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SLAVE LIFE IN GEORGIA:

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

LIFE, SUFFERINGS, AND ESCAPE

OF

JOHN BROWN,

A Fugitive Slave,

NOW IN ENGLAND.

EDITED BY

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SECRETARY OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

LONDON:

MAY BE HAD ON APPLICATION TO THE EDITOR,

AT No. 27, NEW BROAD STREET, .

AND OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1855.

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FROM A COLODION BY J. DUDMAN.

W. M. Watts, Crown Court, Temple Bar.

P R E F A C E .

THE Editor is conscious that the following Narrative has only its truthfulness to recommend it to favourable consideration. It is nothing more than it purports to be, namely; a plain, unvarnished tale of real Slave-life, conveyed as nearly as possible in the language of the subject of it, and written under his dictation. It would have been easy to fill up the outline of the picture here and there, with dark shadows, and to impart a heightened dramatic colouring to some of the incidents; but he preferred allowing the narrator to speak for himself, and the various events recorded to tell their own tale. He believes few persons will peruse it unmoved; or arise from a perusal of it without feeling an increased abhorrence of the inhuman system under which, at this

hour, in the United States of America alone, three millions and a half of men, women, and children, are held as "chattels personal," by thirty-seven thousand and fifty-five individuals, many of them professing Ministers of the Gospel, and defenders of "the peculiar institution."

In undertaking to prepare this volume for the press, the Editor's object was two-fold, namely; to advance the anti-slavery cause by the diffusion of information; and to promote the success of the project John Brown has formed, to advance himself by his own exertions, and to set an example to others of his "race." If by the little the Editor has done to render the volume interesting, he should secure for it a fair meed of popular favour, these two objects will be certainly accomplished, and his labour will not have been expended in vain.

*27, New Broad Street,
London, January, 1855.*

CHAPTER I.

MY CHILDHOOD AND FIRST TROUBLES.

My name is John Brown. How I came to take it, I will explain in due time. When in Slavery, I was called Fed. Why I was so named, I cannot tell. I never knew myself by any other name, nor always by that; for it is common for slaves to answer to any name, as it may suit the humour of the master. I do not know how old I am, but think I may be any age between thirty-five and forty. I fancy I must be about thirty-seven or eight; as nearly as I can guess. I was raised on Betty Moore's estate, in Southampton County, Virginia, about three miles from Jerusalem Court house and the little Nottoway river. My mother belonged to Betty Moore. Her name was Nancy; but she was called Nanny. My father's name was Joe. He was owned by a planter named Benford, who lived at Northampton, in the same State. I believe my father and his family were bred on Benford's plantation. His father had been stolen from Africa. He was

of the Eboe tribe. I remember seeing him once, when he came to visit my mother. He was very black. I never saw him but that one time, and though I was quite small, I have a distinct recollection of him. He and my mother were separated, in consequence of his master's going further off, and then my mother was forced to take another husband. She had three children by my father; myself, and a brother and sister, twins. My brother's name was Silas, and my sister's Lucy. My mother's second husband's name was Lamb. He was the property of a neighbouring planter and miller named Collier. By him she had three children; two boys, Curtis and Cain, and a girl between them called Irænc. We all lived together with our mother, in a log cabin, containing two rooms, one of which we occupied; the other being inhabited by my mother's niece, Annikie, and her children. It had a mud floor; the sides were of wattle and daub, and the roof was thatched over. Our sleeping place was made by driving a forked stake into the floor, which served to support a cross piece of wood, one end of it resting in the crotch, the other against the shingle that formed the wall. A plank or two across, over the top, completed the bed-room arrange-

ments, with the exception of another plank on which we laid straw or cotton-pickings, and over that a blanket.

Our mistress Betty Moore was an old, big woman, about seventy, who wore spectacles and took snuff. I remember her very well, for she used to call us children up to the big house every morning, and give us a dose of garlic and rue to keep us "wholesome," as she said, and make us "grow likely for market." After swallowing our dose, she would make us run round a great sycamore tree in the yard, and if we did not run fast enough to please her, she used to make us nimbler by laying about us with a cow-hide. She always carried this instrument dangling at her side, like ladies in this country wear their scissors. It was painted blue, and we used to call it the "blue lizard." She used to like to see her people constantly employed, and would make us all set to work at night, after our day's labour was over, picking the seed out of cotton. We had a hard time of it with the old lady.

At this period, my principal occupation was to nurse my little brother whilst my mother worked in the field. Almost all slave children have to do the nursing; the big taking care of the small,

who often come poorly off in consequence. I know this was my little brother's case. I used to lay him in the shade, under a tree, sometimes, and go to play, or curl myself up under a hedge, and take a sleep. He would wake me by his screaming, when I would find him covered with ants, or musquitos, or blistered from the heat of the sun, which having moved round whilst I was asleep, would throw the shadow of the branches in another direction, leaving the poor child quite exposed.

The children of both sexes usually run about quite naked, until they are from ten to twelve years of age. I have seen them as old as twelve, going about in this state, or with only an old shirt, which they would put on when they had to go anywhere very particular for their mistress, or up to the great house.

The clothing of the men consists of a pair of thin cotton pantaloons, and a shirt of the same material, two of each being allowed them every year. The women wear a shirt similar to the men's, and a cotton petticoat, which is kept on by means of braces passing over their shoulders. But when they are in the field, the shirt is thrown aside. They also have two suits allowed them

every year. These, however, are not enough. They are made of the lowest quality of material, and get torn in the bush, so that the garments soon become useless, even for purposes of the barest decency. We slaves feel that this is not right, and we grow up with very little sense of shame; but immorality amongst ourselves is not common, for all that.

