THE SOUTHERN SPY:

OR,

CURIOSITIES

OF

NEGRO SLAVERY

IN THE SOUTH.

LETTERS FROM A SOUTHERNER TO A NORTHERN FRIEND.

WASHINGTON:

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1859.

PREFATORY.

The writer of these simple pages has prepared for publication a collection of letters on the subject of Slave Life in the South, which were originally addressed to David M. Clarkson, Esq., "Glenbrook," Newburgh, N. Y.—a gentleman whose friendship is one among those in the North that he has greatly prized, and whose cultivated patriotism is of that broad and noble type that he has ever fervently admired. He ventures to place a few of these letters, in this humble way, before the public. In case of the press, and particularly that of the South, giving these few pages a verdict of encouragement, he will venture further to submit to the public the entire collection of the Letters of "The Southern Spy."

EDWARD A. POLLARD.

Washington, *February*, 1859.

THE SOUTHERN SPY.

LETTER NO. 1.

MACON, GEORGIA, 1858.

MY DEAR C——: I engaged to write you from the South, and I take the earliest opportunity to date my correspondence from Middle Georgia. But I should not fail to drop you a line or two, at start, of Macon, where I write, as it is accounted one of the most beautiful cities of the South, and has many objects of interest. It is the seat of several public institutions, but has but little trade. Near by the city, on a commanding position, stands Fort Hawkins, a rude wooden building, which was constructed as a protection against the Indians; for you must know that Macon was about the frontier of Georgia in 1818. An Indian mound is in sight, on the top of which are standing a few tall, melancholy pines. On the hills which surround the city, and in the beautiful little ville of Vineville, which adjoins it, may be seen the evidences of refinement in the handsome residences adorned with shrubbery and evergreens; among which the olive and the holly, with its lucid green, are the most common. Many of the residences of men of wealth are admirable, especially for their tasteful grounds. But there is the fondness for white paint, which may be observed in all parts of the South, and for a nondescript archi-

tecture, in which all styles are jumbled, or a plain magnificence, studied in rows of pillars and flights of steps, that frequently give to a Southern villa the singular appearance of an eleemosynary institution. The chief object, however, to which the admiration of the stranger is directed in Macon is the public cemetery, which is compared (not extravagantly) in some points of natural scene, to Mount Auburn and Greenwood. It is a lovely piece of ground, with natural terraces overhanging the Ocmulgee, and the wild glen that divides it. The picturesque effect, however, is almost entirely destroyed by the thick brushwood, which prevents the eye from taking in the outlines of the scene. The ground is covered with coppices of oak and pine, and studiously kept in a state of nature. It seems, however, a strange idea to keep the natural scene concealed by the brushwood which everywhere intercepts the view. May-be it is intended to be

"Unadorned, adorned the most"—

an æsthetic fogyism, *en passant*, disproved and despised, at least by the charming ladies of Macon.

In writing you, my dear C., of the South, and its *peculiar institution*, (as I intend,) I am sure that I have no prejudice to dispel from your mind on the subject; but as I may hereafter publish some extracts from the correspondence, I hope the sketches, which may amuse you, may correct the false views of others, derived, as they chiefly are, from the libels of Northern spies, who live or travel here in disguise. Thus I observed lately a communication in some of the

Abolition papers, professing to have been written by one who has been a resident of Macon for eleven years, to the effect that the people here do not allow Northern papers to circulate or be taken by subscribers, or even Congressional documents to be among them, which do not harmonize with their peculiar views. Although this infamous libel is quite as absurd and undeserving of contradiction as the famed Arrowsmith hoax, or any of the Sanguinary Crowbar style of negro-worship fictions, it deserves notice in one respect. There are a number of Yankee doughfaces in the South, who before us are the greatest admirers of the *peculiar institution*, and, to honey-fuggle us, even chime in with the abuse of their own land. There is danger in these men of disguised character, many of whom are doing business in the South. They are not to be trusted; and while, not satisfied with being tolerated among us, they impose on our confidence and hospitality by their professions, they take secret opportunities to gratify their real hatred of us, by tampering with the slaves, or by libelling the South under the shelter of anonymous letters published in the North. The man who would devise a safe opportunity to publish what he knew to be false and libellous of those whose good-will he had won by another lie might, with the same hope of impunity, venture on a grander revenge, and secretly conspire with the slave in a rebellion.

But it is not my purpose to trouble you with a dissertation on "the vexed question," or the social sys-

tem of the South, or any of the political aspects of Slavery. I merely design to employ a few leisure hours in a series of unpretending sketches of the condition, habits, and peculiarities of the negro slave. The field, you know, has furnished a number of books; and I am sure, my dear C., that you are too sensible of the large share of public attention *niggers* occupy in this country to slight them. Besides, I am thoroughly convinced that the negro portraits of the fiction writers are, most of them, mere caricatures, taking them all, from "Uncle Tom's Cabin," down to the latest reply thereto—"a book" from a Virginia authoress, in which the language put in the mouth of her leading character is a mixture of Irish idioms with the dialect of the Bowery. Whoever heard a Southern negro say, as the Virginia lady's sable hero does, "The tip-top of the morning to you, young ladies!" or "What's to pay now?" Nor will we find any of Mrs. Stow's *Uncle Toms* in the South, at least as far as the religious portraiture goes. The negro in his religion is not a solemn old gentleman, reading his Bible in corners and praying in his closet: his piety is one of fits and starts, and lives on prayer-meetings, with its rounds of *'zortations*, shoutings, and stolen sweets of baked pig.

You already know my opinion of the peculiarities of the negro's condition in the South, in the provision made for his comfort, and in the attachment between him and his master. The fact is, that in wandering from my native soil to other parts of the

world, I have seen slavery in many forms and aspects. We have all heard enough of the colliers and factory operatives of England, and the thirty thousand costermongers starving in the streets of London; as also of the serfs and crown-peasants of Russia, who are considered not even as chattels, but as part of the land, and who have their wives selected for them by their masters. I have seen the hideous slavery of Asia. I have seen the coolies of China "housed on the wild sea with wilder usages," or creeping with dejected faces into the suicide houses of Canton. I have seen the Siamese slave creeping in the presence of his master on all-fours—a human quadruped. It was indeed refreshing after such sights to get back to the Southern institution, which strikes one, after so many years of absence, with a novelty that makes him appreciate more than ever the evidences of comfort and happiness on the plantations of the South.

The first unadulterated negro I had seen for a number of years, (having been absent for the most of that time on a foreign soil,) was on the railroad cars in Virginia. He looked like *home*. I could have embraced the old uncle but was afraid the passengers, from such a demonstration, might mistake me for an Abolitionist. I looked at him with my face aglow and my eye-lids touched with tears. How he reminded me of my home—of days gone by—that poetry of of youth, "when I was a boy," and wandered with my sable playmates over the warm, wide hills of my sweet home, and along the branches, fishing in the

shallow waters with a crooked pin! But no romancing with the past! So we continue our journey onward to "the State of railways and revolvers."

Arrived in Georgia, I find plenty of the real genuine *woolly-heads*, such as don't part their hair in the middle, like Mass'r Fremont. My first acquaintance is with Aunt Debby. I insist upon giving her a shake of the hand, which she prepares for by deprecatingly wiping her hand on her apron. Aunt Debby is an aged colored female of the very highest respectability, and, with her white apron and her head mysteriously enveloped in the brightest of bandannas, she looks (to use one of her own rather obscure similes) "like a new pin." She is very fond of usurping the authority of her mistress below stairs, and has the habit of designating every one of her own color, not admitted to equality, as "*de nigger*." Aunt Debby is rather spoiled, if having things her own way means it. If at times her mistress is roused to dispute her authority, Aunt Debby is sure to resume the reins when quiet ensues. "Debby," cries her mistress, "what's all this noise in the kitchen—what are you whipping Lucy for?" "La, missis, I'se jest makin' her 'have herself. She too busy *walling* her eyes at me, and spilt the water on the steps." Among the children, Aunt Debby is a great character. She is, however, very partial; and her favorite is little Nina, whom she calls (from what remote analogy we are at a loss to conjecture) "her *jelly-pot*." I flatter myself that I am in her good graces. Her attention to me has been

shown by a present of ground-peas, and accessions of fat lightwood to my fire in the morning.

The religious element is very strong in Aunt Debby's character, and her *repertoire* of pious minstrelsy is quite extensive. Her favorite hymn is in the following words, which are repeated over and over again:

> Oh run, brother, run! Judgment day is comin'!
> Oh run, brother, run! Why don't you come along?
> The road so rugged, and the hill so high—
> And my Lord call me home,
> To walk the golden streets of my New Jerusalem.

Aunt Debby's religion is of that sort—always begging the Lord to take her up to glory, and professing the greatest anxiety to go *right now!* This religious enthusiasm, however, is not to be taken at its word.

You have doubtless heard the anecdote of Cæsar, which is too good not to have been told more than once; though even if you have heard the story before, it will bear repetition for its moral. Now, Cæsar one day had caught it, not from Brutus, but from Betty—an allegorical coquette in the shape of a red cowhide. On retiring to the silence of his cabin at night, Cæsar commenced to soliloquize, rubbing the part of his body where the castigation had been chiefly administered, and bewailing his fate, with tragic desperation, in the third person. "Cæsar," said he, "most done gone—don't want to live no longer! Jist come, good Lord, swing low de chariot, and take dis chile away! Cæsar ready to go—he *wants* to go!" An irreverent darkey outside, hearing these protestations, tapped at the door. "Who dar?" replied Cæsar, in a low voice

of suppressed alarm. "De angel of de Lord come for Cæsar, 'cordin to request." The dread summons had indeed come, thought Cæsar; but blowing out the light with a sudden whiff, he replied, in an unconcerned tone, "*De nigger don't live here.*"

There is one other trait wanting to complete Aunt Debby's character. Though at an advanced age, she is very coquettish, and keeps up a regular assault on a big lout of the name of Sam, whom she affects to despise as "jist de meanest nigger de Lord ever put breath in." I overheard some words between them last holiday. "I'se a white man to-day," says Sam, "and I'se not gwine to take any of your imperence, old ooman;" at the same time, taking the familiar liberty of poking his finger into her side like a brad-awl. "Get 'long, Sat—en!" replies Aunt Debby with a shove, but a smile at the same time, to his infernal majesty. And then thy both fell to laughing for the space of half a minute, although I must confess that I could not understand what they were laughing at.

