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Memories of Childhood's
Slavery Days

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Memories of Childhood's
Slavery Days

By

Annie L. Burton



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RECOLLECTIONS OF A HAPPY LIFE

The memory of my happy, care-free childhood days on the plantation, with my little white and black companions, is often with me. Neither master nor mistress nor neighbors had time to bestow a thought upon us, for the great Civil War was raging. That great event in American history was a matter wholly outside the realm of our childish interests. Of course we heard our elders discuss the various events of the great struggle, but it meant nothing to us.

On the plantation there were ten white children and fourteen colored children. Our days were spent roaming about from plantation to plantation, not knowing or caring what things were going on in the great world outside our little realm. Planting time and harvest time were happy days for us. How often at the harvest time the planters discovered cornstalks missing from the ends of the rows, and blamed the crows! We were called the "little fairy

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devils." To the sweet potatoes and peanuts and sugar cane we also helped ourselves.

Those slaves that were not married served the food from the great house, and about half-past eleven they would send the older children with food to the workers in the fields. Of course, I followed, and before we got to the fields, we had eaten the food nearly all up. When the workers returned home they complained, and we were whipped.

The slaves got their allowance every Monday night of molasses, meat, corn meal, and a kind of flour called "dredgings" or "shorts." Perhaps this allowance would be gone before the next Monday night, in which case the slaves would steal hogs and chickens. Then would come the whipping-post. Master himself never whipped his slaves; this was left to the overseer.

We children had no supper, and only a little piece of bread or something of the kind in the morning. Our dishes consisted of one wooden bowl, and oyster shells were our spoons. This bowl served for about fifteen children, and often the dogs and the ducks and the peafowl had a dip in it. Sometimes we had buttermilk and bread in our bowl, sometimes greens or bones.

Our clothes were little homespun cotton slips,

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with short sleeves. I never knew what shoes were until I got big enough to earn them myself.

If a slave man and woman wished to marry, a party would be arranged some Saturday night among the slaves. The marriage ceremony consisted of the pair jumping over a stick. If no children were born within a year or so, the wife was sold.

At New Year's, if there was any debt or mortgage on the plantation, the extra slaves were taken to Clayton and sold at the court house. In this way families were separated.

When they were getting recruits for the war, we were allowed to go to Clayton to see the soldiers.

I remember, at the beginning of the war, two colored men were hung in Clayton; one, Cæsar King, for killing a blood hound and biting off an overseer's ear; the other, Dabney Madison, for the murder of his master. Dabney Madison's master was really shot by a man named Houston, who was infatuated with Madison's mistress, and who had hired Madison to make the bullets for him. Houston escaped after the deed, and the blame fell on Dabney Madison, as he was the only slave of his master and mistress. The clothes of the two victims were hung on two pine trees, and no colored person would touch them. Since I have grown up, I have seen the

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skeleton of one of these men in the office of a doctor in Clayton.

After the men were hung, the bones were put in an old deserted house. Somebody that cared for the bones used to put them in the sun in bright weather, and back in the house when it rained. Finally the bones disappeared, although the boxes that had contained them still remained.

At one time, when they were building barns on the plantation, one of the big boys got a little brandy and gave us children all a drink, enough to make us drunk. Four doctors were sent for, but nobody could tell what was the matter with us, except they thought we had eaten something poisonous. They wanted to give us some castor oil, but we refused to take it, because we thought that the oil was made from the bones of the dead men we had seen. Finally, we told about the big white boy giving us the brandy, and the mystery was cleared up.

Young as I was then, I remember this conversation between master and mistress, on master's return from the gate one day, when he had received the latest news: "William, what is the news from the seat of war?" "A great battle was fought at Bull Run, and the Confederates won," he replied. "Oh, good, good," said mistress, "and what did Jeff Davis

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say? ” “ Look out for the blockade. I do not know what the end may be soon,” he answered. “ What does Jeff Davis mean by that? ” she asked. “ Sarah Anne, I don't know, unless he means that the niggers will be free.” “ O, my God, what shall we do? ” “ I presume,” he said, “ we shall have to put our boys to work and hire help.” “ But,” she said, “ what will the niggers do if they are free? Why, they will starve if we don't keep them.” “ Oh, well,” he said, “ let them wander, if they will not stay with their owners. I don't doubt that many owners have been good to their slaves, and they would rather remain with their owners than wander about without home or country.”

My mistress often told me that my father was a planter who owned a plantation about two miles from ours. He was a white man, born in Liverpool, England. He died in Lewisville, Alabama, in the year 1875.

I will venture to say that I only saw my father a dozen times, when I was about four years old; and those times I saw him only from a distance, as he was driving by the great house of our plantation. Whenever my mistress saw him going by, she would take me by the hand and run out upon the piazza, and exclaim, “ Stop there, I say! Don't you want

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to see and speak to and caress your darling child? She often speaks of you and wants to embrace her dear father. See what a bright and beautiful daughter she is, a perfect picture of yourself. Well, I declare, you are an affectionate father." I well remember that whenever my mistress would speak thus and upbraid him, he would whip up his horse and get out of sight and hearing as quickly as possible. My mistress's action was, of course, intended to humble and shame my father. I never spoke to him, and cannot remember that he ever noticed me, or in any way acknowledged me to be his child.

My mother and my mistress were children together, and grew up to be mothers together. My mother was the cook in my mistress's household. One morning when master had gone to Eufaula, my mother and my mistress got into an argument, the consequence of which was that my mother was whipped, for the first time in her life. Whereupon, my mother refused to do any more work, and ran away from the plantation. For three years we did not see her again.

Our plantation was one of several thousand acres, comprising large level fields, upland, and considerable forests of Southern pine. Cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, wheat, and rye were the prin-

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cipal crops raised on the plantation. It was situated near the P—— River, and about twenty-three miles from Clayton, Ala.

One day my master heard that the Yankees were coming our way, and he immediately made preparations to get his goods and valuables out of their reach. The big six-mule team was brought to the smoke-house door, and loaded with hams and provisions. After being loaded, the team was put in the care of two of the most trustworthy and valuable slaves that my master owned, and driven away. It was master's intention to have these things taken to a swamp, and there concealed in a pit that had recently been made for the purpose. But just before the team left the main road for the by-road that led to the swamp, the two slaves were surprised by the Yankees, who at once took possession of the provisions, and started the team toward Clayton, where the Yankees had headquarters. The road to Clayton ran past our plantation. One of the slave children happened to look up the road, and saw the Yankees coming, and gave warning. Whereupon, my master left unceremoniously for the woods, and remained concealed there for five days. The niggers had run away whenever they got a chance, but now it was master's and the other white folks' turn to run.

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The Yankees rode up to the piazza of the great house and inquired who owned the plantation. They gave orders that nothing must be touched or taken away, as they intended to return shortly and take possession. My mistress and the slaves watched for their return day and night for more than a week, but the Yankees did not come back.

One morning in April, 1865, my master got the news that the Yankees had left Mobile Bay and crossed the Confederate lines, and that the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed by President Lincoln. Mistress suggested that the slaves should not be told of their freedom; but master said he would tell them, because they would soon find it out, even if he did not tell them. Mistress, however, said she could keep my mother's three children, for my mother had now been gone so long.

All the slaves left the plantation upon the news of their freedom, except those who were feeble or sickly. With the help of these, the crops were gathered. My mistress and her daughters had to go to the kitchen and to the washtub. My little half-brother, Henry, and myself had to gather chips, and help all we could. My sister, Caroline, who was twelve years old, could help in the kitchen.

After the war, the Yankees took all the good mules

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and horses from the plantation, and left their old army stock. We children chanced to come across one of the Yankees' old horses, that had "U. S." branded on him. We called him "Old Yank" and got him fattened up. One day in August, six of us children took "Old Yank" and went away back on the plantation for watermelons. Coming home, we thought we would make the old horse trot. When "Old Yank" commenced to trot, our big melons dropped off, but we couldn't stop the horse for some time. Finally, one of the big boys went back and got some more melons, and left us eating what we could find of the ones that had been dropped. Then all we six, with our melons, got on "Old Yank" and went home. We also used to hitch "Old Yank" into a wagon and get wood. But one sad day in the fall, the Yankees came back again, and gathered up their old stock, and took "Old Yank" away.

One day mistress sent me out to do some churning under a tree. I went to sleep and jerked the churn over on top of me, and consequently got a whipping.

My mother came for us at the end of the year 1865, and demanded that her children be given up to her. This, mistress refused to do, and threatened to set the dogs on my mother if she did not at once

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leave the place. My mother went away, and remained with some of the neighbors until supper time. Then she got a boy to tell Caroline to come down to the fence. When she came, my mother told her to go back and get Henry and myself and bring us down to the gap in the fence as quick as she could. Then my mother took Henry in her arms, and my sister carried me on her back. We climbed fences and crossed fields, and after several hours came to a little hut which my mother had secured on a plantation. We had no more than reached the place, and made a little fire, when master's two sons rode up and demanded that the children be returned. My mother refused to give us up. Upon her offering to go with them to the Yankee headquarters to find out if it were really true that all negroes had been made free, the young men left, and troubled us no more.