Betty Moore had three daughters. The eldest was married to one Burrell Williams, who acted as Betty's overseer. The second was the wife of one James Davis; and the third was unmarried, when I first began to notice the persons about us. At last the third got married to one Billy Bell, and then I experienced my first serious tribulation.

According to the will left by old Moore, the slave-property was to be equally divided amongst the mother and the three daughters, when the youngest married. About a month after this event, it began to be talked about that the distribution was soon going to take place. I remember well the grief this caused us to feel, and how the women and the men used to whisper to one another when they thought nobody was by, and meet at night, or get together in the field when

they had an opportunity, to talk about what was coming. They would speculate, too, on the prospects they had of being separated; to whose lot they and their children were likely to fall, and whether the husbands would go with their wives. The women who had young children cried very much. My mother did, and took to kissing us a good deal oftener. This uneasiness increased as the time wore on, for though we did not know when the great trouble would fall upon us, we all knew it would come, and were looking forward to it with very sorrowful hearts. At last, one afternoon, James Davis, the husband of Betty's second daughter, rode into the yard. This man had a dreadful name for cruelty. He was the terror of his own negroes, as well as of his neighbour's. When we young ones saw him, we ran away and hid ourselves. In the evening orders came to the negroes, at their quarters, to be up at the big house by nine the next morning. Then we knew our great trouble was come.

It was a bright, sun-shiny morning, in the autumn season, at about the commencement of tobacco-cutting time. At the appointed hour, nearly the whole of us had congregated in the great yard, under the big sycamore tree. A

fourth part of the negroes on the estate, had been kept back by Betty Moore, as her share, her husband's will giving her the right of making a selection. Besides these, she had taken my brother Silas and my sister Lucy, whom she reserved on behalf of her eldest daughter, the wife of Burrell Williams. They were fine, strong children, and it was arranged they should remain with Betty till she died, and then revert to Burrell Williams. All who were there stood together, facing the Executors, or Committee as they were called, who sat on chairs under the same sycamore tree I have spoken of. Burrell Williams, James Davis, and Billy Bell, held themselves aloof, and did not in any manner interfere with the proceedings of the Committee, who told us off into three lots, each lot consisting of about twenty-five or thirty, as near as I can recollect. As there was a good deal of difference in the value of the slaves, individually, some being stronger than others, or more likely, the allotments were regulated so as to equalize the value of each division. For instance, my brother Silas and my sister Lucy, who belonged rightly to the gang of which I and my mother and other members of the family formed a part, were replaced by two of my cousin

Annikie's children, a boy and a girl; the first called Henry, the other Mason, who were weak and sickly. When the lots had been told off, the names of the men, women, and children composing them were written on three slips of paper, and these were put into a hat. Burrell Williams then came forward and drew. James Davis followed, and Billy Bell came last. The lot in which I and my mother were, was drawn by James Davis. Each slip was then signed by the Committee, and the lot turned over to the new owner.

By about two o'clock, the business was concluded, and we were permitted to have the rest of the day to ourselves. It was a heart-rending scene when we all got together again, there was so much crying and wailing. I really thought my mother would have died of grief at being obliged to leave her two children, her mother, and her relations behind. But it was of no use lamenting, and as we were to start early next morning, the few things we had were put together that night, and we completed our preparations for parting for life by kissing one another over and over again, and saying good bye till some of us little ones fell asleep.

CHAPTER II.

MY NEW MASTER: AND HOW HE CAME TO
SELL ME.

WE were aroused by times in the morning, and were soon ready to set off on our journey. Our destination was Northampton, about forty-five miles from our old home. We expected to be two days on the road, and as there were a good many little children, who could not walk so far, the smallest of these were put into a waggon, which our new master, James Davis, helped to drive. He rode by it on horseback, his wife keeping along with the older coloured people, in her carriage. The weather was very fine, and we went slowly on, many of us looking back sadly at the place we were leaving, and with which we were so familiar. At noon we drew up by the roadside to breakfast off hoe-cake and water, after which we started again, and walked on until dark. We camped out in the wood by the highway that night, James Davis and his wife putting up at a planter's in the neighbourhood, who sent relay

parties to watch us. We collected a lot of dried sticks, and made a fire, in which the women baked some Johnny-cake which they made from our allowance of corn. When we had supped, we raked together the leaves into heaps, under the trees, and laid down upon them, covering ourselves with whatever blanketing we could muster. The children slept in the waggon.

At day-break we started afresh, and continued our journey until noon, when we stopped to eat. We had baked sufficient Johnny-cake over night, for the mid-day meal next day, so we were not long refreshing. To encourage us to make good speed, we were promised a feast of boiled black-eyed peas and bacon-rinds as soon as we got to Northampton, and some of us got a cut with the whip. Any how, we reached James Davis' that afternoon, at about four o'clock. We had our peas and bacon-rinds, and some hard cider was served out to us into the bargain. I remember it very well, for it gave me a very violent cholera. After supper we were driven to our quarters.

And here I may as well tell what kind of a man our new master was. He was of small stature, and thin, but very strong. He had sandy

hair, fierce gray eyes, a very red face, and chewed tobacco. His countenance had a very cruel expression, and his disposition was a match for it. He was, indeed, a very bad man, and used to flog us dreadfully. He would make his slaves work on one meal a day, until quite night, and after supper, set them to burn brush or to spin cotton. We worked from four in the morning till twelve before we broke our fast, and from that time till eleven or twelve at night. I should say that on the average, and taking all the year round, we laboured eighteen hours a day well told. He was a captain of the patrol, which went out every Wednesday and Saturday night, hunting "stray niggers," and to see that none of the neighbours' people were from quarters.