Aunt Debby may serve you, my dear C., as a picture of the happy, contented, Southern slave. Some of your northern politicians would represent the slaves of the South as sullen, gloomy, isolated from life—in fact, pictures of a living death. Believe me, nothing could be further from the truth. Like Aunt Debby, they have their little prides and passions, their amusements, their pleasantries, which constitute the same sum of happiness as in the lives of their masters.

The whipping-post and the slave mart are constantly paraded before the eyes of the poor, deluded fanatics of your section. Now, I can assure you that the inhuman horrors of the slave auction-block exist only in imagination. Many instances of humanity may be observed there; and but seldom does the influence of the almighty dollar appear to sway other and better considerations in the breast of the slaveholder. The separation of families at the block has come to be of very unfrequent occurrence, although the temptation is obvious to do so, as they generally sell much better when the families are separated, and especially as the traders, who usually purchase for immediate realization, do not wish small children. Indeed, there is a statute in this State (Georgia) forbidding the sale of slave children of tender age away from their parents.

I attended a slave auction here the other day. The negroes were called up in succession on the steps of the court-house, where the crier stood. Most of them appeared naturally anxious as the bidding was going on, turning their eyes from one bidder to the other; while the scene would be occasionally enlivened by some jest in depreciation of the negro on the stand, which would be received with especial merriment by his fellow negroes, who awaited their turn, and looked on from a large wagon in which they were placed. As I came up, a second-rate plantation hand of the name of Noah, but whom the crier persisted in calling "Noey," was being offered, it being an adminis-

trator's sale. Noey, on mounting the steps, had assumed a most drooping aspect, hanging his head and affecting the feebleness of old age. He had probably hoped to have avoided a sale by a dodge, which is very common in such cases. But the first bid—$1,000—startled him, and he looked eagerly to the quarter whence it proceeded. "Never mind who he is, he has got the money. Now, gentlemen, just go on; who will say fifty." And so the crier proceeds with his monotonous calling. "I aint worth all that, mass'r; I aint much 'count no how," cries Noey energetically to the first bidder. "Yes you are, Noey —ah, $1,010, thank you, sir," replies the crier. The gentleman who makes this bid is recognised by Noey as "Mass'r John," one of the heirs. $1,011, rejoins the first bidder, and Noey throws a glance of infinite disdain at him for his presumption in bidding against his master. But as the bidders call over each other, Noey becomes more excited. "Drive on, Mass'r John," he exclaims, laughing with excitement. The bidding is very slow. Mass'r John evidently hesitates at the last call, $1,085, as too large a price for the slave, though anxious to bid the poor fellow in; but Noey is shouting to him, amid the incitements of the crowd, to "Drive on;" and, after a pause, he says in a firm tone, *eleven hundred dollars*. The crier calls out the round numbers with a decided emphasis. He looks at the first bidder, who is evidently making up his mind whether to go higher, while Noey is regarding him, too, with a look of the keenest suspense.

The man shakes his head at last, the hammer falls, and Noey, with an exulting whoop, dashes down the steps to his master.

Yours truly, E. A. P.

To D. M. C., Esq., N. Y.

LETTER NO. 2.

MACON, GEORGIA, 1858.

MY DEAR C——: The conclusion of my last letter was, I believe, concerning that abolition bugbear, the slave auction mart. Macon, you must know, is one of the principal marts for slaves in the South. Some time ago, I attended on the city's confines an extraordinarily large auction of slaves, including a gang of sixty-one from one plantation in southwestern Georgia. The prices brought were comparatively low, as there was no warranty of soundness, and owing very much, also, to the fact that the slaves were all sold in families; and they, too, extraordinarily large, as I counted fifty-nine negroes in ten families. To give you some idea of the prices brought I quote the following: Clarinda's family—Clarinda, plantation cook, weakly, 45 years; Betsey, field hand, prime, 22 years; James, field hand, prime, 14 years; Edmond, Betsey's son, 4 years, brought total, $2,620. Jourdon's family, bright mulattoes—Jourdon, blacksmith, prime 33 years; Lindy, field hand, prime, 30 years; Mary, prime, 13 years; Winney, prime, 12 years; Abbey,

prime, 9 years; Elizabeth, prime, 6 years, brought total, $3,650. Chloe's family, consisting all of likely negroes, the younger mulattoes—viz: Chloe, field hand, prime, 33 years, classified as "the best of negroes;" Clarissa, field hand, prime, 16 years; Junius, prime, 9 years; Francis, prime, 12 years; Robert, prime, 5 years; infant, 2 months, brought total, $2,940.

During the sale referred to, a lot was put up consisting of a woman and her two sons, one of whom was epileptic, (classified by the crier as "fittified.") It was stated that the owner would not sell them unless the epileptic boy was taken along at the nominal price of one dollar, as he wished him provided for. Some of the bidders expressed their dissatisfaction at this, and a trader offered to give two hundred dollars more on condition that the epileptic boy should be thrown out. But the temptation was unheeded, and the poor boy was sold with his mother. There are frequent instances at the auction-block of such humanity as this on the part of masters.

Facts like these should teach us, my dear C., that when that feature even, which we all confess to be the worst in our system of negro slavery, is relieved by so many instances of humane and generous consideration on the part of slaveholders, our peculiar institution is one the virtues of which qualify its defects, and of peculiar merit.

But I will leave off sermonizing, and give you what I promised—a simple, home picture of slavery.

I must tell you, next to Aunt Debby, who figured in my last letter, of "Uncle" George—"Old Bones," as we boys used to call him. In our young days we were perpetually either teasing or trading with the old fellow, who was the head gardener, and was kept constantly on the look-out by our depredations on his vines. Or when we got a few cents from "grandpa," or obtained leave to give away our "old clothes," how we used to buy from him, surreptitiously, little noggins of muddy cider! Years ago, when I left home, he was then almost decrepit from old age, but his avarice and keenness at a trade with his "young mass'rs" were the same as ever. He was a queer-looking old fellow; never would wear a hat; and, with his immense shock of hair as white as snow, and standing off from his head, and his enormous leather "galluses," (suspenders) he made a singular picture in our boyish recollections.

Ah! how many times in years of exile from my native land have I recalled the image of this old slave, with the picture of the old brick garden, with its grass walks and its cherry trees, and the gentle mounds in the corner, that saddest, sweetest spot on earth—the parental graves!

Boys are never very thoughtful. Notwithstanding Uncle George's respectability and good nature, we used to worry him very much, and were constantly on the alert to cheat him in a trade. The latter, however, it was difficult to accomplish. Quicksilvered cents, which we used to cunningly offer to him by

protesting that we had just "found" them, would not go with him. I remember well, when we went out hunting—four brothers, with an old flint gun—how, after shooting a few "peckerwoods" in the orchard, we would go down to the garden and banter Uncle George to shoot at a mark for "fourpence-apenny." He was very proud of doing this, and enjoyed the privilege of "shooting a gun" with the same zest as a ten-year-old school boy. But he discovered our trick at last—how the gun was loaded for him without shot and with five "fingers" of powder, "kicking" him most unmercifully, and never showing the least sign on the target.

If you should ever visit "Oakridge," my dear C., you must be prepared for a grand reception by Uncle George, who is quite a Beau Hickman in his way. He is a very genteel beggar. He makes it a point to see all the visitors who come to our home; and he has the ugly habit of secretly waylaying them, and begging them to "remember" him. You must have half-a-dollar for him when you come. I think I can promise that you will not be quite as heartless to his appeal for a place in your memory as was a gentleman from the North, ("a friend of humanity") who lately partook of our hospitality. On his leaving, Uncle George, as usual, exercised his privilege of bringing the horse to "the rack;" and, after assisting the gentleman to mount, begged that "massa would *remember* the old nigger." "Oh, yes," replied the friend of humanity, as he rode off, "I will not

forget you, my good fellow; I will think of you, and hope you will be elevated into a better condition." But he never gave him a dime to be elevated with.

On the morning following my return home, after years of absence, I was told that Uncle George, who was too decrepit from age to come up to the house, wanted me to come to the negro "quarter" to see him. He understood that I had been in "that gold country," (he meant California) and he wanted to see his young mass'r very particularly, intimating very clearly that he expected a handsome present. I found the old fellow very comfortably situated. He had grown old gently; he had never seen any hard service; and not only now in his old age was he not required to do any work, but, with that regard commonly exhibited toward the slave when stricken with age, he had every attention paid him in the evening of his life. His meals were sent out to him from our own table. There was one little considerate attention that touched me. His passion for gardening, which had been the whole occupation of his life, had been gratified by giving him a little patch of ground in front of his cabin, where he might amuse himself at his own option.

I found Uncle George in his miniature garden The old fellow staggered up to see me, and, suddenly dropping, clasped me around the knees. I was quite overcome. This poor old man was "a slave," and yet he had a place in my heart, and I was not ashamed to meet him with tears in my eyes. Miserable aboli-

tionists! you prate of brotherly love and humanity. If you or any man had dared to hurt a hair of this slave, I could have trampled you into the dust.

"Uncle George," said I, "I am sorry to see you look so old." "Ah, mass'r, I'se monstrous old. But missis mighty good to me. She know I set store by all her children. "Belinda" (his wife) "*nussed*" (he means "nursed") all of you." "Well, Uncle George," I said, "I am glad to see you made so comfortable. The family should never forget you. I have often heard how you saved grandpa's life when he was drowning." "Yes, yes, mass'r," replied the old fellow, "and I saved him many a dollar, too."

Aunt Belinda, Uncle George's wife, I find in the cabin, as blithe as ever, though stricken with age. She is also on the retired list, and her only care is to "mind" the children in the quarter. The religious element is quite as marked in her character as in that of Aunt Debby, of whom I spoke in my last epistle. But it is more tender and of more universal love. She parts from every one with the wish of "meeting them at the right hand of God." She sings some very simple and touching hymns, which I am sorry I did not commit to paper. One she sings very sweetly, in which the lines constantly recur—

> Oh, Heaven, sweet Heaven, when shall I see?
> When shall I ever get there?

