, high-shouldered servant followed. She wore a starched, white turban, dotted with blue, covering all her hair ; a plain black dress, and a white apron. She untied the pale green ribbons of her mistress' white chip hat, and lifted it from her head. The hat was surrounded by a yellow jasmine wreath, which trailed down her shoulders, and was a fac-simile of her own Southern vines. Her servant shook out the auburn curls of her mistress' luxuriant hair ; took from her basket a brush, ran her quick eye over the elegant muslin dress, carefully removing every atom of road dust from the rich embroidered flounces, and from her pale green slippers. She untangled the points of Parisian lace about Leonore's throat, from the pearl pendants at her ears.

"Toad," said the mistress, "give me my fan."

"No, mistress, mus fan you darlin face myself."

She took her place a little back of her, moving the air gently, and looking steadily at her mistress.

"No Toad, no. I am a Northerner to-day. Give me the fan ; you followed me for your own gratification, you know."

They descended to the parlor.

"Toad, you can go to the kitchen ; perhaps you can be useful there ; unless (turning to Mrs. Glenly,) the ladies wish you to remain ; either course will be equally satisfactory to me."

"Let her remain," eagerly spoke Caro, "if agreeable to yourself."

"Most certainly, my dear. Toad, we are both Northerners to-day. Now mind, my lady, you are not to be hands and feet for me. Please yourself ; you will not give offence to these ladies, I am sure."

They entered the parlor. Fanny rose from her chair.

“An unexpected surprise, but most welcome,” said Leonore, advancing and taking both her hands. “My sweet Fanny! my modest Puritan of the chaise.”

“I am not sure that I can claim that ancestral honor.”

“Pardon! but we call all natives of Massachusetts Puritans — the posterity of the ‘May Flower.’ It is doubtless more befitting to use your true patronymic; but —”

“A thousand pardons,” said Caro. “It is Beame, Fanny Beame.”

“I cannot be wrong in supposing then, that knightly blood flows in the veins of the young cavalier who sprang so gallantly to my side after that ignominious fall into the sand. His delicate attentions were the soul of chivalry.”

“Richard Beame is my brother, Miss Wallace. He has a knightly heart towards all who suffer; but he questions not his blood, for he says all men are created of one blood.”

“My second lesson from those fearless lips. ‘I do not wear diamonds;’ and ‘all men are created of one blood.’ I should be a learner at so pure a fountain of truth;” and she sealed her admiration by a kiss, archly stolen.

After a gentle pressure, she dropped Fanny’s hand, and sat by the open window in the playing light and shade of the waving elms. Toad, with the feeling ever present to a slave, withdrew to the lawn, the garden, and finally to the kitchen.

Fanny was busily revolving in her mind how the young lady would interpret “all men,” with her usual freedom of comment. Caro took up her fine hemming; Ida sat furtively studying Leonore’s costly and elegant attire. The guest addressed Mrs. Glenly, requesting that her presence should be no restraint upon a full interchange of opinion — expressing regret that the North and South were in such bitter antagonism; which was doubtless the source of misrepresentations, tending to aggravate controversy and ill will.

An ingenuous and benignant smile sweetened the reply.

“There is no antagonism on our part, my dear. We believe the enslavement of human beings a transgression of the divine design of God towards man. We believe in the utter wickedness of bondage; and we pledge ‘our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor’

to the cause of universal freedom ; but our means of convincing those in error are entirely pacific."

"I am greatly surprised, dear Mrs. Glenly ; there must be gross misconstruction upon the Southern side. May I ask what are those means ?"

"Certainly ! they are the moral and harmless weapons of argument, discussion and persuasion. We exercise the former two in our families, and in conventions, as the church in its associations devises the best means of propagating truth. The latter we use as opportunity may occur — but always, my dear Miss Wallace, with the most peaceable intentions."

"We are well aware," said Caro, dropping her hemming, "that the South, as a whole, brand us as incendiaries, dangerous agitators and fanatics."

"Also," said Mrs. Glenly, "that we have destructive designs against the Union ; that we sow discord in the national councils ; and that we violate the Constitution."

"That is very true," replied Leonore with great gentleness ; "our Southern men profess to believe that the Northern abolitionists would incite insurrection among the slaves ; that they would carry death to every door. Their acerbity is the result of fear, and a laudable effort for self-protection."

Fanny met this with a pithy Bible proverb,—

"'The wicked flee when no man pursueth.' I think the slaveholder's conscience must pursue him, as his ferocious bloodhounds pursue the flying fugitive."

Mrs. Glenly and Caro were startled. Serious alarm for their guest plead in their eyes.

"I fear we are wanting in consideration for our friend ; that we may give offence," said the former.

"My dear ladies, do not indulge a thought of it. It is true, I have been raised mostly in the South, that I have been taught to believe slavery a divine institution, sanctioned by scripture, and the usages of nations ; but, like yourselves, I reserve to myself the right of unbiased judgment. I sought this introduction." Then turning to Fanny with an approving smile, she said, "You are right and wrong at the same moment, Miss Fanny. The proverb is truth — but in the main, the consciences of slaveholders are, in

sacred language, seared. The absolute conditions of holding one's own species in bondage necessitates the blunting of every moral obligation. Ah!" and with a sigh she added, "these conditions callous every tender sensibility. They feel no compunctions. Instead, they feel an untamed rage towards those who advocate a policy of final freedom."

"Not final, simply, or convenient delay; but immediate emancipation," said Caro, "is our watchword. Immediate abandonment of sin is God's alternative."

"Immediate emancipation! I shudder! Do I hear aright? Immediate emancipation! Do you realize, my dear Caro, what it is to cast forth, without shelter, clothing or ability millions of these helpless creatures to the cruel mercies of rapacious masters? Why," and she lifted her white hands in horror, "they cannot speak our language clearly; they cannot read; they cannot think for themselves; but few of them can count even to twenty; they are reduced by our laws to the lowest of abject beings."

"Doubtless their emancipation would be attended with much suffering at first; but Freedom would soon work out her own beautiful salvation. Inspired by the blessed results of their own efforts, they would work out a glorious manhood and womanhood; equal to that we ourselves enjoy."

"How, Miss Caro?"

"In the same way that every human capacity works out its own problem. The evidence is before the world. In our cities, in spite of the obstacles of Caste, which is the fruit of slavery, there are colored men and women of wealth and refinement, nobly maintaining an honorable standing."

"The Southerner knows that," interposed Fanny; "knows that the human soul which he lashes into subjection, which he holds beneath him manacled by state and national laws, would rise into a proud equality with himself if those bonds were broken. Hence the untamed rage, of which you made mention, towards us, the advocates of Freedom. For the leaders in the anti-slavery crusade, there are offers of five, ten, and twenty thousand dollars for their abduction or death. To such daring deeds of premeditated murder does the spirit of human slavery induct its devotees."

Mrs. Glenly related the persecutions of the mob in New York,

called together by "Many Southerners" to prevent a meeting of the friends of "Immediate Abolition." She drew the repulsive picture of the riot at the closed gates; of their repeated offers of Ten Thousand Dollars for Arthur Tappan; of their blood-thirsty entrance, and finally of the pursuit of that gentleman through the unlighted main hall of the chapel, by one of the mob, with a light and a drawn dagger; of the janitor, who saw the villain, blew out the light, and then took refuge in one of the slips, foiling the assassin with darkness, and saving the life of one of the most Christian men of the century.

"The blood chills at the recital of these facts," said Leonore; "but, my friends, they cannot be denied. They are a subject of conversation in Charleston, my own city, and in the South generally. I know the name and standing of the very pursuer of Mr. Tappan. I have seen the dagger, and heard the curses upon its failure to reach the heart of its intended victim. I blush with shame for the guilt of my fellow-citizens!

"It is gratifying to hear your deprecation of the high-handed assumption of the South; and yet, sanguinary impulses are but the inseparable concomitants of the practice of enslavement. How is it, may I inquire," gently asked Mrs. Glenly, "that your moral perceptions are so much clearer than those of most other Southern ladies? for (allow me to say this without offence) it is considered that the women of the South are more tenacious of Southern rights than the men; that they are more violent towards Northern advocates of Freedom."

"My moral perceptions are quite obtuse, my dear madame. I only see 'men as trees walking,' yet;" and a burst of pleasant laughter warmed each heart present. "My acquaintance South call this, my inherent love of freedom, a 'taint in the blood.' I am a Wallace, my dear ladies, of Scotch genealogy. On that ground they generally pardon my eccentricities, as they are graciously pleased to term the frank expression of my convictions. Besides, my father holds many slaves, and his sturdy Scotch blood has become the American blue, by frequent admixture with the highest aristocracies of his adopted land."

Fanny dropped her work, and rested her busy hands. She was finishing some pretty aprons for little dark Addie Hughes, that her

dress might win to kindness the fair-skinned children of the village school. She looked smilingly, but with a searching gaze into the frank, blue eyes of Leonore.

“If we cherish the dawning light of truth in our thoughts, its brightness will advance to the perfect day. We are judged by the acceptance or refusal of this light, rather than by blood.”

Leonore returned her gaze with a mingling of curiosity and admiration. She was well versed in the suavities of social intercourse, which pass smoothly over disagreeable asperities, ever preserving a well-studied and deceptive calm; but this plain, unvarnished manner of bringing subjects under discussion to the test of conscience, was to her analytical turn of mind something new and interesting.

“Faithfully expressed, Miss Fanny,” said Leonore. “In the South, blood stands for a catalogue of virtues — blood stands for justice, and, I imagine, for conscience. For myself, I do not value this spurious coin; but having been raised there and nurtured on error, I cannot clearly discern the truth, myself.”

“Fanny dear,” remarked Mrs. Glenly, “let us credit Miss Wallace with a *desire* for truth. That is the first approach to the ‘perfect day.’ She could have had no other object, for we never deny its principles.”

Fanny, fearlessly true to her own impulses, replied,—

“You know, Mrs. Glenly, one of our principles is to abjure whatever is false. Now, if Miss Wallace learn and cherish truth in her own soul, of what use will it be when she returns where truth is expelled, and falsehood embraced?”

“We are to understand, then, that you would have Miss Wallace not only yield to convictions of the right, but come out and separate herself from the South and its practices.”

“I wish to be so understood,” answered Fanny, firmly.

“Miss Wallace could not entertain for a moment the idea of being a refugee from the most agreeable and seductive portion of our land, I am sure. The bare suggestion would be a terror to *me!*” said Ida.

“I beg to correct your mistake, Miss Ida,” said Leonore. “I have entertained many thoughts of leaving the South. Miss

Fanny's logic is irresistible. Truth and justice find no place there."

Ida persisted in the senseless flattery, by reminding Fanny of the late evidence of Southern justice in that very house, and under their own eyes."

Leonore would ask for information, if the request would not be intrusive.

"A Southern master—yes, a Charleston master, restored a young and valuable slave to liberty, and gave him a deed of himself. His guardian brought him here for a week."

"Pray what was his name?"

"Ishmael Paisley."

"Is it possible that Issy has passed a week in this town, and gone again? Why, my dear ladies, his master's family are intimate acquaintances. I think I should explain to you the quality of this example of justice, for the facts are well known to others as well as myself."

Mrs. Glenly assured Leonore that all would be happy to hear.

"Issy's master is his own father. You are shocked, Miss Fanny, but it is true. Doctor Paisley's daughter, Mistress Theresa Valmonte, knew the relation he bore to her and her father. A stranger beholding them, would have guessed the truth by their marked resemblance to their father and to each other. At her marriage, as the custom is, Issy was given to Theresa. As he grew older, the family resemblance heightened; Doctor Paisley's son and pet became an annoyance. Theresa Valmonte mortgaged her brother Issy for future sale, she being in pressing need of funds. Doctor Paisley received a hint of this from his factor, and purchased his pet son himself. Hence his free papers and guardianship. I denominate that motive *affection*, not justice, ladies. By justice, he would free every slave impartially."

"You are right," decided Fanny and Caro in one breath.

"There is no obliquity in *your* natural vision!" Miss Leonore said.

Mrs. Glenly, with affectionate admiration for the brave girl who offered no compromise for the fatal errors of her beloved South, withdrew with her daughters to prepare the tea-table.

"My dear Fanny," said Leonore, drawing near to her, "there

must be a similarity between us, despite the apparent difference. I like the flash of your glittering spear. I dearly love the incisive utterances that fall from your lips. Your lofty conceptions of human obligations drop into my confused early teaching like the boom of a minute gun, in a fog at sea. I envy the circumstances of your birth and life, which foster purity of conscience and freedom of speech."

"One more minute gun, my dear friend. You have power to leave the South with all its sins, and to develop your beautifully strong nature in a more moral atmosphere. That would be a heroism which would reduce us abolitionists to pigmies."

"My dear Fanny," pleaded Leonore, "do you love your home, the place of your birth? I love mine. Do you love your brother, and your parents? Just so do I love mine. Do you love the rush of your Northern breezes and your Northern snows? So, I love the Southern balmy airs and our flowers perpetual bloom."

"But Leonore, our Savior bade us leave all and follow Him. 'Whosoever loveth Christ cannot remain a slave-holder or partake in the crimes of slavery.' 'If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; if thy hand offend thee, cut it off.'"

"Ah! thou youthful seer, something divine inspires thee! I love thee, though thou slayest me!"

She hid her face in her delicate hands. Her slender, jeweled fingers were wet with tear-drops. Then dashing them apart, she rose nervously, and drew Fanny to the open piano. She sang an Italian song, caroling the runs and trills like a lark.

The whole house was spell-bound. Mr. Glenly, in his shirt sleeves, paused on the kitchen steps. Mrs. Glenly, butter-dish in hand, stopped half way on the cellar stairs. Caro and Ida dropped forks and napkins and held their breath, lest a note should be lost. Again her fingers rippled over the keys, with the swiftness of hummingbirds' wings; again her delicious voice poured forth its sweetness in a shower of graces. Those in the kitchen remained statuesque. Fanny's expression was of rapt adoration. The last high, sustained, flute-like note floated away up the stairways and among the elms.

The scene was ended. Leonore whirled around on the piano-seat, face to face with Fanny.

“There! that is all I am good for! If I leave my home, I shall be disowned and disinherited, cast out friendless and penniless. I cannot labor — have never learned to hold a needle. Poverty would be my portion, after the life of ease and luxury which was inherited with my breath. Oh! I shudder, dear Fanny. I could not endure poverty!”

Summoned by the tea-bell, Toad stepped in quietly, to follow her mistress to the table.

“Ah! Toad; I had forgotten that I own a slave. Remain here. This young lady is my guardian angel at present.”

She walked on, her arm thrown about Fanny’s waist.

After tea, which Leonore discussed with social ease and generous praise, Caro propounded a question which opened a mine of general interest.

“Who was Ishmael’s mother?”

“She was the pastry cook of Doctor Paisley — a slave of very dark color,” was the prompt reply, while scanning the faces of her auditors. She read their astonishment and incredulity; then added, “Doctor Paisley is a gentleman of commanding precedents, of high-toned pride, of lineage running back to Prince Albert’s time. All this is supported by a copy of the ancient coat of arms, carefully preserved.”

A half smothered, derisive laugh rippled about the room, to which Leonore gave an assuring emphasis with a jeweled finger.

Caro proposed another question.

“How is Doctor Paisley’s truant course regarded by other high-toned Southern gentlemen? I should judge he would incur their displeasure and sever some valuable intimacies.”

“Not in the least, Miss Caro; a tacit assent to these departures is prevalent.”

“Yet we of the North,” said Mrs. Glenly, “are flagrantly accused of desiring amalgamation by marriage, which they denominated a crime, detestable in their sight; while they practice the same in a surreptitious form of concubinage.”

“Another smooth stone for my sling,” thought Fanny.

Conversation flagged. Mrs. Glenly proposed to drop the disagreeable subject. There was more of Leonore’s wonderful music. There were the simple ballads and duets of the Glenlys. Last of

all, there was the "Brides Farewell," by Fanny, charmed away to the piano by Leonore, after the vain remonstrance,—

"How can I sing to a song-throated bird of the South?" and receiving the answer,—

"Sing as you talk to me. Sing like yourself."

At Fanny's first line,

"Farewell, mother, now I leave thee,"

the proud face of the beautiful girl blanched. Through the remaining lines, it seemed that Fanny was playing upon her heartstrings. Her agitation was observed by the other ladies, but they knew not the secret of Leonore's agitation; knew not that her thoughts were far away in her native city; that she stood not by the piano, but by a student's chair in her uncle's office, looking down into the pure, adoring eyes of its young occupant. They suspected not that she was bracing herself for the future struggle with the unbending pride and unforgiving caste of her native State, in the determination to marry the young Northern student-at-law in her uncle's office, to whom she had already given her heart.

Each attributed the change in Leonore to fatigue; therefore, in the midst of the last verse, the performer was interrupted by Mrs. Glenly, standing by,—

"Fanny dear, excuse me. Miss Wallace is weary;" and with her arm about the pale girl, she drew her to the sofa, saying, "Our adamantine creed has been too exciting for you, darling. Come away, let us talk about blackberries."

Her color returned. She replied,—

"Oh! certainly, let us talk about blackberries; for I so desire to go myself after them."

"Miss Wallace can ride 'Marmion' to the field, and we will walk beside her. Her servant, Toad, can pick her berries while she rests in the shade," said Ida.

"Oh! no, Miss Ida, by no means. You mistake me. I shall walk with the party, and share the pleasure of picking the berries, myself. I am endeavoring to become partially Northernized this summer."

So in great glee the field was selected where the berries were thickest, and the time appointed.

When taking leave of the family, Leonore thanked Mrs. Glenly for the day's enjoyment. She had never before entered an anti-slavery family. She had found her views most happily modified. Soliciting an interchange of visits and calls during her stay, taking Fanny's hand for the good-night, she said affectionately,—

“Remember you have a Southerner under your eye ; make the most of the opportunity.”

A great wave of gossip tided over the village of West Elms. Women left their churns and their early breakfast dishes, to loiter over the garden fences separating the white houses, and talk, with bursts of gayety and ominous gestures over the late event. Girls gathered in knots on the door steps, or along the green-bordered street, and fairly lost their breath with merriment over the rapid details. Men in the fields, in their shirt sleeves, leaned on their hoes or rakes amid the harvest, repeating the hearsay, holding their stalwart sides with laughter.

“Have you heard the news?” says one.

“No, what is it?”

“Mrs. Donald's house is full of Southerners and slaves. That young lady's mother has come ; that Miss Wallace, you know, that rides the black pony. Well, there's her mother and her brother, a tall handsome man, a black waiting-man for him, and a mulatto maid for Mrs. Wallace. They came in an elegant carriage with a pair of horses. There's the black coachman, dressed in livery, and a young, brown footman. So with Miss Leonore Wallace's servant, there's three Southerners and five slaves.”

“Oh ! you don't say. The house must be full ; too full for me.”

“But that is not the best of it all. Now hear. You see they came unexpected, and Miss Wallace had a party of girls there — amongst them, the abolitionist Glenlys and their visitor. They had all been blackberrying and were picking over the berries. Leonore ran to the carriage with her hands stained with the juice. Her mother uttered interjectional screams, and cried,—

“‘What is the matter with my daughter's hands?’

“‘Oh ! I've just been blackberrying, mamma.’

“‘My daughter Leonore will condescend to degrade herself in this manner ! I am mortified beyond expression with your vulgarity !’

“‘What silly ideas! Vulgarity indeed, then we are vulgar at West Elms,’ and the speaker’s lips pursed up with wounded self-respect.

“Hear the rest. It is too ridiculous. Mrs. Wallace actually entered the house weeping over the blackberry stains. After ordering her hands washed and bathed in the ‘milk of roses,’ she examined them again — then horror of horrors!”

At this point of the pretty scandal, they were inevitably seized with convulsive laughter, breaking up the relation into incoherency.

“Do tell what happened next! ha! ha! ha!”

“Oh! let me breathe. There. I’ve laughed myself to tears. Now hush. As I was saying, she examined the fingers, and found marks on the joints, and the cuticle broken in various places.

“‘Alas! my daughter, what is this?’ turning very pale.

“‘A trifle, mamma. I have been washing a few embroideries and laces. Among the Romans, do as the Romans do.’

“‘Leonore! I command you to cease these offensive comparisons. Do you compare the incomparable Romans with the labor-soiled, grovelling Northerners; and must you grovel with them? The idea is repugnant to every feeling in my breast. Look at these once delicate hands, bruised and torn, ragged and defaced. What an infamy. Alas! Leonore; have you abandoned every claim to your ancestral dignity?’”

“Sublimely ridiculous!” ejaculated the listeners. “So we have blue blood in our town. Lackaday, what a pity.”

“Leave your laughter now, and hear me through. Put on your solemn faces. Let your hearts ache. The woman fell over the arm of the sofa and actually began to faint, a fitting climax to such acting. After being brought to, by the use of salts, she sent post haste for the doctor, declared to him that the alarming state of Leonore would deprive her of sleep, if he did not remedy her condition immediately.”

“What did the man do? He should have prescribed another healthy dose of washing, as the best restorative.”

“Oh, he put on his official solemnity, and swathed Leonore’s fingers in medicated fine linen. She is under the doctor’s daily care at last reports. Ha! ha! ha!”

“Ha! ha! ha!” all round.

Farmer Bing down in the meadow, went on whetting his scythe while he listened; and, as his bare, brawny arm plied to and fro on the ringing blade, his white, firm teeth gleamed slowly out from his pleased lips, and his keen eyes beamed under his sun-browned hat. When all was told, before his mouth had returned to its gravity, he said,—

“Well, I guess we ought to give that Southern girl that rides that little black horse, some credit. I b’lieve it’ll take a good deal of that nonsensical palaver to make her what her mother wants her to be. She’s got a noble, good look in her face. She dropped her whip in the road once, this summer. I was coming along with a load of hay, and picked it up for her. She thanked me as pretty as if she had been my own girl. Then she said I had a fine load of hay, and asked me if she might ride down in the meadow with me when I came back. I told her to go out to the bars, and wait till I came, and then she rode clear down to the river, her horse side by side with the oxen, asking me questions all the way.”

“She’s got spunk enough for ’em, too. After she got in the field, she says,—

“‘May I ride anywhere?’

“Says I, ‘Yes, anywhere I’ve mowed.’

“So she tossed her hat on to a hay-cock, and went galloping round bare-headed, like a circus rider. That pony and she capered about like children. I guess I shall have to stand by her.”

This gossip was nevertheless truth. Leonore’s fingers were bound with balms and mollifying ointments. Her outgoings and incomings were made under the sharp espionage of her high caste mother.

The Glenlys and Fanny fled from Mrs. Donald’s rooms, with the rest of the blackberry party. Mrs. Glenly comforted the refugees by showing them that these various expressions of Southern life were the very best lessons they could have, as they were drawn from Nature.

The termination of Fanny’s visit drew near. Just the day before the one appointed for leaving, the family welcomed again with pleasant surprise the Friend, Mr. Sterlingworth.

“I was at East Elms,” he said, “and was attracted hither for a

day by the agreeable memory of my week here with Ishmael."

"Where is Ishmael?" sprang from all lips.

"With a family near Boston; thy brother Richard's suggestion, Fanny;" and his glance turned full upon her; neither was it quickly withdrawn, but lingered like the glory of a summer sunset, till Fanny's eyes dropped upon her folded hands, leaving her face suffused with the hues of a pinken shell. Nevertheless the interviewing proceeded in a lively manner by the rest of the family, while Fanny pondered upon a new mystery of life just opened to her view.

During the day she found herself frequently conning this mystery. She had not the baneful experience of the world, which maps out the ways of heart and soul before the inexperienced traveler. Despite her outspoken sense of justice, she undervalued herself, in the extreme humility to which she had attained. So the new mysterious lesson became a different one.

"Strange!" she found herself soliloquizing, "I have dreaded this last day of my stay at West Elms; the parting with Caro and dear Mrs. Glenly; and yet this is the happiest day of my visit. Ah!" she said to herself religiously, "it is my deceitful heart! ever leading I know not whither! I am never what I seem! My feet will stray in by and forbidden paths."

In one of these customary attacks of abstraction, while her absent eye wandered among the tops of the street elms, a familiar voice recalled her.

"Come, Fanny! thy thoughts seem to soar away with the birds! come back to earth! Let us take a farewell stroll to the orchard, and then to the river."

Ere she was aware, her fingers were laid timidly on the arm of Mr. Sterlingworth, and both were threading the mazes of red and golden fruit. Nature appeared more beautiful to her than ever before. The sky, the hills, the orchard and the river distilled a new and strange delight. Mr. Sterlingworth also seemed to her to have found a fresh interest in all she held dear; his gentle words flowed out in harmony with her every thought.

"So thou takest the early stage for home to-morrow, Fanny. Hast thou traveled much alone?"

“Never before, sir. But the distance is short. There is but one change in the stages — at East Elms.”

“Wilt thou allow me the honor and pleasure of being thy companion and protector?”

“I could not consent to give you that trouble, sir.”

“I have business in Cloudspire, Fanny.”

He paused on the lawn before the house — for they had returned — and then in tones which added music to his words he said,—

“It would be more than a pleasure, I assure thee.”

The next morning the burly stage-driver hauled up his four-in-hand before the Glenly gate. It is needless to dwell upon the happy security Fanny felt in being handed into the lumbering vehicle by the strong and ready arms of her friend; and amidst the strange and crowded faces to know that Mr. Sterlingworth was at her side. His delightful conversation, too, relieved the tedium of the rocking, jolting milcs. She even found the journey too short; when the crack of the driver’s whip brought the panting horses galloping up the hill, and round the curve in front of the old tavern and its loungers at Alderbank.

It must also be acknowledged that Fanny felt a certain proud satisfaction in being handed out by a gentleman whose figure and presence demanded the respect of the bystanders. Truly she felt gratified for his protection, when he drew her arm within his and led her to the sitting-room, up the dingy steps, through the track-begrimmed entry, past the noisy opened door of the bar-room; and in the knowledge that her baggage would be withdrawn from the confused pile on the stage without her interference.

Surprise took the place of other emotions, when after the bustle of departure, he entered the apartment, and with the same tenderness she had observed on the morning of his arrival at West Elms, said,—

“With thy permission Fanny, I will attend thee home.”

He drew her hand upon his arm. In a sweet confusion of bashful timidity, she walked by his side up the long street. To the prying eyes in door-ways and curtained windows along their route, and to gossiping tongues, we leave the significance of his errand.

CHAPTER XXI.

MRS. BUDDINGTON and Alfy stood at the east window looking eagerly up the road for Thad. It was nearing Christmas. Winter had made several aggressive skirmishes on the dallying autumn days, till the ruddy-haired nymphs fled out of sight, leaving their late glorious domain to his pale rigor. Snow was falling. The vision of the watchers extended but a short distance through the atmosphere, thick with the feathery shower.

“Mother, don’t you think the snow is beautiful? See, everything is so white; the barn, the shed are roofed anew. Every fence-rail, every branch and twig are heaped with it. Mother, don’t you like it?”

“Yes, my son, I do admire it. Snow is like a pure veil, covering every object offensive to the eye. After a winter snowstorm, it seems we have a new earth. Observe those hemlocks, Alfy; they seem to have put on white mantles.”

He leaned his head on his mother’s shoulder, and threw an arm about her neck.

“Shall we have any snow in Texas, mother?”

“No, my son; no snow, no ice. The climate will appear to us like perpetual summer. The sun will ride higher than here, in the bluest of heavens. We shall have a greater variety of flowers, larger and more splendid. I expect these blue eyes will be busy enough with the blossoms, the gay butterflies and bright birds.” She turned to look into those eyes, ever calm and sunny.

“Father will be better there too, mother.”

“We hope so, my son; his health is the prime object of our removal. We hope the balmy airs of the South will be strengthening to his fragile constitution.”

“He must be there now, mother; and it will seem to him like spring amongst the flowers, butterflies and birds. I guess he misses us among the fiery Southerners and Mexicans. I guess he’d like to be at home with us to-night. Don’t you wish he was here, mother?”

"Home is no home without father, my boy." A tear dropped upon the hair of Alfy. "No man ever loved his wife and children more than he. However, we must submit to a short separation now, that death may not rob us of him too soon. He may live a long life in Texas. I should be satisfied with a letter at present; we have not had any news from father and uncle George for five weeks."

"Mother, why did he and uncle George go to Texas? why not go to some other place South? I find Texas on my map, and it's farther off than Georgia and Alabama."

"Well, because it is a new country; land is cheap, and new settlers are welcomed. There are, also, excellent prairie-grazing grounds for cattle. Raising stock requires no hard labor, like tilling this rocky New England soil. Flocks of cattle require only a herdsman to ride about after them. They take care of themselves; need no hay, no barns. Then the sun there does the work of a farmer here; vegetation asks no nursing from the worn-out laborer."

"But, mother, father has not money enough to buy a herd of cattle."

"Uncle George has; he will help father to make a fair start. Uncle George can buffet with the rough world better than father, too. Dear father will find strength and support in George."

"Where were they when we got the last letter?"

"They were on the Ohio river, between Cincinnati and the Mississippi."

"That will suit Thad, to ride over the plains herding cattle. He likes cattle — and he likes to ride fiery horses. He says he's going to be a stage-driver, mother," an idea at which Alfy laughed loudly, forcing his mother to join.

"The life of a herdsman will satisfy Thad's roving humor, I think; and perhaps Alfy would like a pony to ride also. I expect these two violet eyes, and this fair hair will need that tonic." The fond mother dropped two kisses on the tender lids.

"The snow is falling faster, mother."

"And it is growing darker. I cannot imagine what delays Thad. The roads are filled with snow; old Ned must find it hard traveling, dragging wheels through the clogging ruts."

The mother turned away ; but the anxious eyes of Alfy took another survey of the road.

“Mother, I see something coming ; the horse is walking.”

Mrs. Buddington went to the window again.

“That’s Ned ; but there’s two in the wagon. Perhaps he’s bringing home a neighbor.”

She lighted candles, looked after the supper, waiting by the fire on the hearth. Ned soon came round the house, tired and wet with sweat. Alfy met him on the steps.

“What makes you so late, Thad ?”

“Had to go further,” was the short reply.

“Where ?”

“I’ll tell you all about it when I come in. Hurry and light the lantern. Father said we must be kind to ‘Ned,’ and he’s tired and hungry.”

There was something ominous in Thad’s voice, which Alfy felt, but could not define. The passenger sprang out of the wagon, and laid a heavy gloved hand familiarly on Alfy’s shoulder.

“Don’t know Uncle George ? How do you do ? and how is mother ?”

Alfy noticed something strange in his uncle’s voice ; also the tone was more affectionate than formerly.

“Tell mother I’ve gone to the barn, to help Thad put up ‘Ned ;’ you must bring out the lantern.”

He was glad to have a small extension of time, before the sad meeting which awaited his entrance to the home of his brother.

With a beating heart and bewildered step, Mrs. Buddington drew out the fall-leaf table, spread the white damask cover, and set out the best china. A trembling hand set the extra plate. Her confused sight could scarcely distinguish one jar of preserves from another. She staggered down the cellar stairs where she had last seen her husband at work, storing the products of the farm. It seemed like a tomb ; but she carried up the Christmas loaf, of which her husband was fond, and which she had made for the boys, in his memory. She was bending over the hearth to take up the late supper, when the stamping of feet in the entry announced their coming.

“What news will he bring?” she said to herself. “Where is James? How can I ask?”

Her head swam and she sank into a chair. The whole family strove to maintain a superficial composure during the meal, and succeeded. General inquiries of health and weather were answered in a general manner. Oracular premonitions of a deep sorrow fell about the mother, like the falling snow. The moaning winter wind struck desolation to her heart, yet she only said, as they rose from the table,—

“Thad, where did you find your uncle?”

His uncle answered for him.

“I knew he would go to the post-office, often. I wrote to the post-master from New York, to send Thad on to the ‘old tavern,’ to meet and bring me here. He has had a long ride in the snow. I came back, Mary, on unexpected business.”

“Where did you leave James?”

“At the last place where we stopped. Let us have the table aside; when we gather round the fire, I will explain my visit.”

Alfy followed his mother about, assisting. In the pantry he whispered,—

“Why didn’t father come? Will Uncle George go back soon?”

“I cannot tell, my son; it is all as strange to me, as to you.”

The work was done; they gathered, anxiously, about the bright fire.

“Mary, James has been sick — unable to travel.”

“I fear that is not all the message you bear!” answered Mary in a tremulous voice. “Is he well again? or who attends to him among strangers?”

“James needs no care at present. He had the best of womanly care from the hands of the lady who stopped on her journey for this purpose.”

“George Buddington, my husband is dead. Tell me the truth!” she ejaculated, while tears flowed down her pale face. Her pitiful moans filled the room. The distress of the beloved mother roused her sons, and their childish sobbing joined hers.

The brother made no haste to reply; he could not trust his own voice; he waited for this first outbreak of feeling to spend itself.

Exhausted grief would listen more calmly. The task he had to perform required a serene subjection of his own grief, and the bitter recollections of its cause. While engaged in the hard strife with himself, the tempest of weeping lessened. She addressed him again.

“Tell me, Brother George, the whole truth; delay is no relief. Where is James?”

“He sleeps peacefully — he is at rest, where no apprehension of evil nor the turmoil of earth can ever disturb him more. Control yourselves as much as possible. All times and seasons are in the hands of Him who both giveth and taketh life. He only knows how I have dreaded to be the messenger of these tidings to you, Mary, and the dear boys.”

Alfy threw himself moaning, upon the floor. The pent-up sorrow of Thad burst forth uncontrolled. Uncle George, whose grief had a deeper source than they yet knew, joined his tears with theirs. Stunned by the overwhelming blow, the mother and her sons sat speechless around the winter hearth; each mind picturing to itself the cruel grave among strangers, in a lonely, far-off land.

George Buddington studiously withheld the unsuspected and shocking cause of his death. He spoke little, leaving the heart-rending *denouement* for a future day. It was enough for the stricken wife to know that the beloved husband of her youth was dead. That one word had enough of poignancy for the present. Another hand more skillful than his should reopen the wound, and lay upon its throbbing pain the leaves of healing. Other lips, gentle and loving, should narrate the horrid truths. “Not I!” He thought to himself.

“I could not comfort, or soothe with patient words. I should *curse* — hotly curse his murderers. I should anathematize the brutal fiends, who beat out, with the bloody lash, my brother’s frail, unoffending life. I should curse the Constitution, in which the Southerner crystalized his own diabolical wishes. I should curse a religion that allows its priesthood to minister to the infernal, blood-thirsty oligarchy of the South. I should curse the heavens above, that would receive the fainting spirit of James, threshed from his bleeding body, by the diabolical flails of Southern torture,

without striking down the guilty actors with the fiery bolts of Divine Justice."

Scarce thinking of himself, he raised both arms to join his hands against the back of his head, as a support, when sharp twinges of pain quickly recalled his own flagellation, and the still sore, unhealed welts upon his own person. His arms dropped suddenly. With a bitter groan, he rose and slowly paced the kitchen floor.

Hearing this, and observing the unnatural flush that burned like a flaming fire on his pale face, Mrs. Buddington asked with concern, if he were not suffering from fever; perhaps from the same fever that might have overtaken James; and was there not a Western fever fatal to Eastern residents?"

He had heard so; was not well informed; thought his brother feverish before his death; was not feverish himself, only fatigued with travel. Thus he calmed her fears and walked on, apparently listening to the cold, souging wind and the pattering snow on the panes. Thad had thrown himself on the floor by the side of his brother, before the bright fire, and childhood's sweet sleep of forgetfulness had sealed their grieving eyes.

"Sister Mary," said George, "a lady will come here to inform and comfort you respecting James' sickness and death; the one who attended him in his last sickness. She lives in New York, and insisted upon coming to embrace you and offer solacing words. She will prove an angel of peace to you, as she did to James. But you should not be alone till even then. I propose to send Thad tomorrow morning with a note to Filette Snow, to come immediately here to take the household burden from your distracted thoughts; also, that she may be a cheerful companion to you all.

There was no sleep for James' stricken wife the live-long night. Mr. Buddington bore her company through the long, dreary hours; kept the fire burning brightly, and by his unruffled serenity, calmed the wild outbursts of her trembling soul. He covered the sleeping brothers, on the floor, with blankets, passed out into the drifting snow and in again, to break the dread stillness. He made inquiries concerning the neighbors and the clergyman — thus leading her meditations, at intervals, away from the dead.

When the first crimson rays of morning barred the shroud-like snow, a light knocking called him to the door. It was Mrs. Bud-

dington's neighbor Brown, from the snug home down the hill. Surprise lifted his gray brows, as he pressed George's proffered hand.

"I beg pardon for this early intrusion, Mr. Buddington. Wife has kept a watchful eye on this house since James went to Texas; she has seen a light in the windows several times in the night, and hurried me up here to see if Mary or the boys are sick. There is no need now. Is your brother James well? Is he within?"

He was invited in, and he gave all a kindly greeting. He learned that the shadow of death darkened the hitherto joyful hearth. With a misty voice he spoke of the better land, and another happy dweller there; and that, by and by, imitating his exemplary life, those who wait below may meet the lost above. There was balm in his words and manner. He offered himself and sleigh to go for Filette Snow, remarking it would be too cold and hard a ride for Thad, and too much for old Ned. His horse was young and strong, and was as fond of breaking paths as an engine on the railroad track.

He took a sealed note from Mr. George, explaining all.

Filette came to the door, ringing out her usual merry laugh.

"Why, you look like a miller, Mr. Brown; you are powdered white. Did the colt throw you out? or did he sift the snow over you himself? Come in to the fire. Now that 'gude wife' of yours, will have to eat those delightful pies and cakes without the tailoress, for I'm just going to fly away in another direction. Did you come for me? Why, what's the matter, Mr. Brown? Has anything happened?"

"I have a letter for you."

She looked at it archly, saying,—

"I do not know the hand-writing."

"Read it, Filette," he said, in a voice strangely grave. The entreaty sounded to the gay girl like a rebuke. With a sobered eye she scanned his staid face rapidly, and retired from the circle about the blazing hearth to a chair by the window. Once more she curiously turned the letter in her fingers, with an air as puzzled as if she were about to remedy a mistake in one of the garments her hands turned off so readily.

The half sheet of foolscap was neatly folded in letter form, and

Mrs. Snow dropped the skimmer laden with cream into the pan, and asked again what Filette said.

"James Buddington is dead, mother, and Mary is desolate." She leaned against the shelves, answering with the calmness which only is gained by long experience in life.

"This is terrible news, Filette; but Heaven is a better place than Texas, with all its blue skies, birds and flowers."

"But, mother, how Mary and the boys loved James."

"Oh yes, death is ever cruel. But if James had gone there, he might have lost his soul if he had recovered health." Her voice fell to a whisper. "Nobody can take up their abode among slaveholders; (and those in Texas are nothing better than heartless brigands — robbers of the natural rights of Mexico) I say, no man can live among slave-holders, assimilating his interests with theirs, as residents of a section must do, without becoming assimilated also in soul and principle. James' beautiful boys would have changed to bloody, irritable slave-masters. Filette, it may shock you, but if this is the only way to prevent his abode in that unmanageable den of thieves, I say reverently, 'God's will be done!'"

"Mary has sent for me, mother."

She read her letter.

"Go, my child. Carry Mary in your arms through this fiery trial." She left her cream, and went about bringing her daughter's cloak, hood and wrappings. "Filette," she said, "sit by the stove and warm you. It's a long, cold ride. I will gather up what you will need during your stay."

The return was made almost in silence.

Neither Mr. Brown or Filette knew more than the simple facts stated in the letter. Filette was revolving thoughts which had no reference to the gray-headed man by her side, and which were scarcely intelligible to herself. As she turned the subject confusedly this way and that, prismatic hues shot forth, enveloping it in the colors of the iris. Rainbows gave place to the shadow of sorrow and the gloom of James' freshly made grave. The whitened landscape, the dazzling sunlight, the colt plunging through drifts, and the skurrying snow were familiar to both, claiming no attention; and in the midst of her reveries the sleigh bells ceased ringing. They were at Mary's door.

Before the arrival was realized, a deep subdued voice bade Filette "Good-morning;" two strong arms lifted her from the nest among the buffalos, to the clean-swept step-stone. She raised her face to say "Thank you." The same fascinating hazel eyes which had haunted her memory since they vanished up the green-bordered road, weeks before, met hers again, their tender sheen melting into her fluttering heart.

"Miss Snow, I am under many obligations for this quick reply to my note. Sister Mary needs you much."

She entered the kitchen, where Deacon Brown's wife had finished clearing up the breakfast table. Mary hastened to meet her friend, and while tears rained afresh, exclaimed,—

"James is dead!"

Filette held Mary in a long embrace, saying,—

"I know all—you can but grieve—tears are the best relief. My heart bleeds for you and the poor boys."

Then while Mary went on sobbing, she bent low to her ear.

"Mother sent you a message—this is it. 'We all are but dust, and heaven is better than earth.' And Mary, you know you and I believe that God is good. That comprehends more than we can make clear to ourselves."

"But James is so far away in that lonely grave, among strangers," soliloquized Mary.

"That is true," replied Mrs. Brown; but the All-seeing Eye that knoweth when a sparrow falls will much more watch *his* dust for you. Your agony will not be forgotten. After the sharp pangs are past, which all must feel at the sudden loss of a friend, He will bind up your bruised spirit; He will give you peace for mourning."

"Think Mary," added Filette, "how many of earth's beloved lie in unknown graves of the sea. How many close their eyes forever, and bid adieu to earth on the merciless battle-field, and are hurried into trenches, unknown and unwept. James had a brother at his side, who cared tenderly for his last hours. Let that comfort you."

George entered with Thad and Alf, who followed him about as if he were their only protector. Hearing Filette's efforts at soothing his sister-in-law, he added,—

“Heaven sent an angel to his sick bed, in the person of a lady traveler who was returning to New York with her husband and servant, from a Western tour. They put up at the same inn ; and learning that we were Eastern men, she insisted upon halting until the crisis should be over. Night and day, she sat by his bedside ; made with her own hands various kinds of nourishment which could not have been obtained at a country inn. The proprietor and his wife, pleased with the distinguished patronage of herself and husband, granted all her wishes. Mary could not have nursed him more considerately, herself. When all was over, she, with her noble husband, dressed the body for the grave. More, they went to a neighboring village, and purchased flowers, here and there, from plants in the windows, and with evergreen, wove a floral cross for the coffin. She even borrowed a crape bonnet and veil, tied a badge of mourning on her husband’s arm, and followed James with me, as mourners, to his grave.”

“Heaven will bless her for that,” said Mrs. Brown.

“She is even coming here to make acquaintance with Mary ; to speak of James, and bear a message from his dying lips.”

“When will she come ? ” asked Filette.

“One week from the time I arrived. We will offer her a warm welcome, Mary. You will be tranquilized by her visit. She will remain one week,” said George.

By the close of the interval week before the reception of the guest, every preparation possible in a plain, country farm-house, was perfected. By George’s suggestion, the bird’s eye maple bedstead was brought down from the cold chamber, and placed in the parlor, where was a bright carpet of warm scarlet and green, and a polished stove, which would furnish summer temperature. The white toilet table was brought down also, and placed under the mirror, which, together with the high bed draped in white, gave the room as snug and comfortable an air as one could desire. So said George Buddington.

Cream, mince and apple pies, glorying in the flakiest crust ; and cakes with icing as white as the snowy fields — the handi-work of Filette, awaited the almost dreaded arrival — for Mary said, what with her grief and country manners, she could not expect to entertain a lady so delicate and refined. The extreme poignancy of

bereavement had become deadened, to a degree, by Filette's wise cheerfulness and the occupied days. A quiet resignation was perceptibly gaining ascendancy in the broken family circle.

Near the close of the day appointed for the lady's arrival, which was bright and cold, there were many eyes looking up the road. Thad and Alfy had held several private conferences through the day, on the lady from New York — added to much speculation on her wealth and appearance and the object of her visit. Each was desirous of having his own judgment prove the most correct; therefore, the window commanding the snowy road was not left for a moment without a sentinel.

"It's near sunset; they ought to be near," said Alfy.

"Oh, it's a long way to the old Red Tavern where the stage stops, and the lady would want to go in and warm, before she got in the cutter with Uncle George," answered Thad.

"Wasn't that a nice string of bells Thad, that Uncle George borrowed for the colt; they reached clear round him, and made such fine music."

"Yes, they're just the kind of bells as I'm going to have when I own horses. I'll have two jet black ones, like Lone Star, and a string of bells just like them on each one."

"There! they're coming now, Alf. I'm going to drive the colt down the hill to Mr. Brown's. You want to go, Alf?"

"No, I want to stay and see the lady."

The meeting was cordial on both sides; but on the stranger's part, it was like the recognition of long-absent friends. She embraced Mary with unaffected and sisterly sympathy, imprinting a warm kiss upon her pale brow. She had a kiss also for Thad and Alfy. She took both of Filette's hands in hers, held them long, and said admiringly,—

"So! so! Pink roses among New England snows. I have found a beautiful Hebe."

With some trepidation, Mary ushered her into the parlor bedroom to arrange her toilet for supper — apologizing for their rude accommodations.

"We have no saloons, no folding doors, and no servants, my dear lady, here. I fear you will regret leaving your spacious and luxuriant home in the city."

“By no means. Do not indulge that unpleasant thought. This room is a paradise ; so delightfully warm ; and that bed will tempt me to sleep day and night. I have so desired to nestle down in a New England farm-house ; here my wish is gratified. My dear Mrs. Buddington, you will find, on farther acquaintance, that my likings are very simple.”

The supper was soon upon the table before the blazing hearth, which illuminated every angle of the tidy kitchen. George assisted Filette. He was the infallible reference in perplexity.

“She is a superb woman,” said Mary in an undertone. “Her hair is singularly splendid, with the color and luxuriance of ripened wheat fields. You will admire her, Filette.”

“I hope the supper will prove satisfactory,” whispered Filette.

“It cannot be otherwise,” spoke George encouragingly. “This cooking cannot be had from hotels or servants, for love nor money. She will be delighted with this bountiful repast ; prepared too, by our magic hands.”

“Now Alf,” whispered Thad, “don’t forget and stand your knife and fork on end each side of your plate, while you are looking at the lady. I wouldn’t look at her too much to-night ; we shall have plenty of time to see her afterwards.”

Alfy made no reply, but his sensitive boyish pride was touched ; and the moistened eyes dimmed the happy firelight.

After sufficient time for a change of traveling-dress, Mrs. Buddington stepped into the parlor, to say that tea was waiting. George awaited her entrance to the kitchen, walked by her side to the table, withdrew the chair and seated her. She acknowledged this act of courtesy by saying,—

“Thank you, Mr. Buddington ; but hereafter, allow me to approach the table unattended. Consent that I may be one of the pleasant family, and that no one shall take the trouble to pay me special attentions.”

Her manner was such as to dispel all anxiety from the minds of Mary and Filette ; for she declared, that to come to table in that delightful kitchen, before that picturesque fire-place was worth the whole journey. She begged the privilege of calling Mrs. Buddington Mary ; as her brother-in-law had spoken of her in that manner on their journey ; adding that the ideal of her anticipated visit

had been Mary ; in her estimate, the most exalted name among women.

Observing the downcast eyes of Alfy, and the bashful awkwardness with which he clung to his knife and fork lying prone upon the table as well as the self-possessed silence of Thad, she drew them adroitly into familiar conversation.

“ I must make the early acquaintance of these two fair lads. I have no little boys. Let me see ; the name of the youngest has escaped my memory.”

“ Alfy, ma'am ;” and the blue eyes lighted up with the sweetest pleasure.

“ The older is Thad,” suggested Uncle George. “ As you remarked, madam, they are fine boys — Uncle George is quite proud of them.”

“ Excellent ; with that recommendation I shall place the names of Thad and Alfy on my list of friends. Now what have you in that large barn ? horses ? and what are their names ?”

“ We have one — he is old though — his name is Ned,” answered Alfy.

“ Then you shall take me out sleigh-riding one of these evenings.”

“ Ned is not fast enough to carry a lady to ride,” said Thad.

Alfy was ruffled somewhat in Ned's defense.

“ Father loved Ned,” he quietly responded “ and bade us be kind to him.”

Smiling sadly, she healed the wound by saying,—

“ Then Thad, we will all love Ned and drive him gently.”

After many, and just encomiums upon the delightful supper, she remarked to Mr. Buddington,—

“ Our Hebe should not only be cup-bearer to the gods, but also the bearer of ambrosial food, which her hands so readily form.”

“ Our opinions are harmonious, Madame Lambelle.”

After supper she led Mary and her sons away to her “ pretty boudoir,” saying archly, while Filette's cheeks glowed crimson, and George responded with an approving smile,—

“ I trust they will not be lonely without us.”

That was a never-to-be forgotten evening for Mary's boys. Thad's barometer and Alfy's thermometer, the gifts of the “ New

York lady," as they sometimes termed her, became the keys to future unlocked stores of science. An ardent longing for its mysteries was awakened by a recollection of the pleasant voice which explained their uses. The pretty dressing case bestowed upon each, was the secret indication of fast-approaching manhood. A standard of womanly beauty and refinement was then and there set up in their admiring minds, which was never to be dethroned. Woe be to those maidens hereafter, who, measured by the lovely stature, were found wanting. The keen edge of Mary's ever recurring loss was deftly blunted by her visitor's gentle and considerate ways, in keeping her attention removed from the one object of her thoughts, to new and interesting subjects.

The kitchen was rife with the praises of the elegant Madame Lambelle. She infused her beauty and goodness into every word and action.

Said Filette,—

“How delightfully the dreaded supper hour passed.

“Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seemed lighter from her eyes.
They were so soft, so beautiful and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies!

Her overpowering presence made you feel,
It would not be idolatry to kneel!”

“Doing up the dishes, and chanting Byron!” quoth her companion.

“Certainly! Hands that labor, should be crowned with flowers of thought. When they are not indigenous, they must be culled elsewhere.”

“Valiant as ever in your own defense, I see. Now since you have thrown down the poetical gauntlet, I cannot refuse the challenge. I most heartily accede to your admiration of our lady guest, and beg to add, that, besides being a phantom of delight, she is

‘A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.’

That is the style of woman who commands my reverence. I have

no faith in fancy-wrought angels, whose fairy, golden-slippered feet are never soiled with the dust of earth. Life is real — life is earnest for woman, as well as man. In spite of the sickly teachings of false literature, I have my own opinion."

There was silence for a few moments. Nothing disturbed it but the official crackling of the winter fire, and the rattle of Filette's dishes. She would not compromise herself by any expression of opinion; although before Madame Lambelle's arrival, she had held well-defined ideas upon the true requisites of womanhood. Since the contemplations of her perfections, she had fallen in her own estimation. A secret fear whispered that she might have lost by comparison, in the estimation of one whose favorable opinion she most desired. She could be valiant in her own defense, no longer. However, she broke the expressive silence, by saying,—

"It seems that we have had transplanted into our farm-house a tropical plant of exquisite richness and fragrance, whose bloom is a never-ceasing delight. I could easily become the hand-maid of our visitor, for the simple reward of being near her."

"Miss Snow, there would be nothing in that love service which could in the least diminish your dignity. There is high authority for esteeming others better than ourselves. She certainly deserves high regard for the simple obedience yielded to the exalted and natural impulses of a noble heart; but the ease, elegance and self-possession of her manners are due to leisure, travel and cosmopolitan intercourse. That is not the common lot of all, you know, Miss Snow. Inherent worth should be held at its true value, even if unadorned by artificial aids. Blue field-violets and wood anemones are among the well-beloved of the most sensible minds."

Filette had not given George Buddington the credit of cherishing such radical ideas upon what half the world seemed bewildered; yet they afforded agreeable meditations.

The following Sabbath was fixed for the conventional sermon upon James' death. The news had been spread through town, and visits of condolence had been numerous. Mary and Filette were with Madame Lambelle, inspecting the mourning suit that had been taken from the trunk.

"This bonnet and veil, and these black bordered handkerchiefs,

are my gift, dear Mary. My husband thought these black furs would not be inappropriate ; he begs you to accept them from him ; or, perhaps you have furs already.

"No, I have none. I denied myself many luxuries, that James might have means to remove his family to the South. We farmers' wives find other necessary ways to invest our hard-earned income. But really, I have some delicacy about receiving this beautiful present. I am in no wise worthy."

"They are beautiful," exclaimed Filette. "Try these on, Mary. There, the point of the cape reaches to your belt, and the fur is so long and glossy. Place your hands in the muff. There is not so handsome a set in town ; and none deserves them more than yourself."

"This black broadcloth cloak," continued the lady, "is the offering of your brother George ; he ordered me to purchase it for you. See, Mary, it is perfectly plain, but is rich and in good taste."

Mary inspected it with grateful but tearful eyes.

"Try them all on, once, and then let me put them from your sight till Sunday," advised Filette, considerately.

While Filette went out on her errand, madame took Mary's hand, and said feelingly,—

"I have come to relate to you the circumstances of your husband's death, and to deliver his dying message ; but let us defer the painful duty until Monday. The exercises of the Sabbath will be sufficiently trying. As my stay is extended to Friday, there is ample time. This postponement will be made as the suggestion of your brother, who desires only your comfort and welfare."

"Very well. I can await the proper time ; there may be some reason which I do not understand. George has been a kind brother to James, and I cannot doubt his friendship for me."

At the Sunday sermon there was an unusual attendance. The Reverend Mr. John's kept to the old beaten track of theologians, in accounting for the sudden demise of the well-known and exemplary citizen, to whose memory all had gathered to drop the tear of sympathy. The death of James Buddington was among the mysterious and inscrutable ways of God. It was among His divine and glorious designs that he should pass away from earth in a land of strangers, far from the affectionate voices of his own family.

“*The Lord hath done this!*” he reiterated. “He hath called his beloved disciple away from earth, up to the abodes of bliss. With serene submission the mourners should lay their hands upon their mouths, and their mouths in the dust, not daring to question Heaven’s all-wise plans.”

This was the custom of that day; to lay death, and the anguish of it, whatever it might be, upon the threshold of heaven. To attribute to the loving Creator the whimsical fiendishness of murder, or manslaughter in its various degrees. It was a comforting doctrine for those who could stolidly embrace it; for those who received their spiritual food as the stalled ox feeds upon weeds and thistles. How those mourners took this gracious unction to their souls must be seen hereafter.

The congregation scattered through the town, had seen something of much deeper interest than the sermon; a living mystery, with which God seemed to have very little, or nothing to do. The stranger in the Buddington pew was to be unraveled.

“Such an elegant lady!” said one.

“She was dressed in costliest velvet from head to foot!” said another.

“Those were real ostrich plumes, and the rose in her bonnet looked as if it had just been cut from the stem!” said a third.

“Her eyes were blue as the sky, and her hair like pale gold!” affirmed a young collegian, at home for a vacation.

The mystery of her advent into “that plain house which is no better than ours,” was more difficult of explanation than the austere will and stony decrees of Jehovah.

“I’ll tell you what I believe!” intimated Miss Myrtle Berry, at the Sunday dinner, “she’s to be the wife of George Buddington. She must be a Southern lady. He made her acquaintance on his journey, and has brought her home to see his friends. I’ve always heard those Southern ladies are so hospitable!”

“So I’ve always heard,” said her mother, a little withered woman, to whom all human nature was angelic. “James may have been taken sick at her father’s house, and she probably fell in love with his fine-looking brother, George. The further you go South, the kinder they say the people air.”

“Preposterous! pre — pos — ter — ous!” cried Anna, an older

sister. "Myrtle, don't delude poor mother and yourself. Haven't I been governess South, amongst the blue-bloods, long enough to know better? Hospitable! They are so to those of their own standing, and to no others. Don't imagine that so grand a looking Southern lady as that would ever marry a Northern adventurer, as they term a gentleman who may travel through their section. No indeed! she would be traveling towards Europe, instead of towards New England!"

"Why! wouldn't they marry as good looking a gentleman as George Buddington? he's rich too, they tell me. He's got a deal of property in Massachusetts.

"He's not a rice planter, nor does he hold five hundred slaves! those are blue-blood conditions. Girls there would lose caste immediately, to marry a Northerner. They would marry into their own families, over and over again — first cousins every time, rather than do it."

"Well, I'm astonished!" innocently averred the mother.

"You would have greater cause for astonishment yet, if you lived among them!" was the bitter reply. "However, I am not disparaging the elegant young lady who accompanied the Buddington's to church, to-day. She was beautiful, and evidently possesses wealth and culture. I observed a soitaire diamond on her finger, and a cluster nestled into the blue velvet on her singular hair."

"Well, you don't say, Anna! I never see a diamond in my life," replied the mother, with happy content.

Another enigma worried the church people. When and how did Mary get that costly suit of mourning? the furs, the cloak, the city-looking bonnet? These were tougher questions than foreordination or natural depravity, and busied gossiping tongues quite up to the hour for family prayers. Even the minister and his wife were agitated by the unusual extravagance of the widow, in her purchase of mourning.

Filette and Thad rose early Monday morning. At half-past four, she was busy at the washing, that the short winter day should have its full quota of undisturbed quiet given to the last sacred hours of the deceased husband. At eight o'clock, the lines were flaunting burdens of snowy garments in the dawning face of the tardy sun. A quarter later, the boys had breakfasted, and were

starting for the distant school-house, laden with dinner basket and books. The savory breakfast smoked upon the table, for the elder members of the family. Conversation lagged; abstraction and silence prevailed with all except Filette. Her efforts at cheerful sociability scattered the gathering gloom, kept back the tears from Mary's eyes, and called the color back to George's ashen face. Madame Lambelle seconded Filette, and her glance often met the noble girl's in a glad recognition of her kindly design.

By ten, the three women were gathered about the stove in the visitor's room.

"Mary, your lovely calla lily and the tea roses are drinking this bright sunlight to their heart's content. How pure and lovely they are! ever so, but especially amid icy winter."

"The calla was James' favorite, and his own hands raised it. Everything blossomed under his care — everything except this last fateful journey to Texas." With a deep sigh she added, "He loved flowers with almost feminine enthusiasm."

"Mary, he rested in his last sleep among flowers; they were on his breast and upon his coffin, and, according to the faith of our fathers, he now walks where 'flowers immortal bloom!'"

"Madame Lambelle, I am to hear to-day the particulars of his sickness, and his message to me. Do not hesitate, but speak without a longer delay. Explain precisely the nature of his disease. Explain why you took so deep an interest in his death and burial."

The lady seated herself by Mary, and took her hand in hers, saying,—

"First promise me that you will brace your nerves against excessive grief, that you will bring all your powers of resistance to your aid, for mine is a harrowing task. Remember that the past cannot be recalled—the future only remains. I will answer your last question first.

"I was staying in St. Louis myself last autumn, while my husband made a journey to Texas—not for the purpose of settling there, but for other reasons. We carried letters of recommendation to a few of the most aristocratic families there, and, being heartily welcomed by these, as New Yorkers after their own heart, we were introduced to the *elite* of the city. Towards the close of my stay,

I was invited to attend a public meeting, a sort of jubilee over an event which had just filled the town with an uncontrollable excitement of rejoicing. The hall was thronged with ladies and gentlemen of the highest rank; statesmen, editors, and a large body of the clergy. The street was so densely packed, that being late, our carriage moved through with difficulty. The American Flag was flung to the breeze, and graced the hall, within.

“I found that the occasion of this tumult of cheering and huzzaing, was the whipping of two strangers the day previous, whom they denominated thieves, on the pretence of their tampering with slaves and decoying them away. I arrived late, only in time to hear a few speeches against Northerners and Abolitionists. (By the way, these men who were whipped, were called abolitionists of the bloodiest and most repulsive character,) and to listen to resolutions that were clearly and designedly repellant to every instinct of humanity, to the spirit of our National Constitution, and to the liberal teachings and intent of our fathers. I was shocked at the anathemas poured out against all, whomsoever and wheresoever they might be, who would not violently sustain their system of slavery.

“I was well informed of the danger to one who should dare dissent from their evil and bloodthirsty asservations, so maintained a seeming approval of the meeting and its purposes. I afterwards learned that the punishment of the two strangers was *two hundred lashes each*; that the respectable citizens formed themselves into a line, each, in turn, giving two lashes and passing on. I was in high feather with the families of those very respectable citizens; was the recipient of their extreme chivalric attentions. My husband arrived soon after, and remained just long enough to acknowledge with courtesy the hospitable welcome bestowed upon his wife.

“We then started for New York at easy stages across the country. One night we stopped at a country hotel in Indiana. During the evening, a gentleman dropped into the little parlor where Mr. Lambelle and myself were resting. We exchanged the usual salutations of travelers, and learned that he awaited the crisis of a brother's sickness, and would not go on till that was past. I was educated among Catholics, with the Sisters of Mercy, and had

acquired a great admiration for their ministrations of love among the suffering; since their acquaintance, I have ever felt an acute interest for the distressed. I made more particular inquiries.

“Now Mary, the truth cannot be withheld any longer. I found that the brother was James — your husband; and that the two men publicly whipped in the city of St. Louis, were George and James Buddington.”

A low, wailing cry welled up from the suffocating throat of Mary. Her hands vaguely grasped for an intangible support. Mid sighs and sobs she cried piteously,—

“Oh! no! no! no! It cannot be! Not my James! *my tender, upright, patriotic James!* my husband! The father of my boys!” She sobbed brokenly, “Oh! no! no! tell me no!”

Unable to support herself, her hands caught the back of a chair near her; her head sank upon them, and she groaned deeply.

Filette offered comfort in a choking voice.

“No! no! Do not utter a word of consolation to me! Think of my poor, feeble, suffering James at the whipping-post! his frail, panting life beaten out of him! murdered! Oh! worse! murdered by inches! Don't speak to me! Madame Lambelle, don't speak of the Lord! there is none!”

With an almost insane revulsion of emotion she sat up erect, still clutching the chair with a convulsive grasp.

“Tell me, Madame Lambelle, where was James' spirit crushed out of him? Tell me how! tell me all! everything you know, that I may seem to have been near him — that I may seem to have waited near his murderers to receive his mangled and bleeding body to my pitying arms! Tell me why, I conjure you, tell me why!”

Madame Lambelle bent over the suffering wife, kissed the shaking hands — her soft, white palms passed over Mary's throbbing temples, and her tearful eyes looked calmly into the wild agony of those of her friend.

“I was not an eye witness of that barbarous scene.” Her voice was low and gentle. “I can tell you of his lovely and triumphant death, Mary. I can give the dear message to you, with which he entrusted me. I can describe to you the quiet spot where he sleeps peacefully, that you may seem to weep by his grave, your-

self. I can do that. Shall I proceed?" the soft palms still moving over the stricken woman's temples.

"Yes, go on! omit nothing. I must endure to hear what my dear James has suffered."

"Well, Mary, I went with my husband to James' room — it was comfortable. Mr. George had done all in his power for his brother; but a woman's care was needed. After some consultation, I acquainted the sufferer with my design to become his nurse; informing him, at the same time, of the circumstance that brought us together. To encourage hope, I remarked, 'We will all delay till you can travel with us.' Gladness lighted his face when he learned we were to remain. Mary, the light of his smile did not become dim, when he said, 'My kind friends, you will not be delayed long; but I shall not travel with you.'"

Filette, moved by the pale and rigid face, spoke for Mary.

"George says James died of fever."

"Yes, that is true; his life ebbed out in fever, but that fever was induced by the merciless whip. His wounds did not heal, and were a source of severe pain and irritation. You know in those terrible scourgings, a physician stands by with his fingers often applied to the pulse of the victim. He indicates the number of lashes that can be borne without a complete separation of the fluttering soul from the fainting body."

A sharp shriek rang through the room. Madame Lambelle felt her hands seized suddenly, almost fiercely. Mary asked,—

"How can you speak those words so coolly? Why do they not burn your lips to anathemas?" Moaning and weeping, she bent her head over Madame Lambelle's hands, which she still clenched like one drowning, and wet them with her tears.

"I am cool, my dear friend, because I comprehend Southern slavery; because I know slavery is unchangeably cruel; because I have suffered, and my friends have suffered, till tears are exhausted! tears are succeeded by the calmness of despair. Mary, if George and James Buddington were the only ones whom slavery has thrust into the jaws of Death, then, indeed, might the dove of Peace brood over our nation. But thousands, both of slaves and free-men, have watered with their life's blood this land mockingly consecrated to Liberty. There is no hope in man, his religion or his

laws. *All* bow the knee to this National Moloch. In God must be our trust. 'Judgment is mine,' he has said."

Astonishment in both listeners held grief in abeyance. They had supposed that the Southern institution would be held in respect by a lady so distinguished. Madame Lambelle returned to her patient.

"Mary, your husband could not rally. The shock to his vitality was thorough; but as his physical strength failed, his moral vision became clearer. The character of our national sin dawned upon him in its true light. 'Thank God!' he said, 'this event will save my two boys.' We were all sitting about him conversing; he asked for pen and paper, and begged me to write his message to his beloved wife. He would have it *written*, that his own words, and not another's, should guide and comfort you. I followed his dictation with pleasure. He read it afterwards, expressed himself satisfied, and bade me seal it in his presence."

She lifted the cover of her trunk, and taking the packet, placed it in the wife's possession. Eagerly, but reverentially, she took the sacred remembrance and pressed it with her lips.

"Read it, my dear Mary," besought Filette, "when the force of this grief has passed. Read it when you are alone, when no intrusion can disturb the holy communion between his spirit and yours."

"There is another request he bade me repeat to you, of which your brother may have already spoken," continued the guest, sitting by Mary's side.

"He has said nothing."

"It was a painful experience to him," said Madame Lambelle in a reassuring voice, "and every word relative to it doubtless cost him many a pang. I will open the way. He formed a plan for the future residence of his dear wife and children.' He desired George to sell this homestead and to take you all under his hospitable roof, *now* in your desolation, leaving future changing events to the 'watchful care of an ever-kind Providence.' Those were his words. He clung to the hand of his brother George, while he promised a welcome for you, and guardianship for your two sons. This was about sunset; the room was lighted cheerfully by his setting glory.

“ James desired us to sing around his bed, the hymn,—

“ ‘ Jesus can make a dying bed
 Feel soft as downy pillows are ;
 While on his breast I lean my head,
 And breathe my life out sweetly there.’ ”

“ Angelic peace settled upon his face. At its close, folding his hands upon his breast, he said to his brother in a whisper of weakness,—

“ I am ready to depart.’ ”

“ Filette!” cried Mary, with heart-broken groans, “ where is my Redeemer? This death-bed hides Him from my sight. Where is the loving kindness of the Almighty? This murder comes between it and me. To whom shall I go? There is no arm of support in the awful darkness of this hour.”

After a deferential and silent waiting, Madame Lambelle addressed Mary with great gentleness.

“ Will you hear how sweetly your husband slept in the embrace of that Redeemer you cannot find? It is this distracting grief which blinds your sight — a grief in which we all drop our tears beside yours. Will you hear, dear Mary?”

“ Oh! yes. I am compelled to come face to face with that dying bed, and with that grave which covers my best and only love on earth. Proceed.”

“ Mr. Lambelle insisted I should take a short rest in the evening, with the promise to call me at any change. About twelve I was summoned; the realities of earth were receding. At one o’clock, the gentle, loving life was sweetly yielded to Him whose love for you, dear Mary, is stronger than any earthly affection. There seemed to be no regrets — no pains — simply a falling asleep.”

In a frenzy of grief, Mary repeated over and over,—

“ Oh! my poor, innocent, murdered James!”

“ Geoge informed us that you took great pains to obtain flowers for his burial,” ventured Filette. “ I am sure it is a comfort to Mary.”

“ True, he was buried with flowers; since my arrival here, I have thought it most singular, but we found a white calla; in a

setting of green, we placed it on his name outside during the exercises, and laid it on his bosom after."

Filette left the room to prepare the dinner. Madame Lambelle soon followed, to enjoy, (as she said) as much as possible of that pleasant fire on the hearth, thus giving Mary the quiet opportunity she desired, to loose the seals upon her husband's last, loving words.

This she reverently did; her swimming eyes followed these lines,—

"MY DEAR MARY,—I am about to pronounce the hardest words I have ever spoken—an abiding farewell to you and my dear boys. An end is approaching to the few happy years since our marriage, which have had but one shadow; that was my inability to surround my family with a portion of the luxuries which appear to be bestowed upon some, and are denied to others. I am to leave earth, and try the realities of that world concerning which you and I have often and hopefully spoken. I have been falsely accused, imprisoned, and beaten to my death. I bear no malice to my destroyers; neither can I blindly say, 'Thy will be done;' for I do not believe that this murder (and I can call it by no other name,) inflicted upon my poor body, was the will of Heaven, or was wrought by the hands of Divine Love!

"My dear Mary! my suffering wife! the scales have fallen from my sight! At last I see slavery and its adherents, in a new light. It is a heathen Moloch, demanding with bloodthirsty hands the continual human sacrifice of American citizens. It will not be appeased, but by men's bodies or souls. My body has been laid upon its altar. But let us be thankful, my dear wife, that my soul is untarnished with this idol's guilty worship. My object in writing is not only to say our long 'Farewell!' but to leave you my will respecting our two boys. Mary, as you revere the right—as you love me and cherish my memory, take heed that they do not yield to this infatuation of laying their young hope and faith on the altar of slavery. Teach their youthful hearts to love and respect all races of men. Teach them the humanity of Christ, which knew no distinction of persons; for, my dear wife, remember while your heart is bleeding for me, that thousands in our land, of another color, are daily fainting or dying under the same lash that murdered their father! Do not shock their tender minds at present with the secret of my death. When Thad shall have attained the age of sixteen, call them to you, Mary, and read them this bloody chapter of my life and Uncle George's. On that birth-day, cause them to take the oath of allegiance to Freedom, and of enmity to Bondage.

"My mistake, dear Mary, was in yielding blindly to the blandishments of wrong and injustice, because considered constitutional, also in listening to the 'syren tongue of reconciliation' with the Southern shame. Let my boys never fall into that error. I was never styled an abolitionist. It was neither that name or spirit that cost my life. Teach my sons hereafter, the abolitionist principles and faith. Let them become two of their straitest sect, squaring their lives by conscience and not by compromise, with what a distinguished Divine,

who had evidently been breathed upon by the spirit God, called the 'sum of all villanies.'

"My beloved wife, this is my last will and testament concerning our dear boys. The little of property I leave for you and them, will be taken care of by my dear brother George. Trust him, Mary, and follow his advice; he knows my wishes. My strength is failing. It is hard to think that when I gave you and the children the parting kiss and shake of the hand, on our home threshold, on that not-far-away, lovely autumn day, it was forever. Adieu, dear ones, adieu!"

Before the wife had read this tender missive from her dying husband, she stumbled to the sofa, nearly fainting, yet clinging unconsciously to the paper in her hand. Darkness surrounded her. She had not strength even to cry, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" She could turn no where for help. At intervals, she raised the trembling manuscript before her dizzy sight and whitened face; at intervals, the hand refused its office, and dropped heavily to the floor. At length, she reached the last "Adieu." Dazed and stunned, her throbbing heart refused speech, incoherently pouring forth low, sobbing moans. No one lifted the latch of the door; none intruded into the sanctity of the apartment given up to her. Alone she was, with this last voice of the dead. At last, in an agony of torture, speech came to her relief.

"Adieu, dear ones, adieu!" she moaned. "Yet he can never hear our affectionate response! Nevermore shall I hear his pleasant voice! Nevermore will life seem beautiful in the light of his loving face! Oh! it was all, all to me! Like his Master, 'numbered with the transgressors!' beaten — killed — cruelly murdered! Poor! struggling with the burdens of life! while extending the hand of brotherly love to the proud Southerner, struck down by his haughty pride! Dead! white in his grave!"

The preparation for dinner was carried forward in the kitchen, with careful step and hushed voices. It seemed to all, as if James Buddington had been brought home in his coffin, that day, and that the last look upon the dead had but just been taken. Madame Lambelle glided about, laying the table and assisting in other ways, against the remonstrances of Filette, that it would be too much for her.

All was ready. The madame entered her room, and returned alone.

"Mary desires nothing. She bids us leave her alone. Her sacrament of suffering must be received with fasting."

"Solitude is better at present than society," replied George. "The words of comfort we might offer would prove only vinegar and gall to her extremity."

"I think so," answered the lady. "The healing of nature and time will cicatrize those wounds I have been the instrument of inflicting to-day. Their still ministry produces great cures."

"My dear madame, *you* have inflicted no wounds upon Sister Mary. They fell upon her from the guilty hands of the gentlemen and clergy of St. Louis. Yours has been a mission of mercy to the bereaved."

"And yet, Mr. Buddington, but for one reason, I could not have made this journey from New York to rehearse a tragedy, the simple thought of which makes my blood chill. I could not have stood by Mary, and witnessed the harrowing effects of that rehearsal, but for one stimulating cause, that is, the utter horror and detestation in which I hold Southern principles and practices. Therefore my work here is only begun. Before my departure, I desire to lead the wife of James Buddington into channels of thought similar to my own. I must endeavor to lead her mind into sympathy with those noble co-workers, whose highest aim is the abolition of this heathenish system which holds in abject thrall our nation's most gigantic intellects—which renders our priests, clergy and educators its most servile myrmidons."

"I am a volunteer in your service, Madame Lambelle; but success appears almost an impossibility."

"Oh, no! not an impossibility, eventually. You know that truth is eternal. The most prominent truth of this age stands high and clear, like an icy peak against empyrean blue. It is this,—'Man's birthright is Liberty!' My faith is strong—strong in the immutability of this one dominant truth. It is anchored in the fears and denunciations of the Southron. You should have been present at the meeting in St. Louis, held in honor of the punishment of yourself and brother. You would then see that you were only the first fruits of a sanguinary harvest, for which their blades are already whetted. The ferocity of the Southerners in defence of their domestic institution betrays its danger. Truth will prevail!"

“You speak of man’s birthright, madame. The Southerner declares *man* has his birthright already. In proof they cite Yorktown and our National Flag. They reckon all color, of whatever nature, with their cattle.”

“That is because, for a long period, they have smothered the voice of conscience till it makes no appeal. Color diminishes not, in the least, a claim to manhood, or the fulfillment of manhood’s destiny. It would be strange, indeed, if the whole earth were peopled with pale faces. Man would not be in harmony with the rest of creation — with animals, flowers, fruits, or precious stones. In each of these is found a wide variety, enhancing their beauty and value. No, Mr. George, the slaveholder’s definition and valuation of the color of men will not stand the fiery ordeal of the future.

“I confess to some surprise at finding in yourself an advocate of the equality of the races. Do you believe in their original mental equality as a part of the plan of Divine economy?”

“Most certainly! We have only to turn the pages of history, to study the rise and fall of nations, to learn out of what hordes of barbarism sprang civilization, and the arts,—the polish and refinement of the present. The African in this country was first robbed of his birthright, and, consequently, of all that birthright stipulates. The prime object of the enslaver is to crush out the intellect of his victim. He has left no stone unturned in its accomplishment. Nevertheless, the demand of the Creator for the well-being of His stolen children in our land is as strenuous as if they were not in bondage. Chains are not excuses in His eyes. Examine the subject for yourself, with an eye to justice, and I am sure you will become one of the inflexible advocates of the down-trodden race. I have but one word more to say,— I have sounded this American oppression — I have dropped a plummet to its profoundest depths. I find it has no prejudice of color. It would *as soon* lead the fettered Saxon to its marts as the African, were it possible.”

They left the table. George had commenced preparations for the departure of his brother’s family. Deacon Brown had secured the refusal of the farm for his married son. Some settlement of preliminaries was the order for the afternoon. The ladies were left by themselves. Filette was delighted to have the society of

the dear honored guest. Over her work-basket on her lap twined roses, dimples and smiles.

Towards evening, the soft step of Madame Lambelle entered her own room. Mary, exhausted, slept. James' letter, containing the last "adieu," had slipped from her grasp and lay upon the carpet. Like a thoughtful nurse, the kind lady carefully withdrew it, folding it away from sight, and left the sleeper to her much needed rest.

At their late tea by candle-light, before the glowing back-log on the hearth, Mary came in between the caressing arms of her two steadfast friends.

"Is mother sick?" inquired Thad and Alfy, in their seats at table.

"Not quite well," answered Uncle George quickly. "Don't be troubled; she will be better to-morrow. Our blessed 'Lady of Mercy,' whom you both admire, works wonderful cures." Confiding and affectionate smiles lighted up their grieved faces as they shyly turned them towards madame, their guest.

"Thank you, Mr. George," bowed the lady. "I could not choose a more honorable title—I would that I were worthy." Turning to the boys, she said comfortingly, "Dear mother shall be carefully nursed; and I have been thinking that the two remaining evenings after this, of my stay in this pleasant home, must be more especially devoted to Thad and Alfy. Suppose you both, with our beautiful Hebe as mistress of ceremonies, should give us all a reception in this flame-lighted, dancing-shadowed room. I love this kitchen, and every sturdy beam in it. I desire to carry back to the city a social picture of this family within it. The reception might take place to-morrow evening; then, the evening after, I will give a reception in my pretty boudoir. How does that please my young friends?"

Two pairs of beaming eyes lifted to hers in a bashful silence. Uncle George came to the rescue.

"Shall I be spokesman, Thad? I have no doubt they would be very happy to hold this reception. If my assistance will be acceptable boys, I am at your service."

"Thank you, uncle; you always come to our aid. We are very

grateful. We should make an awkward evening's entertainment, without you."

The house was enlivened the next day by the early patting of boyish feet, low-voiced conferences, and sudden exclamations. Even the mother's sad eyes lifted brighter, as each of her boys threw an arm about her neck, and whispered in her ear for advice. At the breakfast-table, notes of invitation were found upon four plates. The reception hour was six.

"None too early for a cold winter night," said Uncle George.

At the going down of the sun, the new maple back-log began to burn red; its white, wedge-shaped ends were beaded with saccharine dew, which dripped slowly upon hissing coals below. The heavy old andirons wore a stately and official air in supporting the high-piled, blazing faggots in front. Flame-lighted indeed, was the dear old kitchen; and with the guests would arrive the dancing shadows on the walls. The white, sanded floor, which would not soil the train of a queen, (according to Filette) was set about with the farmer's rude, high-backed chairs. One rocker was placed for the pale, suffering Mary.

At a quarter past six, Thad and Alfy received their guests. Thad proudly handed Zaffiri (for so Madame Lambelle requested to be called) to a high-backed chair, while Alfy seated his mother. Uncle George and Filette entered *en ceremonie* from the south room. Shadows and vanishing silhouettes began a witching revelry.

Zaffiri dressed for the evening, though plainly. During the day she conferred with Mary; paying a respectful deference to her wishes.

"I only wish," said Zaffiri, "to pay my respects to the occasion, and win their young minds to the impressions I shall strive to make upon them to-morrow evening. I often think that the more considerately we deal with the manly pride of youth, the more easily we guide them into wholesome truths."

"I confide entirely in your thoughtful regard for me and them," gratefully answered Mary. "Dress and do whatever your sweet judgment suggests."

Therefore, Zaffiri stepped into the reception-room, arrayed in blue silk moire with silver ornaments. The long braids of her pale wheaten hair were looped at the back of her head, over which a

few curls were fastened by a silver arrow ; and a small coronet of silver set above her forehead. A filigree brooch of silver fastened the fine lace collar at her throat. A snow-white shawl, crocheted of fleecy wool, fell from her shoulders, dropping its heavy fringes nearly to the floor.

The wonder and adoration of the two youthful hosts were a study for one observant of the lights and shades of childhood. Thad and Alfy sat one on each side of her. Filette admired the pretty picture thus presented, and said in a low tone to Uncle George,—

The beautiful princess and her two pages.”

She was answered by an approving smile.

“Uncle George, Madame Lambelle is to tell us of Italy to-night.”

“Yes, Alfy. I expect your other guests will be equally interested with yourselves. We shall forget our snows and cold winds ; we shall sit under olives and vines and glide about in gay gondolas.”

“Uncle George, what are gondolas ?”

“Your distinguished guest will soon inform you, Alfy ; she knows better than I.

“Most of my time in Italy was passed in Florence ; but I have seen Venice and glided over her canals, which are used in the place of streets, for Venice seems to rise from the bosom of the sea, and to float, swan-like upon it, with her numberless domes, towers, spires and pinnacles. These canals are traversed by gondolas, or boats, instead of carriages. The grand canal is bordered on each side by magnificent old palaces, with light arabesque balconies and marble porticoes. These palaces present a superb scene ; and their gay occupants trip down the marble steps into the gondolas, bright with carpets and curtains, for a church or festivities — just as in Broadway one would enter a barouche for a drive. The church of St. Marks rivals in splendor any edifice in Europe. Venice is built on seventy islands ; and, next to Rome, is the finest of the Italian cities.”

“Oh ! mother, exclaimed Alfy ; “I should like to ride in a gondola !”

“Perhaps you may some time, my son.”

“It is not impossible!” said Madame Lambelle, laying her hand on his fair hair. “Ah! there’s music on the air!”

A sound of sleigh bells dashed around the house.

“I will attend to the arrival,” said Uncle George; and presently he introduced the pleasant surprise of Mr. and Mrs. Snow, to the reception-room. Thad and Alfy came forward to welcome their unexpected guest. Filette expressed the wish of her father and mother, that their presence should cause no interruption, and the subject of Italy was resumed in a manner to heighten the general, social interest. Rome, St. Peter’s, the Pope and his palace, painting and sculpture were discussed with a common pleasure, and with the happy effect of excluding neighborhood gossip and scandal.

Some frigidity marked the introduction of Filette’s parents to the elegantly dressed lady, but before the evening wore away they took her to their hearts with marked evidences of love and respect. Uncle George and Filette threw open the door of the “south room” at eight, where a luxurious dinner, by the light of a bright fire on the hearth and winking candles, tempted the appetites of the happy party. Thad and Alfy came near a resort to the “code of honor,” concerning the escort of Zaffiri to the supper room. The lady declared peace, by asserting her need of a double attendance, and the inexpressible pleasure it would confer to walk between the two hosts of the evening.

The turkey was browned to an epicure’s taste, the charlotte russe was “*hôtel*,” said Uncle George. Mr. Snow gave his opinion that there must have fallen a “hard frost” in Filette’s oven, when she baked the cakes and cream pies, while the confectionery and nuts received especial favor.

The most melancholy feature was the vacant chair at the head of the table, before an unturned plate, upon which rested a white, waxen calla lily. The most *beautiful* feature, said Zaffiri, was the fresh blooming roses in the garden of Filette’s radiant face. The others whispered among themselves, that the *royal* feature of the feast was the fairy princess, Zaffiri.

After refreshments, Mrs. Snow drew Mary to the boudoir parlor. There she imparted such strength to the mind weakened by suffering, as none but the strong, clear-visioned, can offer.

“My heart bleeds for you, Mary, and as we are commanded

to weep with those that weep, I have wept with you many times since Filette left home. Now take some support and strength for your future peace. Although James is gone, his gentle memory remains to you, an unblemished inheritance. If he had gone to Texas and taken up his abode, death would have found him there ; Mary, bear with me, death would have found him stained with heinous crime toward his fellow-men !”

“ No, no, dear friend ! do not speak thus.”

“ Yes, Mary, these are words of truth and soberness ; they wound but to heal. Whoever consents to hold a man in bondage, virtually subscribes to every article of the slave code. These articles are ; first, the darkest ignorance, which is nothing more nor less than stamping out the intellect. The next article is universal concubinage ; for no slave can marry. The third is subjection, which entails upon the owner the acts of whipping, chaining, and often of killing a slave outright. Another article, is robbery in almost every degree. First, the owner robs of liberty, then of manhood, then of wages for a whole lifetime of toil, and finally, the robbery and sale of what a mother’s heartstrings bind closer than life itself, her children !”

Mary placed her hand deprecatingly upon Mrs. Snow’s arm, and thrust the questioning and almost angered glance upon the speaker,—

“ How can you suppose my James could have accepted such guilt ?”

“ Because, Mary, it could not be otherwise. James Buddington, the affectionate husband and father — James Buddington, the noble friend, the upright townsman, could go into no Southern State, and live there, a respected Southern citizen, without assuming every whit of this burden of guilt ! Much less could he and his innocent boys dwell in Texas, free from crime, for the very basis of the settlement of that State is the extension of slavery, the embodiment of all that our Northern statute books denominate as crime ; those slaveholders who are most defiant of justice and humanity, have carried slaves there and taken up their abode ; have placed themselves at the head of its government. My dear friend, your husband and brother and sons cannot take coals of fire in their bosoms and not be burned, any less than others.”

The desolate wife buried her face in her hands, and cried, sobbingly,—

“Oh! Mrs. Snow, my husband was not drawn away from earth by the merciful hand of a loving Creator! He was murdered! His frail, spotless life was threshed out of him by the cruel whip! My James was murdered! my poor James was whipped to death!”

“Mary, you shock me!”

“It is the truth; my James was murdered in St. Louis, and George would have been, had not his constitution been stronger. They said the brothers stole three slaves! Oh! I cannot tell you, Filette knows! Bury this secret in your heart of hearts, for the present.”

“Certainly, Mary, I shall learn all from Filette. But, in the midst of my astonishment, I must declare that such an act but verifies my words; no honest, Northern man can live among Southerners! So they shot the righteous and God-fearing Lovejoy! hunted him as their own bloodhounds hunt the slave! and murdered him, because he endeavored to reason with them on our National sin! Why, Mary, the Southerners are organizing themselves into a universal body of banditti, to whip, imprison, murder, or drive out whoever does not openly sanction their system and practices! Dear me! they even offer five, and ten thousand dollars reward for the heads of some of our Northern, most saint-like men! Mary, your sorrow is indeed hard to bear. How is George moved by this terrible event?”

“He is mostly reticent; he appears pained to revert to it. Madame Lambelle, who was with James in his last days, and at his death, came here purposely to relate the particulars. She brought a letter dictated by James, to me.”

Blinded by weeping, she groped her way to the repository of the letter, and placed it in Mrs. Snow's hand.

“Read for yourself, my friend.”

Mrs. Snow complied, progressing slowly through tearful sight; then folding it carefully, replaced it herself.

“Mary,” she said in a gentle but persuasive voice, that last will and testament is the crown of James' life; he needs no other in Heaven. It is worth more to you and your children than a million

of gold. Try and inform yourself of the nature of this hydra-headed monster, which befouls every beautiful thing in our land. Read and think upon it; become yourself familiar with the pure teachings the dead father would have you infuse into those young minds. Teach them to feel for the man of color, not only commiseration, but a true brotherly love. Teach them to hate not only the iron chain upon the Southern slave, but the subtle, legal shackles which fetter the whole North. Most happy will I be to strengthen your arms for the work."

A light knock at the door closed the interview. Filette brought the message that snow was falling; her father was anxious to be on the way home. Mrs. Snow and Mary met happy faces in the flame-lighted kitchen. The hour of reception was over, yet Zaffiri was still attended by her two pages, and causing the white-haired visitor to forget his years.

Mary felt wounded by the straightforward words of Mrs. Snow, though she had said, "they wound but to heal;" though she left a warm kiss and a teardrop on her forehead. But on reflection, Mrs. Snow's sharp sentences became words of healing. Mary's manner grew firmer and more self-reliant. Day by day and week by week, the crushed look of suffering assumed a more complacent determination to follow the new light dawning before her.

The next evening's reception was held in the parlor-boudoir. Madame Lambelle presided with a suave grace, not before witnessed. Her character of hostess was a pleasing contrast to that of the "Blessed Lady of Mercy." Her guests were received with the dignity and welcome pertaining to her elegant mansion and apartments in the city. When all were assembled, she addressed them in a winning voice.

"My dear friends, I have given this welcome for a purpose — not merely to wile away the hours in selfish, social pleasure; but to give direction to these young minds; and, besides, to electrify our own dormant thoughts and powers. I trust that our room will be flame-lighted to-night with the fires of righteous indignation. We will have shadows and silhouettes that will not flit away like those of the dear old kitchen. I trust they will remain impressed upon our inner spirits.

"Come, Thad and Alf; you should occupy seats of honor. Mr.

Buddington, what is your opinion of slavery, as one of the institutions of our country?"

"Madame, I will confess, that hitherto my ideas of it have been those of the average American. You know it receives a general support North, as well as South. I have never entered my protest against it. However, my judgment of its wrong and injustice has been recently quickened. Any facts or views, relative to this system of bondage, will fall, to-night, upon willing ears."

"I think the Constitution, within which it is crystalized, has been, and is now, the 'Chinese Wall,' which neither politics, morality or religion dare attempt to scale."

"Yes, madame, that is the forbidden barrier which guards its sanctity. Yet, is it not strange that a people who have struggled for their own freedom, from mere kingly thralldom, should allow a system which levels men to brutes, and which barter humanity in shambles, to be the very cornerstone of their own Magna Charta?"

"To one reflecting, it is singular — yet *few reflect*. I scarcely know how it was brought about myself."

Filette replied,—

"My father says it was done in the same spirit of compromise which has been the bane of the country ever since."

"That is true," replied Zaffiri. "South Carolina and Georgia threatened to secede from the Federal Compact of States, unless slavery and the slave trade were granted. The demand was yielded. Thus, in the beginning, our Upas tree was planted."

She turned to Thad and Alf, and asked,—

"Do my young friends understand the meaning of compromise? probably not. Then just here, explanation may be necessary. A compromise is an agreement between parties in controversy, or a mutual yielding of certain points, to settle differences; and this is often done contrary to the voice of conscience, and in direct violation of justice;" then, catching the perplexed look of their earnest eyes turned full upon her, she said with a merry laugh, in which others joined, "I doubt if my explanation is not more difficult than the original term."

"I can illustrate, I think, with your permississisn, Madame Lambelle."

“Certainly, sir — I will thank you.”

“Well, Thad and Alfy; a compromise is after this fashion. Alfy, suppose Thad should take it into his head, to make your dear old ‘Ned’ draw a heavy load up our steep hill, here; suppose Thad piled on the hay, in the low meadow, in such a cruel weight as he never drew before. When you two and Ned get a few steps up the hill, you say,—

“‘No, Thad, Ned cannot draw this load.’

“Thad says determinedly,—

“‘He shall!’ and commences whipping.

“Alfy remonstrates; says it is unmerciful. Thad says,—

“‘You take the lines and drive, while I beat him.’

“Alfy throws the lines over Ned’s back, and says,—

“‘I will not drive!’ and proceeds to unhitch his old friend from the shafts. Thad flies into a rage, and declares he will never do another stroke of work on the farm, unless that load goes up the hill. After much parleying, Alfy takes the reins again. Thad takes the whip. Old Ned, straining, panting and falling, reaches the top of the hill; where, having burst a blood vessel, he falls dead. *Alfy has compromised.*”

“True,” continued Filette, “Alfy has taken the reins and driven Ned up hill, with his heart aching, his eyes filled with tears — contrary to the voice of conscience, and to every human impulse; because Thad is his brother, and he desires to keep the peace between themselves.”

“I would never do such a thing, mother,” retorted Alfy quickly, turning to her as the only remaining friend of the company. Genuine tear-drops bedewed his flushed cheeks. “I would unhitch ‘Ned’ at any rate.”

“And I don’t think I should ever treat Ned in that way, Uncle George,” answered Thad, with high-colored indignation.

“No! no! my sons, do not feel hurt; this is only a supposition. I am glad to see you defend yourselves against so cruel an accusation, if you think it so.”

Madame Lambelle cast an arm about the shoulder of each, saying laughingly,—

“Ah! I see; these roses spring from a rich soil; these hearts are all right; we wish them to remain so. Therefore we are

endeavoring to make a deep impression of the wickedness of compromise. In this comparison, call Thad the South and Alfy the North — thus you will understand. Remember, Madame Lambelle seeks always to find you both advocates of the right ; following the voice of conscience without compromise.”

“Some persons, Madame Lambelle, appear to have confused ideas of right and wrong — substituting the latter for the former oftentimes,” said Mary. “My sons must distinguish the difference. The Southerner pronounces slavery right. Let us see if it be so. Now my sons, listen well to the kind lady, and judge for yourselves.”

“The most accurate measure of right and wrong, in my opinion, is the Golden Rule. Thad, can you repeat it?”

“Both of us can. Father taught us to act upon the ‘Golden Rule’ with our neighbors,” he added, in a subdued and gentle voice.

“That was excellent teaching. Doubtless you will remember dear father’s example to the end of your lives.”

“We will try,” replied Thad, with the least tinge of conservatism in his manner.

Mary, who knew every fibre of Thad’s temperament, had experienced some trials under that ‘Rule,’ but she believed he had not fallen from the standard. She then wisely requested Alfy to repeat the words to madame. The fair boy’s face, sweet as a June sky swept of clouds, turned fondly to his mother.

“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them.”

“Oh! that is beautiful!” ejaculated Zaffiri.

She passed her white, jeweled hand over Alfy’s bent face, for he was shy and timid when she addressed him.

“By this ‘Rule’ we will see if slavery is right or wrong. Now, suppose some people from a foreign country should land at New Haven, and come up here to this quiet home in the night and seize mother and both of you ; that they should fasten iron hand-cuffs on your wrists ; and should fasten you all to a long chain, with many others about — say Mr. Brown’s family and many of your neighbors ; that these foreigners should drive this gang, as it is called, to their ship, on foot, cursing you all, and beating you with whips

if they thought necessary. Suppose they should force you on board, and sail away far from your home and kindred. Then, after landing in another country, they should place Mary, your mother, on a table in an auction-room, and sell her away from Thad and Alfy, to work for a master who would never pay her any wages, so that when she became old and feeble she would have no money, or home, or friends.

“Then Thad would be put upon the table and sold to another master, far away in another direction. He might be very cruel — beating him with many stripes, forcing him to labor without wages, till he was a poor old man. Alfy would be sold away also, on the auction-table ; perhaps he would be sold to toil under a burning sun ; in sugar-cane fields, where in the course of six or seven years he would sink into an unknown grave. My dear boys, would this be right or wrong ? ”

Thad looked combative, with a lowering brow and hands insensibly clenched. Alfy’s brightness was overcast.

“How could it be right ? ” crisply asked Thad.

“What do *you* think, Alfy ? ” questioned Uncle George. “Would it be right ? ”

“I think it would be the worst wrong I ever knew, and I should think the people in Connecticut ought not to allow it, if they did as they would be done by ! ”

Zaffiri clasped her hands with delight.

“Ah ! Alfy, that is just the conclusion I most desired to show you. We have arrived there without circumlocution. That is the God-like voice of conscience, unwarped by false teachings ! A most holy assertion, ‘*The people of Connecticut ought not to allow it !*’ The stealing, carrying away, and selling your mother and yourselves, would be like slavery in the South. If the ‘Golden Rule’ requires that your State should rescue you from the man thieves, then the Northern people, following the same, should strive to rescue their fellowmen from a similar horrible bondage. Do you see ? ”

Thad, whose natural conservatism had been previously strengthened by the arguments of older minds, replied,—

“Madame Lambelle, the slaves in the South are black ; they came from Africa. We are white.’

“That makes no difference, my young friend. God is no respecter of persons, and you will grant that slaves are persons. He respects the white no more than the black, for He made of one blood all the nations of the earth.”

She grew more earnest.