Our allowance of food was one peck of corn a week to each full-grown slave. We never had meat of any kind, and our usual drink was water. Sometimes, however, we got a drink of sour milk or a little hard cider. We used to make our corn into homminy, hoe and Johnny-cake, and sometimes parch it, and eat it without any other preparation. The corn was always of inferior quality, and weevil-eaten, so that though we got a peck, it did not yield in meal what it would have done

had it been sound. Its outside value might have been about three-pence English money.

The morning after our arrival, my mother was set to plough, and I was put to grub and hoe. She also had other very hard work to do, such as making fences, grubbing bushes, fetching and burning brush, and such like. I had the same kind of work to do, though being small, I could only help my mother a very little, except in the tobacco-fields, where I was of most use, picking off tobacco-worms from the leaves. This was, also, the principal occupation of the children, from the time they could get about to do any thing at all, until they grew old and strong enough to go to harder work.

I said our master was very cruel. I will give one instance of the fact. I and my little brother Curtis were sent up one day to the house. Passing through the grounds, where there was a large number of water-melons, they tempted us, we being very thirsty. So we took one and ate it. The value of it was not half a farthing. We did not know we were seen. James Davis, however, was not far from us, and soon overtook us. He swore at us for thieving his property, and as I was the biggest, and had taken the fruit, he at once set to

flogging me with the cow-hide, and continued doing so until he was tired out, and I could scarcely move. I did not get over that beating for a very long while.

I remained at James Davis's for nearly eighteen months. Once during that period, I remember he took me into the town to a tavern kept by one Captain Jemmy Duprey. There was a negro speculator there, on the look-out for bargains, but he would not have me. I did not know where I was going, when my master took me with him, but when I got back I told my mother, who cried over me, and said she was very glad I had not been sold away from her.

But the time arrived when we were to be finally separated. Owing to a considerable rise in the price of cotton, there came a great demand for slaves in Georgia. One day a negro speculator named Starling Finney arrived at James Davis's place. He left his drove on the highway, in charge of one of his companions, and made his way up to our plantation, prospecting for negroes. It happened that James Davis had none that suited Finney, but being in want of money, as he was building a new house, and Finney being anxious for a deal, my master called me up and

offered to sell me. I was then about or nearly ten years of age, and after some chaffering about terms, Finney agreed to purchase me by the pound.

How I watched them whilst they were driving this bargain! and how I speculated upon the kind of man he was who sought to buy me! His venomous countenance inspired me with mortal terror, and I almost felt the heavy thong of the great riding-whip he held in his hand, twisting round my shoulders. He was a large, tall fellow, and might have killed me easily with one blow from his huge fist. He had left his horse at the gate, and when the bargain for me was struck, he went out and led him to the door, where he took the saddle off. I wondered what this was for, though suspicious that it had something to do with me; nor had I long to wait before I knew. A ladder was set upright against the end of the building outside, to one rung of which they made a stilyard fast. The first thing Finney did was to weigh his saddle, the weight of which he knew, to see whether the stilyard was accurately adjusted. Having satisfied himself of this, a rope was brought, both ends of which were tied together, so that it formed a large noose or loop. This was

hitched over the hook of the stilyard, and I was seated in the loop. After I had been weighed, there was a deduction made for the rope. I do not recollect what I weighed, but the price I was sold for amounted to three hundred and ten dollars. Within five minutes after, Finney paid the money, and I was marched off. I looked round and saw my poor mother stretching out her hands after me. She ran up, and overtook us, but Finney, who was behind me, and between me and my mother, would not let her approach, though she begged and prayed to be allowed to kiss me for the last time, and bid me good bye. I was so stupified with grief and fright, that I could not shed a tear, though my heart was bursting. At last we got to the gate, and I turned round to see whether I could not get a chance of kissing my mother. She saw me, and made a dart forward to meet me, but Finney gave me a hard push, which sent me spinning through the gate. He then slammed it to and shut it in my mother's face. That was the last time I ever saw her, nor do I know whether she is alive or dead at this hour.

We were in a lane now, about a hundred and fifty yards in length, and which led from the gate to the highway. I walked on before Finney, utterly un-

conscious of any thing. I seemed to have become quite bewildered. I was aroused from this state of stupor by seeing that we had reached the main road, and had come up with a gang of negroes, some of whom were hand-cuffed two and two, and fastened to a long chain running between the two ranks. There were also a good many women and children, but none of these were chained. The children seemed to be all above ten years of age, and I soon learnt that they had been purchased in different places, and were for the most part strangers to one another and to the negroes in the coffee. They were waiting for Finney to come up. I fell into the rank, and we set off on our journey to Georgia.

CHAPTER III.

I AM SOLD AGAIN. HOW I FARED.

OUR journey lasted six weeks, as we made a good many stoppages by the way, to enable the speculator, Finney, to buy up, and change away, and dispose of his slaves. I do not recollect the names of all the places we passed through. We crossed the Roanoke river by ferry, and went on to Halifax, and from there to Raleigh in North Carolina. Several incidents occurred on the road, of which I will relate only two.