Of another favorite hymn of hers I took down the following words:

Go back, angels ! Go back angels !
Go back into Heaven, little children !
Go back little angels !
And I don't want to stay behind—
Behold the Lamb of God !
Behold the Lamb of God !
And I don't want to stay behind.

You will find, my dear C., one of the most striking characteristics of the negro in the South in the religious bent of his mind. Whether a member of the church or no, he is essentially at war with the devil. With him religion is entirely a matter of sentiment, and his imagination often takes unwarrantable liberties with the Scriptues. This is particularly so in the images he conjures up of the place where the bad niggers go, and the things appertaining thereto. The negro who has "got de 'ligion," and has never been favored in the process with a peep at "Ole Sa-ten," and is not able to give a full description of his person, is considered by his brethren a doubtful case—a mere trifler, if not a hypocrite.

Sam was relating to me the other day his religious experience, in the course of which the "Old Scratch" seems to have given him a great deal of trouble, appearing at his elbow whenever he prayed, and walking unceremoniously into his room, cracking a long whip, of which instrument of persuasion Sam seems to have a peculiar horror. "De last time he come," says Sam, "he knock at de door and call 'Sam;' my courage sorter fail me den, and I blows out de light and tell him de nigger done dead two weeks 'go; and den he says, 'if you don't open de door,

you dam nigger, I will *straighten* you out;' and den I jis go right clean out of der winder; and as I turn de corner, here come ole mass'r right agin me; and when I tell him as how I jis seed de debble wid my own eyes, he tell me I gwine to catch him, too, and dat he was gwine to get de 'ligion out me by *hooping*"— a new use you might imagine, my dear C., to put "hoops" to; but I discovered that Sam's pronunciation was bad, and that he meant nothing more than a dressing to his hide.

But the idea we get of the negro's religion is not always ludicrous. Some of their superstitions are really beautiful, and illustrate their poetic cast of mind. Their hymns, or religious chants, might furnish a curious book. The words are generally very few, and repeated over and over again; and the lines, though very unequal, are sung with a natural cadence that impresses the ear very agreeably. Most of them relate to the moment of death, and in some of them are simple and poetic images which are often touching. The following occur to me without any pains at selection:

> Oh, carry me away, carry me away, my Lord!
> Carry me to the berryin' ground,
> *The green trees a-bowing.* Sinner, fare you well!
> I thank the Lord I want to go,
> To leave them all behind.
> Oh, carry me away, carry me away, my Lord!
> Carry me to the berryin' ground.

The following is an image of touching simplicity— a thought of poetry:

I am gwine home, children ; I am gwine home, children,
De angel bid me to come.
I am gwine down to de water side—
Tis de harvest time, children,
And de angel bid me come.

The negroes here have three or four churches of different denominations — Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian—in which there is regular service every Sunday. The sermons and exhortations of the colored preachers, as we see them reported, are mostly mere caricatures. They are often sensible, and if the images are those of an untutored imagination, they are often anything in the world but ludicrous. I attended the services of one of the negro churches last Sunday, and heard really a very sensible exhortation from one of their colored preachers, who, although he commenced by telling his congregation that "death was knocking at their *heels*," went on to draw a picture of the judgment with a wild, native sublimity that astonished me.

A feature in the services struck me rather ludicrously. The congregation sang a duet, which ran somewhat as follows:

First Voices. Oh, hallelujah ! Glory in my soul !

Second Voices. Humph ! Whar?

F. V. When the moon go down the mountain, hide your face from God.

S. V. Humph ! Whar ?

F. V. To talk with Jesus. Glory hallelujah !

The colored Methodist church here is a handsome building, which the negroes have paid for, themselves,

besides maintaining a white preacher. You must know that our colored gentry (many of whom, as the custom is here, make considerable money by "hiring their own time," and paying their masters a stated sum for the privilege) not only maintain parsons and build churches, but hire carriages on Sundays to attend them. The fact is, we have too many of these colored codfish in some parts of the South, especially in the towns.

While I was in Macon, quite a spectacle was exhibited on the street in the obsequies of one of our slave gentry. The deceased had been attached as a drummer to one of our volunteer companies, the band of which accompanied the body to the grave. The funeral cortege was truly striking. The body was borne through the principal streets in a handsome hearse, fringed with sable, and preceded by the band of the company, playing funeral marches, while following after came a long procession of negroes, in decent attire, and a portion riding in carriages. Yes! negroes actually riding in carriages, hired each at eight dollars a day! What, my dear C., will Mrs. Stowe and the nigger-worshippers say now of all this "*fuss about a dead nigger?*"—a deprecation, you will recollect, of mass'r Legree!

Let them say what they please, say I, as long as they cannot get our negroes away from us, and kill them off in their own unfeeling land with cold, nakedness, and hunger. I am not ashamed, my dear C., to confess to be attached by affection to some of the

faithful slaves of our family, to have sent them remembrances in absence, and, in my younger days, to have made little monuments over the grave of my poor "mammy." Do you think I could ever have borne to see her consigned to the demon abolitionist, man or woman, and her lean, starved corpse rudely laid in a pauper's grave? No! At this moment my eyes are tenderly filled with tears when I look back through the mists of long years upon the image of that dear old slave, and recollect how she loved me in her simple manner; how, when chided even by my mother, she would protect and humor me; and how, in the long days of summer, I have wept out my boyish passion on her grave.

Yours truly, E. A. P.

To D. .M .C, Esq., N. Y.

LETTER NO. 3.

Briarcliff, Virginia, 1858.

My dear C——: I have been reflecting how illusory and fallacious are our poor human doctrines of happiness. What is happiness?—a question often proposed and often answered by enumerations of pleasures and gifts of fortune. But we cannot analyze happiness; we cannot name its elements; we cannot say what constitute it; all that can be determined, is the fact whether or no we possess happiness, and that fact is one of individual conscious-

ness. Happiness is a fact of consciousness: it is subjective; it is independent of all external conditions; and it is individual. The body may be surrounded by every comfort; the mind may be intoxicated by pleasures; the whole life may be illumined with fortune; no affliction may ever cast its cold shadow on the path; riches may dazzle; soft loves may breathe their incense; the conscience even may never accuse, and the wild pulse of pleasure may beat on and on; but the man of all this store and of all this fortune, when he explores his consciousness, may find the sentiment of unhappiness mysteriously and unalterably there. How wonderful is this!

Yet, dear C., there be many who would accuse me of pressing a trite and very simple observation in thus speaking of the independence of happiness of all external conditions. I think this one of the great mysteries of life; and those who have *felt* its truth stealing into their hearts will think so too. Some days ago I was walking in the fields; the sunset and the balmy air tranquilized me; I had nothing at that time to complain of, or to accuse myself of, and yet at that moment when I saw a poor man walking to his home along the cool shadow of the road, I suddenly, mysteriously, and terribly wished that I was he, and night rest, rest from the weary world.

Yes, my beloved friend, God gives happiness to men, without reference to the circumstances that surround them; he gives it to the beggar as well as the lord; to the slave as well as the master. The doc-

trine of the inequality in the distribution of happiness is impious and is infidel, and should be rejected as a vile and corrupting dogma of the atheists and free-thinkers. The distribution is, in fact, where men do not convert the designs of Providence, as nearly equal as is possible to imagine; for even in the distribution of that portion of happiness derived from external condition, there is introduced a singular law of compensation, which adjusts our natural and original appreciation of the gifts of fortune, precisely in inverse proportion to what we have of them.

There was a time when I thought, too, how unequally happiness—heaven's gift—was shared in by men. Often and acutely, when a tender and inexperienced boy, did I suffer from that thought. It diseased my sensibilities; it introduced into my life a dark and gloomy melancholy; it made me sorrowful, sometimes sullen, sometimes fierce. Well do I recall these feelings. In the midst of my own boyish enjoyments, when having a pleasant ride in the old swinging carriage, or feasting on delicacies, I have suddenly thought of my poor little slave companions, how they had to work in the fields, how they were made to tote burdens under the summer's sun, what poor food they had, and with what raptures they would devour "the cake" with which I was pampering myself. Then would I become gloomy, embittered, and strangely anxious to inflict pain and privation on myself; and with vague enthusiasms would accuse the law that had made the lots of men

so different. I was fast becoming the victim of the same fanaticism, the fruits of which we see developed in a senseless self-martyrdom, or in a fierce infidelity, or in modern socialism, or in the reckless spirit of "abolitionism;" or in any of the insane efforts to make all men equally free and equally happy.

But the bitter experiences of life have cured these feelings. In its sad and painful struggles has expired my juvenile and false philosophy, and I have awoke to the calm, serious, profound conviction, that every human lot has its sorrow and its agony, and that, as an Italian proverb beautifully signifies—"A skeleton misery is shut up in the closet of every heart." I am profoundly convined that the negro slave has naturally as much of happiness as I. What I disappreciate is to him an almost priceless source of enjoyment; the pain I derive from a thousand delicate griefs he never feels; all that I suffer from struggles, from disappointments, from agonies in a superior career, he is a happy stranger to. It is a very simple truth, my dear C., that happiness is *in the mind*—but when will the world learn the plain lesson, wipe away the tears of all sentimental sympathy, and adopt as the great rule of life, that every man should bear his own burdens; that the object of sympathy is individual; and that it is equally senseless and sinful to sorrow over lots inferior to our own, as to repine for and envy those which are superior.

I have no tears for the *lot* of the negro slave; he can make it as happy as, and perhaps happier than,

my own. I look into my own heart and write what I find there. Years ago, I left my home to adventure into the world, to seek my fortune tens of thousands of miles away; but my heart was swelling, defiant, joyous; I had glowing prospects, and I was departing with a flush of exultation, which even the last tears that I dropped on my mother's bosom clouded but for a moment. But when I stood waiting for the boat along the little muddy canal, where began my journey, that was by progressive stages at last to enter upon the great ocean, and when poor old grey-headed Uncle Jim came down to the bank, tottering under my fine trunk, and stood watching my departure with loud, fervent blessings, my heart was struck with a peculiar grief. I thought that while I was going out to the world, to taste its innumerable joys, to see its fine sights, to revel in its fine linens, its wines and its dissipations, here was poor, good, old uncle Jim to go back along the old wagon rut through the woods to his log cabin, to return to the drudgery of the stupid old fields, condemned never to see the fine world, never to taste its pleasures, never to feel the glow of its passionate joys, but to die like the clod, which alone was to mark his grave. So I thought when I left uncle Jim on the canal bank, bewailing his "little young massr's" departure; (but considerately provided by me with two whole dollars to console him with a modicum of whiskey, molasses and striped calicoes at the grocery that stood hard by.)