“Listen further, Thad. The enslaver would enslave white as well as colored, the Saxon, as well as the African, were it in his power. There are white slaves at the South, with fair skins and blue eyes; these are bought and sold in the same manner as the colored. History informs us that thousands of the white race have suffered cruel bondage under other nations. Thad and Alf, the next step for you to make towards the fulfillment of the ‘Golden Rule,’ is to regard all colors as equal before the Creator of the human race; and, therefore, to hold them as your equals, in all civil and religious claims.”

Filette remarked that there were but few dark men in this region; the boys had no acquaintance with them, and that she was not surprised at the rarity of a colored face, after the shameful culmination of prejudice in the “Black Law of the State,” or even before the Law was enacted, for the spirit that indited the “Black Law” was always rife; at the same time, deferentially asking pardon of Zaffiri, for the interruption.

“I think our friend will not consider anything irrelevant which throws light upon her subject,” said Mr. Buddington. As for myself, Miss Filette, I should consider a divergence to this “Black Law” for a few moments a favor. I am entirely uninformed.”

“My dear Hebe, far from deeming the mention of the ‘Black Law’ an intrusion, I am under many obligations for your assistance,” responded Zaffiri, politely.

“I had thought the shameful history of Prudence Crandall’s school, and its legitimate fruit, should excite sufficient indignation in New England to render the subject familiar,” remarked Hebe.

“By no means; the general Northern public is too well satisfied with any act protecting slavery, to question its propriety,” said Mr. Buddington.

So the story of Miss Crandall’s boarding-school of about twenty colored ladies and misses from the cities of Philadelphia, New

York, Providence, and Boston, was rehearsed ; the refusal of the merchants of Canterbury to sell to her or her school ; the filling of her well with filth ; her supply of water and food by her father and a Quaker friend ; Miss Crandall's imprisonment in the cell of an executed murderer ; the final attempt to set her house on fire, and the smashing of ninety panes of glass in the dead hour of night.

Filette explained the warrant served upon Miss Ann Eliza Hammond, a fine, colored pupil from Providence, under the "obsolete vagrant law," which provided that the selectmen of any town might warn any person not an inhabitant of the State, to depart forthwith from said town, and might demand one dollar and sixty-seven cents for every week he or she remained, after such warning ; and in case the person so warned should not have departed before the expiration of ten days after being sentenced, then he or she should be whipped on the naked body not exceeding ten stripes ; that Miss Hammond determined to remain and suffer the punishment like a martyr ; that her persecutors quailed in view of the consequences, and abandoned the warrant ; that the enemies of the school carried their case to the Legislature, where the old 'Pauper and Vagrant Law' was revamped and regilded with the name of the "Black Law," accompanied with seven penalties ; that, after a persecution of eighteen months, the school was broken up, and the pupils scattered to their homes.

"What was the substance of this 'Black Law,' Miss Filette?" asked Mr. Buddington.

"If you please, I can repeat the first section. My father is an abolitionist, upon whose head the Southerners might set a price. He ordered his children to commit to memory the 'Black Law,' and to repeat it to him in conjunction with the 'Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule.'"

"Ah! Hebe, what precious news!" exclaimed Zaffiri, her blue eyes glittering like sapphires. "Blessings on his gray hairs. How much will the pleasure of our visit to-morrow be heightened by this assurance. I shall embrace him as a father."

"Allow one more shadow to pass, dear madame," said Uncle George ; "and then, I suppose, your most honored guests will beg leave to retire," bowing at the same time to his nephews. "Miss Snow, we will hear the 'Black Law' of Connecticut."

"I will recite the first section, if you please.

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Assembly convened, that no person shall set up or establish in this State, any school, academy, or literary institution, for the instruction or education of colored persons who are not inhabitants of this State; nor instruct, nor teach, in any school or other literary institution whatsoever, in this State; nor harbor, or board for the purpose of attending, or being taught, or instructed in any such school, academy, or literary institution, any colored person who is not an inhabitant of any town in this State, without the consent in writing first obtained of a majority of the civil authority, and also of the selectmen of the town in which such school, academy, or literary institution is situated," etc.

"Infamous!" cried Zaffiri. "Is it not, Mary?"

"Judged by the law of Christ, it is," was the reply; "but I find it in perfect harmony with the laws of oppression. You observed, also, that the two stripes on the naked body of Mr. Hammond, was but the flourish of the slave whip."

The party took up the discussion of Miss Crandall's persecutions. Even Thad and Alfy entered the lists in behalf of both teacher and pupils. Thad's conservatism thawed into a generous indignation, strengthened by a warm denunciation of the "Black Law," and its instigators. Evidently the object of the reception had been accomplished; a deep impression had been made on the inquisitive minds of the two boys, which would deepen in coming years. When each received a "good night" kiss from Zaffiri, she said,—

"I reckon among my friends, those who hold correct views upon this great sin of slavery. I hope to count you among those friends. Study well upon the subjects of our conversation, and in every year of your lives let the hatred of human bondage grow stronger."

When the others were left by themselves, Madame Lambelle broke the silence.

"Oh! I hope these dear boys will grow to manhood, with an enlightened understanding of the evils of our land, and of the position of the nation, and of the individual requirements of its citizens."

"Madame Lambelle," replied Mr. Buddington, "I have seen many things in a strange light this evening. In behalf of so lovely

a herald as yourself, of this new truth, I will pledge my best endeavors to guide their young feet into the paths you desire. It may, at first, be an awkward office; but here, I pledge my endeavors. Count me among your friends, madame. Henceforth, whatever that word may signify, *I am an abolitionist.*"

As a delicate vase glows from flames within, so the eyes and features of the beautiful priestess of Freedom lighted by the sudden joy. She arose, approached him, radiant with smiles, saying,—

"I give you my hand."

Meeting her half way, and taking the hand reverentially, he solemnly said,—

"*Over the new-made grave of my brother!*"

"Filette!" cried the husky voice of Mary, "meet me at the same altar."

They met on either side of George and Madame Lambelle — joined hands over theirs; Mary, slowly and solemnly repeating,—

"*Over the grave of my murdered husband, I become an abolitionist.*"

The glory died out of Zaffiri's face. In the character of a prophetess, she asked,—

"My dear friends, with this oath, can you accept its inseparable consequences? Will you not shrink from the chrism of persecution, ostracism, and perhaps death?"

"We accept all," firmly responded Mr. Buddington.

"All," clearly responded the white, set lips of Mary."

"Then we are one in the holy love and support of freedom — true liberty. We may rest upon our pillows to-night, at peace with God, conscience, and the world."

During the remainder of Zaffiri's visit, a sweeter communion than ever marked the intercourse of the family. Aims and affections were assimilated. Greater than the dread of her arrival, was the regret at her approaching departure. Early the next morning Uncle George drove up to the door a fiery span of dappled grays, cinctured with shining bells. They drew the long, market sleigh of a neighbor, carpeted and covered with fragrant hay, blankets and robes. Thad donned a satisfied business air; carrying out

hot bricks —locking doors —tucking in the ladies,— and finally seating himself with Uncle George on the driver's seat. Alfy nestled down by the beautiful madame, as he called her.

“Two pairs of blue eyes on one seat,” as Filette said.

Fairly launched on the way, Thad braced his feet and took the lines.

“Nothing conservative about this, ladies,” remarked Uncle George.

“I understand,” replied Filette ; “the pretty creatures fly.”

This visit at Filette's home proved the climax of enjoyment. The hale old patriarch and his wife received them with open arms, to blazing hearths and bounteous tables. The elevated tone of conversation was a comfort to grief, strength to weakness, and a guide to doubt. Sturdy justice, and gentle humanity illuminated every sentence.

“Ah! Mary,” whispered Madame Lambelle, “these words are apples of gold in pictures of silver. They are a pure delight.”

A mystery dropped into the afternoon. Neither Mr. Snow nor George Buddington were seen till the tea hour ; the boys were at a neighbor's ; a dreamy, restful quiet pervaded the coterie of ladies. Filette's self-possession lost itself in unusual abstraction, or strange gayety. Mrs. Snow took madame to her motherly heart, chatting pleasantly of farm affairs, and learning from her guest much concerning the friends of liberty in New York. Tea hour brought back the deep, cheery, bass voice of Mr. Snow, and the liquid, soulful eyes of George, resting often upon the fitting blushes of Filette.

At the parting, the gray-haired father said to madame,—

“Come, my daughter, to our house summer or winter, whenever the city and its fashions weary. Come to the mountains and meadows for rest. Come and drink milk, eat honey, and tell us of the world's struggle for freedom.”

At home again, the guest drew Filette to her boudoir ; long after the stillness of night settled upon the house, they held happy converse.

“Hebe,” said the lady, “will you not confide to me an explanation of the mysterious absence at your father's this afternoon? We have shared the grief of this abode together ; shall we not share

its joy? Shall I guess who loves you? Ah! my pretty Hebe! do not veil those tell-tale eyes. Let me see their soft love-light, the most holy and beautiful gift of Heaven to earth."

"Suppose, dear madame, that the preliminaries of my marriage were settled this afternoon?" modestly replied Filette, blushing deeply.

"Ah! Hebe, I have observed many tokens of this, since my arrival. I have seen that George was not lonely in the kitchen, when left with you. I have seen his gaze wandering after you. I have seen his ready hands lightening your burdens. I have heard the tenderness in his voice, when addressing you, dear girl, and I give you my happiest congratulations; if, Hebe, if your own heart has found rest in his love. Tell me, is George Buddington the one idol to whom your soul clings without reservation?"

"He is, dear lady. George Buddington is my first and only choice. For him I can endure all that life may have, of trials or losses."

"It is well, Hebe; it is well!" She held the shy girl to her heart, and left kisses on her burning cheeks. "Will you not say 'Come,' to me on the day of your wedding?"

"I had thought that a lady who has traveled the world over, would not care to witness the humble marriage of a country farmer's daughter; yet, nothing could heighten my pleasure at that event, more than the honor of your presence."

"Fie! Hebe. Flattery may wound your friend. Remember that the superficial accomplishments of society are trivial, compared with inherent worth. Let us regard each other as sisters, as we really are, in all that reason, religion, and humanity require. Invite Zaffiri, and thus honor her."

"One of the graces for a country lassie's wedding!" laughed Filette.

"Hush, Hebe! no more humility! inform me when my husband and myself shall make the journey."

"Some time the first of June; George says in the time of apple blossoms."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE two-story farmhouse of Mr. Snow, crowned the summit of a ridge, whose sloping sides were clothed in spring verdure.

Its red paint and white trimmings made a cheerful landmark on the traveled roads for a long distance. An apple orchard, in full bloom, stretched away to the south of it. On this day, this sunny June day, the old trees heaped with flowery promise, seemed a great attraction, if one could judge by the constant gliding to and fro of the throng of new figures and faces suddenly peopling the apartments.

On the evening previous, the neighbors had observed lights in every room; in the front chamber, in the parlor, in the sitting-room, and in the spare bed-room below; the small-paned windows rejoiced in an illumination. The curtains were raised this morning, and the new faces took observations of clouds and sky.

The deep, cheery voice of Mr. Snow, the father, was heard, now at the barn, now in the kitchen, and down in the orchard. The mother, in lace cap and white ribbons, moved complacently about the lower rooms, with Mary Buddington in mourning weeds.

The daughter was in her own chamber. Here, as elsewhere, prevailed the strictest order. Upon the high bed was spread a white dress of jaconet muslin, a white lustring sash, a pair of white kid mitts or gloves reaching to the elbow, a pair of white kid slippers, and a bridal veil.

A light knock at the door was followed by a sweet voice,—

“Are you ready for me now, pretty Hebe?”

“Always ready for *you*, Madame Lambelle; will you enter my plain, little room?”

“To be sure; but I do not like the style of invitation.” Holding Filette in her arms and imprinting a kiss upon each cheek, she insisted upon having no more selfabasement, henceforth and forever. “Hebe, this is not penance day. Do you not know that I love you? that I love the country, and especially these nests of

comfort, the red, brown, or white farm-houses? One more request. Call me no longer 'Madame Lambelle.' Let me be 'Zaffiri,' as at home with my husband and my little maid. Ah! yes, I understand, Hebe will confer favors to-day.

"Now, let us see," she continued, "all is in readiness but the flowers; they will be brought in soon fresh from the trees. How much I like the idea of these lovely apple-blossoms!"

"George says he should be sorry to see me wear orange blossoms; their whiteness seems to him like the pallor of consternation at Southern crimes."

"I, too, dislike orange flowers. Your affianced is growing strong in sentiments of Justice. Mr. Lambelle already has a great affection for him. We have not too much time, Hebe. It is now ten," holding the watch in her hand. The ceremony takes place at eleven. My husband is assisting the groom. Allow me to dress the bride."

Another knock at the door and Cossetina entered breathless, holding forth her apron full of orchard buds and blossoms. She began to chatter Italian as if she were alone with her mistress,—

"Ah! Zaffiri, *Guardate quei superbe d'un colore cosi fresco e splendido vivo!*"

"*Bei fiori,*" ejaculated the lady; observing the confusion of Cossetina's hair and torn dress, she asked hastily,—

"*Ch'e acca duto? Che cosa ha?*"

"*Sono caduto dalla cima dell'al berro al basso e non mi son fatto molto male!*" answered the maid. "*L'ho scappata con una graffiatura.*"

"*Me ne rincresce,*" responded Zaffiri, with much sympathy. "*Segga accanto a me!*"

"*Parliame Inglese, Cossetina.*"

"*Parla ella Inglese?*"

"*Si, parla Inglese.*"

When Filette stood dressed in her chamber for the arrangement of the flowers and veil, a third knock brought a basket filled with apple blossoms. She received them with the compliments of Mr. Buddington and a respectful bow from the bearer.

"Return my thanks, Issy," requested Filette, blushing, "and say they are beautiful!"

“A new face,” said Zaffiri, “colored servants?”

“By no means; Issy is a Charlestonian; was freed by his father; will reside with us at our house in Cloudspire. I am to become his teacher. He was not suited at his former place.”

“I have not seen him since my arrival.”

“No! he came this morning with his guardian, Friend Sterlingworth.”

“Cossetina, give me a blossom with buds.”

“*Vuoi tu quell' uno' ?*” holding up a lovely bunch.

“*Parla Inglese mia cara*; that cluster is exquisite. See, some petals on the floor are like delicate, roseate sea-shells.”

Meantime a new carpet destined for Cloudspire was unrolled and spread under the branches of a broad-spreading apple-tree in the orchard, blushed with bloom. One by one, and two by two, the party at the house strolled down on the greensward, awaiting George Buddington and his bride. There Mary and her sons, Friend Sterlingworth and Fanny, Richard Beame, Issy Paisley, Simon Link, Deacon Brown and wife. Last of all, Mr. Lambelle, his elegant lady, and Cossetina.

The lively buzz of conversation was interrupted by the appearance of George Buddington and Filette.

“How beautiful!” rose to every lip.

“I never saw a bride in apple blossoms, before.”

“What a superb couple!” said Mr. Lambelle to Zaffiri.

They stepped upon the carpet into the mottled shade which folded both in leafy embrace.

After the ceremony, in “Gods temple,” as the clergyman styled the orchard, in his prayer, and after tendering congratulations, George Buddington and wife led the party up through sunlight and fragrant shade to the bountiful collation spread in the house which awaits a new New England marriage. Filette was to be taken to her home in Cloudspire that day. The distance was long, and an early hour was appointed for the departure, convoyed by their friends from that town. Simon Link was master of ceremonies at the stables. His gentlemanly dress and manner was so marked that Richard and Fanny scarcely recognized their friend, waiting in the snow at the foot of the hill after the church mob at the Cloudspire revival.

Issy voluntarily took the part of footman. He said,—

“I shall do this with pleasure, for my *friends*, which I was once compelled to do for a master.”

“First came to the door George Buddington’s curvetting black span and handsome carriage. After Issay’s attentions, Zaffiri propiated future fates, by throwing after them her own slipper. Following them, Friend Sterlingworth and Fanny; next, Richard and Young Paisley. Last went Simon Link and Thad, carrying the bride’s loaf and other wedding cheer. For the first time in many years Mr. Link had a driver. Thad’s chief enjoyment of the day’s festivities was holding the lines for a straight twenty-five miles. It was the nearest approximation to his cherished “stage-driving,” in his experience.

Mary remained a few days with Mrs. Snow, and then left forever the scenes of her married happiness, taking with her Alfy and the tenderly cherished “old Ned,” which in his young days had brought her there, a gay and loving bride.

Filette found, on arriving at her new abode, grassy lawns dotted with clumps of evergreen, terraces, shrubbery in bloom, and a tastefully arranged flower-garden. The house was spacious and inviting, carpeted throughout, and newly furnished in handsome modern style. Her own room was a bower of beauty and comfort, upholstered with warm colors, velvet and lace. From the windows, a softened line of blue mountains met the sky; beyond, a foreground of intervale and patches of forest.

In the kitchen, black Hester and Roland welcomed the new mistress to shining neatness and savory odors. The dining-room table, set with a sumptuous repast, awaited the party. A bell in the hands of Roland soon summoned them to its delicacies.

With affectionate pride, George Buddington led his blushing wife to the head of his hitherto lonely table. Standing by his side till the guests were seated, he withdrew a cover from the tea tray and its contents. To her surprise, a glitter of polished silver revealed a costly set of tea and coffee service, the like of which she had never in her simple country life contemplated.

“Read, Filette,” said George; “and next to your joy in the possession of this beautiful gift, will be mine to drink the beverages poured by your hands.”

Upon every piece of service she read the inscription,—

“*Zaffiri, to Hebe.*”

Seeing her hesitation, her husband, who had taken his place at the opposite end of the long table, addressed her,—

“Your silence is impressive, my charming wife; more eloquent than words. Let us attend to our evening’s hospitalities.”

A few days after, while both walked in the garden during the June twilight, Filette said to George,—

“Our home far exceeds my expectations. I shall be pleased to invite Zaffiri under its ample roof.”

“I have a ‘Zaffiri’ sheltered by its roof; or I shall have, when you, my Hebe, go in with me from this chilly night air. Come in; let us confer upon the future.”

He drew her arm within his, and both repaired to the lighted sitting-room. Mary sat quietly reading.

“I have been reflecting, to-day, upon the vows each took upon us, in Mary’s parlor, with herself and Madame Lambelle. You know, I then took upon myself the character of an abolitionist, whatever that term may imply; and you know, my dear Filette, that I was compelled to this change of sentiment, and it was a total reversion of all I held right, before; I say, I was compelled to this change by the cold-blooded murder of my innocent brother, James. You know, also, that our oath was taken, in imagination, over his grave.

“My first step in compliance with that vow, was to take Ishmael Paisley into our family; not as a servant, but to develop his manhood, and to share with him our privileges, pleasures and pursuits. This I shall do, at any cost. The question now is, in what other manner, and when, shall I manifest fidelity to principle? And yet, I hardly know what principles are involved in this moral metamorphosis! I have been a thoughtless, dogmatic adherent of Party, Church and State, caring not to examine particularly the grounds of my faith. Richard Beame advises me to subscribe for the *Liberator*—Garrison’s paper. What is it Filette; have you ever seen it?”

“Yes, indeed! It is a two-edged sword of Freedom! It cuts to the right and left, sparing not. Father says there are no beams in Garrison’s eyes, that he cannot discern the mote in others. But,

my dear George, do you know that the simple act of *taking that paper weekly from this office* will subject you to revengeful, crucial persecution !”

“I am surprised, Filette ! If one is a free moral agent, can he not choose what he reads ? I know the *South* would muzzle our mouths, but I trust they will not attempt to bandage our eyes, also.”

“You mistake, George ; Northern infatuation attempts to bandage the eyes of those who would read Garrison’s *Liberator*. And let me suggest, that here in Cloudspire, we may find too much opportunity to manifest fidelity to principle.”

“I have courage, Filette. Certain memories nerve my purpose. To-night I shall write to Boston for the *Liberator*, and set that electrical battery at work in our family.”

“Mary,” said Mr. Buddington, “Filette and I have concluded to take our whole family to church, including Paisley, Hester and Roland. There are eight of us, and those square pews, with seats all round, will accommodate all.”

“That is a just conclusion, George,” replied his wife. “‘By their fruits ye shall know them’ is the voice of the Scriptures, and the act will only be an exact result of our sentiments. However, we must expect a conflict between the ‘negro pew’ under the stairs, and *ours*, in the centre of the church.”

“Perhaps,” replied her husband ; “we shall see.”

During the week, Issy, Hester and Roland were instructed concerning the programme for the Sabbath worship. Issy dropped his eyes to the floor and replied modestly,—

“I am accustomed to the gallery, madam.”

Filette replied,—

“Issy, I cannot appear before God, the loving Father of us all, without carrying with us the one shorn lamb of our flock. You must sit in our pew with us. You must claim the manhood that the Scriptures promise in these words, ‘God is no respecter of persons.’”

Issy bowed, and hesitatingly assented.

Hester received the information with pleasant, but derisive laughter.

“Me sit in your pew, Mrs. Buddington ! Me ! that has been

scoffed at, on account of my color and poverty, ever since I had a memory! I dearly love to please you in everything possible, but in this arrangement let me be excused."

"No, Hester, it is an obligation you owe to yourself, to do this very thing. You really *do* believe, way down in your heart, your own equality with the rest of mankind. Then it is binding upon you to endeavor to throw off this yoke of oppression, and to take your seat with us in church, as you now have an opportunity."

"I love you too well, Mrs. Buddington, to do so. I don't wish to bring upon your happy married life a shade of a shadow. If I go and sit in your pew, evil reports will be trumped up about your husband. If I contradict these reports, my word will go for nothing; for outside of two houses in this town,—your house and the doctor's — I am counted a liar and a thief!"

"Hester, are you not mistaken in respect to my husband?"

"Not in the least; you see, I've had experience. I've always found that those who looked after my welfare and my boy's, and who treat me with the most respect, are the most talked about; while the church-members and other men, who pretend to hate us that are colored, insult me everywhere; and yet they are called 'all right.'"

Hester looked at her baking, put some wood in the stove, and set a chair for Filette, saying,—

"As we are all alone in this kitchen, I will explain. The last time I went to meeting in the church, I made a vow that I would never go again. Have you ever heard of William Steele, that come on here from the South, and married the doctor's daughter?"

"I have heard George speak of him."

Here Hester rang out another laugh of derision, and continued.

"Well, I *knew* that man, as pious as he was, better than all Cloudspire knew him. That was the time of the great revival; that was the time Mr. Buddington was converted. I was working at the doctor's. This Steele was courting the doctor's daughter. The doctor sent me into his office to see to the fire and brush up the stove hearth. William Steele was there, but I went on with my work. Of a sudden, he had his arm around my waist and kissed me; at the same time he slipped a silver half-dollar in my hand. I suppose I did wrong, but I took it and went out. I wanted to buy

me a new, strong dress. All my clothes were second-handed, that I had taken for my low wages, where I could get work ; then I had to take a great many old clothes for Roland. Roland's father is a man in this town. I was young and foolish once, but am wiser, now. His father never gave me a cent to support him ; and I was so poor, and needed a strong dress so much, I took the fifty cents and put it in my pocket, so that with the silver quarter he gave Roland for waiting on him at table, I could buy it, afterwards. I went to meeting, and there stood William Steele telling the people that scientific men said negroes were allied to the brutes ; that was the general opinion, except by a few fanatics, who were making the vain attempt to bring these degraded creatures to a level with themselves. Mrs. Buddington, all that church was listening as solemn as if it was a funeral ! I looked at the religious scowl on his face, and thought how his two eyes shone, when he kissed my cheeks and forehead, and said, 'Take it Hester. One touch of your velvety face, and a look into your soft eyes, is worth double the money !'

"I forgot I was in the negro pew in church, and laughed out, at his deceitfulness, either in calling me a brute, or kissing me. When the tithing-man came to send me out of church, I let that horrid silver fifty-cent piece fall on the floor with my pocket handkerchief. Everybody heard it — everybody afterwards called me a thief ; for nobody paid me in silver money. Since then, I and Roland have half starved for want of a place to work ; but I never told, for the sake of Lucy Clarendon. I loved that girl, and I thought her lot was hard enough, to find out Bill Steele herself without my help.

"Since I came to live with you, I lack neither bread nor wages ; and do you see, Mrs. Buddington, that I do not like to bring trouble to this house, and *want* to myself and Roland, by going to church and sitting in your pew ?"

"But, Hester, we should do right, if others do wrong. It is *right* for you to listen to the gospel of Christ. It is *right* to assume to ourselves, all the rights of a common humanity. I have a respect for your scruples, but I still persuade you to go with us. Think of it, Hester, and dare to assert your right for Roland's sake, as well as your own. Teach him to respect himself."

On the following Sunday, when the last notes of the church bell pealed out upon the sunny air, there came up among the loiterers about the old green door George Buddington's carriage and span, followed by a bright wagon and a spanking bay. These two vehicles contained all the members of his family. Hats were raised to his wealth and liberal support of the church. Some admired his bride, others his horses, and others reflected that God would be well pleased to see the negro pew well filled.

George Buddington's pew was more richly furnished than any other — the floor was carpeted; the scarlet cushioned seats were broken at intervals with restful supports for the arm. Into this the whole family was led, Issy being seated next to Filette, with Mary on his left. Roland's dancing eyes shone between Thad and Alfy. Hester sat at the left of Mary.

Soon the heavenly peace of the sanctuary became ruffled. Many a devout prayer, destined for the blue vaults above, fell back to earth on broken wings. Much Christian serenity changed to wrathful agitation. Boasted brotherly love suddenly darkened into vindictive hate. Many a tired man and woman missed their Sunday morning slumber, and the voice of the preacher fell upon heedless ears.

At noon, Mr. Buddington received several admonitions from the church, as to the impropriety of his course, but the afternoon audience saw the sight repeated.

Before the close of the week, a committee of remonstrance called upon the offender, earnestly requesting him to abandon the step he had taken. A gentle firmness warded off every appeal.

"Gentlemen, he said, "I must obey the dictates of my conscience. My convictions are clear in this matter. If Paisley, Hester and Roland, must leave my pew, I shall be forced to leave also. I have taken up the cause of the oppressed, and if I cannot maintain that cause in the church, I must maintain it out of the church."

"But, this sitting together in the *same pew* savors of *amalgamation*, and *this* is the offence against which our Southern bretheren vehemently complain. *Amalgamation* is the crime so distasteful to them. They accuse us of desiring the opportunity for that sin. At the same time, we are commanded in the Scriptures, to 'avoid

the appearance of evil.' This is accomplished by openly separating ourselves from the degraded race — and by keeping the negro in his proper place, which is *not* on an equality with white persons."

Deacon Steele was one of the committee. He had been down to Alderbank tavern during the morning, and now directed his purple nose and winking gaze to the demolition of Mr. Buddington's fanaticism.

"My brother William," he said, with some bombast, "instructed me in my duty to the black race, when he was on from Carolina at the time of our great revival. He said it was imperative that we should treat them with the same kindness that we manifest to our animals; that the *curse* is on them; that they are, by nature, nought but 'hewers of wood and drawers of water.' He instructed us, also, that we were making too much of Hen Hughes, that worked for us; you knew him, Buddington. So I lowered Hen's wages, and fed him plainer food. William said the Southerners insist that amalgamation is at the bottom of all this disturbance on the nigger question. Now, you see, Buddington," renewing his sleepy gaze and bracing himself by throwing one dogmatical leg over the other, "we have one Bible, one Constitution, one God; that is, the South and the North, alike. We of the North ought to strive for peace with the South. They are our brethren. They detest such wicked indulgence and proximity to a slavish race, as was publicly seen in your pew a' Sunday. Let the niggers go into their own pew, under the stairs. Don't, I beg of you, blot the fair character of your young and pretty wife, by allowing that young mulatto to sit by her side in the meeting-house. Since you was converted, you've been a powerful auxilium in the church. Let us persuade you to stand on the Lord's side, and to do no more the works of darkness."

The deacon actually shed a few drivelling tears.

"I appeal to you, as to a brother, Buddington. What do you say?"

"I have much to say," replied Squire Buddington; "but, perhaps, it would be useless. However, there are two points I intend to make. Young Paisley contradicts in his own person every accusation of the Southerners. He is the son of a Southerner, from a

Southern city. His rich, white father brought him to New York, and left money for his future education. Those Southerners *are the very ones who practice amalgamation*. And, worse still, who multiply and replenish their slave-coffers with *their own children*, the offspring of their own flesh and blue blood."

"Now, Buddington, you must know this is all a fabrication by the abolitionists; we do not credit it," cried all, unanimously.

"Gentlemen, I can bring before your eyes the 'free papers' of Ishmael Paisley, signed by his father's own hand when he made him free; but I prefer not."

"Well then, Mr. Buddington, allowing the supposition that the tall mulatto, or Paisly, as you call him, has a respectable parentage, that black Hester you had with you in your pew is guilty of the grossest crimes. She is a liar and a thief; has been turned out of even the negro seat for breaking out into one of her silly giggles. She dropped a silver half-dollar out of her pocket, which she must have stolen, for nobody pays her cash for her work," said Deacon Steele.

"And yet," coolly replied Mrs. Buddington, who had previously entered the room, "some white man in *this town* is the father of Roland, her boy. This one case is sufficient proof, that while the lips profess a prejudice to color, the heart has it not. Gentlemen," she continued, "his father, whoever he may be, has as much sold Roland to poverty and shame, as the Southerner sells his own brown children in the shambles. Pardon me, gentlemen, but my gray-haired father taught me to sow the truth, fearlessly and hopefully, on all soils."

Deacon Steele's nose was purpled more deeply, his face burned, apparently, with righteous indignation. He rose quickly to his feet, and addressing the committee, said hurriedly,—

"Let us retire, my friends. Our duty is done, whether this family hear or forbear."

Filette had early received numerous calls from the ladies of the town; for they desired to secure to themselves the friendship of the mistress of so fine an establishment as George Buddington's. After the pew affair, calls ceased, and the "*strange woman*," as she was termed, was left to herself.

Another friendship awaited her, however, which amply compen-

sated for the lost aggregate. One quiet September afternoon, Doctor Clarendon stopped his horse at the gate, came up the walk with a lady in mourning, and at the open door, introduced "Mrs. Steele," adding,—

"My daughter has been out very little since her return from the South, but she has conceived a strong desire to call upon Mrs. Buddington, and relieve her, in a measure, from the ostracism which at present prevails in this town. Lucy has had some experience, madam; and I believe in her you will find the noble sentiments of yourself and husband reciprocated. I am going my rounds, and will call for her in a few hours. Adieu."

That call was the initiation of an attachment lasting through life.

Lucy and Filette soon had no secrets reserved the one from the other. Twin spirits, they became a mutual strength and support.

Doctor Clarendon and his wife were greatly changed by Lucy's return, so that an intimacy sprung up between the Buddingtons and Clarendons till they became of one mind and purpose.

Since Squire Buddington's return from the St. Louis outrage, his thoughts turned with mysterious affection to Richard Beame. On the day of the revival mob, he, too, had scoffed at him and his words. Now, they had a new meaning. He sought Richard out, confided to him the secret carefully guarded from others, learned from his lips the dark history of American oppression, and conferred with him upon his late determination and future course.

Thus, Fanny was led into the acquaintance of Mr. Buddington and the doctor's families. Her clear and severe ideas of ethics caused her to form, with Filette and Lucy, a trio of strength and inflexibility in the adjustment of human rights.

Simon Link, or "Mr. Link" as he was now respectfully called, was a ready coadjutor in all good works which the others planned. The "rich *drovier*," according to the patronomatology of the town, was absent during a large portion of the year, but ever on his return was welcomed into the charmed circle of fanatics, around which the churches and the rest of the town drew a broad margin of isolation.

After the long drive from Mr. Snow's to Cloudspire, on the wed-

ding-day, Mr. Link yearned for Thad's presence. He plead with Mary and his Uncle George that he should live with him for one year, at least.

"My house is large and empty," he said. "I want to hear his lively feet running over it. I want to teach him to love the dumb critters in my barns. I like to hear his young voice among the neighing horses and the innocent lowing of my cattle. Then, you see, I shall make only one trip West, this cool, fall weather, and I'll take him with me and let him see the world. Why, Mrs. Buddington, I'll watch over him as carefully as I would over a handsome colt. In the winter, he shall go to school every day it keeps. I think Thad takes to my kind of business, and likes it. You see I am alone, and need him. What do you say?"

So Mary gave up Thad, with the assurance of her brother-in-law that it would be a good school for him; and Simon Link's solitary life blossomed into happy hours with Thad, and the companionship of the three families before mentioned.

Early in the fall, the pastor of Cloudspire received a letter from the Rev. Edmund Stone of South Carolina, whom the reader will remember as the former revival preacher; now the spiritual adviser of slaves in that State.

By a letter from Deacon Steele, he had learned the aspect of affairs in Cloudspire. In reply, Mr. Stone stated that his mind was "profoundly moved; that *tares* were growing up among the *wheat* of Cloudspire church; that the church should be immediately expurged of false doctrines and their promulgators; that the defiant act of George Buddington and Doctor Clarendon, in taking negroes into their pews, was heresy to the Constitution and the foundations of American institutions; that the placing the degraded race destined by the decrees of God for slavery, on an equality with 'Anglo Saxons,' would inflame the South to justifiable acts of revenge; that the most odious feature of that fanatical movement, was the evident aim of amalgamation; that he (Stone) was filled with sorrow, that the church wherein God had wrought so many mighty works should sit in the dust of humiliation for that sin which is not only the dread of the high-toned Southerner, but repulsive to every pure and Christian soul."

He closed by an earnest appeal to the pastor and deacons, to set

about casting that odium from their midst, all of which the Cloud-spire pastor communicated to Mr. Buddington.

Reports of this letter reached the doctor. Conferences were held on both sides, and conclusions attained.

Lucy Steele, a few weeks previous, had followed Filette's example, and had taken Binah into the doctor's pew with herself.

Richarad and Fanny drove occasionally from Alderbank up to the church, with the two brown children of Henry Hughes. By the doctor's invitation, they took seats in his pew.

An ominous sky lowered over the face of the church. Therefore, by the continued advice of Edmund Stone of South Carolina, a second committee, reinforced by the pastor, hastily repaired to the house of Squire Buddington, for the doctor's pew was considered only the flagrant shadow of the Buddington offence. He was the chief criminal of all.

Squire Buddington met this committee with a truce, which, though far from satisfactory, each one was forced, mentally to acknowledge, was his ultimatum.

"Gentlemen," he said, "it is useless to repeat arguments. "Whoever obeys laws or customs which are not in harmony with the beneficent laws of our Creator, steps aside from the paths of rectitude. I consider that He has made all nations of one blood; that, as His Word teaches, He is no respecter of persons. It is our common belief that the gospel should be preached to every creature."

"Yes, yes! Mr. Buddington," interrupted one of the number, "we believe that; but these negroes can hear the gospel if they sit alone by themselves."

Here the pastor threw in a remark uttered in an oily, persuasive voice,—

"For the sake of brotherly love towards the excitable South, we should desist from offences of this kind. Your example has already been followed by Doctor Clarendon and young Beame. Your sitting with those negroes has a dark look on the face of it. There are two things, in respect to which the South, as a body, are in constant terror. Insurrection in their *own borders*, and amalgamation or a mixture of bloods, *here!* They are sensitive and watchful, desiring to preserve slavery, which has been handed down

to us from the earliest times, within the bounds of propriety. Let me entreat you, Mr. Buddington, to desist from angering the South."

"Thank you," replied the squire. I must take conscience and experience for my guide, and will therefore finish what I intended to say at the beginning. I have resolved to withdraw from the church in which I could not cease from giving offence. Gentlemen, I have nothing farther to offer."

Deacon Steele blew his purple nose, wiping away religious tears, and said,—

"The cause of Zion will suffer a great loss in your withdrawal; but having faithfully borne our message, we are compelled to acquiesce."

Before Saturday night, the news, on the swift wings of gossip, flew over the town. Farmers stopped their loads of wood and cider in the highway, to congratulate each other on the removal of the scandal.

"That letter from that revival preacher in Caroliny did the work, you see."

"Yes," was the reply, "and our minister is the right kind, too!"

Others, too worldly to stop teams, called out with the "Go 'long, haw—there! Gee! No more niggers in the king's pew, now!" and struck into a shrill, victorious whistle.

Prudent wives threw on their shawls, took their knitting, and ran over to the neighbors, to say how glad they were that those niggers would not be seen in church any more.

"I declare," says one, "that yeller feller is a temptation to have in any church! he's a'most white, and his hair curls like a doll's! I threw a s'arching look over the meetin'-house, several times Sundays, and I see the girls all a lookin' at him."

"I know," was the earnest reply. "I've seen the same, and I shook my head at 'em several times. The girls have all got it that he is a Southerner's son. I overheard my Sarah and your Anna telling how handsome he is. I offered up a silent prayer then, that the temptation might be removed, and I believe my prayer is answered."

"That rich Buddington is going to leave the church."

"I guess there isn't much danger of Deacon Steele's girl, Mary,

looking at that mulatto, for she's taught better ; her Uncle William, when he was on from the South, made the deacon forbid Mary from speaking to that black Henry Hughes, unless to give him an order. I noticed she sat with her back that way, to that mulatto."

"Speakin' of Mary Steele, do you know—" The visitor lowered her voice to a whisper, "I would'nt dare tell anybody but you, that I ever had such a thought,—do you know that, sometimes, I think white people look like niggers? Mary used to learn that thieving Hester's Roland his letters, Sunday noons, over there under the stairs ; and I've said to myself, 'She looks more like him, than his mother, Hester, does!'"

I don't know as I've seen white folks look like black ones, but I've seen the black ones look like white folks. I should hate, dreadfully, to have my Sarah look like a black person."

Everybody rejoiced that the dragon had been cast out.

On Sunday morning the peace of Cloudspire religion brooded over the town. It was a lovely Sabbath, robed in the purple haze of Indian summer. The very trees seemed to have cast their bright garments in the way, and over the lawns, for the feet of the victorious followers of Christ, and the tramp of their horses.

Happy knots in the sunshine about the wide-open double green door, gradually dissolved and passed into the sanctuary, to the last solemn tolling of the bell, that seemed to proclaim upon the amethystine air, "The Lord reigneth! Let the inhabitants of the earth be glad."

Happy thought! Squire Buddington's pew was empty. Lo! during the short hush before the services, heels of a swift horse threw up the rustling leaves ; soft footsteps came up the broad aisle ; Paisley, Hester and Roland took seats in the vacant pew. A moment later, Richard Beame, Fanny, and the two brown children of Henry Hughes, followed, and took seats in the same place.

Blank consternation appeared upon the faces of the young men and the elders. Evidently, love's labor was lost. By degrees, wrath, the imps of wrath, hate, vindictiveness, malice, and resentment sprang up from their hearts, and sat their distorted shapes upon the faces of the worshipping congregation, like the fantastic, grotesque, and frightful gargoyles of the Middle Ages which leered from the cornices of sacred edifices.

Richard Beame carried away with him in memory, from that purple morning, some of those writhing faces as incentives to the daring course of his stern future. After the benediction, and after Richard and Fanny drove away with their charges, Hester took the lunch basket, and with Paisley and Roland sat down upon the fallen mantle of a glowing maple.

The old meeting-house was surrounded with a clean, modulating greensward, sprinkled with clustered trees. At summer and autumn noons it became a lively panorama. Children gaily dressed, girls with wandering eyes, sun-browned youths assuming cockney airs, matrons and fathers were standing or flitting about.

To-day, the music of rustling leaves was unremitting. Beves of pretty misses and children swept around and past the maple overshadowing Issy. Many a bright-lipped maiden in passing, dropped a silvery "How do you do, Hester," while their glances fell kindly upon the beautiful Issy, like blessings. Groups of children walked slowly past, and in low voices, ventured to say, "Where do you live, now, Roland?" for they felt that his lot was as unsettled as the breeze-blown leaves on the church lawn.

Had they been allowed to follow the promptings of their Christ-like love and innocence, they would have importuned Roland to walk with them. Hand in hand with the town's outcast, they would have sought pleasant nooks and sunny spots, mingling their happy laughter with his.

A few matrons passed at a proper distance, and with curious eyes discovered that there was spread before each one of the branded trio a snowy napkin, on which awaited a *wheat* bread sandwich, and an ample piece of frosted cake! This discovery was the cause of the bristling up of a regiment of exclamation points — 'horribile dictu's.'

Just before the tolling of the bell for afternoon worship, five men slowly approached the solitary group under the maples.

Hester whispered,—

"I know every one of those men; they are the committee that came to Mr. Buddington's."

"So do I," whispered Roland, "but I'm not afraid of 'em."

"Hush — sh!" answered Hester, under her breath.

The committee came up, formed around, and looked down upon

them, as the American eagle is supposed to hover and settle down upon his prey.

"Young man" said the chairman, addressing Issy, "be you a Southerner's son?"

Issy, his eyes still fixed upon the ground, replied,—

"I suppose I am, sir; a great many persons besides my mother told me so in my native city."

"What color was your mother, boy?"

"Black, sir."

"Where is your mother, now?"

"Dead, sir."

"Then your father was a white man?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you think your father, if he was here, would want you to sit in the pew with him?"

"I don't know, sir; he wanted my mother about him."

Here, Hester broke into one of her uncontrollable laughs, that once caused her expulsion from the church, catching up the napkin to her mouth to stop the bubbling sin as best he could.

"Hester," spoke one of the committee, a head shorter than the others, and whose tones were in the last shrill notes of an exhausted bagpipe, "Hester, I say, if you were half-witted, you ought to learn by this time not to giggle on the Sabbath, as if it were a week day, nor to treat a committee of the church in this way."

"This foolishness only verifies the incapacitated brain of the race!" soothingly interposed a gaunt, black-gloved member; "let us attend to the case in hand."

"What brought you North, boy?"

Issy had risen and stood respectfully before his interlocutors.

"My white sister was my owner, and she mortgaged me, sir. My father paid the mortgage and brought me North, because he said, 'if I was sold to owners they might treat me cruelly.'"

"What did your sister mortgage you for?"

"To buy dresses, sir."

"How came she to own you?"

"I was given to her, that I might be raised in the family."

"Well, it's pretty near bell-time; we're come to tell you three,

that you'd better go into the negro seats under the stairs, this afternoon. Mr. Buddington's left the church."

"I should not like to go there without Mr. Buddington's orders," modestly replied Issy, gracefully raising his hat from the silken waves beneath. "He will continue to pay for the pew, that we may hear the gospel preached."

"He told us to sit there," clamored Roland, peering at them with eyes as bright as a squirrel's cracking nuts. "I like the red cushions best; and Mrs. Buddington has named the pew for us. What's the name, Issy?"

"The 'Refuge of Oppression,' Roland."

"Then his wife has set you up not to go into the pew under the stairs? What has a woman to do with church affairs?" questioned Deacon Steele, tartly.

"She didn't set us up, Deacon Steele," hastily replied Roland, beating the leaves to a lively dance with a decayed branch. "She didn't set us up. Issy and mother offered to sit under the stairs, but I said, 'I wanted to set in Mr. Buddington's red-cushioned pew.' She didn't set us up, did she, Issy?"

"Far from that, sir. Mr. Buddington concluded not to sit with us,—it made trouble, but he said we must hear the gospel preached, and he wished us to have a comfortable seat; also, that he paid fifty dollars before, and will now pay for this pew one hundred dollars."

"That's a generous offer, but his money won't buy liberty to commit sin before the altar of the Lord. Why, bless me, if you should continue to sit there, the whole church will be pulled down over your heads!"

"Do you mean the church will be pulled down to-day, sir?" timidly inquired Paisley.

"Not to-day, on the Sabbath. No! We keep the Sabbath. But mind, this church will not be baulked or bribed. Now, will you three go where the good judgment and kindness of the North and South place you, in a pew by yourselves?"

"We do sit in a pew by ourselves, sir."

"*Under the stairs!*" thundered the tall man in black gloves.

"I prefer to go into Mr. Buddington's pew, this afternoon."

The bell began its call for all loiterers to gather; solemnly, at

first, it called the attention of the straggling flock ; then it seemed to bellow forth wrath to listening ears ; its heavy iron tongue swung to and fro, with the volubility of a parrot. The people heard the voice above their heads, saying,—

“ *We will annihilate* — annihilate — annihilate ! We will annihilate — annihilate — annihilate — late — late — late ! We will annihilate the outcasts and their friends — friends — ends — the outcasts and their friends — friends — ends ! ”

Keeping step to this cantata of the bell, the committee left the marked maple and crossed the lawn to the green door.

Hester rose from her sitting on the ground, which she had maintained in their presence, and remarked,—

“ There’s the tithing-man come out to meet ’em, and they’re shaking their heads. I wonder if we shall be turned out, this afternoon.”

“ I don’t know,” replied Issy ; “ those Northern bloodhounds have tried us, and they’ve gone off now, on another scent.”

“ I don’t care if they do ! ” flashed Roland. “ It’s pleasanter out here than in there, and they can’t drive us away from ou’ doors, can they ? ”

“ Yes, child,” bitterly responded Issy. “ In the South, they drive us into the rivers and lakes, and into sand-banks. To speak the truth, I don’t care to hear the white men’s gospel preached ; there is not one drop of Jesus’ love in it, for *us*.”

However, the trio went up the aisle again, amidst grim faces that glared at them like the ferocious eyes of wild beasts in their coverts. The tithing-man did not molest, and at the close of worship the swift-footed bay, driven by Mr. Buddington himself, carried them away home.

On one of those lovely, October days, when Nature seems intoxicated with sunshine and colors, and when Filette longed for the companionship of Lucy, strangely enough, Lucy came. Tripping up the steps to the piazza with sympathizing warmth, she declared,—

“ I could not stay away longer. I am weary of the sight of those staring windows in that unsightly mass of deception, they call the church. That is in front of our house, you know ; and the grave-

yard, rank with weeds and leaning, moss-grown stones, is too severe a monitor for my happiness."

"I think you must have come at my spirit's bidding, for I yearned to hear your voice and look in your eyes, to-day," responded Filette.

"Don't look into my eyes till the spell that is on them is irradiated with the amber and-crimson light that drops from these trees, and with the cheerful beauty of your surroundings, Filette."

"Then let us remain out, until the balm of summer pervades our feelings. I will bring Mary; she is suffering too. It is near the anniversary of her husband's departure for Texas, and his consequent death. She must come with Alfy."

"Roland, also, if Alfy; for they are always together. Children's voices exorcise gloom."

"And I will run around to the kitchen for Binah and Hester; Binah came with me."

So the pleasant home was left to itself.

"Let us go among these yellow copses of birches and aspens, and among the dark clusters of evergreen hemlocks."

"And where the sumacs are dropping rubies," replied Filette.

"Down by the brook, too, where the mosses and feathery ferns are, mother," added Alfy's sweet voice.

"Look at Alfy," Lucy whispered to Filette, "as his beautiful face turns to his mother. Alfy is a lovely poem, writ by the hand divine."

"And a forehead fair and saintly
Which two blue eyes undershine,
Like meek prayers, before a shrine —

Yet, child-simple, undefiled,
Frank, obedient — waiting still
On the turning of your will."

Roland rushed up to Filette, holding above his head a white violet.

"Look! look! Mrs. Buddington, I found a white *violet*!"

"True, Roland! a white violet in October is a rarity. I think it must be a good omen for you, my boy. Give it to our guest, Miss Lucy."

“How happy the children are. I think this amalgamated walk will be one psalm of our lives.”

“A psalm as acceptable to the Creator as one of David's,” remarked Lucy. “I agree that this week-day psalm of our lives will be far *more* acceptable to Heaven, than those weak-witted, overstrained psalms of Watt's, which Cloudspire church whines out with dismal drawl, every Sabbath; this, for instance.”

After an echoing laugh, in which the hemlocks joined, she repeated “*The Pilgrimage of the Saints.*”

“Lord! what a wretched land is this,
That yields us no supply;
No cheering fruits, no wholesome trees,
Nor streams of living joy.

But prickly thorns through all the ground
And mortal poisons grow;
And all the rivers that are found,
With dangerous waters flow.

Yet the dear path to Thine abode,
Lies through this horrid land;
Lord! we would keep the heavenly road,
And run at Thy command.

Our souls shall tread the desert through,
With undiverted feet;
And faith, and flaming zeal, subdue
The terrors that we meet,

By glimmering hopes, and gloomy fears
We trace the sacred road,
Through dismal deeps and dangerous snares,
We make our way to God.”

Filette stood among the white boles of a cluster of birches. The whole party were overshadowed by its illuminating gold. Alfy came up at the first verse, holding between his thumb and finger, a blue violet. At the close, he asked with terror in his wondering look,—

“Where is that place, auntie?”

“’Taint here!” called out Roland, dancing around Hester; “if it was, there wouldn’t be no white nor blue *violets.*”

“Where do *you* think that place is, Binah?” queried Lucy.

"Dat place, full ob thorn and pisen, and dismal swamp, be down South, where de slabe run way from oberseer whip! Dare ain't no odder, bad as dat."

"What is your opinion, Hester?"

"I should think that was the path I've been struggling through to get bread, all my life."

"There, we've all guessed, now tell us the riddle!" shouted Roland, amidst a general outburst of glee.

"My friends, that terrible, *gloomy, thorny, poison, barren* route, is the route the Cloudspire church is taking to Heaven!" said Lucy. "We think it is a wrong way. There is a better one. Our pleasant route to-day, through purple haze and golden sunshine, with happy and laughing voices, is the *right* direction. Let us move on."

Roland threw up his hat, and ran ahead with Alfy.

"I 'clar, I don't want go to Heaben dat oder road. Wants to go wid Miss Lucy," said Binah.

"And *I* with Mrs. Buddington," said Hester.

By this time the boys were calling from the brook-side,—

"Come! come! where the mosses are. Come get the ferns."

Down into the "rushy dell" they plunged, enraptured with the narrow babbling brook and its green, ferny fringes, hunting mosses under the willows, or reaching for the bright scarlet berries of the bitter-sweet swinging above their heads.

Roland, the pioneer, tired of mosses, led off Miss Lucy and Hester over the brook, and up the opposite hill, crested by a chestnut grove, anxious lest the "bandit squirrel" should smuggle all the nuts away.

Alfy wandered up the little stream, drawing along with him, Mary, Filette and Binah. Suddenly approaching a low copse, overgrown with vines, he ran back to his mother. The wildest fear was stamped upon his waxen face.

"Oh! mother, somebody is there under the alders, dead! in ragged clothès!"

A thought of her husband's untimely grave caused her to shudder; quick suspicion of a foul wrong blanched her face, which was turned appealingly to Filette.

"*Somebody dead!*" she whispered.

“What shall we do, Binah?” asked Filette. “Will you go with me to the copse?”

“Sartin, missis; nobody dead in dis lan’; Marse Alfy ’stook; somebody sleep.”

They went together. Binah bent down and saw a dark brown arm, bare to the shoulder for lack of the sleeve; it was thrown over a dark face half buried in the leaves, which had evidently been brought there for a purpose.

“Who is you?” called Binah. “What for you sleep? Who is you?”

Rapidly the arm fell; the figure crept out at the other side of the copse, and crawled away among the undergrowth of alders and tangled vines.

“Don’t run ’way, pore brudder!” called Binah, speeding on after him; “don’ run’ way — Binah been slabe — been whip — been sell — we’s all frien’ — ebry one — come wid Binah.”

The fleeing man took a few more rapid steps over the crackling branches. Binah followed slowly at a distance, then halted, and turned upon her a pitiful look.

“Come back,” said Binah. “Dese white ladies love we black folks — pity we — walk wid we. You’s hungry — dey gib you meat; you’s naked — dey gib you close. Come out er de bush — come in de house.”

Pausing step by step on the leaves and breaking twigs, he drew near as if charmed in spite of his fears, by her inviting voice.

“Come near,” persuaded Binah, extending her hand; “two mo’ black ones up on de hill dar, pickin’ ches’nut.”

He spoke not a word, but stealthily scanned the deep dell with his scared brown eyes.

Binah took a step or two nearer, and in an undertone, asked again,—

“Who is you? is you slabe, run away?”

“Run’way to freedom,” he replied.

“Dis don’ ’pear much like freedom, hidin’ here in dis gulch, on de leaves, like a patridge. How long you trabel?”

“Dunno; long time.”

“Whar you raised?”

“Virginny.”

"Whar you run way to?"

"Canada."

"Where be Canada?"

"Dunno."

"How you fin' Candy, when you dunno?"

"Foller de Nort' Star."

"Wha's matter wid your lef' arm?"

"White man shoot me; say I tief."

"I know; de white men's lay all dere own sin to we. Come, speak to dese ladies — dey cure you arm."

Both approached and met under the dark shelter of a hemlock.

"Come," said Binah to Mary, "speak to my poor brudder. Got no frein' — naked — hungry — fraid — arm broke wid de white man's gun."

Their hearts yearned with pity which welled to their eyes, on the contemplation of the hunted, tattered unit of humanity in their presence. One coat sleeve was gone; the other was torn open to the shoulder, to give opportunity to do something for the shattered bone and festering wound. His pantaloons hung in shreds above his ankles, torn by the briers and brush of the refugee's path; his feet were torn and bare; he held the remnant of a hat in his right hand, and dropped his gaze upon the ground, asking nothing.

"What is your name, poor fellow?" asked Filette.

"Bob, missis."

"What is your other name?"

"Dat all, missis."

"Can you trust to us, Robert? We have three colored ones living with us now; one of them is from the South. He was a slave there. My husband is your freind. Can you trust to us, Robert?"

"I 'spects I can, missis."

"You must have suffered from the cold in the woods, these fall nights."

"De leabes, missis."

Filette and Mary held counsel a few moments, and told Robert that there were men in that town whom he must not see.

"Robert" continued Filette, "we think you had better go back

into your bed under the alders till dark. It is near sunset now — it will not be long. Then my husband will come down here and take you to our house. Nobody shall find you; a doctor will be there, to-night. He will bind up your poor arm."

"You shall have a good warm supper and a good bed" said Alfy, while tears chased each other down his cheek. "Mother, I will stay here too, till Uncle George comes. Shall I?"

"Yes, my son, if Robert desires it; that is all you can do for him. Staying here to watch with our friend, will be giving your 'two mites,' Alfy; it may be counted more than we all shall do."

"Dats right, Alfy," praised Binah. "Den when your Uncle George comes, Bob will know he be frien'. An' you, Bob, you cober up in dem leabes; de gentlemen come soon now; Binah meet you at de house."

Roland's shrill call from the grove, demanded immediate obedience.

"Come up the hill! come quick! Chestnuts! chestnuts! chestnuts! Bushels! bushels! Come! come! come! Big ones! big ones! Come!"

Filette and Mary, during the ascent, agreed to keep the discovery a secret, and to lead their party home higher up the glen, for Robert's greater safety; for Roland's tongue and memory were often uncontrollable.

Upon the return, Lucy and Hester strayed on together. They spoke of the time of Lucy's marriage, of the changes since. They spoke of Roland, and many things pertaining to the past.

"One thing I have strongly desired to learn, Hester," said Lucy. "I suppose it is you, only, who will give me the information."

"I will tell you anything you ask me, Miss Lucy; I'm not afraid to tell you anything, now."

"If what I ask wounds you, say so, Hester; but I desire much to know the name of Roland's father."

Hester held her shawl to her mouth, bent her head as she walked, and uttered a little groan of surprise.

"Oh! Miss Lucy, you wont believe me;—I was only fifteen years old."

"Of course, I will. I never had cause to disbelieve you."

"I'll tell you near enough for you to guess," said Hester, holding her shawl to her lips.

"That will answer, Hester."

"Then, my Roland is half-brother to Mary Steele."

For a moment Lucy's thoughts whirled; but she traced the clew and cried,—

"Is it possible? Is Deacon Steele Rolands's father?"

They proceeded homeward in silence, till Lucy broke into a soft laugh.

"Do you know, Hester, that I am Roland's aunt?"

"No, Miss Lucy, no. You are no relation to my boy."

"I insist that I am. You see, Deacon Steele's family has cast me off, because, conscientiously, I take up the cause of the poor and oppressed. Now I will manifest good for evil; I will show to the world my attachment to the Steele blood. The thought has just occurred to me. There is not a male descendant of the Steele brothers, living; my own darling boy sleeps in the soil of Carolina. Hester, he was all my comfort in that far-off State. But Willie is dead! It was a cruel grief."

"Time, but the impression, stronger marks,
As streams their channels, deeper wear."

In a sorrowing monotone, she soliloquized,—

"I walk my parlor floor,
And through the open door,
I hear a foot-fall on the chamber floor;
I'm stepping towards the hall
To give the boy a call;
And then bethink me, that,— he is not there!"

"Oh, Miss Lucy! you are crying. Do not go on, so. 'Twill break your heart."

"Hester, that South robbed me of my dearest hopes. The one lovely blossom of my life folded its beauty there; and sometimes, these gusts of feeling will rush over me, and this splash of tears will fall; I have wandered from the point of conversation. I was saying, there is no male heir to the Steele name. I want some purpose added to my life. Will you give me your Roland? Do not decide abruptly; let me explain. He shall take the place of

my lost child ; I have means. He shall be educated ; I will dress him as Willie would have dressed ; he shall be respected ; I will call him 'my nephew,' Roland Steele, and he shall call me 'Auntie.' By doing this, I shall give an even-handed blow to the mockery of pretended prejudice, and the hypocritical cant against color. I have several debts of that kind to cancel. This acknowledgement of your son, Roland, will be a step in that direction.

"Hester, when I think of the wrongs of colored women, my heart sinks. North and South, more especially the latter, they are forbidden marriage, by statute. These unholy and God-defying statutes are framed by the very men who continually seek and demand of colored women the intimacy of the marriage relation. The virtue of these helpless women is wrested from them and thrown to the winds ; and although they may live with these men for years, they can have no claim upon their property or protection ; their children, termed unlawful upon the statute book, are sold in the South, as merchandise upon the auction-table. In the North, their children are sold by their fathers to poverty, ignorance, crime and shame. Hester, give me Roland. Let him bear the name of 'Steele,' the name of his heartless, praying father. Let me acknowledge him before the world, as my 'nephew,' and raise him up to honorable manhood. Do not decide rashly ; you shall have time. Consult Filette and her husband ; consult Roland's own good, first. These will aid your conclusions."

Night settled down upon Cloudspire, folding hill and dell in a mantle of darkness. Before the arrival of Mr. Buddington and Issy, Filette arranged an unoccupied sleeping room in a retired part of the house. With Mary's help she fastened thick blankets before the windows and brought in an easy chair. Binah, in the meantime, built a bright fire on the hearth, and heaped up a supply of wood for the night. A suit of Mr. Buddington's clothes were laid upon the bed ; the door was locked and the key dropped into Filette's pocket.

After tea, Filette drew her husband, Lucy and Hester to her room, informing them of Bob's hiding-place, and what she had learned concerning him. Hester insisted upon sending Roland to bed, that there should be no danger from his unguarded observation. Lucy rejoiced that her father was coming to carry herself and

Binah home, for thus he would be able to attend to the refugee's arm.

"Take Issy's cloak down to the glen, thou good Samaritan, and wrap Robert in it," said Filette to her husband; "then, any prying eyes that by chance may stray about us, will be beguiled into the thought that your companion is Paisley, himself."

"An angel wife for a good Samaritan, art thou, Filette! I shall enter the front door. Do not light the hall. Strange, what beauty this gentle spirit of humanity lends to thee! Is it lawful to kiss a Sister of Mercy?" he asked, when she felt herself drawn to him, and the pressure of his lips were left on her cheeks and brow. "*Au revoir*, dear one, till I return with your wounded charge."

In half an hour, the anxiety of the group in the parlor was relieved by hearing footsteps on the darkened staircase; the key to the front door was turned. Binah crept into the hall and stumbled up the dark stairs with a smoking supper.

An early ring at the bell, started a shiver of trepidation among the ladies in the well-lighted parlor.

"I will go to the door," said Lucy. "I can keep my self-possession, whoever it may be."

Upon turning the lock, a voice assailed her.

"What the mischief do you mean, locking out the doctor? Do you ever expect to live and thrive without him, and his nostrums?"

"Oh, father! what made you come so early?" she asked, after much hilarity in the parlor.

"Why, because I felt all day like visiting *well* people. I want to chat to-night on subjects outside my saddle-bags."

"So you have left them at home, father?"

"Of course I have. Can't you let your father be a man, amongst men, once a year?"

"Surely some good angel drew you here at seven o'clock."

"Then some good angel inveigled me into leaving my saddle-bags. Now leave me to pay my compliments to the ladies, without an accompanying prescription."

After the usual salutations, Filette, laying her hand upon the doctor's shoulder, invited him to follow her.

"Taken prisoner," he answered gayly. "What will become of

my castle in the air, which I have builded all day, about a social evening, if I follow you?" As his shaking sides passed through the door, he continued, "'Pon my word, I think I should have brought my lancet for self-defense, in this dark hall."

"Silence! doctor! Come up stairs."

He obeyed the mysterious command, finding himself in the secluded apartment by Robert's arm-chair.

From Robert, Binah and Alfy, he learned that his patient was overtaken by his master and shot at, but finally escaped; that his master had traced him to East Elms. The inference was, that hired spies were on the hunt at that moment. For greater security, it was advised that nothing be spoken concerning Robert on the first floor of the house; that Roland be kept out of the secret.

The doctor's examination of Robert's arm showed it to be a shot wound of a severe nature.

"A compound fracture, and gangrene in the ragged flesh," explained Doctor Clarendon, thoughtfully holding the hand swollen to twice the size of the other. "Requires immediate attention. Cursed be the fiend that pulled a trigger on this helpless, friendless being! George, who will go for my surgical case and medicines? My horse is pretty tired to-night. Cannot Paisley take your bay and the buggy?"

"Yes, let him bring back Mrs. Clarendon as if she were sent for to pass the evening. That will make the thing all right. What do you say, Buddington?"

"All right, doctor. Whatever is wanting for this poor, suffering, wounded fugitive, shall be forthcoming. Paisley shall soon be on the way, sir. Do your best, doctor, and make out your bill at as high a figure as you please, and draw upon me."

"*Mon Dieu!* George, you are a selfish fellow! Can't you allow me to take any stock in the 'Golden Rule?' I will not consent that you shall reap all the blessedness in Cloudspire. Now, mind, you shall not pay me for attending this wound, neither shall anybody else. I have been thinking lately of laying up a little treasure in Heaven, myself. Now Paisley, slip down stairs, out to the barn, rig up the bay and be off. I invite my wife to return for an evening visit. Mind, that is the ostensible cause of your night ride,

if any one questions. Make a nimble trip, and don't forget the cases."

When the sharp, swift beat of hoofs on the hard road died away, the doctor addressed his host.

"Buddington, it is best for us both to go down to the parlors, and to keep this evening's party pretty lively, as if nothing else demanded our attention. Some of Lucy's good angels have imbued me with a spirit of watchfulness; you know the house is suspicioned. Binah and Alfy will take good care of Robert; mind, you two keep your voices low. Here, George, let Binah go down and wait in the dark hall for a roll of old linen for bandages."

"I ain't sleep tree night, wid dis arm," meekly interposed Robert.

"Well, well; you shall sleep to-night, in a good bed too," answered the doctor.

Ishmael's bay was dashing round a turn in the road, when he was accosted from a wagon halting in the fork, the driver appearing in suspense.

"Halloo! stranger!"

"Halloo!" replied Ishmael, drawing the reins and thinking to himself, "how merciful is darkness."

"Do you know anything about a runaway nigger in these parts?"

"No, sir-ee," answered Issy gruffly. "They never come near me. There's a few of the black cusses in town, but they're too lazy to run away. They'd better try it, though, a great sight, for they are not wanted here."

Two horse laughs from the stranger's halting wagon, rolled forth on the night.

"I swear you're the right sort; and we found another like you, down to the tavern in that village, back apiece. He's a deacon. What's his name? He likes a drop of the craythur."

"Deacon Steele," answered Issy. "He's an especial friend of mine. He's true blue. A staunch supporter of the South and the Constitution. He's a pillar in the church where I belong."

"He's a damn'd good fellow!" roared from the wagon. "He treated us and himself to the best liquors the old tavern afforded. He said he believed he'd seen the damn'd nigger this very morning, pickling potatoes out of his swill barrel. The deacon said the

cuss looked at him a minnit. like a scared dog, and then run like a hound. It was so dark he couldn't tell which way he went. He thought he was a thief, and was glad to get red of him so easy."

"If the deacon hader known he was a runaway, he would have set his bull dog on him, and caught him for you. Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Issy.

"Said he would; I s'pose he'd help us hunt now, if he wasn't half seas over. But the old soaker wouldn't know east from west by this time."

"Where did that nigger run from?" asked Ishmael, boldly.

"From Virginny, that infernal border State. His master followed. Got track of him, a little this side of New York. See him as plain as daylight and sent a charge of buck-shot after him, for he said he'd hev' him, dead or alive; but the devil scooted. His master hadn't any dog, you see."

"Where's his master now?" asked Ishmael.

"He came up to East Elms — he's a waitin' there. We are willin' to help a man find his property. Nobody likes to lose what's their own. This nigger's worth twelve hundred dollars, you see."

"He ought to be found; but, as for me, they are an abomination, unless I could harness them up like horses, and make them plough my fields; but they're neither man nor beast, and I should hate devilishly to be plagued with 'em," roared Issy, with as much brass in his voice as he could muster.

"That's so! Where does this road lead to?"

"Near abouts to no where," said Ishmael. "No nigger nor white man would follow it, in the daytime."

"Which *is* the best road, friend?"

"You have to turn about, go back a short piece, and take the right hand that leads into the great stage road to Canada. You'd be likely to find him traveling that, dark nights. I've heard say they take a bee line for Canada."

"I swear, friend, you're right; we'll go."

The grind of turning wheels and the crack of the whip showed the spies to be in earnest.

"You have my best wishes, gentlemen, good-night!"

Issy had sent the hunters in one direction and the impatient bay

bounded on in another. Every stride of the horses increased the distance between them.

"Ah! what have I done," thought Issy. "Am I guilty of a crime?"

His beating heart replied,—

"You have saved Robert!"

"Be it so," thought Ishmael, "God is my judge, not men."

"Issy, why drive so fast this dark night?" inquired Mrs. Clarendon. "I confess I am afraid of Squire Buddington's horses."

"Madam, the bay is safe—we both know the road; the ladies are in haste to see you; do not be alarmed."

Ishmael related to Mr. Buddington his encounter with the scouts, and a double watch was set upon the family proceedings. The doctor's wife was missed from the parlors only long enough to look at Robert, and leave him a few encouraging words.

Tea and refreshments were served at ten o'clock, in the dining-room, where all might be seen through the uncurtained windows.

Binah was left with Filette, to remain up stairs, as nurse for Robert, till the excitement over the fugitive might cease. The doctor said, "I will explain to the curious, that I've dosed her into bed, for inflammatory rheumatism; and there is not christianity enough in the town, outside of our circle, to impel one foot towards her room; so we are safe enough to let her stay."

When the lights were extinguished for the night, Mr. Buddington and his wife stole up to Robert's room.

Binah sat by the suffering man, dropping a soothing wash upon the splintered arm.

"How did the doctor find the wound?" asked Filette.

"Drefful, missis! Doctor say it may hab to compitate, 'bove de elbow; but he try to save it."

"We hope he can save it. What medicine did he leave, Binah?"

"Dem powder, dere, to make Bob sleep; he dream, missis! dream dey hunt for him; he say,—

"Dere de come! dere de come!" Den he whisper, "O Jesus! where I hide? where I hide?"

"They are pursuing him, Binah; they may come here; do not let Robert know; keep the door locked on the inside. We shall

want you to stay in the room, days, and we will stay with him nights."

"Yes, Binah, we must all be dumb at our work in the day. So you must sleep at night," said Mr. Buddington. "I will stay with our poor Robert to-night. You go, now, with Filette, and sleep the rest of the night. One thing more. Be sure, Binah, that Roland does not set his eyes on *you*. Little Roland can't equivocate; he will tell all he knows."

Turning to his wife, he said with a bitter determination,—

"When we rescue a human being, black or white, from a blood-thirsty Southerner, we must brandish the self-same weapons we find in their hands. When the slaveholder or his minions come to my door and ask 'Where is my slave?' we must answer boldly, 'Your slave is not here;' for no man can hold his fellow-man a slave. If he asks, 'Is there a runaway nigger here?' we must use a decisive, '*No!*' for, in our creed, there are *no* niggers. Now, good-night, both of you. I will nurse Robert tenderly, remembering all night *a lonely grave in Indiana.*"

After an early breakfast, the next morning, Mr. Buddington stept hastily into the kitchen, from the barn, and said,—

"Hester, this is *your* time to be on your guard. That tall, black-gloved Lappin, that was on the last committee to our house, has come out in all this cold, pouring rain, to buy hay of me. I directed Issy to show him the hay, and sure enough he's tramping all over the mows, and pulling it up in every corner, pretending to look at the quality; but I *know* he's looking for the fugitive, Robert; so be careful! I will speak to Filette."

He had scarcely closed the door, when Roland bounded into the kitchen.

"Mother! has there been a ragged, runaway nigger, here?"

"Why, child, don't you see all the people that come here? Have you seen any ragged body?"

"No, mother; but that man says I must tell him if there's a runaway slave here; and, mother, he says if I tell him, he'll give me two dollars."

He asked Issy, and Issy said,—

"Mrs. Buddington never had any tramps in her house, bringing in filth and diseases."

Issy laughed when he said, "Mrs. Buddington is a very nice lady, sir."

"What makes you so wet, child? Where have you been?"

"Mr. Lappin kept me out there by the gate, in the rain; he wants you to go out there. He is going to tell you how you can make some money."

"Good gracious, child! I can't go out there in this shower. Tell him I am alone in the kitchen; he can come in by the fire and dry himself."

Out skipped Roland with a whoop, singing out,—

"Red candy," "White candy," "Yellow candy," "Peppermints-mints," "Sugar-horse," "Sugar-rooster!"

"I guess you are thinking about the money your mother can make, aren't you?" coaxingly lisped Mr. Lappin.

"Yes, sir-r-r! I be," hopping up to his imaginary benefactor on one foot; "mother wants you to come into the kitchen — she's all alone."

Mr. Lappin moved towards the house and in at the door, like a gaunt shadow of evil; before sitting, he rolled a pair of searching eyes towards every door of the apartment, saying with a simpering chuckle,—

"We are all alone, Hester?"

"Yes, sir, I am always alone at this time in the morning. The rest are busy about their own affairs."

"Well, I've got a little business on hand, and I thought you might help me and yourself, too. You have heard about that run-away slave from Virginy, of course."

"How should I hear? I never go out to hear anything. The neighbors have all cut our acquaintance; they won't even let us go to church; how should I hear?"

"Of course, you will deny all about it; but when I tell you the whole, you may *change* your tune."

"You see, Hester, I've just moved over next to Deacon Steele's, and I think he's a man that loves his neighbor as himself; just about sunrise he come over to my house, and told me to look out for a thieving nigger that he found, early that morning, eating out of his swill barrel. You see, there was a hard frost, the night afore, and I thought I'd track him and see if he was hanging round

our place. I went down to the deacon's, and I tracked him to the rail fence out east; I knew he got over there, for some of his rags was picked off there, on the sharp splinters on the top rail. I went on down into the muddy bottom, and, sure enough, there was great barefooted tracks in the mud *that* side, and on the other too, where he jumped over. He was a runnin', I knew by the long steps and the deep tracks in the soft mud, and I knew it was him — for nobody here goes barefooted this weather. I didn't think anything about it, only I was glad he'd cleared out from our part of the town.

"Last night," he went on, "after we'd all gone to bed, two fellows waked us up and asked if we'd seen anything of a runaway nigger, and if we wanted a reward of a hundred dollars, we'd better look him up.

"I didn't say anything about the tracks, for fear somebody else would find him. I know he run in this direction, and I know Buddington's a crazy abolitionist; so I started early in the rain to find out; now, you're poor and never had any money, I'll give you twenty-five dollars out of the hundred, if you'll tell me if he's here."

"Mr. Lappin, I see every person that comes into that kitchen door. I'm up first in the morning, and I lock the doors at night, and I've never seen such a person as you describe, here. Mrs. Buddington is particular,—she don't have old shacks about here, I can tell you. He may have got into the hay in the barn, but Roland's out there every day for hen's nests — he would have hauled him out in quick metre."

"Oh! I've looked the hay all over myself," he replied, in a low tone of disappointment.

Mr. Buddington entered the kitchen, saying cordially,—

"I am very glad, Mr. Lappin, you have come to-day. Better stay until the rain holds up."

"No, Mr. Buddington, he did not come in to dry himself," interposed Hester. "I'll tell you when I'done laughing," holding her sides and bending over the sink. "Oh! my! it's too good!"

After catching her breath and drying her eyes, she continued,—

"Mr. Lappin's hunting a nigger — somebody's slave — I never saw a slave in my life; he'll get a hundred dollars for him — *when*

he finds him. Ha! ha! ha! keep an eye on *me* and *Roland*, sir — please,— he'll be lugging us off!"

"If you want twenty-five dollars, sir, Mr. Lappin will give it to you, to tell where his game is."

There was no time for an answer from Mr. Buddington, for his visitor rose, white with rage, and denounced Hester.

"What that girl says, friend Buddington, is a falsehood, blacker than her color.

"She has fabricated every word. I came over to buy hay, as the weather was lowering, and I could not work out. I am a member of the church of Christ, and I strive to live according to its precepts. Mr. Buddington, I am a man of truth. That girl is a specimen of her corrupt race. The blacks are incapable of moral sentiments or religious convictions. She has brought up her boy to confirm all her falsehoods. Reports throughout the town confirm my words. Mr. Buddington, I came here to purchase hay, sir. I have examined it. I find the quality good, but I find the price higher than I expected. I cannot engage to take it."

"As you please, Mr. Lappin," mildly answered George, with queer evidences of good humor lurking in the corners of his eyes.

"May I ask if I am exonerated, in your mind, from the infamous charges of your servant?"

"It makes very little difference, as to my opinion; your own conscience will be the best approval. I have business to-day, Mr. Lappin, and will bid you 'good-morning.'"

Hester's pitiless laugh flew after him at the open door; the javelin of her voice passed through it to his wagon.

"Good-morning, Mr. Lappin. Call again! do, and bring your conscience with you, do!"

Robert, carefully guarded from alarm, knew nothing of the keen pursuit after him in the secrecy of his room. The doctor administered to him daily, seeking various pretences to avoid the suspicion of those on the alert.

Sometimes he brought Lucy to spend the day, and came for her the next morning. Sometimes he went under cover of night.

The flutter over the escaped fugitive and the "one hundred dollars" reward, merged into agitation respecting Binah's inflammatory rheumatism.

Cloudspire had nothing remarkable in it but its religion.

That being frozen to adamant in its original mould, admitted no variation or speculation ; therefore, affairs outside of that, of not a feathers weight, became ponderous in the meditations of the people. The opening of a neighbor's door or blind, which was usually closed, offered an inexhaustible source of conjecture and conversation.

Binah's inflammatory rheumatism set the town agog. The doctor was plied with interminable questions ; and the general conclusions were that "Them Southern slaves should never come into the North, but should stay where they were."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THANKSGIVING, the annual New England festival so dear to her children, was in near prospect.

Two days before, the rich "Drovier" and Thad returned to Cloudspire with as handsome a lot of cattle and horses as ever was seen ; so the farmers said, who caught sight of them from their fields and yards, as they passed.

Filette, Mary and Hester, worked days together in their cheerful kitchen, to prepare for the revered holiday. Cupboard and larder brimmed over with dainties, in waiting for the expected assemblage of rare and tried friends, whose voices were ever uplifted for the oppressed, and who, like themselves, suffered the persecution and isolation of the true Reformer.

Alfy rode "Uncle Ned" over to Mr. Link's farm to welcome Thad, after his wonderful travels, and to carry the command that both must present themselves at Uncle George's the next day at an early hour.

"Come out to the barn, and see our fine cattle and horses," urged Thad. "There's bays, and blacks, and chestnuts, and grays; and I'll show you something that'll make you want to be a drover too, Alf."

He led his wondering brother through the yard of prancing creatures, commenting with a business air, upon their points of

beauty and value, and reassuring Alf, who appeared uneasy with fear amidst their wild play.

"Never mind, Alf, they know my voice and the proper place for their heels. Hey! there, you black Beltshazzar! shall I crack this whip? your shoes shine well in the sun, they're all right. Take care, sir, you needn't show your shoes again. Come into the stable, Alf."

He led out from his nice quarters, knee-deep in clean straw bedding, a plump, round, dapple gray pony with snow-white mane and tail.

"Oh, Thad! how pretty!" exclaimed Alf, eagerly.

"I think so, too; its the general opinion."

"What's his name, Thad?"

"His name is 'Silver,' Alf. 'Silver' is mine, my own. Mr. Link bought him for me; and I have a new saddle with my name upon it. Little nicer than old Ned, hey, Alf?"

"Silver may be nicer *now*, but he must grow old sometime; I love old Ned. He's fat as a seal. I comb and brush him every day. Come out and see him."

They walked on together, chatting about Thad's trip to the West.

"Is that 'Ned?'" asked Thad, with surprise; "he has grown handsome, under your care and Uncle George's. Ned shnes like silk. A new blanket! He has fallen into a good home."

"Everybody falls into a good home that goes to Uncle George's. Oh, Thad, I have somethng nice to tell you to-morrow."

"I shall listen to every word, Alf. Then, I have something ugly to tell you and the folks. What's going to be there to-morrow?"

"Lots of friends. The doctor and his wife, and Lucy, Richard Beame, Fanny and her beau, Mr. Sterlingworth, Mrs. Beame, Susan Hughes, and the children. There will be — I forgot — Mr. and Mrs. Glenly, from West Elms, their two daughters, and one son; that makes eighteen with you and Mr. Link; then there's seven of us."

"That makes twenty-five. That'll do for a lively time."

"Well, Thad, there's one more to make twenty-six, but I shan't

tell who, till you see him. Ride over with me, Thad, on 'Silver,' and see mother."

"Can't go, now, Alfy. Mr. Link is away for a few hours, and left the yard to me; but, tell mother we'll be there early to-morrow. Mind, Alfy, don't mention my pony, 'Silver.' I want to give them a surprise."

Thanksgiving day arrived, cold and clear; every kind of vehicle rumbled over the frozen ground, carrying every variety of human freight, from toddling children and third cousins, to the gray-haired grand-parents.

The two parlors of Mr. Buddington's house were well warmed and cheerful from the flood of gladsome sunlight which poured into the long south windows, and lighted up the crimson and purple confusion of easy-chairs, *tete-a-tetes* and lounges, with flaming touches.

At ten o'clock, Filette and Mary took seats in the pleasant rooms with the family.

"There," said one to the other, "the work is all out of the way; we have nothing to do, but enjoy the occasion."

"Yes, Filette, we shall have a long festival; amidst the crowding cares and anxieties, which life brings, we should make the most of these rare intervals of happy rest."

She turned a mother's glance down the brown road between leafless branches, and exclaimed,—

"Somebody is coming; let's see! a man in a wagon and some one riding a white horse follows."

"Why, that's Mr. Link," said Filette; "the other is Thad, on a silver-gray pony, with a new saddle and a silver-mounted bridle; do look, Filette, at the gay tassels flying below the pony's ears. What does it all mean? Thad looks brown and plump; he rides like a major."

"Dear Mary, I can guess what it all means. Mr. Link is rich and he has nobody to love; he has taken an attachment for Thad, and likes to see him happy."

A moment more, and Thad, throwing the rein to Alfy, rushed into the parlor.

"Here's your drover-boy, mother! Give me 'How de'e.'"

Mary held him proudly to her heart, and murmured abstractedly,—

"So my boy has come back alive!" while a few tears, the exhalations of her never-forgotten sorrow, fell upon his head.

"Why shouldn't I come back alive, mother?" asked Thad with surprise.

"Sure enough," answered Filette for Mary. "Of course you would come back alive and handsome, too; you would fly back on the celestial wings of youthful hope, if by no other means, Thad.

"Oh! by the way, how is it that you ride that beauty of all Mr. Link's drove?"

"Because I ride my own horse, Aunt Filette. 'Silver' is my own; my name is on the saddle and bridle."

"So, so! you have made a fine start in the world," she replied, gayly.

"Come out and see him, both of you; come"

"Mrs. Buddington, how pleasant your rooms are. Life seems to be worth something, here," said Mr. Link, taking the arm-chair offered him.

"They lack the very aroma of happiness which will pervade these parlors when all our guests arrive; for, to me, nothing is so dear on earth, as the interchange of the pure and lofty thoughts of kindred spirits; to-day, we are all to be kindred spirits. Such converse is sweeter to me than sunshine or flowers."

"How many times have you all been to church since I went away?" broke in Thad.

"Roland and his mother and I have been once," laughingly answered Ishmael.

"Why did you not go oftener? why didn't you go and sit on the *bare ground*?" asked Thad, with a comical and knowing expression.

"What do *you* know about it?" queried Uncle George.

"I know *all* about it—I was there."

"Where?" asked Alf.

"I was there, in the meeting-house when the deed was done."

"Let us hear about it," chimed in the voices.

"Mr. Link and I started that day, for the West. When we reached West Elms, he had business at the bank; but, taking out his pocket-book, found he had left important papers at home. He told me to jump on 'Thunderbolt's' back and return after them. I took my supper at home and got back as far as the meeting-house,

about nine o'clock in the evening. It was very dark; you know there's a cross road that leads out to the horse-sheds. Well, I suppose 'Thunderbolt' thought he was going to prayer-meeting, and before I knew it, he was half way across that old road. All of a sudden, he shied out. I looked to see what was there; for, when he shies, there's something to shy at; there were two buggies tied there, in the bushes, and one old wood-wagon. I didn't see nor hear any person, so I said to myself, I'd see what's up.

"I turned back into the traveled road, and walked 'Thunderbolt' on the turf, round into the dootor's yard, and tied him. The doctor's house was dark. I didn't think they were at home; then I went over to the green and listened; there seemed to be some sort of sawing and cracking of boards inside. I slipped round to the door and peeped in, for it was open. It was dark, there; but, as I stood still, gleams of light streamed on the floor boards and upon some heaps of red cloth lying in the aisle, and went out into the darkness, again. Between these times, I crept in at the door and around a side aisle, into one of the pews near the sawing and working. There were four men talking in whispers and laughing under their breath. They were in your pew, Uncle George, taking out the seats and pulling up the floor."

"'Mr. Lappin,' said one, 'we're making a good stable for them niggers, with a ground floor. Willaim Steele said they are no better'n beasts, and I believe it.'"

"'Well, Sam, they've got no intellects, and can't understand the mysteries of the 'Godhead,' said another.

"'I hear they're bought and sold South with the cattle,' answered other.

"'That's the way they ought to be,' said a coarse voice. 'Where's these things all a goin'?'"

"'They're going to Deacon Steele's,' answered the other. 'He sent me with the old wood wagon to carry 'em over there. He's the principal church-business man in this town, ain't he?'

"'He's going to put 'em in his garret, and when this abolitionism's played out, he's going to put the pew back again,' answered Lappin.

"'Going to carry planks, and all?' asked the coarse voice.

"'Them's the orders,' answered Sam.

“ ‘Here’s the last damned plank of the nigger pew,’ said the coarse voice.

“ ‘Dont swear, Lem, in the church of the Lord,’ begged a smooth voice, and I knew in a minute *that one* was Deacon Assen’s son, ‘Thode,’ the one that’s studying for the ministry down to Andover. Mr. Link showed him to me one day.’

“ ‘Consistency, thou art a jewel,’ ” remarked Mr. Buddington. Upon which commentary a chorus of derisive laughter rippled forth.

“Who is that Lem, Mr. Link?”

“It’s Lem Hamm. You know him; he wears a tarpaulin, and rings in his ears. He’s an old salt. Some folks say he used to go on the slave ships to Africa, for cargoes of slaves. He’s a hard fellow.”

“How did you get out, Thad?” asked Alfy.

“That light they had was a dark lantern. They extinguished it when they finished sawing. So I crept out softly, and stayed outside till I saw them carry away *cushions, seats, floor and all.*”

“The last thing I heard, was that rough ‘Lem’ swearing,—

“ ‘Damn the niggers; I’d like to hang them all up to these trees, around this church, and them Buddingtons with ’em. If they’ll set in church together, let ’em hang together.’ ”

“That young minister was saying,—

“ ‘Take care, Lem, you are all going to have a supper at Deacon Steele’s. Don’t swear there.’

“Lem answered,—

“ ‘I’ll swear, if he don’t bring on the liquor and give us all some drinks. This night-work is d — d hard.’

“ ‘You’ll get all you want, there,’ said Mr. Lappin. ‘The deacon keeps all kinds.’

“Never mind now, Thad, there’s Mr. Glenly and his family, and Fanny Beame, and Mrs. Beame, bringing Susan and her children.”

After the affectionate greetings were over, Uncle George took Richard, Mr. Sterlingworth and Mr. Link, up to the curtained room where Robert was slowly convalescing.

The half curtains afforded a view of squares of the bright, blue sky, the delicate tracery of leafless tree tips, and the scalloped lines of distant hills. Alfy, Robert’s faithful attendant, had fes-

tooned the room with evergreen ground pine, brought surreptitiously from the woods ; a blazing fire crackled on the hearth, inviting the company to tarry.

The circumstances of his escape from bondage, and discovery were recounted.

"Robert will never use that arm and hand for labor," said the doctor, who followed them up. "Robert is maimed for life. He is the victim of our laws ; by their behest, he is hunted like the beasts, with dogs and guns."

"This," continued Mr. Glenly, "is the protection afforded by a government, instituted to secure 'certain inalienable rights, with which men are endowed by their Creator, such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.'"

"Yes, further," continued Mr. Sterlingworth, "this disabled man is the fruit of a Constitution, ordained to 'establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and promote the general welfare.'"

"The whole thing, laws, constitution and government, are a biting satire upon American liberty."

"The church may be added to the hypocritical list," suggested Richard Beame, "for this hunting, shooting and maiming, is the prerogative of the self-styled followers of Christ. The Northern churches are but the whippers-in of the panting, footsore fugitive, who seeks in another country the 'life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness,' promised all mankind in ours."

"As for that matter," pursued Mr. Buddington, "they are whippers-in of all those who protect or defend, by word or deed, him who flees from the thumb-screw, the overseer's lash, or the auction-room. You and I have had sufficient experience in that, Richard."

"How long shall you keep Robert here?" inquired Mr. Glenly. "You know Benjamin Lundy said, 'Philanthropists are the slowest creatures breathing. They think forty times before they act.' I think it would be well in this case, to think many times less. The reward is still out, and your house is suspected. Doctor, how about this arm for traveling?"

"Oh ! as to that, Robert is beyond danger now. A few weeks of rest, and the care which he'll know how to administer, is all that is required."

"I think he should be on the road to Canada, as soon as possible," remarked Mr. Sterlingworth. "The weather is growing cold, and one small incident may jeopardize his safety."

The silence of regret that followed showed how deeply Robert's sorrows were interwoven with the sympathies of his rescuers. Alfy's living eyes filled with tears, and would not leave the dark face of his friend.

Mr. Buddington looked gravely abstracted, and the doctor spoke with unusual feeling.

"I don't like to lose my patient. My profession never before yielded the pleasure experienced in his attendance."

"Let me help you out," said Mr. Link. "I go to Canada a good deal on business. I know the route and the stopping places on it. I know people there with kind hearts. I know stables where I can get Robert a comfortable place to earn a living, with one hand, and a part of another. George, you have done enough. Let me bear a part of the burden."

"When can you go?" asked Mr. Glenly.

"Any time you say. Has he warm clothes, George? that's a cold country, and it's a long ride."

"I should say to-night," said Mr. Sterlingworth. "The journey must be made in the night. Robert, have you brought along your wages for all these years of work in the sunny South? Have you any money?"

"No, sir; I got nothin'!"

"No money, and not even a name, I suppose."

"I is 'Bob,' sir."

Mr. Sterlingworth paced the floor and replied,—

"What can be more abject? Who could be more robbed and bruised along life's wayside, than he? A sharp heart-ache springs up, when I see such robbery, and think of the two and a half or three millions groaning in the same condition. Gentlemen, let us act the samaritan's part."

"Alfy," said Mr. Buddington, "carry round the hat;" offering his own. "The churchesd rop their offering to-day, to the God of the American Constitution; let us make offerings to the God of the friendless."

"Your remark, Mr. Buddington, reminds me of the words of

Wendell Phillips at the meeting in Fanueil Hall, last month, in behalf of the slave, Latimer. You may have read it in the *Liberator*, but it will bear repeating, and inscribing upon the register of memory. In the midst of a shouting and hissing mob, he said,—

“*When I look upon these crowded thousands and see them trample upon their consciences and the rights of their fellow-men, at the bidding of a piece of parchment; I say, MY CURSE BE UPON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.*”

Alfy went round with the hat and returned to Uncle George.

“Deliver it to Mr. Glenly,” he said, “as treasurer. Now go down and ask the ladies to give a good samaritan purse.”

His swift feet soon returned to the chamber, holding up a purse knitted of bright purple and crimson silk, sprinkled with stars of gilt beads and hung with heavy tassels of the same. Two rings of gold encircled it, and on one was engraved, “Lucy.”

“There, Robert, that is yours!” approaching him, nearly choked with joy. “That is yours, from Miss Lucy.”

A happy look o’erspread Robert’s face and frightened brown eyes.

“No, Marse Alfy, too fine for I.”

While the two, alike in simple childish natures, were examining the beautiful object, the gentlemen laid plans for further flight. Mr. Link offered to go himself, that very night, for Canada.

“If anybody wishes to overtake ‘Thunderbolt,’ they will ride faster than is common in these parts.”

“Your horse may be tired, Mr. Link, take my bay,” offered Mr. Buddington.

“Oh, no, we travel slow with a drove, and he’s had two days rest. ‘Thunderbolt’ knows my voice and my hand on the rein. His resolute shoulders will butt away darkness, distance, and fear.”

Issy offered his help in the care of Mr. Link’s yards, and would stay with Thad till Mr. Link returned. He also insisted upon putting ten dollars in the samaritan purse, saying,—

“My father in Charleston furnishes me more money than I need.”

So the purse was filled, and the hour of Robert’s departure set at eleven o’clock that night.

“What are your means of self-defense, if waylaid, Mr. Link? Robert will be no help, you see,” queried Mr. Sterlingworth.

“My friends, I rely first, upon the Supreme Ruler of events; next, upon my horse, and if necessity requires, I have a trusty brace of pistols; a drover shouldn't be a bad shot.”

“If they get sight of your charge, and you escape, those Virginians will demand the Governor of Massachusetts to deliver you up, as they demanded Governor Seward of New York to deliver up the three men in the schooner ‘Robert Carter’ case in which a slave, ‘Isaac,’ escaped to New York from Norfolk. These Virginians demanded them as slaves-stealers, even after Isaac was seized and taken to Virginia in defiance of the State laws. Woe be to you, in the hands of these Southern desperadoes!”

Mr. Link replied,—

“I think I should be safe enough, if Governor Davis has the back-bone of Governor Seward; and if he had not, the Massachusetts abolitionists would swarm, as they've done in the Latimer case.

“The Governor of Georgia, also demanded of the Governor of Maine, the captain of the ‘Boston,’ homeward bound to that State, as a fugitive from justice, because a slave secreted himself on his vessel, and afterwards escaped to Canada,” said Mr. Glenly.

“And you, my friend Buddington, if those blue-bloods knew your crime, it would not be safe for you to go to the barn, nights, to take care of your stock, or to ride home belated, after dark. There was my friend, Isaac Hopper, a Quaker, suspected of harboring a fugitive. He was knocked down on the street by an unknown hand, and thus laid upon his bed for days. Then there's Arthur Tappan of New York, a well-known abolitionist. A reward of twenty thousand dollars has been offered for him, to be delivered on the levee at New Orleans. The *Charleston Patriot* adverted to it, with apparent approbation.

“Why, sir, those Southrons are blood-thirsty assassins! Like savage beasts having the taste of blood in their own latitude, they demand the delirious draught in every Northern metropolis, and on every acre of the States.”

Filette now entered the room, at the summons of her husband.

“Robert is going to leave us to-night,” he said, “for Canada;

he must be warmly clad. How shall the flannels be made up for him? Can you ladies constitute yourselves into a sewing society and finish them by eight o'clock this evening?"

"I am sure they would be most happy; we can easily accomplish that and more, which will be necessary."

She laid her hand on Robert's shoulder, and looking into his dark face, said kindly,—

"I am sorry to part with you so soon. We could take care of you much longer, could we not, doctor?"

"With all our hearts, with all our hearts; but our friends here, advise departure."

"I 'fraid dey catch me here, missis." Robert's face beamed with a grateful sense of Filette's kindness. "Mus' go to Canada. 'Spects de Queen Victory will be good to I, like you, missis. Dey say she let we be free dere, missis."

"Bless the queen's dear heart; she will be good to all such as you. Robert will be free there."

"True, Filette," responded her husband. "This country is ruled by a bit of parchment, set up like a dumb idol; we might as well be ruled by the wooden Juggernaut of pagan India; but you must hasten. Robert has no warm surtout or cloak," he continued, to the gentlemen.

Mr Link came to their aid,—

"I will furnish that. I bought a long cloak with a double cape, especially for traveling on my trips. Allow me, Mr. and Mrs. Buddington, to give it to our wayfarer."

Below, Susan insisted upon helping Hester about the dinner; while Susan's children and Roland made the house and grounds ring again with boisterous glee; ever and anon stealing into the parlors, to whisper something wonderful and sweet in the ear of Miss Fannie.

Binah would stay with Robert, and talk over slave times.

When the gentlemen were gathered into the busy parlors, 'twas the general request that Mr. Sterlingworth should give them an account of the trial of George Latimer, claimed a slave, in Boston. Thad and Alfy were eager listeners to the story of his master's (James B. Grey) endeavor to recapture him.

"Every step," said Friend Sterlingworth, "was taken by the

friends of justice to foil the slave catchers ; but the enslavers and their Northern allies make the laws. A writ of *Habeas Corpus* was sued out by Latimer's lawyers, Samuel E. Sewall and Amos Merrill. The writ was set aside ; Chief Justice Shaw and the court, by United States authority, gave the advantage to the man-hunter, Grey, that he could claim his slave in any State whither he had fled, and take him back to bondage ; time was also given the master to prove his ownership. At every turn in Latimer's behalf, Judge Shaw and Boston's City Attorney, flourished United States Statutes in our faces, till the slave was cast into jail, in the custody of Grey, till the trial."

"One triumph the Abolitionists gained, however," said Mr. Glenly ; "they secured a trial by jury."

"They did so. Charles M. Ellis and Samuel E. Sewall handled the case vigorously. Again, Judge Shaw called up the hideous spectre of the 'Maryland Prigg case,' and Latimer was left in Boston jail."

"I suppose the excitement rose to a great height. The indignation meeting at Faeuil Hall was thronged."

"About four thousand pro and con. The minions of the slaveocracy resolved to break up the meeting. Speakers were howled and hissed down, and their voices drowned by the most infernal tumult man is capable of making."

"Remond and Fred Douglass could not be heard for the din of schreeches and hisses."

"Samuel E. Sewall presided?" asked Richard Beame.

"In the finest and most dignified manner, Richard. There were letters from the 'old man eloquent,' Samuel Hoar, and others ; Wendell Phillips registered his curse on the Constitution. When Edmund Quincy seconded the resolutions of Joshua Leavitt, he repeated an alphabet which the ruffianism of Boston must remember, and which will frame itself into resistless denunciation upon their heads hereafter."