When I joined the coffle, there was in it a negro woman named Critty, who had belonged to one Hugh Benford. She was married, in the way that slaves are, but as she had no children, she was compelled to take a second husband. Still she did not have any offspring. This displeased her master, who sold her to Finney. Her anguish was intense, and within about four days from the time I saw her first, she died of grief. It happened in the night, whilst we were encamped in the woods. We set off in the morning, leaving

her body there. We noticed, however, that two of Finney's associates remained behind, as we conjectured to dispose of the corpse. They fetched up with us again about two hours after.

The other incident was the stealing of a young negro girl. An old lady whose name I do not remember, and who was going into Georgia, travelled with the drove for the sake of society. She was accompanied by her waiting-maid, a young woman about twenty years of age, and of smart appearance. When we stopped at night, the old lady would be driven to some planter's house to lodge, and her horses be sent back to feed with ours. The girl remained with us. This was cheaper for the old lady than having to pay for the keep of her horses and her maid. In the morning her horses would be sent to the place where she had lodged, and she would drive on until she overtook us on the road, and then take up her maid. Finney determined to steal this girl. One morning, we being then on our way through South Carolina, the old lady's horses were sent as usual, to the house where she had staid the night, and we went on. Instead, however, of keeping the direct road, Finney turned off and went through the woods, so that we gave the poor girl's mistress the

slip. She was then forced to get up in the waggon with Finney, who brutally ill-used her, and permitted his companions to treat her in the same manner. This continued for several days, until we got to Augusta, in the state of Georgia, where Finney sold her. Our women talked about this very much, and many of them cried, and said it was a great shame.

At last we stopped at one Ben Tarver's place in Jones' County, Georgia. This man was a Methodist Minister, and had a cotton plantation, and a good many slaves. He had a great name for possessing the fastest cotton-picking negroes in the whole county, and they were frequently set to work with others against time for wagers. He had an overseer who did the best part of his flogging, but he used the cow-hide himself occasionally, and they said he hit worse than the overseer; but I cannot say if it was so, as he never flogged me. I know he did not give his slaves any thing to eat till noon-day, and then no more again until nine at night. They got corn, which they made into cake, but I never knew them to have any meat, and as far as I was able to learn, I do not think any was given to them. He was reputed to be a very bad master, but a very good preacher.

During the time I staid there, which was two weeks, Finney used to take out his slaves every day, to try and sell them, bringing those back whom he failed to dispose of. Those who did not go out with Finney, for the market, were made to work in Tarver's cotton-fields, but they did not get any thing extra to eat, though he profited by their labour. In these two weeks Finney disposed of a good many of his drove, and he became anxious to sell the rest, for he wanted to take another journey into Virginia, on a fresh speculation. One day I was dressed in a new pair of pantaloons and a new shirt, made from part of the tilt of a waggon in which we children sometimes slept. I soon found out why I was made so smart, for I was taken to Millidgeville, with some other lads, and there put up at auction.

This happened to me some time in the month of March. The sale took place in a kind of shed. The auctioneer did not like my appearance. He told Finney in private, who was holding me by the hand, that I was old and hard-looking, and not well grown, and that I should not fetch a price. In truth I was not much to look at. I was worn down by fatigue and poor living till my bones stuck up almost through my skin, and my hair was

burnt to a brown red from exposure to the sun. I was not, however, very well pleased to hear myself run down. I remember Finney answered the auctioneer that I should be sure to grow a big-made man, and bade him, if he doubted his judgment, examine my feet, which were large, and proved that I would be strong and stout some day. My looks and my condition, nevertheless, did not recommend me, and I was knocked down to a man named Thomas Stevens, for three hundred and fifty dollars: so Finney made forty dollars by me. Thomas Stevens could not pay cash for me, so I went back to Ben Tarver's that night, but next morning Finney and one of his associates, Hartwell Tarver, Ben's brother, took me round to Stevens' place, and the money having been paid, I was again handed over to a new master.

Thomas Stevens' plantation was on the Clinton road, in Baldwin County, and about eight miles from Millidgeville. He was a man of middle height, with a fair skin, but had black hair. He was of Welsh origin. His countenance always wore a laughing expression, but this did not indicate his disposition, which was dreadfully savage. Still, he always laughed, even when in a passion. In fact, at such times, and they were very fre-

quent, he laughed more than at any other. Originally he had been a poor jobbing carpenter. He then set up a still, and made some money by distilling whiskey. He next purchased a plantation and stocked it with negroes, continuing his trade as a maltster of Indian corn, and a distiller. He was a very bad and a dishonest man, and used to force his negroes to go out at night and steal corn from his neighbours. His plan was to gain their negroes over by a present of whiskey. They would then agree to have a quantity of corn ready at a specified place and by a certain hour, which he would then send his own people to fetch away. He always took good care, however, to keep out of the way himself when the stealing was going on, so that if any of his slaves should be caught, he might take sides against them, and his own dishonesty not be suspected. The stolen corn used to be carried to his mill, which was about half a mile from his still-house, where it was taken in by an old negro named Uncle Billy, who had to account for all that was brought. Stevens contrived to keep a pretty correct account himself, for as he was a great rogue, he had no confidence in anybody, and was always trying to prevent himself from being cheated.

I was sent to the still-house, and placed under Uncle Billy. I had to carry whiskey from the still-house to the store, and meal from the mill-house to the still. I also had to carry his breakfast to a slave of the name of John Glasgow, who was at that time employed up in the woods chopping billets for the still. This lasted the whole winter, during which season only, the still was worked. It could not be done in the summer, because the heat turned the malted meal sour and rendered it useless for making whiskey. When the time came for "pitching the crop," that is, for putting in seeds, I was set to labour in the fields along with the rest, clearing the ground, cutting down corn-stalks and burning them, and such like. I was not used to this heavy work; besides which my heart was heavy thinking of my mother and my relations, and I got down-hearted and discouraged, which made me forget my duties, and do what I was set about very indifferently. Then my master would flog me severely, and swear at me the most abominable oaths. I used to feel very bad, and wish to die, and only for John Glasgow I think it must have come to that soon.