Well, dear C., I went out into the world. I went first to California, and for four years there I think I learnt some lessons that will last me through life. I had lost none of my buoyancy when I first stepped on old "Long Wharf," and took my first drink of genuine strychnine whiskey at an old shanty that stood curiously at the head of the wharf, surmounted by an immense wooden figure of "the wandering Jew." I went boldly and buoyantly to work the moment I landed. Well, it is needless to repeat to you here the story of my trials, my successes and my dread reverses. When the world treated me most roughly, when I writhed in all the agony of the defeat, self-distrust and self-contempt of a sensitive ambition, when poverty-stricken I worked along one of the little streams that ran through a pine glade of the Sierra, and when I buried my only friend Mac there, high up on the hill side, that the gold diggers might never disturb his dust, and laid down at night in despair, waking up with the demoniac joys of a reckless life burning in my heart, burning out my life—friendless, moneyless, agonized—with such experiences of my own of the life of this world, I had very little sympathy left, I assure you, for buck negroes "pining in their chains," or any other sort of sentimental barbarians. I just felt that every man has his own burden to bear in this life; that, while (I hope to God) I would always be found ready to sympathize with and assist any individual tangible

case of suffering, I would never be such a fool thereafter as to make the abstract lots of men in this world an object of sympathy. I venture to say that I have suffered more of unhappiness in a short worldly career, than ever did my "Uncle Jim," or any other well conditioned negro slave in a whole lifetime. How many of us, who are blessed with so many external gifts of fortune, can lay our hands on aching, unsatisfied hearts, and say the same!

I am persuaded, my dear C., that the sympathy of the abolitionists with the negro slave is entirely sentimental in its source. They associate with the idea inspired by that terrible word "slavery" the poetic and fiendish horrors of chains, scourges, and endless despair. They never pause to reflect how much better is the lot of the sable son of Ham, as a slave on a Southern plantation, well cared for, and even religiously educated, than his condition in Africa, where he is at the mercy of both men and beasts, in danger of being eaten up bodily by his enemy, or of being sacrificed to the Fetish, or in the human hecatombs, by which all State occasions are said to be celebrated in the kingdom of Dahomey. Indeed, these foolish abolitionists, under a sentimental delusion, are brought to regard the condition of the negro in Africa as one of simple, poetic happiness, while associating with the idea of his "slavery" a thousand horrors of imagination. If you will hunt up a poem by James Montgomery entitled "*The West Indies*," which was

written during the early days of the British "abolitionists," and used as a most powerful appeal in their cause, being published with the most profuse and costly illustrations, you will find the same poetic and delusive pictures of the condition of the negro in Africa on one hand, and his lot as a slave on the other, which exercise so great an influence on the weak imaginations of the present day. I copy some characteristic passages. Here is the picture of the negro at home:

"Beneath the beams of brighter skies,
His home amidst his father's country lies;
There with the partner of his soul he shares
Love-mingled pleasures, love-divided cares;
There, as with nature's warmest filial fire,
He soothes his blind and feeds his helpless sire;
His children, sporting round his hut, behold
How they shall cherish him when he is old.
Trained by example, from their tenderest youth,
To deeds of charity and words of truth,
Is he not blest? Behold, at close of day,
The negro village swarms abroad to play;
He treads the dance, through all its rapturous rounds,
To the wild music ofbarbarian sounds."

But the negro, (according to our poet,) is rudely snatched away from this poetic home of peace, loveliness, virtue, rapture, &c., &c., and is condemned to "*slavery*," condemned to endure

"The slow pangs of solitary care—
The *earth-devouring* anguish of despair.
When toiling, fainting, in the land of canes,
His spirit wanders to his native plains.
His little lovely dwelling there he sees,
Beneath the shade of his paternal trees—
The home of comfort."

Is not all this very absurd? But it is just such stuff on which are fed the weak, fanatical imagina-

tions of our modern abolitionists and shriekers. Here again is a picture by our poet of a slave proprietor, which will suit to a nicety the modern New. England conception of a Southern "nigger driver."

> "See the dull Creole at his pompous board,
> Attendant vassals cringing round their lord;
> Satiate with food, his heavy eyelids close,
> Voluptious minions fan him to repose.
> Prone on the noonday couch he lolls in vain,
> Delirious slumbers rack his maudlin brain;
> He starts in horror from bewildering dreams,
> His blood-shot eye with fire and phrensy gleams.
> He stalks abroad; through all his wonted rounds,
> The negro trembles and the lash resounds;
> And cries of anguish, shrilling through the air,
> To distant fields his dread approach declare."

Now, my dear C., it is needless to say to you that we have no such ogres in the South, or to delay you with criticisms of these hyper-poetical and nonsensical pictures of slavery. I wish to recur to the more logical style with which I started out in the commencement of this letter. I wish to say that the happiness of the Southern slave is not to be estimated by his pancity of fortune, or any such vulgar standard; but that we are to consider, as peculiar elements of happiness in his lot, his peaceful frame of mind, his great appreciation of the little of fortune he has, (by a rule of inverse proportion,) and his remission from all the ordinary cares of life. I will here add, too, in contradiction and in contempt of the poet's picture *supra* of the dreadful slave owner, that a great and peculiar source of happiness to the Southern slave is the freedom of intercourse and of attachment between himself and his master.

Instead of a slave-owner stalking around "with fire and phrensy," amid the "shrilling" cries of slaves, we will find the intercourse between the Southern planter and slave, even in the fields, to be generally of the most intimate and genial kind. Your own observation in the South, dear C., will doubtless attest this circumstance. You have doubtless seen, as well as I have, a master kindly saluting his slaves in the field, and listening patiently to their little requests about new clothes, new shoes, &c. And you have, no doubt, also seen slaves, in their intercourse with the families of their masters, playing with the children, indulging their rude but singularly innocent humor with them, and joining their young masters in all sorts of recreation. It is these social privileges which constitute so large and so peculiar a source of enjoyment in the life of the slave, and which distinguish his lot so happily from that of the free laborer, who has nothing but a menial intercourse with his employer.

I might, dear C., give you a number of anecdotes from my own experience, of the intimacy which is frequently indulged between the Southern slave and the members of his master's family. I was trained in an affectionate respect for the old slaves on the plantation; I was permitted to visit their cabins, and to carry them kind words and presents; and often have I been soundly and unceremoniously whipped by the old black women for my annoyances. All my recreations were shared in by slave companions. I have

hunted and fished with Cuffy; I have wrestled on the banks of the creek with him; and with him, as my trusty lieutenant, I have "fillibustered" all over my old aunt's dominions from "Rucker's Run" to cousin "Bobity Bee's."

And then there was "brother Bromus," who had many a fight with Wilson and Cook Lewis, and who, besides being generally whipped, always paid the penalty for the fun of fighting by a sound thrashing at the hands of Pleasants, the colored carriage driver, and the father of the aforesaid black youngsters. Would you believe it, poor Bromus stood in such terror of this black man, that even after he had gone to college, and used to spout Latin, and interlard his conversations to us boys with pompous allusions to college life, and with the perpetual phrase of "when I was at the U-ni-ver-si-ty," it was only necessary to threaten him with Pleasants' wrath to subdue and frighten him into anything. But Pleasants was an amiable-enough negro gentleman, and although he used Bromus pretty badly at times, he showed him a good deal of rough kindness, which B., to this day, gratefully acknowledges, and which Pleasants avers, with great pride in his manly master, was the "making of him."

Many a time, with my sable playmates as companions and conspirators in the deed, have I perpetrated revenge for such "rough kindness" on the old ill-natured blacks. What fun we used to have; and then there was no cruelty to mar the sport. We limi-

ted ourselves to simple practical jokes, and all sorts of harmless annoyances—would propel apples at Uncle Peyton when he got drunk in the orchard; and would send the negroes out of the fields on all sorts of fools' errands, and lie in wait to witness their reception at the grand stone steps of the house by "ole mass'r," with his inevitable square-toed boots. No one enjoyed the sport more heartily than our sable companions, who, in all the affairs of fun and recreation, associated with us on terms of perfect equality.

But let me dismiss these desultory allusions to young days, to which my memory reverts with more of sadness than of laughter. I ask, seriously, who shall say that the black companions of our rambles and sports, who cheated us, quizzed us, fought us as freely as we did them, were not as happy as ourselves? Now we, their young masters, and they have grown up to be men. From being companions in youth, they have grown up into slaves, we into masters. We two are pursuing journeys far apart across the fickle desert of life. But may it not be that they are still as happy as we? It is true that they have an humble and inglorious career before them, and must ever bear the painful thought of dying without leaving a mark behind them; but unlike many a poor white man, who has to tread the same career not only without a hope of glory, but along the thorns of want, and through great agony, they see a constant care to provide for their support, to lead them along peaceful and thornless paths, and

to sustain them even to the final close of life's journey in the grave. Is there no happiness in this? Is it possible that the negro, who has his human and rational wants supplied constantly and certainly, and who is indulged with so considerable a degree of social intercourse with his master, can be made, by the single abstract reflection that he lacks "liberty," (*abolition liberty*, mark you,) more unhappy than his master, who may see nothing in his own career but a struggle with the great necessities of life, closing in a grave as readily forgotten as that of his slave? Who shall judge of other men's *happiness* in this world? Let the slave speak for himself; let the master speak for himself; and let the record be made when justice, the only equal thing—but that equalizes all things—shall be brought down from the heavens to be done upon earth.

Yours truly,

E. A. P.

D. M. C., Esq.

LETTER NO 4.

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1858.

MY DEAR C——: You will permit me to say that the expressions in your letter, of repugnance at the proposition to re-open the Slave trade, and of horror at what you esteem will be its consequences to the country, as well as to the abstract cause of morality, are in my humble opinion unjust to the facts of the case, and uncalled for.