"Can you give us a few of his sentiments?" asked Lucy.

"I can give you some of his words, which I took down in shorthand." Mr. Sterlingworth took a paper from his pocket-diary, and read: "Of the fugitives from bondage, Mr. Quincy said, 'He turns his face to the North Star, which he had been falsely told

hung over a land of liberty. He threads the forest, he hurries by night across the green swamps, he lies concealed by day in the tangled cane-brake, he dares the treacherous morass, he fords rivers, he scales mountains; but he shuns the face of Christian man, as his deadliest foe. At last, he reaches the Free States; but he rests not from his pilgrimage until he has taken sanctuary in the very birthplace of Liberty. He places his feet on our hearthstone, and demands hospitality and protection. And with what reception met this demand upon the humanity, the Christianity, the love of liberty of Boston? The signal for the chase is given; the immortal game is on foot; a pack of bloodhounds, in human shape, is put upon the scent; they pursue, seize, and hold him down, with the oppressor himself, for the master of the hunt, and the second judicial magistrate in the nation, for whipper-in. Your police officers and jailors under the compulsion of no law, are the voluntary partakers of this hideous chase; and your streets and your prisons form the hunting-ground, on which the quarry is run down and secured.'

"To the ruffianism of the North, that is the alphabet of an unknown tongue. Its real interpretation may be found for them, hereafter."

"The Northern conscience feels nothing but the Southerner's slave-chain which binds it," observed Mary.

"What became of Latimer?" asked Alfy, whose sympathies led him directly to the desired result.

"He was finally bought, my son, for four hundred dollars; thus Boston, recreant to justice and humanity, became a partner with slaveholders. Bought what James B. Grey had to sell — a human being! She made her streets the auction ground of man, to the highest bidder."

During the relation, Alfy drew his chair very close to Friend Sterlingworth, often turning his troubled blue eyes intently upon him. Thad, equally interested but ever conservative, changed his seat to the other end of the Friend's sofa. He now inquired, —

"Are there no kind-hearted people in the South? are they all given over to deeds of cruelty?" A latent tone of sarcasm colored both questions.

A rapid smile ran round the party.

"Never mind, Thad," spoke Mr. Glenly's youngest daughter, Ida, whose Southern proclivities we have before seen, "I often ask that question myself. Thank you for the thread and scissors, Fanny."

Fanny passed them with a grave, reproving smile.

Friend Sterlingworth replied in his usual calm manner.

"There are many men and women in the South, who might heed the claims of justice and humanity, if they were free from the yoke which slavery imposes upon the white masters, as well as upon their slaves. The necessity in efforts to enslave human beings, by natural right the equals of ourselves, is a hardening process. The horrible system is maintained at the expense of every noble and godlike instinct of the human soul."

"It is a natural law, that water cannot rise higher than its source," interposed Lucy. "I think the same law applies to mind. The heartless and brutal slave laws of the Southerner must spring from a debased and brutal source. They cannot flow from natures imbued with pure and exalted impulses."

"And yet," said Mr. Glenly, "there are those who yield to the dictates of conscience, and come out from the mass of corruption about them; such as J. D. Palfrey, who inherited slaves in Louisiana, who gave them freedom and brought them to New England. Then, there's James G. Birney, who came from Alabama to the North, a martyr to his views on immediate emancipation. He manumitted twenty-one slaves at a cost of about twenty thousand dollars to himself."

"The direst proscription is promised, however, to every Southerner who secedes from the slave-code," said Friend Sterlingworth impressively. "Thad, remember that Mr. Birney's name was expunged from the roll of attorneys in the supreme court of Alabama. He had also been a trustee in the University of Alabama and an honorary member of several societies; from all these, he was expelled by resolutions as a mark of displeasure and hatred of the South."

"There is another beautiful instance of adherence to principle, and a willing obedience to the dictates of conscience. The example of the Misses Grimke of Charleston, South Carolina," said Mrs. Glenly. "Those two ladies bade farewell to rank, opulence

and a life of luxury, and accepted a life of exile from all they held dear, casting in their lot with the despised and vilified friends of Freedom in the North. Sarah and Angelina Grimke seem to me to be two celestial beings, leading the way in which we should follow; the hem of their garments I am not worthy to touch."

"Fanny, you remember well, Leonore Wallace who visited us at East Elms," remarked Caro Glenly.

"We all loved her," responded Mrs. Glenly. "Her sentiments were after our hearts; but she lacked strength to follow her convictions. Filial affection was the stronger passion."

"Leonore Wallace was my beau-ideal of a frank, fearless, proud and gentle girl," said Caro.

"Leonore Wallace?" asked Lucy; "where from? I once knew a lovely Leonore Wallace in Charleston, South Carolina."

"She must be the same. She spent one summer in East Elms, with friends, and insisted upon making our acquaintance as abolitionists. We found her a young person of high refinement, of elegant but unaffected manners; a most genial companion. She even formed a strong attachment for our Fanny, here, despite Fanny's puritanical simplicity."

Lucy dropped the flannel on which she was stitching, sank back into her chair, ejaculating with moistened eyes,—

"Is it possible that you have seen and know Leonore Wallace? She sits enthroned in my memory. To my Southern solitary life and sorrow she dared to give me aid and comfort. Have you heard from her since?"

"Not a syllable," answered Mrs. Glenly. "Her aristocratic mother came on and withdrew her daughter from Northern contamination. We shall probably know no more of Leonore. She hath gone back to her idols."

Alfy laid his boyish hand in Friend Sterlingworth's large palm, and solicited another story about the South.

Mary scolded her boy's request.

"If you can aid me, sir, in establishing in these young minds an impartial love for men of all complexions, and a sacred regard for their equal inalienable rights, I shall owe you many obligations."

"I can show them, from personal experience, the heinous character of the advocate of slavery, at least, Mrs. Buddington. I was

a student of Andover a few years since. What transpired there, and the drama in which I was an actor, can be no fiction. I was then preparing for college. In common with several other young men at Phillips Academy, my whole religious nature revolted from the helpless condition of the American slave. Debarred from active service, looking towards his liberation by the Constitution and its insatiate progeny of National and State laws, as well as by popular feeling, we had no other resource but prayer,—that should move the arm of the Almighty Ruler of events. We went into the academy, in one of the rooms used for such gatherings as monthly concerts of prayer for other objects. We soon found that our prayer-meeting for slaves was a flagrant offence to the officers of the academy. At morning prayers, President Johnson warned us to desist from our course; stated that much mischief would arise from it; that it would destroy the harmonious action of the churches and produce a schism between the North and South. He rebuked us for cherishing a zeal without knowledge; also for breaking the rules of the academy in forming a society without permission.

“We held no more prayer-meetings there, but attended the Methodist church concert of prayer for slaves. This was an additional crime for which there appeared to be no extenuation. Another remonstrance followed; two of the students, who were considered ring-leaders, were expelled. The others could not look upon this step with indifference; so, about fifty-two of us took up the burden of disgrace, with those expelled, and left the academy.”

“That was an exodus worth seeing,” exclaimed Mr. Buddington.

“I suppose some of them were poor students depending on their own exertions for the means of education. There was a noble example of self-sacrifice for the future.”

“True; but the times demanded it *then* and *now*.”

“Where did those fugitives from ecclesiastical tyranny find refuge?”

“Many of them were nearly prepared for college, and entered soon after. Others scattered to various ecclesiastical institutions.”

“Where did you go, sir?” asked Thad, hot indignation lurking in every syllable. His conservatism was at last routed.

“I? I and three others went to ‘Noyes Academy,’ in the town of Canaan, New Hampshire.”

“What led you there?” questioned Doctor Clarendon.

“An academy had been built at Canaan, and was then admitting colored students, which was considered an innovation. A growing uneasiness was manifested on the part of the Democrats, and it was thought that an accession of white students would soften the rising hostility. The refugees from Andover were invited there. As I mentioned, only four of us accepted the invitation. To use a homely phrase, we seemed to have jumped ‘from the frying-pan into the fire.’ There was no academy. The mobocratic democrats on the day previous, in a whirlwind of rage, drew it off its foundations and stranded it in a swamp, a mile and a half away.”

A great uproar of exclamation and laughter succeeded this part of the relation. The ladies dropped their sewing; scissors, wax, and thread fell to the floor and rolled away in an unheard-of frolic.

The doctor came to his feet, flourished his red bandana, took excited strides about the room, pulled Thad’s ear, and cried,—

“Why, the deuce! that academy in the swamp was an improvement on the Buddington *peew*, in Cloudspire.”

Mr. Link’s eyes twinkled at the glaring proof of his confirmed belief. He said,—

“I am not surprised at that Canaan outrage; it is consistent with the fixed and general designs of the Democrats, wherever you find them. That political class are the Northern bloodhounds that do the Southern master’s bidding. Go where you will in the States, go into the forests of Maine, go into the quiet hills of New Hampshire, into the valleys of Connecticut, into New York, Ohio or Illinois, a Democrat is the same in principle. The Democrat of the counting-room of the professor’s study and of the most squalid shanty of the foreigner, have each the same determination to crush liberty and the God-given rights of man. Pull the latch of the remotest log cabin in the East or West, and you are confronted by a stalwart, unkempt Democrat, in the midst of his dangerous brood. And, although a newspaper never entered the rough door, or a word of any book was ever read there, and the alphabet never heard of, under its roof, the “*curse of Canaan*” is on his lips. ‘Southern rights’ are coarsely rehearsed, a loaded rifle for the wretched fugitive stands behind the door, and a stout rope hangs by his chimney jam for the neck of the abolitionist.”

"Mr. Link has the floor!" cried the doctor.

"Three cheers for Mr. Link!" cried Lucy, clapping her hands till the clapping became general.

Hester put her laughing face into the dining-room door, and asked what was the matter.

"Oh, Hester! Mr. Link's tongue is loosed. He has been describing Democracy. The silent man has spoken; it is equal to Shakespeare."

"Susan and I are losing all this," laughed Hester; "but we'll get Mr. Link a good dinner, for we know he's on our side."

"You are not losing much," said Mrs. Glenly; "you have been scouged by Democrats from your birth; you know them better than we can tell you."

"Oh, true! Hester, said Lucy. You know two Democrats, and that's enough for *one* to know; you know Deacon Steele and his brother William, don't you? the rest are after the same pattern; you shall spend the evening with us."

The closed door shut out Hester and her ringing laugh.

"Allow me to explain, Mrs. Buddington," said Mr. Link. "You see I've led a sort of a lonesome life, and never till now had many to talk to, except my doves. I feel a freedom here to speak, and I've just expressed what I have always known; so, if agreeable to the company, I should like to hear the story of the academy finished."

"Shall I proceed, ladies?" asked Mr. Sterlingworth.

"Certainly," was unanimous. The stray work and sewing utensils were brought back to duty.

"How could they draw that academy building so far?" asked Alfy.

"The neighboring towns furnished oxen; you understand it was a common cause. One hundred yoke of oxen were hitched on with heavy chains; the day was hot, and the work was tedious; men swore and drank; chains broke, but the setting sun viewed from their hands, 'the worthy action done.'

"The night previous, they mobbed the colored students in their boarding-house; these students numbered about twenty. One of them from New York, was sick in bed; a stone, weighing about four pounds, came through the window over his bed, and tore

away the wall opposite. These students were armed; they had been furnished with guns, and they were loaded. In reply to the stone, the sick man sat up in bed, and fired a shot through the window; others opened the door and sent their bullets whizzing into the night. This volley scattered the cowards. Blood was found in the street the next morning."

"Of course the school was broken up?" asked Mrs. Clarendon.

"It was broken up soon after, madam. We remained and recited our lessons to the principal at private houses. The act of driving out colored students by mob law, makes a fine symphony with the duels of South Carolina and other States which fine and imprison for the crime of teaching a slave to read."

"A sweet savor of earth to rise up among the angels around the Throne," said Mr. Glenly, ironically.

"Lucy," said her mother, "I must confess to entire conversion to your faith; you reasoned your father into anti-slavery belief, more easily. Here I am, at the eleventh hour; count me among the opponents of slavery, hereafter. Heretofore, I have discredited these outrages. I have no cause to discredit them now."

The dinner-bell sounded. Little Roland swung open the door, with a low bow,—

"Gentlemen and ladies, the table awaits."

"Well done, Roland," said the host. "Is there a seat at table for you?"

"Yes, sir."

"For Addie and —"

"Yes, sir."

"For Thad and Alfy?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's right; we are all of one blood. What book is that in?"

"The Bible, sir."

"You three fly-aways don't like turkey?"

"Yes, sir, we do! but Addie says her mother never had a turkey."

"Well, she will have turkey, to-day.

What a table of luxuries. Its delicious odors floated away through parlor, hall and chambers. The happiest era in several lives dated from that Thanksgiving supper. The memories of its

shining silver ; its crisp, brown turkey on the gilt china platter ; of the roasted pigs crouching down as if to crunch the lemons in their mouths ; of the huge chicken pies ; of the loaves of cake white as snow-banks ; of the yellow butter with "pictures on it," as little Addie said ; of the floating island, and of the fragrant pile of apples and oranges.

These memories haunted Susan's hovel, down by the river, all the dreary winter.

When the frozen plain of the river rang with the skaters glee, and Susie's children had no skates ; when the fierce winds blew and the drifting snow buried their path to the village school, their lonely hours were beguiled by imitations of the Thanksgiving dinner. On broken bits of blue crockery, and fragments of glass picked up in the village, a roasted potato grew to a turkey, their plate of mush changed to floating island, and their brown crust was denominated roast pig. A chance orange from Mrs. Beame, cut in quarters was passed with the bright-eyed solicitation,—

"Willie, will you take an orange."

After dinner, Squire Buddington drove the gentlemen over to Mr. Link's with his barouche and pair, for the inspection of the handsome drove. Issy drove Mr. Link with the fast bay. The return in the dusk of evening brought back the heavy cloak, fur gloves, warm leggings, and more 'buffaloes' than Mr. Link would need for a ride home that night.

When the table was being cleared, Filette and Mary packed a large cheese box with the substantials and dainties of the day. A small trunk was taken into Filette's room, and filled with a man's warm clothing.

"There's an abundance for this winter, and next," said Mary, as she brought forward three pairs of her husband's warm wool socks, knitted by herself. These, with Richard Beame's muffler, will just fill the trunk. Ah ! here's Thad's new mittens ; he insists upon giving them."

"Perhaps it would be better for Robert to wear them," answered Filette.

"I think so."

All the members of the family now gathered into the parlors

with the guests, in the evening. Pleasant games were provided for the younger ones, while conversation interested the elders.

Hester's request was presented, that she might hear something about the South. Mrs. Glenly took up the cause and asked her husband to relate the incidents of the visit of their Quaker friend, from New York, in South Carolina and Georgia. Upon gaining his consent, Mrs. Glenly slipped from the room, and Binah entered without comment.

"Your room be all right, Mrs. Buddington," said Binah, dropping her curtsy. "I likes to sit wid all, dis ebenin,' please Missis," and her ample form, white apron, and tulip hued turban, dropped into a chair by Lucy.

Mr. Glenly began by saying,—

"My Quaker friend was a young man of excellent and agreeable manners, whose business affairs carried him South, to Charleston. During his stay there of several weeks, he called on a clergyman, and in the course of conversation was shown his library. My friend mentioned his father's antiquarian taste for books and documents, relating to the Society of Friends. At parting, the clergyman gave him some pamphlets for his father; among them a tract describing the colony at Sierra Leone, and containing an account of the slave trade in Africa. With the pamphlets in his trunk, he started for Savannah. It was in January. He stopped at the City Hotel, and there met a marshal of the City of New York, who knew him. This marshal was in great repute for catching runaway slaves. Not being at that time in pursuit of his natural prey, and having his appetite for blood whetted by the sight of my friend, and being in high feather among the slaveholders, he pointed out my young friend as the son of an abolitionist."

"What a happy discovery for the people of Savannah," remarked Squire Buddington. "I doubt not that worked up a fine frenzy in their blue-blooded veins."

"The frenzy of immediate vengeance, upon the helpless head of their victim, whom, however, they allowed to retire for the night, unconscious of danger, that he might have no means of escape from their villainous hands"

“He might as well be in de hungry lion den. Dere be no angel of de Lord, in dat South den!” exclaimed Binah.

“Binah, you have spoken a solemn truth,” sighed Mary.

“Binah, has the proof of her own experience — that is the surest, Mary,” gravely replied George. “The man is to be pitied, who falls into the Southerners hands.”

“My friend was to be pitied. A gang of men forced open his door, and with horrid blasphemy, struck him, kicked him, and spit in his face.”

“Jesus hab mercy”! ejaculated Binah. Involuntary groans were uttered by every listener.

Mr. Glenly continued,—

“They broke open his trunk and thrust their hands in his pockets for anti-slavery documents. They found the Quaker tract given him in Charleston, on Sierra Leone, and screamed with exultation,—

“Here is the proof we wanted, the proof of his abolitionism.”

The information was communicated to the mob, crowding the halls and bar-room below, that a *trunk full* of abolition documents had been found. Howling and cursing, they seized the Northerner, told him to say his last prayers, and go down with them. He appealed to the proprietors of the hotel, but received for an answer,—

“‘Good God! you must not appeal to me. This is a delicate business. I shall not be able to protect my own property. But I will go for the mayor.’”

“Could he not escape from a back window?” asked Mrs. Beame.

“No, mother,” answered Richard, “there was no escape. All Savannah was of one mind. Wherever he turned, he would have fallen into the hands of the Philistines.”

“Some advised him to jump from the three-story window of his room. The bar-keeper wrote him, on a slip of paper, that his only mode of escape was by the window.”

“Ah! I see!” exclaimed the doctor. “The infuriated wretches on the pavement below, who clamored for his blood, would have had his life all the same, and saved their own reputation as murderers.”

"Awfully true," remarked George Buhdiugton. "His death would have been denominated *suicide*."

"Well," said Mr. Glenly, "he had made up his mind to die, and began to descend from his room, where, fortunately at the foot of the stairs, he was met by the mayor and several aldermen. They accompanied him to his room, examined his books and papers, and were assured that he came to Savannah on commercial business. The mayor had promised the mob to take the so called abolitionist into custody to try him the next morning. If he was an abolitionist, he should not be suffered to go at large."

"T'ank de Lord dey didn't kill him in de street!" murmured Binah, with both hands raised.

"He was confined in a cell doubly guarded. The blue-blooded mob raved round the whole night, and the mayor was sent for to prevent their breaking into his prison."

"Yet," interposed Mrs. Clarendon, "I am reluctant to credit the idea, that the high-bred city of Savannah would allow a cold-blooded murder like that to take place in their midst."

"On the contrary, Mrs Clarendon, the domestic code of the high-bred and Christian Southerner, openly demands just such murders, and makes it obligatory upon every citizen who would maintain an honorable reputation among them," explained Friend Sterlingworth.

"Yes, madam," affirmed Mr. Glenly, "it would be as safe to fall into the torturing hands of savage Indians as into the clutches of those Georgians. Why! believe me, madam, *a gallows was erected*, with a barrel of feathers and a tub of tar under it, that the mob might amuse themselves with their victim before hanging him. The next morning, the mob followed him to the mayor's office, but the mayor was satisfied with the proof that his visit to Savannah had no connection with anti-slavery projects. A pouring rain came on at the time, scattered the crowd, and my friend passed out unobserved. At parting, the mayor said to him,—

"'Young man, you may consider it a miracle that you have escaped with your life.'"

"Where could he find refuge?" asked several voices at once.

"On board the ship 'Angelique' bound for New York. The captain received him with kindness, but soon after the mayor sent

word that the populace had discovered his place of concealment, and would attack the vessel."

"He might as well jump into the water next," said Hester.

"My Sabior!" moaned Binah; "dey fish him out dere sure! kill him twice ober."

"The captain of the 'Angelique' took him in a boat, bade him lie down flat in the bottom, and rowed the persecuted young man to a brig bound for Providence. The captain of the brig had a fancy to play into the hands of his pursuers, by sending him back to the city, but, by the persuasion of the captain of the 'Angelique,' my friend was allowed to be put on board."

"That Providence captain was a dough face, Uucle George," said Alfy.

"That's it, my boy. Proceed, Mr. Glenly."

"Remember, my friends, this was in the month of January, and the brig was bound North. Our traveler had been robbed of his money and clothing in Savannah. The voyage lasted thirty-five days, accompanied by a severe storm. Unshielded from the inclemency of the season, his hands and feet were frozen. Arrived home, his friends scarcely knew the haggard wayfarer as their own."

"A thousand thanks, Mr. Glenly," for this history, said Filette. "You have described an impending fate, to any one or all of us, who may venture into the land of the jessamine and the rose."

"The land of the assasin and the fiend, Mrs. Buddington, with your permission," said Mr. Link.

"Mr. Glenly," remarked Friend Sterlingworth, "that Savannah mob was more successfully controlled by the mayor, than the Boston mob by Mayor Lyman. The Savannah mayor got his man into jail without harm and out of the city, while Mayor Lyman's mob cut the traces of the carriage, held the horses, hauled the driver off his seat, and—"

"Do relate the particulars, Friend Sterlingworth," begged the whole party.

"I will give a brief sketch of the Boston mob, to illustrate the subserviency of the North to the slave power, or the harmony of interests between Savannah and Boston, at that time. The South says,—

“ ‘We cannot afford to have the question of slavery discussed.’

“The North answers,—

“ ‘It shall not be discussed.’

“Thus, Mr. Garrison, the editor of the *Liberator*, becomes an object of envenomed hatred to the Boston public ; a reward is offered for his head in the South ; a mob of two thousand of the most respectable citizens in broadcloth, hunt him in the North.

“The Boston Female Anti slavery society organized a meeting, at which it was thought Garrison and Thompson, an English gentleman visiting this country would speak. But the owner of the hall notified them that they could not hold their meeting unless they would give him bonds to the amount of ten thousand dollars for the safety of his building. The meeting was postponed a week, when the ladies again announced a meeting in a small hall belonging to themselves, in the attic on the morning of that day. A placard was posted in State Street, of which I will report a part.

“Bear in mind, my friends, that George Thompson numbered among his friends, Lord Broughman, Lord Denham, and other distinguished Englishmen, and that his cool and scholarly oratory was irresistible to the consciences of men. This is a part of the placard : —

“ ‘A purse of One Hundred dollars has been raised by a number of patriotic citizens, to reward the individual who shall first lay violent hands on Thompson, so that he may be brought to the tar-kettle before dark. Friends of the Union be vigilant!’ Thomson was not at the Ladies’ meeting. Garrison was present. The ravenous mob below demanded both. The mayor sent the ladies home, and, in order to protect the building, requested Mr. Garrison to find some way of escape.

“ ‘Go out,’ he said, ‘that I may say to these people, that you are not here.’

“Mr. Garrison went out at the rear of the building only to be seized by his watchful enemies and brought with demoniac shouts into the hands of the rioters. He was rescued in a hand-to-hand struggle, and, when carried before the mayor again, he had upon him only vestiges of his clothing ; a rope had been around his body. The weak and timid mayor, instead of protecting him under

his own roof, sent him to the stronghold of the jail for safety.

“Such is the condition of our country. In servile submission to the slave-master’s wish, legislatures, pulpits, and presses thunder forth silence to the advocates of liberty and justice. In Congress, the measures of that arch-traitor, Calhoun, and the Pinckney gag whittled by that Yankee, Atherton, crushed out the right of petition, so that the same chain which binds the slave gang of the South, fetters the Northern Freeman.”

“What is the Pinckney gag, sir?” asked Thad.

“The Pinckney-Atherton gag is a rule of Congress, that every petition, memorial, resolution, proposition or paper, touching or relating in any way to Slavery or the abolition thereof, shall be laid upon the table, without being debated, printed, or referred; it puts a hand upon the mouths of the people, and stifles their prayers. Hunt up the Constitution, my lad, and measure this Gessler rule by that instrument.

“The effrontery of the South, in endeavoring to throttle free speech, has some masterly opponents, who would not be counted fantastics,” said Richrdr Beame. “Daniel Webster says, ‘It is the ancient and undoubted right of this people to canvass public measures. It is a home-bred right; it is a fireside privilege. It is enjoyed in every house and cottage and cabin of the land. Belonging to private life as a right, it belongs to public life as a duty. Wherever it is questioned, I will carry it to its fullest extent. Wherever it is questioned, I will plant myself on the extremest boundary of my rights, and defy every one to move me from my ground. This high constitutional privilege, I will defend in this House, and without the House, and in all places. In times of war and in times of peace, and at all times living, I will assert it; dying, I will assert it; and, if I leave no other inheritance to my children, I will leave them the inheritance of free speech, and the example of a manly and independent defense of it.’”

“Ah!” said George Buddington, with much enthusiasm, “the voice of Daniel Webster should be the voice of us all. We have only to say to the South, ‘We will speak!’ In the language of Lowell,—

“They are slaves, who dare not speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves, who dare not be
In the right, with two or three.”

“According to the Governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Everett, we have committed an indictable offence this day and evening, in discussing slavery and its cruelties. For so he denominated this kind of conversation,” declared Mr. Glenly. “But I say, let us abide by our consciences, even to martyrdom. Let us teach to our children and the communities in which we live, the maintenance of the inalienable rights of man, without regard to his condition of servitude or the complexion of his skin. What say you, my friends?”

A chorus of deep and solemn “Ayes!” was the response.

Hester, Susan and the children, tripped out to the kitchen; the former to look after the late tea, and the latter, for a few more madcap pranks before parting.

The gentlemen stepped up to the fugitive’s room to bid him be of good cheer on his cold night’s journey, and to confer upon a name with which, in his great poverty, he had never been endowed.

“Robert,” said the host, “we give you a name to-night. You will call yourself, hereafter, ‘Robert Adams,’ after John Quincy Adams, a man in Congress at Washington, who speaks for freedom on all occasions. He desires all the slaves to be free. Now see if you can speak your own name so no one can catch you.”

“Bob Adam, sir.”

“No; do not call yourself Bob; you are a *man*, now. Call yourself ‘Robert;’ Robert Adams. Try again.”

“Robert Adam, sir.”

“Robert Adams-s. Try again.”

“Robert Adams, sir.”

“All right now, Robert; do not forget.”

Richard suggested that it would be better, on the whole, “to call yourself ‘Adams,’ a part of the name. Mr. Link will call you ‘Adams’ on the route, and you will get used to hearing it.”

“Now, Adams,” said Mr. Buddington, laying his hand on his shoulder pleasantly, “come back to us. When there is freedom in the South and the North, come back to us.”

“Dat time long way off, sir, I spects.”

“Times and seasons are in the hands of the Lord, who hears the groans of the oppressed, or, in other words, God is merciful and knows all better than we do.”

“Meantime, ‘Adams,’ get some one to teach you to read and write. Never mind if it is slow work at first, study away, and find some friend to write us for you. ‘Adams,’ we shall not speak to you after you leave this room, that you may get away safely; so here are our parting hands, and God bless you. The ladies will come up with your tea, and wrap you for your journey.”

The doctor remained to attend to the wounded arm, to give directions about its future care, and the necessary protection from the cold. The red bandana was in repeated requisition, as his feet went busily between the bed and table, on which was his open medicine case, with vials of washes and liniments, and long bandages to be rolled. Anon he turned to Robert, lifted his arm, examined the fingers, asking questions which seemed to have suddenly occurred. When all was done, he stood again by his patient, and said with emotion,—

“There, poor fellow, I’ve done all I can for you. I shall have to give you up into other hands. Those gentlemen understand your danger, and I suppose the choice between Virginia and Canada is plain. The good Queen Victoria will take care of you. By George! I wish we had as good a woman to rule in this country, I’d rather see her in the President’s chair, than any President we have had so far.”

At this point, the waving of the red bandana in the fire-light, brightened up the room amazingly. But he went on,—

“Robert, I’ve done something for *you*, but you have done *more* for *me*. Adams, your child-like forgetfulness of such unparalled wrongs and injustice as slavery inflicts, has been a puzzle to me. Why! Robert,” stepping round between him and the fire, “If I had been in your shoes — no — by George! you had none. If I had been in your tracks, I should have knocked down and dragged out. Old marse nor young marse wouldn’t have had any heads on their shoulders. Why! ‘Adams,’ that’s your name, you know, though I shall call you Robert to myself; well, ‘Adams’ if your intellect had not been forever under the heel of the white man, you would have handled the lancet to-day, as well as I do; for that matter, perhaps better. You could have had your horse, your home, your office and library, as well as the best of us. My God! there must be a way for you oppressed people out of some Red

Sea, before many years! I feel it and believe it. The Lord Almighty, whom these churches worship, is not the Lord they make him. He cannot be deaf to all the groans, and cries, and tears of anguish that daily go up to Him from that hell in the South. Now, Robert,—ah! ‘Adams,’ give me your whole hand. I’m going to say ‘good-bye.’ Hear me. Hold up that broken arm and withered hand, every day before your Creator, and pray for His vengeance on that cursed Constitution, and our laws, and the men who framed them. If He’s a God of mercy, He will hear. Another thing; get a spelling-book and study, learn to read and write, if it takes you ten years, and if you ever dare to come into the States, come to me and my Lucy. I’ve pinned a paper with written directions for your arm inside your coat pocket, and I’ve tucked into the same pocket a roll of bandages and the liniments. Good-bye, Robert. Good-bye, ‘Adams.’”

At ten o’clock the Thanksgiving festivities closed. The confusion of departure began. One vehicle after another rumbled away on the frozen road. Robert descended into the dark hall, followed by Lucy and Filette; not a word was spoken. Out in the darkness, Mr. Link and Adams stepped into a light, covered wagon, so muffled, that ‘Fugitive’ or ‘Samaritan’ were undistinguishable.

CHAPTER XXIV

“OH! how it rains, Cossetina,” regretfully spoke the lady at the window, leaning her forehead against the sash, and peering out into the gray sheets dashing upon the huddled roofs, the brick walls, and the paved streets of the city. “What a dreary rain! and this gale from the south-east is terrific!”

Cossetina came up by the side of her mistress, and felt herself enfolded by the arm and delicate hand about her shoulders. In answer to this token of her mistress’ never-failing affection for her little foreign maid, she slipped her own arm about the waist of her mistress, asking with a troubled expression,—

“Why is my lady grave? Zaffiri loves the rain!”

This was spoken in the tenderest accents of her native Italian

tongue — the charmed language in which her thoughts flowed most easily, and which was ever chosen, when mistress and maid were alone.

“Zaffiri dearly loves a rainy day ; but her dear husband is on the wild, -tossing sea to-day ; there is danger in its treacherous waves. He is returning from a journey to the South on business.”

Cossetina crossed herself, murmuring,—

“The Almighty God will protect.”

For a while they stood by the window, silently watching the few pedestrians, who, from necessity, dared to face the pitiless storm.

“How is old mauma, this morning, Cossetina? Have you looked into her room? Has she a warm fire?”

“Ah! truly ; I look in often, as your kind heart bade me — old mauma is well and happy, her fire is bright. She sent her heart’s best love to you dear lady, and, I almost forgot — mauma begged me to ask you to see her to-day in your room, if you had no other engagement.”

“I have none ; and the kindly falling rain will prevent all parlor calls. I have wished to have an uninterrupted interview with the poor old creature, ever since her arrival, but absences on my part, visits received, and my husband’s departure, have occupied the days. Thanks to the falling clouds, old mauma can come to my hearth and my heart to-day. Cossetina, this is your ironing day ; so go now, and support mauma along the halls. Put a warm shawl about her, first. Then, about twelve, tell Antony to bring us up a nice lunch, with tea for mauma. Come yourself, Cossetina, and lunch with us. Bring mauma soon, that I may have a long conference with her.”

Before the little maid left the room, she placed easy chairs before the glowing grate, and extended her care to the corrections of any delinquences in her morning’s work about Zaffiri’s chamber. Presently, along the halls were heard a stumping cane, and slow, shuffling steps, with little peals of laughter, and a cheery young voice, broken into sparkling ejaculations.

Cossetina threw open the door, with the parade of an usher of royalty, and a gleeful “*Eccomi! Eccola! Eccoci! Zaffiri!*” while the sunny light of her native skies seemed to rest upon her Italian

face. She led the bent form, leaning upon her stick, up to her mistress, chattering,—

“Vogliate voi bendire mia madre misera! una donna buona e religiosa.”

Zaffiri gave smiling welcome to both.

The two were rare natures that she loved to have clinging about her. She took mauma's hand, and rose, leading her to a low arm-chair, on the warm side of the grate. The white, blue-veined hand, and the toil-worn, withered black one of mauma, met in an affectionate clasp. Mauma held the fair fingers, but hesitated. Zaffiri waited patiently, while her admiring eyes fell upon the new black dress; the white wool blanket, bound with white silk, pinned in Quaker neatness close about the neck, and the quaint, bright-hued India turban, tastily tied about her head,—all the gifts of her own bounty to the destitute old woman.

“Come, mauma, take the arm-chair, and sit by me! Poor mother,” at length spoke Zaffiri.

“I think I stand here before my dear missis;” and her meek, subdued eyes, in her turn, rested with wonder and amusement upon the beautiful lady, whose voice was like healing balm to her bruised spirit. “Mauma never have set down before a lady.”

“Will mauma, with her broken back, stand leaning on her stick before Zaffiri?” she exclaimed, with unfeigned surprise. “I am shocked at the idea! If there be any respectful standing in the case, Zaffiri will stand before her aged mauma. But there shall be none. Come into the warm easy-chair, close by my side. Mauma shall be Zaffiri's guest and friend all this pouring, rainy day.”

The old woman suffered herself to be led along and seated. Cossetina still stood in the floor with the bright shawl, just taken from mauma's shoulders, over her arm, directing her spoken thoughts to her mistress.

“Paremi che ella fosse pin che la neve bianca! Bella a vedere! Cara a undire.”

Mauma's black, but sweet face turned inquiringly to Zaffiri.

“What is the birdie saying? She has been chirruping in my ear all the way along. I think I hear something like it in New Orleans; it might have been a mocking-bird's song. Mauma disremember.”

“She is chattering Italian, mauma,” explained Zaffiri. “Cossetina lovs her own tongue; all her sweetest thoughts melt into it. Cossetina loves mauma. She calls you her unhappy mother. She begs me to please you. She says you appear to her whiter than snow; and she says you are beautiful to see, and pleasant to hear.”

“Dear lady, pardon the offense — but black as I am, I do not suppose old mauma is less acceptable to her Maker; but with His creatures there is a great difference. That young birdie seems not to know.”

“There is no difference with me,” said Zaffiri assuringly, as she knelt upon the carpet by mauma’s chair, and folding her arms about her, kissed her wrinkled cheek.

Strangely enough, this warmth of feeling appeared to cheer its recipient, who replied, with her hand raised like a shield between herself and the kneeling Zaffiri, and her diamond eyes; moist with feeling,—

“My beautiful child, do not love old mauma too much. All mauma loves on this earth have turned to bitter gall. The Lord above is mauma’s portion — she can have no other. But, my dear missis, this old heart has found a new burden which it wishes to lay at your feet to-day. Old age is upon me, I may die before I can tell you. Can the singing birdie go, missis?”

This last request was spoken so solemnly, that an awe crept into Zaffiri’s spirit. She turned to her maid.

“Go now, Cossetina. Remember to send Antony with the lunch at one, instead of twelve. Come yourself.”

As the door closed, Zaffiri drew her chair close to mauma, assuring her that now was the opportunity to say what she wished.

“I suppose the good Master Lambelle has explained why he bought me in New Orleans, missis?”

“Yes; he said he found you on the street, and he bought you at your request. Something impelled him to listen to your petition that he could not resist. He felt himself too happy in being able to smooth the few remaining years of an old slave’s life.”

“And you, my beautiful lady, took the old slave to your home and heart, although I have scarcely seen you since I landed from the ship that brought me here, in New York. But mauma knows,

mauma knows. Missis has been traveling and entertaining ; all her time has been full." She laid her hand upon Zaffiri's knee. "Now will de dear missis 'low the old slave to tell her the story? It may be tiresome to the blessed lady, but mauma must tell all ; can't pick out some here, some there or, maybe, she lose part."

"Relate all as pleases you best," said Zaffiri. "I shall be interested in every event of your life."

"I must tell dear missis how I come here, first."

"Yes, mauma, proceed."

"Thank, missis. I was not raised in New Orleans ; but since I was there, I will tell missis I grew old in that city, that I fell over backwards from the chair on which I stood to clean my master's cupboard, and broke this back. I had the doctor's care, because I was a valuable slave, and to lose me, or to have me become disabled, was the same to master as to lose a valuable horse. But, my dear missis, the back would not cure, and they cursed me for falling, and beat me because I could not walk about quick, and do the work I did before. But the Lord helped me ; I lived through all. When age come on me, my dear missis, this back got weak and painful, so sometimes it appeared I must die. Then my owners got hard on the poor old slave, and wanted to get me off their hands. Nobody would buy me, so they made me sell in the street."

"Dear me ! mauma, what could you sell?" sorrowfully asked Zaffiri.

"Oh ! I could sell great many things they have there. I could sit on a bench, and sell from a little tray ; but I could not carry round on my head, and cry, berries and fruit ! like others. I sold ground nuts and ground-nut cakes, made up with boiled molasses. I could done very well, and carried home my 'lowance every night, if everybody was honest, and the boys didn't steal."

"What do you mean by carrying home your allowance ?"

"You don't know the slave-masters' ways, missis. Dey make we old, worn-out ones sell and bring home every night to them, so much money — so many picayunes. If we don't carry the owners just what they say, then they whip us, and give us no supper."

"Poor mauma ! did they whip you if you failed to bring back the amount of money ? you, with gray hair and a broken back ?"

“They did beat me, dear missis. Under this beautiful dress and this fine flannel you gave me, you can see the welts of their lash. I dreaded the whipping so much. My sisters in the church, better off than I was, used to give me pennies and picayunes, nights, to make out the money for master, before I dared to go home.”

“Mauma!” cried Zaffiri, in a tortured voice. “Mauma, were your owners rich and in high life? Did they boast the blue and gentle blood of the ancient chivalry who were the defenders of the oppressed?”

“My beautiful missis, they were rich, had plenty of slaves, sugar-cane fields, sugar house and cotton fields, had grand house, grand furniture, horses handsome and plenty, carriages, silver everywhere; and, I hear Miss Alice, Miss Sally, and Miss Jane talk about that ‘high blood’ and ‘blue blood’ and ‘proud blood.’ Yes! they rich, missis, but they make me sell, and whip me, all the same.”

“How could you endure so much, mauma?”

“The Lord help me to live, I think, dear missis, to come to you, at last. Well, after a long sickness, I caught in the street in the rain; my owners told me to find a buyer for a hundred dollars; they couldn’t find a buyer on the auction-table or anywhere else for half as much. I tried a long time in vain. I wanted a buyer for this poor old body. I thought a new owner might not be too cruel.”

“None would buy? none had mercy?” questioned Zaffiri.

“No mercy is in New Orleans, dear missis; but one morning I prayed to de Lord to take mercy on me, an old slave. I prayed on my knees, with tears on my face, and with my old hands wringing before the White Throne, that some kind master would buy me. I went out with my tray of ground-nut cakes and my bag of nuts, sat down on my bench, and looked in the face of all who bought from the tray. Some were boys and some girls; a few were men, but their faces were cruel and hard. At last, a gentleman stopped on his walk, and said pleasantly,—

“‘Mauma, give me a cup of ground nuts.’

“The price was little, but he laid down two silver quarters, and he spoke with a gentle voice,—

“‘You are old, mauma; take that for yourself, for your own comfort.’

“I looked up into his face — it was kind and pitiful ; then I said to myself ‘This gentleman was never a slave-master ; his hand and heart must be good. I will ask him to buy me, for the Lord helps them that help themselves.’ Then I held up my hands to him I said ‘Old mauma must be sold, too. Will the good gentleman buy me? I can tend the kitchen fire, wash dishes, baste the roast, and wash vegetables. I am cruelly beaten some nights ’cause I cannot carry home my ’lowance of money to master. But I will try to earn my little bacon and hominy in your kitchen. I can make hoe-cake or a pound-cake to please the taste of any gentleman or lady ; but this old back is broke, and I cannot do more.’ I still held up my hands to plead with him ; the tears fell down my face.

“‘I am a Northern ’man, old mauma,’ he said. ‘I do not buy slaves.’”

“Buy me, then, kind master. Old mauma will take some little corner in your large house. Buy me, kind master ; and if you or your lady is sick, old mauma will watch by your bedside all the long night. If you have children, old mauma can sing lullaby, and hush them to sleep. She has been house-servant, lady’s maid and nurse. Then I saw his eyes were wet, and he said,—

“‘Can you go in the ship a thousand miles?’

“I said,—

“‘Yes, master, I came here on a ship.’

“Then he thought awhile, and said,—

“‘I am going now, but will come back this evening. Comfort your heart to-day. I think you will go with me.’

“I warn him not to buy me himself. Our people hate Yankees, and they would not sell to him. Told him to get the agent to buy for him.”

“Yes, that was an excellent ruse,” said Zaffiri. “My good husband told the slave-dealer that he was from Texas, and wanted you as an old nurse for an invalid — and he *was* just from Texas on his way home, by land across the country.”

“Sure, missis, the good master came back in the evening, and said the agent had bought me for him ; that he should send a carriage for me to go on board the New York ship ; but I warn him to send a mule-cart for a poor old slave. How I thanked him, and the blessed Lord above ; but he told me be calm and show no

joy, and he would be on the wharf waiting for me. He did what he said and more. He brought blankets, and a shawl, and a warm hood for the passage. So I am here, dear missis. And when I look at the pretty warm room you gave me, and this beautiful black dress, and all I have, I cry, and pray God to bless you both, and to give you all your heart's desire in this world, and a reward in the next."

Zaffiri sat absorbed in the old woman's feelings — in her sorrows and joys — this was a phase of the purchase she could hear from no other lips. She brushed away a few tears, and took mauma's hand, holding it in both of hers, and said soothingly,—

"Mauma, I have all I can wish in this world, pertaining to my happiness, but one thing. I have not the power to give freedom to any slave that bows under the yoke of bondage; that would be a supreme felicity. It is a constant pleasure to know that the last remnant of your life will be free; but that satisfaction is embittered by the recollection of the sorrows and wrongs of millions yet unredressed."

"Nobody but God, my dear missis, can set all free. We believe that sometime and somehow, He will do that, because we pray to Him, day and night, and our groans go up before Him. Oh! my missis, the Lord will hear. He made us; we are His children — the work of His hands. That whole South is Ramah, where, as the Bible says, there is a great voice heard of lamentation, weeping, and great mourning. Rachel weeping for her children. O blessed Jesus! we are all Rachels. Missis, mauma has had ten children; all sold to the trader; boys — girls — all gone. Me one left alone. Missis, God must hear."

The conversation had a welcome interruption, by Antony and Cossetina, with a delightful lunch. The latter flew for a nest of gilded Chinese tables; placing one before each, chirruping, as usual, her mellifluous tongue.

"Mauma," said Antony, as he waited for the tables, "you is queen, now, in dis house. T'ank de Lord you will never suffer no mo'."

Zaffiri poured Mauma's tea with her own hand, and filled her plate with luxuries. Cossetina's laugh and chatter made music with the rain on the panes, till the banquet was over.

Left alone again, Zaffiri remarked,—

“The rain still pours. Mauma, the afternoon will be ours.

“Thank the good Lord for this opportunity; for, my dear lady, ever since I saw your sweet face and looked into your eyes, I have been carried back to years long ago. I have lived over again forgotten events. There is a tanglement in all this; a troublesome suspicion, and a burden that weighs heavily upon my thoughts. I must spread all before you, and beg your help.”

“I do not understand you, mauma; but if I can, under your aid, I shall do so. Take your own course.”

“No! the dear missis don’t understand. She can’t dream these old arms might possibly have held her when she was a crowing babe. She can’t dream that this cracked old voice has ever hushed her blue eyes to sleep with a lullaby.”

Zaffiri changed color. With blanched face and startled eyes, she replied,—

“That is impossible, mauma. I have never been in New Orleans.”

“It seems impossible, and possible both to mauma. The strange idea wakes me out of my sleep o’night. I study and study about it. Then I say, ‘No! no! it cannot be!’ Then, a darlin’ little face, with violet eyes, with waxen skin, and cheeks and chin in the color of the rose leaf, laughs out way down in my feeble memory, and crows out, ‘Yes! yes!’

“Dear, darlin’ missis, don’t turn so white! Old mauma will hush. Maybe old mauma’s brain is turned with too much joy. Mauma will hush. There, take the salts; they will revive my blessed child.”

The old creature had brought this restorative before Zaffiri had observed her movements, so completely was she stunned by her unexpected words. She quickly took the bottle from mauma’s hand, and, in a prolonged revery, strove to decide whether those sentences were the delirious fancies of a harmless and happy dotage, or whether the withered oracular finger of the old slave was about to rend the veil which had overclouded her past—a past, within which she had vainly striven to look. Determined to thread the labyrinth further, she said to mauma,—

“Mauma, where was you born? Where did you spend the early part of your life?”

“I was born in South Carolina, missis. I was raised in Charleston, mostly,” she answered unobtrusively, measuring the reply squarely by the question.

“When were you sold to New Orleans?”

“After I was settled woman, missis.”

“What was the character and standing of your owners?”

“They were religious. I belonged to one of the first families.”

Zaffiri, fearing she might betray too much interest by this system of catechising the wise old mauma, said indulgently,—

“Proceed mauma, as you choose in your history. Your own suggestions will be much better than questioning. I will bring my crochet work.”

She brought her basket of bright colors, finding in them and her needle an excellent means of concealment for the uncontrollable agitation which caused every nerve to vibrate. She drew the orange, browns and greens over her hand, as if to compare qualities, and said,—

“I am ready now.”

“Old mauma must beg pardon first for her great offence to her best friend on earth, for making her turn pale and faint. It is only an old slave’s memory waking up, and may be, not half wake either, and my dear missis look so like one sweet bud of a babe old mauma held on her knees, long years ago.”

“You have committed no offence. I am accustomed to faint sometimes. I desire to know your experience in life, that I may give you my sympathy in your last days. Mauma have no fear; unburden your mind freely.”

“Then I will obey. I was the child of an African woman brought over to Charleston in the slave-ship. I am nearly as dark as she was. She was put in the rice field. But when I was a young girl in the rice fields, too, her master came to the plantation to see the overseer, and ’range the house for his residence that winter. He was walking along the banks one day, and noticed me. The next day, overseer sent me up to the big house for house-servant. My master was not married, and make me his black wife. I lived with him four years, and he spent all his winters at

the plantation. If he traveled in the summer, I stayed and kept the house. If he spent the summer at Charleston — he had a fine house there — he took me with him.”

Zaffiri stopped crocheting and exclaimed,—

“Mauma, how can those Southerners excite the North to such an unholy prejudice against color, when they choose their wives from their slaves, and even from the children of native Africans?”

“They choose us because they love us, but they never tell the North about these things.”

“Mauma, tell me, did you love your master?” asked Zaffiri, dropping her needle.

“Yes, missis, I must confess I loved him, because he loved me. He bought me dresses, and ear-rings, and beautiful white muslin handkerchiefs for turbans, sprinkled over with flowers. I had fine furniture in our room — and that was one of the handsome chambers. I was his wife, missis, and all the rice hands called me so.”

“Had you children?”

“I had three handsome brown boys, and a nurse for them. What I tell you next, missis, made my heart ache for years; but thank the good Lord, all the pains and aches have gone way now. All the loves of this cold earth have gone far off with the weeks, the months, and the years. I have a rest in my soul now. After a few happy years, my master had me sit down by him, and told me he was going to get married; that I must go to Charleston and live in a small house, or part of a house he had rented for me; that I could support myself there, and he would not require monthly wages. He talk to me as if all that was necessary was to say what he wished, and I should be satisfied. But, my dear missis, although I knew it *must be so*, the tears run down my face all night. And what to do with my pretty boys? Two should stay on the plantation and learn to be coachman and butler. I begged for one to go with me, and he consent to hire him out in Charleston.

“When I was putting my dresses and clothes in the box to go, master said,—

““Oh Molly, it will be the same. I shall be in Charleston half

the time, and I shall come to see you often. Cheer up, Molly. Go to Charleston, and wait for me.'

"So he married, and a rich white lady took my place."

"Did he visit you in your Charleston home?" asked Zaffiri, horrified at the revelation of inconsistency.

"Yes, missis, he come often, and was as pleased to see me as ever. I had five more children in Charleston — for I was his black wife still. Nancy, Molly, Jane, Ed and Sam. Molly and Jane were like their father; tall, handsome, just a little brown, with long, curly hair, teeth white as milk, large dark brown eyes, and black, heavy lashes. They had their father's high, proud nose, and small proud mouth; his pride was in his step."

She uttered a low, unconscious groan, and relapsed into silence, gazing abstractedly upon the working of her fingers lying upon her lap.

"And you are childless now, dear mauma!" said Zaffiri, bending over, and resting her white hand on the old slave's knee.

Slowly bringing her mind back to the present, she raised her eyes to Zaffiri, replying,—

"Yes, missis, yes; all gone; got nothing in this world; nothing but a few days freedom; got Jesus, and the white robe in the next."

"What became of your master?"

"Don't know what 'came of him, but will tell dear missis what 'came of me. He come to see me one day, when he had been married about ten years; and brought news that his wife was dead, and that he should take his son to Europe the next year, when he would be ten years old. He would put him to school in France. When the year come round, he was not quite ready to go, and one day in July he come and said,—

"Molly, I'm going to send you a new boarder. Will you take it?"

"What kind of a boarder will stay with Molly? the best room is master's, and the children have the others."

"This boarder will stay in the room with you, Molly. It will be a little infant for you to nurse and raise."

"We were alone in our room."

Then old mauma's memory wandered away into a description of

its furniture ; her old face grew sunny, unconsciously, under the electrical power of the happy recollection.

“Our room was furnished in good style, missis. Master put in it a solid mahogany bedstead, mahogany table, and elegant mahogany wardrobe ; stuffed chairs, and a rich carpet, covered with roses ; handsome lace curtains inside the paper ones ; sofa, glass drop-lamps, and everything nice.”

“Is it true, mauma ! It seems to me he would not furnish a slave-wife’s bedchamber in so costly a manner.”

“True as de Bible, missis. Masters are proud and love their black wife. Those men are not obliged to take us for wife. Nobody can make a Southern gentleman do what he don’t choose. They choose their wife, they want handsome room, and they make them beautiful. But I forget my story — does it rain hard, missis ?”

“Yes, mauma ; no one will ring our bell to-day.”

“What did I say last, missis ?”

“You said you and your master were alone in your room.”

“True, missis ; I done forgot we were alone, and master told me to turn the key. Then he said,—

‘I shall probably bring a little infant here soon. Now, Molly, I will make you an offer or a promise, and you shall make me a promise ; if you keep yours I will keep mine. My promise is, that I will give you your freedom and take you North out of harm’s way, after you have fulfilled yours. Your promise is, that you will nurse and raise this child, swearing never to reveal who brought it here or when it came. You have cunning enough. When you take it on the street, airing, if you are questioned, say you are nurse for a Northern lady tarrying in the city. Swear to me, Molly, to keep this secret, and I will swear to you, your freedom, when the child will be sent for and you give it up.’”

“I promise on my part, and know I could keep it.

“About three weeks after, a carriage drove up to my door at midnight. Master came in with a basket in his hand, and said,—

‘Here, Molly, take your charge and take good care !’

“He went away again, but told me, the next day that he should leave for France in about two weeks. He did go ; I tended the little girl ; it grew beautiful every day ; and it was pure white

blood. I knew it was my master's child — it look like him. It had the same look my children had — my handsome girls. It was his child, I knew in my own soul, and he had got into trouble. I named her Pearl. Nobody found out my secret. Dear missis, I wanted freedom, and I was glad to earn it so easy. Everybody stop to admire and pet my baby on the street; everybody say, 'What lily skin! what sky-blue eyes! Then they said, 'That red hair will be wavy auburn when she is young lady!'"

An overshadowing premonition seemed to chain the lips of Zaffiri as she bent her head, searching over her worsteds, and plunged her fingers into the bright colors of her work, raising them to the dull, gray light.

"Had her father, as you suppose your master was, red hair?" she carelessly asked,—

"Why, missis, I knew he was her father. After he went to France, I used to run up to his grand house in Charleston, to see the servants that he left there to take care. Once, I saw there the old housekeeper from the plantation — she was there over night — she had come down to be hired out in the city. She told me after master went to France, a gentleman from Alabama came to the next plantation, and wanted to fight a duel with my master. He got so angry, walked the room with a pistol in his hand, till he said he would shoot him at sight. It was his sister that visited at that plantation a year before — splendid young lady, with red hair curling down her fair neck and shoulders. She said master was over there a great deal; and the servants told her she was engaged to be married to master; but something happened that she cried a great deal, and, from what the servants overheard, her father had lost property. Now, I know master wouldn't marry a white wife, unless she had a power of money. His white wife that took my place, brought him two hundred thousand dollars.

"So, missis, I said nothing to the housekeeper when she told me, but I knew whose child I was totin' round. I knew whose beautiful red hair growed on my little darlin's head. I kept my promise, till little Pearl was toddling round on her little feet and holding on to mauma's finger, calling mauma, mauma! Then a man came and said he had a letter from master; it was all sealed; he said he would read it to me. The letter said I could have

freedom now ; that master was in New York waiting for me, to give me free papers, and that the boat would leave that night. I must get ready and go down to the wharf after dark, and that I might take my five children with me. The gentleman said he would come in the afternoon, and take little Pearl to another nurse. How happy I was, packing up our clothes, and packing up little Pearl baby's beautiful dresses, and cloaks, and lace caps."

"Mauma, you must have been sorry to part with the fair little child!" ventured Zaffiri. "She must have wound herself into your affections."

"I loved her more than I can tell, missis, and I loved her ever since ; but I said to myself, 'She is white and fair, she will grow up a lady, her father will give her money.' So I trust her to the Lord, and turned round to my own children. The gentleman came in the evening to take me and my children to the New York boat; he walked, to show us the way, and put us aboard — said the boxes would go in the cart."

"Oh! my dear missis, the stone pavements that night, seemed to be velvet to Molly's feet. The street lamps and the lighted windows 'peared like an illumination for the freedom of Molly and her children. We took a small boat, and rowed out to the ship, rocking on the waves. The gentleman gave us seats on the deck, went out to the captain, and talked with him in a low tone, and returned to the city. Charleston looked so beautiful, lying low on the water, sparkling with thousands of lights. The land breeze was strong, and we soon left it behind, and bore away down the bay, over the bar, and out to sea under the stars. Then the captain came and said, with his rough voice,—

"'Go down below.'

"We went below. O my blessed Jesus! what did Molly and her children see! Hundreds of slaves, crying, groaning, praying; men, women, and babies; young and old; some chained by hands; some by hands and feet; some on the floor, crying, '*God have mercy!*'"

"Then I said,—

"'Where all you going?'

"'We goin' where *you* goin' — to New Orleans.'

"Then I faint way, and fall on the floor, too. My children cry,

and say, 'We goin' to New York.' The trader come down with his black whip, and hush everybody. So Molly and her children were sold to New Orleans. We were all put on the block at New Orleans. My beautiful girls were bought by the rich, white, young planters for their wives. My boys, Ed and Sam, were sold too, and carried off another way. That's all, missis. That's all."

"Where were *you* sold, mauma?"

"I? I was sold for lady's-maid then, and been sold since for nurse; then, mauma sell in street."

This she spoke with an absent air, as if mind and thought had gone out in a vague seeking after her lost children.

For a time, both sat silent. Zaffiri was in suspense, whether to question further the fate of the blue-eyed Pearl, or to wait till the arrival of her husband. A sudden suggestion arose, that if old mauma should really know the names of families and streets in Charleston, it would confirm her story. Then, what was her master's name? it had not been mentioned, and it had not occurred to Zaffiri to ask. Every event remained so vividly impressed on the old woman's memory, might she not recollect some German names? keepers of the numerous groceries?

"I will venture to ask. I shall be satisfied; and my purpose cannot be suspected."

She strove to assume a calm, indifferent air, and broke the stillness by asking,—

"Mauma, do you remember any German names of the times when you were in Charleston? My husband is a wholesale merchant, and he might know the large firms."

"Oh! true, dear missis, mauma remembers."

The clear sunlight of former happiness seemed to have photographed indelibly every scene and figure upon the tablet of her past. She ran over a list of the hard names, and lo! there dropped from her facile lips the fateful one of 'Deiderich Weintze.'

"Did you know Mr. Weintze, mauma? Mr. Lambelle has had dealings with him."

"Know him well, missis. His grocery was on the corner of the street where I stayed. He was not too young then; must be old now if he is living. Master send in there for best brand of cigars."

“Mauma has not mentioned her master’s name.”

“Master’s name was ‘Warham,’ and his white son’s name was Frederick Warham. He went to France with his father, missis.”

The name of Frederick Warham struck a new chord in which her own memory assisted. Her face burned crimson. Could it be the same? Was mauma’s Frederick Warham the same Frederick Warham? Was *this one* her graceful and gentlemanly attendant at General Terreceine’s grand *soiree* in St. Louis? Was this the gentleman who never left her side the whole evening? on whose arm she leaned in the fragrant gardens, and who, kneeling by her fainting form, which had slid away from him to the floor, chafed her hands tenderly? He, too, was from Carolina. Then there flashed back to memory the careless remark which fell upon her ear that evening, and died as quickly.

“*By Fove! their resemblance is strong enough to be of the same family—of the same blood.*”

Mauma threw a fond glance upon her, and turned away, relapsing into melancholy. Zaffiri was touched by the rigid silence regarding herself, which mauma had maintained, since, with hurried and tottering steps, she brought her the salts; and her resolve was made.

“Mauma, look at me,” she said excitedly. “Can you keep a secret, as you kept that one of your master’s? I cannot offer you freedom — that is yours already — but for my sake, can you keep *my* secret?”

“Mauma can keep a secret as well as ever, and will, till she die. All a poor old slave can do for her beautiful missis.”

Zaffiri tossed her worsteds in confusion upon the carpet, and after some delay, said,—

“Keep my secret, mauma. *Zaffiri is a slave—a Southern slave!*”

“No! no! she is a born lady, with blue veins, blue eyes, and long, fair hair! She is a born lady! If the dear lady had not the fair hair, I think I found Molly’s high-born Pearl — Master Warham’s Pearl. Little Pearl had high blood, proud blood, blue blood.”

“I insist, mauma, *Zaffiri is a slave!* If her owners, or his heirs, could find her, she could be carried back to chains again, and sold

on the auction-block. And more, mauma," holding up her hands with a gesture of horror, "she is a slave by the Constitution — a slave by United States law. All in this house are free, except Zaffiri — except me. No! no! Antony and Zaffiri are slaves; but Antony don't know. Keep my secret, mauma; keep the terrible truth for *my* sake, dear mauma."

"Mauma will keep that awful secret with her life," she answered, with awe struck face and a solemn tone; "but tell me why, dear missis is not free in a free land? The North people hold no slaves — they are not slave-master."

"You are mistaken, mauma. You cannot read and follow the doings of this nation. Zaffiri can do both. The North people *are* slave-holders and slave-masters. They catch the slave who escapes from the South, and give him back to chains. The soldiery and militia of the North, at a warning of insurrection in the South, stand ready to march to the Southerners' aid, and rivet again the bondage of any who have dared to seek liberty. In Washington — in Congress — Northern Democrats play into the hands of the slave-holder; framing every law, and every public measure according to the slave-master's will. Often, the Whig party, the only party in which there is the least hope, fling their moral convictions into the Southern scale. There is no liberty in North America, except in the dominion of the English Queen in Canada, or in Catholic Mexico. The whole United States is under the slave-holder's law."

This was scarcely intelligible to Zaffiri's listener, but was received by sorrowful, submissive bowings of the turbaned head, and suppressed groans.

"Where, in the South, was missis slave?" at length she asked.

"What if I tell you, mauma?"

"She will keep that, too, with the rest, safe here," pointing to her breast.

"I was a slave in South Carolina; a slave in Charleston," slowly repeated Zaffiri, watching the effect of her words.

The old cripple seized her cane, rose, and stood trembling over it.

"Then you is Molly's lost Pearl. The beautiful missis is a Warham. She is Pearl Warham."

"Mauma forgets her Pearl's red hair," said Zaffiri.

“Oh, missis, true! true! true! Molly’s Pearl lost again! The will of de Lord be done!” she breathed with a sigh, and sunk back into her seat.

“It has ceased raining, mauma,” said Zaffiri; “the sun is just setting; it breaks through the clouds, and floods the wet city with its glory.”

“’Tis beautiful, missis!”

“Mauma, I expect my husband to-night. He should have arrived this morning, but the South-easter has probably delayed him.”

Cossetina entered.

“Will mauma go to her room now, dear missis? The master will come safe; the arm of the Lord round him.”

“By no means — Cossetina will assist me in dressing as well when you are present; and I want you here to look at, till I go down to meet company after his arrival. Come in again this evening, mauma; my husband will be glad to see you in a corner of his fireside. Let us all get illuminated faces to meet him — happy faces, mauma.”

“True, my blessed child, faces must be happy that think of him.”

“Zaffiri!” pleaded Cossetina, “please to wear the blue velvet to-night; the pearls and the pale hair, *à la* Jenny Lind. I can dress it like the sweet singer’s. *Il signore* will admire.”

“Bring the velvet and pearls then, Cossetina; but I fear the treacherous sea.”

Six — seven — eight — nine successively dropped from the silver-tongued mantel clock.

Zaffiri passed the evening in the parlor, in obedience to the demands of polite or social calls. She went to mauma’s room, saying to the dear old body,—

“It is so late, I fear something has happened.”

“Never fear, sweet missis, he will come. The Lord’s arm be round him.”

The prophecy was scarcely uttered, before a dash of wheels paused before the house. The opening and clashing of coach doors, the bouncing of trunks upon the pavement, and the bold ringing of the bell, were welcome music to the household.

Zaffiri had determined to receive her husband and guests in her own chamber. It was large, airy, and elegant ; and there was the privacy necessary to the occasion. Antony received his commands from Cossetina, and consequently piloted the party to his lady's room.

Cossetina was dispatched to the kitchen, to order supper, and to request that the family be left to themselves. After the fond greeting of Mr. Lambelle and his adored wife, Zaffiri gave her eager attention to the gray-haired couple who had accompanied Mr. Lambelle. She embraced both, kissing them tenderly, and gazed upon them with tearful eyes, welcoming them both to her heart and home.

The tea-bell rang immediately ; but before obeying its agreeable summons, Mr. Lambelle took occasion to make a necessary explanation to the newly arrived. He said,—

“At the table we hold conversation upon general subjects. It must not become personal. We are abolitionists in the most extreme sense of that word, but under disguise. I am never seen at their public meetings ; and our strongest anti-slavery people never recognize me on the street. It is agreed ; for I play a part which an outspoken abolitionist would not deem it wise to undertake. I travel through the South. I walk into the jaws of death with audacity, for my principles are unknown ; and I bring accurate information of the practices, purposes, and policy of slave-holders, which cannot be reliably obtained in any other manner. For this reason, I held no conversation with you, my dear friends, on the sea voyage to New York. That I may keep this inestimable treasure, this lovely Zaffiri, whom you, dear gray-haired father, sent away from that Southern land of horrors at the peril of your own life, I wear a double character. I take the nefarious hand of the slave-holder, while I despise him in my heart. I visit their cotton marts, their slave marts, their houses and plantations ; that I may secretly bring to light the wrongs and cruelties of their cherished system of robbery—a system of robbery and murder—the most heinous in the sight of Heaven.

“Our house is also an unsuspected refuge of the fugitive from oppression. This is a secret. My friends, you have been accus-

tomed to put a lock upon your lips. It will be no new or difficult task to continue guarded in our parlors, and at our table."

Then, offering his arm to Mrs. Weintze, and followed by Zaffiri on the arm of her papa, as she named him, they repaired below, to the supper-room.

After this refreshment of the weary travelers, by Zaffiri's request they went again to her room. Cossetina withdrew for the night; thus leaving her mistress free to divulge to her husband and friends the strange revelations made by mauma during the day.

She revealed the mania that had taken possession of dear old mauma's mind, that she (Zaffiri) had been dandled upon her knees; that she was of aristocratic blue-blood, and was born free; more — that mauma knew the history of her birth and parentage, and that her baby name was Pearl.

"My dear friends," said Zaffiri, "you know that a search in that hostile State for my parentage would be my enslavement established, and perpetuated. Prompted to learn what I am, and who I am, I sought for convincing proofs of my indenture. The light straw color of my hair is the difficulty to mauma. Little Pearl's hair was red."

The countenance of Mr. Lambelle evinced his perplexity.

"I am astounded!" he said. "Can it be possible that in granting the petition of forlorn old mauma in New Orleans, to buy her, I found the key to the mystery of your birth, my dear Zaffiri?"

"There was a black nurse for the baby, that was afterwards sold as the slave-child, 'Phebe,'" remarked Mr. Weintze.

"Let mauma come in, Zaffiri," said Mr. Lambelle. "Facts must support theories. Let us untie this Gordian knot if possible. Is she in bed?"

"No, Claude. Mauma is sitting up to be presented to you. I had the intention of presenting her to Papa Weintze, to test the reliability of her memory. I will go for her."

The stumping of the cane, and the laughter of Zaffiri along the halls, were soon heard. Claude met them at the open door. Zaffiri led the old mother to Mr. Weintze, and said,—

"Tell me, mauma, if you ever saw this gentleman?"

"Have you ever known me before?" echoed the new comer; "and, if so, where did you know me?"

Mauma pondered, and looked steadily upon the speaker's face, leaning some time on her staff. At length she replied,—

“Mauma think she know master in Charleston.”

“By what name?”

“I think, Deiderich Weintze, master. He had grocery store on the corner of — street. When mauma was younger, she trade there. My name was ‘Molly,’ and I nursed a white babe named ‘Pearl.’ When I took her out airing, in her ‘broidered dress and her white ‘broidered cloak in blue, Master Weintze took her in his arms, caressed her, and toted her in the house to his wife. Does master ‘member little Pearl?”

He avoided an answer by asking how long ago she saw Charleston?

“Don’t count the years, master — long time. I was sold to New Orleans one day — went away in the night — never see Charleston, nor little Pearl, no more. Does master ‘member little Pearl, and the tiny red curls on her waxen neck? If master ‘member, then he is Deiderich Weintze.”

“Take your arm-chair in the warm corner, dear old mauma,” said Claude approvingly, her bent form still leaning on her staff. He took her hand, which trembled in his, and kindly led her to the seat.

“Old mauma,” said the gentleman, “I am Deiderich Weintze, from Charleston. I remember Molly and little Pearl. My grocery was located on the corner of the streets you mention. I can assure you no farther, at present.”

“Our friends are weary, my darling wife,” said Mr. Lambelle; “they have suffered much at sea during the wild storm just passed. Let us do no more to-night, than to settle such preliminaries as shall be necessary, Zaffiri, for a sleeping potion for you.”

“My wife and I could sleep but little ourselves,” said Mr. Weintze, with a troubled expression, “If we are not satisfied that the elegant mistress of this fine house can be identified with the slave-girl I sent North years ago. We do not doubt your generosity, sir; but if there should have been a mistake, we might suffer in our old age from dependence upon strangers, who could have no interest in our welfare. We agree with mauma, that the little girl named Pearl, in the one case, and Phebe in the other, the

same that I sent North, had rich, red hair, which, in older years, would have become a reddish auburn. But this lady has hair of a lighter and more peculiar hue than I have ever seen."

"My friends," continued Mr. Lambelle, "I have a solution for that doubt. That Zaffiri, here, was mauma's free Pearl and your slave-girl Phebe, I truly believe. When the slave-girl, Phebe, was brought North, her hair was red. I saw it then, myself; years after, I saw it red. I resolved to educate the homeless waif, and sent her to Canada, under the protection of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, where all the advertisements of Southern papers could not harm her. I placed her in a convent school, where every facility was offered for developing the fine faculties inherited by her cultured blood. At the annual visits which I made to look after her happiness and progress, I became gradually interested, till her well-being and existence seemed a part of my own; and the fair, blue-eyed, graceful girl became a part of my every thought, and every plan. At the age of eighteen, I proposed marriage. Then I discovered what I had so longed to ascertain, that her affections were already mine. I arranged my business, here, to leave the United States, married in Canada, took passage at Halifax for France, with my hunted, beautiful wife. I was haunted with the idea that the slave-catcher would tear her from me in some way. In Paris, I resolved to try some chemical process to change the marked color of her hair. My design was to make it dark, even to blackness. For some reason, unknown to the dyer, in whose skillful hands my idol was placed, her tresses paled into the wonderful shade you now behold. I was more than satisfied with the mistake, for the disguise was complete. My lovely wife, 'Violet,' was past recognition by the sleuth hounds of the North or South."

Mauma lifted both hands in thankful joy, crying,—

"Bless the Lord! I has found one child—my beautiful Pearl! my baby Pearl! Bless the good God! old mauma will die in little Pearl's house."

"And we have found our dear old mauma, who shall never suffer more, but shall dwell in the pitying love of both her children," said Mr. Lambelle. Turning to the quiet pair on his right, he unfolded the great love he bore them, for the treasure he won from their hands.

“For the noble act of saving Zaffiri from a life of slavery — for the shame, losses and suffering you have endured from the brutal citizens of Charleston, we offer you both a home, a reinstated business, and the deepest of filial gratitude. Have no fears for the future; the guardian angel, whose wings you plumed for flight, will dispense bright days for your declining years. This house shall be your home through the cold months of winter. A room like ours is prepared for you. You shall go out and in at your pleasure. You shall study the metropolis of New York, and visit its places of amusement and interest, without the fear of a scourge, a whipping-post, or lawless violence.

“In the spring, if you desire a change, you shall set up your original business — set up your own fireside, around which shall be kept two spare chairs for your children, Zaffiri and myself. Your income will be twenty-five dollars per week, from this day, one year.”

Mr. Weintze interrupted his benefactor with an humble remonstrance against the weekly stipend.

“We have been very poor and broken-down in spirit; a home, with friendship and comfort, will demand all our thanks.”

“The weekly stipend is settled, already — irrevocably settled. During these long winter days and evenings, we will relate to you the particulars of Zaffiri; how well we remembered the signature of ‘Evening Star,’ under which she was to write you; how she learned at St. Louis the fate of her long-deferred letter to you; how she fainted when she heard from a Charlestonian’s own mouth that her kind wishes had ensnared you in the infamy and distress of a public scourging, robbery, and imprisonment. Furthermore, I shall have to learn from mauma, how the free-born, blue-blooded Pearl came to be enslaved. I shall have the proofs to consider more carefully. We have our winter’s work before us.

“But, above every other consideration, let us remember that Zaffiri is still a slave by the laws of South Carolina, and these slave-laws hold dominion over the Northern States. One word, carelessly dropped, might rivet the manacles again on these fair wrists, and plunge us all into irredeemable sorrow.”

“We will remember! trust us for her future as for her past.

We have been trained in a land of dark and guilty secrets. There, they are in every heart — here, we can and will guard *one!*”

“Mauma knows her dear missis born free. They shall never tell mauma her missis is slave!” said the old woman, quietly drying the tears from her wrinkled cheeks.

The weary travelers retired to rest with life's burthens lightened. Zaffiri walked the hall slowly, by mauma's tottering steps, and returned the care of her baby love, by attending affectionately upon the old slave at her night toilet, and sealing her task with a dutiful kiss.

The winter passed swiftly amid these new friendships, and revelations of a dark past. From out these tangled lives there were drawn these well-proven facts. Zaffiri was “Violet,” the convent maiden. “Phebe” was the white slave; and “Pearl,” the blue-blooded cherub of mauma's memory. After the abduction to New Orleans, of Molly and her five children, little Pearl was brought with a pale, yellow girl, to the yard of a Southern family near to a store kept by a friend of Deiderich Weintze, in another part of the city of Charleston. Both the yellow girl and the white child had been bought from the auction-table in that city — the slave-girl calling the child her own, under the name of “Phebe.” Mr. Weintze, in his frequent visits to his German friend, recognized the child, and, by much persuasion and promises of secrecy, had drawn from the pretended mother the truth that the child was placed with her by the auctioneer, and that she was told to call it *her own*, under penalty of heavy punishment.

Mr. Weintze resolved to send her North at a favorable opportunity, and accomplished his purpose.

The most astonishing fact of all, was, that Madame Lambelle's admiring attendant at the *soiree*, in the grand *salons* of General Terreceine in St. Louis, was Zaffiri's brother, in the person of Rev. Fred Warham.

CHAPTER XXV.

SEVERAL years have passed since the mobbing of the young theological student, Richard Beame, at Cloudspire, and since the radical revolution in sentiment of the Buddingtons, Mr. Link, and the Clarendons.

To this trio of influential and well-to-do families, has been added two other names from the registered list of church membership. Mr. Newland and Mr. St. Albans had made calls of friendship and inquiry upon Squire Buddington and the doctor. The result was a conviction of the claims of humanity upon themselves, and a conversion to the principles of true righteousness, as they termed the radical doctrine.

These men were small farmers, living frugally but comfortably, possessing staunch oaken wills anchored in the faith of universal liberty. Their two small, white homes nestled in a valley of green meadows, like two eggs in a ground bird's nest.

Mutual strength was afforded these two families, by daily converse and pleasant interchange of thought; the pliable young minds growing up in their nurture, were trained to an unflinching love of truth and right.

There, every week, went God's messenger — Garrison's *Liberator*; first, well read, and then loaned by George Buddington. Thither, on many a winter's evening, wound the sleighs and bells of the other sturdy martyrs of Cloudspire religion. To the green valley of a summer day after haying, wended the carriage and span of Mr. Buddington, followed closely by the fast bay and wagon, carrying the whole household. Then arrived the doctor's horse, whinnying in a wise-acre air after the others, he knew were already in the barn. Frequently the parties were joined by Mr. Link, Friend Sterlingworth, and Fanny.

Thus had this strange leaven of fanaticism leavened a part of the dead Cloudspire lump.

On the day of which we now give a record, Mrs. Beame in her kitchen, was selecting beans for the garden planting. Fanny re-

turned from the post-office, held up her palms to her mother, with the one word "Empty!"

"No letter from Richard?" questioned her mother, sifting the beans through her fingers, unconsciously.

"No, mother. I saw the mail distributed."

"Richard must be sick," was the first maternal suggestion. "Richard never fails to write."

"Nay, mother, there are other causes as imperative as sickness. Only a mother's heart suggests sickness. Richard has a hardy constitution and he takes good care of it. I feel an intimation, an impression, or an inner voice, saying he has a work to do yet for languishing Liberty and Right."

"Richard is in the church, Fanny. He is settled after the most approved ecclesiastical form. He is a member of the association. You forget that he cannot step beyond its bounds. You forget, Fanny, that the church has put its hand upon its mouth, to preserve that wicked silence which has been thrust upon its utterances, by the Southern oligarchy — an oligarchy in religion, as well as in politics. I wish, Fanny, that Richard and yourself could see the church, as I see it — a manufactured system formed from the ruins of past ages, tinkered anew in later times by unskillful hands, and daubed with untempered mortar.

"Even the character of God himself has been cast in a human mould and set up like a Chinese idol for unreflecting worship. To this God of their own making they attribute all and each of the evil passions of men — of men, too, whom in the next breath they declare hereditarily corrupt from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet! I should prefer to see my children iconoclasts, breaking down with their strong arms and determined purpose this false image of our Lord, and the meaningless worship attendant upon it."

"Mother, I know the church is wrong in many respects; but, neither Richard nor I can utterly condemn it. Faith is the medium through which Christ our Savior communicates with erring man by the ordained priesthood; as such, we must regard them as the designed instruments of good."

"A false proposition, and, of course, a false conclusion. The church is not the medium of our Savior's love or commands; take

your New Testament, Fanny, and show me where, in one single instance, the church obeys His example or commands. I must go out to the garden now, but at your leisure, examine His life, and tell me where the two coincide."

Fanny went to her flower-garden where she remained through the day; she turned the fresh earth with a spade and hoe, preparing it for seed and transplanting. She labored on till the sun hung near the western horizon amid the pomp of his gorgeous setting; then, Fanny, true to her love of Nature, leaned upon her spade and was lost in the magnificent spectacle. She heeded not approaching footsteps, till a cheery voice cried,—

"Hail! my transfigured sister! who loves the sunset glory better than her brother Richard?"

She turned with the old affectionate smile, offering no welcome, but a surprised,—

"Why, Richard!"

"Give me thy hand, thou prospective Quakeress!"

"I'll give thee my lips, instead; not this earth-stained hand."

"Yes! yes! I'll kiss that pretty nest of 'thee's' and 'thou's,' whence these Quaker fledglings fly out so sweetly. Now that I find you well, how is your other self, Friend Sterlingworth?"

"Well, and coming here next week; but what brought you home so unexpectedly?"

"Come in, Fanny, and when we sit down for the evening, I will answer mother's question and thine. Hear?—at the same time. Let me carry your farming tools."

The "tea things" were got out of the way in "short metre," the lamps were lighted early in Mrs. Beame's sitting-room. Richard entered from his river walk, saying,—

"I have been meeting my boyhood's friends—the steep path, the hemlocks and mossy braes, the pebbly shore and the rippling river. My friendship for them is unchangeable. Alderbank, humble as it is, will ever be the most charming spot of earth to me."

"Then the turmoil and struggle of life will hold in reserve one restful, happy resort for your fretted spirit, my son. Nature is true to her lovers; she has a hidden balm for us all. We are ready, Richard, for any development you choose to make about your

return home. You have brought trunks and books — an ominous move, I think.”

“The laconic reply to the subject is, ‘I’m afloat!’ The logical modification is, ‘I am dismissed from my congregation. I am excommunicated from the association,—all for my shocking heresies to the Pentateuch, and for my traitorous utterances against my country’s laws.’”

“Richard! are you really dismissed from Bigotboro? This is a second dismissal!”

“That wound under that black patch on my forehead, there, is my certificate of honorable dismissal; mother — your anxiety is now relieved.”

“The wounds of the martyr are more to be desired than subserviency to false doctrine,” replied Mrs. Beame. “Let us hear the particulars.”

“Here they are: Bigotboro is a large township containing several corner school-houses, in which I have expounded our moral and religious obligations from week to week. Assuming the love of Christ to be universal, extending to all classes and races. I called attention to the conditions of our own nation, to its infidelity on this point; also, to the fact that God the Father is no respecter of persons. In support of these assertions I laid bare the blood-curdling cruelty of the system of slavery. I showed them its tortures; its thumb-screws, its whips, and chains. I took up Intemperance and exhibited its debasing power in causing man to become an inferior to the brute creation. You know I have been settled in that town over a year.

“Last week I held a meeting at ‘Hickory Corner’ school-house. I remarked a full attendance, quite unusual. After prayer, I took for my text, the ‘Golden Rule’ and went on to enlarge upon the word ‘others,’ giving it a more extended signification than is contained in the narrow limits of the ordinary church member. Suddenly I was confronted by the uproarious taunts, accusations and insults of the hearers. The lights were put out as if by one breath. Eggs and other missiles were hurled at my standing place with mobbish violence; a piece of brick or rock struck my head there, and I fell insensible. When sense returned, I was alone upon the floor. The moon, just sinking in the west, poured in at

the window and showed the time to be about one o'clock. I knew the time of its setting. The open air revived me. My horse stood where I tied him, and neighed impatiently at the sound of my footstep. I bound my head with a handkerchief and attempted to mount. The saddle slid off at my feet; the girths had been cut. I threw the useless thing one side, and sprang on the animals back. It was a three mile ride, and every step of my walking horse sent a throbbing pain through my head."

"Were you not prostrated in bed by pain and the nervous shock?" eagerly enquired his mother.

"I was prostrate two days; the family in which I boarded attended to my needs, but with that cold indifference that would freeze one. I knew this treatment to be only another phase of the mobocratic spirit of the school-house, and valued it at its worth. Last Saturday, a committee of the influential men brought me information that the church would dispense with my services. That the town must hear the *gospel* preached, not *politics*."

"As I imagined, my son! You cannot preach the Gospel of Christ in its purity, in many churches in our land. You have made two efforts that should be satisfactory. You have been settled twice and dismissed twice."

"When was your connection with the association broken?" asked Fanny.

"The association sent my letter of dismissal about a month ago, giving me the opportunity to decide whether I would return to the old beaten path of theology, and repress agitation upon the dangerous heresies I had adopted. I wrote immediately, that I had given four years to pure theological studies, and that I demanded a hearing before the 'Association.' They refused to grant me a hearing. This refusal was contrary to their own rules. Consequently, I informed them that I refused suspension or expulsion. There the matter stands."

"Richard, you are afloat, indeed!" ejaculated Fanny, showing a tender fear for her brother's welfare in every feature.

"Put away fear, my daughter! 'Afloat' is the proper word for a reformer. A ship that never cuts loose from her moorings will rot in muddy waters at her cables length from shore. She might as well be dismantled of her sails and rigging, and dismasted."

“Mother, do you recollect Ralph Waldo Emerson’s ‘Damascus blade?’ I read it to you, when I was home last, said Richard.

“I recollect it well. *The ‘Damascus blade’ such as you search through nature in vain to parallel, laid up on the shelf in some village, to rust and ruin.* You, my son, have quick and powerful perceptions of right and wrong. Being free now, give them untrammelled play, and do not lay yourself away on a shelf in this village of Alderbank, to ‘rust and ruin.’

“Be, Richard, like Emerson’s ‘bolder spirit, a more surrendered soul, more informed and led by God, which is much in advance of the rest, quite beyond their sympathy, but predicts what shall soon be the general fulness.’ Like John the Baptist, lift up your voice in the wilderness, among the mountains, in the lanes and by-places, and herald the dawning of liberty. In the continued words of Emerson, ‘as when we stand by the sea-shore, whilst the tide is coming in, a wave comes up the beach far higher than any foregoing one, and recedes, and for a long time none comes up to that mark; but after some time, the whole is there and beyond it.’ Richard, be a pioneer of the advance guard for Reform and universal Freedom! so the world will finally fall in and rise to your level, like Emerson’s tide.”

“You have met me on the way, mother. You have met your son fleeing from violence and outrage on the way, mother, with your blessing. Had I been disheartened, I should now feel my strength renewed for the race set before me. Mother, I have already decided upon the self-same course you advise. I have consulted with anti-slavery friends. The conclusion is that I enter the lecture field and depend for subsistence on the same Providence that feeds the birds of the air.”

“Where shall you go, Richard?” asked Fanny, in an anxious voice.

“I shall go to Ohio, in company with others. The black laws of that State, enacted with remonstrance of church or clergy, need to have gospel light turned in full blaze upon them.”

“What are they, Richard?” inquired Fanny.

“They are an exposition of the worst elements of human nature. First, every negro that enters the State is required to give two freehold securities of five hundred dollars for his, or her good be-

havior, and his or her support in case he becomes a pauper. Notice the inconsistency. The next step was to *make* them paupers, by forbidding persons from hiring or employing them; also, anyone who harbors or conceals them shall be fined one hundred dollars. Thus driven from pillar to post, perhaps in spite of these disabilities, the colored citizen succeeds in staying within the State, and securing comfortable homes; they, in that case, are liable to become the victims of fraudulent dealings, for they cannot give 'their evidence in court, on any subject in which a white man is involved.' There are several thousand in Ohio; but, as a class, they are debased and ignorant. Instead of seeking to gain freeholds, and depending upon farming for subsistence, they congregate in towns, and become day-laborers, barbers and menial servants."

"And I have no doubt," said Mrs. Beame, "that the mocking assertion of Freedom and Equality is inscribed on the head and front of Ohio's State Constitution."

"True, mother; it declares that *all* are born free and independent, and have certain natural and inalienable rights, and then by its appended laws, Ohio strips her colored citizens of all these rights, forbids him employment, and then sets up a derisive howl over his indolence. Ohio leaves rags for their clothing, and then points the finger of shame at their nakedness. Ohio excludes colored children from her public schools — debars them from every mechanical pursuit; then, in lugubrious, hypocritical tones, laments the *natural, clannish degradation* of the colored race, and strives by statute and violence to drive out the pestiferous fugitives from their soil."

"Richard, how many are there in Ohio?" asked Fanny.

"A few years ago there were about eight thousand."

"Why do they not leave Ohio?"

"Because, my dear sister, its about six to one place, and half-a-dozen to the other in any part of our eagle-ized United States. If they venture to change location, and to travel on foot, like our Savior, and as they are necessitated to do, they would have to run the gauntlet of hissing, starvation and vagrancy. Yet, a body of colored men did apply to the Governor of Canada for a place of refuge. Mark his beautiful reply. Drop his answer into your sack of smooth stones for the forehead of our Goliath.

“ ‘Tell the Republicans,’ said the governor, ‘on your side of the line, that we Royalists do not know men by their color. Should you come to us, you will be entitled to all the privileges of the rest of Her Majesty’s subjects.’

“They did go out from under our Republican Government to a Monarchy for protection.”

“All hail Victoria! the beneficent Queen of England!” said Fanny, in a voice husky with emotion.

“The immediate cause of their effort at removal, was a three-days mobbing of the colored people of Cincinnati. The trustees of the townships issued a proclamation, that any colored man who did not fulfil the requirements of the law, should leave the city. But as that was simply impossible, only a small portion could or did leave. The mob attempted to expel them by force; and for three days’ riot ran wild in the city. The colored people appealing in vain to the authorities, barricaded their houses, and thus alone the fury of the mob was resisted.

“So you see, my dear sister, Ohio needs light; that ineffable Gospel light, which searches the consciences and hearts of men who darkly substitute evil for good, who grope madly among the stumbling-blocks their own hands have planted.”

“The Church of Christ must be cleansed of this sin, through its own inherent tendency to purification,” said Fanny. “I have not lost faith in its rectification. Do not, Richard, lay all the censure on the churches. You and I can live up to our own professions, if others fail.”

“No, my sister, these dumb churches have *not* the spirit of Christ in any particular. They hold none of the Savior’s love, therefore there is no inherent tendency to purification. The clergy, through the length and breadth of the land, are blind leaders of the blind. They fail to discern the truth, themselves; consequently, they fail to educate the people up to the fundamental truths, which are as old as the foundations of the world.”

He took from his valise a pamphlet, and placed it in Fanny’s hands.

“There, my recluse, is a book for your perusal. It was written by an acquaintance whose name you will learn on the fly leaf. He has been beaten about by mobs for many months, but with a brave

soul. He says there, on the second page, 'he values the lawless violence with which they have broken up a majority of the meetings which he has attended as a proof of the profound regard for the truth and power of what he says.'"

Fanny read aloud from the cover,—

"'A BROTHERHOOD OF THIEVES.' That sounds like the 'Arabian Knights.' Who are they?"

"'The Brotherhood of Thieves' represents the clergy of our country; but you had a bright thought, Fanny. The 'fatal spell,' and the 'sorcery' of a designing priesthood, over the people, come nearer to the conjuring and magic of the 'Arabian Nights,' more than anything I know. Read the book, Fanny, and read it to mother. It is destined to set public sentiment in a ferment,—a chemical action much needed in these times. Lay it away, now, please; let us give this evening to conversation."

"Do you know, mother, that only one thing troubles me in this general breaking up? It is the thought of Lucy. You know we were to have been married this spring. I had a home to offer her in prospect. Now, with empty purse and with staff and sandals, I am to become a wanderer. How will she meet this reverse? My marriage must be postponed."

"She may meet you, my son, as you say I have done, on your way, with her love and blessing. Go and see, Richard, to-morrow. Lucy is not a butterfly, to perch upon the fairest rose, on the topmost spray, to be blown away at the first breeze. Her love and trust have been refined in the furnace till it is pure gold. I am sure, my son, she is wholly yours, come weal, come woe."

"Mother, she is dearer to me than aught else; yet, nothing must come between me and this life-work."

"Right, Richard! If needs be, your one single affection must be sacrificed for the healing of millions of trampled hearts, crushed hopes, blasted joys, and outraged homes."

"If all men had such mothers as mine, Tyranny and Injustice would soon slink away with impotent step."

On the morrow, Richard drove away from home, wearing a troubled and apprehensive countenance.

"Wish me joy, mother and Fanny," he said to them, standing upon the steps.

“There is no need, Richard. It will fall about your path like manna in the desert.”

After the evening lamps were lighted, Richard returned. As he entered the little parlor, Fanny caught his hands.

“Ah! brave reformer, I see all is well. I read it in your radiant face.”

“True, Fanny; you are an oracle. All is well.”

“Tell us all about it.”

“Lucy is not surprised. She and her father, the doctor, approved of my decision. Neither would hear of my poverty. He said, ‘I sold my Lucy, once, to Southern ruffianism and debauchery: She brought back the price with her. Take it, both of you; it can be turned to no better account than *undoing* that act.’ Dr. Clarendon will not listen to postponement of our marriage.”

“The doctor has changed much since his daughter’s return from South Carolina,” said Mrs. Beame.

“Hear, further, the result of this day’s visit. Lucy, herself, insists upon accompanying me to Ohio, and spending the season. She will address small audiences of women at every opportunity, and repeat the story of the wrongs of colored women, as she herself has witnessed, in the South. She will take upon herself the distribution and sale of the publications of the Anti-Slavery Society, and thus sow seed by the wayside.”

“In Lucy, you will find companionship of spirit. As a wife, she will be your shield in the hour of trial; she will be your strength in intervals of rest. I can ask no better gift from Providence than such a daughter,” said Mrs. Beame.

“I am under many obligations to you for giving me such a sister, Richard. Lucy will be a tower of strength to us all, for no one can gainsay her experiences of Southern heartlessness and cruelty.”

“Then, *ma belle religieuse*, you grant that the motives actuating her course in reform must be substantially based on reason instead of untrained impulses?”

“Of course, Richard.”

“Then read that, and go and do likewise,” at the same time handing her a paper roll.

Fanny opened it, and read aloud to her mother.

TEETOTAL ANTI-SLAVERY PLEDGE.

Believing slave-holding, under all circumstances, to be a heinous sin and crime, and deeply convinced of the wickedness of aiding or abetting, by our countenance or otherwise, any who are concerned in it, we, the undersigned, do agree never to vote for any candidate for civil office, nor countenance any man as a Christian minister, nor hold connection with any organization as a Christian church, except such as have dissolved their *political* and ecclesiastical connection with the slave system, and are practically pledged to labor with us for its immediate and entire extinction from our country. Nor will we aid in returning fugitives from slavery, nor do any act to prevent slaves from regaining their liberty, by such means as they may think proper to adopt.

RICHARD BEAME,
LUCY CLARENDON STEELE.

“What do you think of that, mother,” asked Richard.

“I think it is a pledge to which every person who professes love to God and man, subscribe. Do you want my name?”

“Yes, mother, just below Lucy’s; more, I want Fanny’s name beneath yours; then I will frame it and hang it in this room, as our confession of faith.”

“Richard, I cannot place my name on that paper yet; I cannot withdraw from the church of my Redeemer. ‘With all its faults, I love it still,’ and will never cease, by word and example, to remonstrate against its errors.”

“It does appear to me, Fanny, that your reverence for the church, as it is, if given its true name, would read ‘*obstinacy*.’ However, I leave a line for your signature below mother’s, and will leave ‘The Brotherhood of Thieves’ for your perusal. Before my departure, I will hang the Pledge in this room.”

“Richard, you look displeased. Let me change the subject to a pleasanter one. What time is appointed for your marriage?”

“Two weeks from next Sabbath. The following day, Monday, we start for Ohio. There will be no foolish display of dress on the occasion. Lucy will be wedded in her traveling dress, which will be made for the journey. Next week she will spend one day home; you and mother are to spend one day there, before I go.”

Two houses in Cloudspire had two weeks of busy occupation.

“Lucy, my brave girl,” said Doctor Clarendon, “going the second time to leave father and mother? Well, I don’t hold to

rusting out, in this world. You learned your part in the South ; now, with a husband to whom you can give your love and respect without reservation, go and repeat that lesson over and over ; teach dull ears and gospel-hardened hearts. Here in my house will be a resting-place for you both, whenever you may choose an interval from your labors, while I live. Sit down by your old father, a minute ; he has something for your ears. Now, mother and I have settled it, that all Anti-slavery friends in this town shall be here on your wedding-day, Sunday, and I've been round with invitations. You'll have nothing to do about the cake and other preparations. Binah says her dear young missis must not lift a finger 'bout the work. So, go on with your own fixings that, Heaven knows, are plain enough. Do you persist in not having a wedding dress ?”

“Yes, father, I persist. Life seems to me real and earnest, now, and too short for the work we should have to do, without dressing ourselves as puppets for a show. My stone-colored traveling dress is well on the way of its making ; if I am excused from the kitchen, I shall have plenty of time.”

“Has Richard engaged his wedding-suit, yet ?”

“No, father, for he will not have one ; and, father, I approve of his judgment. He had a hard struggle to go through his four years' theological course ; he was settled on a small salary and has been dismissed twice. What little funds he has, he will reserve for traveling expenses. My dear father, our friends are beautiful in our own sight, when they are clothed in the habiliments of our own devoted reverence and affection. Thus, Richard is ever beautiful.”

The old doctor wound a longer horn than usual, in the red bandana, and said,—

“Lucy, let me tell you, he will have martyrdom enough hereafter without beginning on his wedding day. Richard *is* to have a new suit for that occasion, from the generous purse of Mr. Link. He takes Richard to-day to East Elms for that purpose. His old student trunk is pretty well battered, too, Buddington says, and his offering will be as good a travelling trunk as money will buy. Issy says he must give him something. His white father down there, in Charleston, remits him so much money, that he will give

Richard a new watch. Lucy I've seen it; it's a splendid time-keeper. Filette will weave the chain. Newland and St. Albans, over there in the green valley, insist upon giving, and their wives insist upon making one dozen new shirts for Richard. I expect they're half done now."

"Richard will be surprised and will feel their kindness deeply. This work is blessed in the beginning," answered Lucy.

The doctor rose, flourished the bandana with increased zest, and after brushing away something that seemed to obscure his sight, made one emphatic gesture with his forefinger before Lucy's face.

"Don't you dare to think that all these people here give Richard Beame more than the doctor. Don't dare to think that their gifts come any nearer to mine, than a grain of sand comes to a mountain. I have given that poor student the apple of my eye. I have given him the light of two lives,—your mother's and mine. I have given to him the sweetest of all our earthly joys, the fragrant blossom of Cloudspire! my lily of the valley! my rose of Sharon! my noble and inimitable Lucy!"

The doctor caught her to his breast, kissing her tenderly. Unfolding his arms, he said,—

"There, don't say another word; don't speak of this again. You work on your dress, and I'll give you the right kind of a good-bye, when the time comes."

The quiet that succeeded Richard's marriage and departure was soon broken by a call upon the ministries of Mrs. Beame and Fanny. Willie Hughes came up from Susan's cabin by the river, bringing news of the continued illness of his mother.

"Is her cough no better, Willie?"

"No ma'am, mother coughs worse; she didn't sleep but little last night."

"Has Doctor Clarendon been to see her within a few days?"

"Yes, ma'am, he came yesterday and left some medicine. He told mother to send for Mrs. Beame and Fanny."