The cabin that was now our home was made of logs. It had one door, and an opening in one wall, with an inside shutter, was the only window. The door was fastened with a latch. Our beds were some straw.

There were six in our little family; my mother, Caroline, Henry, two other children that my mother had brought with her upon her return, and myself.

The man on whose plantation this cabin stood,

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hired my mother as cook, and gave us this little home. We children used to sell blueberries and plums that we picked. One day the man on whom we depended for our home and support, left. Then my mother did washing by the day, for whatever she could get. We were sent to get cold victuals from hotels and such places. A man wanting hands to pick cotton, my brother Henry and I were set to help in this work. We had to go to the cotton field very early every morning. For this work, we received forty cents for every hundred pounds of cotton we picked.

Caroline was hired out to take care of a baby.

In 1866, another man hired the plantation on which our hut stood, and we moved into Clayton, to a little house my mother secured there. A rich lady came to our house one day, looking for some one to take care of her little daughter. I was taken, and adopted into this family. This rich lady was Mrs. E. M. Williams, a music teacher, the wife of a lawyer. We called her "Mis' Mary."

Some rich people in Clayton who had owned slaves, opened the Methodist church on Sundays, and began the work of teaching the negroes. My new mistress sent me to Sunday school every Sunday morning, and I soon got so that I could read. Mis' Mary taught me every day at her knee. I soon could read

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nicely, and went through Sterling's Second Reader, and then into McGuthrie's Third Reader. The first piece of poetry I recited in Sunday school was taught to me by Mis' Mary during the week. Mis' Mary's father-in-law, an ex-judge, of Clayton, Alabama, heard me recite it, and thought it was wonderful. It was this:

“I am glad to see you, little bird,
It was your sweet song I heard.
What was it I heard you say?
Give me crumbs to eat today?
Here are crumbs I brought for you.
Eat your dinner, eat away,
Come and see us every day.”

After this Mis' Mary kept on with my studies, and taught me to write. As I grew older, she taught me to cook and how to do housework. During this time Mis' Mary had given my mother one dollar a month in return for my services; now as I grew up to young womanhood, I thought I would like a little money of my own. Accordingly, Mis' Mary began to pay me four dollars a month, besides giving me my board and clothes. For two summers she “let me out” while she was away, and I got five dollars a month.

While I was with Mis' Mary, I had my first sweetheart, one of the young fellows who attended Sunday

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school with me. Mis' Mary, however, objected to the young man's coming to the house to call, because she did not think I was old enough to have a sweetheart.

I owe a great deal to Mis' Mary for her good training of me, in honesty, uprightness and truthfulness. She told me that when I went out into the world all white folks would not treat me as she had, but that I must not feel bad about it, but just do what I was employed to do, and if I wasn't satisfied, to go elsewhere; but always to carry an honest name.

One Sunday when my sweetheart walked to the gate with me, Mis' Mary met him and told him she thought I was too young for him, and that she was sending me to Sunday school to learn, not to catch a beau. It was a long while before he could see me again, — not until later in the season, in watermelon time, when Mis' Mary and my mother gave me permission to go to a watermelon party one Sunday afternoon. Mis' Mary did not know, however, that my sweetheart had planned to escort me. We met around the corner of the house, and after the party he left me at the same place. After that I saw him occasionally at barbecues and parties. I was permitted to go with him some evenings to church, but my mother always walked ahead or behind me and the young man.]

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We went together for four years. During that time, although I still called Mis' Mary's my home, I had been out to service in one or two families.

Finally, my mother and Mis' Mary consented to our marriage, and the wedding day was to be in May. The winter before that May, I went to service in the family of Dr. Drury in Eufaula. Just a week before I left Clayton I dreamed that my sweetheart died suddenly. The night before I was to leave, we were invited out to tea. He told me he had bought a nice piece of poplar wood, with which to make a table for our new home. When I told him my dream, he said, "Don't let that trouble you, there is nothing in dreams." But one month from that day he died, and his coffin was made from the piece of poplar wood he had bought for the table.

After his death, I remained in Clayton for two or three weeks with my people, and then went back to Eufaula, where I stayed two years.

My sweetheart's death made a profound impression on me, and I began to pray as best I could. Often I remained all night on my knees.

Going on an excursion to Macon, Georgia, one time, I liked the place so well that I did not go back to Eufaula. I got a place as cook in the family of an Episcopal clergyman, and remained with them

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eight years, leaving when the family moved to New Orleans.

During these eight years, my mother died in Clayton, and I had to take the three smallest children into my care. My oldest sister was now married, and had a son.

I now went to live with a Mrs. Maria Campbell, a colored woman, who adopted me and gave me her name. Mrs. Campbell did washing and ironing for her living. While living with her, I went six months to Lewis' High School in Macon. Then I went to Atlanta, and obtained a place as first-class cook with Mr. E. N. Inman. But I always considered Mrs. Campbell's my home. I remained about a year with Mr. Inman, and received as wages ten dollars a month.

One day, when the family were visiting in Memphis, I chanced to pick up a newspaper, and read the advertisement of a Northern family for a cook to go to Boston. I went at once to the address given, and made agreement to take the place, but told the people that I could not leave my present position until Mr. Inman returned home. Mr. and Mrs. Inman did not want to let me go, but I made up my mind to go North. The Northern family whose service I was to enter had returned to Boston before I left, and

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had made arrangements with a friend, Mr. Bullock, to see me safely started North.

After deciding to go North, I went to Macon, to make arrangements with Mrs. Campbell for the care of my two sisters who lived with her. One sister was now about thirteen and the other fifteen, both old enough to do a little for themselves. My brother was dead. He went to Brunswick in 1875, and died there of the yellow fever in 1876. One sister I brought in later years to Boston. I stayed in Macon two weeks, and was in Atlanta three or four days before leaving for the North.

About the 15th of June, 1879, I arrived at the Old Colony Station in Boston, and had my first glimpse of the country I had heard so much about. From Boston I went to Newtonville, where I was to work. The gentleman whose service I was to enter, Mr. E. N. Kimball, was waiting at the station for me, and drove me to his home on Warner Street. For a few days, until I got somewhat adjusted to my new circumstances, I had no work to do. On June 17th the family took me with them to Auburndale. But in spite of the kindness of Mrs. Kimball and the colored nurse, I grew very homesick for the South, and would often look in the direction of my old home and cry.

The washing, a kind of work I knew nothing about,

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was given to me; but I could not do it, and it was finally given over to a hired woman. I had to do the ironing of the fancy clothing for Mrs. Kimball and the children.

About five or six weeks after my arrival, Mrs. Kimball and the children went to the White Mountains for the summer, and I had more leisure. Mr. Kimball went up to the mountains every Saturday night, to stay with his family over Sunday; but he and his father-in-law were at home other nights, and I had to have dinner for them.

To keep away the homesickness and loneliness as much as possible, I made acquaintance with the hired girl across the street.

One morning I climbed up into the cherry tree that grew between Mr. Kimball's yard and the yard of his next-door neighbor, Mr. Roberts. I was thinking of the South, and as I picked the cherries, I sang a Southern song. Mr. Roberts heard me, and gave me a dollar for the song.

By agreement, Mrs. Kimball was to give me three dollars and a half a week, instead of four, until the difference amounted to my fare from the South; after that, I was to have four dollars. I had, however, received but little money. In the fall, after the family came home, we had a little difficulty about my

wages, and I left and came into Boston. One of my Macon acquaintances had come North before me, and now had a position as cook in a house on Columbus Avenue. I looked this girl up. Then I went to a lodging-house for colored people on Kendall Street, and spent one night there. Mrs. Kimball had refused to give me a recommendation, because she wanted me to stay with her, and thought the lack of a recommendation would be an inducement. In the lodging-house I made acquaintance with a colored girl, who took me to an intelligence office. The man at the desk said he would give me a card to take to 24 Springfield Street, on receipt of fifty cents. I had never heard of an office of this kind, and asked a good many questions. After being assured that my money would be returned in case I did not accept the situation, I paid the fifty cents and started to find the address on the card. Being ignorant of the scheme of street numbering, I inquired of a woman whom I met, where No. 24 was. This woman asked me if I was looking for work, and when I told her I was, she said a friend of hers on Springfield Street wanted a servant immediately. Of course I went with this lady, and after a conference with the mistress of the house as to my ability, when I could begin work, what wages I should want, etc.,

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I was engaged as cook at three dollars and a half a week.

From this place I proceeded to 24 Springfield Street, as directed, hoping that I would be refused, so that I might go back to the intelligence office and get my fifty cents. The lady at No. 24 who wanted a servant, said she didn't think I was large and strong enough, and guessed I wouldn't do. Then I went and got my fifty cents.

Having now obtained a situation, I sent to Mr. Kimball's for my trunk. I remained in my new place a year and a half. At the end of that time the family moved to Dorchester, and because I did not care to go out there, I left their service.