In preceding letters I think I promised you something about not discussing slavery as a political question in any respect. I believe that so far I have adhered generally to that engagement; and you will now indulge me for a moment, dear C., simply to say that there are many minds among us firmly convinced that the slave trade is almost the only possible measure, the last resource to arrest the decline of the South in the Union. They see that it would develop resources which have slept for the great want of labor; that it would increase the total area of cultivation in the South, six times what it now is; that it would create a demand for land, and raise its prices, so as to compensate the planter for the depreciation of the slave; that it would admit the poor white man to the advantages of our social system; that it would give him dearer interests in the country he loves now only from simple patriotism; that it would strengthen the peculiar institution; that it would increase our representation in Congress; and that it would revive and engender public spirit in the South, suppressed and limited as it now is by the monopolies of land and labor.

But I recognize especially in the proposition to reopen the slave trade, the interests of the working classes and yeomanry of the South. The cause of the poor white population of the South cries to heaven for justice. We see a people who are devoted to their country, who must be entrusted with the defence of the institution of slavery, if ever assailed

by violence, who would die for the South and her institutions, who in the defence of these objects of their patriotism, would give probably to the world the most splendid examples of courage, who would lay down their simple and hardy lives at the command of Southern authorities, and who would rally around the standard of Southern honor in the reddest crashes of the battle storm—we see, I say, such a people treated with the most ungrateful and insulting consideration by their country, debarred from its social system, deprived of all share in the benefits of the institution of slavery, condemned to poverty, and even forced to bear the airs of superiority in black and beastly slaves! Is not this a spectacle to fire the heart! As sure as God is judge of my own heart, it throbs with ceaseless sympathy for these poor, wronged, noble people; and if there is a cause in the world, I would be proud to champion, it is theirs—so help me God!—it is theirs.

But you doubtless ask, dear C., to know more clearly how their condition is to be reformed and elevated by the slave trade. Now I calculate, that with the re-opening of this trade, imported negroes might be sold in our Southern seaports at a profit, for $100 to $150 a head. The poor man might then hope to own a negro; the prices of labor would be brought within his reach; he would be a small farmer (revolutionizing the character of agriculture in the South); he would at once step up to a respectable station in the social system of the South; and with

this he would acquire a practical and dear interest in the general institution of slavery, that would constitute its best protection both at home and abroad. He would no longer be a miserable, nondescript cumberer of the soil, scratching the land here and there for a subsistence, living from hand to mouth, or trespassing along the borders of the possessions of the large proprietors. He would be a proprietor himself; and in the great work of developing the riches of the soil of the South, from which he had been heretofore excluded, vistas of enterprise and of wealth would open to him that would enliven his heart, and transform him into another man. He would no longer be the scorn and the sport of "gentlemen of color," who paraded their superiority, rubbed their well-stuffed black skins, and thanked God that they were not as he.

And here, dear C., let me meet an objection which has been eloquently urged against the proposition to import into this country slaves from Africa. It is said that our slave population has attained a wonderful stage of civilization; that they have greatly progressed in refinement and knowledge, and that it would be a great pity to introduce from the wilds of Africa, a barbarous element among them that would have the effect of throwing back our Southern negroes into a more uncivilized and abject condition.

What is plead here as an objection, I adopt as an argument on my side of the question—that is in favor of the African commerce. What we want espe-

cially in the South, is that the negro shall be brought down from those false steps which he has been allowed to take in civilization, and reduced to his proper condition as a slave. I have said to you, dear C., what an outrage upon the feelings of poor white men, and what a nuisance generally, the *slave gentry* of the South is. It is time that all these gentlemen of color should be reduced to the uniform level of the slave; and doubtless they would soon disappear in the contact and admixture of the rude African stock.

Most seriously do I say, dear C., that many of the negro slaves of the South display a refinement and an ease which do not suit their condition, and which contrast most repulsively with the hard necessities of many of the whites. I have often wished that the abolitionists, instead of hunting out among the swamps and in the raggedest parts of the South, some poor occasional victim to the brutality of a master, and parading such a case as an example of slavery, would occasionally show, as a picture of the institution, some of the slave gentry, who are to be found anywhere in the cities, towns, and on the large farms of the South, leading careless, lazy and impudent lives, treating white freemen with superciliousness if they happen to be poor, and disporting themselves with airs of superiority or indifference before everybody who does not happen to be their particular master. Pictures drawn as equally from this large class in our slave population, as from the more abject,

would, I am sure, soon convert some of your Northern notions of the institution of slavery.

I must admit to you that I have the most repulsive feelings towards negro gentlemen. When I see a slave above his condition, or hear him talk insultingly of even the lowest white man in the land, I am strongly tempted to knock him down. Whenever Mrs. Lively tells her very gentlemanly dining-room servant that he carries his head too high, I make it a point to agree with her; and whenever she threatens to have him "taken down a button-hole lower," I secretly wish that I had that somewhat mysteriously expressed task to perform myself. Of all things I cannot bear to see negro slaves affect superiority over the poor, needy, and unsophisticated whites, who form a terribly too large proportion of the population of the South. My blood boils when I recall how often I have seen some poor "cracker" dressed in striped cotton, and going through the streets of some of our Southern towns, gazing at the shop windows with scared curiosity, made sport of by the sleek, dandified negroes who lounge on the streets, never unmindful, however, to touch their hats to the "gem'men" who are "stiff in their heels;" (*i. e.* have money;) or to the counter hoppers and fast young gents with red vests and illimitable jewelry, for whom they pimp. And consider that this poor, uncouth fellow, thus laughed at, scorned and degraded in the estimate of the slave, is a freeman, beneath whose humble garb is a heart richer than gold—the heart of a mute hero,

of one who wears the proud, though pauper, title of the patriot defender of the South.

I love the simple and unadulterated slave, with his geniality, his mirth, his swagger and his nonsense; I love to look upon his countenance, shining with content and grease; I love to study his affectionate heart; I love to mark that peculiarity in him, which beneath all his buffoonery exhibits him as a creature of the tenderest sensibilities, mingling his joys and his sorrows with those of his master's home. It is of such slaves that I have endeavored, in the preceding letters, to draw some feeble pictures. But the "genteel" slave, who is inoculated with white notions, affects superiority, and exchanges his simple and humble ignorance for insolent airs, is altogether another creature, and is my special abomination.

I have no horror, dear C., of imported savage slaves from Africa. I have no doubt but that they would prove tractable, and that we would find in them, or that we would soon develop the same traits of courage, humor and tenderness, which distinguish the character of the pure negro everywhere.

When I was last through the country here, I made the acquaintance of a very old "Guinea negro," Pompey by name, who had been imported at an early age from the African coast; and a livelier, better-dispositioned and happier old boy I have never met with. The only marks of African extraction which Pompey retained in his age, were that he would talk Guinea "gibberish" when he got greatly excited, and that

he used occasionally some curious spells and superstitious appliances, on account of which most of the negroes esteemed him as a great "conjurer." Pompey is a very queer old fellow, and his appearance and his wonderful stories inspire the young with awe. He looks like a little withered old boy; and the long fantastic naps of his wool give him a mysterious air. According to his story, he once traveled to Chili through a subterranean passage of thouands of miles, He also is occasionally bribed to exhibit to his young mass'rs, the impression of a ring around his body, apparently produced by the hug of a good strong rope, but which he solemnly avers was occasioned by his having stuck midway in a keyhole, when the evil witches were desperately attempting to draw him through that aperture.

Pompey had married a "genteel" slavewoman, a maid to an old lady of one of the first families of Carolina, and lived very unhappily with his fine mate, because she could not understand "black folks' ways." It appears that Pompey frequently had recourse to the black art to inspire his wife with more affection for him; and having in his hearing dropped the remark, jokingly, one day, that a good whipping made a mistress love her lord the more, I was surprised to hear Pompey speak up suddenly, and with solemn emphasis, "Mass'r Ed'rd, I bleve dar *is* sumthin in dat. When de 'ooman get *ambitious*"—he means high-notioned and passionate—"de debble is sot up against you, and no use to honey dat chile; you jes

got to beat him out, and he bound to come out 'fore the breath come out, anyhow." I am inclined to recommend Pompey's treatment for all "ambitious" negroes, male or female.

By way of parenthesis, I must tell you how Pompey's mistress scolds him. He is so much of a boy that she has imperceptibly adopted a style of quizzing him and holding him up to ridicule, to which he is very sensitive. I will just note the following passage between the two. In the absence of the butler, Pompey is sometimes called to the solemn office of waiting on the table, at which elevation he is greatly pleased. Imagine the scene of a staid and orderly breakfast, attending on which is Pompey, with a waiter tucked with great precision under his arm, and presenting the appearance of a most complacent self consequence. Unluckily, however, making some arrangement in the pantry, he produces a nervous jostle of china. "Pompey, Pompey," cries his mistress, "what are you doing? Ah, Pompey, you are *playing with the little mice*, aint you?" Pompey, in a fluster of mortification at this accusation, denies playing with the little mice. "Ah, yes, Pompey, I know you want to have a little play—here, Martha, Sally, take Pompey out into the yard and let him play." The two maid servants approach poor old uncle Pompey in a most serious manner, to take him out to play, but he shoves them aside, and crestfallen and with bashful haste, he retreats from the room; while the two women solemnly keep alongside of him,

as if really intent upon the fulfillment of the orders of their mistress, to put the old fellow through a course of gambolling on the green.

Pompey is greatly cut up by such scoldings; and to be made a jest of before the genteeler and more precise servants, is his especial punishment and pain in this world.

I must confess for myself a strong participation in Pompey's contempt for "town niggers." Whenever he espies a sable aristocrat, he uses the strongest expression of disgust "dam jumpy fish," etc.; and then he will discourse of how a good nigger should do his work soberly and faithfully, illustrating the lesson always by indicating what he does, while Henry, a more favored slave, has nothing, according to Pompey's account, to do but to recline in an easy chair and eat "cake." I agree with Pompey as to what constitutes a useful and respectable negro, and tell him that we shall soon have some such from the country from which he came, at which prospect he is greatly pleased. "Ah, Mass'r," says he, "dat is de nigger dat can do your work; he de chile dat can follow arter the beast, like dis here," tugging away and gee-hawing while he speaks, at the hard mouth of a stupid mule, with which he is plowing in the garden. "But I tells you what, Mass'r Ed'rd," continues Pompey, impressively, "no matter how de dam proud black folks hold der head up, and don't love de mule, and don't love de work, and don't love nothing but de ownselves, I tells you what, I aint

but nigger nohow; and I tells you, and I tells em all, *de nigger and de mule am de axle-tree of de world.*"

The truth is, my dear friend, we want more such slaves in the South as Pompey, who while they can speak such honest and brilliant sentiments, will also be as humble in their hearts and as faithful to their work as he, and who will sustain the car of progress over all obstacles in the path of Southern destiny.