"Poor child, we will go down after dinner" said Mrs. Beame. "Stay and eat with us, my child, and we will walk back by the river with you. What does your mother want to eat? do you hear her say what she would like?"

"No, ma'am, not very much." Then, with a child's after-thought, "I heard her say she wanted some broth."

"Look here, Fanny," said Mrs. Beame, "I will kill a chicken. You get the hot water ready. I can dress it in a short time, and boil it while cooking dinner. Get out a tumbler of currant jelly, a slice of butter, and a loaf of white bread, Fanny; also a dish for the chicken and soup. Have all ready. I fear we have neglected Susan, in the preparation for Richard's journey."

After dinner, the three took a pleasant stroll down by the violet-crowned banks of the river shore to Susan's cabin. Addie ran to meet them, her hands full of white shad blossoms.

"Oh, Mrs. Beame and Fanny! ma wants to see you so much; she told me to meet Willie, and go over to the farm for some milk, when you are here, so she need not stay alone."

The children went on up the hill green with tender grass. Susan's room was neat and comfortable, from the previous care of her present visitors. Her own bed was supplied with pillows and sheets, while a pretty patchwork quilt gave a bright air to the dull and scanty furniture.

"Dear Fanny, I can't sit up now," spoke Susan in a feeble tone, holding a hand of each. "I've sent the children away, for I want to talk with you both; I havn't long to stay now, and —"

"Lie quiet, Susan; do not talk till you have taken some nourishment. It will give you strength," said Mrs. Beame, in a motherly manner. "Fanny, run out doors and gather a few chips and sticks for a little fire, to warm the soup."

"Yes, mother, 'twill be done very soon."

She first went to the bed, brushed away the dark hair and kissed the thin cheek, saying,—

"We will have plenty of time, Susan; we shall stay till night. Now for the fire."

Meantime, Mrs. Beame got the sufferer into an arm-chair, brought by Doctor Clarendon, and made the bed afresh.

"Don't fret, Susie," cried Fanny. "I know where all the dishes are; you know I'm at home, here."

"I know it, dear girl. Do as you please; only it pains me to see you waiting on me, so much."

"Whom else have we to look after, but you, Susan?" said Mrs.

Beame. Other sick ones have houses, lands, and friends, and money. You, poor dear, have neither. Do not worry — we must do this, not only because we love you, but because Jesus the Christ is looking to see if we love him, too. There, don't have another care about it. Take some soup and this chicken breast. Fanny, bring the toast and the jelly."

"This is so refreshing," said Susie. "I can't cook, and I've been sick so long, there is very little to cook. I wish Henry could see this room, this afternoon."

"Perhaps he knows it all, and sees us from the home above. Let us hope so, Susie. It might make even Heaven happier. There! I'm always saying too much," lamented Fanny, as she took her own handkerchief and held it to Susan's wet eyes. "There, there, eat a bit of toast and jelly. Look here, I've brought you something in this basket — a piece of Richard and Lucy's wedding-cake. We had a splendid wedding — all your good friends were there, Susie."

"Have they gone?"

"Yes, Susie, hundreds of miles away; but they are equally yoked in the Lord's service, and will be happy in their missionary labor."

After an exhaustive attack of coughing, Susie took up the former thread of conversation.

"I suppose their labor is all for we colored ones, to try to make people remember we are human, and to lift us from the earth where we have lain so long, bruised and mangled by the proud feet of the white race. Who would think Christians should need missionaries?"

"All people need missionaries, who do not know the true God. And I call Ohio pagan in humanity. You look fatigued, Susie. Will you try the bed again?"

"I think so. I can talk with less effort there."

Mrs. Beame propped up the invalid with pillows, bathed her temples with camphor, and, with Fanny, drew chairs to the bedside.

"Now, Susie, we are ready to listen to anything you may have to say."

After some delay, in which she seemed striving to repress feeling and arrange thoughts, she said,—

“ Doctor Clarendon was here, yesterday, and I am sure by his manner and expression I shall not live long. The colds I took last winter, ripened into consumption. You see I have grown weaker, till I am helpless upon this bed. My only anxiety is for my children.” She wiped away the tears with Fanny’s handkerchief, kindly laid before her. “ You know how hard it is for colored grown men and women, even, to get bread to support life, and to get respectable clothing. What will become of my helpless, despised children, when they cannot have even my feeble protection, when I am in my grave? Who will give them bread? Who will cover their feet from the winter snow? Who will drop a kind word into their frightened and aching hearts?”

A burst of sobbing filled the little room, and rose above the plash of the river and the shiver of the young spring leaves, that came in at the open door.

“ I do so want to look upon my Henry’s face once more on this earth. Last night, I listened for his step as it used to come up to the door. Sometimes I thought I heard it, but he didn’t come. Henry must be dead; by sickness, or by the dreadful sea.”

“ I fear so,” said Mrs. Beame. “ You have never heard from him since that letter Fanny read to you, so long ago, that summer afternoon.”

“ At the time he sent you twenty-five dollars, Susie,” said Fanny.

“ That is the time, Fanny. All these long years I have not heard a word or breath from my poor, hunted husband. He has never forgot me though; his heart was too true. Henry Hughes is dead! away from his children and his home!”

Pointing with her thin finger to a box on the shelf, she begged Fanny to take the precious letter from it and read it to her again. All through its reading the response to its brave and loving lines were heart-breaking, sobbing grief.

“ There, dear Susie, this is too much for you; rest now and hear what we may offer to comfort you. Doubtless, some calamity has overtaken your husband. He has never deserted you; there is balm in that. His voyages to the tropics were dangerous. He may be waiting for you beyond all earthly trials. Let us hope for the best, Susie.

“Susie, I have a plan for your dear children. In the first place, you may recover. If so, all will be well; yet your disease is treacherous, and in case your children should be left homeless, I will take Addie into my protection. She shall grow up in our house as Fanny has done, if my offer is satisfactory to you.”

Susie caught Mrs. Beame's hand in gratitude, and thanked God that her young lamb would be folded by an arm as gentle as her own.

“With all my heart, I give her to you. You will do more for her than is in my power. I could die in peace if, also, my high-spirited Willie could be saved from the hard fate of his father. If he could be taught his books, and taught to respect himself and others; taught to be industrious, patient and saving.” Susie brought her trembling hands together, and with closed eyes, as if in petition, groaned audibly. “Oh! if some kind roof could shelter him from the cruel curses that follow his color; that he might not become hardened and desperate by that treatment.”

“Hush this grieving, Susie,” a voice whispered in her ear, and a cheek touched hers. It was Fanny. “Do not yield to this sorrow. I believe I know who will shelter Willie under just the kind roof you crave. Do you know Mr. Link, the rich drover?”

“I have heard of him.”

“Mr. Link,” continued Susan's comforter, “is rich, and he is an abolitionist. He has the kindest feelings for the suffering and destitute. He is the one that waited for us in the snow, when Richard was mobbed at the church, and carried us home in his sleigh.”

Susan grew calmer.

“I think he will take Willie right home; and if he don't keep him till he is grown, he will keep him till we can find a good home for him.”

Fanny's cheek still touched Susie's.

“Try to rest now; we will take the burden from you.”

“Take this sleeping powder and let your mind rest,” added Mrs. Beame.

The day waned, still Susie slept. Fanny, with the children, went up to Alderbank, filled a basket with provisions, secured the doors, and came back to the cabin for the night.

The next morning, Doctor Clarendon was informed of affairs,

and volunteered to ride round to inform Filette Buddington how much Susie needed the presence of Hester in her last hours.

“ Binah shall go to Mrs. Buddington,” said the doctor. “ Our nest is empty. Filette has many cares. I am sure Filette will bring Hester as soon as she hears my message.”

Hester came, bringing with her a bountiful supply of necessaries. A week passed, and Hester sent the children, in haste, for Mrs. Beame. Hester met them outside the cabin, saying,—

“ I think there’s a change. I cannot be alone.”

Susie whispered,—

“ I am easier, but I think I am going.” Her face lightened. “ Tell Henry, my poor Henry, if you ever see him, that I loved him to the last ; that I thought of him in my last breath. Kiss me, Fanny, I’m going.”

The small funeral wound up from the river through the grassy banks, bushes and alders to the main road, followed by a few who loved the poor. In a shabby corner, overgrown by briars and thistles, remote from the Saxon pride of marble head-stones and monuments, Susie slept her last sleep.

The last of July, of that summer, brought letters from Richard and Lucy. Little Addie took Fanny’s place as post-office messenger, and now brought her hands full of letters, spreading them out on Fanny’s lap, gleefully.

“ Look, how many ; oh ! Miss Fanny, you will be so glad, and Auntie Beame will be glad, too ! Ugh ! the sun is so hot ! Shall I go and play while you read, auntie ? Am I a ‘ little pitcher,’ auntie ? ”

“ Yes,” said Mrs. Beame, laughingly, “ you are a little honey pitcher.” She cast her arm around the little body, pressed Addie to her heart, left a kiss on the brown cheek, and said, “ Go, now and carry *that* with you.”

Happy as a golden butterfly she skipped from the room, while Fanny opened the letter bearing her brother’s direction, and read aloud to her mother,—

“ *Ohio* — 184 —.

“ DEAR SISTER FANNY,— On this first line, read that we are well and happy ; that will lift the cloud from the sympathetic face and send a thrill of anticipated pleasure into those sisterly eyes. We seem, for the nonce, to have left the

region of mobs and violence, and to have entered the district whose 'manna falls,' as our good mother says.

"We came here somewhat worn by continued speaking and buffetings endured. It is a pleasant spot, amid farms and undulating green. The family are staunch Abolitionists. In view, is a fine farmer's mansion, whose inmates and owners are connected with the South. Two of their sons are settled there, and are now on their annual summer visit here.

"We have addressed meetings here in quiet security. This little township is not mobocratic. This family with Southern interests, never attend our meetings or make social calls upon our hosts. However, we were informed privately, that the wife of one of the sons, who is Southern born, was about to call on us, to say what, as a Southerner, devolved upon her; that she could not see her own section made the subject of contumacy and animadversion, without due remonstrance. Therefore we were not surprised to receive a note couched in politest terms, requesting an interview, with an appointment of the day.

"We consented. On the next afternoon an elegant carriage with a colored coachman, stopped at the gate. A lady of distinguished elegance alighted. Her dress and address betokened refinement and high breeding. She was tall, with black, natural curls, a skin of alabaster, and eyes of such changeable brilliancy, that they might have been any or every color. She asked for Mr. and Mrs. Beame, the anti-slavery lecturer. On meeting us in the parlor, she requested the interview might be strictly private, as her call pertained to us alone. She urged that no doors be closed. We granted all.

"Judge of our surprise, when, finding herself securely free from interruption, the lady extended her hand to Lucy and pressed it earnestly between both her own, saying, 'I have a concealed purpose in this visit; I have not come to rebuke either of you. I have not come to vindicate the South against any 'vituperation,' as out-siders name your truthful assertions.' Here, she embraced Lucy, touching her brow with her lips. I cannot explain the ineffable and tender grace with which this act was done. She turned to me, saying, 'accept my unfeigned admiration and gratitude for the heroism manifested in your two lives. I have never before looked upon an Abolitionist; but here, mine eyes have been blessed! from my innermost heart I reverence you, and place you far above all the blue-blooded nobility of our land. From every throbbing pulse of my being, comes up the cry that you will continue to unfold the cruel outrages of slavery, that you will continue to measure the height and depth of its crimes by the plummet of righteousness, that you will continue to scatter anathemas that shall fall like burning coals upon the dead consciences of the North!'

"'You marvel, my friends, and justly, that I should be possessed of this strange frenzy in your favor. It is true that the proud blue-blood of the aristocrat flows in these veins,' holding forth a hand more faultless than I had ever dreamed of. 'It is true, I am a daughter of the South. Do not betray me — Do not repeat my name — bury it in your own breasts! Do not recognize me or my family on our walks or rides. My call here, will satisfy the neighborhood; therefore, speak of me lightly. Dear friends, say simply, that you expect censure and intimidation from Southerners.' She continued, 'I have a favor to beg; that you will accept from me, each of you, a package to be opened only

after my carriage has rolled away. Continue your ministry to the oppressed, and God will bless you. Night and day, my poor prayers shall go up to the Throne for you both, for the only two Abolitionists I have been permitted to meet.' She pressed both our hands, embraced Lucy, saying, 'Farewell! Remember I am a stranger, hereafter.'

"The carriage departed. Lucy and I retired to our chamber to examine the packages. What do you think, my mother and sister, they contained? Mine contained one hundred dollars enclosed in these words. 'Consider the giver of this small amount as your parishioner, hereafter.'

"This contribution to the meagre salary of one who preaches the pure gospel, will be forwarded annually, by sealed letters to the care of your present host, through whom it will reach Mr. Beame, my revered pastor.' I could only accept the opportune gift in silent thankfulness; you, at home, know well how much I needed it. Lucy peered curiously at her neatly folded packet, raised it to her lips and removed the wrappers; you should have seen her utter a little scream of delight, and holding her gift up to me. It was a likeness of the beautiful stranger herself. The same perfection of feature and hair and skin! The dazzling eyes had their native *hauteur* and cold repose; but we had seen them melt; we had seen this frigidity fused in her enthusiastic devotion to what she termed our 'heroism.'

"The note accompanying the likeness, ran thus: 'When you look at this face, listen to the voice that whispers these words from the still lips; "do not falter, dear lady. For the love of God and humanity, do not falter."' You shall see the pictured lips that speak, some day, and hang it in the secret chamber of the soul, side by side with the memory of Leonore Wallace. You will say she is as

"———beautiful as ever looked
From white clouds, in a dream: —"

"You know, Fanny, Shelly says,—

"Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory.
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live, within the sense they quicken."

"So, around us linger the sweet words and affection of the beautiful stranger."

"So," said Mrs. Beame, at the conclusion of the letter, "my children entertained an angel unawares."

CHAPTER XXVI.

“AND so my pretty wife must go to Washington? here in August.”

“Oh, yes, my husband! I desire above all things to be present at the discussion of that terrible ‘Fugitive Slave Act,’ in the Capital and out of it.” Zaffiri clasped her hands tightly, and with a groan added, “I wish to hear for myself the fiendish ring of the whetting of that sword which shall slay every hope of Freedom in the North.”

“And you left your pleasant visiting days in the healthy air of Cloudspire, to have your sensitive soul harrowed by the coarse bullyings, murderous threats, and wilful falsehoods of the advocates of that ‘Act;’ and to endure the mortification of seeing Northern men yield to this climax of compromises?”

“Well, Claude, as I explained before our friends retired to rest, our decision was sudden. We were all sitting on the piazza, where, impulsively, George and Filette said, ‘Let us go to Washington! Let us enter the lion’s den.’ A swift compliance sprang to my lips. I repeated, ‘Let us go.’ So here we all are, in New York.”

“What if I *lose* you there, among so many Southerners?”

Zaffiri uttered a light laugh, saying,—

“I think after that St. Louis ordeal, there is nothing to fear. After leaning on the arm of my brother a whole evening and enjoying safety from the dangerous acquaintance of those South Carolinans, there will not be much to fear in Washington.”

“However that may be, I shall accompany you, darling! I am your protector, till death do us part.”

“*Will* you go? I am safe then. Happy conclusion; I shall sleep well to-night; George and Filette will be delighted in the morning.”

“The Scripture saith, ‘He giveth his beloved sleep;’ therefore he will give my blue eyes sleep — the sweetest and most refreshing.”

The happy party arrived at the Capitol at night. The high-bred appearance of the new arrivals, obtained for them airy and select rooms, Mr. Lambelle and lady were assigned to a parlor, which, in the crowded condition of the house, had been furnished for lodgings. This parlor, by sliding doors, communicated with another, which was daily thronged with Southern and other select guests.

The next morning, her first in Washington, Zaffiri was made an involuntary participator in one of the many social intrigues carried on in that Mecca of lover's vows and marital plans. While engaged with her little Italian maid at her late toilet, late from the fatigue of the previous day, earnest conversation from the adjoining parlor fell upon her ears.

"Well, May," said a matronly voice, "I think you should take a little time for reflection, or should have taken it before this. Young Dentelle is a fine match for any lady in the land, but you have been playiug off sadly, the week past. I am sure he would propose if you gave him the opportunity."

"So would a dozen others, my dear mamma, if I gave them opportunity!" replied a fresh, gay, girlish voice.

"A dozen others, my child! preposterous! what have you to do with a dozen others? Cease this coquetting. You can choose but *one*."

"Why, mamma, should I choose Monsieur Dentelle? That young lieutenant in the navy is far more captivating to me. His martial air, it haunts me still!" and her fingers rippled carelessly over the keys of a piano like a robin's trill.

"May Bloome, listen. Put aside this giddy-headed nonsense. Your lieutenant is nearly a head shorter than your own queenly height; besides, his antecedents are in obscurity. Dentelle is a Southerner — a Georgian — he represents the blue blood and high-toned chivalrous bearing which your father values so highly. He inherits slaves which would be at your command. His figure is commanding and taller than yours; his intercourse is marked by a dignified courtesy for which one looks in vain among Northerners. He is a regal match for you, May! Judging from his continued and delicate attentions, I am sure you have enchained his affections."

A liquid symphony of chords and *arpeggios* followed.

"My daughter, leave that instrument and listen to me seriously."

"Mamma, of what advantage is seriousness? It is said repeatedly, that Southerners marry Southerners, frequently not going outside of the family blood, in order to retain estates in the same proud line. How, then, could Augustus Dentelle have intentions of marriage with a Northerner — and an Indianian at that? He may wish to dally an idle hour with *me* among many *others*, as the butterfly flutters among flowers."

"My dear May, I beg you to reflect. At the president's levee, where you first met, he singled you out from the throng of fascinating beauties, he honored you with marked and public attentions, from which he has never faltered, since. Here, in these parlors, he hangs upon every word and act of yours, with distinguished admiration. Besides, these Southerners know the status of Northern men. Dentelle, here, knows Mr. Bloome is a staunch Democrat of the Southern type, supporting Southern rights, bending all his political power, which is by no means insignificant, to their support. He knows, also, that your papa will be a member of the constitutional convention to meet in Indiana this year, and that he will make every effort to carry the measures which the South demands."

"Mamma, how is it you are so well informed?" asked May, with doubt in her tone.

"My authority is your own papa, himself. Dentelle has made his acquaintance at the Capitol, introduced him to his friends, and has invited him to dinner. It is openly understood that you are an heiress,—sole heiress to enviable wealth. Your marriage dower will be one hundred thousand dollars. Are you convinced, now, that you are worth winning, by even Augustus Dentelle? and that his attentions can possibly have the charm of sincerity? As to the rest, your mirror will be one of the strongest allies in your decision."

"Mamma, I have had sufficient evidence of the power of my personal attractions, and perhaps, if I should look deep enough down into my volatile heart, I *might* find a preponderance for Augustus Dentelle."

"It behooves you, then, my daughter, to take that trouble. Make

no delay. You may lose or win, by the very course you pursue to-day. There stands your harp, silent and covered, although your lover has repeatedly solicited its music. Unveil it this morning, after the breakfast hours, and sweep from its strings the delicious chords with which you know how, so well, to entrance all listeners. When Dentelle's handsome turnout and servants bring him again at your feet, accept his invitation to an airing, and leave me to make excuses to others. Listen, my beautiful May, you cannot tamper with the fiery Southern spirit. Dare not attempt it longer."

The entrance of Mr. Buddington and Filette into the parlor with others, hushed the conversation.

It had been agreed in New York, by Mr. Buddington and Mr. Lambelle, that neither they nor their wives should pass judgment upon the scenes that might transpire at the hotel or Capitol; that they should shield themselves among the fire-eaters by an amiable silence. That they should avoid being drawn into debate, politely baffling attempts to draw out their opinions on either of the compromises presented that session by the plastic hands of Clay."

"You see," said Mr. Lambelle, "I should be on dangerous ground among those imperious, aggressive, hot-headed members of Congress and their brood of defiant, daring, body-guard. Zaffiri and I have enough at stake to induce wariness, while we are in the hands of the Philistines."

"I too," said Mr. Buddington, "have had enough of Texas; boundaries, and ten million loans included. What could be said to one like 'Holmes of South Caroliha,' who solemnly predicts, in case of secession, that the doom of New England will be '*that of Venia, Palmyra, and other cities of the old world, whose glory and prosperity must be numbered among the things that were?*' What, but the silence of contempt, would be a fitting reply."

"Or to that rabid 'Morse' of Louisiana, who asserts that 'a Union is not worth a curse, as long as distinction exists between negroes and horses,'" continued Zaffiri.

"What better foil than silence, for that other madman, Langdon Cheeves, who affirms that the only remedy for the South is secession, and who declares with imprudent effrontery,—

"'We can scatter our enemies like autumn leaves. California

will be a slave-state; and we will form the most splendid empire on which the sun shines.' ”

“ We are agreed, then, that upon entering that arena of the ferocious and untamed, the guardian angel of Silence shall walk with us? ” said Mr. Lambelle.

“ We are agreed, ” was unanimous.

Zaffiri entered the crowded galleries, at the Capitol, with her accustomed ease and elegant self-poise. Room was made for her, while jeweled hands of the South beckoned her to a seat among them.

There sat the beautiful fugitive, breathing her charmed life of Freedom in the very midst of her lynx-eyed hunters who were held in leash only by a blind and dumb ignorance of their opportunity.

There, on the floor of the Senate chamber, stood Mason of Virginia, holding forth the eight sections of the ‘ Fugitive Slave Act, ’ which was to make the mountains and valleys, the forests and plains, the orchards and hearthstones of the North, sanguinary and guilty hunting-grounds for the slave-masters of the South, which should convert her citizens into baying bloodhounds, pursuing and capturing their human prey. There were Webster, Dayton, and Chase, with their amendments for jury trial, *rejected*. There was Jefferson Davis, triumphant! filching the expenses of their “ slaves’ delivery, ” from the coffers of the National Government.

These were proudly pointed out to the elegant stranger, as they mentally termed Zaffiri, by ladies on either hand. On her left, sat a young lady in costly attire, whose wonderful beauty attracted admiring glances from all eyes; even the staid senators below, found time, in the fierce controversies of the hour, to lift their gaze to her wonderful fascination. She was closely attended by a tall, pale, young man, whose fiery spirit appeared, at times, *afire* with the violent and stormy debate proceeding below; but, losing its violence and malignant bitterness when it turned to the lovely girl beside him, and melting into acts of tenderest devotion.

“ My dear May, ” he said, “ are you content and comfortable here? shall I not take you into the air? Will you not faint in this foul atmosphere? Can your delicate nerves endure this clash of arms? ”

“ I am perfectly, well, Augustus, and nicely seated. I am accus-

tomed to violent debate, both here and in Indiana. Papa, you know, supports all Southern measures."

"I am gratified to have learned, Miss May, that Mr. Bloome has clear views of Southern rights and of our constitutional claims upon the North."

He took up her pearl and satin fan, and gently stirred the air, devotedly studying the classic beauty of her face.

She turned politely to Zaffari,—

"There is Thaddeus Stevens upon the floor, holding a conference with Mr. Seward, of New York. Both those senators are enemies to slavery and hostile to Southern demands. There is Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, approaching the President's chair. He is the author of the compromises." She continued, "This Mr. Seward asserts that there is a 'higher law' than the Constitution. He has rendered Southern members highly indignant, and has subjected himself to the deserved odium of slave-holders. There is Mr. Webster passing across the chamber. He is an advocate of the Fugitive Slave Act. Papa says, 'much to the chagrin' of Massachusetts, which has, heretofore, had a great pride in his masterly power in behalf of Justice, as they term it. It seems to me, that owners of property have a right *to take it*, wherever it may be found."

This last was spoken in the tone of inquiry.

Zaffari replied,—

"Ownership confers rights which no laws or arguments should resist or annul."

"Papa affirms the same," said the young lady, with an eloquent smile. "Augustus, is not that gentleman speaking to Mr. Mason Colonel Fairland of South Carolina? and is not the other Colonel Haywood? I am sure I danced with both of them at the last ball."

"They are the same, fair sylph; they had the honor of being your partners, also."

After adjournment, the only expression of feeling among the party was a long pressure of Filette's hand by Zaffari, and the guarded reply,—

"These scenes curdle one's blood!"

At the hotel, May Bloome increased her acquaintance with Zaffari and her party, seeming to proffer a tribute of esteem and af

fection to her, that was bestowed upon no other. Madame Lambelle must sit, chat, walk, and ride with May Bloome, recognized everywhere as the charming young heiress. She must be introduced to May's friends, to Colonel Haywood and Major Fairland, to Dentelle, the elder, his lady, and a host of accomplished Southern ladies, with whom May was a general favorite.

The party remained until the 'Fugitive Slave Act' became a law; till, with deep mortification, they had seen thirty-three Northern Congressmen dodge the vote, and thirty-one bow the servile knee to Baal.

"Let us go," said Squire Buddington, "we have witnessed with our own eyes the thralldom of the North. We have seen the government of our Republican country which bears on its frontlet the eternal Truth, that 'all men are created free and equal,' securely corraled in that Slave pen!"

Arrived in New York, and seated around, in the security of Mr. Lambelle's parlor, the public scenes and personal experiences of the trip were socially rehearsed.

"So we have been converted into bloodhounds, to be ready for the chase at the sound of the master's horn," said Mr. Lambelle. "So, if *your* track should be scented, my poor wife, instead of being your protector, as I have promised before God and man, I should be forced, in obedience to United States' law and the command of a brutal officer, to lead them into your presence, assist in putting on the manacles, and in thrusting you away from me into a master's power."

"Oh! my husband, to what extent have those Southern madmen carried their high-handed domination? Is there no arm to stay this tide of despotism, or strengthen the wavering, imbecile, compromising North?"

"*I have not yet seen that arm, Zaffiri,*" he replied, laying his soothing hand on the head bent with weeping over the mass of agony looming up in the future of the hunted ones.

"There are twenty thousand fugitives in the so-called Free States," remarked Squire Buddington. "Many of them have been settled here for years, with homes, wives and children."

"Who can deliver them?" asked Filette. "There is no refuge

for us, but in 'Seward's *higher law*.' We must resist this 'act' even to martyrdom."

"Zaffiri, you made a strange but attractive friendship in Washington," said Mr. Lambelle, endeavoring to give a cheerful tone to the conversation. "Miss May Bloome is the belle of the season. She presented you with her picture. Let us examine it."

Being brought forward, it elicited exclamations of admiration. It was colored by a master's brush, and was a faithful portrayal of May's wonderful beauty.

"She looks like a born princess," said Filette, "without a shadow of care on the marvelous symmetry of feature."

"There is a royal cast of countenance and a courtly style about her, which one seldom meets. The dangerous flattery of the superficial society surrounding her, has made no inroad upon the unaffected simplicity and ingeniousness of her nature."

"She is an only child, doted upon by her parents, I believe?" said Filette inquiringly.

"She is, but what a pity that her fine nature should be dwarfed by the Democratic teachings of her Democratic father. She believes in the monstrous 'Fugitive Slave Law,' as a simple act securing the right of property. She has not a doubt on the propriety of ownership in human beings."

"She is to visit you, Zaffiri, this winter, on her return to Indiana?" asked her husband.

"Certainly; but we must lay aside the scales of justice when May Bloome arrives, and give ourselves to fetes and pleasures."

Eight days after, Zaffiri and her friends had witnessed the passage of the odious bill. They sat cosily together awaiting the tea hour and return of their husbands. Dear old Mrs. Weintze had been a visitor for the day. Unusual gayety pervaded the happy group. Papa Weintze entered with the two gentlemen, and after a filial embrace from Zaffiri was led affectionately to the easiest and roomiest chair in the parlor. Turning to greet Mr. Lambelle, who had sunk upon the nearest sofa, she was appalled.

Pale and apparently speechless he gazed intently upon her; her own lips whitened; she stood like a statue, and cried,—

"My dear husband, what is the matter? Speak to me." He

opened his arms. With one long cry she fell into the fond embrace, still beseeching, "Speak to me, speak to Zaffiri?"

"Zaffiri, my precious wife, I have just witnessed a terrible scene. I have just seen the laborious, faithful, trusty John Hamlet torn from his work, without a moment's warning. He was brutally handcuffed and forcibly thrust into a carriage, to be sent to Baltimore; to a woman, who claims to be his mistress. Our Father! it was pitiful to see the wild despair in which he begged for time to take a last farewell of his wife and children; his pleading voice was hushed by violence; every heart was stone. I thought of my treasure left in this house; I hastened to the store and with our friends, hurried home. You are here, still, my life! my all! you are not yet torn from my sheltering home. On my way here, I made a quick resolve. To-morrow's dawn must meet you, Zaffiri, leaving this city. You must go to the home of our friends, in Cloudspire. From there, you must go to Europe, when I shall have matured plans, which will be done quickly.

"Zaffiri, I dare not trust you here longer. Every link in the chain of events by which you escaped, will be ferreted out. Before we dream of it, the clanking of your hand-cuffs, my precious darling, will be heard in this parlor."

The awful danger so clearly depicted, struck awe to all present. Filette silently wiped away her fast-falling tears. Old Dedierich Weintze broke the silence.

"I think, dear child, your husband has just grounds for fear. I know the wicked determination of those Southerners; they will move Heaven and Earth to hunt out the fugitive. Distance nor time will be taken into account; and here, in the North, they will find their willing agents at every step. I would fly, my child, from the merciless hunt."

Mr Lambelle drew his stunned and weeping wife up from the carpet to the sofa at his side. He looked at his watch. "It is early; there is time before the tea hour, for arranging preliminaries. Mr. Buddington, you will pardon the abrupt termination of your visit here. I am sure you perceive the hard necessity which impels immediate action.'

"We are only rejoiced to be able, at any moment, to assist in

securing the safety of Madame Lambelle ; whatever course you may direct, we shall follow to the letter," replied the squire.

"Then I must leave this happy home of years, and wander among strangers. How long must I stay?" moaned Zaffiri.

"God only knows ! my poor lamb," tenderly replied Mr. Lambelle. I cannot cross the water now, but I shall find you, as soon as possible. I cannot send you away, alone ; some companion must be found to travel with you, to divest your castaway life in some degree of its loneliness."

He pressed his palm to his forehead, distracted with bitter thoughts. Ah ! it behooves me to act quickly ; Mrs. Buddington do you think that Mary — Mrs. James Buddington, could be induced to accompany Zaffiri to Europe ? her health is declining. The journey might improve it. I will be responsible for her expenses."

"It is a sudden idea, sir, but of this I am sure. She needs the change, and your wife could have no better friend. I will use my influence to have her go."

"She must go directly from Cloudspire. I propose that to-morrow Zaffiri arrives home with you, and that the next day they go on to Canada, say to Montreal. The necessary equipments of clothing can be obtained there, or in London. In one week after arranging business, I will join them in Montreal, and make arrangements for the future. We should probably proceed to Halifax, where I shall see them off, for England. Zaffiri has spent several years in Europe, and with Mary, to whom she is warmly attached, will get on quite agreeably."

"I will accompany them to Montreal," said George, "if it meets your wishes."

"I am under many obligations for the favor, sir."

"By the way," continued George, "how would you like to have Issy travel with them ? He has funds sufficient, with his annual allowance, to pay his way, and the residence abroad would be of immense advantage to him."

"That is a wonderful idea ; he would so much relieve both ladies," answered Mr Lambelle.

"I should have a delightful family in my exile, if both consent to

your plans, Claude! but you, my deserted husband, who can pour the oil of joy into your life?"

"Never mind that, my beautiful. Think that my chief joy will be to know that you are free, and that *sometime* and *somewhere*, our domestic peace and happiness will be established."

"Mamma Weintze will look after Mr. Lambelle," said the good matron. "We will comfort him. Leave him to us," she continued, in a soft, broken voice. "Leave this house to me, dear child; there is your tea bell." She encircled Zaffiri with a motherly arm. "Come take refreshment; let us trust in Him who orders human events."

There was no sleep for these four friends, that night. Preparations for a long absence required much time, and they were to start before dawn. The heavy traveling trunks were packed by Filette and Cossetina. A nervous helplessness came upon Zaffiri, who, by turns moaned upon the sofas, or walked the floor, on the arm of her pale and suffering husband.

"To-morrow night, my dear wife will be safe under the flag of England! Ten thousand curses rest upon our 'Stars and Stripes, the flaunting lie!'" he said. One week will soon pass, and you will greet me again in *free* Montreal."

The journey to Cloudspire was swift and undisturbed, save by the thoughtful silence of the fugitive in the care of George and Filette. The sun was sinking behind the familiar western woods, when they drew near their pleasant grounds. A feeling of security pervaded the conversation. Each felt that immediate jeopardy was left behind.

The carriage turned into the yard.

"Well, well!" exclaimed Mr. Buddington, "what's all this! One, two, three, four buggies hitched here! Filette, I guess Roland and his mother have given a surprise party."

Before they alighted, Mrs. Clarendon and Hester appeared on the green, with open arms to receive their friends.

"What sent you home so soon?" cried Hester. "Oh! I'm so glad you're here! Dear Mrs. Lambelle, are you sick? Lean on my arm, you look like fainting."

Mrs. Clarendon drew Filette's arm in hers, saying,—

“How welcome you all are! we could not expect you so soon. Dear me! we’ve so much to tell you.”

Dr. Clarendon descended the steps.

“Holloa, George! you see we’ve taken possession of your house — a good deal better than ours, you see — a great temptation. Come in and see how we carry sail, while you are hobnobbing with those much-to-be-esteemed Southerners, in Washington.”

They entered the parlor, charmed by the unexpected welcome, but still marveling at the unexplained gathering. Here they were saluted by Mr. Glenly, from East Elms, Mr. Link, and their two anti-slavery friends from the quiet valley in their own town. On the sofa, supported by pillows, Issy reclined. His head was carefully bound up, and he only extended his hand in place of his customary enthusiastic salutation.

“What has happened my dear boy?” exclaimed George, in a quiet tone of alarm. “No, be quiet, Paisley. Doctor, what does it all mean?”

“Do explain, quickly!” begged Filette.

“Sit down then, and get your pulses into salubrious action. Remember, I am professionally master of ceremonies. Be seated, I say, or I’ll administer a nerve tonic to all five of you, before a word is said.”

Meantime the red bandana performed its customary office.

“There, now, we are all right. You see George, while you all were at the Capitol plotting secession and the destruction of the Constitution, hatched by the wisdom of our infallible fathers, we, peace-loving and law-abiding citizens, as we are, remained in our obscure homes, to give an early test of the humane law of the United States, termed the ‘Fugitive Slave Act.’ By the loyal assistance of Mr. Lappin, as wary a hound as any other in the service of our glorious Republic, in conjunction with Cloudspire’s disguised admiral, Lem Hamm, distinguished by the rings in his ears, and by the awful majesty of the power of a United States marshal from West Elms, we have performed every iota of that ‘Act’ this day, except taking the property claimed back to bondage.”

This information was given with rhetorical effect, the doctor on his feet and gesticulating before his listeners.

"We, and our coadjutors, before mentioned, have proven our fealty to the Union, by putting every element of this 'Act' to its trial in legal proportions. There was surprise, violence, bloodshed, prayer, blasphemy, sympathy, atrocity, despair, hope, handcuffs and torture, black villainy and white innocence, piratical robbery, and swift retribution. By Jove! gentlemen, those are ingredients for a Christian dose, that ought to render the partaker fit for the highest Heaven. Come here, Hester; take the stand. I'm tired. Give some of this morning's particulars."

"Do, Hester," begged Filette; "omit nothing."

"I will if I can, Mrs. Buddington; but I've been as wild as a hawk, all day. When I speak of it I half lose my senses. I've done nothing all day, but run from room to room and look down the road, shake my fists, and vow vengeance. Why, they'll have *me*, next!"

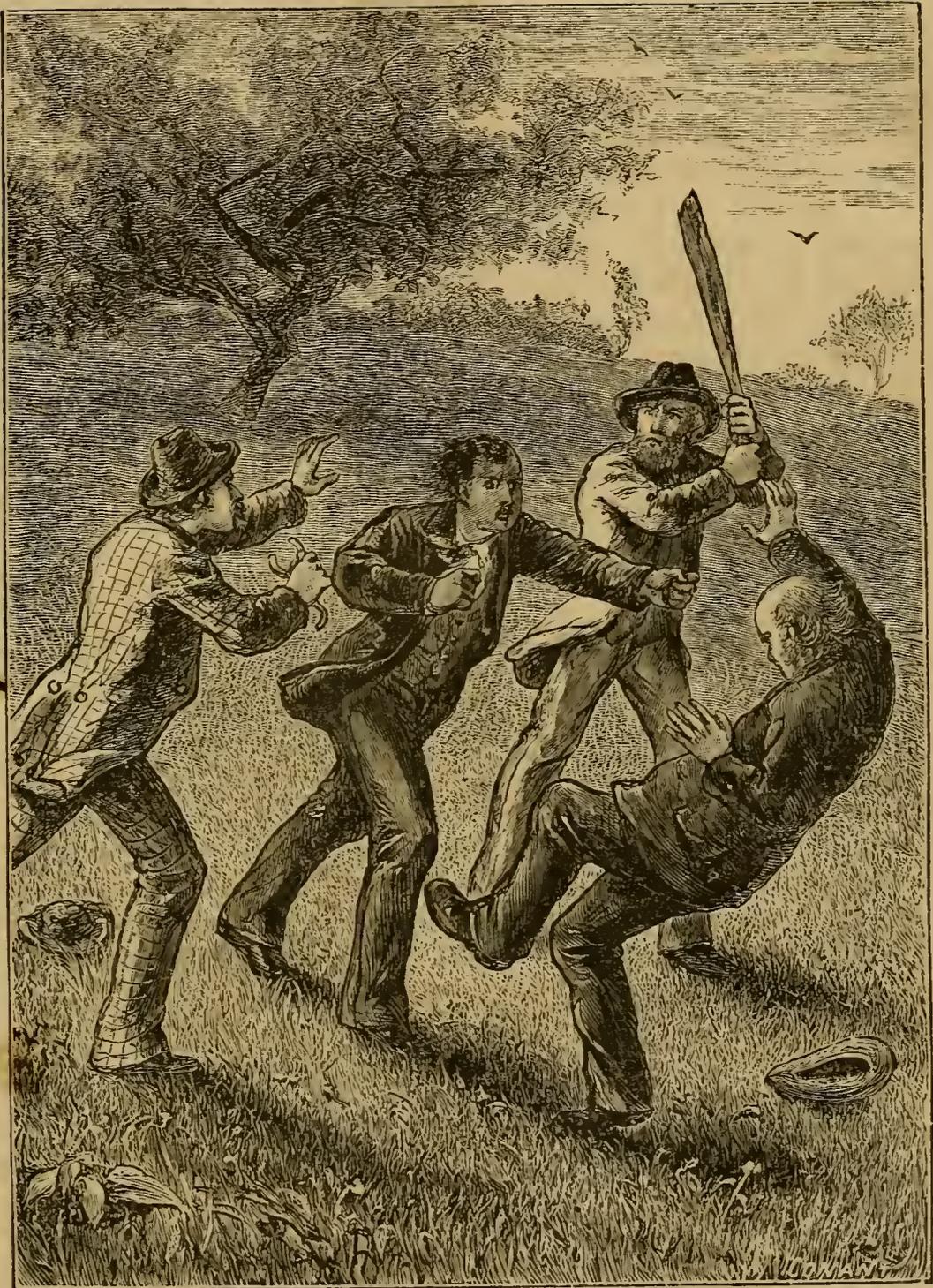
"There is no doubt but resort will be had to kidnapping," remarked Mr. Glenly; "but, Hester, you are in good hands; you are well known in this place."

"We will all take care of *you*, Hester," answered Filette, soothingly. "Go on, now, and tell us about it."

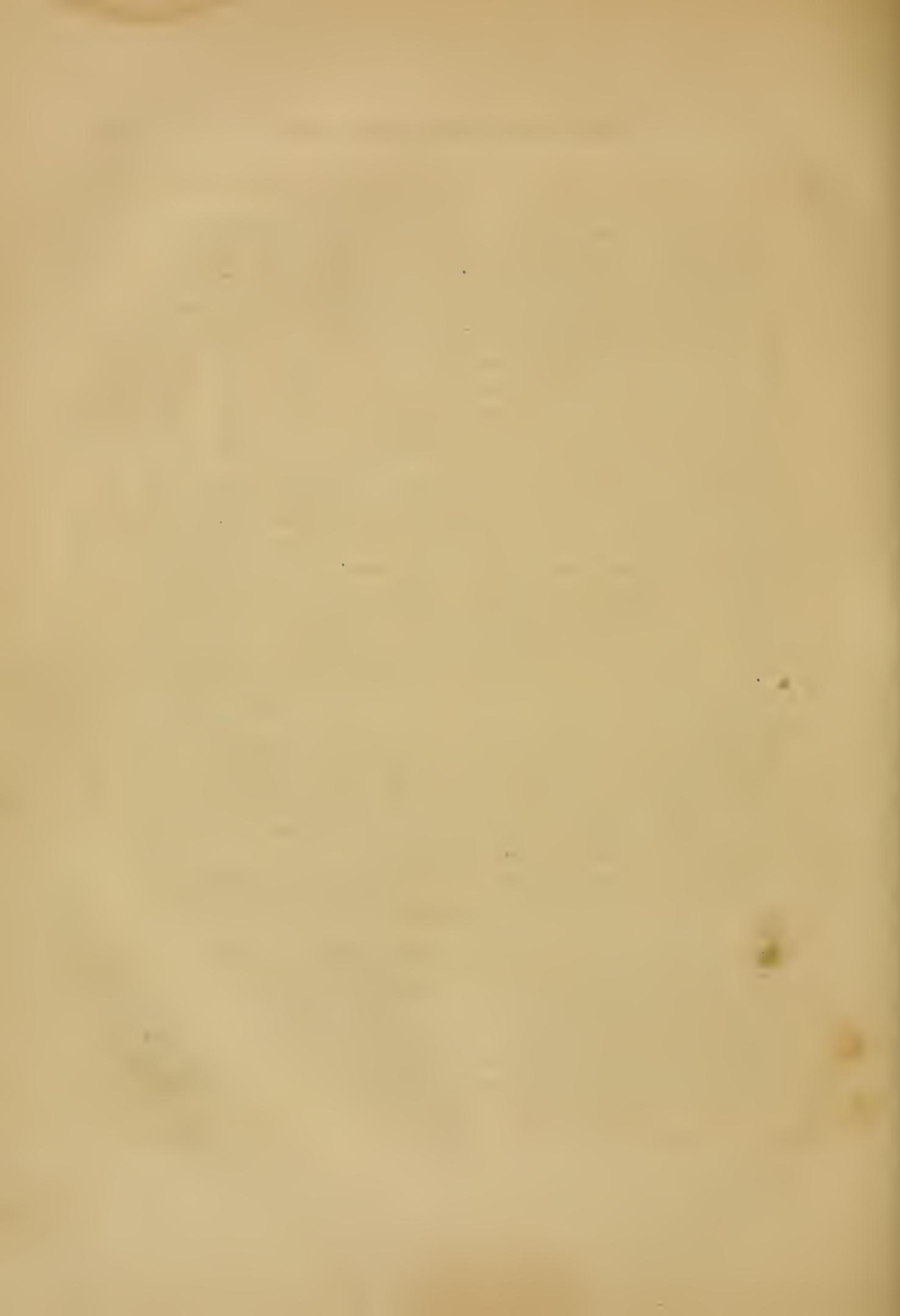
"Well, I got up early, did the milking, skimmed the cream, and got breakfast, so that Issy could go down to the doctor's to study his books. About nine o'clock, three men rode up to the kitchen door in a two-seated wagon; one was a stranger, but the other two I knew; one was that fool-minded Lappin that came here after Robert; the other was that old blotch-faced sailor, Lem Hamm, that helped tear up your pew in the meeting-house.

"The stranger asked if Mr. Buddington was at home, and when he would come? I said I didn't know, and they went away as I supposed.

"About ten o'clock, I heard a dreadful cry of murder down the road. I ran to the door, and there in plain sight, was Issy dealing a blow at old Lappin, that sent him reeling against the fence. Then Lem Hamm, with a great club, knocked Issy down. He lay like a dead man; they all bent over him, put irons on his wrists,



THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY.



led their horse and wagon out of the birches and lifted Issy in; got in quick themselves, swearing, and drove off.

“I’ve heard so much about such works, that I thought in a minute they were going to send him back South. I’m pretty quick to think sometimes, so I run up to Issy’s trunk, turned everything bottom up on the floor, snatched the box that had his ‘free papers’ in, hid it in my bosom and ran to the barn. I slipped the bridle on that fast horse in quick metre. I didn’t stop for no saddle; I said, ‘Now, Jupe, I’ll ride as fast as you can run.’ I gave him a cut and off we went. Jupe run like a rabbit. I took the cross road by the spring, and got to the doctor’s, first. He saw me coming, and stood out there to stop me.”

“Yes, yes!” exclaimed the doctor. “I thought she and Jupe both, were crazed. Old Revolutionary Putnam’s race down the stone steps was no touch to Hester’s ride. She slid off like a cat and glanced at me like a cat. ‘Doctor,’ she said, ‘they’ve got Issy, to steal him, they’ve knocked him down; and I don’t know but he’s dead; they are coming; there they are, down in the hollow. Jump on to Jupe’s back, do, doctor, quick! and run him to the depot; you’ll get there in time for the cars, and they’ll carry you to West Elms, before any horse can go there. Where’s your saddle? I’ll put it on for you — but do go.’

“Oh, you ninny! said I, if you can ride bare-back, can’t I? lead Jupe into the shed before they go past. They came up the hill rather slow, breathing their horse. There the devils were holding up Issy; he hadn’t come to, yet; he had no hat on, and the blood was streaming down his face.”

“Halloo, there! says I, who pays you for that work? God, the devil, or the United States Congress? I’ll join your ‘*posse comitatus*.’”

“Mind your own business, or you may have a bullet wound to dress for *yourself*,” yelled Lem Hamm. “All hands ahoy.”

“I roared after him,—

“‘I’ll lend a hand.’

“They drove ahead; I snatched the box from Hester, jumped on, and Jupe did his best, which is better than any horse about here can do. We went round by Hickory Street, Jupe and I. We headed the devils off. I got to the depot, just as the cars came up.

'*A case of life and death!*' I said, 'take care of my horse!' threw fifty cents on the platform and jumped aboard. I went straight to Judge Way's office, told him the trouble, and gave him Issy's 'free papers.' We both slipped into the old tavern where we knew they'd stop. I went out and collected a half dozen of our good friends. We were all ready with a strong team, for the Right."

"They came up, followed by the rag-tag and bob-tail of all meanness, shouting and whooping like savages. Issy had come too, and was able to walk into a dark little back room; we followed close to their heels, and, for a few minutes there was hot work.

"Judge Way wound the rascals over his little finger. He told them their prisoner had a rich white father, in Charleston; that, although his mother was black, and a slave, Doctor Paisley loved his son as well as any father there, loved his; 'and, far more so,' said he, 'for I believe such black villians as I see before me now would never give their child a deed of freedom, if, like Doctor Paisley, they could sell one for fifteen hundred dollars.'

"Ishmael Paisley holds a deed of himself, which neither you, nor any judge, nor any court, nor any congress can annul."

He slowly unfolded the papers and read them aloud. The rascals were cowed,—

"'Take off those manacles,' thundered the Judge; 'they belong on *your* wrists, instead of the prisoner's. If Doctor Paisley were here, you'd feel his bowie knife as the tree feels the lightning-bolt of heaven.'

"The deputy-marshall then made his defense, said he was a green hand in the business, and that he acted on information; that no man wished to walk within the letter of the law, more than he did. It all came out. That infernal Lappin and Hamm worked up the whole thing. I threatened to put the screws on to them, and they were soon among the missing.

"Who should come in, towards the last, but our friend, Glenly, here, the Lord's own good Samaritan. He brought us out from West Elms, in his own carriage. I dressed Issy's wounds, commanded him to lie there, and here we all are."

"What became of you, Hester," asked Zaffiri.

"I declared I wouldn't go back without Mrs. Clarendon. I harnessed while she got ready, and we came back to Mary. I haven't

been good for anything, all day ; but we've managed to get a nice tea, and there's plenty for you. Mr. Clarendon and Mary have more than I."

"Hester was to be pitied," replied the former lady. "I thought 'Tam O'Shanter' was driving me up here, and she seemed to believe that witches and imps were in close pursuit. Binah saw Issy pass, from our window, and said,—

"'Dar dey go ; jes' like Souf. Dem de slave trader. Issy gone, bleeding, half dead. I seen dat sight, fifty time. Dis Nort' gettin' 'cisely like de Souf. Go, missis, wid Hester ; she go crazy 'fore night.'"

Squire Buddington comforted Issy, expressing gratification that matters were no worse.

"You are home again. This thing will never be tried over. God will avenge your cause, and I trust you will live to witness this debt paid, Issy."

In the interim, before tea, Zaffiri drew her chair to Issy's couch, and, with a sympathy more expressive than words, held his hand and soothed its throbbing pulses.

The two friends from the green valley, returned before tea.

Directly after tea, Mr. Glenly took his long ride home, to East Elms ; the doctor and his wife remained for the evening. The secret of Zaffiri's birth and enslavement was known to none but George and Filette ; it was as safe with them as within her own breast. Again in the parlor, George broached the subject of travel abroad, to Mary. Argument and persuasion, in which Doctor and Mrs. Clarendon and Mr. Link united, together with the evident benefit to her health, resulting from change of scene, at length prevailed. Much to the surprise of the others, the squire drew his chair to Issy's couch, saying,—

"How would *you* like to go along with the ladies, travel in Europe, and look after them for Mr. Lambelle?"

"And abandon this one object of my life — the study of medicine?" he asked in alarm.

"Abandon it? by no means, by no means," cried the doctor, waving the victorious bandana ; "there is no abandoning about it. Tuck yourself into one of those German Universities, and study medicine to your hearts content ; more than I can ever teach you.

Why, study abroad, man, like a Southerner's son, as you are."

"That's it," said George; "get these ladies settled in France, Italy, or Germany, without fear of being hunted or stolen, and take your foreign diploma."

"That would be delightful, Issy," exclaimed Zaffiri.

"There will be no Doctor Clarendon's there, I am afraid."

"There will be just and equitable laws which will answer for good Doctor Clarendon. Those monarchies make no distinction of complexion like our Republic. Here, you will find difficulty in entering any medical college. I advise you to go, Issy."

"Then, let me go, Mr. Buddington, though I leave behind me all I love on earth."

"Now, Mary," asked Filette, "will you be ready to depart before light, in the morning?"

"To-morrow morning?"

"Yes, to-morrow morning. Mr. Lambelle has decided his wife must go on immediately; George will see you both to Montreal. Equipments of travel can be procured there, better than here. Mary, you are bewildered; I will say 'yes' for you."

Issy began to rise slowly from the pillows.

"Paisley, lie down again," cried the doctor; "this hurry-scurry won't do for you. These invalid ladies don't want a crazy brain fever to manage, in Montreal; and, if you are going among German doctors, so much above your old teacher, I want to prove that Doctor Clarendon, of Cloudspire, Massachusetts, has some skill in mending broken heads."

A hearty laugh went round and scattered the solemnity, creeping into the atmosphere of sudden preparation.

"Madame Lambelle, how long shall you remain in Montreal?" asked Issy, sinking again into the pillows.

"Two weeks, perhaps. My husband will join us there in one week. Perhaps the doctor will allow you to go on with him."

"There, you young Southerner," cried the doctor, triumphantly, "time enough yet; so keep your bed for a few days, at least; there, we'll determine the rest. We want you to live. God has called you for some purpose. Mrs. Buddington, we must get our patient into a quiet bed, out of the way of noise and confusion, before another step is taken."

When Mr. Link bade Issy "good-night," he offered the friendly assurance that, if the doctor detained him longer than one week, he, himself, would take him to Montreal, in good time.

"Good-night, poor child," said Zaffiri, "we will not leave you in America. We shall wait till you join us."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE Congress of 1851 assembled in due form in December. It drew together, in its train from the various States, a retinue of Northern and Southern men, with their families of fascinating daughters, and gay, dashing, ardent, young men, besides a sprinkling of foreigners seeking to observe the operations of a Republican Government. Added to these, were the empty-headed votaries of fashion and display, adorning with fire-fly brilliancy, the solemn, imposing scenes of the great sectional struggles going on at that time on the two National arenas of the Capitol. Hotels were filled. Private establishments were set up; some, with as full a complement of slaves in attendance as one would see in a Southern plantation home.

Mr. Bloome, a Democrat from Indiana, returned with his elegant wife and daughter. He took a house with spacious apartments and elaborate upholstery, flooded with marble, glass, and silver in princely proportions. Well-trained lackeys waited in his halls, prepared luxuries in his kitchen, and served his guests. They called him by the flattering name of master; but, that all-potent word, he hired with his servants.

Dentelle, the Georgian, with his Northern wife and family, were domiciled in a roomy mansion, which echoed with the hurrying steps of his own slaves. The appellation of master, for him, was the grand American inheritance, the swindling title that cheated the Constitution out of its well-meant Equality, and left the mammoth skeleton without a soul.

Both mansions held ample accommodations for the dinner parties, in the winter's prospect. Both gentlemen drove out with liveried coachmen. Each carried May Bloome, the reigning belle, and

each turnout alike basked in the obsequious courtesy of the admiring promenade.

Colonel Fairland and family from "Le Grand Palais" were at the Capitol. Ralph Haywood, with his trusting wife, Gracie, from Charleston, were also within the noted circle. These gentlemen were both heavy rice planters; and, as such, were the acknowledged leaders of Southern ton, guarding their high invitations and other social favors within the strictist lines of caste. Colonel Haywood was pointed to all strangers as the haughtiest political dictator and the most vehement claimant of Southern Rights on the ground. He wore habitually the bowie knife and pistol. On the blade of the former, one read the warning, "Death to Abolitionists," and, in the fierce debates of that day, its swift gleaming often flashed prophetically in the Senate Chamber, Representative's Hall, and the lobby. The only labor which his adoring wife deigned to perform, was to polish carefully its glittering surfaces, murmuring idolatrously,—

"This is our only shibboleth of safety and ultimate victory over the mud-stained hordes of the North!"

Once, during the session, in the midst of a coterie of morning calls of her own class, she begged her husband to draw this knife from the sheath, that her friends might enjoy its perfection of finish and adaptability of purpose. As it passed from hand to hand, one lady said,—

"My son wears one of the same pattern."

"My husband," said another, "has a blade precisely like it. He says he either wears it next his heart, or lays it on his Bible."

"That instrument would be a *quietus* for those outrageous traitors to our Constitution, who continue to infest Congress, despite the protestations of the South."

"True, my dear Mrs. Haywood," replied one of her friends. "It would be a magnificent answer to that upstart 'Sumner,' from Massachusetts. Did you hear his atrocious language, on what he termed our efforts to 'repress liberty of speech?'"

"I was kept in by indisposition."

"Do repeat it!" demanded the others. "You have the exact words — you repeat it so splendidly. Let us listen, ladies."

Intense scorn marred her fine features, while she slowly repeated,—

“The convictions of the heart cannot be repressed. The utterances of conscience must be heard! They break forth with irrepressible might! As well attempt to check the tides of the ocean, the current of the Mississippi, or the rushing waters of Niagara. The discussion of slavery will proceed, wherever two or three are gathered together, by the fireside, on the public highway, at the public meeting, in the church. The movement against slavery is from the Everlasting Arm! Even now it is gathering its forces, soon to be confessed everywhere. It may not yet be felt in the high places of office and power; but all who can put their ears humbly to the ground, will hear and comprehend its incessant and advancing tread!”

“Sumner! prating of heart and conscience!” excitedly retorted Mrs. Linde, from Alabama. “That daring abolitionist, and all others of his foul blood have neither. It were well for infidel fanatics, who threaten to deluge our land in blood, to pay heed to the wise teachings of Professor Stewart, of Andover Theological Seminary; in the very Massachusetts which fosters such vipers as Garrison and Sumner. Professor Stewart has written a labored pamphlet, entitled ‘Conscience and the Constitution;’ in which he exhausts argument in vindication of the Fugitive Slave Act. He has also signed a letter, ‘thanking Mr. Webster for his advocacy of compromise measures.’ That is the kind of authority that sets the seal of righteousness upon our political demands.”

“Alabama is safe when Mrs. Linde defends her!” ejaculated Mrs. Haywood. She should go upon the Congressional floor.”

“Nay, nay, my dear friend!” replied Mrs. Linde. Her voice sank to a devotional inflection. “Nay, nay! within woman’s holy sphere, within the sanctity of home, at the mother’s knee, at the altar of prayer, let us teach our sons to hate and resist to the death these frenzied Northern murderers who strive to subvert the very teachings of God, himself.”

“Murderer is the term which Mr. Weller applied openly to Sumner, and to all others who advise resistance to the law,” suggested Mrs. Haywood.

“This Massachusetts senator, Sumner, must have shrank from

the fierce onset of arrow and lance," said Mrs. Fairland, with enthusiasm. "Ah! indeed, Mrs. Haywood, you should have been present when Mr. Clay, from Alabama, branding him as a '*sneaking, sinuous, snake-like poltroon, feeling the obligation neither of the divine law, nor of the law of the land, nor of the law of honor.*' You should have heard the approving volleys of, 'Good! good! right! true!' which rained around the valliant Alabamian from our ladies' gallery."

"There it is, ladies!" ejaculated Colonel Haywood; "the law of honor with one quick pull of a trigger, would cut short long, useless harangues, and save millions of Congressional expense to the Treasury. That postulate," exhibiting his gold-mounted pistol, "would bring the so much desired era of peace and brotherly love."

"*Mon Dieu!*" he ejaculated, abruptly breaking the thread of conversation. "There goes Gus Dentelle and his Northern *affiance.*" A lowering frown shadowed his features. "There must be a corrupt vein somewhere in the Dentelle blood; father and son marry Northerners."

"This alliance is not to be deprecated, Colonel," replied Mrs. Fairland. "Mr. Fairland is almost in love with May Bloome, himself. I think I must come to the rescue. Mr. Bloome, her father, is Southern in principle, a good Democrat, acceding to the advancement and enforcement of all Southern demands. Of course, he cannot absolutely hold slaves, in Indiana."

"With all deference to your kindly judgment, Mrs. Fairland, I will leave this subject to the amiable discussion of my fair friends. I am sure Mr. Bloome will receive justice at this tribunal. I reluctantly beg to be excused, in order to fulfil an important engagement. Charlotte, ring the bell."

This last request was given to Grace's maid; she had just entered, on some slight service for her mistress. Grace, as the wife of Ralph Haywood, still preserved the same unfaltering trust in the integrity of her father and husband, as she manifested in the *tete-et-tete* with Leonore Wallace, on the day of her lover's arrival from Paris. From the time Charlotte was sent up from Charleston to Vacluse, apparently by the selection of Colonel Haywood's factors, to be installed seamstress, she had pleased Grace.

The neat turban, the plain dress, the quiet submission to her orders, and the quick anticipation of her wishes, answered the need she had long felt, since the sale of Zoë.

Charlotte was therefore promoted to the office of lady's maid, that Grace might have the benefit of her deft fingers, and fine taste in her dressing-room, and at her expensive toilet. Grace had said to her husband,—

“Costly fabrics and elegantly made dresses fail in effect, if they be not tastefully arranged. Charlotte will equal that false, deceptive Zoë of mine, that was sold into a cotton-field, for her duplicity. I see no taint of it, in Charlotte; she has the same innate perception of becomingness, and propriety as Zoë, in whatever costume I appear. Therefore, Ralph, you will write Kershaw & Lewis, for another seamstress; and I shall expect they will exercise the same care in the purchase of another, as was shown in buying Charlotte.”

“Charlotte is free, my dear Grace; were you not aware of that?”

At the same time he threw his arm about her, and drew her to his side. Continuing, he said,—

“I think no trouble or expense too great for my proud, lovely wife. I ordered a seamstress of a pleasant, tractable nature, that my pet should not have her delicate nervous organization ruffled. Vexation would spoil your charming beauty, my darling, therefore she is a *paid* servant. You were ignorant of that fact?”

She looked fondly in his face, with a happy smile of satisfaction at this proof of her husband's admiration, and replied,—

“Of course, Ralph, I did not dream of it. You know I never hold conversation with slaves or free. Charlotte is silent and attentive; so that I have never had occasion to use my rawhide or slipper; neither have I yet seen the necessity of sending her to the work-house for punishment. Her tasks have always been done well; and more than her tasks, daily; so I gave the matter no thought.”

“Then, let no thought of her trouble your gentle heart hereafter, unless she prove refractory; then, sweet wife, she shall feel my authority!”

He raised her jeweled hand to his lips, imprinting kisses upon it.

“Ah, Ralph!” replied Grace, “you were ever so knightly in your devotion to me. Those diamonds *pale* in the light of your resplendent love.”

“Nay, sweet one, thou drawest me with cords, and I can but run after thee! Even now, I am loth to part with thee, when the gallop awaits, that brings invigorating health to the wan cheek of my incomparable Grace, when thy pony calls thee at the gate.”

“But, Ralph, Doctor Paisley, the dear, good, old physician, bids me go; and he has prescribed the hour. Look there, at the clock; this is the very time. *Adieu, mon chere!*”

He accompanied her to the parlor door, his arm still about her. While ascending to the dressing-room, she heard his,—

“*Au revoir, ma belle* — I shall write letters in your absence.”

March was directed to follow his mistress.

Colonel Haywood betook himself to the library, and under pretence of writing, gave orders that he should not be disturbed. On his way he bade Charlotte meet him there. A few moments sufficed for the preparation she was expected to make on a summons to her master. She glided within the library door, and drew from her head the loosely tied turban. The wealth of her jetty hair fell about her shoulders in masses of curls, out of which shone from her small ears pendants as fine and rich as those of her mistress.

“Treat that turban tenderly!” he said with irony; “there is virtue in it. Cast off the coarse disguise, and approach, my Star of the Orient! There is news! another phase to affairs.”

She hastily laid aside her calico wrapper and stepped forth, like Cinderilla, from the dress of a homely-clad slave, in the garniture of silk and soft lace — the one admired woman of her haughty and defiant master.

“*Elegante, ma belle princess!* Come, let us promenade. Without music there can be no waltzing; that would suit me better. In lieu of that, the promenade.”

He drew her brown arm within his, and thus they swept slowly over the rich carpet, *her* eyes seeking its velvet flowers, and *his* scanning her stately beauty with a softened expression of idolatry that none but herself ever witnessed.

“We have but a short half hour; lift those lashes, and listen.

Grace is well pleased with your service, and, to-day, has proposed to elevate you to the office of lady's-maid. She praises your taste and demeanor. So far, so good. Become her maid, and maintain the quiet submission to her will, so far successful. Grace has the indomitable Southern fire in her make up, and she will banish you in a twinkling, if roused. If that happen, Charlotte, listen, if that happen, I cannot interfere. Therefore, I have told *her* that you are free; that I hire you for wages, in order that, if she take a dislike, you can retire to your apartments in Water Street, as before you came into her service.

"You are mine, Charlotte. I hold the deed of you. To Grace, you are free. With this understanding, you can travel where she would not consent to take a slave. She is sacredly observant of the laws of our State; she classes them with the Ten Commandments and the 'Sermon on the Mount.' During our seasons in Charleston, when you wish to occupy your house, and take a vacation from service, you can do so, without offence. You can retain her favor by going to the house to attend to her toilet on special occasions. In your retreat, I shall join you at my pleasure, without the forced restraint necessary under Grace's surveillance. Now, brown dove, what have you to say? Speak! I have not yet heard the mellow music of your voice. Soon, I shall have to thrust you from me, and take back again the old, icy inflexibility towards you.

"*Mon Dieu!* if King Solomon were here now, he would strive to buy you from me with his royal treasures! to make you queen of his thousand wives! Jupiter Tonens! we would inaugurate a duel on the spot! St. George! I'd lay Solomon's crowned head low, though he should offer to divide his throne!

"Tell me — tell me — tell me dearest,
 What is in thy dark eyes' play?
 Is it fear, or love's rejoicing,
 Dancing in their depths, to-day?
 Golden — golden — golden moments
 Pass in silence — waste away.
 Thoughts upon thy red lips quiver,
 Speak! brown dove! what wilt thou say?"

Round the room he whirled Charlotte, to the rythm of his own improvisation.

“Only this!” she said. “My heart repeats the lesson you have taught me, here. I shall endeavor to satisfy the mistress, for the master’s happiness.”

“Not for your own, Charlotte?”

“Do you not know how willing I am to suffer all things to be near you? to hear your gentle voice, though gentle to others, yet icy to me? to live on stolen glances, that your law calls crime? Do I love you? Can you doubt my love, master, can you doubt?”

“Nonsense, Charlotte, the law is a dead better! The men who framed it knew the inevitable result. We men, and the law-makers included, love whom we please. The legal objection is only against *marrying* color? The law cannot coerce the affections—they are spontaneous. And yet there was a necessity for this restraint; for, nine times out of ten, our young men lose their hearts among the slaves. They would marry in the eager passion of youth, regardless of sequences. A slave and a wife cannot be the same; a wife holds property under the law; a slave cannot hold property, for a slave *is* property itself, and liable to be sold. If Southern men should marry slaves, their children would become slaves, and thus in the next generation, this would become a South of slaves, with few masters.”

She loosed herself from him and stood apart, casting forth the full splendor of her dark, questioning eyes. The possibilities of her condition dawned clearly upon her awakened mind. Pitiful and helpless terror softened her proud beauty, and toned every word.

“What am I, but a slave to be sold at your bidding? away from your sight forever! to have every fond affection wrenched asunder! to have my happiness torn up root and branch, and cast out to perish. Oh, Heavenly Master! what will become of me?”

Ralph had never before seen the strong side of Charlotte’s character—this sudden outburst startled him. With exceeding tenderness he drew her back to himself, saying hastily,—

“Hush! Charlotte, for God’s sake, hush! Away with these blue-devils! You are not a slave; you are only mine. Cursed be the hand that ever signs your bill of sale!”

“But this is a reality,” she moaned. “What will become of me?”

“Hush, I say! I will take charge of your future. Listen, Charlotte, I am not a beardless boy, choosing and tiring of an object the same day. My love for you is no callow yearning that cloys with the possession. You are the true wife of my soul; you are mine by the law of Nature which is established by the Creator. It has existed from the creation of man, before any human enactments. *I hate to the dagger's point! I love to the last pulse of my being!* Grace is the wife of society and the statute book. Believe me, and be cheerful. I am as much bound as you.”

He looked at his watch, and said,—

“This sweet morsel of time is past. There! resume the turban—let us go back to the old mockery. *Au revoir, ma bien aimee.*”

The seamstress was soon installed in the capacity of dressing-maid; and with a persistence which Grace's husband secretly termed infatuation, she granted Charlotte every favor desired, continuing her in service from year to year to the time of the present chapter. The masks about Mrs. Haywood did not betray their trusts.

Thus was the abused and innocent Zoë, revenged.

The irate Colonel Haywood soon bowed himself out of the morning circle of Southern ladies; and they were again plunged into lively gossip on the daily news and occurrences. Mrs. Fairland continued the conversation on the coming marriage of young Dentelle.

“I do not think Augustus' alliance with Miss May reflects any dishonor upon family lineage. She is an heiress to large wealth, is exceedingly attractive; she is destitute of that angular, offensive brusqueness which one meets in intercourse with Northern ladies. Indeed, she habitually manifests the graceful and suave dignity that distinguishes our Southern daughters.”

“I am most happy to coincide with your opinion,” replied Mrs. Fenn. “Besides, Northern men cannot become cotton or rice planters; their soil will not admit of it. But the young lady's father is an extensive land-holder in Indiana, and his political affiliations are entirely Southern.”

Mrs. Haywood had a prejudice, in common with her husband,

against Northern marriages ; but in this case she thought Augustus only followed his father's precedent, who married a Philadelphian, the daughter of an old Slaver's captain.

"There is a reason, my dear Mrs. Fairland," she said, "for the gentle, engaging bearing of Mr. Bloome's daughter. She informs me that she makes frequent journeys to Mississippi, to pass part of the winter months in the family of a Mrs. Silton, who, she says, is a Southern lady of rare refinement. Through Mrs. Silton she has received introductions to a large circle of high-bred Mississippi families. Mr. Silton is Ohio born, and a relative of Mr. Bloome. The Silton family entertain Southern views. You see, ladies, that whatever of unpolished rudeness, whatever of inelegance may have been necessarily attached to May Bloom's Northern birth, it has been effaced by contact with the courtesies and amenities of Southern society."

"A satisfactory explanation, Mrs. Haywood," replied several voices.

"My dear Mrs. Haywood, have you inspected Miss May's bridal *trousseau*? I had that pleasure yesterday," said Mrs. Fairland. "It arrived from Paris only three days since."

"Under whose selection?" inquired Mrs. Archibald, from St. Louis.

"It was selected by a lady whose acquaintance Miss May formed in Washington — Madame Lambelle, from New York. She is traveling in Europe at present. May corresponds with her. She is a lady of elegance, highly accomplished, speaks Italian quite better than English."

"Madame Lambelle, did I hear aright? speaks Italian — and from New York? It must be the same. She was in St. Louis, some time since — brought letters of introduction to some of our best families. Her husband went out to Texas. He contemplated a removal there; went to look up claims, and learn the prices of slaves in New Orleans, preparatory to purchasing for a plantation. It must be the same. Without effort, all hearts were laid at her feet. A few South Carolina gentlemen visited St. Louis at that time. They met Madame Lambelle at our house. They must be your acquaintances, ladies. There was Rev. Fred Warham, a young man of chivalric carriage, gentle and courtly

as a knight of old. On the evening mentioned, he attached himself to Madame Lambelle. He appeared fascinated by her singular beauty, and did not leave her side the whole evening. Indeed, on other occasions, he was irresistibly drawn to her, yet it is not strange, for her memory remains to this day to her admirers, like a beautiful vision. Do inform me, Mrs. Haywood, if he is married?" inquired Mrs. Archibald.

"He is not married, yet; he is a gallant attendant upon our ladies. I know of more than one who would consider their happiness insured in his keeping. He seems to ward off Cupid's attacks with easy nonchalance, and lead his bachelor life with great relish. He is in Europe, at present."

"Ah! he is recreant to the demands of the hour. He should have been here, this winter, standing guard over this Fugitive Slave Bill!" ejaculated Mrs Fenn.

"He declares with amusing humor," remarked Mrs. Fairland, smiling at the recollection, "that he has no need of the Act, that he never loses his slaves by escape — that he cannot drive them away. I suspect the Rev. Fred, as we call him, is too lenient — gives them large liberties; and writes as many passes as Major Measures. It would be agreeable, as well as of pecuniary advantage, if other masters could bear a similar testimony," said Mrs. Fairland, lugubriously. "We lose slaves every year by escape. Mr. Fairland has six plantations; the aggregate loss from all makes quite a hegira."

"True" said Mrs. Fenn with sympathy; "the ignorant things escape from Alabama; even it is quite astonishing how they make their way through so many Slave States without detection. I really think our negroes have the nature of wild beasts, for they evince their cunning in eluding pursuit. But, Mrs. Fairland, these escapes may be the fault of your overseers."

"Mr. Fairland has expressed that idea. We had an overseer some years ago from the North, named Bill Steele; he was unusually rash and severe. Under him our loss in fugitives was about eight thousand dollars; however, he paid the penalty of his crimes. He was found dead in a rice-ditch; we found he came to his death by the hand of one of our slaves. Colonel Fairland took no other notice of the affair, for he said Steele had his deserts. He himself directly defrauded us of the price and increase of a valuable slave

child, while we were traveling. Mauma Prue whispered it to me afterwards."

"How did he accomplish that robbery? not by the daring act of sale on your own territory?" exclaimed Mrs. Fenn, in startled interrogation.

At that moment the door was thrown open by a servant, and Mrs. Dentelle, accompanied by her prospective daughter, May Bloome, entered. After an enthusiastic reception by the ladies, and many compliments to Miss May on her fine appearance, and rosy health, Mrs. Fenn explained that they were repeating their old subject of grievances in loss of slave property; saying Mrs. Fairland was about to present a new phase of our wrongs from a Northern source.

"I beg the privilege of her continuance. I am sure it will be interesting to all, as an incentive to greater watchfulness over our overseers, who, under the guise of shepherds, steal the increase of the flock."

"Most assuredly, my interest should equal yours," replied Mrs. Dentelle, obligingly. "This constant loss of slave property demands all the light thrown upon it possible. Proceed, Mrs. Fairland. My dear May is soon to be initiated into the vexations of holding slaves, and she will listen eagerly to what must inevitably pertain to her future." A becoming blush heightened her attractions, while she modestly termed herself a most appreciative listener. Mrs. Fairland proceeded.

"To make myself understood, I must repeat that I was about to explain one of our losses by a Northern overseer, named Bill Steele. You understand, ladies; and Miss May will learn that a slave girl nearly white, or one that inexperienced eyes would call white, brings a higher price in market than any other! The reason of this we will not discuss; but the fact is patent. Mr. Fairland bought a slave girl in Charleston, just before we left for Europe. She called herself Isabel, a queenly name you will say; and truly, if I had bought 'Isabelle' of Spain to wait upon me, I could not have had a more worthless object; stupid and absent, feeble and dilatory as she proved, I drove her from my sight.

"In due time we returned from a few years' absence. Isabel was dead. After a time, that most obsequious of overseers, Steele, was

killed by one of our negroes, and his wife returned North. Then it came out that he took Isabel from the field, for his cook ; that Isabel had a child, very fair, with blue eyes and flaxen hair. She was bright and salable. Mauma Prue saw him ride off with her in his arms one rainy night. The next day he made a hypocrite-calado about her being stolen by the traders who were camped out a few miles in the forest. Mauma Prue kept her secret while he lived. He sold that fair child — she was a slave, born in the condition of her mother, and now she would have been grown. She would have brought a generous price — thousands of dollars !”

“That was an exact robbery of those same thousands !” exclaimed Mrs. Fenn ; “for you know, ladies, how we personally tend the young slaves, that they may attain their highest value, by years of careful raising. Why, I have taken many a little pickaninny into my own room, and watched it lying in a chair by my bedside at night, and thereby saved and raised a valuable slave.”

“We have all done the same,” said Mrs. Fairland, “to the loss of our own sleep and comfort ; for in breeding and raising slaves largely lies the profit of this domestic institution. This fair child is a dead loss. Since the Fugitive Slave Law, Mr. Fairland has reclaimed several, but she cannot be described. Age has blotted out her identity. We have never employed a Northern overseer since.

“Colonel Haywood declares he will not stand for identity !” said Grace, scornfully. “He will claim as many slaves from the North as he has lost, at all cost. He says their claims to freedom are of no avail with him ; and if they *are* free, they *ought to be enslaved !* so no obstacle shall stand between him and his rights. If *he* had lost that fair child, he would have brought back to Vauclose a *white* girl in her stead.”

“There are any number of Northern marshals and their agents, who will secure the complement of slaves demanded, without expense to the claimants. The United States is a good paymaster ; the more difficult the pursuit and transfer, the larger the bill for the pockets of the hunters,” said Mrs. Dentelle. “My husband says the Fugitive Slave Compromise is the grandest one yet !”

“One more is needed yet,” suggested Mrs. Archibald, of St. Louis. Congress should reduce the six States of that detestable New England, into one. That rocky nest of hissing abolitionists

would then have but two senators, quite sufficient for the peace and prosperity of our institutions."

"Then with Texas sub-divided by Congress into a progeny of slave-holding States, Calhoun's 'balance of power' would be realized," said Grace.

"Ah! Miss May looks wearied," remarked Mrs. Fairland. "Let us change the subject, ladies, for her young sake."

May made haste to reply. "I assure you, ladies, I am quite interested. The condensation of the New England States, so very small in area, is not a novel subject to me. I have heard papa and Mr. Jefferson Davis discuss their insignificance of territory, and the Congressional authority to limit them to one State; I know very well the dangerous sentiment of that section. I am quite acquainted with Southern causes of anxiety."

"We are glad to hear it," said Mrs. Fenn, encouragingly. "Our difficulties will soon tax your knowledge and ingenuity. The mere governing of the slaves, the wild, ignorant creatures, at home, makes a wearisome life for any mistress; don't you think so, Mrs. Archbald?"

"It is a general cause of complaint," replied the lady addressed; "and we in St. Louis often declare we should be better off without slaves. I envied Madame Lambelle her faithful, and devoted Cossetina. Why, the real affection she evinced for her mistress, was touching."

"I have a free servant, also," said Grace; "my dressing-maid, Charlotte; she is devoted to me, and her taste is superb. Ralph assured me that no sullen slave shall try my nerves; and while I think of it dear Miss May, will you accept of Charlotte's services at your marriage toilet? I doubt if her equal is in Washington. She can dress me early, and repair directly to your dressing-room.

Mrs. Dentelle accepted the considerate offer for her charge, and the party fell to congratulating the lovely girl on the happy consummation of her tenderest wishes, and on the arrival of the elegant *trousseau* from Paris. Mrs. Fairland, who alone had inspected them, was profuse in praises of the laces, satins, the materials of the various suits to be worn on occasions after the ceremony. She especially dwelt upon the pure brilliancy of the diamonds, and the delicate choice of the pearls.

"The set of turquoise," suggested Miss Bloome, "was a gift from Madame Lambelle."

"They are very fine," said Mrs. Fairland; "madame has exquisite taste. Will her husband remain with your family till after your marriage?"

"He will."

"Then I must pay my respects to him, and inquire for his lovely wife," said Mrs. Archibald.

"My dear May, I must beg permission to look in upon your charming Paris importation," said Grace, holding her parting hand affectionately.

After dining at Mr. Dentelle's, and receiving the kindest attentions from host and guest, and after bidding her lover a fond good night in the gaily lighted parlors of her father's mansion, May found herself sitting alone with her parents, for a confidential *tete-a-tete*, on coming events.

"How has papa's pet enjoyed the day?" enquired Mr. Bloome.

"Superlatively, papa; every possible attention has been bestowed!"

The *affiance* of a wealthy Southerner, my child, has nothing before her but pleasures, and *fetes*. I could wish no more honored prospect for you, my daughter!" exclaimed her mother, a complacent joy raying her features. "You will walk on velvet paths, over roses and lillies. Dear May, I am too proud of this allance. Augustus daily manifests a deeper devotion to you."

"But mamma, I see clouds on my horizon, although I love Augustus dearly."

"What clouds? pray."

"We called to-day at Mrs. Haywood's, and met a party of morning callers there; Southern ladies of course. The burden of conversation was the stupidity and indifference of slaves; their escape and recovery by the Fugitive Slave Act — the robbery by overseers; and I don't know what other trials of the system. It seems to me that the South is in a perpetual, studied antagonism and quarrel with the North. I don't like it, papa — that never-ending collision and confusion with the two sections! I want to be free like the caroling birds — and happy like them, too!"

"Never mind, pet; Augustus will do the valiant part — he will

shield his bride from too much agitation. He is a host in himself ; and outside of your boudoir and parlors, he will carry on the warfare. I predict that in time not far distant, the South will secede from this incompatible Union. She will then carry all before her by force of arms ; set up an independent government ; and who knows but my pet, here, will be queen of the ascendant power ? sitting on a throne, dispensing her frowns and smiles upon her Southern subjects. Hey ? my poor worried pet ! ”

His boisterous, rollicking laugh was contagious, and went round the trio, exhilarating as the champagne that nightly bubbled at his table.

“ I think, papa, instead of being occupied with the august duties of a throne, I shall be mostly engaged in nursing puny black babies in my boudoir, feeding them pap, and singing money investing lullabys, according to the details of the morning call. ”

“ Horrid ! May, ” exclaimed her mother. “ Surely your nerves are jangled into discord by too much excitement. ”

“ By no means, mamma ; and if I follow Mrs. Dentelle’s example of to-day, I shall have a raw-hide within reach, and learn to wield its stinging lash, and make my own blood run cold, if no one’s else ; and I might as well begin practice with one of those Paris slippers, for slapping ears and cheeks with a slipper sole is another impending crisis. ”

“ Three cheers for papa’s little slaveholder ! ” cried her father. “ He’ll buy her the handsomest rawhide in Savannah, gold mounted, with a velvet handle, and a pair of Cinderilla slippers expressly for her new dignities. ”

“ No ! no ! papa ! Don’t ridicule tired May’s real troubles. There will be no need of rawhides, or slippers, under her gentle rule. Mrs. Sillton of Mississippi, never frightened her so in the whole winters she passed with her ; and she is a Southerner. Banish those ugly spectres, child ! Mr. Bloome, bring out the harp — remove the cover ; May’s fingers will extract from its strings the balm that will heal herself. ”

He rose, eager to do anything to please his idol ; but would have his say. “ Now, if I held those stupid negroes, I should stir them up with a gusto ! I should delight in any whip, slipper, or boot that

would quicken their time, or comprehension!" He quietly pulled the bell, and proceeded to the harp.

"May, who were the dinner guests at Mr. Dentelle's?" questioned the mother.

"Their usual set. The Misses Fairland have arrived—they were there. Mrs. Fairland was absent. Mr. Lambelle was an honored guest. And what do you think, mamma! the Misses Fairland insist on being two of my bridesmaids — one of them to stand with Mr. Lambelle, and the other with a friend of Augustus, from Savannah."

"I think they are too *passées* for your bridesmaids!"

"Well, it is their decree, and who shall dare to differ, mamma? Ugh! they are so cold and haughty! it makes me shiver. Their affability seems to be condescension, yet they lavish much distinction upon me. They are coming to-morrow with others, to look at my wedding dress, diamonds, etc."

"There's the harp waiting for fairy fingers," said her father, as he bowed deeply before her, and presented his arm. Ah! here comes the servant with wine. Drink, May, I ordered it for you; it will touch those clouds in your horizon with gold."

"No, papa, I beg pardon, but the sight of wine disgusts me; the tables flowed with wine at the dinner, and undermined several judgments. I will tune the harp."

"Even so it shall be," said the indulgent father. "Take the wine away, boy."

Sweet and low, like the sighing of summer winds, floated away the first chords from May's light touch, casting out by their sure sorcery the unpleasant emotions which dropped around her like mists from the day's social sky. More crisp and jubilant rang the voice of the harp. A silver shower of notes filled the room and fairly caused the fragrant flowers to tremble beneath its thrill. Fear and discontent fled from the fair and noble lineaments. The radiance of girlhood's untrammelled hopes filled the bright room, and lifted its occupants above the political and social strife that haunted and defiled the public halls and private homes of the city. Looks of admiration were exchanged by the parents. The door was set ajar by unseen hands from the hall, where a crowd of servants had crept to listen. Like a goddess while she swept the

strings of the gilded instrument, she played upon the hearts that listened. The dark faces of the bond-men and bond-women in the hall grew angelic; they rose above chains and servitude, and to their untutored minds Heaven opened.

May felt her father's arm about her, and heard him saying,—

“Our pet must rest. Sleep will come after the ecstasy of harp and voice. Let me present you before the curtain.”

He opened the door of the hall. Out from the group of servants stepped the gray old butler, bowing respectfully, while all the other dark faces beamed with adoring smiles. With great humility, the butler said,—

“Will de beautiful young lady 'low me to 'spress our thanks for this gran' piece of de New Jerusalem let down dis evening.”

“De Lord bless de fine young missis!” echoed old Chloe, the cook.

When the door closed upon the happy company, Mrs. Bloome said to May, encouragingly,—

“Do you not see, my daughter, that love instead of severity will rule your servants? Your music and your own angelic sweetness will supersede the rawhide and the slipper. Your slaves will adore you. Their swift feet will anticipate your wishes. You will be to them a goddess, moving amongst them in a halo of celestial light.”

Augustus Dentelle led his Northern bride to the altar, amid the universal admiration of his Southern friends.

“What a fine couple!”

“A magnificent pair!”

“A royal match!”

“A queenly bride!” dropped from the haughty lips about them.

Mr. Lambelle officiated as groomsman, with Mr. Fairland's daughter as bridesmaid — and at the departure of the bridal party for Savannah, he even yielded to the solicitations of May and Augustus to accompany them there to participate in the gay festivities awaiting.

Miss Fairland also left Washington for a week in Savannah, and returned under Mr. Lambelle's escort.

Balls, receptions, pleasure trips and invitations filled the happy week.

“If Zaffiri were only here,” said the radiant May Dentelle, “our joy would be complete! She shall make amends by passing some of those cold Northern winters in this delicious climate of Savannah.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WHEN Mr. Lambelle, accompanied by Miss Fairland, arrived in Washington from Savannah, he found Colonel Haywood's family in a state of angry ferment. The colonel's valuable slave, “March,” had escaped in the face of the Fugitive Slave Act. The unwelcome news had just reached him from Charleston, although March took flight immediately after the family left for Washington.

“Lambelle,” said the master, “it is damned aggravating,” lifting up his tall figure nervously from his seat, and walking the floor with his head thrown up, and his long hair falling about his shoulders. “I left the black devil in South Carolina, and deprived myself of his services here, because Washington is a dangerous place to bring slaves. I branded him, moreover, some years ago, with my own hand! With a red-hot iron I put my cattle-mark upon him! That mark will toll him back to me. ‘COLONEL R. H.’ is the brand on his right arm. Ripping up his sleeve, alone, will settle the matter and hand him back to me. Lambelle, you are going to New York; you are no Northern, sneaking, poltroon, like that upstart, Sumner, and others of his kith. Look after the runaway; you are all right on the Constitution. Are you acquainted with the marshalls and commissioners in New York?”

“Familiarly acquainted, colonel,” replied Mr. Lambelle, in an off-hand style. “I shall be most happy to do the favor, sir. I will step into the commissioner's office and look after this runaway's apprehension; if found, a fact of which I have no doubt, will he be returned to you at Washington or to Charleston?”

“At Washington,” answered Haywood. “I'll give him a taste of chains and Georgetown jail — a thing out of his experience. He has been treated in the kindest manner, sir, *like one of my own*”

family! His ingratitude enrages me. I shall offer two thousand, five hundred dollars reward, sir. He shall come back into his proper condition!" Out from its sheath flashed the petted bowie-knife in the face of his caller. "There!" he cried, setting his teeth together. "I would sooner plunge that into the rascal, than see him escape me! That's a fine blade, sir; it would do its work fairly."

Mr. Lambelle took it, read its motto, and coolly drew forth one himself, saying,—

"They are not equal in size, but mine will obey a bloody errand. I purchased it in Venice."

A grim smile parted the teeth of the colonel, as he examined the weapon.

"A good investment, said he. "Glad to find your sentiments allied to mine. I give you permission to plunge that same steel home to the heart of that infernal March, if you find him and he tries to slip from your grasp. Dead or alive, I will have his body."

"Can you not give me a description right here? it may save time and facilitate his arrest," questioned Mr. Lambelle.

"True, sir. Let me see!" running his fingers through his hair. "He's five feet, ten inches high, light mulatto, wears heavy mustache, no beard, straight as a Palmetto, and about forty-five years old, has a grave and well-bred air, is well-proportioned and muscular, is well dressed."

"What hair, sir?"

"Ah! that escaped me; black, thick, and curling; voice, heavy and pleasant."

Mr. Lambelle made a note of these items from the master's lips, expressed deep interest in the return of March, and, after a turn of conversation, left for other adieus.

Mr. Lambelle took the night train for New York, and arrived in Philadelphia in a snow-storm. He stepped off the cars in that city, and took a direction away from the main thoroughfare. The driving storm had swept every vestige of humanity from his course; he paused before a plain, ordinary house, rang the bell, and was welcomed in by a neat, smiling Quakeress, who led the way to the plain, but inviting family room. Closed shutters, curtains, a warm, gray carpet, bright lights, and a triple welcome from the others

present, met his entrance. The Quakeress assisted in removing and shaking his snowy garments, saying, cheerfully,—

“What brings thee here, in such a bitter night?”

“Duty, Rachel,” he replied. “There, you see, is the sentinel’s cloak.”

She was hanging the long, full garment against the wall.

“Thou hast never seen Friend Claude wear any other, Rachel,” said Benjamin, the husband of Rachel.

He held the visitor’s hat, brushed clear of snowflakes, in one hand, and a pair of slippers in the other.

“Nay, Benjamin, I have very little to do with the world and its fashions; I like the sentinel’s cloak best.”

Benjamin placed an easy-chair by the stove for his friend, and sat by him in another. His calm, benign face turned towards his friend, and, in caressing tones, he asked,—

“Where hast thou been, friend Claude, and what is thy errand?”

“I have been to Washington, spying out the land, Friend Benny. What do you think, Ruth and Rebecca,” addressing the two daughters, “I have played the roll of groomsman with a Southern bridesmaid, at the grand wedding of a Northern belle and a Southern fire-eater.”

Both dropped the gray wool knitting from their fingers; a smile of curiosity beamed from under the borders of their snowy caps.

“Nay, friend Claude, did they not find thee out?” questioned Ruth.

“Nay, nay, Ruth,” answered Benjamin; “he is as gay an aristocrat in the world, as thee can meet, when he wishes.”

“More, Ruth,” continued Mr. Lambelle. “I went to Savannah with the bridal party, and escorted back to Washington my lady duchess of Fairland, who resides, when at home, at the plantation of ‘Le Grand Palais,’ South Carolina; and, if my heart had not been carried away to Italy, I think I could have made a conquest.”

“Yea,” said Rachel, “but those gay doings did not bring thee here, to a station of the Underground Railroad, on a stormy night, friend Claude.”

“True, Rachel, I have better news than the story of a gay life at the Capitol. I have had confided to me the flight of a slave

from Charleston. I have been requested by his enraged master to look him up, and I am here now to redeem my promise."

"Hast thou his description?" kindly inquired Benjamin.

"I have."

He took his note-book and read from it the items taken from his master's lips.

"The same, Rachel!" said Benjamin, passing his palm over his bald head and giving his wife a satisfied and gracious smile. "He is here, friend Claude. We have seen the brand. He arrived, three days ago."

"What name does he give his master?"

"Colonel Haywood," calmly answered Benjamin. "Come, friend Claude, go up stairs with me. March is weary and disheartened; he will be glad to see the light of thy face and to drink the strength of thy words."

Without a light they ascended private flights to the attic. In a small room with one window, closely curtained, well warmed by a stove, and comfortably furnished, sat the fugitive; a sudden fear crept into his suffering eyes, that fell upon a stranger.

"I bring thee a friend," said Benjamin. "'Let not thy heart be troubled.' This is Claude Lambelle, an Abolitionist like us."

March had risen; his fine figure, tasteful dress, and repose of manner were pleasing.

"March," said Mr. Lambelle, taking his hand and retaining it, "let me immediately relieve you of anxiety. I have been in Washington, met there your master, learned of your flight from him. My true character is known only to the friends of the slave. I travel among Southerners and receive their hospitalities; I affect to uphold Southern views, that I may see the exact condition of the country, learn the exact sentiments and desires of the slave-holder, and secretly report to Anti-Slavery men. Thus they are sure of their own assertions, and are guided in their efforts to create a sympathy for the oppressed. Be seated, my friend, and trust me entirely. I am struck, March, with your resemblance to your master! Have you the same blood?"

"We are brothers, sir! by one father, sir! May I ask how he regards my escape?" said March, respect modulating every word.

"He speaks like a madman. It would be horrible for you to

fall into his power. He declares he will drag you back, dead or alive. I gave him my word that I would seek you out. I have come for that purpose, to offer you an asylum in my house in New York. I have a room for fugitives, more hidden than this. No one could suspect me of harboring a slave, for I am never seen in company with an Abolitionist, nor do they visit my house. No one can suspect the presence of a fugitive there."

"How shall I get there, sir? I can have no written pass here, sir;" asked March anxiously.

Benjamin replied, "My friend, the Underground Railroad is a safe means of travel. Its station agents, conductors and freight agents are all experienced men. We will plan for you there.

"Benny," said Mr. Lambelle, "in this case efficient haste is requisite. This afternoon, Colonel Haywood developed his intention to me of offering a reward of twenty-five hundred dollars for our friend, here. To-morrow morning, through the aid of the telegraph this unusual reward, together with the description of his person, including the fatal brand, will be blazoned forth in the papers. The eyes of our man-hunters will be quickened to sleeplessness, and their ears will grow keener than the Southern blood-hounds."

The old Quaker roused; his mild eye flashed with determination. His palm passed repeatedly over the shiny baldness of his fine-shaped head, as if to coax from it the sagacity and wisdom immediately demanded.

After some moments of consideration, he said, "Friend Claude, if March could go to New York as merchandise, his master's description would avail nothing."

"Box him up, Benny!" laughed Mr. Lambelle. "Box him up, and label him! that's the idea!" Then occurred the difficulty of the box and a place of unsuspecting rendezvous, and a dray-man.

After many rapid, fruitless suggestions, a thought struck Mr. Lambelle.

"Benny, you know Blank, the manufacturer, on ——— Street, plays my role of negro-hater, Southern views, etcetera! I have seen the pavement before his manufactory piled with boxes for freight. Could we not manage to box our traveler there, at his place of business, and send him to New York on the three o'clock train, to-night? Could Blank confide in his white dray-driver?"

"The driver is *not* white, friend Claude ; he too, came out of the house of bondage. He passes for white, which will be in our favor. Blank sends all his anti-slavery messages by him. Will March consent to this mode of travel?"

"I will consent to any plan my friends devise ; I will be boxed if you direct it," said March, with some solicitude in his voice.

"It would be but a few hours ride, and I will take care that you are safely consigned. I have a five-dollar gold piece for the driver of the dray ; I shall go to New York in the same train with you, and go directly to the consignee and await your arrival."

In the excitement of the conversation all were again standing. Mr. Lambelle laid a hearty slap on March's shoulder, saying, "Take heart, my brave fellow, when you will be emerging from your box, within locked doors newspaper readers will be rubbing their eyes over the first reading of Colonel Haywood's advertisement." Turning to the Quaker he said, "I will go to Blank directly and make arrangements ; meantime, let that handsome mustache be removed and the curling hair cropped."

The two descended in darkness. Mr. Lambelle donned his long cloak and broad-brim.

"It's a fine stormy night," said Rachel, in her silvery voice ; "the world will not care to quiz outside occurrences."

"Favorable, Rachel," he replied, drawing his hat closer. "Take my adieus, good friends ; I shall not return, for in some way I shall make this plan a success. You will find a way for March's transfer to the manufactory.

A brief dilemma respecting this transfer, troubled the friends after Mr. Lambelle's departure ; too much coming and going of men at the quiet Quaker's home, might excite suspicion in the minds of their lynx-eyed neighbors, and March must have a guide.

It was decided by Rachel. She said to her daughter Rebecca. "Thou canst guide March — thou art about his height. Send him a dress and shawl ; he will only remove his coat. I will lend my bonnet ; the Quaker bonnet will conceal his face. Like two women, do then go out quietly at the basement door. Thou wilt be but a good Samaritan."

"That is right," said her husband ; "thou dost show excellent

judgment. Bring the gown and shawl and bonnet; I will dress March."

March soon descended with Benny, in complete disguise; his coat was tied in a bundle, which was carried on his arm. Into it Rachel crowded a package of seed-cakes and a flask of water.

"I cannot return alone, to-night," said Rebecca; "I will go to Mary Blank's, for the remainder of the night."

"Yea, thou canst do so," replied her father.