I was one of the gang that worked with John Glasgow, who used to tell me not to cry after my

father and mother, and relatives, for I should never see them any more. He encouraged me to try and forget them, for my own sake, and to do what I was bidden. He said I must try, too, to be honest and upright, and if I ever could get to England, where he came from, and conducted myself properly, folks would respect me as much as they did a white man. These kind words from John Glasgow, gave me better heart, and inspired me with a longing to get to England, which I made up my mind I would try and do some day. I got along a little better after a while, but for all that my master would flog me for the least thing.

One day, and not long after I had been there, a sudden heavy fresh in the river caused the mill-dam to overflow, and the mill-door being locked, nobody could get in to raise the flood-gate. I was sent to the house to fetch the key. The house was about a mile off, and I ran every step of the way there. Indeed, I ran so fast, that I lost an old hat I used to wear, for I would not stay to pick it up. My mistress made me take a horse out of the stable to get back quicker, so I was not gone very long in all. After the flood-gates were opened, Stevens came to me, and called me to him from the spring-head where I was, cleaning out

the leaves from the water-troughs. This spring-head was up the side of a hill, and troughs were laid down from it to the still-house, on tall stakes, so as to throw the water up to the top of the still-house. Stevens was standing at the bottom of the hill and I went down to him. He began swearing at me directly, and asked me why I did not run when he sent me to fetch the key.

“ I did run, Sir,” I said.

“ You ran, did you, Sir?” said he again, with another oath.

“ Yes, Sir,” I answered.

“ Oh, you ran, did you?” And as he said this he took out his knife and cut a hickory rod from the hedge, with which he beat me until it was destroyed.

“ Now, Sir, you tell me you ran, eh?” he asked.

“ Yes, Sir,” I answered; for I would not tell him to the contrary, though the blood was trickling down my back.

“ Oh, you ran, did you?” he said again, and cut another rod, with which he beat me as before.

I do not know how it was that the pain did not make me cry. It did not, however, but seemed to harden me; or perhaps my feelings were

benumbed, for you may be whipped sometimes till sensation is almost gone. When he saw I did not cry, he swore at me louder, and said,

“Why don’t you cry, Sir, why don’t you cry?”

It was of no use his asking me, for I could not cry, and would not answer.

He cut a third rod, and repeating the same questions, “why I didn’t run,” when I was sent after the key, and “why I didn’t cry,” beat me with it till that was worn out.

In this way he cut five rods, all of which he used upon my poor back in the same way. Uncle Billy was in the still-house, whilst Stevens was punishing me in this manner, and came running up.

“Oh, Massa,” he said, “don’t kill the poor boy, Perhaps he hasn’t got sense to cry. Don’t, please, Massa; please don’t kill him.”

Uncle Billy usually had some influence with Stevens, because he received the stolen corn up at the meal-house, and knew a great deal about Stevens’ business. But on this occasion his entreaties were all thrown away, for my master only swore the louder and hit me the harder. Uncle Billy wrung his hands and went down on

his knees to him, still it was not of any use. I think he would have killed me, had not Hartwell Tarver just then rode up to tell him that Starling Finney had arrived from Virginia with a new drove of negroes, and was waiting at Ben Tarver's, to give him (Stevens) the pick of them. He was cutting another hickory rod when Hartwell Tarver came up, and took off his attention from me. I verily believe I owe my life to that accident. I was very bad after this heavy flogging, but I got over it after a while.

Another time Stevens went to see a man hanged at Millidgeville, and his wife set me to cut broom-corn during his absence. I accidentally broke the knife, in two places, in an attempt I made to cut more stalks in a handful, and so got through more work. I took the knife up to his wife, but when her husband came back she told him I had done it for devilment, that I might not have to do any more work. So he called me up and asked me about it. I told him the truth, and showed him how the accident happened. It was easy to see I was telling the truth, but he called me many horrible names, swore I was lying, and flogged me for an hour with the cow-hide.

Stevens seemed to have a spite against me,

especially after a particular time, when a mare in the team I used to drive died. She got overheated in the field, and would not eat her corn when I put her up at noon. I noticed it when I took her out again, in about an hour after, not knowing she was not fit to work. She dropped down and died in the plough. I was sent to tell my master to come and see the mare, and on my way, stopped in the stable, and shifted the uneaten corn out of the mare's bin into another, substituting the cobs that the other horse had left. I did this lest Stevens should go into the stable and see that the mare had not eaten her corn, and he should flog me for taking her out under those circumstances. The artifice succeeded so far, that he attributed the mare's death to her being overheated in the sun; but this did not save me from a very severe flogging.

From this time he led me a dreadful life, and became so savage to me, I used to dread to see him coming. I had only too good reason for my fears.