From this place, I went to Narragansett Pier to work as a chambermaid for the summer. In the fall, I came back to Boston and obtained a situation with a family, in Berwick Park. This family afterward moved to Jamaica Plain, and I went with them. With this family I remained seven years. They were very kind to me, gave me two or three weeks' vacation, without loss of pay.

In June, 1884, I went with them to their summer home in the Isles of Shoals, as housekeeper for some guests who were coming from Paris. On the 6th of July I received word that my sister Caroline had

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died in June. This was a great blow to me. I remained with the Reeds until they closed their summer home, but I was not able to do much work after the news of my sister's death.

I wrote home to Georgia, to the white people who owned the house in which Caroline had lived, asking them to take care of her boy Lawrence until I should come in October. When we came back to Jamaica Plain in the fall, I was asked to decide what I should do in regard to this boy. Mrs. Reed wanted me to stay with her, and promised to help pay for the care of the boy in Georgia. Of course, she said, I could not expect to find positions if I had a child with me. As an inducement to remain in my present place and leave the boy in Georgia, I was promised provision for my future days, as long as I should live. It did not take me long to decide what I should do. The last time I had seen my sister, a little over a year before she died, she had said, when I was leaving, "I don't expect ever to see you again, but if I die I shall rest peacefully in my grave, because I know you will take care of my child."

I left Jamaica Plain and took a room on Village Street for the two or three weeks until my departure for the South. During this time, a lady came to the house to hire a girl for her home in Wellesley Hills.

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The girl who was offered the place would not go. I volunteered to accept the position temporarily, and went at once to the beautiful farm. At the end of a week, a man and his wife had been engaged, and I was to leave the day after their arrival. These new servants, however, spoke very little English, and I had to stay through the next week until the new ones were broken in. After leaving there I started for Georgia, reaching there at the end of five days, at five o'clock.

I took a carriage and drove at once to the house where Lawrence was being taken care of. He was playing in the yard, and when he saw me leave the carriage he ran and threw his arms around my neck and cried for joy. I stayed a week in this house, looking after such things of my sister's as had not been already stored. One day I had a headache, and was lying down in the cook's room. Lawrence was in the dining-room with the cook's little girl, and the two got into a quarrel, in the course of which my nephew struck the cook's child. The cook, in her anger, chased the boy with a broom, and threatened to give him a good whipping at all costs. Hearing the noise, I came out into the yard, and when Lawrence saw me he ran to me for protection. I interceded for him, and promised he should get into no

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more trouble. We went at once to a neighbor's house for the night. The next day I got a room in the yard of a house belonging to some white people. Here we stayed two weeks. The only return I was asked to make for the room was to weed the garden. Lawrence and I dug out some weeds and burned them, but came so near setting fire to the place that we were told we need not dig any more weeds, but that we might have the use of the room so long as we cared to stay.

In about a week and a half more we got together such things as we wanted to keep and take away with us.

The last time I saw my sister, I had persuaded her to open a bank account, and she had done so, and had made small deposits from time to time. When I came to look for the bankbook, I discovered that her lodger, one Mayfield, had taken it at her death, and nobody knew where it might be now. I found out that Mayfield had drawn thirty dollars from the account for my sister's burial, and also an unknown amount for himself. He had done nothing for the boy. I went down to the bank, and was told that Mayfield claimed to look after my sister's burial and her affairs. He had made one Reuben Bennett, who was no relation and had no interest in the mat-

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ter, administrator for Lawrence, until his coming of age. But Bennett had as yet done nothing for him. The book was in the bank, with some of the account still undrawn, how much I did not know. I next went to see a lawyer, to find out how much it would cost me to get this book. The lawyer said fifteen dollars. I said I would call again. In the meantime, I went to the court house, and when the case on trial was adjourned I went to the judge and stated my case. The judge, who was slightly acquainted with my sister and me, told me to have Reuben Bennett in court next morning at nine o'clock, and to bring Lawrence with me. When we had all assembled before the judge, he told Bennett to take Lawrence and go to the bank and get the money belonging to my sister. Bennett went and collected the money, some thirty-five dollars. The boy was then given into my care by the judge. For his kindness, the judge would accept no return. Happy at having obtained the money so easily, we went back to our room, and rested until our departure the next night for Jacksonville, Florida. I had decided to go to this place for the winter, on account of Lawrence, thinking the Northern winter would be too severe for him.

My youngest sister, who had come to Macon from

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Atlanta a few days before my arrival, did not hear of Caroline's death until within a few days of our departure. This youngest sister decided to go to Florida with us for the winter.

Our trunks and baggage were taken to the station in a team. We had a goodly supply of food, given us by our friends and by the people whose hospitality we had shared during the latter part of our stay.

The next morning we got into Jacksonville. My idea was to get a place as chambermaid at Green Cove Springs, Florida, through the influence of the head waiter at a hotel there, whom I knew. After I got into Jacksonville I changed my plans. I did not see how I could move my things any farther, and we went to a hotel for colored people, hired a room for two dollars, and boarded ourselves on the food which had been given us in Macon. This food lasted about two weeks. Then I had to buy, and my money was going every day, and none coming in. I did not know what to do. One night the idea of keeping a restaurant came to me, and I decided to get a little home for the three of us, and then see what I could do in this line of business. After a long and hard search, I found a little house of two rooms where we could live, and the next day I found a place to start my restaurant. For house furnishings, we used at

first, to the best advantage we could, the things we had brought from Macon. Caroline's cookstove had been left with my foster-mother in Macon. After hiring the room for the restaurant, I sent for this stove, and it arrived in a few days. Then I went to a dealer in second-hand furniture and got such things as were actually needed for the house and the restaurant, on the condition that he would take them back at a discount when I got through with them.

Trade at the restaurant was very good, and we got along nicely. My sister got a position as nurse for fifteen dollars a month. One day the cook from a shipwrecked vessel came to my restaurant, and in return for his board and a bed in the place, agreed to do my cooking. After trade became good, I changed my residence to a house of four rooms, and put three cheap cots in each of two of the rooms, and let the cots at a dollar a week apiece to colored men who worked nearby in hotels. Lawrence and I did the chamber work at night, after the day's work in the restaurant.

I introduced " Boston baked beans " into my restaurant, much to the amusement of the people at first; but after they had once eaten them it was hard to meet the demand for beans.

Lawrence, who was now about eleven years old,

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was a great help to me. He took out dinners to the cigarmakers in a factory nearby.

At the end of the season, about four months, it had grown so hot that we could stay in Jacksonville no longer. From my restaurant and my lodgers I cleared one hundred and seventy-five dollars, which I put into the Jacksonville bank. Then I took the furniture back to the dealer, who fulfilled his agreement.

My sister decided to go back to Atlanta when she got through with her place as nurse, which would not be for some weeks.

I took seventy-five dollars out of my bank account, and with Lawrence went to Fernandina. There we took train to Port Royal, S. C., then steamer to New York. From New York we went to Brooklyn for a few days. Then we went to Newport and stayed with a woman who kept a lodging-house. I decided to see what I could do in Newport by keeping a boarding and lodging-house. I hired a little house and agreed to pay nine dollars a month for it. I left Lawrence with some neighbors while I came to Boston and took some things out of storage. These things I moved into the little house. But I found, after paying one month's rent, that the house was not properly located for the business I wanted. I left, and with Lawrence went to Narragansett Pier. I got a place there as

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“ runner ” for a laundry; that is, I was to go to the hotels and leave cards and solicit trade. Then Lawrence thought he would like to help by doing a little work. One night when I came back from the laundry, I missed him. Nobody had seen him. All night I searched for him, but did not find him. In the early morning I met him coming home. He said a man who kept a bowling alley had hired him at fifty cents a week to set up the pins, and it was in the bowling alley he had been all night. He said the man let him take a nap on his coat when he got sleepy. I went at once to see this man, and told him not to hire my nephew again. A lady who kept a hotel offered me two dollars a week for Lawrence’s services in helping the cook and serving in the help’s dining-room. When the season closed, the lady who hired Lawrence was very reluctant to let him go.

We went back to Newport to see the landlady from whom I had hired the house, and I paid such part of the rent as I could. Then I packed my things and started for Boston. On reaching there, I kept such of my things as I needed, and stored the rest, and took a furnished room. In about a week’s time I went to see the husband of the lady for whom I had worked at Wellesley Hills just previous to my departure for the South. He had told me to let him know

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when I returned to Boston. He said a man and his wife were at present employed at his farm, but he didn't know how long they would stay. Before another week had passed, this gentleman sent for me. He said his wife wanted me to go out to the farm, and that I could have Lawrence with me. The boy, he said, could help his wife with the poultry, and could have a chance to go to school. I was promised three dollars and a half a week, and no washing to do. I was told that the farm had been offered for sale, and of course it might change hands any day. I was promised, however, that I should lose nothing by the change.

Lawrence was very lonely at the farm, with no companions, and used to sit and cry.