"God bless this house, and its people," said March, as the two women stepped forth in the area and the midnight.

In due time the boxes were packed on the floor of the manufactory; alike in size — alike in weight — alike in label, and alike in strong binding. Mr. Lambelle had gone to the depot; the dray was at the sidewalk, and the driver inside.

"Look here, driver," said Mr. Blank in a low tone, and looking at his watch — "twenty minutes to three; time to start. Look here, I shall give you some pretty round cursing at the freight car. These goods, *you understand*, ought to have gone on the last evening train; but you were off, yourself, we'll say. That will be the reason of this three o'clock move. Understand?"

"Every word, sir."

"Another thing, driver; while I am storming, you step into the car and set the boxes right side up, but, at any rate, stand *that* one, so, pointing to the one that contained slave property. The value of that one is twenty-five hundred dollars. Right side up with care — all aboard, now!"

The driver took from his pocket the shining five-dollar gold piece, and showed it to Mr. Blank, —

"There, that's good pay for to-night's job, cussing and all!"

"Ha! you're making money faster than I! I'll give you a bit of dressing down out here at the door, for inquisitive ears. Hear?"

"Every word, sir," with a chuckling laugh.

"Go ahead, then."

The boxes rumbled out over the stones on to the dray. A policeman stood near.

"Come, hurry up, lazybones," grumbled Blank, "keeping me up."

till this time o'night. If you'd been on hand and tended to your business, this freight would have gone on the evening train! You'll have your walking papers, to-morrow. Drive ahead, I'm tired," said Mr. Blank, interposing some of the most solid swearing the policeman had heard.

The plump, sturdy dray horse, used to his bed after this time of night, and, apparently more bewildered than anybody else, pulled lustily over the rattling stones.

They had the boxes on the platform. Another lively scene was enacted at the freight car door.

"Spring aboard there, driver! help *somebody!* I'm not an owl, to be kept up till three o'clock at night for goods that were ready to go on the evening train! pack away, and take up your lines for the stable!"

A new brace of strong phrases followed.

Inside the car, the freightman said to the driver,—

"I wouldn't work for such a crabbed old boss! I'd starve, first!"

"I suppose it's my fault," said the driver; "those boxes ought to have gone last evening; but he needn't turn owl, on my account. I can bring freight alone."

The train went on. Mr. Blank took the dray with the driver and directed him to drive to his private residence.

"Tie the horse there, throw a blanket over him, and come in for oysters and coffee; my family will make you welcome."

"All right, sir;" and, while he tied the wondering animal, the street lamp threw its rays on his triumphant and happy face.

On the arrival of the train at New York, Mr. Lambelle made rapid haste toward the store of Mr. Blank's consignee; in a half hour the merchant himself, by the side of his driver in the business wagon, was hurrying through streets and round short corners, to the depot, for the boxes.

In a hurry they returned.

"Drive up, Bill," said the merchant; "this is a cold morning and I have bills to settle or I should not have come out. At the store, he said, "Tumble them in here, Bill, to the back room, and put the horse up out of this snow."

The key of the door communicating with the front store, was

turned ; a saw and hatchet did lively work on the most valuable box. The cover was quickly wrenched off, and March, with the help of Mr. Lambelle, stepped out of his prison.

“Keep your hand on my shoulder a few moments, March ; you cannot stand after the cramping,” he said. “How did you find your quarters?”

“I found more liberty in that box, than in all South Carolina, sir. Mr. Blank’s driver set my cage right side up, and it was not changed till the train arrived here, sir ; then, I was turned out on my head. How far is it to Canada, now, sir?”

“Some distance yet, but trust to your friends, and let your mind rest. Our friends, here, will conceal you to-day, and to-night, again, in a Quaker woman’s dress, you will ring my door-bell and pass in, out of danger.”

“I could not go alone, sir.”

“By no means. A lady will accompany you ; you will arrive in a carriage. Our friend, the merchant, will now attend to your concealment and refreshment.”

“I will attend to the first, before you leave,” said the merchant ; “here is my private closet, of which I hold the key ; within, are blankets and some of my extra winter clothing, plenty of breathing room, and space for a chair.”

He held the door open.

“Shall I go in, sir?” questioned March.

“Yes,” said Mr. Lambelle, laughing ; “that’s better than the workhouse, in Charleston.”

“Do not take trouble for my food,” said March, respectfully, “I have some seed-cakes and a flask of water, from the good Quakeress.”

“Never mind the seed-cakes, my friend,” answered the merchant. “We give our Southern fugitives dinners here. Have no fears ; no one opens this closet but myself.”

He put the key in his pocket. Mr. Lambelle went to his own residence. Mamma Weintze was apprised of the expected arrival, and, during the day, aired and set to rights the secluded little chamber for March. ; she swept the bright carpet, dressed the bed in snowy white, laid the fire herself in the cheerful grate, and placed a dish of fruit upon the table. She even sent out for a

bouquet of fresh flowers, from her own pocket money, and placed them in a handsome vase beside the fruit.

“Poor fellow,” she said to herself, “he shall have the welcome of flowers. He came from the land of flowers, among our cold snows. Something gentler than snow shall give joy to his sore heart. Sore heart? yes, I mean it. I have been among those Southerners; and there, *I* had a sore heart; bruised and trampled, till life was nearly gone; there, my poor old husband was tied to the whipping-post and publicly flogged. There, in Charleston, he was put upon the tread-mill in the workhouse. There, we were robbed of all our honest gains; stripped to poverty by the very thieves who fatten on unpaid labor. And why? Because my poor old Deiderich did what our Christ would have done. Because he had mercy on a dear, little, prattling girl, pure white and free as the birds, by birth; a helpless infant, sold into slavery by her own father! because Deiderich gave her back her birthright — her freedom!”

She raised a corner of her apron to eyes blinded by tears.

“Yes, this poor fugitive from Southern Algerines shall have flowers. There they are; they will speak to him sweeter words than human voices.”

All was ready. The old woman locked the door and dropped the key into her pocket,

She descended and busied herself in small offices of which there was no need, but which seemed to make the minutes slip faster away.

From room to room she went singing in a cracked and wavering voice, snatches of half-forgotten German songs.

The servants rallied her upon this unusual gayety, and asked if her pretty Zaffiri would return from Europe that night?

The day wore away; at nine o'clock a carriage dashed to the door. Two Quakeresses rang the bell and the carriage drove away. Mamma Weintze answered the summons and received her expected friends.

March felt his pulses throbbing less tumultuous in the precincts of his charming seclusion. His eye became less changeful, his glances less furtive, and his intercourse grew gradually marked

by the suavity and dignity of character which he possessed by birth and experience.

Mr. Lambelle spent an hour or more daily in his retreat.

"You are in prison yet, my friend, he said fraternally; on our part, your chains are woven of sympathy and affection. On the part of the United States, its laws and statutes, you are in involuntary and compulsory incarceration. This city forges the chains for a continuation of your former servitude. They expect your discovery. Freedom awaits you only in Canada.

"A monarchy will confer the liberty of which our Republic mockingly boasts. Liberty on American soil is a baseless and delusive dream. Could a true Republic force her children to artifice and subterfuge, even to leave its territory that they may obtain the very blessing of Freedom which it denies? By no means. Better live in Turkey or Algiers, or among barbarians. Keep your prison here for a few months at least, till these blood-thirsty slave-catchers, goaded by the large reward offered for your apprehension, shall have lost all track of their game. It is now February. I think in May it will be safe to move."

Father Weintze and his old wife found March's chamber an enticing resort. They learned news of their Charleston acquaintances; of the increasing acrimony corroding Southern sentiment, and of the ringing challenges for secession.

"March," said Father Weintze, "that people grows more bloody and arbitrary every year. They will surely draw destruction upon their own heads, in the end."

March smiled incredulously.

"Their high-handed defiance carries all before them; they have had their own way so far, without rebuke. Their outrages outnumbered the waves of the sea, and none have been able to say, Nay!"

"That is so," replied the old man; "but if there is warning on the pages of history — if there is justice in Heaven, they must settle their black account with some power strong enough to cope with their blind madness. I am old. You may live to see the awful balance-sheet."

A few days after the return from Washington, Mr. Lambelle

looked in upon the commissioner, inquiring if he had got upon the track of the South Carolina fugitive.

“Not yet,” was the reply. “We’ve ripped up any number of sleeves, and spoiled any number of coats; not a brand has come to light. That brand fixes him, though. We are sure of capturing the fellow. He is probably lurking in Philadelphia. All thoroughfares out of the city will be under strict surveillance.”

“That’s a handsome reward, and your experience will make it difficult for the runaway to get past the pickets. Deputize me marshal, as your assitant, if you like; furnish me the papers conferring the proper authority to arrest, and I am at your service. I have pledged myself to his master to look after him. The reward shall be yours. I am only fulfilling an obligation of friendship to Colonel Haywood, the fellow’s owner. He gave me permission to fix him with that,” drawing out his Venetian knife, “if there should not be time for hand-cuffs — so, dead or alive, the twenty-five hundred dollars will be yours. I think I have some opportunities for observation that others may lack.”

“You are gassing, Lambelle! I know you are true blue; that is, all correct on the Constitution and Southern rights; but gentlemen of your cloth, a merchant of your means, would not soil your gloves handling niggers.”

“I may not soil my gloves, or I may, as the occasion requires. With a commission from you, in my pocket, I can make up a posse at any time or place. But, really, catching slave property should not be beneath *any* cloth, when, *par excellence*, that is the engrossing business of the nation — when it occupies the august attention of the chief justice on the supreme bench, inferior judges and courts, congress and legislatures.”

“That’s so,” said the commissioner. “That’s the way I reason. But, joking aside, do you want a commission, Lambelle?”

“I do; I have pledged my word to his master to look after the vagabond. The reward shall be yours. I want nothing of the twenty-five hundred. I am only fulfilling an obligation of friendship to the fellow’s owner, Colonel Haywood, who is in Washington.

“That kind of arrest, with your knife, there, might answer for his master,” replied the commissioner. But our country is not

quite up to the bowe-knife as a legal instrument. If this March eludes us, we might substitute another shade of color; one as black as your coachman, Lambelle, would make as good a slave as the light mulatto in the description. Would Colonel Haywood object, if he should have returned to him the same value, in another article?"

"He would object. Identity is the word; I suspect he is more chagrined at the sharp trick his slave played on him, than at the loss. Probably he has a course of punishment and humiliation prepared for his capture. Identity is the word; that throws the perquisite of twenty-five hundred dollars into doubt."

"We get the largest pay from the United States," the marshal answered, absently, while filling and signing Mr Lambelle's commission.

"Has hunting proved remunerative the past year, marshal?"

"Pays better than any other business. The Federal treasury never scrutinizes bills or contests them. There has been more captures this past year, than in sixty years before."

"I suppose the cost of returning a fugitive might easily be doubled, and the amount would be forthcoming?"

"Yes. 'Uncle Sam' trusts entirely to our bills, as I said. I know of one case of returning five slaves. It cost the old fellow *twenty-two thousand dollars*, where the expenses were only two thousand. So the marshal and posse made twenty thousand dollars out of that little affair. But this is only between you and me, Lambelle."

"Certainly, marshal," folding his commission, "you'll hear from me again; as I said before, I think I have some opportunities for observation that are wanting to others in regard to this March."

Mr. Lambelle returned to his own counting-room, wrote a letter with '*double entendre*' to Colonel Haywood, informing him of his investment with authority to arrest fugitives, and of his purpose to look closely after his servant, and send him forward at the earliest moment.

During three months he called often upon the marshal. The blood-chilling secrets of slave-catching and kidnapping were fully confided to him, and he became a secret confederate with others in a series of tactics to ensnare the twenty-five hundred dollar prize.

May came. Mr. Lambelle's last few visits to the marshal convinced him that the hunters had given up hope, and ceased the search.

"Oh! I've no doubt," growled the marshal, "that the pale-livered devil was in Canada before his master advertised. We've had our trouble for our pains. However, I'll fasten the expenses on the *next* chase, and Uncle Sam shall reimburse."

All this was nightly repeated to March in his agreeable prison.

"It is safe, now, to depart," said Mr. Lambelle; and he proceeded to lay before March, the steps to be taken. "I have a coachman near enough to your size, who is black as ebony, with African hair and heavy beard. The people in the city are accustomed to see him driving me about, either with a pair and the carriage, or to and from my place of business in a single vehicle. I propose to get you up in his likeness with paint and false hair and beard, on the evening of the first steady rain. My coachman will drive me here to my door. He will enter; you will put on his livery; he will remain within, and you, March, will go out to the vehicle as driver. Through the long night we will make our way to the house of an abolitionist friend. During the day, we will sleep. The next night we shall proceed to the next station; rest there, thus advancing till you are in Canada. David is my coachman. You will answer to his name.

The former nervous anxiety returned; anticipation of danger drove the color from March's face and sent a tremor to his limbs.

"I have no friend to rely upon but you, sir. I should prefer death to returning to my brother and master."

"You will do neither," said Father Weintze. "You will make a safe and pleasant journey with our common protector, here. He is our pillar of cloud by day and our pillar of fire by night, and God is over all."

Kindly Nature soon afforded the rainy night. One David in livery drove Mr. Lambelle to his door, and, in the full glare of the street lamp, another David in livery drove him away. Out of the long line of flaming lamps, out of the dimmer suburbs, out upon the dark, wet, sandy roads they flew. No clamor, cry, or sound excited alarm. Nothing was heard but the beating rain, the quick thud and splash of nimble hoofs, the flop of the rubber cover on

the horse, and the dripping wheels. Nothing was seen but the darkness. Not a word was uttered but the brief directions — “To the right!” “To the left!” “Hold up” or “Go ahead!” and, finally, “Pass me the lines, David.”

Before the sun rose, horse and travelers were welcomed under the calm, brooding roofs of a villa ever opened to the oppressed. They slept in quiet chambers to the spring song of birds and under the wary watch of sentinels below.

The second night was a repetition of the first, in speed, silence, and safety. One additional sentence cheered the way.

“*Towards the North Star, David,*” pointing with the whip for an index.

The second day, they rested in the cheery, red farm-house of Mr. Snow, Filette’s father. They were fed, literally, on milk and honey, while hidden from mischievous eyes. The hearty, patriarchal welcome, the loving, maternal solicitude, the Christian sympathy that weeps with those that weep, and rejoices with those that rejoice, were the treasures of this household. In this atmosphere, March felt the shackles of slavery slipping off. His hitherto suppressed manhood rose and broadened; his courage was braced and his freedom dawned.

“Stay, my friend,” plead Mr. Snow, “a couple of days; rest and refresh yourselves — sleep amidst orchard blooms; visit my barns, inspect my stock, smell the sweet mows of hay, and learn how a New England farmer lives. Then, Mr. Lambelle if you must return, take the third morning’s sun and ride leisurely back, among spring buds and breezes. I will take David on to Cloud-spire, the second night, with a lively-stepping thorough-bred. I’ll be conductor between this place and the next. I know every inch of the track. I’ll put David safely in the hands of Mr. Link. He is agent for the Underground Railroad from that station; and, David, you can never be in better hands than his. Mr. Link has the nature of a lamb with the courage of a lion. He’s as gentle as a child, but he never knew fear in a just cause. Isn’t that so, Mr. Lambelle?”

“Precisely,” replied Mr. Lambelle, warmly. “I reckon Mr. Link among my cherished friends.”

“Then I must take my farewell of you here, sir,” said March to

Mr. Lambelle, gazing at him intently through dimming sight, as if to photograph every feature of his well-tried friend upon his memory.

“Not a farewell, March, I trust, if life continues. I have formed a deep affection for you, and shall seek you out in Canada at the earliest opportunity. That opportunity may not occur within two years; so keep me informed of your doings and whereabouts. My wife is in Europe. When she returns we shall settle in Canada. I may do business in New York, or I may make a transfer to Montreal. Then, March, I shall want you as a part of my family. By the way, you should have a new name. There is no further use for David, and March is dangerous.”

“I think so, sir.”

“Suppose then you take Paul for the first and our host’s name for the last? Paul Snow; how is that?”

“I like it, sir.”

At nine o’clock of the second night, Paul Snow and Farmer Snow, after much rearing and dancing on the part of “Thoroughbred,” and multiplied good wishes on the part of Mrs. Snow and Mr. Lambelle, darted out of the yard upon the Cloudspire road.

After a two mile heat, Paul remarked,—

“I think this horse must be a Southerner; he is sufficiently fiery and hard on the bit.”

“No,” said the farmer with a laugh, “he’s not a blue-blood. He’s a Northerner; fiery, resolute, tractable and enduring; qualities which most of our Northern men possess, and which would make their hue and cry about secession as useless as a broken dog-whistle. This secession is a great bug-bear. I only wish they’d try it once!” said the farmer, in a tone of the deepest scorn.

“I think they will, sir.”

“Let it come,” replied Mr. Snow, severely. “The sooner they feel the weight of the Northern arm the better. Like the blows of an iron sledge it will grind them to powder.”

In a lower tone, he advised to drop conversation.

The hours rolled on as all hours will, whether mingled with joy, or weighted with fear.

In the dim uncertainty of morning, while Cloudspire yet slept,

Mr. Snow reined "Thoroughbred" into Mr. Link's spacious shed.

"This town is wide awake on the Constitution, Paul," said the farmer. "They're patriots to country, and traitors to humanity. They're a choice pack of hounds on a man's track. They'd hunt you down quick. They lack one quality, however — that is conscience; so they can't know you are here. It's as dark as a pocket in this deep shed. Mr. Link has just struck a light. Thoroughbred is as wet as if he had escaped from Pharoah, out of the Red Sea."

"I expect he has, sir, escaped from Pharoah. Will it injure him sir?" asked Paul.

"Not a whit! we all have to sweat in search for Liberty, in this Republic. There comes the good man out of his kitchen door."

Mr. Link came into the shed, saying in a genial voice,—

"I heard the buggy drive into the dark here; I cannot rightly welcome my friends. Will you go in?"

"I am Filette's father — my name is Snow, from Connecticut. The other is my brother, Paul. Take him in, my friend, to a private room where he will explain. I must ride over to George's, before the neighbors get routed. Will make you a call this afternoon."

Mr. Snow rode quickly away.

Mr. Link and Paul entered the house.

Mr. Link turned the key, and by the candle-light scanned his newly-arrived guest.

"Oh! I see," said he, grasping Paul's hand, "I guess you're a brother to me as well as Mr. Snow. It will be best to put out this light. Just follow me up stairs to your chamber, and there we will hold some conversation."

"Are you on your way to Canada?" inquired the host.

"I am, sir; and was assured that you were the slaver's helper, and would take me the rest of the distance. I conjure you, sir, by the love you bear the common Father, to do this."

"Right! I can do it without the least danger, and I *will*. Throw every fear to the winds. I know several different routes, and to assure you still further, I prepared for these night journeys the

very year the Fugitive Slave Act passed Congress. I am a drover ; may be they have told you. I travel all over the two States between here and Canada. Well, I said to myself, I don't think I could serve the Lord better than to spy out an untried way to Canada for these hunted ones, and about three families where I can stop and sleep days, in security.

“So I set to work buying cattle and laying a track. I found three small farmers among the mountains who would shelter the fleeing bondman at the peril of their lives. Their humble dwellings are a night's ride apart. To each one I gave a strong limbed horse, both for their use and for mine ;—for mine, when a swift night-ride over mountains and rough roads makes a change of horses necessary. These horses are always ready, fleet and strong. None will molest or make you afraid. I have traveled this road five times up and down the mountains, along the deep valleys, by the foaming, rocky water-courses, through miles of silent overshadowing forests, without an obstacle or a startling sound. I have made haste to inform you of this, that your tantalized and buffeted spirit may be relieved of the torturing uncertainty incident to secret routes and a trust in strangers. Sleep, now, my hunted brother ; there is your bed. Take what the Lord gives to his beloved—Sleep. There is light in the east. Lock yourself in. I will go as usual to my barns.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

THREE years slowly passed, from the time of Zaffiri's swift flight from the home in New York, and from the encircling affection of her husband. Three years slowly passed ; not only for the lonely fugitive, making her nest of safety among the valleys of the Alps, or in picturesque villas under Italian skies, but to those others of darker skin, whose escape from chains and cruelty caused them to be hunted in the Free States on American soil ; and whose hunters, endowed with greater sagacity and keener scent than the Southern bloodhound, seldom failed of their prey.

After his wife's departure, Mr. Lambelle, desirous of retaining

Zaffiri's abode in the order of her arrangement, the most sacred memorial of her rare taste and precious affection, called back Papa and Mamma Weintze to its luxurious comfort. He charged the kind-hearted old lady, whom he made his housekeeper, with instructions to preserve the interior, furniture, pictures, books and ornaments, precisely as they were left at the compulsory exile of its mistress.

In the haste and grief of leavetaking, an embroidered handkerchief, and a small pair of gloves were left upon the table of her room. They were there still, speaking the silent language of remembrance. A cluster of violets and tea roses, which she had worn in her wheaten hair the last evening, had fallen from it during the tearful, despairing promenade to and fro on the arm of her husband, in the limited extent of her chamber, during packing. She had tossed these, unconsciously, upon her reading table, among the books. Faded and withered, they remained just where they had dropped from her hand. The affection of her husband had sheltered it from dust and the profane touch by a bell-shaped glass.

He had made one journey to Europe in the meantime ; had hurried across France, regardless of scenes and objects of interest, occupied only with the inspiring expectation of meeting and holding to his heart the one beloved being of his life.

Zaffiri had awaited her husband's arrival at Florence. There she learned from his lips occurrences and signs of the times immediately concerning their happiness and welfare, which had never been committed to paper in their correspondence, lest in contingences of travel their carefully guarded secret should be exposed.

Together with Mary, whom Zaffiri had learned to love as a sister, they wandered about the romantic environs of this Italian city of painting and sculpture, beholding fresh beauty everywhere.

"My dear Claude," said his wife, leaning upon his arm, and fixing the idolatory of her blue eyes, swimming in tears, upon his face, "My dear Claude, with you by my side, my taste for the beautiful in Art and Nature returns. Your presence is like a golden dawn, which gilds and permeates every object with its glory. Without you, Claude, the master-pieces Raphael, Titian or Angelo are meaningless and lack-lustred. Separated so far from you, the most striking pieces of sculpture seem but dead forms of the past. If

your Zaffiri had been banished to the sterile deserts and snows of Siberia, by the autocratic fiat of Russia, her fate could not have been more rigorous ; for the alleviation and repose of mind which only mitigate this exile are thoughts of you, my husband, of your unchanging devotion, and of my own happy home. These memories would make Russian banishment as endurable as Italy."

"It is two years since your flight, Zaffiri."

"Two long years," she repeated. "Has not the South at last grown apathetic in the pursuit of her fugitives?"

"No, my darling ; more ferocious instead. The first year after the passage of the bill, it is computed that the man-hunters captured more slaves than they had done in sixty years before. The implacable chase extends even to kidnapping the free. I have been thinking we might make our home in our American Siberia."

"In Canada, dear Claude? that is not far from New York. How much time must intervene before I can return there?"

"I think one more year in Europe will be best, Zaffiri — one year from this spring. Then the Canadian summer will make it more endurable for you, my tender lily, although thousands and thousands have made it their refuge from chains and cruelty, during the severest rigors of a Northern winter, scantily clothed and half famished — a Siberia, indeed, to them."

They were wandering leisurely up the eminence Fiesole ; and, having reached the summit, they were seated in the enchanting view of Florence and the vale of Arno.

"Oh, Claude!" exclaimed Zaffiri, joining her hands and bowing her head on them, "what attraction can this resplendent scene have for me, when I reflect upon the persecution and want of that vast number who threw off their shackles in the same way I did? I am no better than they. I am filled with pity and dismay. How long, O Lord! how long will this suffering continue?"

"Be calm, my dear Zaffiri! there is an Arm that rights wrong. The South is laying a mine under its own feet. In some way, it must entomb their homes and hopes. Trust and wait, my exile!"

"Till my life ends?" she sobbed.

"I believe not. The South is resolved on forcing a disunion, either by the catastrophe of secession, or a separation by common

consent. We shall see when the crisis comes. Zaffiri, *it will come!* Listen! I have something to disclose to you of Papa Weintze and Southern effrontery."

"What can have happened to him, Claude? Has he not suffered enough, already?"

"You know the long distance between my store and our dwelling. The old man was going to the house. A Charlestonian who formerly knew him, met him on the walk. He accosted Papa Weintze, rudely.

"Hallo, old gray-headed thief! old Weintze, the slave-stealer! How came you in New York? Where's the 'Evening Star' you hustled away to the North? It will be safer to inform where she is, than to guard the secret. I saw you tied to the whipping-post, in Charleston — your punishment was deserved. We'll have whipping-posts planted in the North, yet. Congress will plant them, and pay expenses. Uncle Sam will pay the whippers. Come, now, where's 'Evening Star?' Own up, old Dutchman, or you'll regret it."

"I'll call the police!" said Papa Weintze, "if you continue this abuse. I've had enough of Southern pirates in their own dens. I demand peace in the North!" and walked away.

I was not in the city. Weintze had charge of the store, and came home late. When he arrived near the spot of the morning's onset, he was felled to the pavement by an unknown hand, first hearing the words,—

"'Call the police, now, slave-stealer!'"

"The dear, old father!" ejaculated Zaffiri. "In the street! helpless, old, and infirm! Who cared for him, Claude?"

"Policemen found him lying there, took him to the station-house; and, by morning, he was able to be carried home, where I found him the next day, in bed. He did not go out for a week. They have not forgotten 'Evening Star!' Canada will be our secured home. One year from this time, all shall be ready for my young, proud, blue-blooded wife."

This was spoken with merriment and laughter so contagious, that Zaffiri and Mary joined heartily in the rippling melody.

Together, they passed on to Rome — thence to Naples; there,

in evening strolls by the star-spangled waters of the magnificent bay, they reviewed their early love, cemented then, as now, by the appealing friendliness of the beautiful slave-girl.

Mr. Lambelle returned to New York ; and, at the time of the commencement of this chapter, that three years of Zaffiri's exile had nearly passed. She was still in Europe. He was to depart on the morrow for Canada, to prepare a residence for the reunion of his family. A note was placed in his hand by a messenger from — Hotel. This note was signed "Frederick Warham," soliciting an early interview with Mr. Lambelle, on business of importance. A thrill of surprise disturbed his equanimity for a few moments. However, at the appropriate hour, he was ushered into the private apartment of the Carolinian.

Courtesy and cordiality characterized the reception. The Rev. Fred reclined upon a bed. He was pale and wasted by sickness. The servant placed a chair at the bedside for the visitor, and was then bidden to retire. Left alone, Frederick Warham turned his hollow eyes to Mr. Lambelle, and said in an enfeebled voice,—

"I have just returned from Europe. I am going home to die — to morrow, I take passage for Charleston. I went abroad, in the hope of restoring my failing health. It was in vain. I have steadily declined. Whether this increasing weakness arises from the fatigue of the voyage, or whether it is the final yielding of Nature's forces, I cannot judge. I desire to complete one act, before essaying the trying journey to Carolina. In doing this, I wish to secure you as aid and confidant. Am I asking too great a favor, sir?"

"By no means. Inform me of your pleasure. It will be mine. Allow me to pour for you a small draught of wine, before proceeding."

The invalid drank it with a look of gratitude, and continued, as if he feared even then the thread of life might break.

"I have three slaves, Mr. Lambelle, which I wish to manumit before my dissolution. I ask that it be done under your eye, as witness ; and that you retain in your keeping a duplicate of the instrument, in case accident or chicanery should destroy the other. There is reason in this. Our people South have come to the determination that no free colored shall be tolerated in slave territory.

Those who are already free, must either be driven out, or be reduced to the yoke of bondage. Thus it is plain, my friend, that opposition may arise to this bestowal of freedom."

He hesitated, as if in perplexity. His thin fingers sought the hand of his auditor.

"You are a man," he said. "I can lay bare to your sight the dearest secret of my life. These three slaves are wife and children to me. Minnie, the mother, is a quadroon, of rare and wonderful beauty. I have never married. She was the choice of my soul; and she is still the strong tie that would bind me to earth. I hope to die in her arms. My last look must rest on her beloved face. I have not freed her, because ownership was the only legal bond between us. My happiness was, and is enwrapped in hers; therefore, I have deferred her freedom till the present; for to me, that word seemed to mean separation. Now the hour has come — if it be delayed, my beloved Minnie will be mercilessly sold with my plantation slaves. And my boys! my God! what will become of them?"

In his excitement, he had risen from his pillow; but he sank back, groaning under the weight of the terrible thought.

"Would it not be best to send for the attorney immediately?" suggested Mr. Lambelle. "You will feel relieved when this burden shall have been rolled from the mind."

"Let it be done," he replied. "Send my servant, sir. The attorney has had warning; the papers will be ready, except my signature, and witness. While he is gone I have further explanation for your ear. I desire Minnie and my boys to take up their residence in Canada."

Mr. Lambelle replied quickly,—

"I will meet her and the children upon their arrival in New York, upon receiving the proper information of her departure from Carolina. I will personally attend them to Canada. Consider the matter settled, my friend, and take a few moments rest before the attorney enters."

In an hour's time duplicates of the manumission and will were executed, signed, sealed, and placed in the possession of their respective holders — Mr. Lambelle and Frederick Warham.

Mr. Lambelle insisted upon tarrying through the night, to the

great gratification of the invalid. He administered an opiate, kindly enjoined silence, and seated himself by the couch to watch the recuperation of exhausted strength.

Most wonderfully had the springs of thought been set in motion by this unexpected incident, in the mind of the watcher. Most rapidly and noiselessly they worked, making no index for exterior observation.

“What is this mine eyes have seen?” said an inner voice, “but the amalgamation so decried by the Southerner? I have never seen its counterpart in the North, either in wedlock, or out of it. What defiant mockery is the Southern cry of amalgamation, to those who would righteously loosen fetters and let the captive go free! Ah! this shame and derision hurled at the North are the tricks of harlequins. The South plays the harlequin dexterously! Her sweet and gentle affections are linked with the loves of her slaves. Yet all have not the abiding, faithful heart of this sleeper! His beautiful and beloved Minnie is his first and last thought, waking or sleeping. Hark! he calls her now!”

The restless invalid murmured.

“Minnie! darling! come, kiss me ere I go.” After a little time, he whispered hoarsely, “Free, Minnie, Free! Farewell!”

Claude Lambelle’s sympathetic nature yearned towards his suffering charge—the brother of Zaffiri by blood. Tears, manly and Christ-like, dropped from his eyes. He longed to tell Fred Warham a brother’s hand was smoothing his pillow; and that in Zaffiri, a sister’s love would embrace his precious Minnie, and soothe her widowed grief. Too late now! Once, it would have been dangerous to *her*.—now it would be dangerous to *him*, to confide the awful truth.

“Thank God there will be no fugitives in Heaven!” he murmured with a sigh.

The awakening was favorable. Strength had returned. The pulses throbbed calmly. The flame of life burned less fitfully.

“I am a new man under your care!” said Fred. “You have attended me with the assiduity of a brother! Ten thousand thanks. I cannot requite my obligations.”

“Accept all as the spontaneous offerings of a brother’s love, without obligations; that will set us both right,” replied Mr. Lambelle.

Fred Warham turned conversation again to the engrossing subject of Minnie and his children,

"I shall will them," he said, and through the same attorney, twenty thousand dollars — ten thousand for dear Minnie, and five thousand a-piece for my boys. May I ask that this dower be consigned to your care, in trust for them; that you take charge of its investment; my Minnie cannot at present manage monetary affairs."

"I shall be most happy to gratify any wish of yours; not only for the friendship and respect I bear you, but on behalf of the esteem and regard of my wife, which she first conceived for you in St. Louis, and has cherished ever since."

"Your wife! your lovely and angelic Zaffiri!"

A smile irradiated the wan features. "In health, courtesy would have dictated a mention of her first, and would have dilated upon the extreme pleasure I experienced in meeting her in Europe at the summit of 'Weissenstein,' where I was staying for the fresh air, and the '*curc de petit lait*' — goats whey, recommended for invalids. She was accompanied by a traveling companion, a nun-like lady whom she called Mary. Afterwards, during last winter, they found me in Naples, where they both tended me like Sister's of Charity. I should have mentioned this before; for, believe me, sir, my heart is filled with the grateful remembrance. But conversation fatigues me, and I suppose she has written you the particulars."

"She has done so, with many expressions of grief for your malady."

"It was at her suggestion that I repose this trust in you, sir. She knows I am to free some slaves; but understands nothing of our relations. She is to spend the summer in Canada. I wished to engage her sympathy in dear Minnie's sorrows; but I could not venture the attempt to interest an accomplished and high-bred lady in the fortune of a slave. And yet, from Zaffiri's sisterly watchings with me, I was half convinced that she would condescend to love and pity Minnie, for my sake.

"Minnie will be a stranger in this great city, and a stranger in Canada. Alone, and without my protection, she will be like a frightened dove, driven from the cote."

"Would it be a satisfaction to have Minnie attached to our family, sir?" questioned Mr. Lambelle.

“Not as a menial, my friend. She has been reared tenderly, and will have means to rise above low labor. I think she would delight to engage in the capacity of dressing-maid, or housekeeper, under the eye of Zaffiri.”

“Mr. Warham, my dear friend, you misapprehend my intent. Minnie will be free to choose for herself. She might prefer some light offices; but I spoke more especially in reference to her companionship for my wife. Her little Italian servant, Cossetina, has married a young Italian and made a home in her native land. Mary, her traveling companion, has friends in New England, and will return to them. Minnie and her two children would engage Zaffiri’s attention and love.”

“That will be most agreeable,” said Fred.

“Then, I beseech you to lay aside every anxious thought for the happiness of her who has been to you lover and wife. Do not diminish further the physical strength you need so much for the remainder of the journey.”

Mr. Lambelle accompanied Fred to the steamer, supporting him at every step. He bore him, in his arms, up the long gang-way, and placed him in a hammock, swung on deck, which he had personally ordered as a surprise. He had sent aboard the rarest wines, and most delicious fruits New York afforded. He remained by the hammock with cheerful and encouraging words, till the stentorian “All Aboard!” warned him to depart.

The all-absorbing subject came to Fred’s lips.

“Tell you lovely Zaffiri that I have loved Minnie; perhaps she will deign to love her, also.”

In the hurry and din of loosing from the quay, amidst painful thoughts, struggling with dissembled cheerfulness, they took their last farewell.

The devoted husband turned his steps quickly towards Montreal, where he was soon to meet his still exiled wife. With the aid of March Haywood, *alias* Paul Snow, summoned to his assistance, a gray stone house, in the Upper Town, was furnished with Aladdin-like celerity. Luxurious comfort, and expensive elegance adorned its apartments. Spacious, and almost palatial, it was well adapted to the generous hospitality anticipated by its occupants. Paul was installed generalissima of the establishment, and bore his honors

with the affable dignity of his high-born nature. Claude passed one month of undisturbed domestic enjoyment with Zaffiri, and returned to New York.

The expiration of the second month brought him back with Minnie and the children. Zaffiri received her with open arms; kissed her brown cheeks, and addressed her as Mrs. Warham.

Minnie's intercourse with Zaffiri was characterized by the deference she was accustomed to render to Saxon blood. Gradually this formal deference assumed the delicate homage rendered by grateful affection. Her quiet, high-bred, unassuming demeanor, softened still more by her late bereavement, fascinated Zaffiri. And yet, the distance of caste between them was gently, but rigidly maintained by Minnie. She delighted in serving the mistress, as she termed Zaffiri, never venturing the pretty Italian name. She would dress the long, fair hair; the languor of her dark eyes would waken to a gleaming admiration, while plaiting and arranging it with new grace.

If her beautiful boys, radiant with childish glee, made their way into the parlors with the "pretty lady" who welcomed them with kisses and bonbons, Minnie slid in, begging pardon, and smilingly withdrew them, lest they should trespass upon the lady's pleasure.

This patient and humble deference disquieted Zaffiri. She longed to bring Minnie nearer to her own heart. She longed to break that last fetter of bondage which had not been included in Minnie's deed of freedom. She longed to dash away the cup of Caste which Minnie had so meekly presented to her lips. She made the resolve, saying mentally, "This cruel delay shall proceed no farther!" — A hasty pull at the bell brought little Fred Warham, who stepped into the room with the air of a prince.

"Ah! Zaffiri's little page will call mamma," she said kindly.

In a few moments, Minnie and Zaffiri were seated together.

"Banish alarm, dear Minnie! I am going to shorten this caste distance which exists between us. It would be cruel to maintain it a day longer. I've a secret to break to your astonished ear. Minnie, by your Carolina marriage with Frederick Warham, I — am — your — *sister*. Frederick Warham was *my brother!*"

A strange, inquiring look was the only reply. Amazement almost paralyzed Minnie.

"It is true," repeated Zaffiri; "and here I will prove the relation which surely binds us to a mutual affection. I am, moreover, a slave, Minnie. You are free! I am still in bondage by the laws of our Republic — subject to the snares of its man-hunters; if identified in the States, I could be taken back in irons to Charleston, to serve a master the rest of my life!"

Minnie roused at last, threw her arms about her, and said tenderly,—

"Oh, no, dear lady! You have been seized with sudden illness! your reason is affected! take your bed, and allow me to call a physician!"

"No, Minnie; my brain is not turned. I know whereof I speak. The story is long — listen, and you will believe."

Zaffiri took up the thread of her narrative, gave the proofs of her birth, sale, flight through the aid of Father Weintze, the purchase of her old nurse in New Orleans; nor did she give up the clew, till she had traced it to the certainty of her affirmation.

"Minnie, do you doubt my sanity, now?" she asked, weeping tears of anguish at the remembrance of her wrongs. "Do you doubt the relationship between Fred Warham and myself — that we were brother and sister? You were his wife, Minnie; am I not sister to you, also?"

"I cannot doubt it, dear lady."

"Hush, Minnie! do not address me with that subservient title. The difference between us is but in complexion, and you are more beautiful than I. Come to the mirror, Minnie. Let that decide."

With one arm around her waist, Zaffiri drew her unwilling steps before a full length glass, saying,—

"Look up, Minnie. Your rich brown color gives me a sickly pallor. Your jet black curls make my pale hair look faded. The deep damask of your cheeks and lips give mine a half-ripened appearance. And my eyes! like shaded wood violets! How do they compare with the tropical softness of yours! so dark, velvety brown. Minnie, you are a living picture to me. No marvel that Fred Warham loved you! And, if *he* loved you, cannot *I*? Cannot I love my brother's children? Are they not my nephews by consanguinity? Teach them to call me auntie, and teach yourself to call me Zaffiri. Give me a sister's love."

“My dear Fred knew nothing of this, or he would have confided in me!” exclaimed Minnie.

“He knew nothing; we dared not trust a Southerner with my liberty. We will make future amends for that distrust of Fred, to you, dear Minnie, and to his children.”

CHAPTER XXX.

IN July, Zaffiri gave Paul *carte blanche* for furnishing other chambers and making festive preparations for a New England house-warming, early in August. She explained to him that the intent of the phrase was a merry-making by the friends of a family who enter a new house.

“Cause the upholsterer to copy the red and blue rooms,” she said; “the rest I leave to your care. Have a supervision over all, Paul, and I shall be content.”

Mary spent most of the following day with Zaffiri, in the seclusion of her chamber. Both were busy with their needles, consulting chiefly upon Mary’s future.

“So, after the reunion and hilarity of the house-warming, you will leave me, Mary. After three years of travel and closest intimacy, I shall miss you more than words can express; and yet, if I knew you were to change the loneliness of your long widowhood for the companionship offered you, I could see you depart with a degree of satisfaction.”

“You have the same desire for my marriage with Mr. Link, that Filette and George have expressed without reserve in their correspondence with me during the last year. But, my dear Zaffiri, I ask you if a companionship without love could be more desirable than that of one’s ordinary friends?”

“Without love! Mary? Those words have a doubtful import. You certainly hold Mr. Link in highest esteem for his long-trying integrity, for his Christian sympathy with the suffering and oppressed, and for his persistent, unselfish interest in Thad. Esteem easily ripens into that quality of love which must distinguish your age and his. You could never feel again the romantic, half bewil-

dering sentiment once cherished for your first and only youthful lover, James Buddington."

At the mention of that name, Mary's mournful eyes dropped.

"My poor, murdered James!" she ejaculated. "So ignominiously murdered! My life's happiness was buried in his grave." Her misty vision and trembling fingers refused guidance to the needle. "Oh! it seems sacrilege—like breaking vows to consent to a second marriage."

"Mary, far be it from me to recommend any course to you which could cast a shadow of unfaithfulness upon the memory of James. You could not, if you would, yield to Mr. Link the affection betowed on him. Mr. Link would not ask it. He asks only that you share his house, its luxuries and comforts; that you give to him what your bruised heart has to offer of friendship and regard. He asks the privilege and right by marriage to brighten your sad life by a love which we all know is devotion itself. He does not require what you cannot confer. Reflect, Mary, what he has done for you already.

"He has built a stylish, commodious house, he has had his grounds laid out under the eye of a gardener, its parterres, fragrant with flowers, await your coming; he has planted rare shrubs and shade trees. Besides, he has purchased an elegant carriage, the finest in town. I am sure he would not have made these preparations without the encouragement of George and Filette. They judge it would be better attained in a home of your own encircled by the deep and unobtrusive love of Mr. Link, than by a continuance in their numerous and noisy family of children."

"I do need and desire quiet for the remainder of my life, Zaffiri; but I must not seek it in forbidden places."

"Why is the beautiful home of Mr. Link forbidden, Mary? It seemed to me that his letter to you offering himself and his possessions, was a scroll let down from the skies by a Divine hand, presenting to your tortured spirit an asylum of sweet peace and content. Where is that letter, Mary? Let us read it together. Let my pleading be secondary to his."

Mary left the room, smiling at Zaffiri's tenacity — and returning gave the letter to her friend, who said cheerfully,—

“Leave the sewing, Mary, listen while I read.”

“*Cloudspire, Mass., June 30, 185—*

“MRS. MARY BUDDINGTON, — MY DEAR FRIEND,—If this letter and its object prove an unhappy intrusion upon your attention, I here at the commencement, beg pardon ; a favor which I believe will be kindly granted. I will write without ambiguity ; for I do not think the love one bears another on earth necessitates hesitation or evasion. I have discovered, during our years of social intercourse, and especially during your long absence in Europe, the gentle, but unyielding sway you unconsciously hold over my hopes and happiness.

“Thoughts of you mingle with all my purposes — thoughts of our possible future companionship ; thoughts of your dear presence in my house, at my lonely table, and among my garden walks. Unworthy as I am, I venture to offer you, dear Mary, all these with my first and undivided affections. I have thought that domestic interests in what was your own — in the oversight of a quiet home — your health and some degree of lighted-hearted enjoyment might return to your grieved life.

“My sister expresses her attachment to you, and should the crowning wish of my desolate manhood be realized, she will welcome your coming with a glad-some and tender affection.

“I have no more to write, but I close this letter with a painful distrust of consequences. Take time, dear Mary, to reflect. I shall come to Montreal with the party of friends in August. Then I will learn from your lips, the conclusion. Your will shall be mine.

“I am yours with deepest respect.

“SIMON LINK.”

“There Mary,” said Zaffiri, “is not that letter beautiful, tender, and considerate? We all love Mr. Link, why should not you? My Claude loves him, and will have his company in New York, weeks at a time. He says we have never had a more gentlemanly guest in our house. What! grateful tears? As I told you. Esteem and gratitude, then love. Mary, do not hesitate longer. Decide to-day, and let us talk over preparations ; allow me to write Filette to-morrow, of your consent that Mr. Link may make one delightful journey to Canada.”

“How can I take off this mourning which I have worn for so many years, Zaffiri?”

“Dress in gray and white, Mary, for the rest of your days. Gray and white are simplicity itself ; at all events if you remain single, I should advise you to relinquish those sombre externals you have worn so long. I believe you are already decided in Mr. Link’s favor. Confess at once. Let me be happy. Let Claude

and I arrange the wedding here with all our friends present. Claude and I will stand with you at the ceremony, and you shall go back from Europe to your own charming home."

She threw her work upon the carpet and knelt before Mary, fixing her blue eyes upon her, gleaming with sunny light.

"Be married here for *my* sake," she plead, "on the last day of the house-warming. Minnie and I will make you a lovely bride. Let Claude do something for you, who have done so much for me."

She drew the thoughtful brow down to her lips and whispered,—

"Take this golden cup that Heaven offers. Two separate congenial lives will blend in one. Shall it be so, Mary?"

"It shall be so, Zaffiri."

"Shall Mr. Link receive his life's best gift here in the house of the exile, Mary?"

"If it please you, blessed one."

"Shall I write to Filette, to-morrow?"

"You may write."

The first week in August filled the gray stone house with affectionate greetings and festive cheer. George and Filette, Richard and Lucy, Mr. and Mrs. Sterlingworth, and Mr. Link, saw again their beloved ideal of womanhood, their model of refined elegance, and their personification of angelic charity. Zaffiri saw again her tried friends endeared by mutual sufferings and participated joys. Queen of her drawing-rooms, and attending minutely to the ease and enjoyment of her guests, she was the admiration of all.

There was much to be revealed by hostess and guests. The progress of Freedom from the standpoint of each was rehearsed. Zaffiri's experiences abroad were narrated. Minnie and her children were presented, she as "*My sister*," and the two boys as "*My nephews*," from South Carolina; and the chain of events which brought the sisters together was minutely traced.

Zaffiri's friends listened with an intensity of interest one gives to the strangest romance. At the recital by Mr. Lambelle of his interview with Fred Warham in New York, in which that Southerner's love for Minnie was so frankly confessed and in which he so nobly complied with the demands of Justice in arranging for her future, tender tears fell with Minnie's, to the memory of such

rare virtues in one who had proven himself her true husband and protector.

Zaffiri produced the locket containing an exquisite likeness of Fred, and presented to her as a souvenir of himself in Italy.

"It was painted in Paris by a distinguished artist," said Zaffiri; "and the locket itself, is an exquisite work of art. That diamond setting must have been very costly.

"What do you think my friends," she continued, "when Minnie came to us from dear Fred's grave, she drew from her bosom, where she wore it concealed, the exact counterpart of my locket, with the same likeness and diamond setting."

"Minnie removed the chain of her own from her neck, opened it, and gazed upon the fine features with reverent affection. Tear drops quivered on her silken lashes; she raised the dear face to her lips, and passed it to Mrs. Sterlingworth, for comparison with the other. Heads were eagerly grouped over both lockets, held side by side in Fanny's hands.

"Precisely alike, Mrs. Warham," said Mr. Sterlingworth to Minnie; "you can have no better evidence of Mr. Warham's respectful and sincere attachment to yourself, than this likeness of which Madame Lambelle's is an exact copy. By this delicate act he placed you on equality with a lady whose superior we think we have never met among our Anglo-Saxon acquaintances."

"I entertain, sir," replied Minnie, sadly, "the sentiment expressed by the similarity of these two precious souvenirs; but in all my life at 'Breezy Bluff,' I was never made to feel the least degree of inferiority, however just that infliction might have been. Contrary to the legislation for slaves, I was in childhood taught to read and write. Mr. Warham read with me the works in his library; and his correspondence with me by letter, although under cover, was as free and confiding as it would have been with any lady of the land. I was not surprised, therefore, that my locket equaled dear Zaffiri's, in beauty and expense."

"Do you know, Minnie, other instances of the Southerner's attachment to slaves, as marked as yours?" questioned Filette.

"They are very common, Mrs. Buddington; but cruelty and affection are strangely mingled. The slave-holder is often reckless in the management of his estates, and a spendthrift. A slave

wife has no means to build up her master's fortune, and he turns to the surest resources. To accomplish this, he must deliver up the dark woman he really loves, to the slave-trader. She is hurried from her handsomely-furnished apartments, from the kindest attentions, from the fondest caresses, to the nearest auction, and sold in the incongruous lot; her pretty and petted children going one way, and she, broken hearted, going another."

Every woman's heart around Minnie uttered a long, simultaneous moan. Filette asked,—

"What am I to understand by your words, 'the surest resources?'"

"That from the wealthy ladies of the South, or North, he marries a white wife, who will bring to him a fortune. I had a sister, fairer than I am, who was the slave-wife of a young blue-blood in Savannah. He idolized her. He called her his sultana, and dressed her like one. He secretly wore a curl of her hair in a locket. They had two or three beautiful children. He lived too fast, and lost his fortune.

"One day, he gave Isabel (that was my sister's name) and the children, a pass to go to Charleston to visit some of her acquaintances. There she was sold with her children, while Mr. Dentelle was on his way North, to marry a rich Philadelphian. That was the last I knew of Isabel. I think she must have died of a broken heart. Major Dentelle now has a son, who about three years since married a rich Northern young lady, from Indiana. They were wintering in Washington. Augustus Dentelle was captivated with her at the President's levee. She was the belle of Washington. Fred said she was very beautiful, and that it was a true love marriage. Augustus did not follow the example of his father."

"Do you know, ladies and gentlemen," said Mr. Lambelle, "I attended those same nuptials? that I was bridesman at the ceremony, with an extremely blue-blooded lady of South Carolina as bridesmaid, a Miss Fairland, of the estate with the high-sounding name, 'Le Grand Palais?' Furthermore, I yielded to the pleading of pretty May and her lover, by accompanying them to Savannah with Miss Fairland."

Amidst general laughter and clapping of hands, the parlors echoed with "No! No! No!"

“Yes, indeed!” replied Zaffiri; “and Claude says if I had not carried his heart away to Italy, it might have been stolen by this same irresistible maiden.”

“I should say that was a dangerous journey into the lion’s lair for an abolitionist of the first water,” exclaimed George Buddington.

“But I had my protecting angel along with me, you understand.”

“Not the angel of the Lord, Mr. Lambelle,” said Lucy. “Miss Fairland is endowed with the opposite qualities. I think I have never witnessed such supercilious contempt of others, such arrogance of bearing, as those Fairlands manifest. They seem to rise on their exorbitant claims to rank and power, as on pinions above the rest of humanity. Never in my experience have I met with such hearts of stone as those two ladies seemed to possess, while I was at ‘Le Grand Palais.’”

“I agree with you, Mrs. Beame, that I was not conducted by the angel of the Lord; but this angel was the best the South affords. Had she known the character of her companion, however, she would have hurled me into the lacerating teeth of those same roaring lions that everywhere fawned at my feet; but I came forth from that den of dead men’s bones with safety, basking in the smiles of my enchantress.”

“That bit of romance in Miss Fairland’s life would have been sublimely humiliating, could she have known that her exclusive graces were lavished upon a friend of universal freedom — an aider and abettor of fugitives, and a chief shareholder of the Underground Railroad,” said Mr. Buddington.

“I declare it is delightful,” laughed Fanny. “Miss Fairland ought to know it.”

“She ought!” reiterated all, in a lively burst of merriment.

“Not yet, my friends!” explained Mr. Lambelle. “I have several high-handed games to play in the sunny South; and, if those Southerners understood the address and artifice that I wear as an armor among them, they would tear me in pieces with red hot pincers. One might as well fall into the hands of the Spanish Inquisition, as to fall into the hands of one’s own fellow-citizens, in this Republic.”

“That is too true!” observed Richard, sorrowfully. “I have experienced the tender mercies of my fellow-citizens.”

The sharp irony of Richard’s “tender mercies” roused various trains of harrowing recollections. Memory was casting her spectral shadows over the happy party, enshrouding, more especially, George Buddington and Mary.

Zaffiri, watchful for the happiness of her guests, perceived the wave of gloom that had suddenly rolled in upon them, and adroitly turned back conversation to its former animated flow.

She related some humorous incidents of her last voyage from Europe, illustrating the “foolishness of the wise.”

“There were,” she said, “on board two Southerners, with their families; Colonel Haywood, wife and children, of South Carolina, also Mr. Sillton, wife and son, from Mississippi. The Haywoods usually grouped themselves with the Silltons, as Southerners prefer to associate with Southerners. Mrs. Haywood, a cold, haughty lady, bestowed her condescensions chiefly upon Mrs. Sillton, although I was graciously included in her distribution of social favors. There were also on board two passengers, Mr. Vassano and his daughter, Marie, whose acquaintance I had previously made. They were from Philadelphia, and of colored lineage. Possessing well-bred and accomplished manners, they made a welcome part of the social circle. The father was often sought in conversation by the Southerners.

“Once, I sat near Colonel Haywood, who was conversing flip-pantly with these two passengers on Southern prospects, Southern wrongs, and the cotton interest. The father and daughter, who had never denied their extraction from the despised race, gave me a covert smile, unobserved by others, signifying the ludicrousness of the interview. The conversation turned upon negroes and the certainty with which the slightest taint of African blood can be detected.

“‘I assure you,’ said Colonel Haywood to Mr. Vassano, ‘I can tell a nigger anywhere, if he is as white as I am. There is an indication in the pupil of the eye that is always reliable.’

“‘I have never learned that test,’ replied Mr. Vassano, lifting his eyes full upon him. ‘I have always found sufficient evidence

of color in the skin and hair ;' closing his remark with a laugh, in which his daughter joined.

"At the dancing hour, the officers of the steamer vied with each other in obtaining the hand of the sparkling and handsome Miss Vassano. Twice, the colonel gallantly offered himself to Marie, and was graciously accepted. Mr. Sillton led Mrs. Haywood upon the floor. On one of these occasions, I offered my hand to her father, and had for my partner a gentleman more *distingue* than Colonel Haywood. The fancy of the hour was cotillions. We were all in the Southern set ; the basket cotillion was proposed, At the point where hands were locked and arms intertwined, weaving us all into a human wreath — Colonel Haywood and Marie Vassano, Mr. Sillton and Mrs. Haywood, the captain and Mrs. Sillton, Mr. Vassano and myself, I mentally christened the dance the '*Equality Cotillion.*'

"I caught the sparkling eye of Marie. I understood its electric telegraphy flashed back to mine. It read, '*Behold my triumph over Caste!*' Her rich charms were aglow and enhanced by the tasteful elegance of her attire. She glided about like a fairy, the centre of admiration, and, by general applause, the finest dancer aboard. Often joining me in the secrecy of my state-room, she was forced to muffle with her handkerchief her immoderate laughter at the ludicrous mistakes of this American Caste. The echo of Marie Vassano's derisive laughter filled Zaffiri's parlors with uncontrollable mirth."

"Well, well!" ejaculated Mr. Sterlingworth, "there are some features of oppression enjoyable. Who can appreciate them better than we, advocates of the unpopular Anti-Slavery Reform?"

"Mr. Vassano's family," explained Claudé, "are as well educated as any Southerner's. His wealth is abundant. Libraries and works of art adorn his home, which is one of the stations of the Underground Railroad. He was free born in the South, has taken a collegiate course in New England, and is an eloquent speaker. The proof of his information on our political issues is the repeated satisfactory conversations which Colonel Haywood held with him, on the passage. The best qualities of many bloods filtered into his veins — Moorish, English, Jewish, African, and

Southern. His noble manhood is the ripe perfection of this strange miscegenation."

The reader has seen that the imperious Colonel Haywood had really no prejudice against color. His love of Flora and Charlotte both disproves the antipathy and contempt which constantly assailed the Northern ear. This boasted scorn of color was only a manufactured gall, dropped upon the Northern tongue by Southern sorcery, that it might become infused through the whole system; that it might embitter and pervert the Northern moral and religious nature. This boasted scorn of color was like the ink bag of the cuttle-fish; in its turbid cloud the slave-holder forever swam, lest the eye of God should find him. The virulence of disdain towards African descent, assumed by the oppressor, was the *blot* by which he rendered illegible the Scripture passages, "God is no respecter of persons," and "He hath made, of one blood, the nations of men."

Three days yet remained of the house-warming. Another unexpected arrival was a surprise to Zaffiri and Mary. Alfy stepped into the circle, embracing his mother with the devotion of a lover. Mary held him from her proudly, and scanned his dear face affectionately.

"Alfy, my blue-eyed boy," she said, "you have grown superb. More than three years of manhood have fallen upon you, during my absence; but are you well? your skin is fair as a lily, and your eyes are like two spring violets. You have not the bronze of health, my farmer-lad!"

"I have renounced agriculture, my dear mother," replied Alfy, with some pride.

"Then I have been much deceived. With whose consent? Tell me all about it."

She drew him down beside her, retaining one soft, fair hand in hers, while her admiring eyes overflowed with gladness.

"Mother, I have come to explain, and to ask forgiveness, if my course shall prove an offense. You know I most earnestly desired to pursue the law, but our circumstances forbade the attempt. After your departure, Mr. Link proposed to defray the expense of a course at the Law School at Harvard; and lest this generosity should seem to place you under disagreeable obligations, he insisted

that you should be kept in absolute ignorance. Uncle George, Doctor Clarendon, and Richard advised acceptance. I have graduated with the usual honors, have been admitted to the bar, and am now attorney-at-law in the office of an old, experienced lawyer of Boston. This partnership was procured through the kind offices of Uncle George. This lawyer is a friend of his."

"How was your wardrobe supplied, dear boy?"

"By Mr. Link, entirely. He insisted; and I was clothed in as fine style as any student there. My room was attractively furnished; and he himself came to Harvard twice a year, passing a week on each occasion. I divided the summer vacations with him and Aunt Filette, in Cloudspire. My father could not have shown more liberality. Mr. Link said to me with deep emotion,—

"Alfy, I do this for your dear murdered father's sake. I have no children. I have means, and they are yours. Now, my dear mother, I have come as in childhood, to receive your rebuke, or your blessing. I have obtained a profession without your sanction, and by means without your approval."

"Your profession, Alfy, should be one of your choice; one in which your youthful hopes and ambition will be successful. It seems to me that the law is not a healthy educator in morals, or in the love of justice. You, my son, will not frame the laws; but you will be the advocate and interpreter of statutes, many of which are tyrannical and unjust. My fear is that in the clemency and equality we so much revere, the acumen of your righteous judgment may become blunted. Rather than witness this change in my Alfy, I should prefer to feel your hands calloused and bronzed by the farmer's honest toil, and to see your fair face roughly tanned by the sun and winds of a laborer's life."

A shadow fell upon Alfy's bright face at this imagination of distrust.

"I adjure you, mother, the best and dearest of all others, to trust my integrity; and consider what events move me to array my efforts on the side of justice. The ignominious scourging to his death, of a tender father! Our cruel bereavement—the forced dependence of our helpless years! Add to these your faithful teachings, which time can never efface, and trust your Alfy for the result."

“Then you have my blessing and my proud anticipation of your future success.”

“What has Mr. Link, dear mother?”

“The beneficent foster-father of both my boys has my truest gratitude.”

“Nothing more?” he inquired, with a troubled light in his tender eyes.

“Dear Alfy, my answer has been made to Mr. Link;” a faint blush reddening her pale cheek.

Still doubtful of the accomplishment of his heart’s most earnest wish, he asked timidly.

“Shall you go home with Aunt Filette, mother?”

Mary hesitated, kissed the hand still in her possession, and replied,—

“Alfy, your mother will go home with Mr. Link.”

The morning of the last day of the reunion in Canada was a happy one to Zaffiri’s whole household. Alfy and Paul, who quickly became the best of friends, made the parlors and halls redolent with floral beauty and perfume. The table of Mary’s wedding gifts was laden profusely with remembrances from the Clarendons, Mrs. Beame, the Glenlys, and from the “Green Valley” in Cloudspire; there was a costly memento from Mr. and Mrs. Snow, and from others of her Connecticut neighbors, as well as from the Buddingtons and Thad. Alfy desired the privilege of giving his mother away, in the English marriage service, which had been chosen for the occasion. Mr. Buddington indulgently consented.

At eleven o’clock, the whole household and numerous guests were gathered in the parlors. Every eye lighted with pleasure and admiration, when Mary entered upon the arm of Alfy, followed by Mr. Link and Filette.

The marriage ceremony being concluded, and the ring being placed upon Mary’s finger, amidst the congratulations Alfy said to Mr. Link,—

“For your unexampled kindness to me, I have transferred to you my entire earthly possession — my adored mother.”

In a voice tremulous with joy, Mr. Link replied,—

“Alfy, your debt is doubly repaid.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

PENNSYLVANIA, sublime in its Apalachian mountain ranges, grand in the wild barbaric career of its untamed rivers to the sea, picturesque in the mingling of nationalities about her varied industries, fed by the wealth of her natural resources, is beautiful, also, in the pastoral attractions of green valleys, whose secluded loveliness would seem to exclude the repulsive human strife waged by ambition, covetousness, poverty, power, and political chicanery in and about metropolitan centres.

To one of these charming valleys, an idyl in itself, and chanted by a poet's lyre, our readers are invited. Cultivation in rising swells extended up the sides of the two ranges on either hand, nearly to the bizarre outlines of their summits, clearly cut against the summer sky, so that this vale of verdure had the appearance of an emerald carpet suspended from parallel rows of peaks, and arabesque with garden, grove, corn-field and coppice; sprinkled with abodes of plenty, spires, hamlets and towns. Through the lap of this valley rolled the sparkling Susquehanna; a tide of animated voices from dwellers and pleasure-seekers mingled with bird-carols and the happy low of well-kept herds.

In one of its towns, a stylish hotel welcomed and entertained commercial travelers, and the swarms of romantic visitors who yearly flutter from place to place, like butterflies dallying with the rarest sweets that Nature offers in sky and landscape. The proprietor of this *caravansera* understood the tastes and desires of his guests, and never wearied in acceding to their caprices. Many of the waiters, stable-men, and other superumeraries returned year after year to fill their posts under his considerate authority, with the pleasure one finds in returning to an old friend.

In the season of which we write, the same of the reunion of the friends of the exiles in Canada, a new hostler was added to the servants' corps of the hostlery. He was rough, burly, and tanned to the hue of many of the colored waiters in the dining-room. His hair was coarse and unkempt; his eye was wary and sullen, lighted

only by gleams of dangerous cunning ; his physiognomy was massive and rude, like the face of a statue blocked out and unfinished. He wore a tarpaulin, rings in his ears, and loose pantaloons, nearly covering his huge slippered feet. He had the salt phrases and swing of a seaman ; yet this hermaphrodite sailor, calling " yho ! heave ho ! " to the horses, performed his stable duties with such punctilio of skill and dispatch as commended him to entire approval. He was a picturesque object about the premises, attracting the attention of the guests.

Among the waiters was one mulatto, who drew, unconsciously, upon himself the general admiration. He had a fine, clear color, silken hair in curls, was of medium height, of an erect, muscular, and well-developed figure. His elastic step moved directly upon his purpose, in attending with unflagging zeal upon the varied demands of those whom he served. He never misunderstood, or made mistakes at the crowded tables ; and his placid equanimity of temper, and his unremitting efforts to please, conquered the most petulant and irascible. The gentlemen said among themselves, " He's an obliging fellow ; " and the ladies, in their table-gossip, said of him, " Oh ! isn't he delightful ! I haven't had a cold steak nor an overdone egg from his hands since my arrival."

" He never makes you wait till you are out of all patience," added a second.

" And he never puts on airs," remarked a third. " I declare he's splendid."

The habit of the new hostler was not gregarious ; he conversed more with his horses than with his own species. The limited utterance in which he indulged, extended only to the white servants. The last days of July saw a change in this moody stranger, from reticence to a degree of sociability extending to the colored waiters. His favors were more especially bestowed upon the mulatto waiter, of whom we have spoken. He hovered about him as various opportunities offered, after the work of the day was over, and invited him to the stables to inspect some fine animals, recently purchased.

He seemed to suffer from depression, saying to the waiter,—

" I should like to be of your color — then my work might be

appreciated — here I get only curses. Your praise is in everybody's mouth."

"You wouldn't care to be of my color, 'Lem,' if you knew how my race is persecuted, hunted and despised."

"I don't see it," replied Lem. "I hear everywhere, 'Mark does this, and Mark does that. I gave him a dollar — and I gave him five, and I don't begrudge it.' I should like to be hunted that way."

"You wouldn't like to be seized and carried South into slavery, if you'd been a slave and got into the Free States, would you, Lem? Here, only last week, a black woman, up on the mountain, was taken out of her bed at night, and carried off somewhere, nobody knows where, into slavery, by a Southerner that called himself her master and an officer."

"Good God!" ejaculated Lem. "You are not afraid of being carried off, are you? Was you ever a slave?"

"I'm not afraid," replied Mark. "I've had my free papers a good many years. I'm a free man."

"That's good!" replied Lem. "Good-bye to the Southerners now! who set you free, Mark? Some kind-hearted person, with feelings. Such a person, I guess, don't live in the South. It's my opinion they're all hard-hearted rascals."

Really, Mark's sympathies were awakened for this ugly waif of a hostler; but a deep fount of gratitude welled up to his lips at Lem's designation of his benefactress, as a kind-hearted person, with feelings. He did not let the opportunity escape of acknowledging his never-ceasing indebtedness for the freedom and manhood he had so long enjoyed, and which was legally secure to him. He said, —

"Yes, Lem, a kind-hearted person freed me — a lady. She did it of her own free will; because, as you say, she had feelings. My papers were made out South. She is North now. Her name was Mrs. William Steele. She gave me her maiden name, Clarendon."

"So your name is Mark Clarendon?" inquired Lem.

"No! my name is Marquis Clarendon."

"What was her first name, Mark?"

"Lucy — Lucy Clarendon, before marriage. I know it's Lucy,

because it's on my free papers, and because she writes me once a year to inquire for me and my family."

"It's a great thing to be free," said Lem. "Where does this woman live?"

"In Massachusetts — in the town of Cloudspire."

Lem took off his tarpaulin with one hand, and scratched his head with the other, slapped on his hat again, and ejaculated, —

"Mark, I know that woman — I know her family. I have lived in Cloudspire. Have you seen her since? Have you ever been in that town?"

"You know Mrs. William Steele, the lady that freed me? It cannot be possible. No, I have not seen her since the day we parted, in New York; but I could fall on my knees this moment, and thank her for giving me myself, — to walk this earth without a master, to labor where I choose, and to possess my own earnings."

"Well, she's the same now as when you knew her. She's a friend of mine. I've staid many a week at the doctor's — Doctor Clarendon's, I mean. They are all abolitionists. There's another family there that I stay with a great deal — the Buddingtons — that's my home where I stop when I'm there. I've helped 'em to carry ten runaway slaves to Canada. Strange, that you and I both know those people, Mark!"

"They were sitting on the steps, at the end of a long row of kitchens and store-rooms. Lem stood up on his huge slippered feet, about to go.

"I want to inquire about them," said Mark. "Come up to my room to-morrow night, Lem. This is the best news I've had this long time."

"I'll come, if I can get away from that stable." A foxy gleam shot from his eyes, but its aim was not towards Mark. "I'll tell ye, Mark, I want to see your free papers, so I can tell Lucy I've seen them, when I go back to see 'em this fall. Have you got 'em in your trunk?"

"Yes, Lem; I carry them wherever I go. Be sure and come up. You shall see my deed of myseif."

Lem went to the barn, and Mark to his dining-rooms.

Less than a week after, Lem came to Mark in a tumult of vexation, inquiring the names of those two men who arrived last night.

"They have been out to the barn, looking at the horses, and they treat me like a dog. Look in the register, Mark, and tell me their names. I can't get into the office, you know."

"They are Southerners," laughed Mark; "I waited upon them this morning at breakfast. But I'll find their names if you desire it."

He found time to read on the book three names, registered the night before. He remembered only two for Lem's ears — Colonel Ralph Haywood, and Colonel Fairland, Charleston, S. C. He went back to the dining-rooms to give them the last finishing touches before dinner. He had put on clean linen, and a fresh, white apron; he was adjusting the chairs. Suddenly, a blow felled him to the floor. For a moment he was blinded. Three men stood over him with a club and pistols. The blood was dripping from his head to the floor. He heard their fierce, and hurried voices,—

"Put on the handcuffs, quick!"

He had no power to think, or rise. One was already fastened upon his wrist.

His brain cleared. With superhuman strength he tore himself from their grasp, warding off blows, and knocking his assailants hither and thither, with the hand-cuff on his wrist for a weapon. They caught him by his clothes. He left them in their hands. Bloody shreds strewed the floor, and hung upon the chairs.

"I'm a free man!" he cried; "nobody's slave!" Tigers' eyes glared upon him, and pistols brandished about him. He still fought with the courage and strength of a lion. Cursing, and incoherent cries of "Desist!" "Let him go!" "Shame!" "Take your property!" "According to law!" "Shoot the nigger!" "Present if you dare!" "Southern assassins!" mingled with the screams of servants and ladies in a demoniac symphony, filled the hall and rang out into the streets.

Above this diabolical jargon, floated the tones of Mark's clear, mellow voice, like the torn colors in the midst of a terrible combat, "Death or Victory!"

Half a dozen voices from the other end of the hall shouted cheerfully,—

"Good! Death or Victory!"

Lem entered the street door, and closing it behind him, barred

it with his body. In a flash, a stranger's iron grasp hurled him headlong upon the floor, and opened the door. Mark, panting, bleeding, nearly naked, rushed through, like a deer — bounded to the river, and plunged in. Neek deep, and facing the shore, he awaited his pursuers. On they came, Haywood, Fairland, and the deputy-marshal. On came the crowd, men, women, and children; clerks, drivers and mechanics. Emotions of every kind moved the crowd — anger, pity, fear and horror.

“Fellow-citizens,” said Colonel Haywood, “I am pursuing a course of right and justice. That negro is my slave — I have owned him for years. By the laws of the United States he is my property. His name here, is Marquis Clarendon.”

He took from his pocket the papers legally prepared for his arrest, and read them aloud to the by-standers.

“He escaped from ‘Vaucluse,’ my plantation in South Carolina, in 1851. He waited upon me in my boyhood. I took him to France with me, and brought him back. Fellow-citizens——”

At this point, cries of “No! no! no! not fellow-citizens with Southern assassins!” made an unpleasant interruption. Colonel Haywood hesitated. He looked round upon the burning indignation that seemed ready to fall upon himself and companions, and was awed. But he heard the words,—

“Go on! you're right!”

Several gentlemen approached him with hats raised, with bows, and subservient smiles. Thus encouraged, he continued,—

“That negro is my property. Mine by the Bible, mine by the Constitution, that unmistakable guaranty of Southern Rights!”

A growl of disgust and warning was his answer.

“Lem,” called Mark, “Go to my trunk, and bring my free papers. Let the people read for themselves!”

“Go!” said Fairland, in a low tone.

Lem ran back to the hotel with the alacrity a dog shows his master. He returned immediately, shouting before he reached the shore in his harsh voice,—

“No free papers there! No free papers there!”

His answer was an exasperated growl from the spectators in one voice,—

“*Stolen! Stolen! Stolen!*”

Mark raised his arms to the sky in despair, moaning the words like a prayer,—

“Oh my God! they are stolen!”

The deputy-marshal, rampant for his ten-dollar fee, and a handsome extortion from the government, strode to the edge of the water and thundered,—

“Come out of that, hell-hound!”

“Come in after me,” said Mark. “I can carry two or three down with me.”

“Courage, Mark! stay where you are!” shouted the crowd.

“Fire!” howled Haywood through his teeth.

Fairland and Haywood discharged their revolvers at their staggering victim. From his forehead fell a shower of blood, reddening his face like a crimson veil. Another shot, and two streams of blood from his shoulder floated away in long lines on the river.

Indications not to be misunderstood warned the hunters to look for their own safety. They withdrew for a conference. Lem followed.

“Colonel Haywood,” advised the marshal, “there is more abolition in these valleys, than I dreamed of! we shall never capture that infernal nigger. Public opinion is stronger than Uncle Sam, here! Where’s that devil’s free papers?”

“There they are, sir,” said Lem, taking them from his shirt bosom. Haywood lighted a match for his cigar, unfolded and glanced over the papers.

“All right!” he said to Lem—lighted another match, set the papers in flames, threw them blazing upon the ground, and ground their ashes into the soil, with his boot.

“I had no difficulty,” said Fairland, “in capturing that black woman and her two children last week, from the mountain up yonder.”

“No,” chimed in the deputy-marshal, swinging his club to and fro like a pendulum. “No trouble about that. I carried her away under my arm, as I’d take up a cat, and her two kittens.”

“She’s safe now in my rice-field at ‘Le Grand Palais,’ said Fairland, “and I’m remunerated for the loss of Rachel, in overseer Bill Steele’s time, years ago.”

"More than remunerated," said Haywood. "Those two children will more than compensate you for the loss of Rachel's labor."

"We took that woman in the night, sir," ventured Lem to Haywood. "If we lose Mark, can't I hunt you up another nigger in some other place?"

"I don't intend to pay you fifty dollars for this job!" replied Colonel Haywood sourly. "Go away from here, secure me another, and you shall have a hundred. Deputy, do you hear? put a hundred dollars for Lem into the bill against the United States Treasury, when this hostler here secures me another."

"I shall do so, sir," replied the marshal. "On that condition had we not better leave this place! their eyes glare on us like tigers."

"Not tigers," resumed Fairland. "Like panthers — they fear our revolvers. They are only waiting to trap us by stealthiness."

Colonel Haywood turned his eyes to the shore and ejaculated with unmitigated rage, —

"Damn him! he's come out of the water. Let us see!"

"He lies on the ground!" said the marshal; "he has come out to die. Dead niggers are not wanted South."

"No! they are raising him up and putting on pants. I'll have him yet. Come on, marshal."

They rushed back to the almost dying man, and presented their revolvers. In a twinkling he was in the river again at his former depth.

"I'll die here," he said faintly.

The ruffians dared not send another bullet after him. Affairs grew ominous; hurrying groups went up the street and returned. Other groups whispered with rapid gesticulation; threatening glances flashed on the posse. The three bandits strode off to the hotel, and when the supper-gong sounded they had absconded, with Lem added to their number.

Marquis, pallid, bloody, and haggard, waved his arm to his friends on shore, to retire. They understood, and slowly left him, lingering till he waded round a bend of the river, and was hidden from view.

About the middle of the afternoon, when the glorious sunlight

was cradled in that beautiful valley, its sheeny splendor reflected from river and swell, while a shuddering horror still shook the hearts of those who had witnessed that brigand raid of the morning upon the life and liberty of a citizen, while the Susquehanna was bearing its crimson stains far down its babbling channel, while the blood-hounds were turning back to their kennels, Marquis lay insensible upon the ground in a corn-field, into which he had dragged himself, and fallen.

How long he had been there no one knew, but as the merciful God ordered, three good Samaritans entered the field at the same time, but in opposite directions. Each recognized the other as having been at the river bank.

One was the stranger who had hurled Lem Hamm from the door at the hotel — young and finely dressed. The second was a middle-aged mechanic, and the third was a neatly-clad colored man, quite black.

“Have you seen any trace of him?” said the stranger to the black man who was coming up from the river.

“I’m on his track now, sir. Here’s blood on the corn and the ground.”

They traced the clue together and found him. The other, the mechanic, came up from the road; they gazed with dismay upon the wreck of Marquis, lying between the corn hills. His fine hair was stiff with gore and sand; a red pool had dripped from his wounded shoulder to the ground by his side. He had on no shirt, and the hand-cuff held its grip on his right wrist. Dark red, congealed spots were in his ears, his eyes, and at the corners of his mouth.

“Does he breathe?” asked the mechanic. “My God, what a sight! I wish those wolves would secede to-morrow. I’d volunteer to give them back blood for blood.”

The stranger was on his knees, pressing his hand on Marquis’ breast, and taking his pulse.

“He was a handsome fellow,” he murmured.

“Is he alive, sir?” asked the black, respectfully.

“Yes, he breathes, and his pulse beats faintly; but we must work fast. How far are we from the hotel?”

“A mile, sir.”

"Listen, both! I am a physician. I have brought wine and medicine and other necessary things. Raise his head gently, while I put this flask to his lips — there — he swallowed. Where can we conceal him, and, at the same time dress his wounds? Will any one shelter and protect this poor body?"

The black answered,—

"I have got a room ready in that old German house, way up through the grove," pointing to a remarkably large building with a steep, mossy roof, with clapboards hanging by rusty nails, and with here and there a paneless window boarded up. "The people are white. The man is an old miner who has been hurt in the mines and gets his living here on the land, as best he can. They are English; they do not treat us like Americans."

"My name is 'The Surgeon,'" said the stranger. "What is yours?"

"King, sir," answered the black man.

"What is yours? turning to the other.

"Lee, sir."

"Right," said The Surgeon. "Now, Lee and King, support his shoulders. I will carry his legs; go through the woods."

They entered, by the direction of King, a spacious unused chamber, in as ruinous condition as the venerable house. The kind-hearted wife of the English miner had swept the broken floor and brushed away the webs and dust of years. An old oaken bedstead, left in the corner, was supplied with a fresh straw mattress and bed-clothing brought by King. Mark remained insensible; the miner tenderly lifted the arm which hung over the bed, to which the locked hand-cuff clung.

"That wrist is broken," said The Surgeon. "The hand-cuff must be taken off by some means."

"I will do that," said the old miner. "I have worked in iron."

His wife brought in some old white pieces for the wounds, and went to the bedside. Drying her eyes with her apron, she said, compassionately,—

"I think our good English Queen, our good Victoria, would weep to see one of her poor subjects bruised and murdered like this."

Lee, King, and the old miner stand by, obeying The Surgeon's

orders, dropping words of sympathy for Mark, and anathemas for his assassins.

Before sunset, the blood and sand were washed from the curls, the head was swathed with bandages brought by The Surgeon, the broken wrist set and splintered, the dislocated shoulder put in place, a bullet extracted from the other shonider, the ragged hole cleansed and skillfully dressed.

“There,” said The Surgeon, “he had no shirt and he will need none at present. The upper part of the body is covered with linen ligatures. The sheet will be sufficient. King, call the miner’s wife. I have something to say.”

When all were present, The Surgeon said,—

“My friends, this kind of outlawry,” pointing to the bed, “demands not only active sympathy, but it requires concealment. The government committed that outrage. The President, and every member of Congress, who did not denounce the infamous Fugitive Slave Bill, put on that hand-cuff, fired those revolvers. Their hands mangled that almost lifeless body. Those three man-hunters were but the executioners of the public will. Well, then, these three ruffians may be pursued by the just indignation of this quiet valley ; they may be brought before the law to answer for today’s wanton violence. What then? The judge will shame their righteous prosecutors, by saying to Haywood and Fairland, ‘Gentlemen, I find no count against you. You were in the pursuit of lawful business.’ He will add, ‘The true disturbers of the country’s peace are the plaintiffs.’ This decision will give the defendants leave to return and take that man from his bed, if he is likely to recover, and carry him away to the plantation of Vaocluse in South Carolina — the slave of Haywood for life. His free papers are gone. We can make no defence but concealment. I think he will come out of this ; he has groaned twice during my operations, but his recovery will be a three months’ job. Now let us all understand the steps to be taken, for, as God is in Heaven, we must stand by the sufferer in that bed.”

“We shall do that,” answered every one.

“Right,” continued The Surgeon. “The front windows of this chamber are boarded up ; let them remain so. This north window must have a curtain impervious to light. Here our three

names are settled ; Lee, King and The Surgeon. The names of these two," laying his hand familiarly on the old miner's shoulder, "will be The Miner and The Miner's Wife. Outside of this house, there will be no names. I shall not recognize you — you will all be strangers to me."

"We will be strangers, sir," replied Lee.

The Surgeon placed a new, crisp, five-dollar bank bill in the hand of The Miner, saying,—

"There is a beginning ; I shall be your boarder for a week or more — as necessity requires. I pass my summer vacation in this town. I find more pleasure in this chamber than at the hotel. I shall conceal my departure from the hotel under the pretense of a trip to Philadelphia, and shall be here this evening. This victim of Daniel Webster, 'The Godlike,' needs my care. Friend Lee, I leave him under your eye till my return. King, can you make me up some sort of a bed in this room ? let it be hard and plain ; anything to escape detection."

"I can do anything for you, sir," answered King.

After giving directions for the use of the restoratives, The Surgeon glided through the grove and corn-field to the river, where he threw his fishing-rod over his shoulder and soon took his usual seat at table for supper.

In due time, when the five Samaritans were gathered in the north chamber, The Surgeon unfolded a Philadelphia paper, and read aloud the proceedings of the arrest of Mark's assailants, accompanied with the account of their discharge, and the remarks of the Justice of the United States Supreme Court on that occasion.

"Here it is in black and white," said The Surgeon ; "this infamous decision is as I expected. This representative of the Supreme Law concluded the proceedings in this language.

"We are unable to perceive in this transaction, anything worthy of blame in the conduct of these officers in their unsuccessful endeavors to fulfill a most dangerous and disgusting duty — except, perhaps, a want of sufficient courage and perseverance in the attempt to execute the writ."

"Of course no mention was made in court of the theft of free papers before the attempt at kidnapping Marquis — for it was kidnapping a free man. It is singular whose fingers pilfered Mark's

papers. I suspect that ugly copperhead looking fellow of a hostler to be the traitor."

"Mark should have another set of papers, if they can be obtained," remarked Lee.

"True," answered The Surgeon. "We can at least make the effort to obtain others."

He approached the bed of his patient, and asked,—

"What is the name of the person who freed you? You are feeble; make no effort at conversation; simply answer my questions. The name of the person who freed you?"

"Mrs. Lucy Steele."

"Is she living now?"

"She is."

"Her residence?"

"Cloudspire, Massachusetts."

"What is your full name?"

"Marquis Clarendon, sir."

"Where did this lady reside at the time you were made free?"

"Charleston, South Carolina."

"That is sufficient. Take this opiate and all will be right."

At the end of three weeks' time, The Surgeon read to Mark a letter from his benefactress, Mrs. Lucy Beame, and another from her husband, Richard Beame. Both expressed the deepest commiseration for his suffering, and were accompanied by the proper and legal papers, establishing his freedom. Folded in these instruments was the sum of one hundred dollars, to be equally divided between Marquis and the good old miner.

Richard had said to Lucy, after reading The Surgeon's communication,—

"Our annual gift from my charming parishioner in Mississippi has just arrived. Let us bestow it upon one who has been way-laid, robbed, and half-murdered, under the sanction of Republican Law."

In November, Lucy and Richard received information from Marquis by letter that he had made a successful escape into Canada, with his family, by the "Underground Railroad." We quote a few extracts:

“I was concealed and guarded by several friends, to whom I shall ever owe a debt of gratitude ; but my life was saved by the wonderful devotion and skill of a stranger. He was young, fair, and angelically beautiful, possessed of every manly grace, and endowed with the noblest traits of humanity. These are summed up in that one phrase, ‘The spirit of Christ.’

“The spirit of Christ. How like a balm those words fall upon the heart! yet where is it to be found? In the Government that professes to be founded upon the Scriptures? No. In the administration of public officials? No. In the ruling utterances of the Press? No. In the thousand and one churches who worship Christ as the Asiatics worship Boodh? No.

“Is the spirit of Christ found in those who have taken that sacred bath in the blood of the Lamb, called conversion? No. Is this blessed spirit found anywhere? With emphasis I answer, Yes. It is found in the faith and deeds of those good Samaritans who hold paramount the claims of justice, and humanity, over the wicked laws of a nation of heartless banditti. In the lives of those good Samaritans over whose heads hang the ‘Social frown,’ and the judicial penalty of fines and imprisonment, for giving aid and shelter to the fleeing fugitive. In these hearts alone, I have found the helpful, sympathetic, benign, and ineffable spirit of the Messiah.”

“My comfortable cottage in the suburbs of Philadelphia, and of which I hold the deed, is left to the indifferent care of strangers. It is the purchase of years of industry and economy, by Janet and myself. When shall we again traverse its verandah, or sit under the vines our hands have trained?”

CHAPTER XXXII.

AUGUSTUS DENTELLE and his young wife, May, passed out from the breakfast-room to the garden. Like two lovers of a day, they slowly followed the winding paths beneath rose arbors, out into the glint of the morning sun, hidden by masses of

sweet myrtles, oleanders, and japonicas, under the shade of magnolias and crape myrtles, mingling honeyed words and low, rippling laughter with the matin songs of birds, floating down from the branches.

His arm was thrown about her waist above the sash of blue that girdled her delicately embroidered white robe, and her trusting hand was upon his shoulder.

“Augustus, Augustus!” said May, turning her radiant face to her husband, “do you know Zaffiri is coming to-morrow? I am so happy. Those roses should not make such haste to unfold their charms.”

She waved her left hand towards the shrubbery, apostrophising the wilderness of budding fragrance.

“Hush, beautiful roses! Listen, children of the skies! Fold the secret I am about to confide within your velvet hearts. Zaffiri and Claude are coming. Mamma Bloome and Papa Bloome are coming. Fold your petals. Hide your lovely blushes till *they* stand in your midst! Then put on your royal robes! then be ye superb.”

“Roses!” ejaculated Augustus, in turn extending a shapely hand, “I will tell ye something seraphic! May is here, in your midst! My May! my beautiful ‘Bulbal!’ my rose-loving nightingale! Is she not pouring the silver music of her voice in your ears? Roses! I command ye, bloom, and delay not! Open your velvet hearts to my sylph,—my May! Pure white ‘Sappho,’ rosy pink ‘*Reine de Fleurs*,’ rosy crimson ‘Marx,’ satiny ‘Lamoreciere,’ cherry-colored ‘Margolin,’ clear flesh ‘Amandine,’ rose incarnate ‘Beranger,’ vivid red ‘Robin Hood,’ expand! bloom! die! and cast your resplendent robes in perfumed drafts at my love’s feet! Obey!”

“Fie! dear Augustus! what will the roses do now?” asked May, almost suffocating with merriment.

“They will obey me! Nightingale, this garden, these bowers, these roses are for *your* delight. Let them bloom to-day! Do not understand, however, darling, that I do not rejoice in your anticipations of a reunion with Claude and Zaffiri. If they had refused to come to Savannah for the gratification of my beautiful wife, I should have waived my arm towards the North, and thundered forth, ‘COME!’”

“And so, my dear, you count their pleasure as nothing ; only think of the delightful change from their cold, leaden, November skies, to this summer clime. Like sleet-driven birds, they will nestle down under this warm sun.”

“No, sweet one ; I shall extend the bounteous, knightly hospitality which a Southerner knows well how to offer ; they shall sail, walk, gallop and drive. I will load the table with venison, duck, wild turkey, and delicately flavored fish from the sea. The goddess ‘Terpsichore’ shall preside over the shades of night ; and you, my ‘Euterpe,’ shall rule the day.

“Thanks ! and you, my charming ‘Apollo,’ shall preside over all. Ah ! has the pony, ‘Moslem,’ that I ride at the plantation, been brought down ?”

“He is here in the stable. Madame Lambelle is a fine *equestrienne*, I believe. ‘Moslem’ will please her. You ladies will sweep across the plains on ‘Moslem’ and ‘El Canala,’ like two Arab queens.”

They approached the orangery.

“Dear me, Augustus, I could never have conceived the superabundance of fruit supported by an orange tree, without the evidence of my own eyes. What an extravagant redundancy of golden fruits. The leaves are pressed for existence between the compact bunches.”

“They are certainly unique in their growth, dear May.” He called a grey-headed servant, awaiting orders on the piazza.

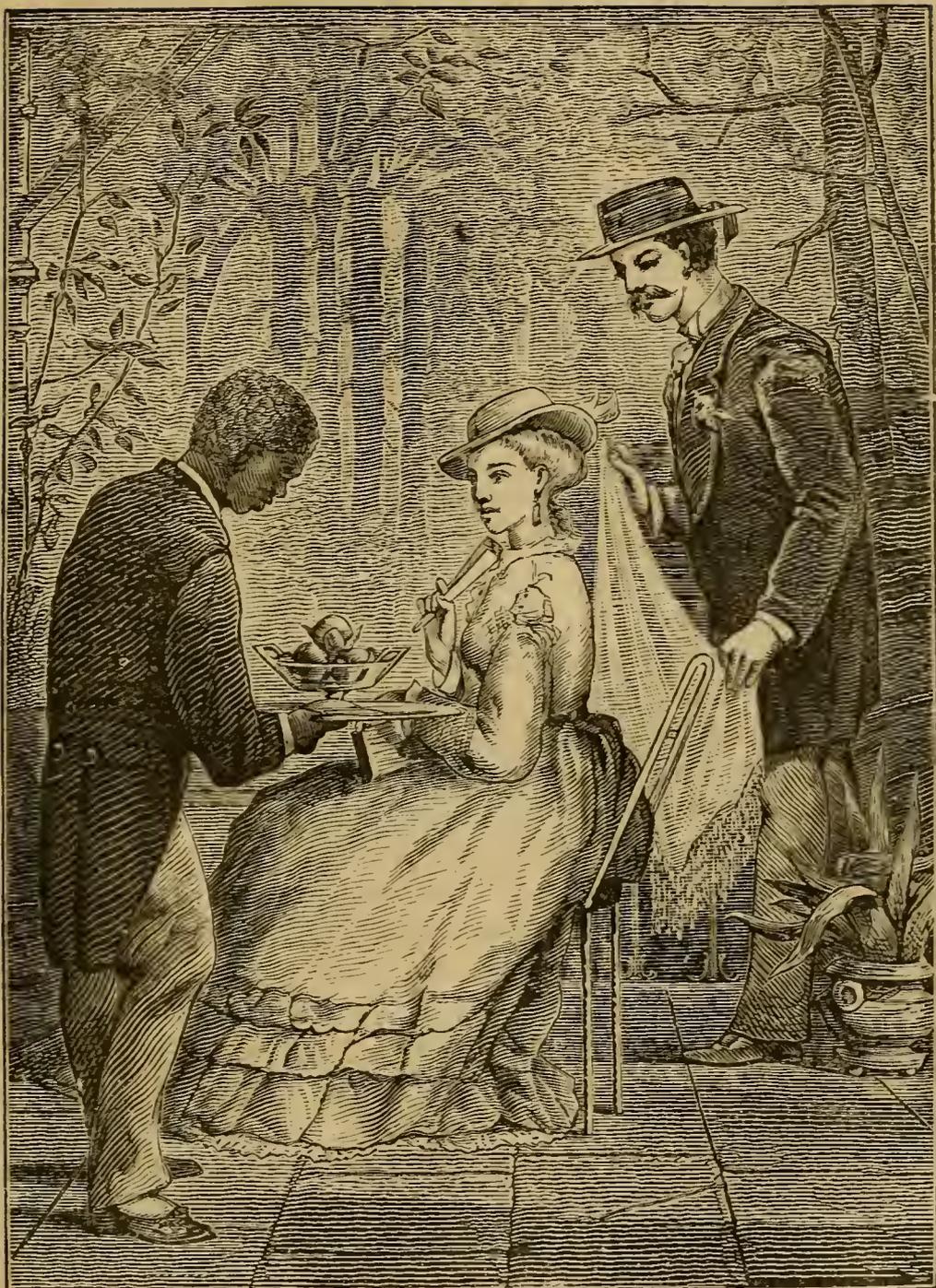
“Here, ‘June,’ select an orange and remove the peel for your mistress. Let us pass through the conservatory while June is occupied with the orange.”

They entered amidst the obsequious attentions of the florist, who called May’s admiration to a new collection of rare exotics received the previous day.

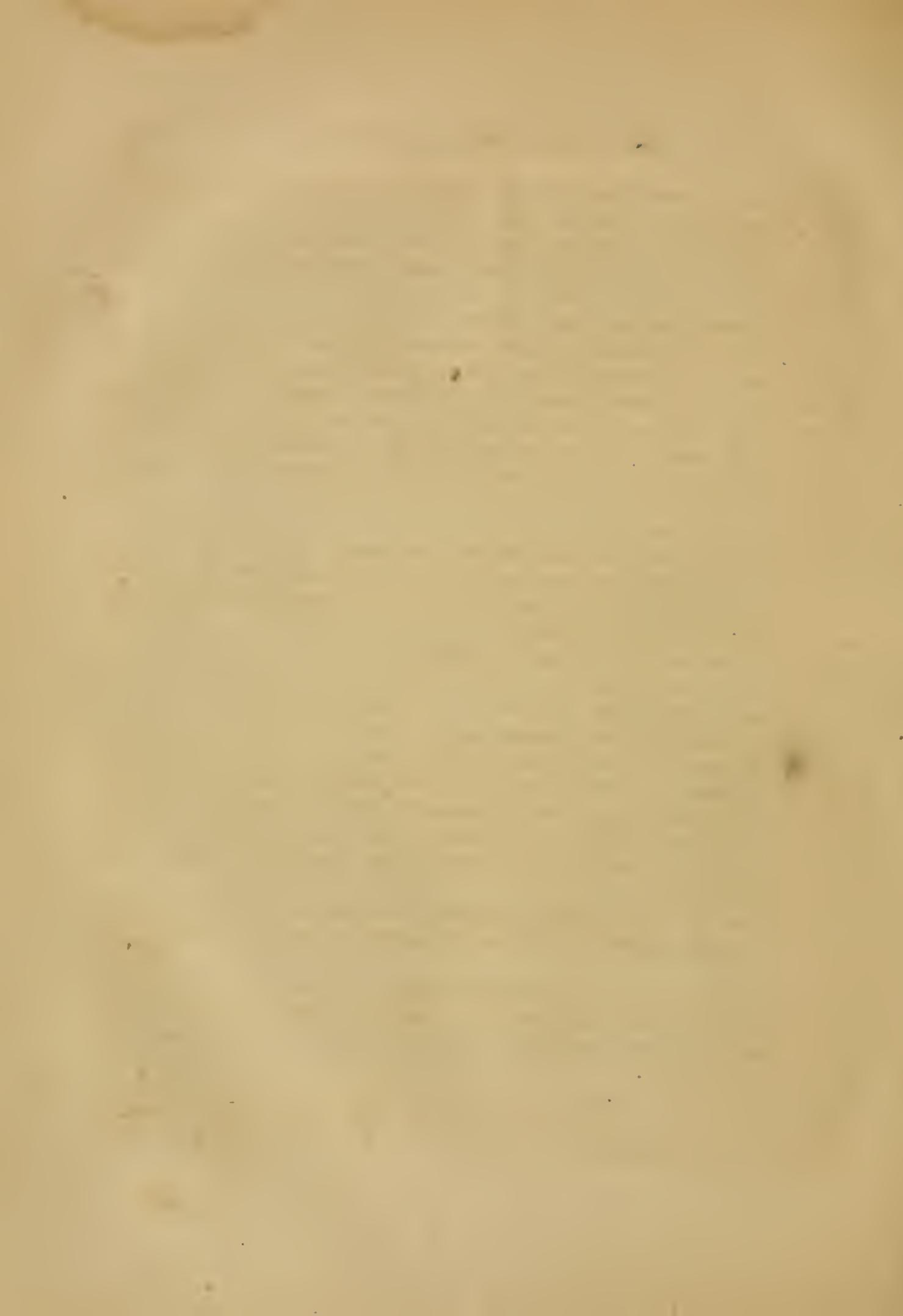
“They are exquisite,” said May, “but do not torture me with their ugly, scientific classification ; I will name them for myself, as I fancy.”

“Florist,” said the husband, “cut the flowers that Mrs. Dentelle prefers ; arrange, and bring them to the piazza.”

This piazza projected into the garden which was screened from the street by high brick walls, overgrown by English ivy.



WHITE MAY AND BLACK JUNE.



Two arm-chairs of lilac-brocade near the fluted columns awaited the youthful pair, into which they sank, more engrossed with each other than with the elysium about them. June presented, with a bow, a silver waiter bearing the orange and fruit-knife of the madam.