Yours truly,

E. A. P.

To D. M. C., Esq., New York.

LETTER NO. 5.

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1858.

MY DRAR C——: In your rejoinder to my letter on the subject of the slave trade, which was touched but lightly and incidentally, you charge me with preaching "disunion doctrine," and say that "I have overlooked the political consequences to this country of re-opening the African trade," and that "the first consideration should be that this commerce could not be opened without risking the Union." I cannot, dear C., rest in silence under the charge of paying no regard in my recommendations for the legalization of the slave trade to the peril in which it may place the permanence of the Union, especially when I am confident, if my memory does not greatly deceive me, of having suggested in my former letter (which you read cursorily, I suppose) that this commerce, by strength-

ening and satisfying the South, would confirm the bonds by which the two sections are united. I shall therefore vary somewhat from the original design of the correspondence, not indeed to go into a political discussion, but to call your attention to the relation which the proposition to re-open the slave trade, or the general proposition to strengthen and develop the South by new systems of labor, bears to the always interesting question of the perpetuation of "the glorious Union."

But in the first place, my dear friend, I must say that I do not agree with your judgment that the slave trade cannot be re-opened by us except by infraction of our statute and treaty law. I contend, on the contrary, that the commerce in African labor can be carried on under the permission of existing laws. Observe that the African may be imported of his own will, as an apprentice, for any number of years; and when he arrives in the South, what is there to prevent him (although you say he cannot alien his liberty) from accepting inducements to live in bondage? This, I grant you, would be practically the re-opening of the African slave trade; but where exists the law that can suppress a trade which buys labor, not liberty, and which is really, in a legal point of view, conducted on the basis of enfranchisement. You may cry out that this is an *evasion* of the law; and I will simply answer that you will find that it very often becomes necessary to evade the letter of the law in some of the greatest measures of social happiness and of patriotism.

I sincerely believe, dear C., that with the slave trade movement rests in a measure the great political problem of the day, viz: the just elevation of the general condition of the South, as an integral part of the Federal Union.

It is evident that the great want of the South is a sufficiency of labor. Certainly no equal part of the globe can vie in sources of wealth with the belt of cotton territory in America, which, it is estimated, is capable of producing twenty million bales of the *snowy fleece* of modern commerce. Add to this the consideration that within the borders of the South, owing to the singular advantages of a climate that partakes of an inter-tropical temperature, and enjoys in its change of seasons the peculiarities of the temperate zone, is a country capable of a greater variety of crop and agricultural products than any other territory of equal size on the face of the globe. To develop this occult wealth; to introduce on the soil the many varieties of tropical vegetation of which it is capable—the olive, the camphor, and the cork tree; to bring into cultivation the thirty thousand square miles of cotton-producing land, which is now lying unproductive; to multiply by almost infinite processes the product of our great staple, which now, under all disadvantages, is said to increase, according to a general average calculation, three per cent., or eighty thousand bales annually; to expand our agriculture and infuse it with new spirit; and to make the golden age of the most splendid fables of history

our own, there are but wanting labor and the energy to employ and direct it. To attain this *desideratum* we have no other hope except by the importation of labor from Africa.

The proposition to re-open the slave trade may be most truly characterized as a measure to strengthen and elevate the South in the Union; and this being the condition of the perpetuation of the Union to us, as emphatically a *conservative* policy. In brief, dear C., *the slave trade proposition means Union and conservatism.*

The policy which I avow is that the South shall secure to herself the utmost amount of prosperity and strengthen herself in the Union, which, as sure as the gentle hastenings-on of time, can only be preserved on this condition. This policy, then—the only one to save the Union—even if adopting extremest measures, is ever the truly "conservative" one.

I must confess to you that I have the greatest contempt for that time-serving and shallow policy of many false politicians in our section, who decry a measure of Southern patriotism in order to conserve our *party* interest in the North. I refer to the counsels of a certain class of politicians, who tell us that our party alliance at the North will be hazarded by free discussion at the South, and that it is to be cemented by our abandonment of the proposition to re-open the slave trade. Now I truly honor our Democratic allies in the North; but, as a Southerner, I am not disposed (and I am sure, dear C., for one

you would not demand of me) to sacrifice to their prejudices any measure of domestic policy which it is at once our right and our paramount duty to decide on for ourselves. Was the South, too, to yield up Kansas "for the sake of the party?" Is this the beginning of the end? As God is my judge, I forswear, forever, this false policy in the South to sacrifice any interest of her's to the consolidation or prestige of a party.

To the policy to strengthen a party, I would place in antithesis the policy to strengthen the South.

The South, my dear C., is approaching a critical stage in her political history, when she must act, if ever, for herself. The tendency to her enslavement, ruin and dishonor, must be avoided by constitutional measures, or changes of domestic policy. The question is, how can the Union be preserved in the sanctities of the Constitution, and on terms of equal rights and equal advantages—how can the decline of the South be arrested—how can she be saved? She has now no means to develop her resources *pari passu* with the rapid progress, in this respect, of the North; she is unable, from want of labor, to expand her agriculture, or to follow where enterprise beckons; her public spirit wanes under her disabilities, and her constant sense of dependence on the markets and manufactures of the North; she is being constantly weakened by party identifications; her political prestige is even gone; her peculiar institution has to bear a burden of censure, under which even the best men of the

South think it must sink, unless strengthened by new measures; the common territories of the Republic are being steadily closed to it; the black lines of freesoilism, in which it must languish and die, are being drawn around it, and the dregs of the poison cup are at our lips. In all plainness, what is to become of the South, if she is to remain in the Union without a change of policy? How is she to fulfill the necessities of progress and self-development, unless means to do so are provided by herself? How is she to be rescued from the fate which she has brought upon herself, and which now impends? The Democratic party cannot save her. The President cannot save her. She must save herself.

Will she do it? Let every patriot of the South answer for himself. Let him resolve that she shall not be argued into repose. Let him resolve that the inventions of policy to restore her strength, and at once raise and confirm her in the Union, shall not be hooted out by party cries of "peace!" Let him resolve that she shall not rest in the supine embrace of party alliances. Let him resolve that she shall be called to the necessity of strengthening herself by independent measures of prosperity and power, within the terms, as such a policy must be, of honorable rivalry and of the Constitution.

Nor shall we, patriots of the South, despair of the result! Rather would we turn from the panic fears of disunion to the hopes of a victory in new measures of Southern independence. For myself, I respect

disunion only for its sincerity of motive; commended as it is too by many minds, and actuated as it may be by a generous spirit; but alas! one

"Turned aside
From its bright course by woes and wrongs and pride."

And yet, dear C., I regard disunion as unconsciously involving a moral cowardice, which puts to blush the courage of our land. Let the South, say I, stand or fall by the Constitution! True courage would dictate this course, even if the hope of ultimate victory in the South's holding the balance of political power did not commend it. The hard-fought field of constitutional contest should not be forsaken by the South for shelter beneath a divided flag; but the battle should be continued with the same weapons, while new exertions should be put forth to conquer by the power of the Constitution. We see, indeed, the necessity of following up each victory, and of devising new measures of Southern advantage and development; and to this necessity, and its demand of a new policy, let us, ye true men of the South, God helping us, be true! But disunion is not a necessity. No! not a necessity as long as patriots still keep the field under the banner of the Constitution, and the prize of valor there is the victory of PEACE.

Yours truly,

E. A. P.

To D. M. C., Esq., New York.

LETTER NO. 6.

OAKRIDGE, VIRGINIA, 1858.

MY DEAR C——: The last lines I sent you from dear old Virginia, from the retirement of Briarcliff, were written in one of my fits of meditation, and I fear conveyed you but little of interest concerning my visit to the old familiar haunts of earlier days.

I have since then been making a round of visits to "the kin," and I have been travelling most of the way on a canal-boat, at the rate of four miles an hour. Rather slow progress, surely; but I have not lacked for pastime. In the first place, I had to wait for "the packet," as the codgers call it, at a solitary "lock-house," where a bed could not be had for love or money, from night-fall until 3 o'clock next morning. But then I had some charming companions in my vigils. A sweet, gentle lady, with her little boy, was there, and with beautiful and modest conversation beguiled the hours; and this lady, who kept her uncomplaining watch in the rude cabin, and who was dressed so plainly, and who even deigned to enter into the fun of a company of boisterous humbly-born girls, who also occupied the room, was, as I learned the next morning, really one of the F. F. Vs, for she was met at the lock where she landed by her father, whom I at once recognized as one of the most distinguished politicians and gentlemen of the Old Dominion. She did not even forget to say farewell to the boisterous "Bet" and her tom-boy companions, who had so vexed the drowsy ear of the night before.

The boat-horn wailed out as the locks opened, and as I glided down the big, dirty ditch along the James, I turned for consolation to Bet, who in all the charms of rural beauty, was watching from the deck the scenery of the canal.

Bet was a rural curiosity, indeed—a pretty, coarse, and very ungrammatical girl, whose chief amusement the night before had been surreptitiously emptying gourds of water over the heads of her drowsy companions. Bet had been quite sociable with me through the night; but now that she was aboard the packet, she treated me with a disdainful coolness. Approaching her, I hazarded the old hackneyed remark of canal traveling that "I hoped Miss Bet was not suffering from sea-sickness." "No, she warnt sick a bit." A pause, and then I ventured to ask "if Miss Bet proceeded as far as Richmond." "No, it was too *furrer*." The cause of her reticence and disdain was soon discovered. I found, to my discomfiture, that Bet had recognised an old beau in the steersman, whose city manners and glass and copper jewelry had quite extinguished me in her eyes, A dog-eared album told the story plainly. The following tribute I managed to transcribe literally, as with slow and jealous deliberation, I turned over the leaves of the record of Miss Bet's charms and conquests:

"When I from thee, dear maid, shall part,
Shall leave a sting in each other's hearts,
I to some grove shall make my moan,
Lie down, and die, as *some has done*."
(Signed) PHIL. TOOLEY.