The place was sold about ten weeks after I went there, and I came into Boston to look about for a restaurant, leaving Lawrence at the farm. When the home was broken up, the owners came to the Revere House, Boston. Barrels of apples, potatoes and other provisions were given to me.

I found a little restaurant near the Providence depot for sale. I made arrangements at once to buy the place for thirty-five dollars, and the next day I brought Lawrence and my things from Wellesley Hills. I paid two dollars a week rent for my little

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restaurant, and did very well. The next spring I sold the place for fifty dollars, in time to get a place at the beach for the summer.

Lawrence got a position in a drug store, and kept it four years. Then he went to Hampton College, Hampton, Va. After finishing there, he came back and then went to the World's Fair in Chicago. After that he took a position on one of the Fall River line boats. At the outbreak of the Spanish War, he enlisted in Brooklyn as powderman on the battleship Texas. He was on the Texas when the first shot was fired. He was present at the decoration of the graves of the American soldiers in Havana, and also at the decoration of the battleship Maine after she was raised. After the war, he came to Brooklyn and got an honorable discharge. Then he served as valet to a rich New York man, who travelled a good deal. About the middle of last November (1906) Lawrence came to Boston to see me. He is now in Atlantic City, a waiter in the Royal Hotel.

In 1888, I was married, at 27 Pemberton Street, ✓
to Samuel H. Burton, by Dr. O. P. Gifford. After my marriage, Mr. Burton got a place in Braintree as valet to an old gentleman who was slightly de-
mented, and he could not be satisfied until I joined

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him. So I put our things into storage and went to Braintree. I remained there ten months, and then came back to Boston. Then I got a position as head matron in the help's dining-room in a hotel at Watch Hill, R. I. My husband was also there as waiter. At the end of the season we both came home, and rented a lodging-house, and lost money on it.





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The times changed from slavery days to freedom's days. As young as I was, my thoughts were mystified to see such wonderful changes; yet I did not know the meaning of these changing days. But days glided by, and in my mystified way I could see and hear many strange things. I would see my master and mistress in close conversation and they seemed anxious about something that I, a child, could not know the meaning of.

But as weeks went by, I began to understand. I saw all the slaves one by one disappearing from the plantation (for night and day they kept going) until there was not one to be seen.

All around the plantation was left barren. Day after day I could run down to the gate and see down the road troops and troops of Garrison's Brigade, and in the midst of them gangs and gangs of negro slaves who joined with the soldiers, shouting, dancing and clapping their hands. The war was ended, and from Mobile Bay to Clayton, Ala., all along the

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road, on all the plantations, the slaves thought that if they joined the Yankee soldiers they would be perfectly safe.

As I looked on these I did not know what it meant, for I had never seen such a circus. The Yankee soldiers found that they had such an army of men and women and children, that they had to build tents and feed them to keep them from starving. But from what I, a little child, saw and heard the older ones say, that must have been a terrible time of trouble. I heard my master and mistress talking. They said, "Well, I guess those Yankees had such a large family on their hands, we rather guessed those fanatics on freedom would be only too glad to send some back for their old masters to provide for them."

But they never came back to our plantation, and I could only speak of my own home, but I thought to myself, what would become of my good times all over the old plantation. Oh, the harvesting times, the great hog-killing times when several hundred hogs were killed, and we children watched and got our share of the slaughter in pig's liver roasted on a bed of coals, eaten ashes and all. Then came the great sugar-cane grinding time, when they were making the molasses, and we children would be hanging round, drinking the sugar-cane juice, and await-

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ing the moment to help ourselves to everything good. We did, too, making ourselves sticky and dirty with the sweet stuff being made. Not only were the slave children there, but the little white children from Massa's house would join us and have a jolly time. The negro child and the white child knew not the great chasm between their lives, only that they had dainties and we had crusts.

My sister, being the children's nurse, would take them and wash their hands and put them to bed in their luxurious bedrooms, while we little slaves would find what homes we could. My brother and I would go to sleep on some lumber under the house, where our sister Caroline would find us and put us to bed. She would wipe our hands and faces and make up our beds on the floor in Massa's house, for we had lived with him ever since our own mother had run away, after being whipped by her mistress. Later on, after the war, my mother returned and claimed us. I never knew my father, who was a white man.

During these changing times, just after the war, I was trying to find out what the change would bring about for us, as we were under the care of our mistress, living in the great house. I thought this: that Henry, Caroline and myself, Louise, would have to go as others had done, and where should we go and

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what should we do? But as time went on there were many changes. Our mistress and her two daughters, Martha and Mary, had to become their own servants, and do all the work of the house, going into the kitchen, cooking and washing, and feeling very angry that all their house servants had run away to the Yankees. The time had come when our good times were over, our many leisure hours spent among the cotton fields and woods and our half-holiday on Saturday. These were all gone. The boys had to leave school and take the runaway slaves' places to finish the planting and pick the cotton. I myself have worked in the cotton field, picking great baskets full, too heavy for me to carry. All was over! I now fully understood the change in our circumstances. Little Henry and I had no more time to sit basking ourselves in the sunshine of the sunny south. The land was empty and the servants all gone. I can see my dainty mistress coming down the steps saying, "Rit, you and Henry will have to go and pick up some chips, for Miss Mary and myself have to prepare the breakfast. You children will have to learn to work. Do you understand me, Rit and Henry?" "Yes, Missus, we understand." And away we flew, laughing, and thinking it a great joke that we, Massa's pets, must learn to work.

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But it was a sad, sad change on the old plantation, and the beautiful, proud Sunny South, with its masters and mistresses, was bowed beneath the sin brought about by slavery. It was a terrible blow to the owners of plantations and slaves, and their children would feel it more than they, for they had been reared to be waited upon by willing or unwilling slaves.

In this place I will insert a poem my young mistress taught us, for she was always reading poems and good stories. But first I will record a talk I heard between my master and mistress. They were sitting in the dining-room, and we children were standing around the table. My mistress said, "I suppose, as Nancy has never returned, we had better keep Henry, Caroline and Louise until they are of age." "Yes, we will," said Massa, Miss Mary and Miss Martha, "but it is 'man proposes and God disposes.'"

So in the following pages you will read the sequel to my childhood life in the Sunny South.

Right after the war when my mother had got settled in her hut, with her little brood hovered around her, from which she had been so long absent, we had nothing to eat, and nothing to sleep on save some old pieces of horse-blankets and hay that the soldiers

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gave her. The first day in the hut was a rainy day; and as night drew near it grew more fierce, and we children had gathered some little fagots to make a fire by the time mother came home, with something for us to eat, such as she had gathered through the day. It was only corn meal and pease and ham-bone and skins which she had for our supper. She had started a little fire, and said, "Some of you close that door," for it was cold. She swung the pot over the fire and filled it with the pease and ham-bone and skins. Then she seated her little brood around the fire on the pieces of blanket, where we watched with all our eyes, our hearts filled with desire, looking to see what she would do next. She took down an old broken earthen bowl, and tossed into it the little meal she had brought, stirring it up with water, making a hoe cake. She said, "One of you draw that griddle out here," and she placed it on the few little coals. Perhaps this griddle you have never seen, or one like it. I will describe it to you. This griddle was a round piece of iron, quite thick, having three legs. It might have been made in a blacksmith's shop, for I have never seen one like it before or since. It was placed upon the coals, and with an old iron spoon she put on this griddle half of the corn meal she had mixed up. She said, "I will put

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a tin plate over this, and put it away for your breakfast." We five children were eagerly watching the pot boiling, with the pease and ham-bone. The rain was pattering on the roof of the hut. All at once there came a knock at the door. My mother answered the knock. When she opened the door, there stood a white woman and three little children, all dripping with the rain. My mother said, "In the name of the Lord, where are you going on such a night, with these children?" The woman said, "Auntie, I am travelling. Will you please let me stop here to-night, out of the rain, with my children?" My mother said, "Yes, honey. I ain't got much, but what I have got I will share with you." "God bless you!" They all came in. We children looked in wonder at what had come. But my mother scattered her own little brood and made a place for the forlorn wanderers. She said, "Wait, honey, let me turn over that hoe cake." Then the two women fell to talking, each telling a tale of woe. After a time, my mother called out, "Here, you, Louise, or some one of you, put some fagots under the pot, so these pease can get done." We couldn't put them under fast enough, first one and then another of us children, the mothers still talking. Soon my mother said, "Draw that hoe cake one side, I guess it is done." My mother said

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to the woman, "Honey, ain't you got no husband?" She said, "No, my husband got killed in the war." My mother replied, "Well, my husband died right after the war. I have been away from my little brood for four years. With a hard struggle, I have got them away from the Farrin plantation, for they did not want to let them go. But I got them. I was determined to have them. But they would not let me have them if they could have kept them. With God's help I will keep them from starving. The white folks are good to me. They give me work, and I know, with God's help, I can get along." The white woman replied, "Yes, Auntie, my husband left me on a rich man's plantation. This man promised to look out for me until my husband came home; but he got killed in the war, and the Yankees have set his negroes free and he said he could not help me any more, and we would have to do the best we could for ourselves. I gave my things to a woman to keep for me until I could find my kinsfolk. They live about fifty miles from here, up in the country. I am on my way there now." My mother said, "How long will it take you to get there?" "About three days, if it don't rain." My mother said, "Ain't you got some way to ride there?" "No, Auntie,

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there is no way of riding up where my folks live, the place where I am from.”