“June, bring your mistress’ wrap.”

He brought a charming Parisian mantle, which Dentelle drew tenderly about May’s shoulders. June brought also a velvet cushion for her feet, which he placed, with a smile of humble satisfaction.

“Well, old fellow, you don’t seem to consider it a hardship to attend upon your mistress?” said Dentelle in a bantering tone.

“To wait upon your lovely lady, is a great pleasure, sir. She is the white angel, sir.”

“What am *I* then?”

“The master and mistress are both one, sir.”

“Now, May, do you hear that? Do you see the glory with which your celestial aurora envelopes me? Truly, marriage is divine. Tell me the hour, June.”

After a look within, the slave replied,—

“Half-past nine, sir.”

“Dentelle arose, gave his arm to his wife, saying,—

“I must go; one song on the harp, dearest.”

June followed, placed the harp, and retired. In a few moments the air of the parlors thrilled with the melody of May’s voice, rising in brilliant roulades, or poising itself on delicious thrills, above the silvery shower of the harp. The mocking-birds of the garden caught the inspiration and from the tree-tops poured forth their wildest carols.

“*Ravissante! Ravissante!* exclaimed Augustus, as May’s fingers dropped from the strings, and his arms opened for the parting embrace.

When his step was no longer heard, May took up a book, a recent gift of her husband, and lost herself in its pages, as if the atmosphere of love in which she had passed the morning were her natural element.

A familiar voice accosted her in a gentle manner.

“My dear Mrs. Dentelle, are you not fatigued? Will you not have a glass of wine?”

“No, indeed, Celestine. I am not the least weary; I am just ready for a *Mazurka*.”

“I have observed you,” continued the gentle voice, “with your husband in the garden. He is devoted to you. It was a rare and charming sight in this cold world, yet you drink from the chalice of his affections as indifferently as a bird drinks dew from the leaves. You fear not to lose his adoration, and look for it daily.”

“Why, Celestine, I never knew the feeling of one unloved. I never missed human love from my earliest memory.”

“True, destinies are dissimular. Some are stamped with disappointment and sorrow; others are woven with threads of gold, and embossed with flowers.”

“Dear Celestine,” said May, “you would say the former is yours, and the latter is my fate; but I cannot decide to do penance by wearing haircloth and sleeping on thistles, in order to piously balance these inequalities of destiny. I think every intelligent being should strive towards happiness. The garden will not refuse its charms to you, Celestine; the roses will yield you their fragrant breath; the oranges will fall into *your* hands as well as into *mine*. The blue serenity of the sky o’erarches *you*, as well as *me*. I wish you to enjoy all.”

“Marriage, Mrs. Dentelle is the diadem of earthly loves; fraternal and filial affections must yield before the royal behest of conubial endearment. True marriage gilds every enjoyment. But I am sure this conversation harasses you. I congratulate you, my kindest of friends, on this union with your noble husband, and your prospective happiness.”

“Cheer up, Celestine, there is a bright side to all conditions. Zaffiri and her husband will arrive to-morrow; they will afford you a new study. You will adore Madame Lambelle; think of *her* to-day.”

True it was, that Madame Lambelle was on her way to Savannah. After repeated solicitations, she was to run the gauntlet of discovery. She had embraced Minnie in Montreal, and said with agitation,—

“Pray for me, lest I fall into a snare.”

Minnie had said, cheeringly,—

“They would never dream of your being a fugitive!”

“Ah! what a paradise!” ejaculated Zaffiri, the next morning after her arrival. “Your rooms are wreathed with flowers and fragrance, your garden is redolent with bursting buds, and here are orange trees laden with luscious fruit! Mrs. Bloome,” turning to May’s mother, “I think I should prefer the South as a residence.”

“I am very glad to escape from Savannah summers to Indiana, though the winters here are delightful. May had a conservatory at home, as large as this.”

In passing through it, Mrs. Bloome named the rare plants with familiarity.

There were groups of ladies in the arbors, politics on the piazza, and music around the harp and piano. ‘Moslem’ and ‘El Canalo’ daily bore May and Zaffiri out into the dewy suburbs, their riding-skirts brushing the odoriferous copses of laurel and sweet bay. They paused and conversed under the evergreen domes of live-oaks, tangling their plumes in the swaying drapery of pale gray moss; they explored the balmy depths of pine forests, trailing among vines and fan-palms.

They returned, radiant with health and animation. Upon one of these occasions, Mrs. Bloome said to May,—

“Your milk-white pony misses you sadly, up in Indiana, my darling; but papa will see him in his stall as long as he chooses to live.” Turning to Zaffiri, she continued, “Mr. Bloome will have May’s saddle hung in the same place as before her marriage. He will have the same flowers every year in May’s parterre, and he will have the flowers she loved best cut for the vases in her vacant chamber; he orders the servants to leave the furniture and trifles as May last disposed them. He mourns her loss, deeply.”

“And you, mamma,” asked May with her arms about her mother’s neck, “Do you miss me?”

“Do I miss you? my child, do not stab my heart with that cruel question. My sunlight has turned to night. My bird has flown from its cage. Love, youth and beauty flew away with my birdie.”

May kissed her mother gayly, saying,—

“Dear mamma, you have your birdie now, and you will have her for two years; you know you and papa are going to Europe with us. We shall admire the ancient and modern wonders, together. Now, while you and papa take an airing in the carriage, with Papa

and Mamma Dentelle, I shall hold a *tete-a-tete* with Zaffiri. Oh! I've so many sweet things to say, and I've not had her one moment to myself."

June, who was sitting in his accustomed place in the upper hall, rose as the ladies gayly ascended. His face was benign with the dumb homage which ever welcomed his beloved young mistress.

"June, bring up a nice lunch," May said. "We have had a long gallop. Bring what will please me; one thing must be orange sherbet. Let us be Orientals, Zaffiri. Bring on the salver a dish of violets and tube-roses." She said to her maid, "dress us quickly and retire; then disturb us for nothing."

Over their lunch, violets and tube-roses, began the outflow of meandering confidences like the sparkling streams of long-pent fountains.

"You have a fine, trusty old servant in the hall," remarked Zaffiri.

"Yes! I am attached to June, and he pets me as if I were his grandchild. What an idea!" they both laughed without control. "I mean to say, as if I were the blossom of his poor, slave existence. You see, I oblige him to sit when waiting in the hall. It is the custom for slaves to stand. But June is *my* slave. Augustus made a bill of sale of him to me." A comical witchery glinted in her eyes. She laid her hand on her friend's arm, bent towards her, and said in an undertone, "Oh, it is so ludicrous! but Augustus appears really jealous of our young colored men-servants. I make no pretensions of understanding, but June — dear me!" she covered her face with her palms and shook with convulsive merriment. "June — oh, my! June is the eunuch of Augustus' harem, of which I am the idolized and *sole* occupant!"

There was a long pause in which both swept away tears of jocose ridicule.

"Do you suppose, Zaffiri, *can* you suppose that Cupid has errands between the whites and negroes of the South? I've always heard the taunt of amalgamation cast contemptuously at the North, and I have never dreamed of anything but a general hatred and contempt for any shade of color in the South."

"I should suppose Cupid's occupation gone, in that direction," answered Zaffiri; "but I am not a resident of the slave section, and, therefore, can form no opinion except of impossibility."

“Well, Augustus’ care is a riddle to me, although a very pleasant one. He’s a queer fellow ; he has an antipathy against Celestine, that gentle, subdued woman. He thinks her sombre view of life casts a gloom over my happiness. He says there shall be no clouds in my sky.

“Celestine is a woman of about fifty years, without friends, near relations, and without a home. She is distantly connected with Papa Dentelle’s mother, who traces her blue blood back to Henry the Eighth of England. It is only Celestine’s high blood which induces Augustus to tolerate her at all. He reveres blood.”

“She should be content in your family.”

“She is, entirely. Celestine is the housekeeper, carries her keys. These cares lighten her trouble by diversion.”

“What is her family name ?”

“Channaire — Celestine Channaire. I am in a study about the future. Mamma Dentelle will not allow her in *her* family ; and Augustus will not welcome her on our return from Europe. She is a true Southern lady by birth and education. Private misfortunes have brought her to dependence. Zaffiri, have you need of her ? I know your generosity and delicate sympathy. Celestine could not feel her desolation with you and your noble husband.”

“Miss Channaire would not be pleased with the North, would she ? You know, May, the Northern temperament is said to be more phlegmatic than the Southern. Would she not miss the exuberant social warmth of her own section, which is as graceful and luxuriant as the growth of your vegetation ?”

“Dear Zaffiri, you make an unfortunate mistake. Caste reigns here. There is no social warmth for one in Celestine’s destitution. Our ladies, in consideration of her blood, would not meet her with open superciliousness, but she would feel neglect in a thousand ways which could not be well-defined as contempt, but which would be thorns to her peace of mind though she would never complain. She conceals a secret cause of grief, of which I have been informed.”

The two friends bowed their heads very near, and for an hour their low voices could scarcely have been heard beyond their own seats. Surprise, pity, indignation and commiseration sat in turn upon the faces of each. Their eyes flashed, calmed and melted

into tears. Compassion wrought new beauty in the countenances of the two lovely women, and rendered them angelic. When the conference closed, and their voices still grieved, and their cheeks were still wet, May opened her bureau drawers and spread an assortment of linen and muslin embroidery upon Zaffiri's lap.

"That is Celestine's work for me ; observe, please, the delicacy of those lilies and leaves, the jasmine sprays and pensile buds, the finish of the points. It was a labor of love, for I besought her not to peril her sight, which has been severely tried during many years."

"This embroidery is like the handiwork of Nature, herself ; but it pains me to measure the heart-ache stitched beneath that floss. A person of Celestine's shrinking, sensitive organization, would feel a voluntary preference for the one who should offer her home and friendship. She should not accept a mere shelter from a pitiless world without a satisfying rest to her affections ; else she will pine under the corroding effect of concealed disquiet and homesickness. If Miss Channaire should indulge the slightest antipathy or prejudice for me, dear May, it would be cruelty to proffer a home to her when she has no other alternative."

"Antipathy or prejudice to you, Zaffiri? Preposterous supposition ! then Celestina must be the only exception to the world. Every one you meet is charmed into admiration and love for you, and to confess the truth, I have broached the necessity of a change for her at her timid request. She is captivated with Zaffiri — you have a singular attraction for her. She talks of you constantly."

"That information changes the aspect of the transfer. I do not doubt my own love and ability to cherish her into a brighter view of life. I think I might extract that hidden thorn of sorrow, and heal the wound, though not without a cicatrice, perhaps. I believe I might heal its rankling, festering pain. Her pallid, patient face haunts me last, when my lids are closed in sleep ; and first, when I awake to consciousness. I will think farther."

"Hark ! I hear Augustus. They have returned," exclaimed May, at the same time gliding out upon the piazza and leaning over the balustrade to listen. She returned, saying, "The gentlemen are deep in discussion. That ogre — that ghoul — of Secession rises head and shoulders above other issues, as usual ; rather

call it the Grecian Sphinx, with a riddle in its mouth, for individual solution of all that pass by — and which kills all who fail to solve it. Ugh! how I hate that word, Secession; like Pharaoh's plague of frogs, it is everywhere; in parlor, chamber and kneading trough."

"May, I fear that word, 'Secession.' I think that Grecian Sphinx with the riddle, will change tactics, in America, and *kill all who do solve it.*"

"I don't fear it," laughed May, in a tone of ridicule. "Papa Dentelle says, 'Secession' would not trouble Savannah or any other Southern city. There would be a few military brushes on the line between the Slave and Free States. He says the North would yield to the first thunder of Southern artillery. The Slave States would gain a bloodless victory on paper at Washington, when the North would sign terms of capitulation there conceding Constitutional Southern Rights. I only wish they would go about it, and indulge no longer in indolent and imbecile hesitation."

"I agree, dear May. The sooner their rights are established the better. Much as I deplore a fracture of our Republic, if secession is the only panacea for her ills, I say, let the experiment proceed."

"Dear me!" exclaimed May, "how we babble on, Zaffiri, like those noisy Northern brooks. I have not found time to speak of my lovely Mississippi friend, Mrs. Silton. *N'emporte*, we must meet the party below. Do allow Celestine to go with you to your dressing-room; she craves the privilege and will not feel the least humiliated by the service she knows well how to render. I will give June his orders."

She found June at his post in the hall, bade him remember that "this day will be a *fete* of roses."

"Fill the vases, everywhere, with every variety the garden affords," she said with enthusiasm, and she gave him a paper with a list not to be overlooked. "Deep carmine 'Royal,' 'Clear flesh Amandine,' deep crimson 'Baronne Halez,' light 'Rose Madame Verdier,' pure white 'Portland blanc,' incarnate 'Beranger' and purple red 'Magador.' Give this to the gardner and tell the florist to send up to me some of his choicest tea roses. Have this order attended to immediately."

"Immediately, dear mistress," repeated June, hastening away.

Then May and Zaffiri entered the rose-scented apartments below, with tea roses in their braids and at their throats, and passed out to the piazza. The four gentlemen left their seats with an instinctive salute of admiration.

"Do not allow us to interrupt the discussion," said Zaffiri. "Consider us as priestesses in the American temple of Justice."

"Proceed, gentlemen," urged May, with a gay smile and a sibylline wave of her blue-veined hand. "Perfect your scheme of secession; no longer agitate disunion, metaphorically; clear it of objections and difficulties; lay your foundations for secession on the rock of sovereign will — not on the quicksands of the past, to be undermined by the first flood of Northern compromises. Proceed, gentlemen."

A clapping of hands, and many polite "bravos!" followed. Dentelle called May his proud goddess Minerva, kissed her cheek and gallantly led her to a seat. He took up the broken thread of argument.

"As I said, the South will soon be in a hopeless minority. Let her face the reality with such feelings as she may. The South, like the dead body of Hector bound to the car of Achilles, will soon be dragged by the triumphant North around a ruined possession, quickly to be followed by the erasive ploughshare of the subverting conquerer. Let me show the process of our humiliation. By the surrender of Kansas, the South will become subordinate and the North predominate *in the* Union. Never again could the equilibrium of State sovereign representation between the South and the North be restored to the senate, or the equality of the South with the North be maintained in the House of Representatives."

"The loss of Kansas, to the South, will involve the loss of Missouri," said Mr. Bloome, "and the loss of Missouri will destroy the moral as well as the political prestige of the South."

"True," joined Mr. Lambelle; "with abolitionized Iowa, stretching on the north of Missouri, and abolitionized Kansas, on the west, Missouri must in a few years necessarily cease to be a slave-holding State."

"A correct view, sir," agreed Augustus; "besides, the loss of Missouri to the South will involve the loss of Creek and Cherokee

domain ; the Choctaw and Chickasaw domain, and New Mexico, and Arizona."

"There's the loss of six States, which are legitimately attached to the slave-holding interests of the South, and which would save the harmonious equilibrium of the Union. Then follows the loss of Arkansas, another slave-holding State ; and of Texas, warranted by the law of annexation to be divided into five slave-holding States."

"A positive loss to the South of twelve States," said Mr. Bloome fraternally. "In justice, as well as through a wise and politic statesmanship, they should be saved to the slave-holding interests."

Dentelle paced the floor with exasperated step, and caught up the words hastily.

"Yes, Mr. Bloome, and what will be the effect of this Black Republican piracy?" He stopped before May's father, and with aggravated gestures declared solemnly, "This! It will subject to abolitionism the entire western shore of the Mississippi river, reaching beyond the Rocky Mountains, to the Pacific Ocean and down to the Rio Grande ; and convulsing Louisiana with servile war, will saturate her soil with blood."

"It seems," remarked Mr. Lambelle, "that Black Republicanism embraces and controls abolitionism, while, on the other hand, it *professes* to entertain due regard to Law, Government and the Constitution."

"Yes, their organization is political, separate from religious fanaticism and moral frenzy. It is only potent for evil while the South shall continue in the Union. It has mentally eliminated a broad and profound policy — a comprehension and far-reaching statesmanship, which contemplates *the gradual consolidation of the government through* AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION. But Black Republicanism has a stopping point, and ceases its power *for mischief* IN regard to the South, at least with DISUNION."

"According to this curriculum, father, the abolitionists will have the power in a few years to *alter the Constitution in any way they please*. They will, in ten years, more or less, fulfill their intentions of abolishing slavery in all the States in a constitutional manner."

"Clear as the sun, Augustus ; if, then, the South would escape

the dire effects of the abolition of slavery, the best attitude in which she can meet the danger, is that of a *separate and independent government.*"

"The North scarcely estimates the significance of emancipation; and yet, I think they would hesitate long before inflicting so heavy a loss upon the South," remarked Mr. Lambelle.

"Why, sir, the loss would be nine billions of property to the whites; and the abolition of slaves means that your *hired* freed negro-gang will be made your '*equals*' and '*fellow-citizens*,' by the grace of law and the abolitionists. It means, to the negro, equality with his former master in politics and civil rights; and, as far as it can be done, in social privileges."

"Who would be submissionists?" asked May, her eye eloquent with disgust.

"I ask that question, myself," said Mrs. Bloome. "Who would not encounter Secession and collision, rather than give up his slaves to emancipation, his family to degradation, his property to ruin, and himself to poverty."

Encores and cries of "*Hear! Hear! Hear!*" from familiar voices in the parlor, checked the further unrolling of that web of fate in which that circle had been so busily engaged.

They rose simultaneously with the appearance in the long windows of Colonel Haywood and his wife, Grace.

"Jupiter, Olympus, Dentelle," said the cononel, "we have not fallen into a nest of Abolitionists this time. Be seated — I command."

After the hand pressures and welcomes, Grace entreated May and Augustus to resume seats with their friends.

"This is a delightful surprise to us, as well as to you. Do not allow our entrance to interrupt the engrossing theme which occupies the thoughts of every true Southerner."

"By the gods! gentlemen," said Colonel Haywood, I assure you I have something to say respecting our purple robe of power; whether its ermine shall retain its hereditary sanctity or whether its spotless purity be dragged in the furrow of the Northern mud-sill. Pardon me, Messrs. Bloome and Lambelle, that caste is as much your enemy as ours."

The ladies fluttered into the parlor.

"Oh, May! what a paradise of roses! they are dazzling. The golden fleece of your garden must have been shorn! The whole house is spicy with delicious fragrance," cried Mrs. Haywood.

"This day is my feast of roses," explained May. "June, bring tea-roses for our guests."

The ladies returned to the piazza. Colonel Haywood's sentences flamed with vindictive fervor.

"What can we expect from the emancipation of our slaves, with the national imbecility of their race clinging to them; our negroes will become a sottish, ragged lazaroni; they would be intolerable to even the honest white man. There would be a general uprising among the whites of all classes, *to drive them from the country*. Thus will commence that war between the races which is inevitable, where an inferior and degraded race has been *forced up* by foreign intervention to an equality with their former masters. In such a war, with the whites well armed and acquainted with their use, and double the number of blacks, *who doubts the result?* Horrible tragedies may be enacted in a few neighborhoods; but it must soon terminate in the *indiscriminate slaughter of the negroes*, by tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands, until they shall either be exterminated or driven out of the country. What is your opinion, Lambelle?"

"I think your conclusions are wisely drawn. In the premises, we should look for these results."

"I should prefer expatriation as an evil more easily borne," said Mrs. Haywood. "I fear if Secession does not change its nature, from a myth to a material form, and thus remove the South beyond pale of the intended Black Republicans amendments to the Constitution, expatriation must be the doom of us all."

"I coincide with you, dear Mrs. Haywood. If all that fanfare of cause and complaint could be condensed into an ordinance of a separate and independent government of our own, it would prevent the indignity of being brought to a level with a degraded race," said May.

"To be jostled by them in their paths and to be intruded upon by their rude vulgarity," added Grace, contemptuously. "When we accept expatriation you may be ready to accompany us, Madame Lambelle."

"I have not considered expatriation the worst evil," Mrs. Haywood. "The course taken by myself and husband towards the South has subjected us to much social ostracism."

"Zaffiri," exclaimed May, "do let us choose some country where roses flourish all the year — some balmy tropical shore."

"Ladies, I honor your patriotic sacrifices, but don't pack trunks this winter; we are waiting to see which way the hinge of Kansas turns. If we get possession of and hold Kansas, it will be worth thousands of millions of dollars to the South."

"Colonel Haywood is right, darling May," said Augustus. "Do not frown over Southern destiny. Kansas is the Malakoff fortress, the taking of which would decide our victory in that quarter of the Republic, in this battle of abolitionism — a battle in which from three to six states are the prizes to be lost or won to the South."

"Mr. Lambelle, I have been out to Kansas since we met," resumed Colonel Haywood. "I was present at the sacking of Lawrence."

"Colonel Buford, from Alabama, has taken a Southern regiment to Kansas, to establish Southern claims, I believe?"

"He has. They were recruited mostly in South Carolina and Georgia. The Carolinians under Captain Wilkes, and a company from Florida under Titus. There has been, and will be, hot work there. Buford's regiment will give no quarter to the Abolitionists. It will clear them out with henip, bowie-knife and bullets. They are the boys to use them. They will subjugate Kansas. There's a paper established under Missouri's patronage called the *Squatter Sovereign*. This is one of its early paragraphs,—

"*'We will continue to lynch and hang, tar and feather and drown every white-livered Abolitionist who dares to pollute our soil!!'*"

"Colonel Haywood, it would afford me great pleasure to listen to your description of the sacking of the town of Lawrence," said Zaffiri, "if I am not asking too great a favor."

May and Mrs. Dentelle joined in the request.

"The pleasure would be mine, ladies. I assure you, I am never weary of recounting the victorious occurrences of that day.

"For several days before the attack there was parleying on both sides. Lawrence asking whys and wherefores, and answered by the demands of General Shannon. His pretext was the enforce-

ment of the territorial laws, while the true design was to 'wipe out' Lawrence — 'the citadel of Free State principles.' Now, I will show you how gloriously Lawrence was 'wiped out.'

"On the morning of the twenty-first of May last, General Atchinson (U. S. Senator from Missouri) led the Platte County Rifles up to the west of Lawrence; the United States Marshal, Donaldson, with Colonel Buford, commanding the Georgians, Carolinians, and Alabamians, halted on Mount Oread, on the east of that kennel of Abolitionists — Boston, named Lawrence."

The force estimated at about eight hundred, marched down the hill and formed a hollow square. General Atchinson made a speech, saying they would go in and test the strength of that d—md Free State Hotel; they would teach the Emigrant Aid Company that Kansas shall be ours! I respect his closing words; "Come on, boys! now do your duty to yourselves and your Southern friends." Your duty I know you will do. If one man or woman dare stand before you, *blow them to h—ll with a chunk of cold lead.*"

"That's the spirit," ejaculated Augustus, joining his father and the other gentlemen in clapping.

"Well, they arrested two prisoners, and then demanded the surrender of all the cannon and Sharp's rifles in their possession, through General Pomeroy, with five minutes time by the watch to decide. One cannon was surrendered.

"On the nineteenth, Shannon had declared their arms must be given up to the posse, and that the hotel and printing-presses must be destroyed, for this reason; and now, gentlemen, I fear your applause will be overwhelming for this reason, 'else the *South Carolinians will not be satisfied.*'"

Both ladies and gentlemen rose to their feet and rendered vigorous and prolonged applause.

"Dear Ralph," begged Grace, "do not forget to relate the interesting particular at this point. I declare, Madame Lambelle, I cannot sufficiently admire the Southern spirit of Colonel Buford's men."

Colonel Haywood resumed,—

"The *Free State* office was destroyed with a will, and its types thrown into the river. The types of the *Herald of Freedom*

office were thrown into the Kansas, and the press broken. The flag of South Carolina was hoisted first on this office, but soon removed to the hotel."

"Do Ralph, allow me to interrupt you, in order to describe this flag to the ladies. You may have seen it, Mrs. Dentelle."

"I have not seen it, Mrs. Haywood."

"The ground is blood-red, with one white star. That is the star of hope. It was inscribed on one side with 'SOUTHERN RIGHTS,' and on the other with the glorious name of 'SOUTH CAROLINA' in black. I assure you, that deep incarnadine banner was consecrated in Charleston, by woman's prayerful solicitations, and its inspiration was fulfilled when it first gave its folds to the Kansas breeze, above these doomed nests of Abolitionists."

"We emulate your devotion to that beautiful symbol!" replied Mrs. Dentelle. The 'State's Rights Hotel' ought to have fallen under its potent spell, like the walls of Jericho under the spell of rams horn's."

"It fell, nevertheless, under a spell more powerful than rams horns — *the Southern yell!* Cannonading had no effect, nor kegs of powder in the cellar. Colonel Titus of Florida ordered the hotel to be fired. Fires were set in every room. I had the honor of setting one myself. The walls of the hated den fell in the seething wrath of flames."

"Was it a rude structure?" asked May.

"No, madam, very fine. Its furnishing cost ten thousand dollars; it was the finest hotel west of St. Louis. Before firing it, our boys ransacked its stores, cupboards, and cellar. They supplied themselves royally with cans of fruit, sardines, oysters, wines and cigars.

"From the plunder of private houses, our boys clothed themselves." The colonel's voice lowered. "I confess, Dentelle, my heart ached for the ragged condition of our troops; a few scanty thousands were parsimoniously doled out by the South. It is entirely inadequate. We don't compete with the Northern Emigrant Aid Societies, which contribute hundreds of thousands of dollars, to equip, send out, and colonize their emigrants in Texas."

"But, Haywood my friend, Kansas is left unaided, not so much by the penuriousness, as from the poverty of the great bulk of our people," resumed Dentelle.

"I know ; the whole course of national legislation has tended to divert money from the South, which leaves her scant of funds for every public-spirited purpose."

"They should have found other valuable articles besides clothing in private dwellings," said Mr. Lambelle. "To the victor belong the spoils."

"They did so. They investigated trunks and wardrobes ; they carried off letters, drafts, money and apparel of both sexes. Ah ! I have a package of letters here, in my pocket."

He drew them forth, broke the cord that bound them, and tossing them about among the ladies, said,—

"Accept a memento of 'Southern Rights.'"

"I esteem this letter a most precious gift," said Zaffiri.

"I too," said May ; "but let us peruse them at our leisure. Do Colonel Haywood, continue the narration."

"You would have been amused, Madam May, to have witnessed the picturesque appearance of our boys. In lieu of sashes, they wore about their waists heavy curtain cords and tassels taken from the hotel ; they carried about in their hands pieces of broken mirrors thrown from the windows, surveying themselves, and adjusting their adornings."

"They marched about with silk and satin dresses on their arms, their pockets stuffed with varieties ; they crushed trinkets and daguerotypes under their heels ; I took from one of the men a rare and elegant mosaic brooch, as a souvenir for Grace."

"Have you it here ?" asked the ladies eagerly.

"I regret it is in Charleston. It equals any mosaic I have seen, even in Rome."

Colonel Haywood proceeded.

"I was walking with Colonel Titus when he ordered a store to be broken into. He said, '*I think there are Sharpe's rifles in there ! Stave her in, boys, if she is locked !*' They broke in the windows with the butts of their guns, and crawled through."

The warning bell rang for dinner. The ladies about retiring expressed regret that the interesting narration of the colonel should be so abruptly broken.

"Fly away to your chambers, fly away, white doves !" replied

the colonel, with gallantry. "Time enough hereafter. June, bid Charlotte attend her mistress."

Left alone with the gentlemen, he grasped Dentelle's shoulder, by way of emphasis, and said with an exultant smile,—

"I have not unvailed to the ladies a fraction of the reckless and daring bravado of our boys. I feared to shock their nerves. Why, our troops broke everything that would break, and burned what they could not otherwise destroy. They sung, swore and danced on the ruins. Buford, Titus and Wilkes, gave them unrestrained license, and went in themselves. They rained furniture from the windows of the hotel—mirrors, marble top tables, *fauteuls*, beds and toilet-sets crashed to the ground in a mass of debris.

"A party of Buford's men deliberately fired upon some ladies, sitting upon College Hill, west of the town. They levelled their guns at a hundred rods distance and the balls went whizzing! They threw down their guns, swung their hats and shouted, 'Hurrah for South Carolina! Down with Abolitionists! Slavery in Kansas, by G—d!' I must acknowledge the bravery of those ladies, for they stood still and faced the men and their bullets. The boys picked up their guns and levelled them again, but were prevented from firing again, by one of their number. But they went up the hill, singing 'Katy Darling' and 'Lily Dale.'"

A volley of laughter from the colonel's auditors sanctioned these outrages.

The ladies returned. Madame Lambelle went to the table on the arm of Colonel Haywood; May with Mr. Lambelle, and Grace with Augustus. The dinner was sumptuous and epicurean, festive, and sparkling with wine. A pyramid of roses graced a costly epergne in the centre, a rose bouquet was found at every plate, and a white-gloved slave waited at the back of each chair.

During the last week of Mr. Lambelle's stay in Savannah, invitations were received from Charleston to a St. Cecelia ball. It was inaugurated in honor of Preston Brooks, the idolized vindicator of South Carolinaism on the person of Charles Sumner. As Zaffiri held the card, bearing the names of "Mr. Claude Lambelle and Lady," her heart beat heavily. She said mentally,—

"This terrible pass grows narrower! Charleston, the city of my bondage, the city that bound dear Father Weintze to the whipping-

post, that sold away to New Orleans mauma, my roster mother ; Charleston, that gloats over the martyrdom of Free Speech in the bloody body of Charles Sumner. That city was not in my programme."

Her face began to writhe with the hatred she bore it.

"Pass me the card, please, Zaffiri," said her husband.

In complying, she caught from his eye the peculiar look which she understood as a gentle warning. He read aloud,—

"*In honor of our distinguished fellow-citizen and representative, PRESTON S. BROOKS!*" and said,—

"Zrffiri, this ball will be a supreme pleasure, the crown of our Southern trip. I have many friends in Charleston whose acquaintance I wish you to make."

"Ah, Zaffiri! exclaimed May, "you will be delighted. A St. Cecelia ball is worth the attention. None but the *creme de la creme* are admitted. Blue blood and high caste are the talismanic words that swing open St. Cecelia's door. The intervening time will be occupied in the preparation of our toilets *au bal!* delightful! *ravis-sante!*"

On the evening of the Charleston assembly, none of the fair rotaries of the dance were more elegantly or tastefully attired than May and her guest.

Both wore Marie Antoinette style.

Zaffiri, in maize-colored satin a shade deeper than her harvest hair, overlaid with bodice and train of turquoise, blue velvet garnished with rich lace, a tiara and a necklace of diamonds completed her toilet.

May, in white gossamer gauze flecked with silvery stars, a bodice and train of rose-colored velvet lined with white satin, finished with frills of costly lace, and a parure of opals and diamonds. She was the cynosure of all eyes; her hand was sought by Carolinas noblest sons.

Madame Lambelle received courtly courtesy and distinguished attention.

Among the gentlemen who hovered about her, was one introduced by Augustus Dentelle. He was past middle age, his hair was gray, and his rubicund color hinted of the wine cup and an epicurean table.

Gallant and gracious as his youthful competitors, he obtained her hand for the set forming at that moment. Zaffiri gave him the tips of her fingers as she would have extended them between the fangs of a rattlesnake. When she glided through the mazes of the dance, she seemed to feel the subtle poison of that venomous serpent weakening her nerves; but she maintained a smile above the pallor of her face, and replied with becoming grace to his gallant phrases and insipid flattery.

When the strains of music ceased, and all were repairing to seats, her companion, expressing a fear that too much fatigue overcame her or that she suffered from the closeness of the air, gently persuaded her to go out upon the balcony.

"The stars are bright," he said, "but they fade before the lustre of madam's eyes."

"Thank you, but I think my eyes must be quite spiritless at present."

"Lean upon my arm more heavily, dear lady; angels have no ponderable weight; therefore the charms of Madame Lambelle cannot be burdensome."

The open air, and the consciousness that her emotion was veiled by darkness, restored her color and brilliancy of manner. Strolling up and down, she listened to the encomiums lavished upon Preston S. Brooks, and to the polite anathemas poured upon Charles Sumner, while a flood of uncontrollable indignation surged to her cheeks. Her knight stopped before the blaze of an open window, and turned his eyes deferentially upon her.

"Ah! madame has recovered. Her entrancing beauty has resumed its throne. I was right. The knightly arm should never leave a fair one in distress. Allow me to offer a draught of wine." He escorted her into one of the elaborately furnished anterooms where her husband met her with tender inquiries.

The gray-haired cavalier bowed, saying,—

"Very reluctantly I transfer my beautiful charge to her husband. I am under many obligations for the pleasure Madame Lambelle has conferred upon me this evening. Allow me to suggest a longer rest, sir, for your lovely wife."

Her partner left Claude and Zaffiri to themselves and joined the assembly, then sweeping about the hall in promenade.

She gave her husband's hand a clinging, trembling pressure. It was returned with masonic fervor.

Zaffiri, the fugitive, had danced with her master!

Claude led his wife into the grand hall to a seat from which could be seen an impressive design which had been unveiled during her absence.

In large letters on the wall, at the end of the hall, she read this extract from Sumner's speech on Kansas.

"Ah, sir! I tell the Senator that Kansas, welcomed as a Free State, will be a ministering angel to the Republic, when South Carolina, in the cloak of darkness which she hugs, lies howling."

Around this prophecy were wreathed revolvers, bowie-knives and broken canes, intertwined and bound together by the hempen rope of the hangman. Over all was looped away the blood-red flag with its one white star; a likeness of that banner of outrage and atrocity which waved over Buford's guerilla warfare in Kansas.

"Singularly appropriate," ejaculated Zaffiri.

"Singularly so," responded the Misses Fairland, who had left the promenade to join Zaffiri. "The surroundings of Sumner's insulting assertion, are indicative of Southern sentiment. That design is as beautiful as the carvings of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers on the walls of Solomon's temple."

The elder crossed herself before it as a devotee crosses herself before the shrine of the Holy Virgin.

"True, sister," replied the others. "Senator Brooks ranks with Leonidas and Spartacus. His name has borrowed a sanctity from the deserved humiliation of Sumner."

"Mr. Brooks has certainly won for himself an endurable fame," said Mr. Lambelle

"Our sentiments coincide, sir."

The conversation turned.

"We must see you both at 'Le Grand Palais,' said both ladies. Two days, at least, cannot interfere with your timely return North."

The next day found them, with May and Augustus, at the plantation of the Fairlands. The luxury, pleasures and garden of Savannah were repeated with the additional phase of plantation slavery; the rice and cotton gangs, the negro quarters, possessing a solemn interest for Zaffiri.

She mentally recounted the year of Lucy's trials at "Le Grand Palais," after her marriage with William Steele. She galloped with May and the Misses Fairland, over the very forest path where Lucy had guided her pony, solitary and despised. She furtively made a drawing of the overseer's house to carry away with her.

The two days were extended to four. On the third, May insisted upon a visit to the negro church. Augustus accompanied Zaffiri and his wife on the gallop to the humble structure.

Arrived at the church, Zaffiri delayed, attended by the footman, to make a sketch of the picturesque building, while May and Augustus took a turn in advance about the parsonage.

In the midst of her drawing, a hump-backed man came from the interior to the church door and bowed, saying,—

"God bless you, lady. This is none other than the house of God, and the very gate of Heaven."

She knew by Lucy's description that this must be the veritable Edmund Stone of Cloudspire noteriety.

"Good morning, sir, are you the pastor?"

"Through the grace of God, I have been chosen to bear the Word of Life to Mr. Fairland's slaves."

"Do you find satisfaction in delivering the gospel to these benighted ones?"

"I feel that I am walking in the path of duty, my dear lady; and that my labors are wonderfully blessed among them. We have a constant revival — a thronging at the mercy-seat. The Savior has no respect of persons, lady."

What a sinister, foxy look, thought Zaffiri. How little he suspects I know his hypocrisy.

"Do you think, sir, that these slaves are capable of understanding theological doctrines?"

"No, madam, they are little above the brutes, in capacity. I teach them mostly simple, practical deductions from those sublime doctrines; such as the fear of an avenging God, submission to their owners, a faithful performance of their tasks, the sin of purloining, the duty of charity, and the absolute need of their conversion and baptism into the kingdom of Christ."

"Do you think this furnishing them with the means of grace is a paying investment?" asked Zaffiri, still sitting on her pony.

“I know it to be so, dear lady. The amount paid me by Mr. Fairland for my salary and support is returned to him ten fold in his rice and cotton crop. They fully understand that bondage in their normal condition, by the decrees of God. They know that they are under the curse of Canaan. I teach it to them daily with the open Bible in my hands, dear lady.”

“Then I should judge religion is the slave-master’s most effective auxiliary.”

“You judge rightly, madame. Religton not only keeps the hoe moving, but it prevents runaways. The master has lost but two fugitives since I came here — a black woman and her husband. They are more than glad to wait for an entrance into the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, for freedom.” With a sly, crafty leer at Zaffiri, he added, “I convince them it is safer to wait, than to be hunted, caught and ironed by marshals and their deputies, in the law-abiding North.”

“I can corroborate your assertions, sir, that the New Jerusalem is the safer place. May I ask if my friend, Major Fairland, has recovered those two fugitives? Has he availed himself of that avenue of remuneration, the Fugitive Slave Bill?”

Edmund Stone clamped down the open board steps of the church with the agility of the dwarf of “Notre Dame,” and holding his broad-rimmed plantation hat in his hand, approached Zaffiri. He hesitated, as if rolling a sweet morsel under his tongue, then said,—

“In answer to your kind inquiry, I will explain that Mr. Fairland recently made his loss more than good by the seizure of another woman and two children in Pennsylvania, for Rachel, the fugitive. By the aid of the law, he picked up a black man in Ohio for Guy, that he lost. Guy was Rachel’s husband. They were not his slaves; but his loss is made good, kind lady. We believe that all of African blood should be reduced to slavery, and the Fugitive Slave Bill is admirably adapted to this humane purpose.”

“Receive my thanks for this agreeable information,” said Zaffiri. “I am glad to meet so worthy a pastor. I fear Mr. Dentelle and lady have mistaken the route. Footman, can you guide me back to the family?”

“I knew every step of the way, mistress.”

"Let the lady return by the river-road, footman, if it pleases her," suggested the pastor.

"Thank you, it pleases me well. Good morning."

May ran down the flight of steps from the piazza, to meet Zaffiri on her return, begging a thousand pardons for leaving her so rudely.

"Augustus made a blunder in the routes, and then he said the footman might take *you* back before *us*. At last we found ourselves galloping along that delightful river road."

She threw one arm carelessly about her friend, and held away her long riding-habit with the other hand. Thus they slowly ascended the stairs.

"I came by the river, also," said Zaffiri.

"We discovered three graves under the trees," said May. "Two were marked by plain head-stones. One read, 'WILLIAM STEELE,' and the other, 'WILLIE.' Mrs. Fairland says William Steele was their overseer, and was stabbed by the negroes."

"Why did they murder him?" asked Zaffiri.

"He was awfully cruel," said May. "Mr. Fairland took no notice of his death, for the overseer deserved it."

"Ugh! I would not allow his grave to disgrace that pleasant spot!" exclaimed May, shaking with nervous horror.

They dropped into seats on the verandah.

"We are going to have a grand plantation feast to-day, and plenty of royal Southern cheer, Zaffiri. A dozen rice planters and their families will be here. We are to have music from Charleston, and a hop to-night! Oh! I am so happy!"

She drew a sigh.

"Happy for the nonce! What shall I be, to-morrow, when I have to say 'Farewell,' to you?"

"The very cream of delight has been crowded in these four weeks," replied Madame Lambelle. "I have breathed again the air and basked again in the skies of Italy. We shall meet again, my dear May."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“HOW is our patient this morning, Doctor Clarendon?”
“Had she any sleep during the night?” he asked in a suppressed tone.

Zaffiri shook her head.

The sick woman rolled her head restlessly on the pillow, fixed her eyes on the doctor, and said,—

“Dayton, is everything ready? my trunks are packed. Go bring back to me the pretty babe and her nurse. She will thrive on the sea air, and grow to be like me. Dayton, does she look like me now? Oh! she has the same golden-red hair as I had, when I was an infant! It will be auburn and wavy, like mine, when she grows to a beautiful young lady. See, Dayton, like this hair of mine, that you’ve kissed so often!”

Her weak hand essayed to reach some of the locks that strayed over the pillow. She drew out of the disheveled mass a waving tress of auburn, threaded with gold, and faintly smiled on the doctor.

“You will marry me then, Dayton, in Europe, as you promised; before the altar in some grand cathedral, solemn and dim — dim — dim!”

She sighed, turned away, and wept the gentlest of tears — feebly wringing her shadowy hands.

“The good old doctor retired from the bed, while Zaffiri bent over the grieving woman, laid her cooling palm on her forehead, and dried her falling tears.

“There, there,” she said in a low soothing tone, “Dear Celestine, Zaffiri is here. Do you not know Zaffiri?”

Celestine turned her vacant gaze upon her, and answered,—

“Yes, nurse, bring my pretty babe! my baby with the blue eyes and waxen skin. She will be a proud child. She has high birth. She is the picture of Dayton! Dress her nurse, we are going to Europe!”

Zaffiri obeyed a sign from the doctor, and both left the chamber. Mary watched Celestine.

Zaffiri and Celestine by invitation had passed the winter in Cloudspire, with Mr. and Mrs. Link. Since her visit to Savannah, she had ventured to spend the winters in the States; the coldest months in New York in her own home, but during the summer, when the Southerner was omnipresent in the North, she was driven by her husband's fears to Canada, like a leaf before the wind.

Mr. Lambelle wishing to pass most of the winter in Washington and Charleston, she had the opportunity of accepting Mary's repeated solicitation for a renewal of the intimate friendship of past years, in her own attractive home.

Celestine had been with Zaffiri four years, and their affection was mutual. Whatever sorrows had fallen upon her earlier years, the grinding memory had nearly vanished. Restored to her former social plane by the love of Zaffiri and the wealth of Mr. Lambelle, a degree of natural vivacity and dignified cheerfulness returned. Madame Lambelle felt that the happiness of her Southern friend was in her keeping, and she was never remiss in fostering care.

Celestine accompanied Zaffiri on her numerous journeys to *fetes* and the drama. Her dress equaled Zaffiri's in quality and richness. On the other hand, the noble bearing of Celestine proved a protection to Zaffiri from the suspicion of her own original condition; for, in the country, Celestine was denominated by gossiping coteries, "The rich Southern Lady." In fashionable metropolitan circles she was welcomed with fawning cordiality as the accomplished Southern heiress of untold wealth.

The doctor and Madame Lambelle withdrew to the parlor for consultation.

"Oh, doctor!" said Zaffiri, "do you think this sickness will terminate fatally? She does not recognize one of us."

"That is not strange — the brain is affected — it's the nature of the malady. It is typhoid, madame. Our climate has got the better of her, and besides, she must have suffered a deep sorrow. Poignant memories will often grapple in with disease, and heighten its violence. She must have sleep, madame; ice must be bound upon her head. Do not check her incoherences; her sentences are but the bubbles of a disordered mind. Admit no one to her chamber but yourself and Mary. Mary is like an angel hovering around the sick-bed."

“How long, doctor, before a change will be perceptible?”

“A week, perhaps; meantime, get rest yourself. It makes no difference now, who administers care, so it be done faithfully. When reason returns, she will need *you*, madame. The sight of you about her will be better than all my nostrums.”

The bandana waved a truce, and both returned to the chamber.

Celestine's eyes followed Doctor Clarendon about the room.

“Oh! Dayton, you have grown old. Your beautiful locks are white with age. Cruel, cruel neglect! Give me back my lovely child! my innocent babe! Why, Dayton, did you win my young heart and then leave me to suffer alone? I had no fortune, but I had proud blood and birth. You robbed me of my child — of *your* child! Give her back! I am alone! and the world is cold! oh! so cold!”

She shuddered, drawing long sighs. The good old doctor hastened away with directions to Mr. Link to come for him at any time he might be needed.

“Go! leave me!” said Celestine, as he passed out. “Leave me, Dayton! you have winnowed my life, and robbed me of its sweetness! you left nothing but chaff to me!”

For days, Zaffiri and Mary listened to the pitiful promptings of insanity; they made no attempt to probe the mystery of her delirium, but waited, unquestioning, the return of reason. As Doctor Clarendon had predicted, after a week of hallucination, she rallied. She awoke from a long sleep, and said to Zaffiri,—

“I think I must be quite ill; how long have I been here?”

“Two weeks, Celestine.”

“I think my mind has wandered; am I better now?”

“The crisis is past. With perfect quiet and patient care, you will be restored to health, Doctor Clarendon says.”

“What day of the——”

“Do not talk more. It is the sixth of March;” and Zaffiri signed silence, by raising her finger to her lips.

About the tenth of April, Celestine was able to depart with Zaffiri on her journey to Canada.

It was the memorable year of 1861. Mr. Lambelle had written his wife from New York, without signature, accounts of his observations in Washington and at the South. He was present in Co-

lumbia and Charleston, at the convention which passed the Ordinance of Secession. He had described to her the congratulations, the huzzas, the jubilant ringing of bells, and firing of artillery in those cities. He had run down to Savannah and witnessed the parting of May with Augustus, who joined the first company of eighty men that was formed to march to Charleston. He had seen the palmetto-flag raised over the Custom House and Post Office in Charleston, and wherever he had traveled, he had witnessed the daily preparatory practice of squads of minute-men. He had heard their martial tramp in Charleston, by night and day.

He had been in the Capitol, at the admission of Free Kansas into the Union; and, after attention to his business in New York, he was to return to Charleston.

This news argued favorably for the close of Zaffiri's expatriation. She held many congratulatory interviews with Minnie, and looked forward to a day of release from the thralldom of the Fugitive Slave Bill. Paul grew young again, his dark eyes were illuminated with a new light, and his habitual gravity changed to unwonted gayety.

On the twenty-fifth of April, Zaffiri received a letter from Claude, which set the house in general commotion. It ran thus,—

“MY DEAR ZAFFIRI,—I have made my last journey to the South. Have just returned from Charleston, where I witnessed the reduction of Fort Sumpter by the NATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA! It was a fearful sight. General Anderson and his men marched out in order, the band playing. He gave the old flag a salute of fifty guns, and hauled her down with the firing of the last.

“Language cannot describe the frenzied exhilaration of the Charlestonians, at their *bloodless victory*. The streets were thronged with enthusiastic whites. Each repeated the story to the other, with rapture. Bells rung, wine flowed like water, and the prevailing toast was, ‘*Damnation to the Yankees.*’ I believe they intend by this fratricidal bluster to bring the North to their knees. Their terms, enunciating ‘Surrender or die,’ will intensify into one word, ‘Surrender!’ But I judge the day of compromises is over. I believe Abraham Lincoln, our then president-elect, made the last compromise to Southern mobocrats when he went through Baltimore, unknown and undiscovered, on the twenty-third of February, like a hunted fugitive on the Underground Railroad. Zaffiri, the terrible ordeal of War must decide what a few words of Christ's teaching should have accomplished, long ago.

“My dear wife, I consider your term of exile at an end. The South will now hunt the white citizens of the North, *en masse*, with brigade, regiment, and squadron. Arrange to leave Canada, immediately, and to nestle again in your own happy home. I consider slavery at the near beginning of the end. North-

ern troops are swarming through New York to Washington. I shall be in Montreal, in three days.

“With undying affection,
“CLAUDE.”

“What news from the South?” asked Celestine.

“Fort Sumter is taken by South Carolina, which act virtually declares war.”

“You cannot suppose, Zaffiri, there will be war between the sections? The North will pacify the South. The South are a fiery people.”

“The president has called for seventy five thousand men to put down rebellion. Claude writes that multitudes of armed men are swarming through New York to Washington. Celestine, we are going now directly to New York to reside.”

“I believe I prefer Canada; for the war will be carried on in the North. Southern men all declare it. Northern cities will be ravaged, and towns destroyed; the whole North will be devastated. If you were Southern born, Zaffiri, we might take up our residence there. It would be much safer. But I should be unwilling to part from you and return alone.”

“Would it surprise you to learn that I am Southern born!” asked Zaffiri, bending over Celestine, and peering laughingly into her eyes.

“I trust there is no mystery in *your* life, dear friend,” she replied with apprehension.

“My life is an enigma which has been solved by but one person. Celestine, in childhood I was a slave, sold on the auction-table in Charleston.”

Celestine looked at Zaffiri, appalled, then covered her face with her hands; tears filtered through her fingers.

She lifted her face suddenly, gazing at her with a searching look.

“Zaffiri, there is not a drop of colored blood in your veins.”

“No, Celestine; I am pure white, and of high birth; my family name was ‘Warham.’”

“What a terrible enigma!” gasped Celestine, turning very pale. “Dear Zaffiri, assist me to the sofa.”

Zaffiri dropped upon the carpet by her side, and said assuringly,—

“Not a terrible denouement! Do I resemble any person you ever knew?”

“Do not question me; let me hold the respect of *one* friend.”

“Celestine, let us shorten this agony. I know all the secrets of your life and mine. I am Dayton Warham’s child. I am the pretty babe you asked for, and wept for, at Mary’s house in Cloudspire. Do I resemble my father?”

Zaffiri rung for Minnie. Celestine had fainted. When she recovered, Zaffiri was chafing her hands. Celestine begged her to repeat her words which she scarcely heard.

“It will overcome you — shall I not defer farther conversation?”

“No, no, repeat those words.”

“Zaffiri is the pretty blue-eyed babe you asked for, and wept for at Mary’s home. You are my beautiful, high-bred Southern mother.”

“It cannot be! it cannot be!”

The bewildered woman sprang up to a sitting posture.

“It is not possible!”

“Lie down, Celestine. Rest on your pillows, and step by step I will give you indubitable proof.”

“How long since you believed this?”

“I knew you to be my mother in Savannah. May learned your misfortune from Augustus, and confided the circumstances to me, *not dreaming* that she had given me the last precious link of a chain which led me to my mother.”

“Oh, Zaffiri! why have you not divulged this to me before?”

“Because I could have been taken back to slavery, if by any chance my secret had come to light. That is the reason why I have been driven to Canada; but now there is other employment for both North and South, than the rendition of fugitives. Can you endure the recital of the strange events that have brought us together?”

“I must hear, though I die in the hearing!”

Zaffiri recounted her escape from Charleston; her education, and marriage with Mr. Lambelle; her husband’s purchase of old mauma in New Orleans; old mauma’s connection with Dayton Warham; his marriage, and the death of his wife; mauma’s care

of a little blue-eyed babe in Charleston, with the promise of freedom; mauma's sale; the kindness of Mr. Weintze and his wife in sending her North; how she had learned in St. Louis of his scourging, and loss of property; how Mr. Lambelle went to Charleston and brought him to New York; how mauma recognized him.

Then she related how old mauma learned of Celestine's marriage engagement with Mr. Warham, from the servants on the plantation, and how Minnie first, and May afterwards, had given her name and residence.

"Minnie! what opportunity had Minnie to know my name or my past? What temerity! She must have been ubiquitous and enjoyed a perennial youth."

"My precious mother! No, Celestine, I will not address you by that name which makes my heart thrill, till you are convinced of my claim. I have deceived you in regard to Minnie. The name of Warham which she has adopted has appeared to trouble you. I have observed the shadow that fell upon your face, whenever she was called Mrs. Warham. Celestine, do not be startled, Minnie 'was the wife of Frederick Warham, Dayton Warham's son."

"No, dear Zaffiri, she could not be the *wife* of a white South Carolinian. We do not allow the evidence of negroes, South, and you see her first assertion is false."

"Celestine, have patience with us all. I have been educated North, and have imbibed sentiments at variance with Southern statutes. I think Minnie was entirely Fred's wife. He loved Minnie and his children. He chose no other wife; and when he died he bestowed twenty thousand dollars upon herself and his two boys. That amount has been invested by Claude at the personal request of Frederick. Minnie has her 'free papers,' signed by his own hand. Allow me to ring for Minnie; she will lift the veil between us."

"By no means, Zaffiri! There is no necessity for proving to me what the tears and grief of nearly a lifetime attests. I, dear Zaffiri, can unfold to you more than Minnie, or May, or old mauma included. If you are the blue-eyed babe that Dayton Warham carried to mauma, if Mrs. Weintze has assured you of your iden-

tity with that babe, then *Celestine Channaire*, *wronged, disowned, despised and penniless, is your mother!*"

She covered her face with her hands again, and sobbed aloud.

Zaffiri knelt by her mother, held her in her arms, kissed the delicate hands that still hid the dear face, and with an utterance choked by tears, said,—

"Then, as old mauma and Mamma Weintze corroborate each other, Zaffiri, the fugitive from American Slavery, is no longer an orphan and an outcast. Thank the merciful Father! My adored and honored mother shall suffer no more pain that her daughter can alleviate. Believe it, precious mother, Zaffiri is your long-lost, blue-eyed babe! Claude knows all dear mother! he has patiently waited to render you the reverent homage of an affectionate son. The beautiful bow of promise spans your clouded life. Dayton Warham, the heartless man, who added a blasted young life to the humiliation of financial disaster, has passed beyond all human ken. The last link between your past and the present — his son Fredrick, has followed his father. Minnie will accompany us to New York, where she will take passage for France, for the purpose of educating her two sons. The name of Warham need not receive the slightest allusion."

"And yet, my dear, lovely Zaffiri, that name of Warham — that one name would have been to me a beautiful word of incantation, calling up around me the full fruition of my most ardent hopes and all the world holds most sacred to woman."

"But the world or society is a frigid judge. Its icy regard approves only a specious surface. As the wife of Dayton Warham, my much-abused mother, the fruition of your ardent hopes could not have been realized. The sanctuary of your wedded home would have had a cloister of tears for an unhappy wife. I beg you to think yourself happy in escaping the bonds of marriage with a man who could become intoxicated with the dewy sweetness of a trusting, innocent, girlish love, such as yours, and then leave you to years of anguish and cruel scorn. A man, too, who could cast his own helpless infant,— bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh,— into the dust; and with his spurning foot toss her to the auction-block to be sold — a slave.

"No, no, dear Celestine. I insist, marriage would not have

changed his nature. I declare, vehemently, that I repudiate his name. It is the synonym of obdurate wrong. I, who picked up the name of Phebe, in the Charleston shambles; who accepted the name of Violet, in the convent, as a charity; who dropped that purple veil into the crater of Vesuvius, to be again endowed with Zaffiri, borrowed from the mellifluous Italian at my bridal with Claude; I am at last restored to my birthright, 'PEARL CHANNAIRE.'

"My queenly mother, is your long-lost child acceptable? Does she respond to the ideal of your maternal yearnings? Does my high-bred mother acknowledge her blue-eyed baby?"

The wan face turned on the pillows, and gazed long at the speaker kneeling before her.

"Acceptable!" she moaned. "What ideal could surpass the reality? You are lovely as the proudest Southern lady I have ever met; and it has been my fortune to meet with the noblest by lineage and social position. You would vie with them all. Education, the advantages of travel, the polish of *haut ton*, all blend in you, Zaffiri; you, who seek to share my poverty and shame. I dare claim you. I dare not yield to your filial appeal. I am bewildered. I can scarcely breathe. A maelstrom of events seems to whirl me, a helpless wreck, in its vortex. Leave me, thou beautiful vision, to the solitude of my chamber till to-morrow. Let my brain cool. Let me have time to weigh my doubts and assent in the balance of reflection."

"Filial obedience is henceforth the sweetest pleasure of your baby Pearl," was the reply.

Celestine felt her hands pressed, and the touch of lips upon her forehead. Then the door closed upon her.

Zaffiri, before going down stairs, tapped at Minnie's door and entered.

"Busy with preparations for France already? Lay everything by till we arrive in New York. There, Sister Minnie, I will aid you in every possible way. I have just come from my dear mother's room, where the relationship between Celestine and Zaffiri has been explained. She is distracted with the information, and requests undisturbed quiet."

Zaffiri wept, and continued,—

“I find in my heart a deep affection for my mother, and an indefinable joy at her almost miraculous restoration to me; and these feelings have increased yearly, while I was faithfully guarding the secret.

“But, Minnie, I can never cease to feel a horror for slavery, and the tenderest interest and friendship for all who may have been its victims, be they black, or brown, or yellow — or white like myself. My mother cannot harmonize with me in this. She has been blinded by constant contact with the terrible crime of human bondage. Her interests have been bound up with it, and she still cherishes the un-Christ-like pride of superiority that clings to the white race. These sentiments, alone, will divide us at the present; but I leave all to the mollifying influence of time and enlightenment. I consider a devoted love for my mother compatible with an affection for my fellow-sufferers from slavery.”

“I believe, Zaffiri, your resolve meets the approval of Heaven. If my dear Fred had known that I should have fallen into such consideration as you have shown me, he would have been relieved of a burden of dread for my future in his last hours. Where shall I find the unmistakable respect and friendship that Zaffiri has evinced for me?”

“Minnie, you will find it in France. In Europe, the negro — the real negro — has received honor from crowned heads. At the Uffize, in a picture gallery, I have seen three paintings of the Magi by as many different artists. Two were painted in the fifteenth century and one by Albrecht Durer in the sixteenth. One of these kings, the youngest, is a full-blooded negro. I have also seen this black king in Andrea del Sarto’s magnificent fresco, in the portico of the ‘Annunciata.’ It is a legend of the Roman Catholic Church History perpetuates this negro’s honor. The portrait by Vasari of Alexander Medici, the first Duke of Florence, shows him a mulatto. For further proof, in the cabinet of engraved gems, in all the portraits of the Medicean family are seen the woolly hair, the thick lips, and flat nose of the mulatto duke.”

Minnie indulged in a little incredulous laugh, and asked, —

“How did Prince Alexander Medici become first Duke of Florence?”

“I declare, Minnie, you are manifesting the same want of faith

in color that tinctures the universal American minds. I've half a mind to be vexed with you. But there are no arguments so good as facts. So I'll explain. History informs us — mind, now — *history* informs the world that he was the illegitimate son of Cardinal Giulio Medici, by a negress. This cardinal became Pope Clement the Eighth, but amid pontifical glory, His Holiness did not ignore his mulatto son. He had him brought up as his nephew, and in 1530 he clothed him in the ducal purple of Florence. Then there's the grand termination. Charles Fifth could not have despised color, for he gave his daughter, Margaret, in marriage to this same duke — and she was of the proud house of Hapsburg — and to show further that Margaret did not suffer ostracism from other families of royalty, her second marriage, after the death of her mulatto husband, Prince Alexander Medici, was ratified with Prince Farnese of Parma and she became Regent of Belgium under the reign of her half-brother, Philip Second of Spain."

"What a career that would be for a colored man, even the son of a Southerner, in this Republic, without rank or pageant, to become even the governer of a State. I will go to Italy during my stay in Europe, if for nothing more, to inspect this Grand Duke's portrait, and to trace his lineage in the Medicean gems. But Zafiri, that transpired long ago; has not contempt for color sprung up in later years?"

"Oh, no! President Roberts, of Liberia, a mulatto and an intelligent statesman, dined at the Lord Mayor's in London; and Baron Damier, a black ambassador from Hayti, was received in England, admitted to diplomatic parties, and the public receptions of Queen Victoria.

"In France, too, the French Court admitted a black representative of Soulougue, the emperor of Hayti. Observe the difference Minnie, between a Monarchy and a Republic. Mason, our American Minister, was present at the French Court, on that occasion. An Englishman present, pointed Mason to the Ambassador of Soulougue, and said,—

"What do you think?"

"Mason replied,—

"*I think, clothes and all, he is worth one thousand dollars!*"

"They extend their property right to the white race as well,"

said Minnie, "when a Corsair chance offers. If you, Zaffiri, could be herded and sold with African slaves, that Mason would as gladly set a price upon Louis Napoleon, as upon the black representative of Hayti."

"I agree, Minnie; now, compare our Congress with the proud Court of France. In a debate in the Senate, on authorizing the President of the United States to appoint diplomatic representatives to the Republics of Hayti and Liberia, respective, Davis of Kentucky, said of this Haytian ambassador,—

"Well, a great big negro fellow, dressed out with his silver or gold lace clothes, in the most fantastic and gaudy style, presented himself in the Court of Louis Napoleon, and, I admit, was received. Now, sir, I want no such exhibition as that in *our* Capitol, and in *our* government. Further, (and he spoke for the whole South) he had no objections to the recognition, by our government, of the existence of those two Republics as independent powers; he had no objection to commercial relations between our country and those two republics, nor to the negotiation of a treaty of amity and commerce and friendship between our government and theirs. To what did he object, then? To reciprocal, diplomatic relations between our country and theirs. He said if the Republic of Hayti and Liberia should send a full-blooded negro to our government, in the capacity of minister plenipotentiary, or *charge d'affairs*, he could demand that he be received, precisely on the same terms of equality with the white representatives from the Powers of the earth, composed of *white* people. When the president opened his saloons to the reception of the diplomatic corps—when he gave his entertainments to such diplomats, the representatives of whatever color, from those countries, would have the right to demand admission upon terms of equality with all other diplomats; and, if they had families consisting of negro wives and negro daughters, they would have the right to ask that their families also be invited on such occasions, and that they go there, and mingle with the whites."

"Oh, my!" laughed Minnie, "how ridiculously absurd, and fastidiously select! in Washington, those Southern Statesmen! At home, they would have wooed those same Haytien and Liberian wives and daughters with peculiar blandishments!"

“An analysis quite consistent with facts,” answered Zaffiri ; “but I think this duplicity is drawing to a close. I am impressed that the taking of Sumter is the first act of Emancipation. The North, although seeking peace by unhallowed means, has a strength of resolve the South has not sounded. They will contest for the Union ; but out of the ashes of War will arise the Phenix of Freedom for all bowed beneath the yoke of oppression.”

“I wish I might share your faith, Zaffiri.”

“Minnie, I propose to celebrate the firing upon Sumter, by a dinner to-day. My mother will remain in seclusion, therefore it it can give her no pain. Come down with me, and let us arrange for the dinner with Paul.”

With their arms thrown carelessly about each other, the two beautiful women descended to prepare for the evening's sacrament.

The sun went down — a blaze of light illuminated the dining-room. The long table was laid for guests, and a bouquet of rare hot-house flowers smiled by each plate. Over the centre extended an arch, bearing these words in silver letters on a pale-blue ground, “*The first gun fired at Sumter.*” This arch and sentiment were wreathed with evergreen, rosebuds and callas. Beneath the first arch, which was very high, reaching up among the glass fringes of the chandler which dyed its waxen lilies with prismatic purples, burning topaz and quivering sapphires, rose another arch, supported by pillars — a triumphal arch, from the keystone of which depended an exquisitely formed floral bell. Upon the bow of the arch-triumphant one read this inscription, “*The Tocsin of Emancipation.*”

Zaffiri and Minnie came from their dressing-rooms faultlessly arrayed, in the richness of reception attire. They were in the dining-room, engaged in rapturous admiration of the lovely foreshadowing of the morning's prophecy, and the artistic skill in which Zaffiri's orders had been followed.

A halt of carriage wheels, and a ring of the door-bell was noticed. Every avenue to the dining-room was quickly closed, Zaffiri remarking,—

“Our guests are all here — how troublesome !”

Paul summoned Madame Lambelle to the parlor without cards.

Entering the grand saloon, she took a hasty step forward, and with an arm about each of the new comers, she exclaimed,—

“Dear me! Doctor and Mrs. Clarendon! what brought you to Canada?”

“You, yourself!” said Mrs. Clarendon, smilingly.

“We came,” said the doctor, to proclaim the year of Jubilee, and to set the captives free. War is declared by the hostile and foreign nation of South Carolina, against the United States! This is the beginning of the end. The exiles will return to their hearthstones and accept the sanguinary terms of perpetual amnesty.”

In token of the sincerity of his proclamation, the red bandana waved a salute.

“But what is all this dazzling splendor of diamonds, velvet and lace?” asked Mrs. Clarendon. “Our arrival is inopportune, Madame Lambelle. Give us no attention — attend to your engagement.”

“I will do so with your permission; the dinner hour is at hand.

There will be sufficient time after. I cannot express the delight I feel in welcoming you under this roof, and at this precise day and hour. I can scarcely credit my senses, that I see your faces, and hear your dear voices!”

Zaffiri rung for a servant to attend her friends to their chamber, and improved their absence by seating her invited guests at the table, that she might usher in the good old doctor and his wife to a surprise.

No bell was rung for dinner, from respect to Celestine; but the doctor and his wife soon entered the saloon, where Zaffiri awaited them. She ushered them into the dining-room, where the guests at the well-filled table were conversing pleasantly till the appearance of the “dear madame,” as they termed Zaffiri.

Upon crossing the threshold, she addressed all.

“My friends, Madame Channique is suffering under nervous prostration in her chamber; it will be necessary to preserve quiet in our celebration. I have the pleasure of presenting Doctor and Mrs. Clarendon, from Cloudspire, Massachusetts. I know those names are very dear to some present; but I beg the favor of deferring congratulations until our general interview in my private parlor.”

The company were all standing, as they rose immediately upon the doctor's entrance. Zaffiri continued,—

“For the promotion of unrestrained conversation, I will proceed with the introductions.”

The doctor and his wife remained near the entrance, and silently bowed, his face lighting up in the old way, with the enthusiasm which the unlooked-for scene inspired.

“Mrs. Warham and her two children, from South Carolina,” said Zaffiri. She passed on. “Paul Snow, from the same State, an acquaintance of Mr. Link.” She laid her hand upon the stout shoulder of a neatly dressed black man, whose glad smiles were misty with emotion. “Robert Adams, our coachman; his wife and three children. Mr. Adams is from Virginia.”

The doctor bowed very low, and furtively cleared his sight, by a rapid use of the bandana.

Zaffiri passed round to the other side and stopped by a fine-looking mulatto, wearing upon his head, more upon the left side, a black embroidered velvet cap, with a mass of short shining curls, uncovered, escaping from the band. A handsome brunette wife, as half the world would say, with wavy hair, was by him, and four children beyond.

“Marquis Clarendon and wife,” she said, “formerly from Charleston, recently from Philadelphia.” She placed her hand affectionately upon the shoulder of the children respectfully, “Lucy Clarendon, Garrison Clarendon, Toussaint Clarendon, King Clarendon.”

The doctor accompanied his bow, with the remark that he hoped for a further acquaintance. That, as their patronymic indicated, their lineage must have had some connection with his own.

“I am sure we have one common Father, sir,” replied Marquis.

The doctor and Mrs. Clarendon were seated at the head of the table before the smoking meats, to which Zaffiri pointed, saying,—

“Will the doctor serve, as the New England custom is? We have no servants to-night. Humility, in view of the blessing of freedom and equality about to fall upon us, becomes this feast of commemoration. My friends,” she continued her gaze along the table, “let us serve each other.”

Zaffiri took her seat at the foot of the board.

A low hum of animated conversation, interspersed with quiet pleasantries, heightened the enjoyment of the profuse and elaborate entertainment. The festive hours lengthened.

The various emotions pictured on different countenances, while contemplating the sentiments inscribed upon the arches, had a curious interest for the doctor and his wife. Grieved unbelief, patient despair, a flush of hope, a smile, a tear, a shiver, shadows of bitter memories, a gleam of manhood's pride, appealing eyes suddenly raised and meekly dropped; all these were carefully noticed.

Short and pertinent speeches closed the sitting at the table. The doctor yielded to the general solicitation, and took the lead.

"My friends, he said, "I cannot but remark upon the appropriate device that arches this elegantly spread board. '*The first gun fired at Sumter*,' I believe, is a whisper of Freedom to the captive, from the Almighty Throne. The guilty record of the past, in the judicial, ecclesiastical and civil departments of our nation, has proved that public and private conscience is dumb and dead; that it can neither indicate the course of justice nor follow in the path of righteousness. The terrible arbitration of war will decide that slavery must go down. The South, blinded and demented, is building better than it knows. She has struck the first blow on the temple of freedom. Maintain that faith, my friends — the sublime faith in the eternal triumph of justice — for the lifting up of the oppressed, and the overthrow of the oppressor."

The white-haired old doctor received his "encore" in the grateful looks of his auditors, which rested upon him like a blessing.

Last of all, Zaffiri rose from *her* seat. Every eye turned upon her in affectionate homage. In a low, saddened voice she began.

"With you, exiles, I have lent a straining ear to the cannonading of Sumter. I have been shaken by a tremor of hope and doubt. Out of it all I have been borne on the wings of a foreshadowing faith in the future. Like you, I am a slave and an exile from my country."

Astonished by this avowal, the festal radiance of the scene grew dim. Murmurs of "no, no, no," interrupted her.

"It is true," said Minnie, in a grieved tone.

“True as the gospel,” reiterated the doctor, wrathfully.

“Like you I have been sold on the table in Charleston. Like you I have been doomed by the curse of Canaan, to toil unpaid through hopeless years. But for the love of that noblest of men, Claude Lambelle, I should have been struggling with poverty and a stolen liberty for my daily bread. Like some of you, my father was a Southerner, rich in rice and cotton-fields, by robbery. Like you I am a fugitive. Madame Lambelle in velvet and diamonds is your fellow-sufferer.”

Leaning over the table she extended her fair arms, and, transfixed with intent compassion, she cried,—

“In my heart I embrace you all. Believe with me that we are to be free. Believe with me that the cannonading of Sumter was the musical tocsin of our emancipation.”

Minnie led the way to the private parlor; and Zaffiri, at the entrance to the hall, on the way to her chamber, received a touching expression of Paul’s respectful sympathy. He sprang forward, opened the door, held it open for her to pass through, and closed it after her. This was a slave custom which Zaffiri had never allowed to be practiced towards her.

The Doctor and Mrs. Clarendon found themselves in the midst of an attentive circle. He drew Robert down on one side of him and Marquis on the other—in which condition he and the red bandana held high carnival till twelve.

“Marquis,” he said, “remove your cap a moment; let me see how those shots worked. Ugh! that is an ugly scar! no hair at all on this side of your head, and the tip of your ear gone, too! Well, it’s a wonder if those revolverites don’t lose some of their hair and their heads too, in the coming contest. Your wrist is stiff, Marquis. That was the hand-cuffed wrist that served you so well.”

“Yes, sir. I fought my way to the river with that hand-cuff; it was my only weapon.”

“Richard and Lucy advise you to return to Philadelphia. You can do so without further danger from kidnappers. Our government has other business on hand, now.” He drew from his pocket a plethoric envelope, and placed it in Marquis’ hand, saying, “It contains a hundred dollars for the expenses of your return, from my two royal children.”

The next morning, the chamber-maid delivered a hasty message to Zaffiri from Mrs. Channaire, to visit her room. The interview was short. Arm in arm, they entered the parlor, where, alone, were the Doctor and Mrs. Clarendon.

"My mother, Madame Channaire," said Zaffiri, with emotion.

"My daughter, Pearl Z. Channaire Lambelle, Mrs. Clarendon! My blue-eyed baby, doctor," said Celestine, joyfully.

Hand-shakings succeeded. Lace handkerchiefs united with the aged bandana in the kindest offices, and the doctor declared that "typhoid" was a most mysterious dispensation.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"**W**E have had a busy morning," said Mrs. Sterlingworth to Afra. "It has been quite a task to prepare your father's trunks for Charleston, in the close quarters of our two small rooms."

"It will be quite another task to restore order without a Northern convenience of cupboard or closet, dear mother."

The mother and daughter were standing under a live-oak, near the door, which brooded the small, newly-built house and its inmates. In its shade, they had just exchanged adieus with the husband and father.

Fanny Beame's acquaintance with Friend Sterlingworth, at West Elms, resulted in a life-long attachment and marriage. In the early part of the war he received an appointment by the government for one of the coast islands of South Carolina. Fanny and Afra, a blooming girl of seventeen, accompanied him.

After the evacuation of Charleston by General Hardee, Mr. Sterlingworth was immediately transferred to that city, leaving Fanny and Afra in their island quarters, for one month.

"How delightful this morning air is, mother," said Afra; "how warm and balmy. I suppose Alderbank is buried in snow, now, with the temperature dancing about zero."

"Yes, Afra; and, but for this terrible war, I should never have seen South Carolina. Always, from childhood, I longed to go

South, but it would have been as unsafe for your father and I to come here, as to have traveled among the hostile savages of the Western plains."

Both sat down upon the rude, unbalustraded, board steps, and fastened their enraptured gaze upon the scene ; upon the lofty arch of blue, spanning the level expanse, unbroken by undulating hill or mountain range ; upon silvery clouds, trooping in light and scattered masses, seaward ; upon stretches of neglected fields without fence or boundary, and waving with a harvest of sere grasses ; upon streets of white tents yielding their canvas to the gentle influence of the rising breeze ; upon a regiment of cavalry horses beyond, picketed in the open air ; upon squads of the "boys in blue," marching away to military duty ; upon galloping officers, plunging through the sandy roads, gay, in bright uniforms and rattling accoutrements ; beyond all, upon forests of feathery pines, leaning against the soft horizon, swimming in distant haze.

They listened to the clear notes of the bugle ; the beating of drums, muffled by distance ; to fiery and impatient neighings ; to the mutterings of cannon on the Main ; to the carol of a bird in the green oak above, and to the short, comical, derisive laugh of spying crows skimming over camp and field.

"We should have no fear to stay here alone till father returns from Charleston," said Afra ; "we are strongly guarded."

"I have no fear among Northern soldiers, my child ; bless their brave, sun-browned faces ! I have been thinking what a grand thing it is to come South, protected by the United States army. Afra, the scenes I have witnessed on these islands—the scene before us now is worth all the scorn and contempt we have suffered in a lifetime, in behalf of freedom, and the rights of the colored race. In youth, I had an earnest desire to pass my life among the Asiatic heathen ; to become a missionary, was my most ardent wish. That privilege has been granted in my own country, and none demands such service more."

"I have become attached to the children and colored people about us, mother. It would be a trial for me to leave our school."

"This people are equally attached to you, Afra, although other teachers will supply our place. I feel a deep regret in leaving the islands for Charleston. The patience and utter forgetfulness of

past wrongs which these poor, stripped, hungry, naked freedmen exhibit, is a marvel."

"What a hue and cry the Southerners made about insurrections," said Afra, "and about Northern Abolitionists inciting insurrections. It was all nonsense! In the first place, the slaves were a most submissive, docile, and long-suffering people, and in the next, how were Northern letters, papers and pamphlets to stir them to resistance, when they could not read, even the first letter of a word?"

"Afra, 'The wicked flee when no man pursueth.' The slaveholder knew that in every human breast, there is an instinctive yearning for Freedom. He knew too, that every act of his was towards the repression of this instinct. The phantasm of insurrection sprung from his own guilty conscience."

"Ah, well," laughed Afra, "the South has met insurrection in an unanticipated quarter — in the uprising of the whole North!"

She clapped her hands in exultation, and added,—

"A very different insurrection from that of the poor negroes! but one no less destructive — an armed insurrection. Look mother, over the brown fields, there! see that host of bayonets glittering in the sun!"

She clapped her hands again.

"An armed insurrection to put down an insurrection of the slaves-masters, Afra. In the midst of it all, the slaves are freed by the arbitrament of War. Afra, the history of the past and present of our Government is ridiculously amusing as well as absurdly unreasonable. About twenty-five years ago, more or less, Charles G. Atherton, of New Hampshire, a follower of the South, offered a resolution in Congress on the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, in these words,—'That Congress has no right to do that *indirectly*, which it cannot do *directly*.' This passed the House by one hundred and seventy yeas to thirty nays. In a following resolution he enlarged upon the other,—'That Congress in the exercise of its acknowledged powers, has no right to discriminate between the institutions of one portion of the States, and another, with a view of abolishing the *one* and promoting the *other*.' That passed gloriously, also. Now observe, that very thing — the abolition of slavery in *one* portion of the States and

the promotion of it in *another* has been done on an infinitely grander scale than it would have been in the insignificant territory of the District of Columbia. This has been accomplished — the Constitution and Congress to the contrary, notwithstanding. Accomplished by the fiat of *one* man, who says,— *I, Abraham Lincoln, do order and declare, that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be free!*” He promotes slavery in thirteen parishes in Louisiana, in forty-eight counties, forming West Virginia, and also in seven other counties in Virginia.”

“That emancipation was a war measure,” replied Afra,” “and we are advocates of peace.”

“We are, Afra, but it seemed necessary to inaugurate an arbitrary power vested in a Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the United States — distinct — and more absolute than the fossilized Constitution and Congress, both of which remained to the last insurmountable obstacles to the advance of Liberty.”

“True, mother, some power was wanting to proclaim Emancipation. Is it not strange that the Southerners themselves should have been the creators of that power, by rushing into civil war?”

“Strange indeed! but the South actually was the creator of that kingly arbitrary power. Volcanic eruptions often throw up mountains, that tower against the sky from surrounding levels. So by our national upheaval, the lofty peaks of Disunion offered a sublime pedestal for the feet of our President. Majestically he ascended the rough escarpment, till standing on their sulphurous summits, above the States, above the Constitution, above Statutes, above Congress, he seemed to have listened at the Eternal Throne, and to have taken counsel from the Most High; for he answered to the mutterings, fears, and reproaches that surged beneath his dizzy height,— “*WHATEVER SHALL APPEAR TO BE GOD’S WILL, I WILL DO!*” and from that Sinai, Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Liberty, the law of the land. Convoysed by a nation’s love and reverence, his name will descend to the remotest future. Yes, Afra, it is all stranger than words can express. How little the Southerners thought it, when through their newspaper organs they declared ‘*The fate of the Southern Confederacy hangs by the ensign halliards of Fort Sumter!*’ Your father and others think the rebel-

lion is nearly subdued. The flight of General Hardee from Savannah and Charleston seems to indicate fear and weakness."

"What a superb march was Sherman's from Atlanta to the sea, mother! Those Northern and Western soldiers helped themselves to Southern hospitality. They lived on the fat of the land. Think of the beeves, fowls, swine, rice and potatoes they consumed! I hope Thad Buddington lives, and we shall be able to hear the story of the triumphant march from his own lips."

"I hope so, my daughter. The city of Savannah was a handsome 'Christmas present' for the President. You know Sherman said in his dispatch to Abraham Lincoln, 'I beg to present to you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah, with one hundred and fifty heavy guns, and plenty of ammunition, and also about twenty-five thousand bales of cotton.' It was extremely humiliating to the Georgians, no doubt; but Afra, darling, the morning is passing — those two rooms need revision. Here comes Bacchus. Bacchus we are going out riding this afternoon, to make some farewell calls. You may bring 'Cotton Ball,' and 'Chinquapin' to the door, about three o'clock."

"I will, missis. I make 'Cotton Ball' shine for Miss Afra!"

The furniture within was scant, but more than sufficient to fill the rooms. A small unpainted pine table, without leaves, was set with a few pieces of crockery, brought from Alderbank, in trunks, bright tin fruit-cans supplying deficiencies. Silver, iron and wooden spoons commingled. One black stuffed chair, one painted Northern one, and another made from pine boards, with a much-worn rebel settee, found places on a bare floor, with a narrow, unpainted pine bedstead made on the island. Trunks were piled upon each other, and saddles hung upon the rough braces of the walls. One available nook was occupied by a miniature cooking stove, furnishing many a Yankee dish from the hands of Fanny and Afra. The new tin wash-boiler answered for cupboard and refrigerator.

"Afra, I have spent many happy hours here with you and your father. These apparent inconveniences have lightened our labors; and amidst the revelations of this War of Progress, all else has seemed insignificant."

Bacchus, prompt to the hour, assisted the ladies in mounting; and away they swept past the camps, where many a young soldier's

eye admiringly followed Afra, and her pony, over the brown wilderness of fields, through forest glades, to "Nightingale Hall." As they passed through the massive arched gateway, walked the ponies slowly through the shrubbery, and paused under the green magnolias, several fresh young Northern faces saluted their arrival from the top of the long staircase leading to the piazza, where Colonel Ashland, years ago, welcomed and entertained the Rangers, after hunting excursions.

"Ah!" laughed Afra, "you teachers live up among the tops of the trees! I have never seen a house so high!" And she reined "Cotton Ball" gayly between the brick pillars and under the house.

"We have come to bid you goodbye!" said Fanny. "We are going to Charleston."

"Dismount then, and tarry till evening. We can get you a good supper from our rations," said a cheery voice, descending the long flight of stairs. We can give you bacon; and old Elsie cooks hominy splendidly — with sweet potatoes, fresh eggs, and a nice pound-cake, baked in one of the Southern conveniences, a bake-kettle!"

"And dried apple sweet-meats, besides," said another rosy girl, laughingly. "Colonel Ashland is not at home, nor Cleopatra; but we will do the honors of Southern hospitality for them. Colonel Ashland, the owner of this fine mansion, is off hunting Yankees, I suppose; for hunting was his pastime."

"Dan," said a third to a young Freedman, approaching, "take these ladies' horses."

"Perhaps," said Afra, "Colonel Ashland is hunting angels with blood-hounds in Paradise by this time. If, as some assert, we are in Heaven what we were on earth, he must hunt something!"

"Oh, Afra Sterlingworth!" cried one of the young ladies, "you shock me!"

Afra's eyes sparkled with enjoyment, as she replied,—

"It is very healthy to be shocked occasionally; so my good mother says, here. I suppose all the Southern electrical batteries are in use at the bottom of rivers, and harbors, in connection with those most Christian instruments,—torpedoes! I have thought for the general welfare, to convert myself into an electrical machine."

"Afra is as radical as I could wish her to be," replied Fanny, with a smile of pride. "Dear me, what a delightful wood fire on the hearth! and these rooms are so spacious and airy! How are you all getting on?"

"Delightfully! We've a mule and cart, and hay in bale, furnished by the officers, and a fine riding pony."

"Better still," said another; "we have a pocket edition of a milch cow, that the soldiers brought from the Main for us; and this old hair-cloth sofa is a great comfort; do you notice that wide notch in the solid mahogany on the back? That must have been taken out by a Yankee soldier's axe."

"Very well; I hear of our soldiers cooking their breakfasts with finely-carved piano-legs, split up for their fires. You know this furniture, purchased with stolen wages from the slaves, is in danger of rough usage."

"You have a cook, too, I think you said," observed Afra.

"Yes, old Elsie needs food and clothing; we pay her from our rations. Since you were here last, Elsie has told us of the conduct of Colonel Ashland towards a governess he once employed here. Her name was Honora Hudson. She died, and he did not even condescend to attend her funeral, but went off hunting. Elsie laid Mrs. Hudson in her coffin with flowers, and the servants followed her to her lonely grave."

"Honora Hudson!" said Fanny. "She was the intimate friend of my mother, in girlhood. I have heard her often speak of Honora Hudson."

"You will find her grave, Mrs. Sterlingworth, where that church was. It is in among the sweet gums. He took her daughter, Hattie, to Charleston; and no one knows here what became of her. Colonel Ashland's house is occupied by Yankee teachers, now — a fine retribution for the scornful Southerner!"

"He had a black wife, named Cleopatra," observed another. "Dan, who took your horses, is Colonel Ashland's son. What curious family histories we're learning!"

Thus they chatted on, till the time for departure. Returning home, they stopped at the ruins of the small church, and riding into the thicket of sweet gums, Fanny found the grave of Honora Hudson, and reverently read her name upon the low, half-hidden

headstone, leaving upon the neglected mound the sweet flowers of her mother's love and her own sympathy. Nothing was left of the church but a few handfuls of mortar and some fragments of brick, over which "Cotton Ball" and "Chinquapin" stumbled.

"Afra, this church, which was a mockery to the living God, was standing entire, when your father first came to the islands. Board by board, seat by seat, beam by beam, rafter by rafter, and brick by brick, it has all been carried away. The soldiers and poor blacks have put it to the legitimate use of comforting the body. It never gave strength to righteous convictions — never fed the soul with the bread of life. It never led one spirit to an humble aspiration after Truth. It was based on falsehood, maintained by falsehood, and fostered falsehood in return."

"I think so, mother. In its downfall and disseverment, it has truly aided the advance of the age."

She slipped from her saddle, and picked up from the debris among the grass, some mementos of "Eternal Justice."

Other days found Fanny and Afra riding over familiar and beloved spots. At one time they galloped miles along the white beach, bathing the ponies' feet in the pearly fringes of incoming waves, and retouching the rare Southern pictures to be borne away in memory with stronger lights. Again, they were winding among the spicy pines, weaving their way in and out of the woof of golden shafts that shot through their plummy tops. Again, they were halting before the cabins and improvised habitations of their pupils, receiving the warm and grateful "How de's," and taking affectionate leave.

In due time, the steamer on which they took passage to Charleston, crossed the bar and made her way up the smooth bay, towards the city. The Northerners who crowded her decks were busy in scanning the forts and batteries which had so fiercely opened the fratricidal war. They passed Sumter, a dismantled, misshapen mass, pounded to pumice by cannon and mortar. None saluted the battered wreck with reverence or affection, but the old ruin was shrouded only with lowering looks and exultant indignation.

Far up the bay on a level with the blue waters swimming in the violet haze of declining day, lay the "City by the Sea," in

the humiliation and asphyxia of her own suicidal destruction.

“Oh, mother!” cried Afra with enthusiasm, “how beautiful Charleston appears! like the warm Oriental cities I love so much in paintings.”

“Beautiful as an apple of Sodom! fair on the exterior, but heartless, Afra, utterly heartless. Count her numerous spires glittering in the sun — enough to have led double her population into paths of rectitude. Alas! false beacons, every one. The full-blown bladders of Southern arrogance have been pricked in this city or the Sterlingworth family would not be allowed to land. They would repulse this steamer from her docks.”

“Or,” added Afra, “if we succeeded in landing and entering her hotels, they would bring a carriage to the door and hustle us away again, and we should be compelled to go, to save ourselves from their prisons or scaffolds.”

The steamer came alongside the wharf. The black, rotten timbers of its floor showed the dark gurgling water beneath, except where the more dangerous spaces were overlapped by loose, ill-shapen planks. Waiting by the gangway, were a fine coach and span. A lively voice said laughingly,—

“Welcome to Charleston! Step in here. I am delegated by this distinguished city, to offer you its generous hospitalities!”

Amid surprise and gladness, Fanny and Afra seated themselves in the coach and were driven over and around caving sand batteries, jolted over rough, ragged, and desolate streets, past gaping walls, and rent pavements ploughed by Yankee shells.

“Here we are,” said Mr. John, as they stopped before an elegant, piazzaded mansion, standing in the midst of evergreen shrubbery, purple blossomed wisterias, and rose-laden climbers. “The people of this establishment have had the great kindness to vacate the premises for our accommodation.”

Within, the Sterlingworth’s met as warm a welcome as at the wharf. Mrs. John said to Fanny,—

“Enjoy all the house affords; you deserve a rest, and a change from those two small stifling rooms on the island. We have servants at your command, and the carriage at your pleasure.”

Carpeted, airy rooms, costly furniture, fine china and glass,

adorned the house. A few days afterwards, Mr. John said to Fanny,—

“I have any number of fine dwellings at my disposal, so many that I hardly know which to select for myself. Take the carriage; the coachman knows the streets, and will drive you where I direct. Choose from these houses to suit yourself. I am delighted to see a staunch abolitionist like you, driven at your pleasure in a rebel carriage about the streets of this ‘Nest of Treason,’ without fear or molestation.”

In a few weeks, the Sterlingworth’s were nicely settled in a handsome home, filled with every necessary luxury of furniture, and other equipment.

Three servants left Fanny and Afra free to wander about the city, and to become eye witnesses of the devastations which met them on every hand.

“Mother,” said Afra, one day, “lift your eyes to that spire — a shot or shell passed entirely through it. Mind now! here are ugly breaks in the wharf.”

Everywhere within Yankee range, the walks and grounds about buildings, and churches in particular, were strewn with fragments of window-panes to be “measured by the bushel,” as Afra said.

They entered the slave-marts and looked from the first floor, riddled and splintered beneath their feet, through the stories above to the blue sky where shells like falling meteors had explored the guilty iron-barred rooms.

Driven in the “rebel carriage,” they jolted over scattered paving-stones of East Bay, an avenue of ruin and utter desolation. The commercial marts of human merchandise stared at the curious passer like grim and unfleshed skeletons. Ragged and windowless, the steps and alleys rankly overgrown with commonest weeds, they proclaimed to the glad hearts of Fanny and Afra that the day of retribution had at last come. Weeds, and small shrubs springing up from the stone window sills, found nourishment in the accumulated dust and rubbish of years.

“I think we have found the American Palmyra,” said Afra pointing her mother’s attention to a small thrifty “Tree of Paradise” upon one sill; its green pinnate leaves waving pleasantly in

the breeze, and seeming to say, "no more hideous bargains of human beings here."

They ascended the steps of the battered, marble Custom House, and walked over the remnants of white, fluted columns ground to powder. They paused upon the splendid eastern portico and gazed down the beautiful bay, pondering upon the tears, sighs, sobs and heart-breaking agony that had gone down its glittering path, in the course of the inter-state slave-trade on the terrible voyages to New Orleans.

"There went Paul Snow's love," said Fanny; "and there went Zaffiri's dear old mauma. Afra," she exclaimed, "when a nation rejects conscience and the claims of natural rights, righteousness *wust* be bellowed forth from the cannon's mouth. Thank God! I have lived to behold this day. Here, mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. Its is overwhelming. The scenes in this city produce upon the beholder a sort of sacred vertigo."

Each held a bunch of grass in hand, which they had left the carriage to gather from the pavements of the streets. In doing this, they foraged among the cows, picturesquely herded in the thoroughfares, and grazing as complacently as in rural campaigns.

"What was Jeff Davis' prophecy about the grass in our Northern cities?" asked Afra.

"At Stephenson, Alabama, he said in a speech, 'England will recognize us, and a glorious future is before us. The grass will grow in Northern cities where the pavements have been worn off by the tread of commerce.' He said, also, 'They cannot rear the cities which took years of industry and millions of money to build,' meaning after the Southern army should have destroyed them.

"When he left Jackson for Montgomery, he said in another speech, 'If war must come it must be upon Northern and not upon Southern soil.'

"Alexander Stevens, the Confederate vice-president, said in a speech delivered after the formation of the rebel government, 'Its foundations are laid; its corner-stone rests upon the great truth, that the negro is not equal to the white man, that slavery, subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition.' This, our new government, is the first in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.

He also said, 'The new constitution (Confederate,) has put at rest forever, all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution.' "

"Where are their prophecies now?" asked Afra, separating the grass in her hand and holding it more carefully.

"In the tomb of Secession," replied Fanny. "I shall press this grass to send to our Northern friends. I shall label it '*Jeff Davis' prophecy fallen upon Charleston.*' "

CHAPTER XXXV.

ISSY PAISLEY remained in Europe two years after Madame Lambelle's return to Canada. His medical studies were completed at a German university, with increased remittances from his father who had learned the course his son was taking.

Four years before the war he returned to his American friends in Cloudspire, finding his old home again in the family of Squire Buddington. Doctor Clarendon's eyes were wet with joy, and the red bandana performed ample service when he first took Issy's hands, declaring,—

"Doctor Paisley is as fine and polished as any medical professor I have ever met."

After repeated conversations with the young physician upon his course of European study and his attainments, he said,—

"Doctor Paisley, you are fitted for any professional position in America. You have digested more books and theories than I have ever seen. I am old and worn out. It would be the happiest act of my life to transfer my practice to you. Would you have courage to make the attempt?"

"I think not, my good friend. Cloudspire's prejudice against my color would outweigh all the science of Europe; as to that matter, most places are alike, and prescriptions for the few friendly families here would not avail for my support."

"I have been thinking deeply on the matter," said the old doctor. "I think, Doctor Paisley, if you consent to my plan we can outwit this rare delicacy of taste in the Saxon tongue. If the thou-

sand and one patients will not allow you to take their pulse, because your fingers are brown, dose them without that formality. You and I know that a few simple causes produce a multiplicity of diseases. Set about remedying those causes by a few preparations and combinations known only to yourself. For instance, get up a preparation corrective to the stomach or liver, and that cures headaches, dyspepsia, biliousness et cetera. Get up another for lung difficulties, that will cure coughs, colds, croup, wheezing, whooping coughs and that terrible spectre, consumption. Give these preparations a high-sounding, mystified name, box and bottle them neatly, and I'm vigorous enough yet to go to Washington and get them patented in the name of Doctor Paisley, graduate of — that jaw-breaking German university of yours."

Issy laughed incredulously.

"Why bless you," cried Doctor Clarendon "the world is a fool and nobody knows it as well as a doctor. I've given bread-pills many a time to nervous, scarey women who *would be* sick whether or no; and, Doctor Paisley, bread-pills are a most efficient remedy."

Then he laughed with his old funny importance, run his fingers through his gray hair, and asked with a slap on his young friend's shoulder,—

"Doctor Paisley, will you make the trial? Dose the world — contrary to the curse of Canaan, the Christian church and the Constitution."

"Well, doctor, I will take this week to turn again the pages of my books, and if for nothing more, to convince you of my gratitude and love, I will bring to you a written list of different compounds for inspection."

"Good, Doctor Paisley. I must do something for your prosperity before my demise. The manufacture of patent medicines is a gold-bearing business. There are no midnight rides, nothing abhorrent to the sensibilities in that kind of practice. Suppose, now, you bring your books down to my office, here, and do the work; I shall have some spare time to devote to you. Don't take offense because I mentioned bread-pills. I know that everything you do will be scientific and worthy of my efforts in your behalf. Issy, you are welcome to my family. We are too much alone.

Lucy and Richard are away most of the time. Mrs. Clarendon will be rejuvenated by the history of your foreign experience and the cheerfulness of your company."

Issy yielded to the solicitations of both, and was soon domiciled with the doctor.

During the first evening in the office, his patron said,—

"You see, Doctor Paisley, at my house you are nearer to a certain young lady residing with Mrs. Beame. I can give you a ride to Alderbank occasionally, and at other times it will be an invigorating walk for you. How does Miss Addie Hughes meet your wishes? *We* call her a paragon of excellence, besides being good looking."

"I would not desire to make any change in Addie. During my four years absence she has grown intelligent and ladylike beyond my anticipations."

"Do you love that girl, Doctor Paisley?"

A velvet carmine flushed Issy's face, and his long, silken lashes hid the brightness of his eyes when he replied,—

"Addie is very dear to me, sir."

"Could you wish her joy if she was about to marry a stranger?"

"That will never be, sir," was the quick reply.

"Good," cried the doctor; "now you're all right;" and he fairly set the vials on the shelves rattling by his happy, uproarious laughter.

Dr. Clarendon's plans and prophecies for Issy's success were all perfected and bore golden fruitage. He bore back from Washington the necessary patents, and went from city to city to initiate the sale of medicines.

Three years after, Mrs. Beame's declining health rendered it probable that Addie would be left without a protector. Issy, by the advice of his friends, purchased a pleasant home in West Elms, with the funds he had saved from his father's annuity, and the ever-increasing proceeds of his medicine sales. Mrs. Beame, still declining, desired to see Addie well settled. She was permitted to witness her marriage within the home of her adoption, in the presence of all Issy's dear and fostering Cloudspire friends. After Fanny's bereavement, Dr. Paisley made his young bride the happy mistress of his newly purchased hearth and home.

During the war, he enlisted, a surgeon in a regiment of colored troops, and with them drifted away to Florida. While there, he was unexpectedly cheered by a call from Mr. Sterlingworth, with his wife and daughter. They found him occupying a charming Southern house surrounded with the tasteful comforts left by rebel fugitives from the approach of the federal forces?