At last I reached my point of disembarkation, and I summarily dismiss Bet from my mind. I see again the beautiful mountains of the Blue Ridge in the distance, and the woods stretching far away across level plains to their base. How lovely it all looked, especially when with the whole scene were associated a thousand human memories. In my childhood, I had looked upon these distant peaks, and wondered about them. How much nearer and smaller they appeared now than when I saw them through the eyes of youth!—yet still beautiful, ever pointing through sunlight and through cloud to heaven, ever unchanging in their robes of blue, ever putting on at the same hours the purple and gilt of evening.

Having landed at W—— village, I prepare to pursue my journey on horseback. I disembark with an old gent, who, in the course of the voyage, had managed to convey to me the information that he was a Judge from Alabama, and had travelled a thousand miles on the "steam cars," and who had delighted the whole boat's crew and company with his learning and sententiousness, having advanced in a learned geological discussion in the cabin of the canal boat that "the vein of water was like the human vein," which illustration summarily closed all argument as to the distribution of subterranean waters. The old fellow was sound on the liquor question though, and proved himself "a judge" of good whisky before retiring to his virtuous couch in the old "Rock Tavern." The sun was high when the the black boy "Washing-

ton" roused me from my slumbers. Having bestowed "a quarter" on Washington, in abundant gratitude for which he wished to know "if mass'r didn't want his footses washed"—an ablution which the slaves of Virginia constantly perform for their masters with little noggins of warm water—I took up my journey along the old red clayey road to the local habitation of my dear, respected old uncle. Here I spent a few days of delightful happiness, especially in company with my pretty cousin with the Roman name. But having found out that kissing cousins was no longer fashionable in Virginia, and that it excited my dear aunt's nerves, with one last lingering kiss of the sweet lips, I had my little leather Chinese trunk packed on the head of a diminutive darkey, and again embarked upon the James river and Kanawha canal.

After a round of visits to other of "the kin," I at last find myself the guest of that most excellent and beloved old lady, Miss R., and strolling about over the beautiful lawns and green affluent fields of Oakridge farm.

In the bright day with the light and shade chasing each other over the fields where I wandered in youth, I recall many a laughing and many a sorrowing memory. I cannot write of all these. I must pursue the sketch of the slave, which is, indeed, the prominent figure in the early associations of all home-bred sons of the South.

I find the old familiar black faces about the house. Uncle Jeames, the dining-room servant, is an

old decayed family negro, wearing a roundabout, and remarkable for an unctuous bald head, unadorned by hat or cap. Miss R, who has known him since he was a boy, still addresses him by the name of "Jimboo." Uncle Jimboo has a good deal of slave-pride, and is anxious to appear to visitors as one of great dignity and consequence in household affairs. He is especially proud of his position as general conservator of the order and security of the household, and any interruption of his stilted dignity is very painful to him. Devoted to his mistress, he assumes the office of her protector. Having in one of his winter patrols, according to his account, been chased by some forgotten number of "black bars," and having valiantly whipped "the king bar," and put the others to flight, it remains that he is afraid of nothing in the world "but a gun."

Peace to Uncle Jimboo! May his days never be shortened by the accidents of his valiant service! I can never expect to see the old man again; he is passing away; but, thanks to God, he, the slave, has not to go down to the grave in a gloomy old age, poverty-stricken and forgotten; he has a beloved mistress by to provide for him in the evening of his life—a rare mistress, who, distinguished in her neighborhood for hospitality and munificence, has delighted also to adorn herself with simple and unblazoned charities to the humblest of all humanity—the poor, dependent, oft-forgotten slave.

And there is Tom, too, the hopeful son of Uncle

Jimboo, a number one boy of about thirty, splendidly made, and of that remarkable type of comeliness and gentility in the negro—an honest, jet-black, with prominent and sharp-cut features. When I was a boy I esteemed Tom to be the best friend I had in the world. He was generally employed as a field hand, occasionally, however, at jobs about the yard, waited upon the table when there was "company," and on Sundays he rode in the capacity of footman on the little seat behind the old, high-swung, terrapin-backed carriage to church. I had a great boyish fondness for him, gave him coppers, stole biscuits for him from the table, bought him a primer and taught him to read.

There appears to have grown up a terrible rivalry for supremacy in the kitchen between Tom and his daddy. As time progresses, Uncle Jimboo is impressed with the prospect of being supplanted by his smart son, and, in consequence, he is very jealous and depreciatory of Tom. According to the former's account, Tom is a stupid boy, and is "good for nothing 'cept meat and bread." On the other hand, it is quite shocking to witness Tom's disrespect to his ancient daddy, whom he calls by no other name than "de nigger," and whom he artfully represents as "mighty shackling," and as making the last stage of life. The parental relation is completely ignored.

Here, too, lives Aunt Judy, who is associated with my earliest recollections of the days of boyhood. Especially do I remember the intensity of her religious

sentiment, and how, for the faith of every assertion that any one ventured to dispute, she would appeal to the "judgment seat of G-o-d." Her hymns, her fairy tales, her traditions of old Sa-tan, her "shoutings," at meeting, her loud and ostentatious prayers among the alder bushes and briars of the brook—which latter used to be to us boys a great exhibition—are yet fresh in memory. How well do I remember the wonderful stories, with which she used to fill our youthful minds with awe, superstition, and an especial dread of being alone in dark rooms. We were told by her of every variety of ghosts, of witches that would enter through the key-hole and give us somnambulic rides through the thickets and bogs, and worse than all, of awful and terrible visions that had been afforded her of the country of the dead. She had a superstitious interpretation for everything in nature. In our childhood we were even induced by her to believe that the little bird that sung plaintively to our ears was the transmigrated soul of a little child that had been the victim of the cannibalism of its parents, and that it was perpetually singing the following touching words:

"My mammy kill me,
My daddy eat me,
All my brudders and sisters pick my bones,
And throw them under the marble stones."

Unfortunately, however, for the credit of Aunt Judy's Christianity, she was always very passionate, and our boyish plaguing of her was sometimes replied to in great bitterness. Dick, who was always ahead

in plaguing, had no other name for the old woman, who was a great exhorter in colored congregations, but "the Preacher," or sometimes "Old Nat Turner." It was especially on religious subjects, which we found to be tender ones with Aunt Judy, that we thoughtlessly—but ah, how wrongly—delighted to tease and annoy her. Under pretence of delivering some message from headquarters, Dick would call to her with an ordinary countenance, and have her come very near him, when he would bawl out, taking to his heels at the same instant, "I say, Preacher, what text are you going to preach from to-day." "Go way, boy," would scream out Aunt Judy, "I aint gwine preach from nothing; if you want to hear preaching, go and hear your own color."

All the warning about the tragic fate of Nat Turner which Dick would give, Aunt Judy greatly despised, and would retaliate by asking that young moralist what, when he was "put on the lef' hand," which she assumed as a fixed fact, he was "gwine to say to black folks preacher den."

From Aunt Judy's sentence of poor Dick, it might be inferred that he was a bad boy. And so he was, after a fashion; and I fear that in this respect my humble self was only behind him in years.

When I was an eleven year old "white-headed" irascible little boy, Dick, the elder brother, and myself, were perpetually at fisticuffs, and the negroes would often egg us on to fight each other, which we would do in the most passionate manner. We used to have some

downright terrible fights. Whenever we were captured by some vigilant house servant in the midst of hostilities, or were informed upon, we were made to smart under the rod, and what was more painful to the proud and angry spirit of each, we were made to kiss each other, while our beloved mother in vain spoke to us lessons of brotherly love. We hated each other thoroughly, I believe. How curious, indeed, are these boyish animosities between brothers, which in progressing manhood are so often converted into the most passionate loves!

How distinctly, how sadly, do I recollect one dark cloudy morning in the years of our boyhood, when I ran away from home to escape well deserved punishment for a fight I had had with Dick. Ah, how painfully revert the memories of youth—the memories of our reckless wounding of the hearts that loved us best!

My dear mother was at first not disquieted on account of my absence; she naturally thought that I had hid myself somewhere about the yard, and that I would soon return, sullen and slouching, as usual, to submit myself to the punishment I so well deserved. But as the morning wore away, and I came not, she became uneasy. Inquiry for me was set afoot among the negroes. Uncle Lewis, the cook, testified that "de last he see of mass'r Ed'rd, he was running straight down towards the crik." My poor mother was instantly thrown into the most violent and heart-rending anxiety. The

creek, which was fed by a number of mountain streams, and often overflowed its banks, had risen, and was still rising from the recent rains; and it was certain that if I had attempted to cross the stream, which was not improbable, as I had often waded across its shallows at ordinary times, I would have been drowned in its swollen waters. The painful fears of my mother could not be quieted; they communicated themselves to those around her, and in an agony of tears she ordered instant search to be commenced for me along the creek and over all parts of the farm. Many of the negroes were mounted on horses to scour the fields, and the tutor and the whole school, including brother Dick, who trotted along in tears, joined in the search.

I was eventually discovered, but not until near nightfall, by Smith, the head slave, who carried me home on the back of the cart horse, "Old Windy Tom," in spite of my remonstrances and kicking. He was very short to all I had to say, which was little, as Windy Tom, who for my particular punishment, I believe, was kept in a high trot through the whole distance, jolted all argument out of me. I could only understand from Smith that my mother was in a dangerous state from the excitement of her grief; that I ought to be "hooped all to pieces;" and whenever I remonstrated at his restraint of my liberty, the answer was that he warn't "'fraid of my fuss," and that my "mar' knew that he was doing for her and hern."

Approaching the house I heard cries of anguish. My poor mother imagining me to be dead was bewailing me with all the tears and agony of a devoted parent. Alas, how my conscience smote me! With my own cheeks wet with penitent tears, I presented myself to my dear mother, who covered me with embraces and kisses, and wept over me with happy forgiving tears.