We hoped the talk was most ended, for we were anxiously watching that pot. Pretty soon my mother seemed to realize our existence. She exclaimed, “ My Lord! I suppose the little children are nearly starved. Are those pease done, young ones? ” She turned and said to the white woman, “ Have you-all had anything to eat? ” “ We stoppèd at a house about dinner time, but the woman didn’t have anything but some bread and buttermilk.” My mother said, “ Well, honey, I ain’t got but a little, but I will divide with you.” The woman said, “ Thank you, Auntie. You just give my children a little; I can do without it.”

Then came the dividing. We all watched with all our eyes to see what the shares would be. My mother broke a mouthful of bread and put it on each of the tin plates. Then she took the old spoon and equally divided the pea soup. We children were seated around the fire, with some little wooden spoons. But the wooden spoons didn’t quite go round, and some of us had to eat with our fingers. Our share of the meal, however, was so small that we were as hungry when we finished as when we began.

My mother said, “ Take that rag and wipe your

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face and hands, and give it to the others and let them use it, too. Put those plates upon the table." We immediately obeyed orders, and took our seats again around the fire. "One of you go and pull that straw out of the corner and get ready to go to bed." We all lay down on the straw, the white children with us, and my mother covered us over with the blanket. We were soon in the "Land of Nod," forgetting our empty stomachs. The two mothers still continued to talk, sitting down on the only seats, a couple of blocks. A little back against the wall my mother and the white woman slept.

Bright and early in the morning we were called up, and the rest of the hoe cake was eaten for breakfast, with a little meat, some coffee sweetened with molasses. The little wanderers and their mother shared our meal, and then they started again on their journey towards their home among their kinsfolk, and we never saw them again. My mother said, "God bless you! I wish you all good luck. I hope you will reach your home safely." Then mother said to us, "You young ones put away that straw and sweep up the place, because I have to go to my work." But she came at noon and brought us a nice dinner, more satisfactory than the supper and breakfast we had had. We children were delighted that

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there were no little white children to share our meal this time.

In time, my older sister, Caroline, and myself got work among good people, where we soon forgot all the hard times in the little log cabin by the roadside in Clayton, Alabama.

Up to my womanhood, even to this day, these memories fill my mind. Some kind friends' eyes may see these pages, and may they recall some fond memories of their happy childhood, as what I have written brings back my young life in the great Sunny South.

I am something of the type of Moses on this 49th birthday; not that I am wrapped in luxuries, but that my thoughts are wrapped in the luxuries of the heavenly life in store for me, when my life work is done, and my friends shall be blessed by the work I shall have done. For God has commanded me to write this book, that some one may read and receive comfort and courage to do what God commands them to do. God bless every soul who shall read this true life story of one born in slavery.

It is now six years since the inspiration to write this book came to me in the Franklin evening school. I have struggled on, helped by friends. God said, "Write the book and I will help you." And He has.

It was through a letter of my life that the principal -

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of the Franklin school said, " Write the book and I will help you." But he died before the next term, and I worked on. On this, my 49th birthday, I can say I believe that the book is close to the finish.

My life is like the summer rose
That opens to the morning sky,
But ere the shades of evening close
Is scattered on the ground to die.
Yet on the rose's humble bed
The sweetest dews of night are shed,
As if she wept a tear for me,
As if she wept the waste to see.

My life is like the autumn leaf
That trembles in the moon's pale ray.
Its hold is frail, its date is brief,
Restless, and soon to pass away.
Yet, ere that leaf shall fall and fade,
The parent tree will mourn its shade,
The winds bewail the leafless tree;
But none shall breathe a sigh for me.

My life is like the prints which feet
Have left on Tampa's desert strand.
Soon as the rising tide shall beat
All trace will vanish from the sand.
Yet, as if grieving to efface
All vestige of the human race,
On that lone shore loud moans the sea.
But none, alas, shall mourn for me.



A VISION





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There remains to be told the story of my conversion and how I came to write the foregoing history of my life.

In 1875 I was taken sick. I thought I was going to die, and I promised the Lord I would serve Him if he would only spare my life. When I got well again, however, I forgot all about my promise. Then I was taken sick again. It seemed I had to go through a dark desert place, where great demons stood on either side. In the distance I could just see a dim light, and I tried to get to this light, but could not reach it. Then I found myself in a great marsh, and was sinking. I threw up my hands and said, "Lord, if Thou wilt raise me from this pit, I will never fail to serve Thee." Then it seemed as if I mounted on wings into the air, and all the demons that stood about made a great roaring. My flight ended on the top of a hill. But I was troubled because I could not find the light. All at once, at the sound of a loud peal of thunder, the earth

opened, and I fell down into the pits of hell. Again I prayed to God to save me from this, and again I promised to serve Him. My prayer was answered, and I was able to fly out of the pit, on to a bank. At the foot of the little hill on which I sat were some little children, and they called to me to come down. But I could not get down. Then the children raised a ladder for me, and I came down among them. A little cherub took me by the hand and led me in the River of Badjied of Jordan. I looked at my ankles and shoulders and discovered I had little wings. On the river was a ship. The children, the cherub and I got into the ship. When we reached a beautiful spot, the little cherub made the ship fast, and there opened before us pearly gates, and we all passed through into the golden street. The street led to the throne of God, about which we marched. Then the cherub conducted us to a table where a feast was spread. Then the children vanished. The cherub took me by the hand, and said, "Go back into the world, and tell the saints and sinners what a Savior you have found, and if you prove faithful I will take you to Heaven to live forever, when I come again."

When I recovered from my sickness, I was baptized by the Rev. Dr. Pope, and joined the church

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in Macon. When I came North, I brought my letter. Not finding any church for colored people, I came among the white people, and was treated so kindly that I became very much attached to them. The first church I became connected with in the North, was in Newtonville. When I came to Boston, I went to the Warren Avenue Baptist Church. Before my marriage I joined Tremont Temple, when Dr. Lorimer was its pastor. When the church was burned, my letter was destroyed, but when I went South on a visit I had the letter duplicated, and took it to the new Temple. I am still a member of the Temple, and hope to remain there as long as God gives me life.

Five years ago, I began to go to the Franklin evening school. Mr. Guild was the master. At one time he requested all the pupils to write the story of their lives, and he considered my composition so interesting he said he thought if I could work it up and enlarge upon it, I could write a book. He promised to help me. My teacher was Miss Emerson, and she was interested in me. But the next year Miss Emerson gave up teaching, and Mr. Guild died.

In each of the terms that I have attended, I have received the certificates showing that I have been regular and punctual in attendance, have maintained

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good deportment, and shown general proficiency in the studies. I would have graduated in 1907, had it not been for sickness. The following was to have been my graduating composition.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY

ANNIE L. BURTON



❁ ABRAHAM LINCOLN ❁

In a little clearing in the backwoods of Harding County, Kentucky, there stood years ago a rude cabin within whose walls Abraham Lincoln passed his childhood. An “unaccountable” man he has been called, and the adjective was well chosen, for who could account for a mind and nature like Lincoln’s with the ancestry he owned? His father was a thriftless, idle carpenter, scarcely supporting his family, and with but the poorest living. His mother was an uneducated woman, but must have been of an entirely different nature, for she was able to impress upon her boy a love of learning. During her life, his chief, in fact his only book, was the Bible, and in this he learned to read. Just before he was nine years old, the father brought his family across the Ohio River into Illinois, and there in the unfloored log cabin, minus windows and doors, Abraham lived and grew. It was during this time that the mother died, and in a short time the shiftless father with his family drifted back to the old

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home, and here found another for his children in one who was a friend of earlier days. This woman was of a thrifty nature, and her energy made him floor the cabin, hang doors, and open up windows. She was fond of the children and cared for them tenderly, and to her the boy Abraham owed many pleasant hours.

As he grew older, his love for knowledge increased and he obtained whatever books he could, studying by the firelight, and once walking six miles for an English Grammar. After he read it, he walked the six miles to return it. He needed the book no longer, for with this as with his small collection of books, what he once read was his. He absorbed the books he read.

During these early years he did "odd jobs" for the neighbors. Even at this age, his gift of story telling was a notable one, as well as his sterling honesty. His first knowledge of slavery in all its horrors came to him when he was about twenty-one years old. He had made a trip to New Orleans, and there in the old slave market he saw an auction. His face paled, and his spirits rose in revolt at the coarse jest of the auctioneer, and there he registered a vow within himself, "If ever I have a chance to strike against slavery, I will strike and strike

hard." To this end he worked and for this he paid "the last full measure of devotion."