I was ploughing one day, some long time after the mare died, with what we call a buzzard plough. It is made so as to cut under the roots of the grass and weeds that choke the cotton, and must be

used carefully, or it will go too deep, and leave the roots of the cotton-plant exposed to the sun, when the plant will wither and die. The share was loose on the helve, and would not run true, so I could not do my work quickly or well, as I had to keep stooping down to set the share true. Stevens saw me, came up, and asked me why I did not plough better. I explained to him why, and shewed him that the plough ran foul. I stooped for this purpose, and was cleaning the dirt off from the share with my hands, when he viciously raised his foot, which was heavily shod, and unexpectedly dealt me a kick with all his might. The blow struck me right between the eyes, breaking the bone of my nose, and cutting the leaders of the right eye, so that it turned quite round in its socket. I was stunned for the moment, and fell, my mouth filling with blood, which also poured from my nose and eyes. In spite of the pain, and though I could scarcely see, I got up and resumed my work, continuing it until the evening. John Glasgow then doctored my eye. He washed the blood from my face, and got a ball of tallow, and an old handkerchief from Aunt Sally, the cook up at the house. He gently pressed the ball of tallow, made warm,

against the displaced eye, until he forced it back into its proper position, when he put some cotton over it, and bound it up with the handkerchief. In about a fortnight I was able to have the bandage removed, but my eye remained very bad, and it was more than two months before I could use it at all. The other eye was also seriously affected, the inflammation having extended to it. I have never been able to see so well since, and cannot now look long at print without suffering much pain. The letters seem cloudy. To this day my right eye has remained out of its proper place.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORY OF JOHN GLASGOW.

I MUST interrupt my own narrative here, to relate the story of John Glasgow. I had it from his own lips; and acting on the advice of the Secretary of the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society*, I have made a declaration in his presence, before a notary public, to the effect that, as given below, the narrative is substantially correct. I stated the facts to the Secretary of the Society, some time ago, and he introduced them in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* for July 1853.

John Glasgow was a native of Demerara, born of free negro parents, whose free condition he inherited as well as their complexion. When quite small he took to the sea, first as a cabin-boy; working his way up until he stood A.B.S. on the ship's register. His first voyages were made on board the small coasters that trade between the West-India Islands, but he abandoned the coasting-trade after a few years, and went to

and fro to England, improving his opportunities so much, that he saved money, and was regarded as a prosperous man. He then sought a wife. In the immediate neighbourhood of Liverpool—the port he had most frequented—there resided a small farmer who had a daughter. She is said not to have belied the adage which is so complimentary to Lancashire, in respect of its maidens. On the other hand, John Glasgow was a fine fellow, tall of stature and powerful in frame, having a brave look and a noble carriage. He was, moreover, upright in conduct, and of thrifty habits. In fact, save in one particular, he was altogether such a youth as would be most likely to find favour in the eyes of the “Lancashire witches.” But, alas, John was as black as a coal, and though many admired, none of the Liverpool lasses would “have him for a husband at any price:” at least so the report went out, when it became bruited that he was going to marry the farmer’s daughter. For his part, John said, when he heard it, “that he had never asked them to have him.” He felt, in fact, quite happy in the affection of the girl he had chosen, and who had consented to take him for a partner, in spite of his complexion and very woolly hair. So they were

married, the young woman's relatives taking her view of matters, and coinciding in the opinion that it was wise in her to marry the man she loved, whose sterling qualities she had learned to appreciate.

Being married, however, was not all. John had saved money, it is true, but not sufficient to support a wife in idleness. On the other hand, his spouse's relatives were not in a position to assist them much. They were in a small way; and though the farmer worked hard a-field, and his dame tended the dairy and sold eggs and butter at market, their united labours, aided by the good wife's economy, proved barely adequate to meet the expenses of a large family, or left but the smallest surplus sometimes to put by against the contingency of failing crops. Thus the young couple saw that they must depend upon their own exertions, and they set to work accordingly. Through the father's interest, they got into a small farm in the neighbourhood, and John Glasgow invested his savings in the purchase of three horses, a plough, and a cart. As his wife had been accustomed to farming operations, she agreed to attend to the concerns of the farm; whilst John—who, though well acquainted with

the economy of a vessel, from her keelson to her signal halyards, knew nothing at all about farming—determined to continue his calling, and therefore engaged himself as an able-bodied seaman, on board one of the many vessels trading between Liverpool and the West Indies. At the end of his second voyage he found himself the father of a fine brown baby, over which he shed many tears when the time came for him to leave port again. But John and his wife prospered, he in his vocation, she at her farm; and as he had managed to add trade to navigation, there seemed to be a prospect of his amassing wealth in the course of a few years. Indeed, had he only known how to read and write, he might have been mate long ago.

In the year 1830, John Glasgow, being then about twenty-five years of age, engaged to go out to Savannah, in Georgia, in an English vessel, and under an English captain, for a cargo of rice. He was now the father of two children, and his heart yearned more strongly towards them and his wife than it had ever done before. He seemed to be impressed with a foreboding of evil, and half repented having put his mark to the ship's articles. But his wife encouraged him,

reminding him of his promise to her that this should be his last voyage to so distant a country, and that on his return he was to confine his trips to the English coast, and never go far from home again. So John kissed his wife and children, and the vessel left the Mersey with a favourable breeze, bearing him away with a sadder heart than he had ever had under similar circumstances. The voyage was prosperous, and the passage a rapid one: too much so for John Glasgow's happiness, as it turned out.