"Strange! strange!" he said, after a cordial greeting, "that we should meet at this extreme of our land!"

"Ah!" remarked Mr. Sterlingworth, "the government has use for you and me now. We were brought to Florida on a government steamer. Uncle Sam is pleased, at present, to give pleasure trips to Abolitionists!"

"It is true, he showed us favors," said Fanny. "Our pleasure trips at government expense cannot equal the cost of a half dozen of the thousands of fugitive slave-cases, taken from the public treasury. I think the government should give Mr. Garrison and the rest of us a trip round the world!"

"I should like to see you, Dr. Paisley, in your uniform of army blue, and official badges, but you are quite comfortable in dressing-gown and slippers. How do you find Caste, in the army?"

"I find it, sir, especially at officer's table. If I had not learned in Europe the utter insignificance of this American display, it would be annoying; but it troubles me no more than a musquito's hum. I intend to appropriate *my* rights, without infringing upon the rights of *others*."

"That is a duty, doctor, to which I am happy to find you adhering."

"Where shall we meet again, sir?" asked Issy, at the close of the interview.

"At Charleston, I trust. I believe that city is doomed to fall into the hands of Justice."

Thus they parted, each maintaining unswerving faith in the ultimate triumph of Right.

About the time of the occupation of Charleston by the national army, Issy was mustered out of service, and impelled by that instinctive love of the place of one's birth, so common to all, he made his way there. There his wife, Addie, met him, and he obtained a position under the government. A fine house was assigned

them, and a choice of furniture from the abundance unclaimed.

He sought the house of Doctor Paisley, his father. It was occupied with Yankee officers and strange servants in attendance. Federal uniforms passed out and in; the halls and parlors resounded with clanking swords and triumphant cheer.

One fine morning, Issy sauntered into the commissary rooms to witness the destitution of which he heard daily accounts. Among the crowd of men and women receiving rations from the enemy, as the Northern army was styled, Issy observed a face which he thought he recognized, though changed by time in beauty and expression. The dress of the lady was plain mourning, in a style long past. She gave her basket of rations to a ragged little colored urchin, and bade him follow her.

Issy, curious to convince himself, stepped carelessly after her, preserving an unsuspecting distance, in the rear. At the corner, a gentleman met the lady, and accosted the boy.

"Do you go to school?" he inquired.

"No, sir."

"Do you live with her?"

"No, sir."

Issy drew near.

"Put down that basket then, and come with me," the gentleman continued. "Education is free, in Charleston, now!"

The lady was enraged.

"What!" she cried, "do these low Yankees take our servants from us? Do you mean, wretch, that I shall carry that basket of provisions through the streets? I, a daughter of Doctor Paisley?"

The gentleman had the boy by the hand. The basket was dropped on the walk.

The unknown walked away with the child, but Issy caught a comical smile lurking about his mouth and eyes. He advanced, and bowing, said,—

"Mistress Valmonte, I am Issy, your former slave."

Astonished and angry, she asked,—

"To whom do you belong now? No! I suppose you claim freedom, since General Hardee abandoned us!"

"How is Doctor Paisley, Ernestin and Corinne, madam?"

"My father is dead. This war killed him. Ernestin has given

his life on the battlefield, for our Southern cause. Corinne is with me, in poverty. Oh! all is gone!" She stood wringing her hands. "My beautiful home is filled and defiled with defiant Yankee officers, while Corinne and I have no where to lay our heads. We are sheltered temporarily by a friend as destitute as I am. My plantation house is burned and my negroes refuse to obey the overseer! Issy, take up that basket and follow me."

Theresa Valmonte turned and strode on. Issy smilingly took the basket, not in the spirit of obedience, however. He had intended to offer his aid. This new phase of freedom pleased him. Madam Valmonte ascended the steps of her friend's house, saying, curtly,—

"Bring up the basket and ring the bell."

He did this also, and then said,—

"Mistress Valmonte, I am living in the city; if you will call at my residence, I may be able to assist you."

She listened to the street and number, saying,—

"You hire the kitchens, I suppose. You ought to help me. All my slaves ought to help me. I tell them so. You can go now."

He turned and went on his way.

The next day, in the twilight, she came with Corinne, to the side gate and asked for Issy. Being shown into the parlors, she said,—

"It must be a mistake; he must occupy the kitchens."

"Oh, no, madam," replied Addie, offering seats. "Issy will be in immediately."

Addie sat down herself.

Madam addressed her tartly. "If you are a servant in the family, why do you sit in my presence? I am not accustomed to have negroes sit with me."

Issy entered, heard her words, saluted and sat, also. Haughty, starched, and silent, he eyed both.

Issy opened conversation. "Mistress Valmonte, allow me to explain my situation here; there will be a better understanding between us."

"Go on."

"I have been a free man for years before the war. In the North, I have been educated, and through the kindness of friends, have

spent five years in Europe, in the study of medicine. I am a physician, although at present I have a position under the Federal Government. I occupy this *house*, not the kitchens. I am married; this is my wife, Mrs. Addie Paisley."

"*You* have studied medicine. *You* have studied in Europe. A fabrication, I dare presume. Negro testimony is worthless. If you have this house, give me one of the chambers — not one on the street. I do not care to be shocked by the passing of negro and Yankee troops!"

"There are two large, square chambers, Madame Valmonte. You can choose either. Have you furniture for your use?" said Issy, nobly passing over her continued insults.

"Not a piece of furniture. I have been robbed of all by this war, thrust upon us by the thirst for blood which possesses those low-bred, coarse myridons of the North. No, I have not a piece; you must supply it. Have the room ready by to-morrow night. I shall come then."

She arose without deigning to bestow a look upon Addie, and went straight to the hall door. Persistently kind, Issy held the door open for his arrogant sister to pass out. Addie followed them into the hall, respectfully, saw the white hand of Corinne seeking hers, and felt the warm, silent pressure.

Madame said sternly, without turning her head,—

"Ishmael, send a conveyance for our trunks, at eight o'clock."

When the door was closed, Addie re-entered the parlor with both hands raised in angry surprise, and broke into contemptuous laughter.

"Hush, darling Addie," cried Issy, in an undertone. "I know it's enough to provoke a saint, but the pleasure of seeing that proud woman humbled in my house, more than compensates for the towering insults she rains upon us both. I feared you would break out in some truthful repartee, in reply to her scorching language. I remembered you had been educated by Fanny Beame, but you was a good girl and kept silent."

Addie perched herself on Issy's knee, slid her arm about his neck, and said,—

"I followed you, dear Issy. You are always so calm and wise, I knew you must be right. If Mistress Valmonte is *your* sister she's

my sister too ; but, I declare, I would not do one thing for her, only in consideration of that charming Miss Corinne who looked so troubled at her mother's *brusquerie*. Do you know, Issy, in going through the street door she reached her hand back and pressed mine ; Mrs. Beame, dead and gone, my second mother, would have turned Theresa out of doors, in a twinkling."

"Corinne," replied Issy, "was always a lovely child before I was sold. In the Paisley-house, she would run to me and nestle down in my arms, lay her soft rosy cheek against mine, and say, 'Corinne love Issy.' She *would* divide her goodies with me ; many a time I have led her about these streets chattering as sweetly as the birds above us. But, dear Addie, her mother is all wrong ! Slavery was all wrong ! It has hardened her heart to stone. She is coming here, nevertheless, and let us both try to practice the Golden Rule which, so far, has guided our lives. Theresa will be a most trying occupant of our house, but when you find your patience waning run to me as you have now, and I will brood away the wrongs."

During the next day Issy obtained the proper military order for furniture, and at night the chambers were handsomely furnished. At eight o'clock a mule and cart brought the two trunks. Mistress Valmonte began housekeeping without a servant. Corinne had learned to make tea and coffee ; braving the fretful repinings of her mother, she tried her hand in the kitchen at cooking bacon and hominy. Addie's servant became attached to the bright girl directly, and taught and assisted her in every possible way. Corinne swept and dusted their chamber, while her mother sat rocking and murmuring about her daughter's soiled and blistered hands. Mistress Valmonte went out every day to call on some of her old circle of friends. Her black cotton gloves were faded and worn, but carefully darned by Corinne's needle. She wore the same black dress from week to week, often sponged and repaired by her dutiful daughter.

"On one of these occasions Corinne remaining alone, came down to the parlor to sit with Addie.

"My mother will be absent for the day," she said, pleasantly, "and I wish to see you and Issy, to beg you to overlook mamma's eccentricities. She declares she cannot endure the noisy play of

your children and the company you have, and she is resolved to lecture you about it."

"Come, sit down, dear Corinne," said Addie, laughing. "Rest yourself and make a pleasant day of it. Your work is hard for you."

Corinne took the handsome arm-chair offered, and drawing a sigh, replied,—

"I confess the work tries me because I am so ignorant how to do it. I am gaining, however; it will be lighter after a little."

"Now, in reference to your mother's requirements, do not borrow trouble about it. Whatever she says to us, will receive a respectful notice, without the least offence. I know my two children, Henry and Susie, are boisterous; we consider romping and laughter healthy for them, but we can easily modify our arrangements."

"You are so kind, Addie; believe me, I appreciate it. I have one more favor to ask; shall I do so?"

"Certainly, Miss Corinne."

"I will venture, then. Mamma frets over the coarse brown sugar we get in our rations, and craves the white loaf sugar she used to have for her tea and coffee. She also craves fresh milk, in lieu of the canned milk we are forced to use. Milk now, is twenty-five cents a quart. Addie, we have no money but the Confederate bills, and although mamma *will say* she prefers them to greenbacks, they are entirely useless for purchase or exchange. They are no more value than so much wrapping-paper."

Both Addie and Corinne joined in a merry laugh over the Confederate bills.

Corinne proceeded,—

"We left our house in the city for two reasons. It was in range of General Gilmore's guns; and next, because our plantation had no head to it—it needed a supervisor. While we were there warning was sent to us that Yankee troops would pass our way, mamma and I hastily packed two large trunks and with the aid of two faithful servants, carried them into the woods and buried them. Those are the two trunks up stairs; one is filled with costly clothing and mamma's diamonds, the other with our wearing apparel and some silver. The rest of our silver fell into the hands of the

army. Our splendid house was burned to ashes, with all it contained; also our barns, rice mill and overseer's house."

"Addie, I blush to confess the reason, mamma was beside herself. She insulted the white officers, reviling them with every Southern epithet at her command. She actually spit in the colored soldiers' faces. I trembled from head to foot and besought her to be calm. She would not listen. The soldiers were exasperated and at the command of the officers applied the torch to all. She took the black whip in her own hands and lashed our slaves, ordering them to put out the fires. Then the officers ordered all our slaves to follow the regiments and be free. Of course they fled with them and we were left houseless and alone."

"We are here now with only those two trunks. We are in mourning for Ernestin and Grandpapa Paisley, and shall probably remain so for years. Mamma concluded yesterday to sell the silk and muslin dresses, bright shawls and sacks with jewelry and two of our watches. We have six fine gold watches. When she told me, she threw herself on the bed, and wept and moaned herself into a hysterical attack. To sooth her, I begged her to think no more of it and promised to take charge of the sale myself."

The tears were streaming down Corinne's cheeks.

"I know none of our acquaintances will purchase them, for they are selling their own and there is no money. There are no banks, stocks or savings — no factors or debtors — all have been scattered to the winds. Have you any Northern acquaintances, Addie, who would be likely to purchase? Can you help me?"

"Do not weep, dear Miss Corinne," said Addie tenderly, standing by her and gently fanning her flushed face. "I will help you. I have Northern acquaintances here, and will ascertain this very evening. Will you trust me with one of the watches you wish to dispose of? I will take it out with me and bring you word to-morrow concerning the dresses and other articles. Leave it to me, Miss Corinne, my friends will assist me."

Addie cast a glance out of the open window.

"Issy is coming; stay, do not retire; he will comfort you, dear Corinne; he is strong and comforts everybody."

Issy gave his wife her usual kiss and bowed low to Corinne.

"I am happy to meet you below," he said. "Little Corinne

used to be my pet, and I have not lost my affection for her during these long years. Our dinner is on the table, if you would not consider the invitation an offense I would ask you to partake a freshly cooked meal with us."

"Issy, I will sit at your table with pleasure. Mamma is away for the day, arranging to send our diamonds to London for sale, with those of several other ladies."

"Never mind, Miss Corinne, diamonds are but stones. Tender hearts are better. You are surrounded by the latter in all these strangers who may appear so callous to you. Come to the dining-room." As of old, he held the door aside for her to pass through.

Issy kept the conversation general and lively. The dishes were Northern and varied. Corinne enjoyed the repast and returned to the parlor with her hosts.

"Issy," asked Corinne, "may I inquire who was so kind as to defray your expenses in obtaining a medical profession? I think the Northerners are better hearted than I have been taught to believe."

"Shall I inform you, Miss Corinne?"

"Certainly, Issy."

"My dear young lady, Northerners are kind, but so are *some* Southerners. I am indebted to a Southern slave-holder for my education."

"Pray, what Southerner?"

"To Doctor Paisley, miss. Shall I relate my early history of which you, doubtless, have never been made acquainted?"

"I beg you to do so."

"I fear to shock you, Miss Corinne, but Doctor Paisley was my father. He loved his brown son, freed me, and furnished funds, annually, for my education."

Corinne's face grew pallid; she asked hurriedly,—

"Does mamma know this?"

"She knows I am her brother, and that she mortgaged me for sale because I *was* her brother. Doctor Paisley was fond of me. I was given to her when a child. Mistress Valmonte owned me. When Doctor Paisley learned of this mortgage he bought me secretly and took me North."

"Do not speak of it to mamma, I beseech of you, for my sake.

I could not endure the result ; but, Issy, I am rejoiced that grand-papa was capable of that act. Is it possible that you are mamma's brother?" she smiled through her tears. "Then, Issy, you are Corinne's uncle."

"If relationship was ever claimed with slaves, I am so," said Issy, smilingly. I shall never bring up old issues with Theresa Valmonte ; and certainly, if silence is my shield to your sorrow, I promise you that."

"Thank you, Uncle Issy. I am astonished beyond expression and can speak of this denouement no more at present. Excuse me."

She withdrew, and returned bringing with her the two watches before spoken of, saying,—

"I am desirous of selling these as soon as possible."

She placed them in Addie's care who went directly to Issy.

"Are they not beautiful? Mistress Valmonte wishes to sell them. Perhaps we can assist Miss Corinne as she has taken the task upon herself."

Issy opened the larger one and saw engraved within "*Doctor L. Paisley.*" The case was large, heavy, and of fine gold, curiously engraved with the long-ago coat of arms of his ancient ancestry. The chain was heavy and of modern make, to which was attached an elegant seal engraved with the family name, "PAISLEY."

Corinne sat silently weeping, Addie fanning her with one hand and smoothing her fair hair with the other.

"Has Mistress Valmonte set a price upon these watches?" asked Issy.

"One hundred dollars apiece," Corinne replied.

Issy left the room for a few moments, and returned laying one hundred dollars in Corinne's lap.

"Oh! thank you, Issy!" she exclaimed. It is appropriate that you should have grandpapa's watch. But it seems cruel to take compensation for it. If we were not in absolute want I would not accept it."

"Do not have a thought for me, dear young lady. I am in circumstances which the North terms 'well off.' I have *one* never-failing income — I have my profession — a paying position now ; and, besides, I own a pleasant home in Massachusetts. I will not

wear this chain at present ; your mother's sorrow might be aggravated by the sight of it."

"Thank you for that consideration."

"Now, Miss Corinne, if you are happier below with Addie, than in the solitude of your chamber, we entreat you to remain. I must return to business."

In the evening, Issy and his wife called upon Mrs. Sterlingworth, to make, if possible, a sale of the dresses. Their servant followed after, with a large bundle of the articles, which Addie spread out in dazzling and attractive beauty.

"The price of human beings, and unpaid labor!" said Fanny, sorrowfully. "The master and mistress clothed in elegance ; the toiler half-clad in coarse, scanty garments."

"But who thought, Fanny, we despised Abolitionists, we, the bané of Southern minds, should ever see these elegant articles offered for sale, to lift the burden of destitution from the proud slave-holder. Let us buy a silk dress for our Afra, that she may be clothed in the garments of righteousness."

"Say retribution, Reuben," answered Fanny.

"Synonymous with God's righteousness, Fanny. Afra dear, come select for yourself."

"I should take the blue silk," said Afra, "and this embroidered white lace shawl."

"Very well," replied her father ; "take *your* choice Fanny. The purple and brown plaid satin, perhaps."

"Do you not think, Mr. Sterlingworth, you could find a buyer for this watch?" asked Addie ; and this shawl cost a thousand dollars at the opening of the war. Mistress Valmonte will sell it for one hundred dollars."

"I will do my best, Mrs. Paisley," he replied. "Their war has been fruitful of sorrow to them as well as to us."

"I, too, will endeavor to aid in the sale of these articles," added Afra, "for the sake of distressed Corinne."

Addie drew Afra out upon the piazza, saying,—

"I desire to impart a bit of information, respecting the blue silk dress you purchased. It was bought and was made up for Corinne to wear at a large party given to Southern officers, by Mistress Valmonte, in commemoration of the downfall of Sumter's

National Flag in 1861. She wore it on that occasion, and once afterwards at another celebration of the rout of the Yankees in the first great battle of Bull Run. Her brother Ernestin was killed soon after, and she has never worn it since. The dress is historical, Afra."

"Then I, an anti-war and an anti-slavery daughter of the North, will add an interesting supplement to the gay chapter. I will wear it to the raising of the triumphant 'Old Flag' over Sumter, on the approaching fourteenth of April, 1865."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN April, 1865, Mr. Sterlingworth, coming up the walk to dinner and observing Afra in the garden among the roses, drew her into the parlor by saying,—

"Come, humming bird, leave the flowers; I've a pocket full of letters."

Away she flew and playfully thrusting her arm through his, went up the marble steps with her father. He bade her speak to Fanny, that they should enjoy the letters together, and the three were soon busy with the generous mail.

Fanny soon held up hers, exclaiming with animation,—

"Guess!"

"I guess Madame Lambelle; the post-mark is New York," said Afra; "Oh, mother, have I guessed right?"

"You have, Afra. Claude and Zaffiri will be here to witness the raising of the dear old flag over Fort Sumter."

Afra finished reading, and with laughing eyes held the letter back of her chair and said,—

"Guess!"

"The teachers on the island?"

"No, try again."

"Filette and George from Cloudspire?"

"Better still; Uncle Richard and Lucy. They will arrive with Mr. Lambelle and his wife. Dear father, what news have you?"

"What do you think, ladies? We are to welcome Captain Thad Buddington, from Savannah. His time of enlistment in Sherman's

army expired some time since. He desires to see the old flag reinstated on Sumter, and will stop here on his way North. He informs me he has a surprise in store for us all.

“The fourteenth of April will be a day of surprises,” said Fanny, “very agreeable surprises.”

“Welcome to the Abolitionists!” said Afra; “we have ample accommodations, and can entertain them sumptuously.”

“I have other papers of additional interest,” remarked Mr. Sterlingworth. Here are the orders of General Gilmore and Admiral Dalghren for to-morrow.”

He gave one to Fanny, and one to Afra, saying,—

“Read them aloud my darlings. These orders are the voice of God. To us, they are the peans of holy Victory, Justice and white-winged Peace.”

Fanny read in a voice tremulous with grateful joy,—

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH, }
HILTON HEAD, S. C., April 10, 1865. }

[*General Orders. No 41.*]

Friday next, the 14th inst., will be the fourth anniversary of the capture of Fort Sumter by the Rebels. A befitting celebration on that day, in honor of its reoccupation by the National forces, has been ordered by the President, in pursuance of which, Brevet Major-General Robert Anderson, United States Army, will restore to its original place on the fort the identical flag which, after an honorable and gallant defense, he was compelled to lower to the insurgents in South Carolina, in April, 1861.

The ceremonies for the occasion will commence with prayer, at thirty minutes past 11 o'clock, A. M.

At noon, precisely, the flag will be raised and saluted with one hundred guns from Fort Sumter, and with a National salute from Fort Moultrie and Battery Bee, on Sullivan's Island, Fort Putnam on Morris' Island and Fort Johnson on James' Island; it being eminently that the places which were so conspicuous in the inauguration of the rebellion, should take a part not less prominent in the national rejoicing over the restoration of the national authority.

After the salutes, the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher will deliver an address.

The ceremonies will close with prayer and a benediction.

Colonel Stewart L. Woodford, chief of the staff, under such verbal instructions as he may receive, is hereby charged with the details of the celebration, comprising all the arrangements that it may be necessary to make for the accommodation of the orator of the day, and the comfort and safety of the invited guests from the army and navy and from civil.

By command of Major-General Q. A. GILMORE.

W. L. M. BURGER,

Assistant Adjutant-General,

“Afra, dear, read your Psalm of Peace,” said her father, who did not deem the thankful tears in his own eyes unmanly.

She read,—

FLAGSHIP PHILADELPHIA,
CHARLESTON HARBOR, S. C., April 13, 1865. }

[*General Order. No 36.*]

(THIRD YEARLY SERIES.)

The public prints announce the surrender of the rebel army, under General Lee, to the Commanding General of the United States Army.

As the ceremony ordered for the formal restoration of the Union Flag to Sumter will occupy the greater part of to-morrow, it only remains to give the rest of the day to some appropriate recognition of an event which seems to leave no further power of effective resistance to the rebellion.

The vessels of the Squadron will therefore dress-ship, in full colors, to-morrow, at 8 o'clock, A. M., and at the same time every vessel will fire a National salute of twenty-one guns.

Twenty-one guns will also be fired at sunset, when the flags are hauled down.

JOHN A. DAHLGREN, Rear Admiral,
Commanding So. Atlantic Blockading Squadron.

“There, dry your tears, both of you. More news yet. The ‘Oceanus’ was steaming up the bay, when I started home. I presume Richard and Claude, Lucy and Zaffiri are aboard. I am going to meet them with Mr. John’s rebel carriage.”

He rang the bell for Abram, gave orders for tea, and departed.

After the embracings and rejoicings, Richard said to Fanny,—

“Sister, how splendidly you live here, in the rebel city! Elegance and luxury surround you. If you were not my radical sister, a suspicion of your antecedents would invade my happiness. Slave-holders lived like this!”

“True, Richard,” laughed Lucy. “Mirrors in which the whole family is reflected at once! Marble and velvet furniture! Three servants! Oleanders, jasmins, roses, orange trees, vegetable-garden, et cetera!”

“Delightful! delightful!” ejaculated Zaffiri. “A fine piano for Afra’s skilful fingers, also.”

The morning of the fourteenth dawned with a bright promise for the day. About ten o’clock, nine steamers with flags flying and bands playing, left the docks amid the enthusiastic cheering of spectators and the joyful clamor of their crowded decks.

Richard, looking back at the gala fleet, said to his friends,—

“What a sublime spectacle we witness to-day. Compensation has come at last, to the ‘boys in blue,’ who have borne the strife of battle, and to our government which so faithfully put down this insurrection.”

“Thoughts of this magnificent scene makes one faint,” exclaimed Zaffiri. “That I should have lived to see this day.”

Without accident the participants in the national *fete* were landed. Over the parapets and down the long stairway to the parade ground of the fort, flowed a rainbow-hued cascade of bright uniforms, gay dresses, handsome young officers, sun-burned veterans, happy faces and sparkling eyes.

After the recitation of the *Te Deum* and prayer; after the reading by Rev. R. L. Storrs, Jr., D. D., and the audience, alternately, of Psalms 126, 47, 98 and 20, and the reading of Major Anderson’s dispatch to the Government of the fate of Sumter, dated April 18, 1861, Major Anderson and his faithful Sargaent Hart unfurled the glorious old banner, with an evergreen wreath attached, and with many loyal hands hold of the halyards, up! up! to the top of the staff the starry emblem floated on the strong breeze, and the indescribable enthusiasm of the multitude below. Simultaneously the assemblage rose, and for fifteen minutes saluted the dear symbol of Hope and Peace with cheers, hats, handkerchiefs, tears, smiles and joyful acclamation.

Two hundred guns saluted the flag and bellowed forth victory to the echoing shores.

“Let us listen,” said Mr. Lambelle seriously, “with reverence to these iron voices which have proclaimed to our nation the words of truth and soberness, that reason and religion have failed to utter. Barbarians that we are, let us admire the sulphurous mouths that have thundered, ‘*Let the oppressed go free.*’”

The orders of General Gilmore were enthusiastically carried out, and at the close of the exercises the vast collection scattered over the fort, seeking mementos of the occasion. Bits of woods, pieces of rusty shell, fragments of masonry, splints of half-buried gabions, wave-washed pebbles and broken sea shells were hoarded by all, withered flowers and green sprays were gathered from the speakers stand and borne away with sacred memories.

Strangers swarmed in and out of the dismal casemates or grouped upon the parapets. In one of the former, Richard discovered Captain Thad Buddington hardy and tanned.

"Welcome, brave soldier," said Lucy. "You must have carried a charmed life with the musket and knapsack. Mary will embrace you with a grateful heart."

"*I have lived to see the murder of my father avenged!* Mrs. Beame, every shot from my hand has been *winged with his name*; and I have seen it do bloody work; I have not come out of this war unscathed, but I am content with its achievements. Where are the Sterlingworths?"

"In the wilderness, somewhere," said Richard. "You will accompany us home?"

"I shall do so with pleasure. Beg Mrs. Sterlingworth not to wait tea for me; I shall take my supper at the Charleston Hotel. The steamer 'Anna Maria' is at the landing. Excuse my haste."

He bounded up the long stairway and disappeared. Every eye at leaving the fort gave the flag a benediction, and kindled afresh in contemplating the colors that dressed the squadron in recognition of Lee's surrender.

After tea, Afra lured her Uncle Richard and Lucy into the streets, and after an interesting inspection of the curious throngs, led them, unwarned, to Issy's home.

During their absence, Captain Thad Buddington, accompanied by an old negro slave, paid his promised visit.

"Sit down, June," said the captain, "in this parlor; let the kitchen take care of itself. You are among friends, now."

The gray-haired old slave obeyed, taking his seat in a corner.

"Come up among us," said Mr. Sterlingworth, with the consideration which his family ever manifested to one of his class. "You have served all your life. Learn to be free as soon as possible."

"I have not served all my life, sir," replied June. "I was born free."

"Ah! were you kidnapped in the North?"

"I was shipwrecked and cast ashore on one of the sea islands, sir; was picked up by Southerners and put in Charleston work-

house. I was kept there a long time, and then was sold into slavery to pay my jail fees, sir."

"Why did you not insist that you was free, or write to your Northern friend, if you had any?" asked Fanny, pityingly.

Mr. Lambelle answered for June.

"Why, Mrs. Sterlingworth, in the first place he could get no one to write for him, and in the next, if he had written a hundred letters for himself they would all have been destroyed instead of being posted. This man, June, would have been used in the same manner if he had sailed a free seaman, cook or steward, into the port of Charleston. He would have been imprisoned till the vessel sailed away, and if overlooked and left behind he would have been sold all the same.

"The Legislature of South Carolina passed an act in 1835 to that effect. The captain of such vessels bringing from other ports free cooks, stewards or mariners were obliged to enter into a 'recognizance with good and sufficient surety for such free negro or slave, so brought into this State that he would comply with the requisitions of this act,' and on his neglect or refusal, or disability to do the same, he was compelled to haul his vessel into the stream one hundred yards distant from the shore and remain there until the vessel should proceed to sea. If the captain refused this, he was indicted and convicted, made to pay one thousand dollars and suffer imprisonment six months."

"Our sea-captains were not over-zealous for the welfare of free colored people," said Mr. Sterlingworth, "and many a poor fellow has been left in jail to be sold at *vendue*. The State was benefitted by this act, for it had one half the proceeds of the sale of every one."

"Many a one," answered Mr. Lambelle. "This nefarious act brought Samuel Hoar to Charleston in 1844, to confer with the Governor, for the purpose of having the legality of such imprisonment tried before the Supreme Court, and the 'collection and transmission of accurate information, respecting the number and the names of citizens of Massachusetts who have heretofore been or may be imprisoned without the allegation of any crime.

"He and his daughter staid at the hotel three days, submitting to insults and threats. The legislature convened at that time in

Columbia, received information from Governor Hammond, of the letter that Mr. Hoar had addressed to him, and in frantic haste passed resolutions, expelling that gentleman from the State."

"What was the substance of those resolutions," asked Fanny, eagerly.

"I can repeat the last two, for it has been the business of my life to study and observe Southern motives and diplomacy. In the first place, Mr. Hoar was denominated a seditious person, dangerous to the State. The third resolution read thus,—

"That the emissary sent by the State of Massachusetts to the State of South Carolina, with the avowed purpose of interfering with her institutions and disturbing her peace, is to be regarded in the character he has assumed, and to be treated accordingly."

"The fourth resolution was in these words,—

"That his Excellency, the Governor, be requested to expel from our Territory the said agent, after due notice to depart; and that the legislature will sustain the executive authority in any measure it may adopt for the purpose aforesaid."

"Gentlemen informed Mr. Hoar that he was in imminent danger while remaining in the city, and the hotel-keeper demanded he should leave for the safety of his house. He was compelled to enter a carriage at the door, and take a boat homeward."

"Ah!" laughed the captain, "Columbia dared not try her legislative enactments on the sixty thousand seditious persons led by Sherman, although I think the peace of the State was more disturbed by his forces, than by the gentlemanly mission of Mr. Hoar!"

"True, true!" ejaculated Fanny; more carriages would be necessary than are left in this city, to expel the Yankees from the Charleston Hotel."

"You would have to deal with General Gilmore, to-night," said Mr. Sterlingworth."

"We have forgotten our friend, June," said Zaffiri. "Did you not insist to your jailors that you were free?"

"It was of no use, ma'am. I was paid for it by the whip. I saw one man in the work-house that I knew in the North. I appealed to him, but with one oath, he declared every word I said was false."

"In what Northern State did you live before your shipwreck?"

"In Massachusetts, ma'am."

"What part — or what town?"

"In Alderbank, near Cloudspire."

Startled and amazed, she asked,—

"Had you many acquaintances there, and what were their names?"

"I knew the town's people generally. One family were friends to me and my wife and children. Their name was Beame. Fanny Beame was kind to Susan, my wife, and to my children. I worked for Deacon Steele and others, but my life was hard there, and I tried the sea."

"Trembling nervously, she asked,—

"What was your name?"

"Henry Hughes, madam."

"Do you know that lady, June, who addressed you?" asked the captain.

"Her voice seems like one I heard years ago."

Mrs. Sterlingworth rushed to June, seized his hand, and cried,—

"I am Fanny Beame! the same Fanny Beame that loved Susie and your children!"

She buried her face in her hands and wept, while the bent form of the old slave bowed lower, dropping tears upon his clasped hands.

Zaffiri wept with Fanny and June. The bright light of the chandelier grew dim to sterner eyes than theirs.

For many minutes there was the solemn silence of grief. At length the captain said,—

"I have told June nothing of his family. He knew not that he was to meet you here. He wished to go North under my protection."

"Tell him all, Ruben," sobbed Fanny to her husband. "I cannot! Oh! how dreadful this is!"

"June, what were your children's names?" he asked.

"Will and Addie, sir."

"Well, Henry Hughes, there is good news for your last days, even in this accursed city. Your daughter, Addie, is married to a

physician and gentleman. She lives in good style, is what we call wealthy. Susie, your wife, is dead!"

The old man groaned, and wrung his hands.

"She is buried in Cloudspire graveyard. Willie, your son is a lawyer in Boston, a man of excellent reputation."

"Where is Addie, sir?" moaned June.

"She is in this city, ready to welcome her long-lost father."

Merry voices were heard coming up the walk. Mr. Sterlingworth passed into the hall, saying,—

"You are excused, I will meet my friends at the door."

He took the party to the privacy of another room and related to Issy and Addie the surprise of the evening, also to Afra, Richard and Lucy.

Addie, sobbing wildly, almost fainted in the arms of her husband.

"It cannot be! it cannot be!" she repeated, over and over.

"Hush, my poor Addie," said Issy, at last, "Let us turn our tears to rejoicing over the lost one. Let us take his broken heart to our own home and tender keeping. Are you not glad, my poor darling? This is but *one* of the cruelties of slavery. Thousands upon thousands have suffered the agonies of your dear father without the compensation that will come to his old age to-night, when he clasps you to his heart. Let us go to him; he has *three* children now, Addie."

Richard and Lucy had already made themselves known to Henry, who was still standing. Addie entered the parlor with Issy, looked upon the tall, bent form, and with a cry sprang forward and threw her arms about his neck,—

"Dear, dear, father!" she sobbed, "I am Addie! your lost Addie!"

"Such scenes as these are the results of this bloody war," said Richard. "This first fruit of freedom was reserved for our eyes, Lucy."

While our friends are revolving and enjoying the happy reunion, another scene was being enacted in a private chamber at the Charleston Hotel.

Three names had been written on the books with which the reader is familiar.

M. Justine Sillton, Ohio. Mrs. Edmée Sillton, Ohio. Mrs. May B. Dentelle, and servant, Savannah, Ga.

Edmée Sillton and May Dentelle retired immediately after the tea hour to the chamber of the latter.

While General Gilmore's grand reception occupied the attention of the host and corps of servants, while the music of the band echoed on the night, these two ladies held their conversation undisturbed till a late hour.

May, like the majority of Southern ladies, wore deep mourning; her fine features were impressed with an habitual sadness; but changing entirely the gay, blooming, animated expression of former years.

Mrs. Sillton, grown older, was the personification of health and happiness.

"Dear Edmée, I think you grow superb as you advance in years," said May with a mournful smile. "You have the inspiration of continued love about you. You thrive on sweet memories, while I need daily draughts of the waters of Lethe, to live the joyless life left to me. Augustus sleeps in an unknown grave among those who vainly sacrificed their lives for the South. Mamma Bloome died in Europe, and my three sweet children exhaled from my sight like sparkling dew-drops in the morning sun."

"To lose friends, dear May, is the common lot of all; time will heal grief — hope will spring anew in future days."

"No, Mrs. Sillton, time will not change or soften *one* phase of my life. It is that which brought me here to meet you in Charleston. It is that mystery which I am about to ask you to help me solve."

"Proceed, May."

"Edmée, I know myself the most part of my life, but there are faint dream-like, indistinct memories floating over my brain which I cannot clearly recall. These turbid recollections would not have stirred but for old 'June,' my servant of years, and to whom I am much attached. Since Sherman opened Savannah to his forces our slaves have become free. In February last, I noticed a deep anxiety brooding constantly on old June's face. He was constantly studying me; following me with an earnest and troubled

look ; fixing his gaze upon me, till he became so lost to everything that he heard not even my orders.

“ I questioned him concerning this unwonted abstraction and finally forced him to reveal what troubled him. To come to the fatal truth, he almost convinced me that I was born a slave in South Carolina — that my mother’s name was ‘ Isabel ’ — that my father sold me to a slave-trader for the New Orleans market, and that my baby name was ‘ Lillian.’ ”

“ Who did he say your father was, May ? ”

“ William Steele on Colonel Fairland’s plantation ; and would you believe I have read that name on a small stone, *myself*, under the trees down by the river, on that same plantation. I can speak of it coolly, now, but I was prostrated in bed by a nervous fever brought on by this revelation.”

“ How could June know all this ? ”

“ Where do you imagine he professes to have learned my history, Edmée ? he says in Massachusetts ; that this William Steele went North, years ago, to visit his brother ; that he, June, sat in the kitchen by the open door and heard it all. William Steele told his brother that my mother was nearly white ; that he obliged her to live with him a year or more ; that she died and was buried by the river. Edmée, *I have seen two graves there.* ”

“ May, how could this old slave have been in Massachusetts ? ”

“ He says he was free and was shipwrecked on the coast of South Carolina, was taken to the work-house and after some time was sold.”

“ Then I cannot understand why he should dare to select *you* for this child, sold to a traveling trader. Why *you* more than a thousand other ladies ? Who owned June before Augustus bought him for you ? ”

“ Colonel Haywood. He bought him from the work-house at public sale. Oh ! you asked how he dared to select *me*. He says I continually remind him of the Steeles in my voice, and certain resemblances in my features. He came finally to be *impressed* that I was Lillian, how much soever he strove against it. He said a voice, everywhere, whether he was asleep or awake declared it. He heard William Steele say that when I was born, a *mark like drops of blood flowing down* was on my shoulders. That Isabel, my

so-called mother, was brought up delicately and for some reason was sold to work in the field ; that she could not do her task and the driver cut her shoulders with his black whip till the blood flowed and she fainted. Following his impressions, June persuaded my dressing-maid to tell him, before hand, if there were blood marks on my shoulders, without giving her a reason. *Edmée, they are there.*"

May, who had successfully struggled with her feelings till the present moment, broke down, and gave way to an uncontrollable fit of weeping. In broken and incoherent sentences, she cried,—

"Oh, Mrs. Sillton, I cannot be a slave ! I cannot go down so low. I have been educated and raised among the noblest of the land ; I cannot lose caste, and with it the respect to which I have been accustomed. I would rather die. I have been tempted again and again to throw myself into the Savannah."

"Does Papa Bloome know anything of this ?"

"Not a syllable,"

"Does your father-in-law, Dentelle, dream of it ?"

"Oh ! Edmee, he was forced to know it. Those two terrible weeks I was delirious and raved about all June had told me. Papa Dentelle has idolized me since my first acquaintance with Augustus, and he watched me then day and night. He had a couch made for himself in my chamber and nursed me with anxious solicitations. He selected Augustus' old nurse to attend with him ; she did not hear much ; he would have her come in only as occasion required. When I recovered, he opened the subject and told me to preserve silence to others ; and if, after seeing you, my slave birth should be corroborated to keep silence forever. He said,—

" ' May, I am an old man ; the deaths of nearly all my family have broken my spirit. I have no one to supply Augustus' place but you, my child. I love you now in spite of this great dread, which you term disgrace. Be calm, and live to comfort my last days. '

"Oh ! I love Papa Dentelle as well as Papa Bloome. But I feel this infamy myself. I am proud, Edmée. How can I ever meet Madame Lambelle, and maintain this falsehood of rank and high-birth, if it really be one ? "

“May,” said Mrs. Sillton, “I have learned that being a slave does not confer disgrace. The advancing age calls for equality among the races of men. The tendency of nations and communities is towards a universal recognition of rights. The voice of God and Nature demand it. Suppose you really had been born a slave, to follow the condition of your mother’s bondage, ignorance and subjection. Would that have changed the inherent possibilities of your nature? Would you not be then, in mental faculties and moral capacity, just what you are now? In refinement and culture, you would have been repulsively different no doubt. To what would this difference be due? May, only to lack of opportunity. Do you not see there is no caste but the wicked distinction that men in power force upon the helpless and oppressed. What harm if you *were* born a slave? Slavery is dead forever.”

“Oh, Edmée! I never heard you speak this way before — you, so proud and blue blooded.”

“May, I never had occasion, and blue blood has found its proper level. It has soaked into the soil to nourish into life *something more beautiful than Southern pride.*”

“Edmée! dear Edmée! all this is a new language to me. I cannot comprehend it. Let us return to myself. Help me, I pray, to unravel the mystery I am searching out. *Was I born a slave? and if so, how come I to be Papa Bloome’s daughter?*”

Mrs. Sillton, who had been pacing the carpet, returned, seating herself in front of May, and hesitated.

“Well, I cannot avoid the inevitable! I had hoped that you would have ended your life in the belief that you are, and was, the child of our Mr. and Mrs. Bloome. But it seems that the iniquitous deeds of slavery *must* come to light. I know but a portion of your history. The old slave June has informed you of the rest. I am now going to make it clear to you, that, *you were by birth a slave.* That, doubtless, William Steele, your father, sleeps at ‘Le Grand Palais,’ by the side of Isabel, your mother.

“Now listen. After my marriage and settlement in Mississippi, with Mr Sillton, I found that his principles would not allow him to enter into the sin of slave-holding, although our house was supplied with a sufficient number of servants; they were all hired. Only once he bought and owned a human being. He had business at



THE KU KLUX OATH.

quite a distance from home, not so far however, but that he was driven in our carriage, two or three days journey. In the midst of a forest he encountered a slave-trader, with chained gangs of men and women, and the huge ungainly wagon-arks for children. Mr. Sillton alighted, made an examination of the slave-drove, as if to buy; inquired prices and qualities, simply to observe the wickedness and cruelty sanctioned by a Republican government, and professedly, the most enlightened Christian nation on the globe.

“He passed on to a huge covered wagon whence issued the chirping of children, and peered in. A little, fair, blue-veined child, with eyes like wood violets, and with curling flaxen hair, toddled up on her feet, put out her small, white arms towards him and cried, ‘Papa, papa! Lily tire.’ The dimness of the wagon and her eagerness to find some friend, caused her to forget identity.

“Mr. Sillton extended his hands, and said,—

“‘Come, come, Lily!’

“Stumbling and falling among the crowded infants, she reached him, clasped him round the neck and nestled down in his arms.

“‘Trader,’ he asked, ‘what is the price of this child?’

“‘Five hundred dollars, sir; you see she’s a nice piece of flesh. I don’t often get that quality of article.’

“‘I will make the purchase,’ replied my husband. It happened that he had more than that amount of money with him. He counted out the five hundred dollars and was hurrying to the carriage with Lily in his arms, when the trader arrested his steps.

“‘Here, mister, I’ve got a paper for you to take along,’ at the same time opening his pocket-book. ‘If there’s anything wrong about that pickaniny, you’ll be in as much trouble as I. We traders trying to get an honest living, are took up sometimes for stealing niggers; so, when I bought that white one on a rainy night in South Carolina, I got my customer to write a paper that I was all right, that she was his slave. Here’s the paper, and name signed to it.’

“Mr. Sillton looked it over, and read the signature, — ‘*William Steele, Le Grand Palais, South Carolina.*’”

“He brought the little creature to me, disheveled and travel-soiled. Her dust-smirched cheeks were channeled with baby tears, her dress was torn nearly to shreds.

“‘There,’ said my husband, ‘is my only slave purchase. Heaven forgive me, Edmée, you know what motive impelled the act.’

“I kept her in my room till a little suit was prepared. Then, washed, clad in white, with blue ribbons, in great delight, she turned round and round before the mirror, lisping, ‘Pitty Lilly! Pity fite dess! Lilly nice!’”

“I had an irresistible desire to have that child brought up away from the contact of slavery. In accordance with my wishes, we took her to Ohio, and succeeded in getting her adopted by Mr. Bloome, a relative of the Sillton family. The rest *you know*, dear May.”

May scarcely moved a muscle during Edmée’s recital. She seemed to follow the trader, to be present at his camp in Mississippi, and to have ridden home with Mr Sillton, in his carriage.

Now, her pale cheeks crimsoned with false shame. She buried her face in her handkerchief, and wet it with tears of humiliation.

“Fie, May Dentelle!” cried Edmée, lifting the bent head and supporting it against herself. “Why will you shed these weak, wicked tears? See what I have done; I might as well have allowed you to be raised and trained in the South, as in Mr. Bloome’s family. You are spoiled by Southern ideas. You never was a slave, except by laws which had lost their savor and were fit to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Go back to Papa Dentelle’s love. Tell him all, and if his affection fails you, come to Ohio, to my heart and home, and learn to be strong.”

“Explain one thing more,” sobbed May. “The motive that impelled Mr. Sillton to purchase me.”

“Have you not had enough of mysteries to-day?” asked Mrs. Sillton. “Dry your eyes; look into my face and learn to be brave.”

“There, now,” taking her old seat before her listener. “Keep your eyes upon me,” repeated Edmée laughingly.

“The motive that impelled Mr. Sillton to buy *you*, was because *I was once a slave, myself.*”

May uttered a scream of terror.

“Look at me!” reiterated Edmée. “I was sold by my sister at the auction-table, and the terms for my sale were that I should toil in the Southern sun, with the planter’s hoe. Mr. Sillton loved

me, and by the persuasions of my colored mother and white father, he was allowed to bid me off.

He married me that night, after placing in my possession my free papers, which were deposited in a silver box with my marriage certificate. I have them now, in Ohio. There, you cannot have lost Caste with me ! ”

This was the climax of May's endurance. She staggered to the bed and fainted.

In the midst of Mrs. Sillton's efforts for the restoration of her friend, a light tap at the door brought her face to face with an apparent stranger.

“Madame Lambelle meets Mrs. Sillton, I believe,” said the visitor, cordially, entering the room splendidly attired in silk, lace and diamonds. “Mr. Lambelle has come on an invitation to General Gilmore's reception, and I took the pleasure of calling first upon Mrs. Dentelle. Is she ill, Mrs. Sillton ? ” she asked, approaching the bed.

“She will recover soon, she has fainted.”

“How wan and wasted ; I should scarcely recognize her,” said Madame Lambelle, lifting a cold hand. “I have not seen May for several years.”

“The events of the war have effected her much.”

“Perhaps I should withdraw. It may shock her nerves to meet me suddenly. I leave for her my love and sympathy.”

Madame Lambelle stole out of the chamber, and joined the bright scene below, which was often clouded by thoughts of May's quiet suffering.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE next morning after the discovery of Addie's father, after an almost sleepless night of joyful sorrow and sorrowful joy, she said to him at table,—

“Dear father, Charleston is to witness another gala day in welcome to, and in honor of the Commander-in-Chief of the moral and religious forces of the United States, William Lloyd Garrison,

of Boston. Thousands of people will be out to look upon the face, and listen to the voice of one who would never have knowingly been allowed to land at any port in the South, unless it had been for his imprisonment and death, in order to obtain the high reward offered for his head. Will you go with us, to welcome this great apostle of peace and good will to men?"

"You must excuse me, my daughter, I have never heard his name. I know but three apostles, Mrs. Beame, Richard, and Fanny Beame. They preached the gospel of hope to me. Their words of encouragement have been hidden in my soul, through all these years of bondage. They smoothed my poor Susan's way to the grave. They saved my children, Addie. The world has passed me by, with its doings. I shall attend to my dear mistress, as long as she remains in this city. I have heard of ministering angels, my child. I have *seen* one in mistress May."

"So, with Issy, old June made his way to the hotel; and, while the masses swayed, swarmed, cheered and rejoiced around the speaker's stand erected on Citadel Green, and crowded Zion's Church, presenting a sea of grateful, tearful, adoring upturned faces to William Lloyd Garrison and George Thompson, the old slave sat in the hall by May's door, with his head bent over his folded hands, listening lovingly for her slightest command.

There was to be a general reunion of acquaintances and friends in Fanny's parlors, for the afternoon; but May kept her room undisturbed, save by a call from Addie, presenting flowers from herself and Madame Lambelle.

Holding the hand of June in hers at the door, she said, smiling gracefully,—

"I am Addie, Henry Hughes' daughter, from the North, Mistress Dentelle. I have come to thank you for the great kindness shown my father, in bondage."

"Come in, Addie," said May, sadly. "I have heard your name before. Come in and tell me your story and June's."

Her father closed the door upon them; and when Addie trod the streets homeward, the stars were shining.

Claude and Pearl, (as Zaffiri begged to be called after the old Flag floated over Sumter) waited in the hotel parlors for the Silltons, and escorted them to Mr. Sterlingworth's in Mr. John's rebel

carriage. Nothing of Edmée's history, so frankly exposed to May the day previous, was known to any one of the company. Pearl Lambelle greeted her, as her Atlantic voyage acquaintance and the cherished friend of May.

When Mrs. Sillton saw Richard and Lucy Beame, she raised the hand of the former to her lips, exclaiming,—

“My revered pastor!”

Richard answered,—

“My faithful and generous parishioner!”

She embraced Lucy, exclaiming,—

“Thou noblest of pastor's wives, and the inspiration of my life!”

Fanny, hearing these words, guessed the solution of the cheering letter she had received from Ohio, the season after her brother's marriage, and saw in the beautiful and winning stranger his benefactress.

Mrs. Sillton cast her eyes about the apartments, out of the long, open windows to the garden, and said to her husband, pressing her hand to her breast,—

“Ah, it is my turn to faint now! My heart throbs violently! You may have forgotten!”

“She sank quickly upon a seat near, exclaiming,—

“Ladies and gentlemen, pardon me! In these retributive days my triumph is among them.

“I beg permission in a few words, at present, to inform you that for years I was held a slave in this house. I have lived to see a family of abolitionists occupying the mansion of Chancellor Mowndes, my father. I was given to my sister, Gracie Mowndes, who accused me falsely before her marriage of dallying with her lover, Ralph Haywood, simply because that gentleman, who had been absent in Europe, mistook me, her maid, for Gracie herself, and bowed to me from this upper piazza. There is the same wisteria, or one springing from it, that I was clipping at the time!”

She paused, affected with strong emotion.

Madame Lambelle besought her to proceed, while the others remained silent with breathless attention.

“I agree. I think it better to finish this unpleasant subject at once, and devote the afternoon to an interchange of other thoughts.”

Her husband kindly took up the narrative, bidding Edmée rest.

“My wife,” he continued, “was taken from this house to the auction sale, by her sister’s orders. There, I bought the beautiful girl, made her free and married her. We settled in Mississippi, where I was then in business. At the breaking out of the war or just before, as I knew it would come, I settled my affairs South, and removed to my former home in Ohio. We have three fine sons. Edmée wished to pay her respects to her relatives in Charleston; therefore we are here most opportunely and unexpectedly, to meet our former friends.”

He turned to Madame Lambelle, and said with gayety,—

“I have often recalled that strange cotillion on the ocean steamer, where we first met. Edmée had never met her sister Gracie or Colonel Haywood before, since her sale.”

“Mrs. Sillton,” said Pearl with laughter, “I named that dance the ‘Equality Cotillion.’ I will explain to you the mysteries of that brilliant, gobelin dance, as I now understand all the figures composing it. You know Colonel Haywood and Gracie, also the captain and yourselves. I was a pure white slave, from this city—exiled by the Fugitive Slave Bill. Mr. Vassano was an acknowledged gentleman of color, born free in the South. Marie, his daughter, of course had the same taint of color, in Colonel Haywood’s eyes, if he had not been charmingly deceived.”

“I understand! I understand!” answered Mr. Sillton. “The angels must have waved their white wings over that combination. But another astonishment is forced upon us, in learning that the accomplished favorite upon the Atlantic steamer, Madame Lambelle, was a captive from this city. We are still in a maze of inquiry.”

The next hour was devoted to the disentanglement of Pearl’s experiences, and when all was understood, Mr. Lambelle led Afra to the music-stand, saying,—

“Let us have the ‘Star-Spangled Banner’ on this rebel piano, as a fitting close to these romantic revelations.”

“It is a union piano now, sir,” replied Mr. Sterlingworth. “I purchased it of the government-agent.”

Every voice joined in the solemn hymn of triumph. Every face was glorified. The ‘Star-Spangled Banner’ was rendered in oper-

atic style, although with a more profuse embellishment of shakes, tremulos, and diminuendos, than a strictly classical school would have required.

On the morrow, the last day of May's continuance in Charleston, she received Zaffiri. No reference was made to the past of either.

Zaffiri folded May in her arms, kissed the shadowy hands, and after much persuasion, half obtained the promise that May would go North with her, change the scene, and endeavor to regain health and spirits.

"Two weeks will be ample time for you to prepare. Captain Buddington will go on at that time, also Mr. and Mrs. Sillton," she said cheerfully. "You owe this effort to Papa Bloome, and to your indulgent Papa Dentelle. Their lives are bound up in yours."

May returned to Savannah in the care of an officer, an acquaintance of the captain's. Major Dentelle gave her a more cordial welcome than ever before. As she expected, Mr. Bloome was on his way to Indiana, which he had not visited during the war, having spent the four years in his widowed house purchased before the death of his wife.

After a sufficient rest, Major Dentelle sought from May the result of her conference with Mrs. Sillton. Without evasion she gave a summary answer.

"Oh, papa! Edmée has furnished the finishing chapter of my life. My slave lineage is fully traced."

After relating the incidents of her purchase, she presented him the identical paper signed by William Steele at 'Le Grand Palais,' South Carolina, which Mr. Sillton took from the trader's hands in Mississippi.

"Of course," she says, "Mr. Sillton knew nothing of the antecedents related by old June; but the testimony of both corroborates all."

"Do not weep continually, my beautiful child," he said consolingly. "I repeat to you again and again, that you are as dear to me now as on the day of your marriage. Dry those lustreless eyes, and listen to a secret of my life, which your immoderate and wearing grief obliges me to confide to your keeping."

“My dear May, there have been customs in the South, of which you may not be aware. The pure and devoted affection of Augustus for you, his first and only love, precludes the probability. The men of the South before the war, took wives, or mistresses, as you please to term them, from all shades of color from our slaves. They often remained attached to them through life. Now a slave-girl or woman could not legally marry either one of her own race or of ours. Your Papa Dentelle in his youth, saw a lovely slave-girl and loved her, bought her, and took apartments, living with her like any man in his family; never, however, forsaking his paternal home. This slave-girl, handsome as an Eastern princess, and graceful as your Zaffiri, bore me three children. I was young, reckless, and a spendthrift, wasted my fortune, incurred the displeasure of my parents, and married the wife you know, Augustus' mother, thus repairing by her fortune, my losses.

“The octoroon was sold by my orders in Charleston, and her children also. I have never ceased to love her memory or to feel a sharp agony when I think of her heart-breaking separation from me. May, my poor May, old June has shown me her fate, and opened afresh my self-inflicted wound. That octoroon girl was Isabel, your mother.”

“Oh, papa! I never dreamed of such loves! How dreadful must have been her fate. How terrible must have been her agony to have left it written in letters of blood on the shoulders of her child. Poor dear Isabel! my beautiful mother!”

She was sobbing now, not over her own sorrow; she had stepped upon a higher plane of discipline. She sobbed for the griefs of another. The gray-headed Southerner neither checked nor soothed her. Isabel's memory was resuscitating what slavery had left of humanity in his bosom.

“Am I like Isabel, papa?”

“You are like her and have ever been. I have analyzed during your absence, the elements of your belle-ship in Washington before your marriage. I recall your peculiar fascination, and have traced your likeness to Isabel. You had her changeable, dreamy, sparkling eyes, her naivete, her *bel-esprit*, her hauteur, her insouciance, and as to features, the mirror tells the rest. It is a physiological fact that the mingling of different races and nationalities

produces the finest specimens of human beauty. I have admired the splendid Western physique in Sherman's army despite my hatred of Northern hordes; it is the result of the intermarriages of different nationalities that emigrate to the North, from every country in Europe.

"To return to May Bloome, I never thought of Isabel then, for how, I ask, in the name of Heaven, could I begin to imagine the stupendous fact, *that my Augustus would ever marry the child of Isabel?* I only felt your fascinating charms as others did. You have my secret now, May, as a guarantee that you will be doubly dear to me for this discovery. So take heart. Go to New York with the Lambelles. He is a democrat of the old stamp. He upholds Southern Rights and Secession, which is not dead yet. Your Southern pride will not be wounded in his family. Why did he not come with his wife to Savannah?"

"Dear papa, they were actuated by the most delicate motives — they feel that this is not a time for condolence or congratulations towards men of the South.

"Like Lambelle!" he said. "Come out into the garden, May."

She took Major Dentelle's arm, adorning his gray age with her ripe, fair womanhood.

They wandered among the paths and arbors, as she had done in the past with her beloved Augustus.

He broke a stem of the white *Perles de l'Imperatrice*, fastened them in her hair, saying,—

"May, I am still rich. I have not lost my possessions like thousands of others. My blockade-running was a successful venture. You will be the sole heir of my gold and estates."

He requested her to be seated in an arbor; and after further conversation, placed in her hands an elaborately wrought ivory box. She took from it a gold locket, which he opened by a secret spring. There, folded in its natural rings, was a black silken curl which dropped down in its ravishing beauty, as she raised it from its velvet bed.

"There is a memento of your mother's charms," he said. "That is a tress of Isabel's hair, which I have guarded with miserly care, through the long, dreary years. I transfer it to her daughter's keeping. Wear it, dear May, for Isabel's sake."

After May's departure, Mr. and Mrs. Sillton spent much time walking about Charleston, viewing the desolate scenes of the devastating fire of 1861, and the destruction of Hardee's insane incendiarism in the spring of 1865. They often passed the house where Pauline had the rooms with the woman of Leonore's brother's choice, where Pauline met Zoë on the night of her sale, and where Zoë was married to the man she loved.

As they passed one morning, a gentleman dressed in faded, seedy clothes, and rusty gloves, encountered them at the foot of the steps. He was followed by a servant, carrying the inevitable Yankee rations.

"By Jove!" said the Southerner, "do I see right? Is this Mr. Sillton, from Mississippi, our acquaintance on the European steamer?"

"The same, sir," replied Mr. Sillton. Mrs. Sillton has been desirous of paying her respects to Mrs. Haywood. Will your lady receive a call this morning?"

"Certainly, you are Mississippians. If you were Yankees, I should say, 'Move on!' Mrs. Haywood will give any true Southerner a friendly hand."

They entered the half-furnished, plain parlor, with bare board floors; were cordially received, and listened for two long hours to the trials of the war, which had been hopefully endured for the Southern cause.

"This is one of my father's — Chancellor Mowndes'-houses," said Gracie. "We came back from Columbia, and found papa's mansion filled with Northerners. Mr. Haywood's fine house on Broad street was burned in the terrible fire of 1861. It is too late in the season to attempt cultivation at 'Vaucluse,' even if the Northern barbarians have left the plantation tenable. How have you been during the struggle in Mississippi?"

"We were not located near the points of contest, and consequently have not suffered like many others, although Mr. Sillton has given freely of his means to sustain the war, (meaning the Federal side.) I felt a great interest in the misfortunes of Charleston, and hastened here as soon as the way opened."

"Alas!" said Gracie, "you find us all helplessly poor, although we intend to carry on the contest till Independence hovers around

our banners. I could have torn those colors from Admiral Dahlgren's squadron, in honor of Lee's surrender, and trampled them under my feet! *Our Cause is not lost!*"

"Sherman will find his match in Johnston; he will not surrender!" said Colonel Haywood testily. "Neither will our army in the south-west. Roused by the proclamation of Jefferson Davis, they will strive on, in the spirit of his closing words."

He took from his pocket a rudely printed paper, and read,—

"Let us not despond, my countrymen; but relying on God, meet the foe with fresh defiance, and with unconquered and unconquerable hearts."

"Mr Sillton, we shall help Jefferson Davis, our President of the Confederacy, carry out this reliance, outside of the army. We shall enlarge our organization of the 'Order of American Knights!' It works in Missouri, like a charm. I made my way there last autumn, for special observations. These 'Knights' profess to be neutral. They are apparently a quiet people; and if questioned upon the war issues, they answer, they *tuck no sides*. But, sir, they carry on a successful guerrilla warfare."

"That must be an effective organization," said Mr. Sillton. "Did you witness its active operations?"

"By Jupiter! I did. I mounted a horse, and went along with Anderson's gang, that attacked a railroad train on the North Missouri road. He found aboard twenty-two unarmed soldiers on sick leave. He took them out, and shot every one. Some, he scalped, others, were laid across the railroad track, and the engine was run over them! I assisted in the latter duty. I should like to put these blue-coats here in Charleston, through the same process. General Price was Commander-in-Chief of this order in the South, and Vallandigham, of Ohio, in the North. You have joined the order of course, Mr. Sillton."

"I have subscribed my name, sir, (meaning to the Sanitary Commission,) and have made my most strenuous efforts to further its designs."

"That's the true spirit, Mr. Sillton," said Colonel Haywood, shaking his hand with eagerness. "Go in for our secret Order — exterminate Union men everywhere! I found the women of Mis-

souri as earnest as the men in this kind of warfare. I expect Gracie and Mrs. Sillton will be as enthusiastic as they."

Edmée replied,—

"I shall throw my heart and efforts into every good work, Colonel Haywood. Remember, I am a Southerner with the best of blue blood as an incentive."

She turned to Gracie, and asked,—

"Did you lose anything of value in Sherman's raid on Columbia?"

"We lost all our movable valuables. Those renegades took fifty thousand dollars worth of solid silver plate; we have not a piece left. During that ravaging fire, I saw them break open my trunk and distribute our clothes to the half-naked negroes that followed their regiments! She held up the striped delaine dress she wore to Edmée. 'See! I've had that dress ten years. It is my best. I have no bonnet suitable to appear in public.'"

The gentlemen were absorbed in their own discourse. Edmée drew Gracie to the window, and took from her purse two fifty-dollar greenbacks, saying,—

"Mrs. Haywood, can I offer these without offense? I beg you to accept them. We are both Southern born. I have not suffered like you. Receive them as a small gift from one sister to another."

Gracie hesitated, but finally carried Edmée's hand that held the bills to her lips. She accepted them, wet with her own tears. At parting, a kiss of unsought forgiveness remained upon Gracie's lips, and a kiss of gratitude on Edmée's.

After many inquiries of the old maumas that shuffled along the streets, Mrs. Sillton, to her great joy, found one who knew Pauline. With a low courtesy, she said,—

"She be dead, missis. She die after Sumter took. Is you Pauline chile, I hear her talk 'bout?"

"I am her child, mauma!"

"Bress de Lord!" said the old creature, courtesying.

From her, Edmée learned that her mother died in the nouse where Gracie now lived, surrounded with all needed comforts. Before the war Pauline had been gladdened by the sight of one of Edmée's children, a daughter of twelve years. One of Mr. Sillton's

friends had taken her to Charleston and put up with her openly, at the hotel. Her guardian, with proper directions as to the street and number, took the young Pauline to her grandmother's rooms every evening, under cover of darkness, thus spending a week in Charleston, unknown.

Mr. Sillton received several calls from Colonel Haywood, in the seedy coat, rusty gloves, and napless hat, at the Charleston Hotel ; and was as often urged to actively espouse the cause of the American Knights as a Mississippian and a supporter of the Southern cause.

Upon Edmée's return North, she mailed a letter in New York to Gracie. She explained her late visit to Charleston, made her relationship to Gracie known, and communicated a history of her happy past. She extended a generous forgiveness, besought her sister to become reconciled to the inevitable decrees of Truth and Justice, and signed her name "Zoë."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE last of the month of May brought Mr. Link and Mary, with the handsome lawyer, Alfred Buddington, to the bosom of Mr. Sterlingworth's family.

Again, objects and places of interest were visited. Again, the wonderful occurrences of the few past years were revived.

"Four years of 'Waterloo' we have had," said Mr. Link ; "that should be enough to put down this Southern Napoleonic dynasty !"

"I do not think the South know when they are beaten any more than their arrogant prototype, Bonaparte, did. The effective strength and means of the Confederacy are exhausted. They are forced to lay down their arms ; but really they are as cruel, as defiant, and self-laudatory to day, as in 1861."

"If there must be vicarious blood in every kind of salvation, extending even to the Union, then I should suppose the blood of six hundred thousand men would suffice for the safety of our Republic," replied Mr. Link.

"It would seem so, to a human mind ; but these Southerners are

blood-thirsty. We have proof of it in their secret Societies, formed for the assassination of Union men and abolitionists.

"There was an Alabama planter, a Northern man, who in 1860 came near a violent death on account of an intercepted letter from Connecticut. The old tricks of intercepting letters, you see! This letter besought him to give up his slaves and go North. To save his own life he was obliged to join the minute-men and *assist* in hanging six Northern men. In six weeks one hundred men were hung in his section and the neighboring section of Georgia. Then the unprecedented cruelty of the Confederates towards Northern prisoners, in Andersonville, Belle-Isle, and other war prisons proves of what cold-blooded atrocities the Southerner is capable. In my opinion that kind of Southern sentiment is unchanged."

"I think also," replied Mr. Link, "that if the legislatures of the States in rebellion are allowed to assemble, they will pursue the old courses of offensive legislation. President Lincoln made that test in Richmond, when he promised a safeguard to Judge Campbell, for the members who should assemble. Campbell's promises were changed into a general legislation for the State. But the President soon saw his error, and ordered General Weitzel to revoke the safeguard, and permit the members of the legislature to return to private life."

Mr. Sterlingworth replied that Governor Magrath had summoned the State officers of South Carolina to Columbia, to resume their duties.

"Mr. Link," said Afra, clapping her hands, "General Gillmore, with a few strokes of his military pen, has annulled Governor Magrath's acts, and has notified persons interested not to heed his proclamations. This people know very well that General Gillmore's sword lies beside his pen!"

"He has annulled Governor Brown's proclamation in Georgia, and a similar act in Florida," said her father.

"Is it not singular," asked Afra, "that these slave-masters who always demanded the military to put down slave insurrections, should find the Federal army holding the sword of subjection over their own insurrectionary heads?"

"The South claimed the arbitration of the sword, and its prayer is answered," replied Fanny, laughing.

“The last Northern concession to the South was an engagement in civil war. Now what will be the first concession *from the South* to the North?” asked Mr. Sterlingworth.

“Reconstruction!” was the unanimous answer

“I think,” said Mr. Link in his calm manner, “that a thorough reconstruction of this section will include colored suffrage, and an accordance to the freedmen of all rights we ourselves enjoy. Both of these preliminaries have many opponents in the North, in Congress, and in President Johnson. The struggle will be a hard one; and, it appears to me, will keep our army in requisition for some time to come.”

“The Anti-Slavery amendment went through Congress by the skin of its teeth — 119 ayes to 59 nays — nays all Democrats — only seven votes more than two thirds,” said Alfy. “Thank God! sixteen Democrats voted with the Republicans. With Greely and the one hundred guns that saluted the sublime result, I say, ‘God bless the Thirty-Eighth American Congress!’ I was present, Miss Afra, in Washington, and never witnessed a more thrilling scene. Despite the gloom on the Democratic side over their foiled attempts to ‘ram the struggling negro back under the protection of the sacred Constitution,’ the enthusiasm was unbounded, in the crowded galleries and with the throng on the floor. Senators, judges, soldiers, women and pages joined in the august and thundering excitement. Amid the waving of handkerchiefs and hats, and clapping hands, rose cries of, ‘Hurrah for Freedom!’ ‘Victory!’ ‘Glory enough for one day!’ The tumult was deafening.”

“The silvery voice of Whittier took up the echo, and completed the triumph,” said Mary. “Do, Alfy, repeat a part of his *Laud Deo*. I never tire of hearing that,” she said, with idolatry for her son in the very tone.

“Do, Alfy,” begged Afra.

He repeated,—

“It is done!
Clang of bell and roar of gun,
Send the tidings up and down.
How the belfries rock and reel!
How the great guns, peal on peal,
Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O bells !
 Every strike exulting tells
 Of the burial hour of crime.
 Loud and long, that all may hear,
 Ring for every listening ear
 Of Eternity and Time.

How they pale,
 Ancient myth and song and tale,
 In this wonder of our days,
 When the cruel rod of war
 Blossoms white with righteous law,
 And the wrath of man is praise.

Ring and swing !
 Bells of joy on morning's wing
 Send the song of praise abroad,
 With a sound of broken chains,
 Tell the nations that He reigns,
 God alone, is Lord and God."

"What a solemn grandeur is in those words," said Fanny. "No Southerner could have written them. A true and earnest love of freedom exalts all talent and literature."

"What would the world say to hear such words from the lips of Barnwell Rhett?" asked Mr. Link, a smile stealing over his benignant face. "He, more than any other, has fired the Southern heart with madness. This is what he said, in 1860, of the North. 'Upon a dissolution of the Union, their whole system of commerce and manufactures will be paralyzed and overthrown; their banks will suspend specie payments; their stocks and real estate will fall in price, and confusion and distress will pervade the North. Mobs will break into their palaces, and society there will be resolved into its original chaos. Many of the Free States will desire to join us; but, you see, on the condition that the Southern Confederacy should be a slave-holding Confederacy.'"

"That bubble has burst with an explosion!" exclaimed Alfy.

"True, the world heard it," answered Mr. Sterlingworth. "For years, the Southern leaders have educated their families and the masses up to a belief of these absurd falsehoods. The most malignant reproach I remember to have seen flung at us Yankees was in a paper that Mr. Lambelle brought to me after one of his excur-

sions South. It was in the *Iron Furnace*; the speech of John H. Augey, a Presbyterian clergyman of Mississippi."

Fanny brought the paper and he read,—

"The Yankees are an inferior race; they are cowardly in the extreme; they are descended from the Puritan stock who never bore rule in any nation. We, the descendants of the Cavaliers, are the Patricians; they, the Plebians. The Cavaliers have always been the rulers, the Puritans the ruled. The dastardly Yankees will never fight us; but if they, in their presumption and audacity, venture to attack us, let the war come. I repeat it, let it come. The conflagration of their burning cities, the desolation of their country, and the slaughter of their inhabitants, will strike the nations of the earth dumb with astonishment, and serve as a warning to future ages, that the slave-holding Cavaliers of the Sunny South are terrible in their vengeance. . . . We will drive back to their inhospitable clime, every Yankee who dares to pollute our shores with his cloven foot. Go he must, and if necessary, with the bloodhounds on his tracks. The scum of Europe, and the mud-sills of Yankeedom shall never be permitted to advance a step south of thirty-six degrees, thirty minutes, the old Missouri Compromise line. South of that latitude is ours, westward to the Pacific. With my heart of hearts, *I hate a Yankee*; and I will make my children swear eternal hatred to the whole Yankee race.

"In battle, one Southerner is equivalent to ten Northern hirelings. . . . We have free institutions — freedom for the white man, bondage for the black man — as Nature and Nature's God designed. The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places. The only evil we complain of, is our bondage to the Yankees through the Federal Union. Let us burst these shackles from our limbs, and we will be free again."

"Well, the Yankees are here in their 'pleasant places,' protected by Federal bayonets, and they find their stay very agreeable," laughed Alf. "What is the Rev. Mr. Augey going to do about it?"

"The religious offices of that clergyman would be a great aid in Cloudspire revivals," said Mr. Link. "Think so, Mrs. Sterlingworth?"

She replied,—

“On the subject of Yankees, Cloudspire might consider him a fanatical innovater ; but his religion would be as available as William Steele’s and Edmund Stone’s.”

Afra skipped in from the garden with her hands full of roses, which she distributed to all.

“Listen to that musical voice, crying blackberries, in the streets, clear and rich as a prima donna’s.”

She rang for Abram, and bade him purchase and bring them into the parlor, on a salver, for the company. She said to Mr. and Mrs. Link,—

“You must go out this morning ; the city is pervaded with the enchanting haze and balmy air I love so much. Go down to White Point Garden ; you must drink deep draughts of this delicious climate before you return North. While you are all partaking of berries I will sing and play ‘Hail Columbia’ as a close to this morning’s *tête-a-tête*.”

“Miss Afra,” said Alfy, “can I persuade you to extend our musical enjoyment by singing us Gottschalk’s ‘Last Hope,’ for the Sunny South ; his ‘*chant du Soldat*’ for our ‘Boys in Blue,’ and Thalberg’s ‘Home sweet Home,’ for the ‘Boys in Gray?’”

She consented, to the general gratification. After the music, she said,—

“I am going over to assist Addie and Corinne as usual. I shall dine there, dear mother.”

Alfy stood before his father and mother in full, manly beauty, hat in hand. Cultivated intellect, contact with refined society and the professional world, have recast the angelic sweetness of beloved boyhood into the mould of the self-poised, polished gentleman who is everywhere recognized with respectful regard. A cooler, grayer tone has crept into the azure beneath his still modest lids. The flaxen hair has deepened into an auburn brown. Brown, curling side-whiskers, and a heavy moustachelendssufficient severity to the fair, expressive, and still tender face. A faultless toilet finishes the *tout ensemble* of his personal attractions.

“My best beloved,” he said to Mary and Mr. Link, “I shall spend the day out, dining and supping with Doctor Paisley. I shall ride with the doctor this afternoon ; but to-morrow I shall

ride with you, father. The officers of our acquaintance have kindly proffered the use of fine horses, while I remain here."

He drew on his gloves, adding,—

"Make yourselves as happy as possible. Mrs. Sterlingworth is an excellent hostess. I leave you in her care."

Giving Afra his arm, they went out, leaving affectionate good-mornings.

"Fanny, come here," requested Mary, who was leaning on the balustrade of the piazza, following Alfy and Afra out of the gate with her gaze. "Fanny, is not that a handsome pair? Do you know what I have been thinking? Since our arrival, I have wished that the union of our two children might add one more tie to the circle of tried friends in Cloudspire and Alderbank."

"Afra is a singular child," replied Fanny, smiling. "I have never discovered the first germ of love in her intercourse with gentlemen. See, Mary! she is talking and looking up into Alfy's face now, with the frankness of a sister. Love supposes shyness. We have frequent calls from agreeable and fine looking young officers, who probably are attracted by her music and the home life they meet here. Afra makes no efforts to please or attract beyond the bounds of politeness and her natural vivacity. I shall be both satisfied and gratified if her choice falls on one so noble and worthy as Alfy."

The days of Madam Valmonte and Corinne glided away with much uniformity. Corinne was still patient, though tried by her mother's unceasing invectives against the Yankees, who had brought this cruel war upon the South, as well as by her constant repinings at her losses and privations. She went out on pleasant days, leaving Corinne to make up necessary clothing purchased with the money accruing from the sales of her wardrobe, and other articles of value. She had said to Corinne that morning,—

"This is terrible! I, who used to ride in my carriage everywhere, am walking about these streets like any low-bred sand-hiller!"

Corinne had replied,—

"Dear mamma, all our ladies do the same, they experience the same vicissitudes as we ;" and had received the answer,—

“Corinne, I cannot bear other people’s troubles; my own are sufficient for me.”

Corinne knew nothing of cutting or making. Addie, in her never-failing kindness, said to her,—

“I will help you. My sewing-machine will save your poor fingers.”

Afra gave her assistance, basting and planning for the machine. The work was carried to Addie’s parlor, as often as Mistress Valmonte went out.

Ignorant of all this, she has praised Corinne’s dexterity, and said,—

“Why, my child, you stitch beautifully, and you never made an article before! It is a relief to me, for I cannot frame my fingers to the use of the needle and thimble.”

When Alfy and Afra entered the parlor, Corinne was at her work with Addie. She had frequently met Lawyer Buddington there, since his arrival in Charleston, and while he bowed low, and lightly touched her hand on this occasion, her eyes took on an unwonted lustre; the faintest rose-petal tint spread over her cheek.

Afra was soon equipped for sewing, and set about it with energy, petitioning that Mr. Buddington would read aloud a few poems of Longfellow, to which he consented. As often as he raised his eyes from the page, and by chance caught the soulful gaze of Corinne, her lids dropped.

He was reading ‘Evangeline,’ often interrupted by the lively criticisms of Afra. To the full mellifluous flow of Alfy’s voice, hers was like the sparkling, sun-lighted spray by the fountain.

Of Evangeline returning home after confession, he read,—

“Homeward silently she walked, with God’s benediction upon her. When she had passed, it seemed *like the ceasing of exquisite music.*”

“I declare,” laughed Afra, addressing Corinne, “I think *you* must have passed by the poet, for *that* picture!”

“Too high a compliment for me, Miss Afra,” she replied, raising her head suddenly from her work. Her casual glance fell full into the liquid depths of the eyes of the silent reader. Their melting tenderness seemed to repeat the words of Afra.

“I am sure Afra is right,” said Addie. “The poet must have

had a vision of Corinne! I always feel the sentiment of that line, when she passes out of our parlor."

From very confusion, her glance wandered somewhere — anywhere, for modest concealment. Again it melted into the same welcoming sweetness of Alfy's azure eyes, that again gave affirmation to Addie's devotion; and again, her glance fluttered away, constrained and afraid.

"I beg Mr. Buddington will resume the reading," said Corinne.

"After a pleasant episode," he said, bowing, and continued. When the poem followed Evangeline over the prairie in search of Gabriel, Afra said,—

"I should like to inquire of Mr. Longfellow if that is the way to

‘Make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time?
Footprints that perhaps another
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,—
A forlorn and shipwrecked (woman)—
Seeing, shall take heart again?’

"I call Evangeline a false and dangerous ideal, wandering away a lifetime in search of a lover. Suppose, that emulating her solitary crusade, *all* women and maidens should follow her example in making footprints on the sands of time! The scene over the United States would remind one, in multitude, of both the Northern and Southern armies let loose without discipline or command. The government would find it expedient to erect a line of lunatic asylums; not along the lines, for there would be none; they would dot the soil from Maine to California!"

An outburst of laughter succeeded, in which Corinne heartily joined. All dried away comic tears at the ludicrous picture.

"Indeed, Miss Afra," said Alfy, still laughing, "you have luminous ideas. This outburst is hygienic; physically as well as morally; quite auxiliary to a renewal of my health."

"Afra is a copy of her mother," said Addie.

"Thank you, Addie; I wish no higher compliment. I think it safer to copy my mother, than the delusions of Evangeline. My mother says Evangeline was superstitiously devotional in the first place; and when Acadia was destroyed, her religious emotions

broke bounds, and flooded the channels of her love nature ; and that her moon-struck wanderings were the effect of a romantic mixture of both."

Alfy replied, that in poesy, "the imagination is allowed to soar into heroic and dizzy heights."

"I call that a great mistake," replied Afra. "A mental faculty which is so apt to merge into impossibilities, should be held in leash by those less erratic. How much more exalted was the poet's mission in 'The Quadroon Girl.' That poem thrills the soul, and makes it responsive to the holiest sympathies. I think Evāngeline a dangerous and false ideal. Do you not agree with me, Miss Corinne ?"

Corinne had risen, preparatory to leaving. It was near the dinner hour, and no persuasion could induce her to remain. In a voice soft and mournful, as the Angelus, she replied to Afra's question,—

"I have been educated to such false and dangerous ideals, that my judgment may be dazed by their garish light ! I cannot see truth clearly. Pardon me."

She turned to Alfy, who had arisen, and said politely,—

"I trust, Mr. Buddington, that your gallop through our quiet suburbs and forests this afternoon will be pleasant and invigorating. Strangers usually find our woodlands attractive."

He thanked her ; and as she passed out, "*it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.*"

When the afternoon grew cooler, Alfy and Issy mounted, and rode away out of the city, among the ragged and desolate fields ; they clattered over the broken plank road to the green shades of the woodland, and turned their horses into long, dim, grassy paths, beneath the arching trees, walking slowly, side by side.

Alfy with hat in hand, exclaimed,—

"I love these calm and quiet shades. There is

‘an eloquent voice in all.
The sylvan pomp of woods, the golden sun,
The flowers, the leaves, the river on its way,
Blue skies, and silver clouds.

In many a lazy syllable repeating
Their old poetic legends to the wind.'"

“There is the river now,” said Issy. “See that steely glinting through the trees!”

They reached a grassy, sunny glade, dismounted, tied their horses, and threw themselves on the ground, upon the bank of the gleaming Cooper. Let us not invade the privacy of that long absorbing communion of two endeared friends, who lie amid that

“sylvan scene.
Where, the long drooping boughs between,
Shadows dark, and sunlight sheen
Alternate come and go.”

The subject must have been of deep interest; for the face of Alfy alternately saddened, or grew seraphic; it paled, or brightened. Often in earnest enunciation, he abstractedly pulled the green blades about him, and cast them away; then silent as if in a dream, or beholding a vision, he lay with his arms under his head, ever devotedly watched by the anxious face of Issy, reclining by his side. The final words were uttered by him, as they rose to mount!

“Alfy, I am not surprised! I believe I have not exalted your fondest hopes in vain.”

The horses walked again through the delicious shades to the main road, and across it into a labyrinth of delight towards the Ashley.

“Hark!” said Alfy, laying his hand on Issy’s rein.

A powerful voice rose clear as a silver bugle, in the distant solitude, swelling and diminishing like the flute stop of an organ. For five minutes its fascination pierced the woodland; during which time neither spoke.

“That one voice was worth coming to South Carolina to hear!” said Alfy, taking his hand from Issy’s rein.

He replied,—

“It is my turn at poetry, this time;” and in his own rich voice repeated a part of Longfellow’s

“SLAVE SINGING AT MIDNIGHT.”

“Loud he sang the song of David!
He, a negro, and enslaved;
Sang of Israel’s victory,
Sang of Zion, bright and free.”

* * * * *

Sang he from the Hebrew Psalmist,
In a voice so sweet and clear,
That I could not choose but hear

Songs of triumph and ascriptions,
Such as reached the swart Egyptians
When upon the Red Sea coast,
Perished Pharoah and his host."

"Those lines are a fitting echo to that never-to-be-forgotten voice," said Alf. "It was a voice of freedom! doubtless caroling the wondrous joy that burdens his liberated spirit. A panorama of moral grandeur surrounds the visitor of this South — this desolate arena of men's worst passions and crimes."

"True, Alf, it lifts the pure soul to a sublime faith in the sure advance of Right, that shall triumphantly override all wrong. Shall we find the Ashley? Let us make the endeavor."

They cantered away through the shadows on the muffled sod.

Afra left Addie, after dinner. Corinne remained in her chamber.

At dusk, a friend of Mistress Valmonte called, and together they went out to an evening service of the church. Then Addie stole up to Corinne, closed the door, and drew a chair near her, saying,—

"I have a message for you from Mr. Buddington. He begs you to grant him an interview this evening."

Corinne, in profound agitation drew her breath quickly, but made no reply.

Addie said further,—

"Lawyer Buddington adores you. He will be unhappy till he meets you, dear Corinne. You are his first and only love. No other attractions have moved him, although they have fluttered about as thickly as swallows in summer. I am sure your natural politeness and regard for others will not allow you to refuse the request. Issy bade me tell you to seek your *own* happiness. It is a duty you owe yourself."

Corinne held her handkerchief to her eyes with trembling fingers, and said weeping, to Addie,—

"Mamma! oh, Addie, mamma!"

“Follow the promptings of your own noble heart in the matter, my dear girl; they will guide you safely. Alfy has been here three weeks now; you know his antecedents. He is no adventurer. I am going to walk with Issy, and dear old father is watching my children in bed. They are his pride. Shall you go down?”

“I shall grant Mr. Buddington’s request.”

Addie poured water for Corinne to bathe her burning face, brushed her hair, and they descended together

Corinne entered the parlor alone.

At the door, Alfy took her hand and led her respectfully to a seat. The interview could not be prolonged, and on the part of Alfy, it was manly, frank, and tender.

We will not intrude upon the sacredness of that swift-winged hour.

At its close, the trembling lover held Corinne to his heart, and left upon her fair, pure brow his first kiss — the kiss of betrothal.

Mrs. Valmonte made many complaints after her return, of Corinne’s abstraction and stupidity; asserting with petulance that she did not hear remarks or requests, assigning oversleep during her absence as the cause.

Alfy met the liveliest congratulations from Mary, Mr. Link and Fanny upon his improved appearance.

“You must ride every day,” said Mrs. Sterlingworth. “Your color and animation are returning.”

“We had an invitation to Fort Sumter and accepted. We are all weary and should seek an early hour for retiring,” said Mary.

Alfy followed Mr. Link into his mother’s chamber, and there revealed the day’s events.

“I am too happy to sleep now,” he said, “as I was too wretched before.”

“So you are to take a Southern bride, Alfy. I am so astounded that I can scarcely find words to wish you joy,” said Mary; “but I am sure she must be pure and lovely or she could not be your choice.”

“My dear mother, I am confident you want to be assured that the wishes of my own heart are gratified — you would wish my mar-

riage happy. Madame Lambelle has ever been my standard from boyhood. My dear Corinne is Zaffiri's counterpart. You will love her both of you, not only for my sake, but for her own."

"Alfy," said Mr. Link in his gentlest voice, "you are very dear to me. I shall endeavor to further all your desires whenever you choose to make them known. The one you love, I shall love; the one you honor, I will honor. I rejoice in your happiness."

Mary, recovering herself, kissed his pleading face, smoothed his brown hair, saying,—

"Get those blue eyes bright again, my proud boy. I will love dear Corinne; I love her already, because she loves you. When will you bring her to us?"

"To-morrow, mother."

Corinne, who slept little during the night, did not confide her happy secret to her mother through fear of maternal displeasure. In the morning, under the pretense of exercise, she made an early call on an intimate friend of her mother, who had returned to the city and occupied apartments alone. Like Evangeline, this woman had learned from a life of sorrow, "patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others." She listened to Corinne's confidential explanation of her fears and joys with the calm beneficence of a Sister of Mercy, and then said,—

"My dear, trembling girl have no more dread. You are doing right. The most beautiful thing I know is the pure, trusting love of the human heart. I am going to soften your mother, hard and irreconcilable as she is."

"Oh! I love mamma! my proud mamma!" said Corinne, weeping. "I could do anything for her; submit to all her caprices—anything, but to give up my dear, noble, handsome Alfred. My love for him, pure, white, and celestial, I could not overcome if I would."

"And you should not, if you could, dear girl. When and where will your marriage take place?"

"The day he and his parents leave Charleston. I do not know where—dear Alfred has not said. He has a difficult case to plead in Boston the first week in July. I shall pass that week there; then we shall pass two weeks at his father's in Cloudspire, Massachusetts; then leave for a six months tour in Europe."

“How much time before Mr. Buddington leaves Charleston?”

“Twelve days. I must inform mamma this morning. I do not feel that I have strength enough to withstand the grief and recriminations.”

“Never mind, Corinne. I will go directly to your mother’s room. Walk a little and compose yourself. I will be present. Now you must have all your time to go out and come in at your pleasure, with your lover, and to arrange your *trousseau*. Theresa will never be present at the ceremony wherever it may be. Do not allow that to trouble you. Time will change all. After your marriage, I will persuade her to occupy my rooms with me. I think she will do so readily. Is that any relief to your harrassed thoughts, my dear lamb?”

“Oh! I cannot express how much.”

“You are not going to continue in mourning, of course? You have worn it three years for Ernestin and two for Doctor Paisley. You must make yourself as attractive as possible, by putting on colors from your marriage, at least.”

“I cannot take one cent from mamma’s scant funds.”

“Mr. Buddington and his friends will look after that. I know these Northern people; they are not hard; they have generous, feeling hearts. I have lived much among them. Trust in them, dear Corinne; your faith will not be misplaced.”

“What a strong comforter you are!” ejaculated the frightened girl, at the same time kissing her friend’s sweet, dispassionate face.

“You have another comforter in that nice little body, Issy’s wife,” said the lady; “she will help you through.”

She left the room a moment, and returned with a box carefully secured, which she placed in Corinne’s hands, saying,—

“That is yours. I can make no better disposal of it.”

She opened it, and saw within an elegant *parure* of costly pearls.

“Examine them dearie; they are yours, for your marriage. I have long ago bid adieu to those trifles. They will suit your fair brow, neck, and arms. I paid two thousand dollars for them in Paris; you know their value; they should belong to a daughter of the South. No? Offer no objections, dearie. I have money in store in New York, where I had the wisdom to deposit it before this mad war, which I *knew* would be disastrous to the South.”

The twelve days passed away more happily to Corinne than she could have imagined. The devotion of Mr. Link and Mary to herself and Alfy was incomparably soothing to her tempest-tossed spirit. There was unlimited welcome and generosity on the part of the Sterlingworths. There were cheerful teas, dinners, and moonlight walks. Corinne, without shyness or restraint, manifested her deep attachment for Alfred; and he, proud and happy, could scarcely allow her to depart from his sight.

Issy insisted upon presenting the bridal dress, which Corinne resolved should be of the simplest, unadorned, white muslin. Addie presented the veil and orange flowers.

Addie's parlor was in delightful confusion, between the dress-maker and herself, and the making over of the rich dresses, selected from the buried trunks. A dress-maker and seamstress worked daily in Mary's room, at Mr. Sterlingworth's. Afra also, had important errands between the two families. Corinne's fingers soon regained their accustomed celerity on the piano, and alternately with Afra, the house was charmed with the perfection of musical taste and execution.

Alfy had sent two polite messages to Mistress Valmonte, expressing his desire to converse with her, that she might be assured of his affectionate regard and of his desire to alleviate her present burdens, by making a home for her in Boston with Corinne. She read and threw the notes into the flames, with indignant scorn! She washed and perfumed her hands with cologne, to remove the Yankee taint of the notes, disdaining any reply.

A singular attachment took root in Corinne's heart for Mr. Link. She loved his mild, unobtrusive ways, and saw beneath the pleasant exterior a true and knightly gentleman. She called Alfy her "handsome Cavalier," and Afra, her "*petite* Abolitionist." She made Mary her confessor and counsellor, taking no step without her consultation. She said to her,—

"You are too kind to show a preference; but can you love me, a Southerner, when I am Alfred's wife?"

"How can I help loving you now, my darling daughter, in your winning character of peacemaker, and for the proud love you bear my noble Alfy?"

She begged Mr. and Mrs. Sterlingworth to receive her mediator

with her mother, to their acquaintance, and went to her mamma, while her friend passed an afternoon and evening with Fanny and Mary.

One important arrangement was made during the twelve days, by the solicitations of Alfred and Corinne. Afra was to accompany them to Europe. Corinne said,—

“I need her companionship and her lucid moral teachings; she is a guide to my obliquity of vision. Afra will help me to distinguish the true from the false.”

“We cannot yield to that reasoning,” replied Fanny. “On the contrary, I should be most happy to place Afra under *your* influence, Corinne. She needs travel; and if you will not allow her to be an obstacle to your bridal pleasures I shall most gladly consent.”

The auspicious morning dawned with a benediction on the day of Alfy’s union with his Southern bride. Fanny’s parlors and halls were an elysium of flowers and fragrance. Afra’s chamber was made the secret vestibule of Hymen, to which Corinne even, was not admitted till she entered with her former dressing-maid, who had offered her services for the occasion.

When Corinne asked for her plain muslin dress, Afra and Addie uncovered to her astonished sight a rich pearl-white satin, purchased and made in New York, and finished with costly lace. Beside it were the bridal veil from Stewart’s and orange flowers from the North.

“Read that paper, dear Corinne, on the dress,” cried Afra, dancing about the room in a delirium of delight.

In silent surprise she took up the slip, and read,—

“From Uncle Issy, who could not see his proud Corinne arrayed in humiliating cheapness!”

Corinne stepped aside from the glossy splendor, and for a few moments indulged in happy, grateful tears. While this scene was passing in Afra’s dressing-room, Mr. Link found time to say to Fanny,—

“Is it not strange that the plain old ‘drover’ should have such an accomplished son and daughter?”

“It is precisely what you deserve, Simon Link. They are your just reward for the consolation you gave Richard and me, in that

Cloudspire church mob ; when *you*, of all the town, carried us home in your sleigh, thus bringing upon your own head social and religious disaster. When that town beholds Alfy and Corinne, its scorn and meanness will change to envy, and servile adulation ! ”

As the hour approached, the parlors filled with Northern friends and dashing uniforms. Henry Hughes had offered to serve the company with Abram, but Addie said,—

“ No, my poor trampled father, you will never serve more ! I shall assist at waiting, in your stead.”

So, with Issy, he took his honored place among the guests.

When Mr. Link entered the grand saloon with the elegant Corinne on his arm, followed by Alfred with Mary, all attended by a bright uniformed young Northern officer and Afra, as groomsmen and bridesmaid, a buzz and rustle of admiration succeeded. The clergyman in sacred robes awaited them. The formula of marriage was soon spoken. When Alfy placed the golden seal of their covenant upon the trembling hand of his best beloved, a glittering tear of filial sorrow fell upon the plain circlet, in memory of the unhappy and obdurate Theresa.

Corinne raised her eyes, met the saintly face of her mediator, and regained composure.

After an hour of congratulations, feasting, and good wishes, Corinne prepared to take her mother's farewell. By the assistance of her dressing-maid, she was soon arrayed in a rich and fashionable traveling-suit, sent from New York with the satin toilet, and the compliments of Pearl Z. C. Lambelle. With Alfy by her side, Mr. John's rebel carriage soon conveyed her to the abode of Mistress Valmonte. Alone Corinne ascended to her mother's chamber. At the close of the interview of torturing frigidity on the part of Theresa, Corinne advanced, and in a voice choking with affection, said,—

“ Kiss me, mamma.”

“ She received for a reply,—

“ I cannot kiss lips yet warm with the kisses of Yankee vulgarity.”

Corinne drew off her glove, and extended her hand. She heard the heartless words,—

“Draw on your gloves, my child, before I take the hand that receives the pressure of love and friendship from a Northern enemy!”

Corinne obeyed, and pressed the maternal hand in a long and tearful farewell.

Captain Thad and his wild-rose wife from the “Green Valley,” met the bridal party at Madame Lambelle’s, for a hasty welcome, and *au revoir*, on his brother’s departure for Boston. He afterwards escorted his parents and Afra to Cloudspire.

May left a few days previous to the arrival, for Indiana, with Papa Dentelle, to attend the bedside of her dying Papa Bloome.

In conformity with the New England custom, Mr. Link’s family rose early. On the second morning after the arrival of Alfy and his bride from Boston, while the dew sparkled on the grass, and the roads were yet damp and hard from the night’s shower, Mary, with an arm about Corinne, drew her out upon the piazza. There, on the broad-graveled walk, stood the former fugitive, Robert Adams, now the hired help of Mr. Link, holding two saddled horses.

One, the smaller, was a pure cream, with snow-white mane and tail, handsomely equipped for a lady. The other was a dark chestnut, equipped for a gentleman’s pleasure. He was rearing, and champing his silver bit, with proud impatience. Uncle George and Mr. Link and Captain Thad, in rustic chairs, were sitting calmly by. Alfy came out; and round the corner of the house peeped Robert’s wife from the kitchen.

“How splendid those creatures are!” cried Corinne, running down the steps to fondle the “cream.”

“Marse Alfy, how you like dis?” said Robert.

Mr. Link and Squire Buddington came down on the walk, where the ceremony of presentation took place, of the “Snow Bird” to Corinne, by Mr. Link; and the “General Grant” to Alfy, by Uncle George. After a few moments spent in the happiness of giving and receiving, Uncle George said,—

“The sun is getting high; mount and explore the picturesque beauties of Cloudspire. Forget law, books, and sorrows.”

Mary, observing the perplexed hesitation of Alfy and Corinne, said,—

“Come, my daughter, dress yourself for riding.”

Before she could make a proper reply they were in her chamber.

“There is your riding-habit, my darling,” said Mary. “It was purchased for you in New York, where Mr. Link procured your pony. This is my gift. Do not say a word. You have made my Alfy happy. You have rounded his pure life into fullness and perfection. What shall we not do for you?”

While Corinne was adjusting her beaver and veil, at the mirror, Mary continued,—

“Do not fear for your pony; he is spirited, but docile. He has Arabian blood. Papa Link purchased him from an Englishman, about to return with his family to London.”

Cloudspire gossip sprang into fresh vigor during that two weeks. Culinary processes were evidently bewitched by “Snow Bird” and “General Grant.” The bakings came out from the over-heated stoves, hooded with black cowls. Saucepans boiled over and sputtered spitefully to themselves, and the tidy cream pans got into slovenly manners—all for the daily sight of four pairs of gay, clattering hoofs and a flying riding-habit darting swiftly by.

“I declare,” said common tattle, with envious volubility, “them abolitionists have more Southerners and niggers round ’em than anybody else in town. There’s that black Robert, and his wife for a cook, at the Drovier’s; there’s Robert’s two girls over to ‘Green Valley’; there’s Hester, to Squire Buddington’s, and Binah and Roland, to the doctor’s. Them Beames used to have Henry Hughes’ girl. Well, I wouldn’t eat bread and pies that their black hands wet up, if I dropped down at the molding-board, myself. They’ve most all been down South; and I shouldn’t wonder if George Buddington went next.”