His political life began with a defeat for the Illinois Legislature in 1830, but he was returned in 1834, 1836, 1838, and declined re-election in 1840, preferring to study law and prepare for his future. "Honest Abe" he has been called, and throughout Illinois that characteristic was the prominent one known of him. From this time his rise was rapid. Sent to the Congress of the nation, he seldom spoke, but when he did his terse though simple expression always won him a hearing. His simplicity and frankness was deceptive to the political leaders, and from its very fearlessness often defeated them.

His famous debates with Senator Douglas, the "Little Giant," spread his reputation from one end of the country to the other, and at their close there was no question as to Lincoln's position in the North, or on the vital question of the day.

The spirit of forbearance he carried with him to the White House, "with malice toward none, with charity for all." This was the spirit that carried him through the four awful years of the war. The martyr's crown hovered over him from the outset. The martyr's spirit was always his. The burden of the war always rested on his shoulders. The

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fathers, sons and brothers, the honored dead of Gettysburg, of Antietam, all lay upon his mighty heart.

He never forgot his home friends, and when occasionally one dropped in on him, the door was always open. They frequently had tea in the good old-fashioned way, and then Lincoln listened to the news of the village, old stories were retold, new ones told, and the old friendships cemented by new bonds.

Then came the end, swift and sudden, and gloom settled upon the country; for in spite of ancestry, self-education, ungainly figure, ill-fitting clothes, the soul of the man had conquered even the stubborn South, while the cold-blooded North was stricken to the heart. The noblest one of all had been taken.





THE RACE QUESTION IN AMERICA

BY

DR. P. THOMAS STANFORD





THE RACE QUESTION IN AMERICA

BY

DR. P. THOMAS STANFORD

AUTHOR OF THE "TRAGEDY OF THE NEGRO IN AMERICA"

As a member of the negro race, I myself have suffered as a child whose parents were born in slavery, deprived of all influences of the ennobling life, made obedient to the will of the white man by the lash and chain, and sold to the highest bidder when there was no more use for them. •

The first negro fact for white thought is — that my clients, the colored people here in America, are not responsible for being here any more than they are responsible for their conditions of ignorance and poverty. They suddenly emerge from their prison house poor, without a home, without food or clothing, and ignorant. Now the enemies of God and of the progress of civilization in our country are to-day introducing a system of slavery with which they hope to again enslave the colored people. To carry out their evil designs they retain able politicians, lawyers and newspapers to represent them, such as Senator Tillman, the Hon. John Temple Graves of Georgia and the Baltimore Sun, and they are trying the negro on four counts which allege that the race is ignorant, cannot be taught, is lazy and immoral.

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Now, are the negroes, as a whole, guilty of these charges? In the first place, the negro race of America is not ignorant. In the year 1833 John C. Calhoun, senator from South Carolina, is reported to have said that if he could find a single negro who understood the Greek syntax, he would believe the negro was human and would treat him as such. At that time it was a very safe test. God accepted the challenge in behalf of the negro race, and inspired his white sons and daughters both in the North and South to teach their brothers in black; and a few years afterward black men were examined and the world pronounced them scholars, while later still the schools were using a Greek grammar written by a black man, W. S. Scarborough of Wilberforce, O. In his class were Frederick Douglas, Henry Highland Garnett, Robert Elliot, the Rev. J. C. Price and John M. Langstone, as defenders of the race. Bishop Allen Payne, Bishop Hood and John B. Reaver will ever be remembered for their godly piety and Christian example, as we shall also remember Bishop, Sumner and Buboïs for their great literary productions, William Washington Brown as the greatest organizer and financier of the century, Prof. Booker Washington as the greatest industrial educator of the world, and last, but not least, Thomas Condon, the greatest crank for the spiritual training and higher education of the negro race.

Under the leadership of such men, assisted by our white friends and backed up by our colored race journals—the Christian Banner of Philadelphia, the Christian Recorder, the Star of Zion and the Afro-American Ledger of Baltimore,

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Ind., the National Baptist Union of Pennsylvania, the Age of New York, the Christian Organizer of Virginia and the Guardian of Boston — our onward march to civilization is phenomenal and by these means we have reduced illiteracy 50 per cent.

“In the South we have over \$12,000,000 worth of school property, 3,000 teachers, 50 high schools, 17 academies, 125 colleges, 10 law and medical schools, 25 theological seminaries, all doing a mighty work for God and humanity.

Now as to laziness. We have now in practice 14,000 lawyers and doctors, and have accumulated over \$150,000,000 worth of church property. In the South we have over 150,000 farms and houses, valued at \$900,000,000, and personal property at \$170,000,000. We have raised over \$11,000,000 for educational purposes. The property per capita for every colored man, woman and child in the United States is estimated at \$75, and we are operating successfully several banks and factories; we have 7,500,000 acres of land, and the business activity of the colored people was never as thoroughly aroused as it is to-day.

When I come to deal with the charge of immorality I bow my head and blush for shame, first because if the charge be true, I see they are getting like the white man every day. I know that at the close of the American civil war the 4,000,000 negroes had more than 25 per cent. of white blood coursing through their veins.

What about this new educated negro? Just ask the Pullman Car Company, which employs hundreds of negroes,

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into whose care thousands of women and children of our best American families are entrusted every day.

Now, you cannot do without the negro, because if you send him away, you will run after him. He is here to stay. The only way to deal successfully with the colored race is God's way. First, recognize that he is your guest; second, recognize that you have robbed him of his birthplace, home, family and savings. It is these facts that are causing so much unrest on the part of the whites in this country. The negro loves his country, which he has proved beyond a doubt in every American battle, in every act of loyalty to his country, and in his long and patient suffering. Pay him what you owe him by educating him. Give him an opportunity to live. Allow him to live in decent parts of your city. Pay wages sufficient to support his children. Do this and God will remove the objectionable negro from the land.

The Negro stands to-day upon an eminence that overlooks more than two decades spent in efforts to ameliorate the condition of seven million immortal souls by opening before their hitherto dark and cheerless lives possibilities of development into a perfect and symmetrical manhood and womanhood.

The retrospect presents to us a picture of a people's moral degradation and mental gloom caused by slavery. A people absolutely sunk in the lowest depth of a poverty which reduced them to objects of charity and surrounded them with difficulties which have ever stood as impregnable barriers in

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their way to speedy advancement in all those qualities that make the useful citizen. Every influence of state and society life seems to be against their progress and like some evil genius, these Negro hating ghosts are forever hunting them with the idea that their future must be one of subserviency to the white race.

Hated and oppressed by the combined wisdom, wealth and statesmanship of a mighty confederacy who watched and criticised their mistakes which were strongly magnified by those who fain would write destruction upon the Emancipation; they are expected to rise from this condition.

The idea of giving to the newly enfranchised a sound, practical education was considered at the dawn of freedom, an easy solution of what as an unsolved problem threatened the perpetuity of republican institutions. Within a year from the firing on Sumter, benevolent and farsighted Northern friends had established schools from Washington to the Gulf of Mexico, which became centers of light penetrating the darkness and scattering the blessings of an enlightened manhood far and wide.

The history of the world cannot produce a more affecting spectacle than the growth of this mighty Christian philanthropy which, in beginning amid the din of battle, has steadily marched on through every opposing influence, and lifted a race from weakness to strength, from poverty to wealth, from moral and intellectual nonentity to place and power among the nations of the earth.

We have ten millions of colored people in the United States

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whose condition is much better to-day than it was fifty years ago. Then he had nothing, not even a name. To-day he has 160,000 farms under good cultivation and valued at \$4,000,000 and has personal property valued at \$200,000,000. In the Southland the negroes own 160 first-class drug stores, nine banks, 13 building associations, and 100 insurance and benefit companies, two street railways and an electric at Jacksonville, Fla., which they started some few years ago when the white people passed the Jim Crow law for that state.

Now it is reckoned that the negroes in the United States are paying about \$700,000,000 property taxes and this is only one-fifth of all they have accumulated, for the negro is getting more like the white people every day and has learned from him that it is not a sign of loyalty and patriotism to publish his property at its full taxable value.

In education and morals the progress is still greater. As you all know, at the close of the war the whole race was practically illiterate. It was a rare thing, indeed, to find a man of the race who even knew his letters. In 1880 the illiteracy had fallen to 70 per cent. and rapid strides along that line have been made ever since.

To-day there are 37,000 negro teachers in America, of which number 23,000 are regular graduates of high and normal schools and colleges, 23 are college presidents, 169 are principals of seminaries and many are principals of higher institutions. At present there are 369 negro men and women taking courses in the universities of Europe. The negro ministry, together with these teachers have been prepared for

THE RACE QUESTION IN AMERICA

their work by our schools and are the greatest factors the North has produced for the uplift of the colored man.