Would to God that I had been made to suffer pain equivalent to what I had inflicted upon the heart that loved me best in all this world! Going astray in maturer life, wandering away among its shadows, selfish, unreflecting, careless of that watchful and searching love that never forsakes, never forgets, and never ceases to watch and pray for the return of "the son that was lost," I have found that same easy weeping forgiveness that took me into its arms the dreary night that I came home from the woods. I could offend and offend, ever in the hope of seeking that forgivenesss at the last, and ever with the cheating comfort of amendment *soon*. One being on earth I had to fly to—one from whom to obtain forgiveness again and again as life wore on. Now—oh, my God, *now* I can only in tears look up to the skies, look to the beautiful imaging clouds of heaven, and beseech the forgiveness of the angel-spirit that I see there resting and returning never more.

Yours truly,

E. A. P.

To D. M. C., Esq., N. Y.

LETTER NO. 7.

BRIARCLIFF, VIRGINIA, 1858.

MY DEAR C——: In reflecting on the subject of negro slavery in this country, I have been greatly impressed by a characteristic, which, I think, has never been sufficiently recognised and dwelt upon, and which most honorably distinguishes it from other systems of slavery known to the world. Consider, dear C., that the American institution of slavery does not depress the African, but elevates him in the scale of social and religious being. It does not drag him down from the condition of free-citizenship and from membership in organized society to slavery; but it elevates him from the condition of a nomad, a heathen, a brute, to that of a civilized and comfortable creature, and gives to him the priceless treasure of a saving religion. Other institutions of slavery are found, generally speaking, to rest on systems of disenfranchisement and debasement. Look, for instance, at the Roman slavery. Its victims were obtained in war; they came generally from the ranks of enemies as civilized as the Romans themselves; or—more horrible still—they came from the ranks of their own free and co-equal citizens, who might be sold for terms of years by their parents in their non-age, or by their creditors for debt, Thus their institution of slavery was founded on the natural debasement of man; it was anti-progressive, depressing, barbarous. How free is the American institution of negro slavery of such ideas! *It rests on the solid basis of human im-*

provement. And in this respect does its elevated spirit concur with the progress of civilization and of the religion of Christ, that, like the winds of Heaven, moves in its mysterious ways, gathers on its wings to and fro, and never is at rest.

Surely, God proceeds mysteriously to us in His works of love and redemption. While missionary efforts have proved generally so unavailing in the conversion of the heathen, we find great institutions and events in the common history of humanity used as instruments in the enlarging work of the redemption of man. We discover this in all of human progress. The translation of African savages from their country as slaves—a great improving and progressive work of human civilization—we also discover to be one of the largest works of Christianity endowing a people with a knowledge of the Christian God, and they, in turn, enlightening us as to His Grace and the solemn and precious mystery of the conversion of the soul to Christ, The work of gathering to Christ goes on, on, through all the tumults of the world, and its contempt of God's means and its own vainglory. Many developments in history, however unmerciful to our eyes, may be seen to be turned to the glory of God: and all our prosperity and progress is taxed for the completion of the work of the redemption of the world. On, on speeds and gathers the work in the changes of dynasties, in the founding of human institutions, in the intercommunications between nations, and in all the consummations of man's power

on earth. Already it is said that the problems of the world—the political and social problems, and with them the great problem of Christ's religion are to be aided to their solution by the swiftest and sovereignest agent that science has discovered in the world's domain. Already may we declare glory to the Most High—and prophesy—oh, with what beautiful strangeness—that the lightnings, the home of which verse and the unwritten poetry of our natures have placed fast by the Throne of God, shall be sent on the missions of His love to all the nations of the earth.

But to return. I think the remarkable characteristic of our "*peculiar* institution," in improving the African race humanely, socially, and religiously, is alone sufficient to *justify* it. It would insult it to plead it in extenuation. Indeed, dear C., I venture to say that if nothing else was accomplished in taking the African from the gloom and tangles of his forests, and from savage suffering and savage despair, than bringing him to the unutterable riches of Christ, this alone should justify and even adorn our institution of slavery in the eyes of the Christian world.

We are accustomed, dear C., to hear of the paramount value of the religion of our Saviour—how far it exceeds all that this world can give or can take away. But we scarcely appreciate in the practical intercourse of life the comprehension and force of the truism. The best of us do not properly esteem it in our comparative judgment of the condition and happiness of God's creatures. What, indeed, is the vain-

glory of the world, the names of free and great, compared to the riches of Christ and the ecstacy of a hope in Heaven, which the poorest and, to our earthly eyes, the most suffering portion of humanity, may enjoy equally with—nay, in excess over—the elevated and sumptuous ones of the world.

You have read the story of Rienzi, the last and the most august of the Roman tribunes. He made a vow by the dying body of a young sinless brother. In the death of those we love, there is a beautiful prompting of Providence to order our lives anew. We feel, in the depths of our nature (*and it is therefore true*) that the angel spirits of those who were beloved on earth and who worship in Heaven, still watch over us in tender sorrow at our worldliness or in exceeding joy at our leaving the fleeting things of earth and coming home to them in Christ. But Rienzi, desolated by the death of his childish brother and the snapping of the last loved tie on earth, did not make the vow that nature prompted. He did not resolve to leave his proud manhood, to give up the vanities of his great learning, and to go back to childhood, searching in tears for the innocence he had lost there. He made a vow of bitterness—a vow to drown grief in enmity to man, in selfish studies, and in the pursuit of glory. And he succeeded in the accomplishment of his vow. He mounted the throne of the Cæsars; and all that treasure, luxury, or art could yield were made to contribute to the pageantry and magnificence of his power. He was hailed by the extravagant populace as the deliverer of Rome

and the arbiter of the world. Standing before the Roman people, he unsheathed his sword, brandished it to the three parts of the world, and thrice repeated the declaration, "And this too is mine!" He exhausted in this speech all the extravagance of self-glorification. But, alas! he could not do what the humblest Christian slave that waited on his pageant might do—point to heaven, and say, in the comprehension of all joy and glory, "But this, this is mine!"

Go, false servitors of Christ, ye who on the ground of religion itself, and in the garb of God's ministers, assail the institution of negro slavery, that has brought the knowledge of Christ to the heathen, and who recommend its excision by the sword of civil war, go and speak to the slave in our own country. Tell him he is assigned to an inferior lot, to life-long labor, in which he can never be great or rich, and can never taste of the applause of this world. And yet, how would you feel rebuked, if, pointing to heaven, he should declare, "But *this* is mine."

He has been plucked from the wilds of Africa, and saved to Christ. He is never an infidel, for he does not require, to establish his belief in the reality of the Saviour, expenditures of learning and processes of reasoning, and arguments about the prophecies and the miracles. He is not reasoned into religion, (as no man ever truly was;) but he teaches us, even us, an unlettered lesson of religion beyond all price—to cast down the pride of reason, and to listen to the voice of the intuitive divine spirit, telling us without

argument, without learning, without price, of the eternal, irresistible truths of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Not for all your saintliness, ye red-nosed shepherds of God's people, who preach licentiousness and discord, and the contentions and parting of brethren, would I exchange the simple faith in the Saviour of the poor, ignorant negro slave, whom you affect to pity. He has none of your learned assurance in maters of salvation ; his ideas of religion may be fantastic and may excite the laughter of your superior wisdom, that scorns the tender and beautiful ignorance that throws the charm of superstition around the lessons and emblems of religion ; his notions of his state and calling here may never have been edified by your learned jargon about the Christian duty of socialism, of rebellion, and of the baptism of blood ; but the great preacher Jesus Christ has spoken to him—not in lessons of discontent, not holding out freedom, or riches, or licenses, not addressing the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eye, or the pride of life, but in precious consolations, in assurances sweeter than learning and research, ever found in their Bibles, and in lessons of perfect peace—the peace of the stricken, the weary, and the desolate, in the life everlasting.

It is true that the slaves' religion is greatly mixed up with superstitions, that it is ostentatious and loud, and that it has some comical aspects. But in his simple, earnest, affectionate and believing heart, in his ecstasies of love for "Mass'r Jesus," and in his

tenderness to whatever appeals to him in nature, are principles of religion as saving, I venture to say, as the precise creeds and the solemn and exact manners of the churchmen. Many a death-scene have I witnessed among the slaves on the old plantations, and many a time have I seen those whose untutored and awkward religious professions amused me when a thoughtless youth, yet dying with the sustainment of that religion, joyfully, and with exclamations of triumph over the grave. No Christian philosopher, no preacher of politics or preacher of creeds could add to that triumph and joy eternal, or could diminish the ecstasy of that inner assurance of Heaven by weighing the hopes of the poor slave's salvation in doubting scales.

Precious is the memory of the dead! And precious to me, my beloved friend, is the memory of the black loved ones who left me in the thoughtless, unremembering, laughing hours of boyhood, for that peaceful shore, where, now recollecting and sighing, I would give all of earth to meet them. Pressing upon me, and drawing the sweet tear from a nature that has long lain in the decaying embraces of the world, come the memories of youth.

I have often spoken to you of the old black patriarch, uncle Nash, who led me by the hand to the preaching at the negro quarter every Sunday fortnight. This good old christian man fell in harness, and died with no master but Jesus to relieve the last mysterious agonies of his death. He died out in the woods, where the angel had suddenly come to him.

How vividly do I recall the excitement of the search for uncle Nash, and the shock to my heart of the discovery in the bright morning of the corpse lying among the thick undergrowth and in the whortleberry bushes of the wood. But why lament the old slave, and wail at the terrible sight! The body in its coarse garments, dank with dew, lay there in the bushes, in the loathsomeness of death, but the immortal soul had been clothed for the service above in its raiment of glory, and was singing the everlasting song in heaven.

He was buried in the grave, which my eye from the point where I am now writing, can catch on the warm hill, covered now with the blue blossoms of the thistle. Unusual marks of affection and respect were shown in his burial. The funeral services were read before all the negroes at the grave, and the younger members of our family attended as mourners; and, according to the negro custom, each one of us threw a handful of dirt on the coffin lid, as the last farewell. Many years have gone by since then, but I can never forget that scene of the deep, red grave, in which the old christian slave was laid; and when the day expires, I revisit the spot and read on the white head-board that marks it, the words—"*The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*"

Yours truly,

E. A. P.

To D. M. C., Esq., New York.