The black law of Georgia, like that of South Carolina, is no respecter of freedom, if it present itself with a coloured skin; and poor John, a free-man born, a British subject, and unoffending, was seized, handcuffed like a common felon, conveyed to gaol, and incarcerated until the vessel that brought him to the port should discharge her cargo, be re-laden, and on the point of sailing away again. What his feelings under such a trial were, may be left to the reader to imagine. He had learnt, only too late, that his fate was in the hands of the captain: though, as he had faithfully served him, he doubted not but he would pay the gaol fees and save him from slavery. Unhappily the ship was detained considerably beyond the

ime the captain had reckoned upon, owing to delays in the procuring of the cargo. Slave-labour was dear, and the captain had to pay high wages to the slave who had been hired to him to do John Glasgow's work, while John lay pining in gaol, desiring nothing so much as that he might be doing it himself. The captain was displeased at being thus imposed upon, especially when he thought of the wages he would have to pay to John Glasgow; and matters in his mind were not improved when, the time having come for the ship to sail, he found that the gaol-fees for John's release had run up enormously high, and with what he had already paid and would have to pay, made so considerable a sum, that, looking at the whole matter commercially, to hand over so much money was wholly out of the question: and considering it humanely, was out of the question too. Besides he was "only a nigger after all;" so the captain refused to pay the gaol-fees: he set sail without John, leaving him, as yet, in ignorance of his dreadful fate.

Poor John's wife and children! They were already expecting him home, on the day he was taken out of the gaol and sold on the auction-block for three hundred and fifty dollars, to

Thomas Stevens, of Baldwin County, Georgia. He would have fetched more than three times as much, but being "a green hand," he was not worth it. Well, he was marched off to the plantation, and set to work. Here he soon realized the extent of his misfortune. His "brave look," when spoken to, offended his master, who swore he "would flog his nigger pride out of him;" and poor John had to suffer for having the look and carriage of a free man. When he had been some three or four years on the plantation, his master bade him take a wife. John told him he had one in England, and two dear children. Then his master flogged him for saying so, and for insisting upon it that he was free and a British subject. At last, to save his poor body from the torture of the cowhide and the paddle, he promised his master never to say as much again, and to look out for a wife. In Jones County, and about five miles from Stevens' plantation, there lived another planter named John Ward. John Glasgow, having to go backwards and forwards on errands, saw and at length selected a young, bright, coloured girl named Nancy, and they were married, in the way that slaves are; that is, nominally. This did not please Stevens, because

Nancy being Ward's property, her children would be Ward's also: so John was flogged for marrying Nancy, instead of one of Stevens' "likely gals," and was forbidden to visit her. Still he contrived to do so without his master's discovering it. The young woman was of a very sweet disposition, it seems, and knew all about John's misfortunes, and his having a wife and children in England. She was very kind to him, and would weep over him, as she dressed his sore and bleeding back when he crept to her log cabin at dead of night; so it was no wonder he came to love her and the three children she bore him, whilst all the time talking of his English wife and children, whom he should never see more: never, never.

One Christmas-day—a holiday for all—he thought he would slip away from the other slaves who were having a feast before Stevens' house, and go see Nancy. Accordingly, watching his opportunity, he soon succeeded in getting away, unobserved as he fancied. Not so, however. His master saw him, but instead of calling him back, maliciously allowed him to get a good distance off, when beckoning to him three other slaves, myself, March, and Jack, (of whom I shall

say more presently,) they started in pursuit, and soon came up with the object of their search. John Glasgow struggled ineffectually to release himself from the grasp of his comrades, though he knew full well they were only obeying their tyrant master. He was secured and brought back to quarters, and the other slaves were called together to witness the infliction upon him of a punishment called *bucking*. The poor fellow having been stripped stark naked, his hands were fast tied and brought down over his knees, he being compelled, for this purpose, to assume a sitting posture, with his knees doubled up under his chin. A stout stake was then thrust under his hams, so that he was rendered completely powerless. In this position he was turned first on one side then on the other, and flogged with willow switches and the cow-hide, until the blood ran down in streams and settled under him in puddles. For three mortal hours he endured this inhuman punishment, groaning piteously all the time, whilst his master looked on and chuckled. At last he was taken out of the buck, and his lacerated body washed down with salt, red pepper, and water. It was two weeks before he went to work again.

Severe as this torture was, it did not smother

John Glasgow's affection for the poor mulatto girl who shared his sorrows, and who was, perhaps, the only human being to whom he durst unburden his whole soul. As soon as he felt able to go so far, that is, in about three months, he made another attempt to see her, was missed, pursued and caught. Then Thomas Stevens swore a fearful oath that he would cure him of "wife-hunting. If he must have a wife, there was a plenty of likely yallow gals on the plantation for such as he to choose from. He might have the pick of 'em. But he (Stevens) wasn't going to let his niggers breed for another man's benefit, not he: so if John couldn't get a wife off the plantation he shouldn't have one at all. But he'd cure him of Nancy any how."

The unfortunate fellow was taken to the whipping-post, which on Stevens' estate consisted of two solid uprights, some ten feet high, with a cross-beam at the top, forming a kind of gallows. Along the cross-beam were three or four massive iron cleets, to which pulleys were fixed, having a fine but closely-twisted cord passing over them. John Glasgow having been stripped, as on the previous occasion, the end of one of these cords was tightly fastened round his wrists. His left foot was then

drawn up and tied, toes downwards, to his right knee, so that his left knee formed an angle by means of which, when swung up, his body could conveniently be turned. An oaken stake, about two feet long, was now driven into the ground beneath the cross-beam of the whipping-post, and made sharp at the top with a draw-knife. He was then hoisted up by his hands, by means of the pulley and rope, in such wise that his body swung by its own weight, his hands being high over his head and his right foot level with the pointed end of the oaken "stob" or stake.