To-day there are those who wish to impede the negro's progress and lessen his educational advantages by industrializing such colleges as Howard University of Washington by placing on their Boards of Trustees and Managers the pronounced leaders of industrialism, giving as a reason that the better he is educated the worse he is; in other words, they say crime has increased among educated negroes. While stern facts show the opposite, the exact figures from the last census show that the greater proportion of the negro criminals are from the illiterate class. To-day the marriage vow, which by the teaching of the whites the negro held to be of so little importance before the war, is guarded more sacredly. The one room cabin, with its attendant evils, is passing away, and the negro woman, the mightiest moral factor in the life of her people, is beginning to be more careful in her deportment and is no longer the easy victim of the unlicensed passion of certain white men. This is a great gain and is a sign of real progress, for no race can rise higher than its women.

Let me plead with the friends of the negro. Please continue to give him higher ideals of a better life and stand by him in the struggle. He has done well with the opportunities given him and is doing something along all the walks of life to help himself, which is gratitude of the best sort. What he needs to-day is moral sympathy, which in his condition years ago he could hardly appreciate. The sym-

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pathy must be moral, not necessarily social. It must be the sympathy of a soul set on fire for righteousness and fair play in a republic like ours. A sympathy which will see to it that every man shall have a man's chance in all the affairs of this great nation which boasts of being the land of the free and the home of the brave for which the black man has suffered and done so much in every sense of the word.

Let this great Christian nation of eighty millions of people do justice to the Black Battalion, and seeing President Roosevelt acknowledges that he overstepped the bounds of his power in discharging and renouncing them before they had a fair trial, and now that they are vindicated before the world, to take back what he called them, Cutthroats, Brutal Murderers, Black Midnight Assassins, and Cowards. This and this alone will to some extent atone for the wrong he has done and help him to regain the respect and confidence of the world.

Now in order to change the condition of things, I would suggest: First, that an international, industrial association be formed to help Afro-Americans to engage in manufacturing and commercial pursuits, assist them to buy farms, erect factories, open shops in which their young men and women can enter and produce what the world requires every day for its inhabitants.

If they were able to-day to produce the articles in common use as boots, shoes, hats, cotton and woolen goods, made-up clothing and enterprises such as farming, mining, forging, carpentering, etc., negroes would find a ready sale in prefer-

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ence to all others, because of its being a race enterprise, doing what no other corporation does, giving employment to members of the race as tradesmen, and teaching others to become skilled workers. These enterprises should be started in the southern, northern and western states, where the negro population will warrant such an undertaking.

I would suggest "A School History of the Negro Race" to be placed in our public schools as a text book. The general tone of all the histories taught in our public schools points to the inferiority of the negro and the superiority of the white. It must be indeed a stimulus to any people to be able to refer to their ancestry as distinguished in deeds of valor, and particularly so to the colored people. With what eyes can the white child look upon the colored child and the colored child look upon himself, when they have completed the assigned course of United States history, and in it found not one word of credit, not one word of favorable comment for even one among the millions of his fore-parents who have lived through nearly three centuries of his country's history. In them he is credited with no heritage of valor, he is mentioned only as a slave, while true historical records prove him to have been among the bravest of soldiers and a faithful producer of the nation's wealth. Though then a slave to the government, the negro's was the first blood shed in its defence in those days when a foreign foe threatened its destruction. In each and all of the American wars the negro was faithful, yes, faithful in battle while members of his race were being lynched to death; faithful to a land

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not his own in points of rights and freedom, all and that after he had enriched with his own life's blood, shouldered his musket to defend, when all this was done, regarded him with renewed terms, Black, Negro.

Last but not least the negro needs a daily newspaper in every large city, managed and edited by members of the race.

Such papers are needed to deal with questions of state and reflect the thoughts of the social world, to enter the province of ethics and tread the domain of morals and to give their opinion on the varying phases of religious truths and pass judgment on matters of a political nature.

There are hidden wrongs perpetrated by the whites against the negro race that will never be brought to light until the race owns and controls its own daily newspapers which alone have the power to discover and enthrone truth, thus becoming a safe guide to all honest seekers of facts respecting the race whether from a moral, educational, political or religious field. To carry out the plans suggested, whether viewed from an intellectual, industrial, commercial, or editorial standpoint, the world must acknowledge that to-day the negro race has the men and women, who are true to their race and all that stands for negro progress.



HISTORICAL COMPOSITION

BY

ANNIE L. BURTON



HISTORICAL COMPOSITION



It is only 132 years ago to-day that the British troops, who had occupied Boston, made a riding school of the Old South church, and otherwise sacrilegiously disported themselves, were persuaded to get out under the compulsion of the batteries set up on Dorchester Heights. But when the last company embarked for Halifax, it carried the last British flag ever unfurled by a military organization on Massachusetts soil. That was the end of foreign domination in Massachusetts. And by a happy coincidence this is the legendary anniversary of the birth of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, whose memory has been an inspiration in the struggle of another race for Liberty.



A QUESTION OF ETHICS



NEW YORK, Dec. 17. — Andrew Carnegie declared yesterday in a speech on the negro question that the negroes are a blessing to America, and that their presence in the South makes this country impregnable and without need of a navy to defend itself.

“Suppose,” said Mr. Carnegie, “Great Britain were to send her war fleets to America. It would amount to nothing. All that the President of the United States would have to do would be to say, ‘Stop exporting cotton.’ The war would be ended in four days, for England cannot do without our cotton.

“We don’t need a navy; we are impregnable. Because we have 9,000,000 colored men anxious and willing to work we hold this strong position, and I am interested in the negro from this material standpoint, as well as from the more humane point of view.”



MY FAVORITE POEMS



MY FAVORITE POEMS

Verses

On a green slope, most fragrant with the Spring,
One sweet, fair day I planted a red rose,
That grew, beneath my tender nourishing,
So tall, so riotous of bloom, that those
Who passed the little valley where it grew
Smiled at its beauty. All the air was sweet
About it! Still I tended it, and knew
That he would come, e'en as it grew complete.

And a day brought him! Up I led him, where
In the warm sun my rose bloomed gloriously —
Smiling and saying, Lo, is it not fair?
And all for thee — all thine! But he passed by
Coldly, and answered, Rose? I see no rose, —
Leaving me standing in the barren vale
Alone! alone! feeling the darkness close
Deep o'er my heart, and all my being fail.

Then came one, gently, yet with eager tread,
Begging one rose-bud — but my rose was dead.

MY FAVORITE POEMS

Verses

The old, old Wind that whispers to old trees,
Round the dark country when the sun has set,
Goes murmuring still of unremembered seas
And cities of the dead that men forget —
An old blind beggar-man, distained and gray,
With ancient tales to tell,
Mumbling of this and that upon his way,
Strange song and muttered spell —
Neither to East or West, or South or North,
His habitation lies,
This roofless vagabond who wanders forth
Aye under alien skies —
A gypsy of the air, he comes and goes
Between the tall trees and the shadowed grass,
And what he tells only the twilight knows . . .
The tall trees and the twilight hear him pass.
To him the Dead stretch forth their strengthless hands,
He who campaigns in other climes than this,
He who is free of the Unshapen Lands,
The empty homes of Dis.

Verses

Out of the scattered fragments
Of castles I built in the air
I gathered enough together
To fashion a cottage with care;
Thoughtfully, slowly, I planned it,
And little by little it grew —
Perfect in form and in substance,
Because I designed it for you.

MY FAVORITE POEMS

The castles that time has shattered
Gleamed spotless and pearly white
As they stood in the misty distance
That borders the Land of Delight;
Sleeping and waking I saw them
Grow brighter and fairer each day;
But, alas! at the touch of a finger
They trembled and crumbled away!

Then out of the dust I gathered
A bit of untarnished gold,
And a gem unharmed by contact
With stones of a baser mold;
For sometimes a priceless jewel
Gleams wondrously pure and fair
From glittering paste foundations
Of castles we see in the air.

So, I turned from the realms of fancy,
As remote as the stars above,
And into the land of the living
I carried the jewel of love;
The mansions of dazzling brightness
Have crumbled away, it is true;
But firm upon gold foundations
Stands the cottage I built for you!

MY FAVORITE POEMS

Verses

You do but jest, sir, and you jest not well.
How could the hand be enemy of the arm,
Or seed and sod be rivals? How could light
Feel jealousy of heat, plant of the leaf,
Or competition dwell 'twixt lip and smile?
Are we not part and parcel of yourselves?
Like strands in one great braid we intertwine
And make the perfect whole. You could not be
Unless we gave you birth: we are the soil
From which you sprang, yet sterile were that soil
Save as you planted. (Though in the Book we read
One woman bore a child with no man's aid, ?
We find no record of a man-child born
Without the aid of woman! Fatherhood
Is but a small achievement at the best,
While motherhood is heaven and hell.)
This ever-growing argument of sex
Is most unseemly, and devoid of sense.
Why waste more time in controversy, when
There is not time enough for all of love,
Our rightful occupation in this life?
Why prate of our defects — of where we fail,
When just the story of our worth would need
Eternity for telling; and our best
Development comes ever through your praise,
As through our praise you reach your highest self?
Oh! had you not been miser of your praise
And let our virtues be their own reward,

MY FAVORITE POEMS

The old established order of the world
Would never have been changed. Small blame is ours
For this unsexing of ourselves, and worse
Effeminizing of the male. We were
Content, sir, till you starved us, heart and brain.
All we have done, or wise or otherwise,
Traced to the root, was done for love of you.
Let us taboo all vain comparisons,
And go forth as God meant us, hand in hand,
Companions, mates and comrades evermore;
Two parts of one divinely ordained whole.