Afra, meantime, assisted by Filette’s two daughters and Aunt Lucy, was ready for the prospective tour abroad. Cloudspire was left to its usual quiescence; its front blinds were closed, its front curtains lowered, and domestic assiduity reinstated.

During the summer, at one of the prayer-meetings, a strange programme for a gathering of the citizens of Cloudspire was read. This gathering was to be addressed by an escaped prisoner from Andersonville, Georgia, and also by a slave from the South. Public curiosity was on the *qui vive* to hear the stories of both. A

change had come over the spirit of the North. The new church which had supplanted the one of William Steele's fame, was filled with anxious listeners. The old slave was escorted up the carpeted aisle by a prominent church official, and seated within the railing of the chancel, by the side of the United States soldier. Richard Beame was in one of the slips, reflecting upon the change in the facial expression of the assembly. He observed that the former ferocity of its mobbing expression had settled into something like sympathy for the two speakers before them. The soldier rose first, and spoke upon the rebel prisons South, for Northern men, during the war.

His own emaciated form, his sunken eyes, the staff upon which he leaned, and the hollow voice, were swift witnesses of the tortures he related. He told of thirty thousand men, confined in unhealthy, unwholesome quarters, in a close and small area of ground, inadequate to their wants, and destructive to their health. He told of the malicious neglect to furnish tents, barracks, or other shelter, sufficient for their protection from the inclemency of winter, and the dews and burning sun of summer; of the robbery of their clothing and blankets, and other articles, by the Confederates; of their being compelled to subsist upon unwholesome water, reeking with the filth and garbage of the prison and prison-yard; of minds impaired, and intellects broken by these cruelties; of the bodies of the dead, permitted to remain among the emaciated, sick, and languishing living, until these bodies became corrupt and loathsome, and filled the air with fetid and noxious exhalations! He told of the *dead line*, to which, if the prisoners approached too near by accident, or necessity, they were shot down, as if for a pastime! He told of the deaths of *ten men in Andersonville prison, from the town of Cloudspire*.

"I was chained," he said, "in a gang, for a week. We were chained together by the neck, and feet; each wore a ball weighing thirty-two pounds. One of your townsmen fell dead in that gang! Lem Hamm attempted to escape, but *he was torn in pieces by a bloodhound!* I have seen men hobbling half naked, on crutches, begging for bones. I have seen them crawling on the filthy earth, carrying their tin cups in their mouths, because they could carry them in no other way! I have seen them die so. Mr. Lappin's

oldest son was shot by the guard, while extending one arm under the dead line for a crumb of mouldy bread. His youngest son died of starvation, and reamputation of gangrened wounds. At one time, names were called for removal; and orders were given the rebel guard to bayonet any Yankee who laid down in the way! Deacon Steele's grandson was one of the number to be removed to another prison. This fine young fellow had been vaccinated with poisonous matter, and was covered with sores, as the result. He was also unable to walk, from sickness and starvation. *He was crawling on the ground to the cars*, because he could not stand; and was bayoneted and killed, according to orders!"

The audience in the church was in tears. Sobbing interrupted the speaker.

At length one man rose and asked, what were the rations? The reply was,—

"Two ounces of meat, one small potato, and a half-cooked piece of corn-cake, two and a-half inches square! I have seen our skeleton men digging in the vermin and dirt for potato-skins, and other refuse, to eat. Sometimes our coarse meal, ground cob and all, was given us raw; and they would not allow us wood to cook it, although forests were near at hand."

Another questioner arose in his slip, seeking information of the deaths of Cloudspire's remaining victims at Andersonville.

The soldier leaned more heavily upon his staff, and in a voice more husky, replied,—

"My friends, I do not deem it proper to make further revelations to an assembly of ladies, youth and gentlemen. The horrible, blood-chilling truth cannot be further related here. Already your hearts are aching, tears are flowing, and sobs interrupt me. At private calls from any man of this town, I will use my remaining strength in detailing cruelties and murderous outrages that your hearts never dreamed of.

"It was the design of the Confederacy to torture and destroy us. Henry Wirz, our Southern keeper, said he killed more Yankees than the rebel army that served at the front. That was not enough. General Winder, distinguished for greater heartlessness, and love of murder, was appointed by Jeff Davis, to the supervision of prisons. He said,—

“Every — Yankee sympathizer, and — Yankee, ought to sink into —.”

“I have but few more remarks to make. We of the North have suffered, and died nominally, for the Union. That Union is restored, but on a different basis. If it had been restored intact, as before the war, I should prefer Disunion. I am a member of this church, and according to its doctrines, the Almighty Ruler of events, that God of wrath and punishments, has been Commander-in-Chief of these four bloody years. He has led your sons, fathers, and brothers to death, and the prison, that He might wrest from this Nation the Freedom for four millions of slaves, which it refused peacefully to yield. If He *has been* an avenging God, He maintains that character still, for I have been taught in this house that he never changes. I pray you, therefore, guard well this jewel of Liberty, so dearly purchased. That Jesus who healed the blind, has anointed your eyes with the clay of beloved graves. The clay of six hundred thousand graves should be enough to restore sight to the whole North. I beseech you to use this sacred ointment for the years to come. Do not forget your dead, or wholly trust the South. A people which has been educated to murder, maiming, and every form of barbarity for two hundred years, cannot unlearn crime in four years. Once more I beseech you, do not forget the graves of your dead !

“I give way to another Southern sufferer, sitting in this chancel. In listening to him, you cannot relax interest or sympathy, for the history of a slave is often the parallel of mine, as affected by Southern barbarism.”

The old slave rose slowly, and bowing to the people, said,—

“Ladies and gentleman of Cloudspire, the testimony, which I have to bear to you to-night may be offensive.”

Cries of “No! no! no!”

“I was not born a slave. By chance I was thrown into the power of slave-holders, and was sold into bondage. I lived in the North, was a poor and honest man, free from crime or evil habits. The North despised color, and oppressed all her colored citizens, both in social treatment and wages. I could not earn enough in the town where my little hut was allowed, to support my wife and children, and to clothe myself. I could not attend church in

that town without suffering scorn and mockery. I could not seek the salvation of my soul at the same altar with the whites, in a revival."

Cries of "Shame! shame!"

"So being ragged, hungry, and cast out, I thought to escape from the snares laid for our feet; and in so doing, I fell into the snares of the South. I have been a slave for many years. I have felt the black whip on my naked flesh, but finally I fell into gentler hands. I have seen cruelties and horrors that would wring a humane heart. I was freed by Sherman's army; and since, I have found my little children grown to honorable manhood and womanhood, through the kind watchfulness of friends to the colored race. They are called abolitionists. My poor wife died in poverty, and wretchedness."

He paused — wiped his eyes and asked if he should proceed?

"Go on," was unanimous; and a request was made for the name of the State and town — his former home.

"The State was Massachusetts, and the name of the town was Cloudspire. My name is Henry Hughes."

Consternation seized the audience. Confusion reigned. He still stood. As it seemed evident that old June had further communication to make, a hush prevailed.

"My wife, Susan Hughes," he continued, "sleeps in a neglected corner of your old cemetery. I have come to drop my tears over her cruel grave, and also to lay bare to your view, my friends, a hidden sin which this church still fosters."

Breathless attention followed.

"Doubtless the older and middle aged, remember William Steele, an assistant in the great revival, many years ago. The beautiful silver baptismal font, overlooked by three angels, in use now, and the Steele Bible, which I now see on the sacred desk, *are the price of blood!* William Steele sold his own child, of two or three years, to a slave-trader in the dark hours of night, in South Carolina, and gave her guilty price to the Lord. The child's name was Lillian. Deacon Steele, whose white locks and shaking head I see before me, will testify to the truth of my words. He knows that history which was related to him in his parlor on the first winter

night of his brother's visit. Be calm, my friends, a few moments and I will not embarrass you farther.

"Against such a religion I hear my testimony. The worship of our Savior does not require such bloody sacrifice. I hereby, on this altar, shake off the dust of my hunted feet, against the religion of this church, and bid you *farewell*."

While uttering the last words, he extended both hands over the congregation, bowed, and passed down the aisle.

Richard Beame came out from his slip, took the arm of Henry Hughes in his own. They went out alone under the starry sky.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

AFTER the departure of Afra with Corinne, Fanny took upon herself the burden she so ardently desired to assume in her girlhood's prime — a missionary life.

"Thanks to my dear, sainted mother," she said, "I know how to fulfill my mission now. I have learned the sin of withholding personal sympathy and comfort, and the crime of substituting in its merciful stead a few Sabbath hours in teaching this crushed people to wait for fraternal recognition, till they shall have passed beyond the bounds of time."

"You are right, Fanny," replied her husband. "These freedmen have been literally crammed with this hypocritical, tyrannical religion, thoroughly leavened with the curse of Canaan. The equivalent for the cruelty, scorn, and contempt of American Christianity towards the African race, was represented by the churches as awaiting them in Heaven. That theory left earth as the favored arena of the worst passions of men. That theory still exists. This city is full of so-called religious guides of all shades of creed and complexion, who herd these still distrusted and despised ones to a salutary fear of Hell, which act is considered promotive of public safety, and to an exalted hope for the no-respecter-of-persons equality in another world, which act renews the earthly lease of continued and oppressive caste of color. Go, Fanny, out into the

highways and byways, into the hovels and hungry kitchens, with your heart full of love and sympathy. Follow the promptings of your untrammelled conscience and the example of our Christ. Weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice. As far as is in your power, feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Thus, at least, will your rare devotion to the victims of oppression find its legitimate expression."

So Mrs. Sterlingworth went about her calling. One of the handsome rooms of Chancellor Mowndes mansion was piled with charitable stores, which had drifted into her hands from various Northern sources. She set about their distribution. She accosted the old maumas and aunties in the streets, ascertained their destitution, and visited their homes. Her name was repeated to others in like need, and many of her hours were occupied in listening to, and serving her multiplied calls.

Fanny's missionary life led to the discovery of several characters, which will elucidate the closing histories of these chapters. One morning, she found herself following an infirm, shuffling woman leaning upon a cane, and carrying a nearly empty basket. Her dress was of the coarsest osnaburg; the color used in dyeing, had settled in darker patches over the lighter, faded slate ground. Her turban was of the same material. Fanny stepped to her side, with a pleasant "Good morning, auntie," and asked her name.

A broken voice replied,—

"Cleo, Missis."

"Have you no other name, auntie?"

"Cleopatra Ashland, missis."

"You seem to be suffering from weakness; have you no relatives to care for you?"

"No, missis; I suffer greatly in this war. Master Ashland went 'way four years ago, and I never see him since."

"Where have you been this morning?"

"To the market to beg a bone, missis. I 'bleeged to beg. I have no money, and cannot work now. I was not raised in Charleston."

Fanny accompanied Cleo's tottering steps to a kitchen which chanced to be located near her own residence, entered and learned that starvation stood at the door; learned that the feeble woman

was the former slave, inmate and mistress of "Nightingale Hall." She had the pleasure of daily supplying Cleo's wants from her own table, of supplyiog strengthening restoratives, aud finally of securing a free passage for her back to the islands, to the protection of the teachers and her son Dan.

A call at Fanny's kitchen, later in the season, may be of interest. Obeying the summons of Abram, she found awaiting her a dignified, reticent quadroon, past middle age, who asked for clothing to protect her from the increasing cold. At a glance, Fanny read that the inroads of grief, as well as hardship, had marred the beauty which still lingered in her clear black eye and in the gray curl that strayed from under her worn turban. A silent, touching despair marked her manner, in place of the docile humility which distinguished other applicants. She seemed reluctant to answer questions except those concerning her immediate wants.

"Trus' the lady, Charlotte," said Fanny's cook. "Missis be all our frien' ; tell missis all ; she help you."

"Come up stairs, Charlotte," said Fanny ; "sit down with me and rest you. The clothing is at hand, there."

The cook made an impatient motion for her to go, which she obeyed.

"Cook, make a cup of strong tea," said Fanny, "and send it up by Abram with something eatable."

Charlotte's dress was the faded remnants of better days ; from the affliction of rheumatism, she leaned upon a cane, and on one foot wore a large ragged moccasin. She took the velvet arm-chair, by Fanny's solicitation, and, softened by her unexpected sympathy, unbosomed the sad history of her slave-life.

This was Colonel Haywood's Charlotte. Two years previously he sold her in Charleston. She was put into the kitchen as washer and ironer, and was compelled to do heavy tasks. Accustomed to indulgence and the sheltered life of lady's-maid, she sank under the severe and incessant toil. Her hands became deformed, painful and nearly useless. Her two sons — the sons of Colonel Haywood — were taken early into the war and had never returned. Her daughter, fairer than herself, was sold away to Texas in her attractive girlhood.

While relating this, the proud, despairing eyes melted to tears.

“Oh, Mrs. Sterlingworth!” she cried, “I am a woman like you. I suffer like any other. I have a heart and affections like Gracie Mowndes. This South is filled with just such wrecks as I am. Can this war atone for the colored woman’s wrongs? With freedom will she receive justice and respect?”

“The blood shed by the North and South should expiate much, my poor Charlotte; but *woman*, of any color, will be the *last* to be benefitted by society or statutes. My heart bleeds for you, and the multitudes who have suffered like you.”

Abram entered with the tea and a relishing lunch. Fanny set a small table by Charlotte, and poured her tea with the kindness of a sister. The rigid coldness of the stricken woman relaxed, and once more her manner warmed towards a white face.

Fanny visited Charlotte’s room often, supplying her hearth with wood and her table with comforts. Later in winter, the owners of the house returning, warned her to leave the chamber. By the kindness of Northern friends, an “Old Folk’s Home” had been established, and was supplied by the government. Charlotte had no other refuge. Fanny saw the broken-hearted wring her hands as she took a last look around upon her furniture, endeared by long possession.

“I have given it all to a dear, destitute woman, who has helped when others passed me by,” she said; and groaning deeply, she turned away to the cart standing at the gate.

At the “Home,” a darker feeling of desolation in the winter days hovered over Charlotte. Death soon cast oblivion over her earthly sorrows.

Fanny retained a bright memory of Leonore Wallace, and often questioned herself on the probability of learning the sequel of her brilliant and happy lot. On a pleasant afternoon of the subsequent summer, Abram summoned her to the parlor at the request of a “white lady,” as he said, laughing.

The stranger was dressed in the extreme of plainness, approaching Quakerism, so thought Fanny.

“Mrs. Sterlingworth,” said she, smiling, “I have called to ask a favor. I hear that you are very benevolent and are never displeased at applications for aid.”

“I shall be most happy to do anything in my power,” replied

Fanny, with politeness, won directly by the lady's pleasing address.

"It is a strange request, but I might as well make it, for I so much object to applying to gentlemen. I have an invalid servant who has grown old in my service. 'Toad' has endeared herself to me, and as poor as I am, Mrs. Sterlingworth, I cannot cast her off. If I should, she would die of that even. I do not think she can survive; and in case she dies, can you, through your influence at the 'Bureau,' procure a cart for her burial? I declare, we are all so reduced by our losses in the war, that I am forced to make this appeal. I came to you, for I understand Northern generosity. I passed many happy seasons North, in girlhood."

"I am glad to find that a few Charlestonians trust us," said Fanny, smiling. "Since the South is opened to Northerners of all opinions, it is quite natural that we, who have heretofore been confined within the limit of winter snows, should seek this delightful climate, and if possible engage in business like any one."

"You may be assured that in my heart of hearts I welcome you to this sunny clime. We Southerners seek *your* cool, invigorating summers; the exchange should be cordially reciprocated on our part."

She then entered into agreeable reminiscences of her last visit North, at West Elms, reverting to her pony "Marmion," her fall in ascending the hill at East Elms, and the polite rescue from her disgrace. In the course of the narration she laughed heartily.

"My 'West Elms' friends removed to Texas afterwards," she added, "and I have never heard from those acquaintances, since."

Fanny found to her unbounded surprise that this plain, frank, and jovial lady was no other than her lovely, interesting, and magnanimous Leonore, whose queenly image of youthful beauty and grace she had preserved fresh in memory, to that moment. But for cogent reasons that ran rapidly through her mind, she resolved to preserve her *incognito*.

Conversation turned upon losses by the war.

"Why, Mrs. Sterlingworth," said Leonore, "I came down to Charleston fully assured that I had sixty thousand dollars in the bank, here; but there is not one penny! I am reduced to the absolute necessity of sewing for a subsistence. Our Charleston ladies have established a sort of labor-office for the destitute; they

engage embroidery and plain sewing from the families of those who have been more fortunate, and from those who have been able to resume business; they distribute this industry among the rest of us. Dear me, I sew days! at night I am obliged to hold this finger so pricked by the needle point, in a cup of cold water, to reduce the inflammation!"

She laughed heartily over her own calamities, and Fanny was forced to join.

"What would my mother say, if living?" ejaculated Leonore, "to see my swollen 'fingers? Mamma was a proud woman. She used to reprimand me after my return from a Northern visit, for setting a chair in its place. She would say,—

"'Have we not servants enough to do that? I am mortified by my daughter's vulgar habits.'"

She burst into uncontrollable merriment again; then said,—

"We've no servants now. I have only 'Toad;' and most of the time I am caring for her ills. I build my own fire; but I cannot blow it up to a blaze, for I've no teeth and cannot afford a false set."

Here she made a comical representation of blowing the fire, saying with laughter,—

"I attempt to blow this way, and my breath goes that way! Well, I might as well laugh as to cry!"

"Much better," replied Fanny, careful not to utter a word that might wound the heroic philosopher. "I suppose the times will regain their former prosperity, after the fluctuations of our civil strife."

"Some things cannot be restored, Mrs. Sterlingworth. My father's house was situated in the burnt district. Every endeared reminder of my childhood's home (and my local attachments are very strong) is obliterated. My second marriage secured me a lovely home in a distant part of the State. That has been reduced to a ruinous condition."

"By the Northern army?" inquired Fanny.

"I frankly say, no! It was pillaged by our own guerillas; probably for the reason that our Union proclivities were well understood. I am living at present in a shabby little house, quite out of the busy centre of Charleston—a remnant of my parental dower."

The interview was pleasant to both. When Leonore took her leave, after asking a second assurance of Fanny's aid in securing the cart for 'Toad's' burial, she cordially invited her to call, and continue their acquaintance.

In October, in the midst of Fanny's benevolent offices the Northern mail brought a letter to her, bearing a black seal. With a feeling of dread she broke it hastily, and read,—

“Cloudspire, Mass., October —, 1865.

“MY DEAR SISTER FANNY,—My pen almost refuses to record the painful event of the past week. Our family has been plunged into a sudden and irreparable grief. My dear, blessed father has left us forever. Without a warning — without a farewell, he has joined the throng of the glorified.

“His last conversation with us, was concerning Alfy and his Southern bride. His manner was cheerful as usual, and he went out about the grounds. The dinner hour drew near; I went out on the lawn to call him, where I had seen him pass but an hour before. I did not find him, and went into the office. He was sitting in his large rocker, with his feet thrown upon the lounge. His bandana lay across his knees, as was his custom. I spoke to him, but received no reply and saw no movement. I thought him asleep, and approached. Fanny, my dear father was dead! His features were as placid and sweet as in his healthful sleep. He seemed to have stepped from this world to the next, without a moment of agony or a sigh.

“The funeral was strictly private, attended only by our dearest friends. In answer to a dispatch to New York, Claude, Pearl, Mrs. Channaire, and Mary came on. The Buddingtons, Links, Robert Adams, and the friends from the 'Green Valley' were present; also Doctor Paisley, Addie, and Henry Hughes, who were visiting us at the time. Claude and Zaffiri brought the richest profusion of rare flowers from New York. March presented also a large floral cross, and laid it reverently upon the coffin with his own hands. Dear father was literally buried in flowers.

“No clergyman was present. Richard offered prayer. George Buddington reviewed my father's ripe and useful life. Madame Lambelle read in her silvery voice, Longfellow's 'Psalm of Life.' Squire Buddington, Mr. Link, Doctor Paisley, and Roland bore his coffin to the cemetery, followed by us all.

“Dear Fanny, can we not all say that Doctor Clarendon's work was done, and well done? None can enter Heaven wearing a purer, whiter robe than my dear, just, beneficent and affectionate father!

“SISTER LUCY.”

In 1867, on a bright morning in November, Fanny and Afra seated themselves in the cars with Richard, on a visit to a rice

plantation. At the end of the railroad conveyance, they took a buggy awaiting them, and were soon lost in piny woods, amid the hum of insects, spicy breezes, and the songs of birds.

"This reminds me of our island home," said Afra. "How quiet! An actual sabbath reigns in these solitudes. If we were mounted on 'Cotton Ball' and 'Chinquapin,' it would be a pleasure to explore these grassy paths."

"Richard," asked Fanny, "do you not find these plantation solitudes charming?"

"Enchanting! We passed a pleasant summer in the pines, and have not long since returned to the house. We are all settled now, however, and ready for your long deferred visit."

The slow mule brought them to the avenue gate in good time for dinner. On the shady road to the house, the whole family met them with noisy welcome; Lucy, Filette, Squire Buddington, Roland, Hester and Henry Hughes.

"Who could have imagined, ten years ago, that radicals and fanatics would be found running South Carolina rice plantations?" exclaimed Fanny.

"We are no longer fanatics," replied Squire Buddington. "Since the amendments to the Constitution, we are considered harmless, loyal citizens."

"Or, by reversion, the whole Nation, or at least the ruling majority have become fanatics, and we are considered no longer dangerous!" added Richard.

Fanny walked up to the house between Roland and Lucy.

"Ah! my Carolina planter!" she said to Roland, there is some difference between this and your shabby little cabin by the river in Alderbank. How do your crops turn out? How many thousands shall you pocket this year?"

"Several, I trust, Mrs. Fanny."

"Is it generally known that you are the proprietor?"

"By no means," answered Lucy for him. "Uncle Richard takes the initiative in all business matters; but Roland will have all the profits. This plan secures to us a residence of a few years South, and furnishes capital to our nephew Roland, for a successful life. We are quite proud of him. Besides, the study of medicine which

he pursued under my dear old father, makes him so useful among these destitute freedmen; and they are so proud of his professional services. I really believe they conjure up all manner of sickness, in order to be attended by Doctor Roland Steele, of their own color."

"I ought to prosper," said Roland, "under such a self-denying guardian as Aunt Lucy. Do you not think so, Mrs. Fanny?"

George Buddington and Richard Beame had hired plantations as far back as the winter of 1866. The squire hired one adjoining Roland's; and as its buildings had been burned, and Roland's house had ample accommodations for both families, they took up their abode together.

Unacquainted with rice culture, they hired an experienced overseer the first year, but took charge themselves, the second. It came out after, that the squire had leased the property of Theresa Valmonte, affording her a generous annual income. Through the efforts of Mr. Sterlingworth and Doctor Paisley, her city house had been restored, and she now occupied her lonely house with Corinne's mediator, in comparative ease and comfort.

Fanny had a true antiquarian taste for old and half-forgotten local and family histories. When these were learned, she was accustomed to people old houses in her reveries with the spectral forms of their former inmates, trace their ancient habits and ideas, and thus by comparison with the present, measure the progress of ideas.

She asked Lucy during her visit, who were the original owners of the estate?

"Thereby hangs a tale," replied Lucy.

"All houses wherein men have lived and died
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors,
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.
We meet them at the door-way, on the stair,
Along the passages they come and go —
Impalpable impressions on the air,
A sense of something moving to and fro."

"This time-battered house, Fanny, is haunted by the old story of

woman's wrongs, though showing a more cruel phase than is often known in enlightened communities. Two ladies once dwelt here in days ago. They were daily seen,—

‘Under the lustrous leaves and through the sheen
Of dewy sunshine showering down between.
The one (the mother) had the attractive grace
Which sorrow sometimes lends a woman's face ;
Her dark eyes moistened with the mists that roll
From the gulf-stream of passion in the soul !
The other, with her hood thrown back, her hair
Making a golden glory on the air,
Her cheeks suffused with an auroral blush,
Her young heart singing louder than the thrush.’

“Now, I will answer your question Fanny. The original owner of this place was Major Measures. He was a gay sportsman ; and these woods, for miles in extent, have echoed to the horns of many a hunting-clan. That large, broken circle of hitching-posts around the live-oak was for the convenience of his boon companions.”

“He never married, but he brought here to ‘St. Cloud,’ a lovely young Northern girl ; won the love of her trusting innocent heart, and made her his illegal wife. One fair child, a daughter, was born from this union. As the years went on, he grew jealous of the mother, and in a paroxysm of rage, the fiend called in slaves, bound her, and *branded* his name into her tender, shrinking flesh with a brutal red hot branding-iron ; intimating that she was his *property*, with his colored chattels.”

“He drove her from ‘St. Cloud’ afterwards, on a small annual stipend. She died in a distant part of the State. He took her daughter from her, sending her to France to be educated.”

Fanny was thinking how hard for herself would be a final separation from her husband and Afra ; her face was wet with tears.

“Dear Fanny,” continued Lucy, “that humiliated and abused woman was Hattie Hudson, of whom we have so often spoken. There are old slaves on this plantation who remember her well. But listen !

“‘Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small ;
Though with patience he stand waiting,
With exactness grinds He all.’”

“Who holds this plantation now? Roland Steele; of illegitimate birth, like Major Measures’ daughter. Roland Steele — a Northern colored planter!”

“That reminds me of information I have for you, Lucy. See how God’s mills grind, in Charleston! The Misses Fairland, those arrogant daughters of the South, are reduced to the deepest poverty. The father and mother are dead. They live in one room, for which they pay only a nominal rent. Prepare for surprise, Lucy! The Misses Fairland earn their bread by making orange marmalade, canning it, and selling it to any customers chance may offer!”

Lucy raised her hands, and uttered a cry of “No! I cannot credit you!”

“Dorcas — your old Dorcas, told me herself. I found her out accidentally, and she related their condition with extravagant gestures of pleasure. You should have heard her, thus. ‘Oh! Mrs. Sterlingworth! she cried, ‘I am too glad! Just so, I poor slave set up nights, and make marmalade when dey all sleep. I see ‘em *bilin’, bilin’, bitin’*; *simmer, simmer, simmer*; *skim, skim!* I see high head come down! come down! Missis, I see dem put marmalade in cans, jest like me, Dorcas, and send it off to ladies in Baltimore. Do, I beg, let Miss Lucy know. Tell her dey be old and gray, and seldom go out. Dey be shame!’”

“Dorcas is right,” exclaimed Lucy. “These girls have ever scorned labor; and it is no worse for them to earn an honest living, than for others. They have fattened, heretofore, on stolen wages. I must see that dear Dorcas, who was my only trusty friend at ‘Le Grand Palais.’ Did Dorcas succeed in buying her freedom, Fanny?”

“She paid all but two hundred dollars; was not able to earn the remainder, and was finally freed by the Emancipation Proclamation.”

At ‘St. Cloud,’ Hester was in her culinary glory, furnishing the table with delightful Northern dishes — declaring daily, she could never learn to live on “bacon and hominy.”

Henry Hughes was supported in the “Union League” by Richard in his own stead, as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention.

The freedmen on the plantations had an unswerving trust in

Squire Buddington and Marse Beame, as they persisted in calling him ; but these gentlemen waived all claims in favor of others. Both desired Henry to fill that position of Constitution maker, and they held him in the district for that purpose.

Fanny went to the plantations for the purpose of witnessing the first exercise of political power, in South Carolina, recently conferred upon the former slaves — the first triumph of colored manhood suffrage through the ballot. The nineteenth and twentieth of November were golden days in that State calendar, as well as in the harmonious and indulgent calendar of Nature herself.

An enthusiastic party gathered round the breakfast-table, in the sun-illumined dining-room of St. Cloud.'

"The spirit of Calhoun should be present in his beloved and misguided Carolina, to-day!" said Squire Buddington, "to witness this tidal wave of progress, which, like King Canute, he vainly strove to roll backwards!"

"Ah! if we only had a 'Witch of Endor' to bring him up!" laughed Afra. "Mrs. Buddington, what do you think the old man, covered with a mantle, would say to his former constituents?"

"What will you not imagine next, Afra?"

"Well, I think he has been converted by this time, and would say to Secessionists, like Samuel, 'The Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor — even to David.'"

Squire Buddington, standing at the head of the family board, held in his hand an empty wooden box, in size nine inches by twelve. It was the first ballot-box for the reception of the new suffrages, and had been prepared from a Northern starch-box. He said,—

"I present to your view, one of the corner-stones which will support the new Constitution of this State, which is about to establish justice, ensure tranquility, provide for mutual defence, promote the common welfare, and secure to its posterity the blessings of Liberty. According to programme, I now place it upon its honored pedestal, before our hero of the day; the freeman, slave, and freedman, Henry Hughes!"

He proceeded to deposit it upon a high evergreen support in the



HENRY HUGHES FREES HIS MIND.

centre of the table, placing a laurel wreath, woven by the young ladies, upon its closed slide.

Three cheers greeted this act, which were followed by demands for the orator of the occasion.

Henry Hughes arose from his central seat, and bowing deeply to Richard and the others, said,—

“My friends, with much humility I receive these tokens of your loving kindness towards myself. As a humble candidate for political honors in the Constitutional Convention, and in behalf of my fellow-sufferers from American oppression, I would say, that in all these proceedings I behold the hand of God. Unworthy as we all may be, through ignorance and inexperience, to take upon ourselves the duty of making laws for a State, this unworthiness has been thrust upon us by a so-called Christian Nation. *Such citizens as we are, this Republic has made us.* If, in the future, the finger of scorn should be pointed to our legislation, we will point back the finger of shame and condemnation for our errors and mistakes, *to the white race of our common country!* If we who have been mercilessly robbed of manhood, wages and suffrage, who have been cruelly defrauded of education and property, fail to handle State and financial affairs in such a manner as to bring back prosperity to our oppressors, it will be for them a judgment from Heaven! Let all the world say, ‘Amen.’”

Amidst responsive and prolonged ‘Amens,’ he bowed, and resumed his seat.

Hester now brought forward the smoking viands of the breakfast. While the repast was in progress, conversation turned upon the coming ballot.

“I do not perceive the magnanimity of conferring citizenship upon Freedmen,” said Doctor Steele (Roland.) “Colored suffrage is not a new thing to Congress, or the States. For eighty years, each Southerner has fought the Northern mono-suffragist with his *own* vote, and the votes of *three-fifths* of any number of *slaves* he might possess—counting slave women and infants. That kind of negro suffrage crowded the Capitol with fire-eating representatives, and wrung from Congress constant Southern exactions. I have examined the Census of 1860, and I find that in South Carolina

the slave vote nearly equaled the white — lacking only about fifty thousand, to about three hundred thousand of white representation."

"True, Doctor Steele," answered the squire. "The Americans *are* acquainted with colored suffrage; and when it was under Southern dictation, I do not consider that it was more enlightened than at the present. *That*, supported Tyranny. *This*, supports Freedom."

Every mode of conveyance was brought into requisition, to transport the family and visitors to the voting precinct.

By Fanny's request, Henry Hughes drove two large docile mules, attached to the large wagon, carrying the ladies in the afternoon, Afra sitting by his side.

"So I rode with Henry, in my girlhood!" said Fanny; and a merrier set never went to the polls.

Five miles drive through the sunny glades of forest, brought the party to the spreading, moss-draped live oaks, within sight of the quiet, orderly throng that gathered around the small, weather-stained building.

There was no angry clash of partisan phrase, no recrimination of the past, no vociferating doubts of the present. Silent, reverential, and trusting, the voters approached the ballot-box, and cast in their bits of paper, inscribed with mystical powers which they could not understand. Few knew how well they were building! Few knew that thus they were rehabilitating the State, and clothing her in the beautiful garments of Equity.

A feeling of awe crept over the party from "St. Cloud," at their departure.

The blood-red sun hung low in the west and touched everything with crimson, as if to remind all of the terrible sacrifice by which this glorious day had at last dawned upon the down-trodden race.

The Precinct was holy ground, and the whole assembly seemed in the presence of Him who worketh wonders.

CHAPTER XL.

MRS. PAISLEY was closely shut into her parlor and had given orders that no one be admitted. It was the day before Christmas. A shapely holly tree, clustered with its scarlet berries, and glossy green leaves, on one side of the room, was receiving her earnest attention. Packages of various sizes were strewn about, waiting to join their companions already swinging from the branches.

A glance at the street showed her a carriage turning away; a ring at the bell announced a call.

"Oh, my!" she ejaculated in an undertone, "this room is all in confusion, myself included;" and fitting into the hall, met her servant with a hand upon the knob. "Remember, the back parlor," she said hurriedly, and hastened on.

Before she had reached the upper landing of the stairway, a cheery voice called after.

"Halloo! Mrs. Paisley, don't you know me?"

She turned, ran down as quickly as she had flown up, and in a moment was in her brother Willie's arms.

The next moment she said,—

"How splendid you are! dressed in the top of fashion, too. Why did you not write us you were coming? Issy and father will be so glad to see you!"

"I thought everything would be prepared for me at this festive season, without that formality, and you see I judged correctly."

He was finishing the sentence as they entered the back parlor, which was garlanded with evergreen and glowing holly berries.

"Aha! my little sister of the Alderbank cabin lives like a princess. Where did you procure all these? What are these scalloped thorny leaves?"

"They are the Christmas holly — they came from the plantations. Doctor Roland Steele sent them down."

They took seats near the fire by the grate.

"Well, Sister Addie, I confess this is a delightful climate. I had

many a good skate on Boston ice before leaving, and here you have bouquets of japonicas and rose-buds. I hear our dear old father is elected to the Constitutional Convention. Can you realize what astounding changes have been wrought, within a few years?"

"I could not believe the evidence of my senses, at first; but living here amid rapidly shifting vicissitude and progress, I am accustomed to see the world move. How long, Willie, will you remain with us? All winter I trust."

"I have leave of absence for two months! long enough to daguerreotype Henry Hughes as a Constitution maker, indelibly upon memory. I have still, as fresh as ever, the picture of him as a half-clad, half-fed, despised Northern laborer. I have a fancy picture of him as a Georgian slave. The next will complete the set."

"Were many Northerners on the steamer?"

"Yes, they are flocking to Southern climes. By the way, I accompanied Mrs. Corinne Buddington, child and servant, to Charleston. I expect the Valmonte schism is healed, for while the driver was removing her trunks from the carriage, I observed a most affectionate embrace in the hall, and heard the words "Dear, dear Corinne!"

"Yes, Corinne's long absence has softened Theresa's cruel, supercilious coldness. I am told that she is even quite proud of Alf's professional fame, and that she has conspicuously hung the picture of Corinne and husband — she in her magnificent bridal array — in her grand parlor. You know it was sent to her immediately after the marriage."

"That is all as it should be; how are they prospering at the plantation?"

"Right well. Doctor Steele will make a handsome net profit this season. His rice crop is abundant and of excellent quality. How wonderfully Lucy and Richard watch over his interests."

"No more wonderfully, I think, than the Beames watched over you and me, Addie. If all the religion in this world was of the Beame, Buddington, Clarendon, and Link variety, the churches would be relieved of the necessity of laying out a programme for a millennium."

“Precisely my opinion, Brother Willie. What a remarkable friend and father Mr. Link has proved to Alfy. Will he pay his respects to Mistress Valmonte this winter?”

“Alfy is to come down to accompany his wife and child back to Boston. You should see that little ‘Mary Link Buddington.’ She is as sweet a one-year-old as you will ever meet. I expect Mrs. Valmonte will adore her.”

“Has Corinne a white nurse?”

“By no means. She has one of Robert Adams girls. She is devoted to Corinne and little Mary, and will know how to please the captious Mrs. Valmonte.”

Doctor Paisley’s Christmas board was generously laid, and was surrounded by his own family, the Sterlingworths, Hester, and Doctor Steele. To these old and tried friends, were added two picturesque figures who came to the table on canes, two withered old bodies in plaid turbans, faded black dresses, and neat gingham aprons. Both had worn their lives out in the cotton field; their unpaid wages had all been pocketed by the slave-master, and they were left to eke out a nearly finished earthly existence, by the daily sale of a few peanuts on the street corners. Old “Nan” was the *protégée* of Addie; and old Peggy, for half her support, leaned daily upon Afra. Addie had said to Afra,—

“We must take care not to lead selfish lives.” In a sacred glee, she added, “Let us remember we are in a good and regular standing in the liberal, independent Beame church of Alderbank. To continue our example without blemish, let us give these two good old souls a Christmas dinner.”

The appetite was gratified by Southern dishes of venison, duck, wild turkey, ham, rice, yams, and a tempting dessert. To the circle still lingering at the table, Doctor Paisley said,—

“Gentlemen and ladies, we never use wine as a beverage. I propose in its stead, copious libations of the nectar of poesy, that if possible, our hearts may be stimulated to nobler aspirations, and that our minds may be healthily lifted above the groveling cares of sense.”

His reply was unanimous applause. Each poem was recited standing. Mr. Sterlingworth repeated first “The Reformer,” by Whittier. Fanny begged the pleasure of paying a poetical tribute

to Jefferson Davis, and recited with dramatic effect, "King Canute and his Nobles," by Doctor Wolcott. Willie Hughes recited for his father who rose with his son, Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Boston Hymn," read in Music Hall, Jan. 1, 1863. He was followed by Doctor Steele, who repeated for himself and Hester, standing, "The Black Regiment," by George H. Boker. Afra was called upon next. Without prudery and with a winning grace, she repeated, Tennyson's "Lady Godiva." Addie followed her with Longfellow's "Killed at the Ford."

Fanny bade old "Nan" and "Peggy" remain in their seats, while she repeated *for* them, "Nearer, my God to Thee," by Sarah F. Adams. Every one at the table felt their eyes misty when, in response to the solemn words so slowly and distinctly repeated, their wrinkled hands clasped and their heads bowed with low groans, at every verse.

Little Susie and Henry were lifted upon their feet in chairs.

"Little Susie, who said something sweet?" asked her mother.

"A — be Lincoln, mamma."

"Repeat it, darling. Whatever —

"Hoteber sall ap-pear to be Dod's will, I vill do."

The general applause was so great that little Susie slid down from her chair, ran round to Addie and hid her face in her arms.

Doctor Paisley rose smilingly, saying he desired to remember a recent visitor to the city, "Miss Mary Link Buddington." A wreath of smiles met the request. In the tenderest voice, as if endeavoring to make the little lady herself understand, he slowly repeated "Baby Bye," from Theodore Tilton. After the cheering and laughing, he said,—

"Dear friends, our wine is quaffed and our nerves are still strong. As other offices devolve upon this festival day, shall we have the benediction? Papa's boy can repeat the words of Mr. William Lloyd Garrison at Charleston, in April, 1865."

The party rose, Henry Hughes going round to lift his petted grandson again, into his chair. The child repeated in a clear, innocent voice, these words,—

"I knew of the black or colored people as the children of God, men and women, created in the same divine image, having by creation the

same sacred rights, and as much entitled to liberty as the proudest slaveholder that walked the earth."

"A sentiment, sublime as Garrison himself!" responded Mr. Sterlingworth, to which all present assented.

Issy and Addie led the way to the parlor, where the holly-tree was unveiled. Willie Hughes was delegated to pluck the Christmas fruitage, which was bountiful and appropriate. None were forgotten; but as Henry Hughes is the hero of the day, his remembrances only need be enumerated. Afra put into his hands a sealed box, inscribed "From May Dentelle."

His eyes habitually sad, lighted up at the sound of that name.

"Open it now, dear father," said Willie, coming forward to assist.

The old man loosed the knots of the package, as if they were sacred from the giver's touch. The seal was broken, and a tiny key was discovered. He unlocked it, and lo! exclamations were uttered by all gathered about him. He raised a costly gold watch and massive fob chain with elegant seals.

"Moultrie Bloome!" exclaimed Willie, "it must be her deceased father's watch. There is a small, folded note, dear father, and money beneath it."

"Read the note, my son."

He read,—

"June, receive this watch from May. Wear it always. With this money, I desire that you should purchase an entire fine black cloth suit and whatever else will add to your happiness and comfort. It is due, with a much greater amount for your long and faithful service to
May."

"The Lord is good," said Henry in an agitated voice.

After a half hour of admiration, both of the giver and the gift, Willie placed the watch upon his father's person.

"Henry Hughes!" again cried Afra. This time it was a cane with a bent handle. Upon a gold plate she read, "Willie, to his father." He further explained that it grew near the spot by the river in Alderbank, where the little cabin once stood.

"Henry Hughes again," laughed Afra.

"I believe you are a good fairy like your mother," he said, taking the package and opening it.

"Gold spectacles," he said. "I am afraid I shall lose the humility necessary to my condition. Read Afra."

She read,—

"From Issy and Addie."

He made no reply, appearing more concerned than pleased.

"Do not take these inflictions to heart, poor father," said Doctor Paisley. "You deserve all these, and more. These few mementos are a small reward for your life of suffering."

"Wear them, use them," added Mr. Sterlingworth. "They are but a small portion of your unpaid wages, Mr. Hughes. The gold and broadcloth belong to the honest toiler. Wear them and be happy."

"Old "Nan" and "Peggy" tottered up to him on their canes with the happiest of faces.

"Wear dem ebery day," they said; "youse earn twenty watch, — all gold; youse earn whole plantation — tousan acre; tank de Lord youse got your chilen! Wese got none — all done sold; me five and Peggy six — all done gone. Tank de Lord for de chilen and de gold."

Afra went back to the holly tree, and cried "Nan and Peggy." She carried a large package to each containing a full suit of clothing, neatly finished for immediate use. The thanks, chatting, nodding, unfolding and folding done in their corner, was the brightest feature of that Christmas.

At the departure, Fanny took Hester home with her; and for a week she enjoyed the rest and quiet of the Sterlingworth family. Together they recounted their New England past, with many a hearty laugh of derision and triumph.

On the fourteenth of January, Henry Hughes stepped down from Doctor Paisley's door, watched by the happy face of Addie, and leaning proudly upon Willie's arm, passed down through Meeting street, entered the deep yard of the Club House, wound along its evergreen shrubbery, ascended the broad staircase, entered the grand hall of God-defying, slave-holding wassail, and took his seat among the one hundred and twenty four delegates for the purpose of framing for the rebellious State of South Carolina a constitution which should establish justice as the law of the land. His elegant

dress, his massive gold chain and seals, the gold mounted cane on which his hand rested, the spectacles, gray hair, his noble, patient face, and his keen, intelligent eye were aristocratic and impressive to the spectators.

He looked about upon the earnest, hopeful white faces, Northern and Southern, mingling in nearly equal number with delegates of his own color. In a prayerful soliloquy, he murmured,—

“*Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.*”

He raised his head, and the Divine image in which he was created illuminated every feature. The mantle of his stolen manhood fell at last upon the shoulders of Henry Hughes, enfolding him in a new glory scarcely understood by himself. His heretofore bent form sat erect. His head, heretofore bowed in despair, took its proper and dignified poise. A radiant smile of hope and trust beamed upon his grief-furrowed lineaments. He said mentally,—

“In the language of Cloudspire church, at last, *I see a great light.* Restored to my educated children, to freedom, to political and civil equality, what can I ask for more?”

Willie, sitting apart among the spectators, recalled the negro pew of Cloudspire religion; the Buddinglon pew torn up to the bare sleepers, and the ground beneath. In a dizzy rapture he exclaimed,—

“The Lord reigns! The sight alone, presented in this hall, is a canticle of praise!”

‘Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stand waiting,
With exactness grinds He all.’”

During that winter, a letter arrived at “St. Cloud” plantation for Filette, post-marked at Charleston. She broke the heavy seal bearing the initials, C. L., took out three sheets of closely written note paper, scanning the signature first. She immediately summoned Lucy, and together they read the alternation of pleasant and startling information, of which a few extracts will be sufficient.

“Alabama, Feb. 15, 1865.

MY DEAR HEBE, — Do not be offended to learn that we have made the long journey from New York, without a call of love upon Charleston, and ‘St. Cloud.’ Claude and I have long had in mind the idea of purchasing the Channaire

mansion in this State, both for the gratification of my dear mother, Celestine Channaire, and to secure to ourselves a winter residence in the South. Consequently, Claude made a trip here early in the fall, and found the house and grounds not only in excellent repair, but adorned with rare shrubbery, gardens, an orangery, and pleasant parks.

“Property has depreciated since the war, and this dear home of my mother’s childhood was for sale at half its former price. Claude purchased it, and returned quickly.

“I proposed to my mother, to take a Southern journey to Savannah, to visit dear May Dentelle. We took a steamer in New York for that city, remained a week with May, and proposed a further tour South. As we journeyed, my mother said, ‘Pearl, would not you like to visit my beloved home, and although it is in the hands of strangers, fix its principal features in memory?’ Claude assented. We arrived at the town near it, and took a carriage a short distance through the country, to ‘Elysée,’ the name of the plantation.

“At the high, handsome iron gateway, overrun with ivy, my mother hesitated, and said, ‘I dislike to meet strangers here. Let us survey the grounds, and return.’ Claude said assuringly, ‘Remain here with Pearl a few moments, and I will remove all unpleasantness about entering.’ Poor, suffering mother! She looked so pale and agitated! While she surveyed from the carriage the delightful surroundings, Claude returned, saying the people were very courteous, and invited our party to enter. She took my arm up the long brick walk, seeming scarcely able to stand.

“We entered the spacious hall, and turned into the parlor, without attendance. It was freshly carpeted, and supplied with new, stylish, rose-wood furniture.

“‘Ah!’ said my mother, weeping, ‘how delightful! Here in these parlors and chambers I spent the gayest, happiest part of my life!’

“I said, ‘Come up stairs, and show me your chamber, dear mother.’ She utterly refused, as being a breach of good manners. ‘No, I replied; the occupants are perfectly willing you should do so, and have even invited us to dine.’ Just then Claude entered with my former Italian maid, Cossetina. My mother knew that she had come over from Italy, in great poverty, with her husband and children, to New York, and recognized her immediately.

“‘Cossetina, how came you here?’ she asked.

“I could not endure her cruel suspense longer, and answered, ‘Dear mother, this charming Elysée is yours and mine! We are to pass the winter here. Come to your own chamber — it awaits you.’ Claude had furnished it as nearly as possible in conformity to the descriptions she had often given me in conversation. He assisted her up stairs; and in her own furnished apartment, she gave way to one of those nervous attacks, by which she was often prostrated in other days. She desired, as usual, to be left alone.

“We are very happy here now. My mother and I are healthy and strong. Cossetina is in ecstasies. Her husband is an experienced gardener, and when we go North for the summers, they will remain to take care of Elysée. Our

beautiful Italian tongue is revived, and whatever spies may lurk around us Northerners, they will be no wiser. Cossetina speaks Italian with me ; her husband and children know no English.

“ The poor Freedmen in the country are in a terrible fear from the secret societies, called Klu Klux Klans. This murderous organization is composed of former slave-holders, who go out nights, whipping, maiming, and hanging Republican voters, and members of the ‘ Union League.’ They dress in grotesque costumes, wholly concealing identity. One of the Cyclopes, as they term their leaders, has endeavored to induce Claude to join them, so that he has all the mysteries of the Order. Claude excused himself on the ground that he was not a resident of Alabama ; and although a Democrat in ante-bellum times, he now had assumed neutrality, on account of ill health, and constant change of location.

“ One sure shield of protection to us from these midnight assassins, is the fact which I take pains to disseminate, that I am a native South Carolinian. Thanks to Claude’s former experience among these bloodthirsty Alabamians, and to the Italian which will be spoken in our absence, we shall escape being murdered or driven out.

“ My mother has resolved to pass the summer here, as the proud mistress of ‘ Elysée.’ I am glad to hear that you are all going North this year ; and that you and Lucy will go on this spring. I shall do myself the pleasure of spending a few of the summer weeks with your dear families in Clouds-pire. In return, we shall claim your winters, or a part of them, at our lovely Elysée.

“ I cannot tell you how much Claude misses March, both here, and in New York ; but we could not consent to retain him longer. His intelligence, gentlemanly address, and the general information which he has acquired North by extensive reading, and contact with our noblest minds, eminently fit him for a leader in the Republican movement of the day. The way is open for his political preferment, and we could but bid him God-speed. He writes that he is a candidate for the Legislature ; and we know he will become a wise and judicious Statesman. We shall not fail to visit him in Columbia during one of the Legislative sessions ! *Grace a Dieu. Le bon temps a venu.*

“ I send this letter to Charleston by the politeness of one of Claude’s Northern friends. I doubt the safety of mailing it here.

“ PEARL Z. C. LAMBELLE-”

CHAPTER LXI.

“ **H**ERE! you infernal Atlanta, Sherman, Georgia nigger ! How’s your mule going to draw a cart, that way ? Buckle your harness, there. Get a strong string, and tie up that breeching. Can’t buy new harnesses now, till the country gets over that cursed Yankee invasion ! Recollect, I am overseer at present ! I don’t

understand what such a blockhead dropped out of Sherman's ranks for."

The black in patched clothes, and toeless boots, smiled without anger, and said,—

"Mus' work for de hominy, and sweet tater, sir."

"You'd better have gone on to Washington, and made laws in Congress, you'd do as well at that, as our ringstreaked — and — striped Convention here in Charleston!"

"Don' know what dat be, sir!" tying up the breeching.

"You never was made to know anything. Go ahead, down to the rice banks."

Colonel Haywood sprang on to his horse, and cantered away down to the rice fields where his hired freedmen were clearing out the ditches.

He had occupied "Vaucluse" two years. He had a hard struggle to start cultivation. His house was nearly stripped of its furniture — how, and by whom, no one told. Colored troops had camped near, United States officers had quartered in his chambers, cantered up and down the magnificent avenue, and sauntered in his gardens, while their horses had been stabled in his stalls. The white, scalloped fence, around Gracie's flower garden, still stood, dilapidated and paintless. Some of his former slaves remained; others, weary of Colonel Haywood's tyranny and hard usage, had gone, some one way, some another. Their places had been supplied by other freedmen seeking employment; and over all the colonel kept a sharp supervision. His dog kennel had fallen to ruin, no longer the baying hounds, followed by the thundering heels of gay huntsmen, resounded in the forests. But one of his numerous stalls is now occupied, and that by a half-worn cavalry horse which suffices for plantation business.

Grace has but one servant, who unites the duties of maid, seamstress and table waiter.

One cook occupies the extensive kitchens, who, finding that the reduced "cuisine" of the lord proprietary, gives sufficient time for laundry service, takes that upon herself, also. Of the fifteen house-servants which kept Vaucluse in palatial order, before the civil war, not one met the family on their return to offer service. The name of March, long since dropped out from Colonel Hay-

wood's curses, ceased to make a part of the plantation gossip. The kidnapped waiting-man, procured in his place by the paid instrumentality of Lem Hamm, had stolen away to the Federal army and found his way North.

Yet, a short time antecedent to Colonel Haywood's return, Vaucluse welcomed a wanderer of which he knew nothing. Old Prudy was long since dead. The inmates of her cabin in the slave quarters gathered around the light-wood fire, in the early part of November, 1865, heard a light knock upon the door, and suspiciously opened it to a stranger. With proper respect to his fine dress and bearing, he was invited to enter.

"Cato, have you forgotten your old friend?" said the brown man with a smile, extending his gloved hand for the large, brawny, toil-worn one of the cabin's occupant.

A superstitious fear was observable in the reply.

"I tink I know dat voice. Is you March?"

"I am March; don't be afraid, Cato. I did not come out of my grave. I am alive and well."

Cato gave him a cordial welcome, set for him the same carefully preserved old arm-chair that March's father had given to Prudy, threw on more light-wood, and asked how he came?

"Are your children asleep, Cato?"

"Ebry one — only tree of 'em. Don' you be 'fraid, March; nobody on dis plantation hear you — all still — like Death been here."

"Do you know anything of Ralph?"

"He send word he come in tree weeks," answered Cato's wife. "We neber want to see him gin."

"Well, then, I am waiting upon Northern officers, stationed about ten miles from here. They very kindly loaned me an army horse, and I rode over to see the old place once more, to gather the news from you all. Can we get my horse into the stables?"

"He can hab all de stall to hisself. It be de clar moon and we can see any ting."

"Is my Flora's cabin occupied?"

"No, March; de people's gone; it be all lone."

They went out together, put the horse in the stable, and fed him with oats that March brought with him.

"Now," he said to Cato, "I must spend this night in Flora's cabin; I have an army blanket, and with a good fire shall be happier than anywhere else. I am going down to the old Palmetto tree where my dear, lost Flora prayed for me last; if you will get a fire kindled, Cato, I will tell you my story when I return."

March went on alone down the path, past the piny grove, through the deep, sere grasses in the open fields, under the magnolias, past the copses of sweet bay, to the sacred spot where he buried the pretty French basket, and the beautiful gifts he brought across the water to his still beloved Flora. The old palmetto had succumbed to the destroying hand of time, but its rough stump was fondly cherished by a richer mantle of jasmine, reaching over to the other trees about it.

The old agony returned. Flora's sweet vision seemed to float about him as of yore.

"Slavery is dead!" he ejaculated, "but its cruelties remain!"

With an aching heart he kneeled upon the small grave and prayed, that, "if indeed she might yet live, Flora, abused, crushed, worn, broken with grief and years, might be restored to his enfolding love." But his petition appeared hopeless. When he arose from his knees, the lovely vision seemed to have departed as a warning that she could never return. "Flora is dead. There is nothing left to me on earth but her dear, unfading memory."

How long he lingered, gazing again and again at every object, he scarcely knew; but he finally found himself at the door of her cabin, where Cato waited. His grief was renewed within.

"O my Savior!" he cried, "this room, once so happy, has for me the chill of the tomb!" He recalled her laughing eyes, her busy housewifery, her silken curls, and seemed to feel again her arms about him.

"Don't grieve so much," said Cato. "Come, go trough de big house. I'se got de key. Turn your mind. Come."

They walked on to the "big house," which was as silent and empty as Flora's cabin. They entered. The moonlight was sufficient to show the absence of luxury and comfort within. The library door was open; the glass doors of the empty book-cases swung at random.

"In Ralph's chamber," Cato said, "De Yankee officers sleep

here. De hand ob de Lord sweep all dese room, clean. No more furniture here dan in my cabin."

They returned to Flora's fire-lighted room. March rolled himself in the blanket, and threw himself on the floor before the blaze, exhausted. He related the events of his escape, withholding names. Cato's eyes enlarged at the recital of the box-ride from Philadelphia to New York. He threw himself flat upon the floor, and turned several somersaults for joy.

"De Lord bless de Yankees!" he cried; "dey don' 'fraid nothin."

Cato sat through the remainder of the night, on an old piggin, watching March while he slept, and keeping the fire. In the gray dawn he awoke him, and brought his horse to the door.

March put five dollars, broken in small currency, into Cato's hand.

"Remember," he said, "you are not to mention my name or allow my return here to be known. I have a great dread of Ralph Haywood. I believe there is no black deed he will not lay his hand to, if he finds opportunity. Remember, Cato, my name is Paul Snow, in the regiment. The officers and men know no other."

"I 'member all, Paul Snow," said Cato.

One more mournful look within Flora's cabin, and the swift beat of a gallop died down the pines.

Colonel Haywood returned from the rice ditches earlier than usual, at ten o'clock.

"Grace, how is the dinner coming on?" he said in haste, as he entered his chamber. "You see we are to have twelve planters here from this district, besides that cuss, Rev. Edmund Stone. The meeting is appointed at ten o'clock, and we must dine at twelve. They will ride a long distance, some of them, and need a good meal. I'll go down, and swear at the cook; that will help the thing along."

"No, Ralph, I beg you not to do that; she will leave directly, and then I shall have to pick up anybody. You know they have grown so independent since they were freed, that we are forced to

be careful. The dinner will not wait. I have just been to the kitchen."

"Independent! D—n them! I'll take the starch out of these niggers, when I get this company organized. Is my disguise finished?"

"It will be in time; I am at work on it now. Do you know, Ralph, I never undertook anything in my remembrance, that gave me the pleasure that this Klu Klux disguise does. You see I cannot sew fast, for I never learned to use a needle."

"How shall I get the others made? There will be some poor devils that cannot buy one. I shall have to furnish them."

"Do not be troubled. I will call a meeting of the ladies, and they will be as glad as I, to engage in anything that will put the negroes in subjection, and keep them away from the Union Leagues. Ralph, why do you hire that clergyman? I don't think we are able to pay him a salary."

"I don't hire the d—d dwarf; he must stay somewhere; he is a good Democrat, and will help my plans. He asks only his support, and the niggers will supply him, mostly. He's got a black wife, too, that works in the rice-field; she will help support him."

The arrivals were exact in number, and the plain dinner was laid in time. Assembled in the parlor with closed doors, the colonel took the initiative, as was expected. He thus addressed them.

"Gentlemen, I have called you together to-day, to advise with you upon the condition of our State. You need no explanation to understand that, without some effort on our part we shall soon pass under Negro and Radical Rule. Our legislative assemblies were dispersed by Gilmore. General Sickles annulled our revised Criminal Code, making all laws applicable alike to niggers and whites. Really, he abolished color and caste. Corporal punishment, too, the best remedy for insubordinates, he shivered with his sword.

"All negro crimes which we specify as felony, without benefit of clergy, are to be tried in courts, with all the pomp and legal display that we confer upon *white* criminals. Gods! what are we coming to, gentlemen? In Charleston! the city of our pride, from which we have heretofore expelled every d—d fanatic, there sits a ring-streaked and striped convention of niggers, scalawags, and Yankees.

"We relinquished our right at the polls very foolishly, I think, on that convention. The Radicals or Union Leagues had it all their own way. We were absentees."

"Ah, colonel! it was too degrading to submit to military rule and vote with our niggers besides!" said another.

"We have been under the military, three years, since the war. Our laws have been made and administered to us by the North, as a salutary regimen is prescribed for invalids!" observed "No. 3."

"*Parbleu!*" ejaculated Colonel Haywood. "I reject the dose! or at least, I am about to propose to-day an antidote for what we have already swallowed, by allowing the Constitutional Convention to go through, by default."

"How did you find resistance in Georgia and Alabama, colonel?" asked "No. 4."

(As this is a Klu Klux conference, it will be proper to denominate these gentlemen by numbers as they chose to designate themselves thus, on their bloody raids.)

"Every sail set, sir, and a stiff breeze blowing. They are whipping and killing radical niggers, and driving out white Union Leaguers. They are also preventing Radical votes, by refusing to contract with Radical voters."

"Robert Toombs says of Republicans, '*Ostracise them; drive them out; spurn them from your midst!*'" observed "No. 6."

"That is the only proper course to take!" chimed in Rev. Edmund Stone. "We took that step at the North, towards Abolitionists."

"I have here, gentlemen," said the colonel, a 'Constitution,' and 'By Laws' for our secret order, which I wish to submit to your decision this afternoon, that we may get ourselves in working order before the election for the Governor, State offices, and Legislature takes place."

"I propose that it be read," said "No. 12."

"I think the vote would be unanimous in favor of reading, without further delay," said "No. 10."

Colonel Haywood read from some sheets of fools-cap.

"OBLIGATIONS OF THE KLU KLUX KLAN."

"I (name) before the Immaculate Judge of Heaven and Earth,

and upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, do of my own free will and accord, subscribe to the following sacredly binding obligation :

1. We are on the side of Justice, Humanity, and Constitutional Liberty, as bequethed to us in its purity by our forefathers.
2. We oppose and reject the principles of the Radical party.
3. We pledge mutual aid to each other in sickness, distress, and pecuniary embarrassment.
4. Female friends, widows, and their households, shall ever be special objects of our regard and protection. Any member divulging, or causing to be divulged, any of the foregoing obligations, shall meet the fearful penalty and traitor's doom, which is *Death ! Death ! Death !*"

CONSTITUTION.

Article 1. This organization shall be known as ——— Order, No ——— of the Klu Klux Klan of the State of South Carolina.

Article 2. The officers shall consist of a Cyclops, and Scribe, both of whom shall be elected by a majority vote of the Order, and to hold their office during good behavior.

Article 3. It shall be the duty of the Cyclops to preside in the Order, enforce a due observance of the "Constitution" and the "By-laws," and an exact compliance to the rules and the usages of the Order. To see that all the members perform their respective duties, appoint all committees before the Order, inspect the arms and dress of each member, on special occasions, to call meetings when necessary, draw upon members for all sums needed to carry on the Order.

Section 2. The Scribe shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Order, write communications, notify other Klans when their assistance is needed, give notice when any member has to suffer the penalty for violating his oath, see that all books, papers or other property belonging to his office are placed beyond the reach of any one but members of the Order. He shall perform such other duties as may be required of him by the Cyclops."

Section second of article fourth prohibited the admission of any person of color.

Article sixth read, "Any member who shall divulge any of the matters of the Order, shall suffer death."

The colonel continued to read further articles, and a paper of by-laws. Section second read, "Five members shall constitute a quorum, provided the Cyclops, or Scribe be present."

Article fifth read, "Each member shall provide himself with a pistol, Klu Klux gown, and a signal instrument."

"How is the signal instrument to be used, colonel?" asked "No. 6."

"It is a whistle for intimating danger. When the Chief uses it, it signifies, 'Mount ;' for you understand that all members must go upon raids, mounted, and disguised. Wait a moment, gentlemen."

He left the room, took his disguise from Grace, returned, and dressed himself in a long blue gown, with a loose, yellow head covering, drawn around the neck with a string, and having a yellow mask face, with red about the mouth and eyes. A shout of exultation went round.

"The Republicans will think the devils are let loose, when they see a dozen of those hideous things!" said "No. 8."

"They will *believe* it when they feel the halter around their neck drawing them up to a tree, some night!" said "No. 3."

"Or when they feel seventy-five lashes on their bare backs, with hickory switches or with iron ramrods!" said "No. 1." "We'll make good Democrats of the new-fledged Union Leaguers!"

"Shot guns or muskets will answer for arms," said the colonel. "An Enfield rifle will be a fine arm for removing some white Radical usurper out of our way through a crack of a window blind, or a curtain, dark nights."

"This organization will be as effectual in ridding the State of Northern poltroons, as our stringent laws of expulsion were before the war!" said "No. 7," with a malicious laugh.

"How many Constitutions and By-laws have you, colonel?" asked "No. 1." "We have, some of us, a long way to ride on our return; it is necessary to complete our business as soon as possible."

"I have written out six for the party."

"That is sufficient," replied "No. 1" "Those of us living near the gentleman who takes one, can easily copy and return."

"There are many offences besides political ones, which will call for our raids. I shall swear in my Klan to-night, and raid as soon as may be, on two defiant niggers. One says he will be buried in a white burying ground. He will need a whipping. Another on my plantation does not take off his hat when he meets me; he must be dealt with."

"It is quite necessary to organize immediately, to turn our nigger voters into good democrats before the election—besides we must go around to the polls; we must crowd and intimidate!" said "No 6." "We have also to prepare the disguises, which will take time."

"Our ladies will meet in circles and finish them in one day," remarked "No 5."

"Let us bear in mind, gentlemen," said the colonel, "when any danger of exposure happens, '*Dead men tell no tales!*'"

"Aye! aye! aye!" was the ready response."

The colonel furnished copies of the Constitution and By-laws.

The party rose to take leave.

No. 12 asked,—

"What signs and pass-words the colonel's Order would use."

"My signs will be first, to pass the right hand to the left ear. Also, place the right heel in the hollow of the left foot—the answer will be given, *vice versa*. Any word spelled and not pronounced, will be a pass-word, such as 's-a-y,' or any other. The title of my Klan will be, 'Holy Stone Klan,' in honor of our brother here, who will take the oath to-night."

"I think it is important to have another general conference, one week from to-day, in order to secure harmony of action, and report progress," suggested "No. 5." "As my location is most central, I shall most cordially welcome you all, gentlemen, at my house."

It was agreed, and the twelve horsemen disappeared down the avenue.

After Colonel Haywood had bowed his guests away, he returned to the parlor with Rev. Edmund Stone, and invited him to remain at Vaucluse over night that the business of the Klan might be fully arranged, and understood. The clergyman suavely consented.

"I desire," said the colonel, "to make you Scribe — you are supposed to be a man of much writing ; therefore, in your care and keeping, the records of our Order will be secure. No active service will be required of you — of course, Mr. Stone, you do not mingle religion and politics."

Rev. Stone bowed in a servile manner, and said,—

"Certainly not, colonel ; my mission is to preach 'Christ, and Him crucified.' I hope that the eternal salvation of man is *distinct* and *separate* from worldly or political subjects."

"Very well, Mr. Stone, suppose, as you are alone and at leisure, you take the oath of the Order here, before tea, as afterwards, after dark, ten or a dozen members will be sworn, and we shall need time to open the records."

"I am at your service colonel, and the service of South Carolina. It is the State of my adoption. I give my heart and hand in the interests of her intelligent, humane people, and of that Constitutional liberty bequeathed to us in its purity, by our forefathers. I am ready to take the oath, sir."

Colonel Haywood took the copy of the oath, and standing, said in the tone of an absolute dictator,—

"It will be necessary for you to kneel, sir, and hold up your right hand."

The hump-backed figure slid from his chair to his knees upon the floor, raised his bony hand, and listened solemnly to the reading of the obligations,—to the last words "Death! Death! Death!" and as if to bind himself still stronger, he rolled his round, staring eyes heavenward, and echoed,—

"*I swear!*"

At the tea-table, Grace lavished more attentions upon this apostle of Christ than he had ever received from a South Carolinian. He was overwhelmed ; being unaccustomed to these favors, his acknowledgments became simpering and idiotic.

The two gentlemen exercised upon the piazza after tea, indulging in pipes.

"Jupiter! I used to enjoy my Havanas," said the colonel ; "but we have given our property and our lives for the South Good God! I don't call ours a lost cause, yet. This Klu Klux business will fix things right. History but repeats itself. In the long

records of man's existence, there are landmarks by which we may guide our uncertain steps down the rugged paths of the future. I repeat the sentiment of the *Charleston Mercury* I was speaking of landmarks. When Oliver Cromwell trampled upon the cream of England, and laid waste her palaces and gardens, crushing works of art and scattering loved memories of past time with brutal joy; when he had wasted to the very dregs the grand old Norman blood that had built the British Empire, and given it laws and civilization, and arms, and raised it among the powers of the earth, then came the reaction; and Charles Second was proclaimed with almost universal satisfaction, King of England.

"So the 'May Flower' set her sails, laden with the germs of future woe, and the Norway rats and the English Radicals landed together on the mall stone typically called, 'Plymouth Rock,' to the pest of the world, and the destruction of the United States Government. Now will come the reaction. The Cavaliers of the South, the born rulers, will establish themselves in the power inherent in their noble blood.

"We have another landmark in Roman struggles. When Marius, master of butchers, brutal, savage, hater of all elevation, hater of all excellence, at the head of a filthy mass of emissaries and foreign slaves, assaulted his country and turned her fields, her forums, her gardens, and her palaces into butcher pens for the spilling of that blood which through centuries had made Rome the master of the world, then came Sylla. Sylla, red-handed, a fate, succeeded MARIUS, the beast, and the Roman Empire was established.

"History repeats itself, I say again, Rev. Mr. Stone, and will repeat itself in these States of America."

He strode with weightier step across the piazza, and after some earnest affirmation from his low, ill-shapen companion, he continued,—

"Alexander H. Stephens, the vice-president of our Confederacy, believes there *must be a war of races*. He was asked, 'Well, what will the white population do in such an event?' This was his weak and unworthy reply. 'One of two things, quit the country or remain and fall. For my part, my mind is made up. I have not long to live. I will stay and go down with the ship; but to the young I would counsel them to find homes elsewhere.'

“I say that is the advice of a timid, old dotard. What! eight millions of civilized white men abandon their homes, the noblest territorial expanse upon the face of the world, and surrender their country in ignoble panic to three millions of barbarians, and those barbarians the weakest and lowest in the scale of men — negroes? No! this is OUR country; and please God we will keep it yet, and *rule* it.”

Edmund Stone assented with fervor.

“What do you think, Mr. Stone, of President Johnson’s answer to the charges of impeachment?”

“I think, sir, that his answer is a most perfect and complete vindication of his innocence. He has nobly opposed the proposition of any amendment to the Constitution by Congress, while, out of the thirty-six States constituting the Union, eleven are excluded from representation in either house.”

“True! If ever there was a friend to the South, Andrew Johnson is that one. He has exercised the Presidential power in vetoing the ‘Freedman’s Bureau Bill,’ and the ‘Civil Rights Bill’ which abolishes distinction between the races. He is an opponent of Negro Suffrage. As far back as the fall of 1865, he strove to disarm the adversary and set an example that other States would follow. He wrote to Governor Sharkey, of Mississippi, counseling him to extend the elective franchise to all persons of color who could read the Constitution of the United States in English, and write their names; also, to all persons of color who owned real estate, valued at not less than two hundred and fifty dollars. He said,—

“‘This you can do with perfect safety, and thus place the Southern States upon the same basis with the Free States, and as a consequence the radicals who are wild upon negro franchise, will be completely foiled in their attempt to keep the Southern States from renewing their relations to the Union, by not accepting their senators and representatives.’”

“With the *Charleston Mercury*, I say, ‘If the United States Senate condemn Andrew Johnson, the name of every senator who declares him guilty will stand gibbeted forever in history, as the basest traitor to the South, Justice and Liberty.’”

At eight o’clock, the colonel donned his Klu Klux gown in a re-

tired, unfinished chamber. This time he appeared more terrible by the long horns attached to his head. His face was entirely masked. The ten candidates awaited in the hall ; and for expedition all were blindfolded at one time. The Rev. Stone conducted each, separately, before the Cyclops ; arranging them in a semi-circle around him and bade them kneel.

In this attitude and with raised hands, they took the oath to the "Obligations," which he read in a solemn, unearthly tone. At the close of the words "Death ! Death ! Death !" he bade them rise, when he read the Constitution and By-laws, to all of which they assented. He gave them the signs and passwords ; he appointed the "Night Hawks," whose duty it was to warn the Klan when, and where, to raid.

The Rev. Stone conducted each one into the hall again, where they removed the covering from their eyes, and departed, till summoned for deeds of cruelty, whipping and murder.

On a golden June day, following the events here described, an elegant carriage, reflecting the sun's splendor from its wheels and burnished sides, drawn by a proudly moving pair, and driven by a liveried coachman, slowly approached the former residence of the Fairlands, at "Le Grand Palais." The horses were walking and tossing their fine heads, while the lady within the carriage wove into a wreath a vase of exquisite flowers, kept fresh in the water by her side. They were passing, when a well-dressed serving-man, standing upon the high verandah, raised his hat, and bowed with the courteous civility usual even to strangers of their rank and style. The lady gave a second searching glance, exclaimed from the open side,—

"Paul Snow, follow this carriage down to those graves yonder, by the river."

"What does this mean, dearie?" asked the gray-haired gentleman at her side.

"I will explain, papa, at the river."

The carriage wound slowly down over the grassy road, to the river bank, when the one so strangely addressed stepped to the side, and politely opened the carriage door, saying with joyful surprise,—

“Pardon, Mistress May, I did not recognize you, until this moment!”

“How came you here, Paul?” said May Dentelle eagerly, for it was no other. “Who occupies ‘Le Grand Palais?’”

“A gentleman from New York has purchased it for a winter residence, and, through Mr. Lambelle, I have waited in the family the past winter. They are now in the North, for the summer.”

“May,” said her companion, “is this the Paul Snow that waited upon you with such attention at Madame Zaffiri’s, that you have never ceased praising him since?”

“The same, dear papa.”

“Are you sure the name is correct? I think something is wrong. I should say his registered name would be ‘March Haywood.’ He has a strong resemblance to Ralph, and I have known both from boyhood. If I had not supposed March dead, long ago, I would swear to it, May!”

She laughed, and said in a low tone,—

“Papa, you have divined the truth—but say no more here! let us walk down the river-bank together.”

Ever indulgent to her wishes, they alighted, and walked on. May made a sign for Paul to follow.

Removed from observation, she laid her hand upon Dentelle’s shoulder, and looking earnestly in his face, said,—

“Dêar papa, will you grant all my requests to-day?”

She took a locket from her bosom, touched the spring, and showed him Isabel’s curl, saying,—

“By that talisman, I expect to hear an affirmative answer. Papa, will you grant all my requests, to-day?”

He pressed her small hand in his, raised it to his lips, kissing it tenderly.

“What am I, to refuse your requests, my darling, my pride? Do you not lead me wherever you will?”

“God bless you! dear, noble papa.”

She recalled Paul, who had walked one side, and asked with agitation,—

“Are you elected from this District, a member of the Legislature about to meet in Columbia?”

“I am, Mistress May.”

“By what name did you register?”

“March Haywood, madam.”

“Do you apprehend no personal danger, by remaining here till the Legislature convenes?”

“I have not, madam.”

“Then let me tell you, your life is in danger. We have just paid a visit to Vaucuse. Colonel Haywood has been informed of the result of the election, and has recognized your name. He is enraged beyond measure, and will take unwarrantable means to prevent you from taking your seat. I can say no more than to assure you that the assault upon you will be night work, by men in disguise. *Three nights hence* is the appointed time. I must see you safe in Columbia. We are rambling about the country for pleasure, and I have acquaintances in Columbia. We are half way there, from Charleston now. Go to the house, take what clothing you need at present — as much as will pack in the driver’s box, and go with me to Columbia, immediately!”

“Could I not remove to some other place, near here? to ‘Snowfield,’ or ‘Success?’ We are forty miles from Vaucuse.”

“March, they will search every cabin for you! The brand on your arm will betray you, wherever you are. I demand that you follow my advice.”

Major Dentelle said,—

“I advise you to take May for your guide! I do not approve of this negro hunting, at night, but *others do.*”

“Thank you, papa,” said May. “Go directly, March, and come down to the carriage. The horses are fresh; at least, we shall leave this district by dark. You will be my footman, Paul Snow. Understand?”

The same frightened look crept into the expression of March, as Mr. Lambelle observed in the Quaker’s chamber in Philadelphia. He went to the house for his effects.

During his absence, Major Dentelle and May walked back in a sad silence to the grave beneath the magnolias. He took the wreath from the carriage seat, and May, weeping and kneeling, laid it reverently upon the breast of her mother, Isabel. Tenderly supported in the arm of her father, May entered the carriage. March took his seat on the box. Major Dentelle said to the coachman,—

“Let the horses try their mettle. Take the route to Columbia.”

In July, a week after the meeting of the Legislature, March was summoned outside, from his seat in the Representative's chamber. There stood before him a ragged, haggard freedman, who seized his hand eagerly, saying,—

“I so glad to fin' you, March. Tank de Lord, you is well an' saft!”

“Why Cato!” exclaimed March, “what can be the matter? What brought you to Columbia?”

“I'blege to come, March, but I tell all nudder time. You is busy now making de laws; but I mus' see you face. I satisfy now.”

“Cato, I am glad to see you,—sit down here and wait for me. In an hour the session will be concluded. Are these tattered clothes all you have here?”

“Ebryting I got, March. I tankful to have myself. I tell all dis ebening.”

“Are you hungry, Cato?”

“I eat nottin' since yesterday morning.”

March gave him money, bidding him go buy a meal. Then reflecting how little he understood customs, went out with him to a restaurant, and left him at a bountiful table, with the injunction to return for him.

At the close of the session, he took Cato to a clothiers, and purchased for him a becoming suit, which he wore away. He completed Cato's outfit at the shoe and hat store; and after a call at the barber's, took him to his lodgings.

“There, Cato,” said March, “you look like a new man. Come to supper, and then tell me all.”

Happy and confiding as a child, he followed March, stepping carefully, and surveying constantly his strange new clothes.”

At length they were alone.

“Now tell me all,” said March, playfully. “I feared I should never have the opportunity to entertain you, Cato. Try to feel content with me. You shall share my bed, and this room, as long as you like. How is your family, Cato.?”

“Dunno, March. Wese all run way from dem Klu Klucks. I come here, my wife start fur Charleston, an' my grown darter, dat wait on Miss Grace. You say when you come dat night horse-

back, if I get in trouble, go to Missis Sterlin'woft in Charleston ; she will help us.

"You see, March, fore de 'lection, dem debble masters get on dere horses, and go round nights, whippin', and hangin' we. Dey say dey make all we good democrat ; and make we promise not to vote 'publican ticket. Dey say dey won't hire no hands on plantation dat vote so — nor any dat go to Union League. Say dey dribe all we off ! Say dey dribe de Yankee off, too !"

"Cato, have the Klu Klux really whipped colored men ?"

"I tell de trut', March ! Dey whip good many I know, and I tink good many I don't know. Dey whip me, Cato !"

"Who whipped you ?"

"I knows one — dat's Marse Ralph. Dunno de oders. Dey all dress in long gown, hab head and face all cober up, say we come from hell, an we goin' back to hell. Dey hab gun, an pistol. Dey broke in my door, drag me out, and whip me wid hickory switch till I can't walk, and say, 'You won't vote Radical ticket ?' I say, 'No sir.' Dey hold de pistol to my head, and say, 'We make you democrat ! Den dey whip again.'"

"Did you vote at the last election ?"

"No, March."

"Were you not afraid to travel to Columbia ?"

"I trabel four day in de swamp and wood, and I seen tree men hang dead on one tree ; den I seen one mo' dead in anodder place, shot to pieces !"

You must stay away from such friends ; never go back, Cato. You helped me to escape to the North, before the war ; now, I will help you."

"You mus' stay 'way too, March ; dey ride in de dark night for you. Dat what I come dis way for — to warn you neber go back where you was 'lected."

March groaned, and asked,—

"How do you know they would harm me, now ?"

My girl, maid to Missis Grace. She was in de dressing-room, and missis don't know she there. Marse Haywood come in de chamber, and swear and cuss 'bout March, say you was gone when dey ride forty mile after you. Den he say when you go back, after you done in Columbia, he hab nudder Klu Klucks ready for you

dere ; cuss and swear an' say dey take you in de woods an' shoot you, and bury you so deep *God can't find you*. She tell me ; I come dis way to warn you. Stay in Columbia all de time, March. Marse Haywood will murder you."

March paced the room — his face writhed in agony. He exclaimed, —

"Is this Reconstruction? When will this South cease to indulge in the ferocity of barbarism? When will this lovely land cease to be watered with tears and blood? Alas! when shall I ever be free?"

To and fro, to and fro, went his scarcely conscious feet, pondering upon his bitter past and no less cruel present. At length, his hands clasped, his soft dark eyes turned upward a look of pleading despair, as he mournfully exclaimed, —

"My Savior ! I am hunted still !"

LAST CHAPTER.

BETWEEN three and four years after the events recorded in the previous chapter, a carriage was leisurely driven to one of the wharves in Charleston.

"Stop here, driver," said Mr. Lambelle ; then turning to his gentlemanly companion, one of the State officials from Columbia, he remarked, —

"I think we can observe every movement of interest from this point."

"I think so, sir," replied March Haywood ; "there will be no necessity for our alighting."

"None at all ; we shall be more secure in the carriage from the jostling crowd. I think they are approaching now. *Once more*, March, the Federal Government has extended its arm of power over the rebellious and unrelenting South. By the peaceful grandeur of judicial process it brings the South again to punishment and reflection !"

In a few moments, a gang of white prisoners from the jail were marched under guard, slowly past the carriage wheels and under

its open windows. A motion from March fixed the attention of Mr. Lambelle upon one of the forlorn, woe-be-gone, and haggard crew. He wore a gray blanket in the manner of a cloak over his shoulders, fastened with a string. His eyes were steadfastly cast down.

“Is that man your proud, defiant brother?” asked Mr. Lambelle, in a suppressed voice.

“That is my brother — Ralph Haywood!” answered March, with a compassionate sigh. That is Ralph Haywood, on his way to a Northern penitentiary, in the snows of January.”

The Klu Klux prisoners ascended to the deck of the steamer “Charleston,” where a detachment of the Eighteenth Infantry received them. They descended into the bulkhead, temporarily prepared for their confinement, and were lost to view.

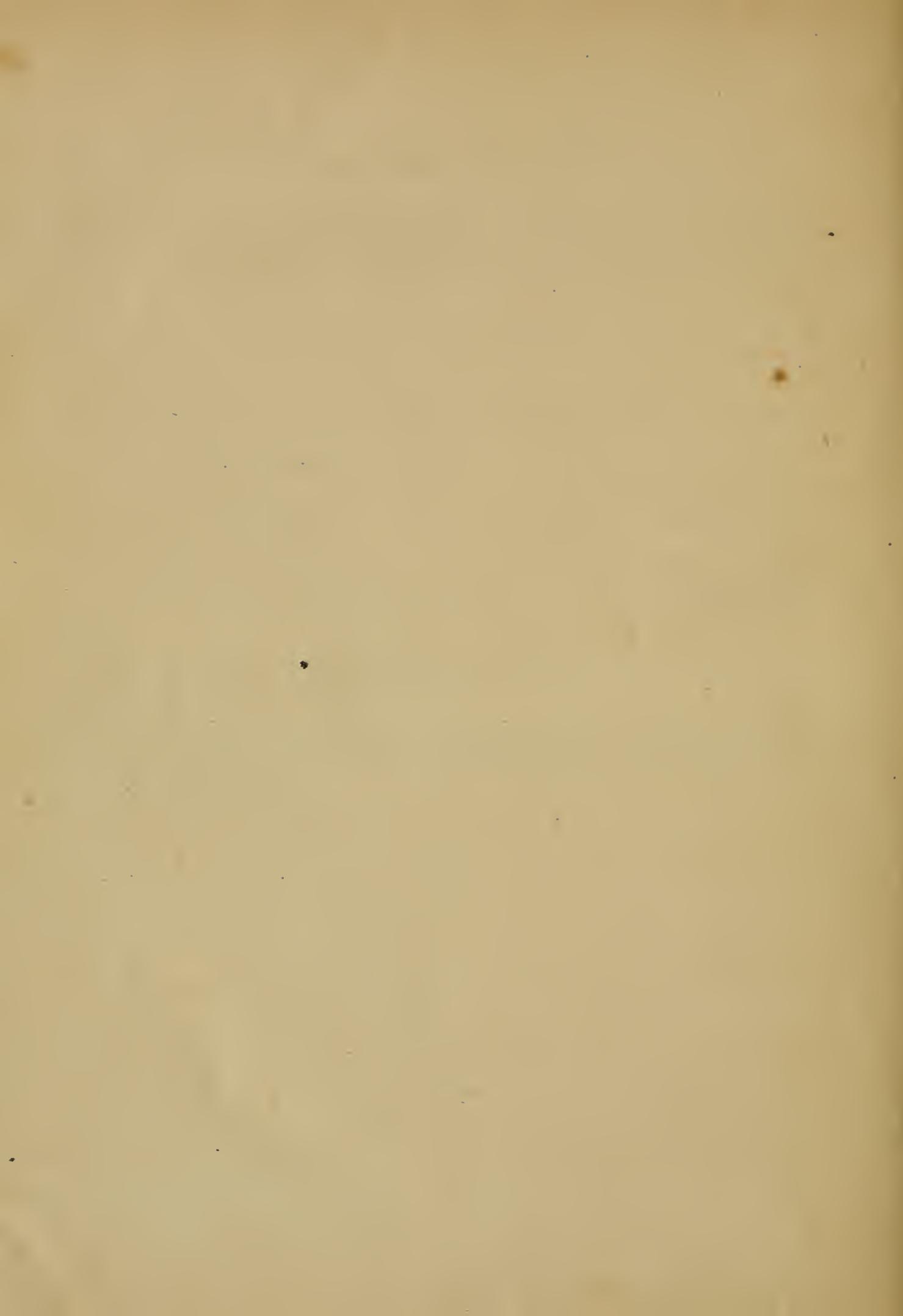
The carriage still remained. Mr. Lambelle and March, in awe-struck silence, saw the convict steamer loose from her moorings, heard the swash of the waves as she swung into the Bay, and left the Port.

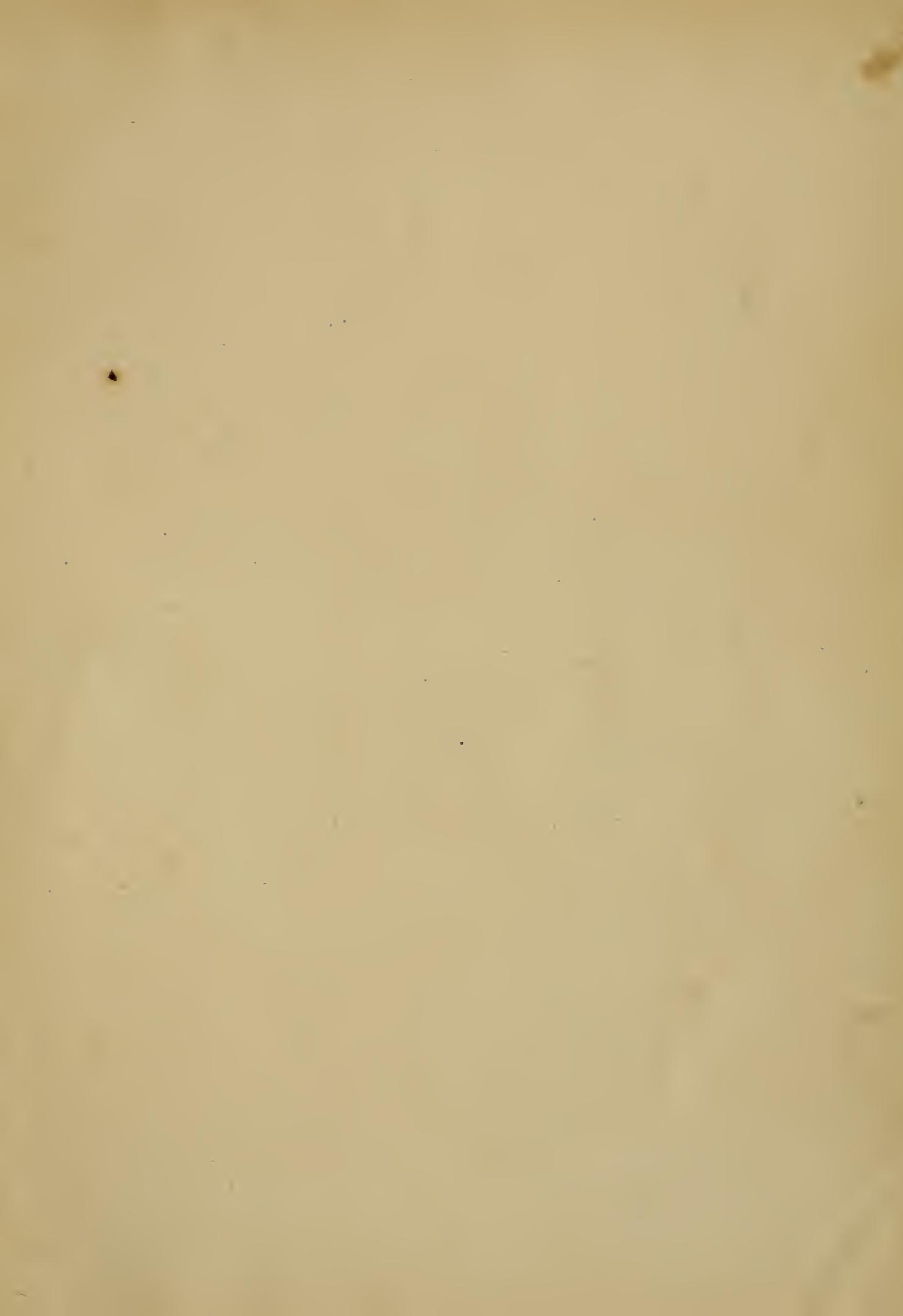
“Thus, my dear, dead Flora is at last avenged!” said March.

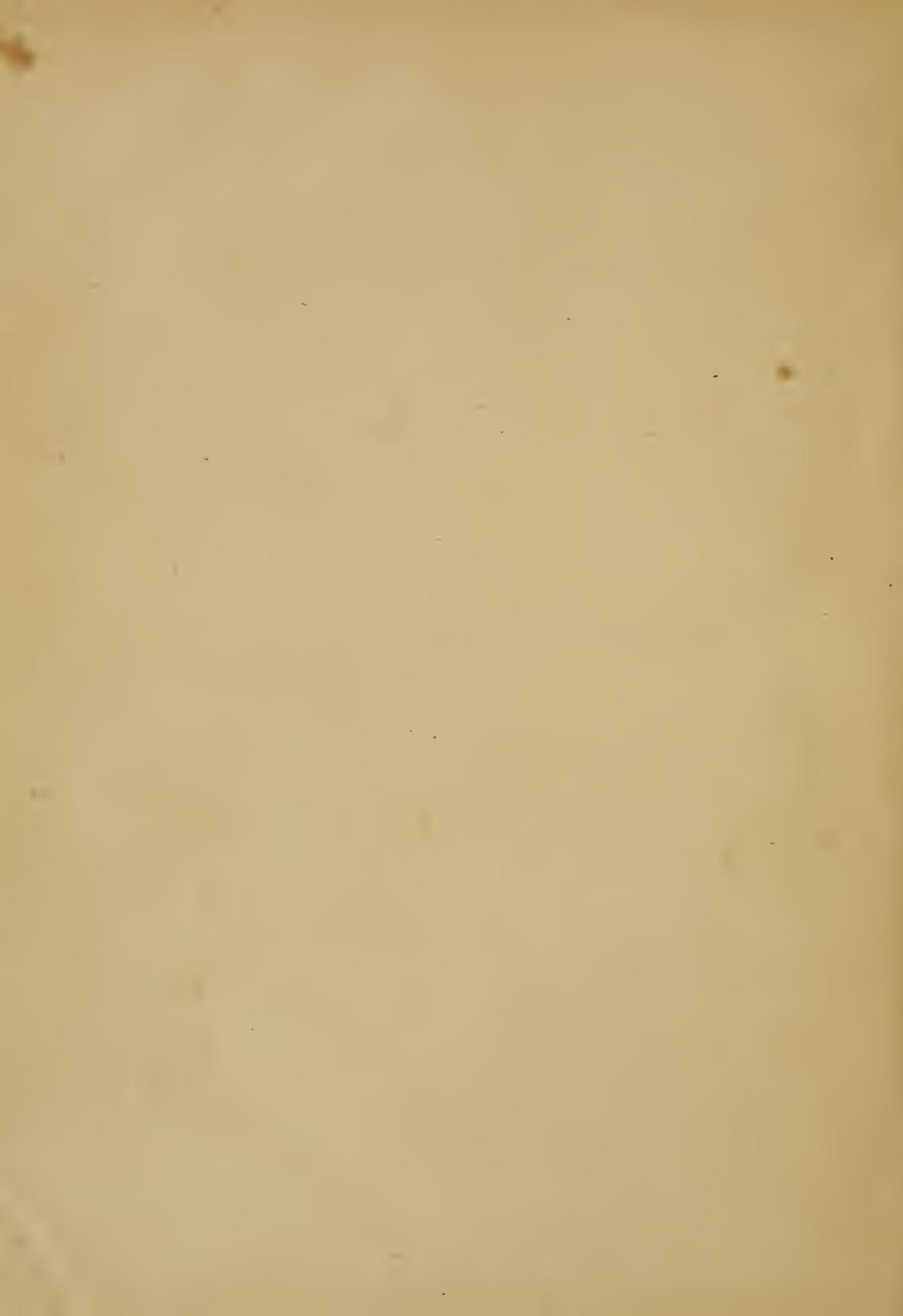
Absorbed in reflection, he scarcely heard the reply of Mr. Lambelle,—

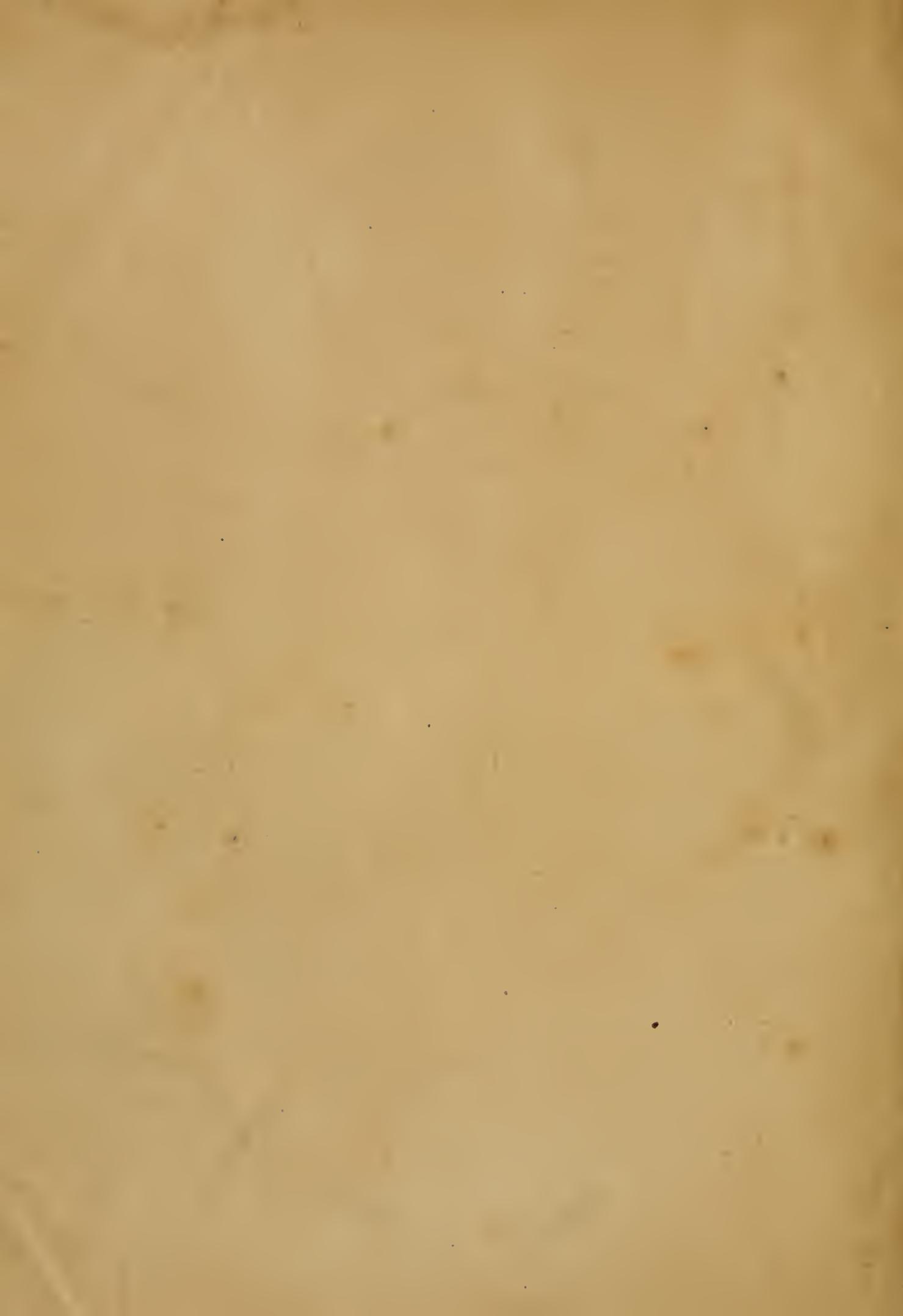
“Thus you, my patient, long-suffering friend, are at last set free from his bloody pursuit!”











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