Verses

A widow had two sons,
 And one knelt at her knees,
And sought to give her joy
 And toiled to give her ease;
He heard his country's call
 And longed to go, to die
If God so willed, but saw
Her tears and heard her sigh.

A widow had two sons,
 One filled her days with care
And creased her brow and brought
 Her many a whitened hair
His country called — he went.
 Nor thought to say good-by,
And recklessly he fought,
 And died as heroes die.

MY FAVORITE POEMS

A widow had two sons,
One fell as heroes fall,
And one remained and toiled,
And gave to her his all.
She watched "her hero's" grave
In dismal days and fair,
And told the world her love,
Her heart was buried there.

Our Mission

In the legends of the Norsemen,
Stories quaint and weird and wild,
There's a strange and thrilling story,
Of a mother and her child.
And that child, so runs the story,
In those quaint old Norsemen books,
Fell one day from dangerous play ground,
Dashed in pieces on the rocks ;
But with gentle hand that mother
Gathered every tender part,
Bore them gently, torn and bleeding,
On her loving mother heart.
And within her humble dwelling,
Strong in faith and brave of soul,
With her love-song low and tender
Rocked and sang the fragments whole.
Such the mission of the Christian,
Taught by Christ so long ago ;
This the mark that bids us stay not,
This the spirit each should know :
Rent and torn by sin the race is,
Heart from heart, and soul from soul ;
This our task with Christ's sweet love-song,
Join, and heal, and make them whole.

—*Rev. E. M. Bartlett*

MY FAVORITE POEMS

Verses

Lord over all! Whose power the sceptre swayed,
Ere first Creation's wondrous form was framed,
When by His will Divine all things were made;
Then, King, Almighty was His name proclaimed.

When all shall cease — the universe be o'er,
In awful greatness He alone will reign,
Who was, Who is, and Who will evermore
In glory most refulgent still remain.

Sole God! unequalled and beyond compare,
Without division or associate;
Without commencing date, or final year,
Omnipotent He reigns in awful state.

He is my God! my living Savior He!
My sheltering Rock in sad misfortune's hour!
My standard, refuge, portion, still shall be,
My lot's disposer when I seek His power.

Into His hands my spirit I consign
Whilst wrapped in sleep, that I again may wake,
And with my soul, my body I resign;
The Lord's with me — no fears my soul can shake.

THE CREATION

BY

ANNIE L. BURTON

The earth, the firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
Were made by God's creative power
Six thousand years ago or more.
Man, too, was formed to till the ground;
Birds, beasts, and fish to move around;
The fish to swim, the birds to fly,
And all to praise the Love most high.
This world is round, wise men declare,
And hung on nothing in the air.
The moon around the earth doth run;
 The earth moves on its center, too;
The earth and moon around the sun
 As wheels and tops and pulleys do.
Water and land make up the whole,
 From East to West, from pole to pole.
Vast mountains rear their lofty heads,
 Rivers roll down their sandy beds;
And all join in one grand acclaim
 To praise the Lord's almighty name.



MY FAVORITE HYMNS



MY FAVORITE HYMNS

The Ninety and Nine

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold,
But one was out on the hills away,
Far-off from the gates of gold —
Away on the mountains lone and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

“Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine:
Are they not enough for Thee?”
But the Shepherd made answer: “This of mine
Has wandered away from me,
And, although the road be rough and steep,
I go to the desert to find my sheep.”

But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through
Ere he found His sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert he heard the cry —
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

“Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way
That mark out the mountain's track?”

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

“ They were shed for one who had gone astray
Ere the Shepherd could bring him back.”
“ Lord, whence are Thy hands so rent and torn ? ”
“ They are pierced tonight by many a thorn.”

But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a glad cry to the height of heaven,
“ Rejoice! I have found my sheep ! ”
And the angels echoed around the throne:
“ Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own ! ”

My Faith looks up to Thee

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O, let me from this day
Be wholly Thine.

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
O, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream
 Shall o'er me roll,
Blest Saviour, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O, bear me safe above,
 A ransomed soul.

Jordan's Strand

My days are gliding swiftly by,
And I, a pilgrim stranger,
Would not detain them as they fly,
 Those hours of toil and danger.

Chorus

For, O we stand on Jordan's strand,
 Our friends are passing over;
And, just before, the shining shore
 We may almost discover!

We'll gird our loins, my brethren dear,
 Our heavenly home discerning;
Our absent Lord has left us word,
 "Let every lamp be burning."

Should coming days be cold and dark,
 We need not cease our singing;
That perfect rest nought can molest,
 Where golden harps are ringing.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Let sorrow's rudest tempest blow,
Each cord on earth to sever;
Our King says, "Come!" and there's our home,
Forever, O forever.

Over the Line

O tender and sweet was the Master's voice
As he lovingly call'd to me,
"Come over the line, it is only a step —
I am waiting my child, for thee.

Refrain

"Over the line," hear the sweet refrain,
Angels are chanting the heavenly strain:
"Over the line," — Why should I remain
With a step between me and Jesus?

But my sins are many, my faith is small,
Lo! the answer came quick and clear;
"Thou needest not trust in thyself at all,
Step over the line, I am here."

But my flesh is weak, I tearfully said,
And the way I cannot see;
I fear if I try I may sadly fail,
And thus may dishonor Thee.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Ah, the world is cold, and I cannot go back
Press forward I surely must;
I will place my hand in his wounded palm
Step over the line, and trust.

O could I speak the Matchless Worth

O could I speak the matchless worth,
O could I sound the glories forth,
Which in my Saviour shine,
I'd soar, and touch the heav'nly strings,
And vie with Gabriel while he sings,
In notes almost divine.

I'd sing the precious blood He spilt,
My ransom from the dreadful guilt
Of sin and wrath divine;
I'd sing His glorious righteousness,
In which all-perfect, heavenly dress
My soul shall ever shine.

I'd sing the characters He bears,
And all the forms of love He wears,
Exalted on His throne;
In loftiest songs of sweetest praise,
I would to everlasting days
Make all His glories known.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Well, the delightful day will come
When my dear Lord will bring me home,
And I shall see His face;
Then with my Saviour, Brother, Friend,
A blest eternity I'll spend,
Triumphant in His grace.

O God, beneath Thy Guiding Hand

O God, beneath Thy guiding hand,
Our exiled fathers cross'd the sea;
And when they trod the wintry strand,
With pray'r and psalm they worshipp'd Thee.

Thou heard'st, well pleased, the song, the prayer :
Thy blessing came and still its power
Shall onward through all ages bear
The memory of that holy hour.

Laws, freedom, truth, and faith in God
Came with those exiles o'er the waves;
And where their pilgrim feet have trod,
The God they trusted guards their graves.

And here Thy name, O God of love,
Their children's children shall adore
Till these eternal hills remove
And spring adorns the earth no more.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

America

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrim's pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring.

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us with Thy might,
Great God our King.

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

In the cross of Christ I glory,
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,
 Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me:
 Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
 Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming,
 Add more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
 By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
 Joys that through all time abide.

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
 Pilgrim thro' this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
 Hold me with Thy pow'rful hand;
 Bread of heaven,
 Feed me till I want no more.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing waters flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through;
Strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Bear me through the swelling current,
Land me safe on Canaan's side;
Songs of praises
I will ever give to Thee.

Christ receiveth Sinful Men

Sinners Jesus will receive;
Sound this word of grace to all
Who the heav'nly pathway leave,
All who linger, all who fall.

Chorus

Sing it o'er and o'er again:
Christ receiveth sinful men;
Make the message clear and plain:
Christ receiveth sinful men.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Come, and He will give you rest;
Trust Him, for His word is plain;
He will take the sinfulest;
Christ receiveth sinful men.

Christ receiveth sinful men,
Even me with all my sin;
Purged from ev'ry spot and stain,
Heav'n with Him I enter in.

Some Day the Silver Cord will break

Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But, O, the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King!

And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story — Saved by grace.

Some day my earthly house will fall,
I cannot tell how soon 'twill be,
But this I know — my All in All
Has now a place in heaven for me.

Some day; till then I'll watch and wait,
My lamp all trimmed and burning bright,
That when my Saviour ope's the gate.
My soul to Him may take its flight.

MY FAVORITE HYMNS

Battle Hymn of the Republic

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are
stored;

He hath loos'd the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence in the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel,
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you My grace shall
deal;

Let the hero born of woman crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never sound retreat,
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat;
O, be swift, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.



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