I may here state that this punishment is called the picket, and by being swung in this manner, the skin of the victim's back is stretched till it shines, and cuts more readily under the lash: on the other hand, if the unhappy sufferer, swinging, "between heaven and earth" as it is called, desires to rest, he can do so only by placing the foot that is at liberty on the sharp end of the stake. The excessive pain caused by being flogged while suspended, and the nausea excited by twirling round, causes the victim of the "picket" to seek temporary relief by staying himself on the "stob." On his doing so, for ever so brief a space, one of the bystanders taking hold of the

bent knee, and using it as a handle, gives the unfortunate a twirl, and sends him spinning round on the hard point of the stake, which perforates the heel or the sole of the foot, as the case may be, quite to the bone.

John Glasgow thus suspended was flogged and twisted for an hour, receiving "five licks" or strokes of the raw cowhide at a time, with an interval of two or three minutes between, to allow him "to come to, and to fetch his breath." His shrieks and groans were most agonizing, and could be heard, at first, a mile and a quarter off, but as the punishment proceeded, they subsided into moans scarcely audible at the distance of fifty paces. All Stevens' slaves were made to stand by during the infliction of the torture, and some of them took turns at the whipping, according to the instructions of their master, who swore he would serve them the same if they refused, or ever disobeyed him as "that cussed nigger there had done." At the end of an hour he was "dropped from the gallows," his back being fearfully lacerated, his wrists deeply cut with the cord, and his foot pierced through in three places. Beneath the beam there was a pool of coagulated blood, whilst the oaken stake was dyed red with that which had

streamed from his foot. He could not stand, much less walk, so they carried him to his quarters, where the usual application of salt and water, and red pepper, was made to his wounds, and he was left to die or to recover, as might be. It was a month before he stirred from his plank, five months more elapsed ere he could walk. Ever after he had a limp in his gait.

I made my escape from Thomas 'Stevens', about two years after this horrible punishment had been inflicted on John Glasgow. I do not know whether the husband and the wife ever met again. The last I know of John's history is, that in 1840, or thereabouts, the poor fellow was felling a white oak in the woods, which in falling struck him on his right thigh, just above the knee, and broke it in two. As he was thus rendered comparatively useless for field-work, Thomas Stevens gave him to his son John, who kept him to shell corn off the cob.

Should this narrative by chance meet the eye of any person to whom John Glasgow's name or the circumstances of his disappearance are familiar, and lead to a discovery of the whereabouts of the poor fellow's English wife and children, let such a

one write forthwith, to the Secretary of the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society*, who will place the parties in communication with such friends as may be anxious to take steps in this distressing case. One of my chief regrets is that I cannot remember the name of the place where John's wife lived. To John I owe a debt of gratitude, for he it was who taught me to love and to seek liberty.

* This narrative has been slightly altered. As it originally appeared in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, the Editor spoke. In the present instance it is John Brown.

(ED.)

CHAPTER V.

DR. HAMILTON'S EXPERIMENTS UPON ME. MY
MASTER DIES, AND I AGAIN CHANGE HANDS.

I HAD been fourteen years with Stevens, suffering all the time very much from his ill-treatment of me, when he fell ill. I do not know what his malady was. It must have been serious, for they called in to treat him one Doctor Hamilton, who lived in Jones County, and who had a great name. He cured Stevens, who was so pleased, that he told the Doctor to ask him any favour, and it should be granted. Now it so happened that this Doctor Hamilton had been trying a great number of experiments, for the purpose of finding out the best remedies for sun-stroke. I was, it seems, a strong and likely subject to be experimented upon, and the Doctor having fixed the thing in his mind, asked Stevens to lend me to him. This he did at once, never caring to inquire what was going to be done with me. I myself did not know. Even if I had been made aware of the nature of the trials I was about to undergo, I could not

have helped myself. There was nothing for it but passive resignation, and I gave myself up in ignorance and in much fear.

Yet, it was not without curiosity I watched the progress of the preparations the Doctor caused to be made. He ordered a hole to be dug in the ground, three feet and a half deep by three feet long, and two feet and a half wide. Into this pit a quantity of dried red oak bark was cast, and fire set to it. It was allowed to burn until the pit became heated like an oven, when the embers were taken out. A plank was then put across the bottom of the pit, and on that a stool. Having tested, with a thermometer, the degree to which the pit was heated, the Doctor bade me strip, and get in; which I did, only my head being above the ground. He then gave me some medicine which he had prepared, and as soon as I was on the stool, a number of wet blankets were fastened over the hole, and scantlings laid across them. This was to keep in the heat. It soon began to tell upon me; but though I tried hard to keep up against its effects, in about half an hour I fainted. I was then lifted out and revived, the Doctor taking a note of the degree of heat when I left the pit. I used to be put in between daylight

and dark, after I had done my day's work; for Stevens was not a man to lose more of the labour of his slaves than he could help. Three or four days afterwards, the experiment was repeated, and so on for five or six times, the Doctor allowing me a few days' rest between each trial. His object was to ascertain which of the medicines he administered to me on these occasions, enabled me to withstand the greatest degree of heat. He found that cayenne-pepper tea accomplished this object; and a very nice thing he made of it. As soon as he got back home, he advertised that he had discovered a remedy for sun-stroke. It consisted of pills, which were to be dissolved in a dose of cayenne-pepper tea, without which, he said, the pills would not produce any effect. Nor do I see how they should have done so, for they were only made of common flour. However, he succeeded in getting them into general use, and as he asked a good price, he soon realized a large fortune.

Having completed his series of experiments upon me, in the heated pit, and allowed me some days' rest, I was put on a diet, and then, during a period of about three weeks, he bled me every other day. At the end of that time he found I

was failing, so he left off, and I got a month's rest, to regain a little strength. At the expiration of that time, he set to work to ascertain how deep my black skin went. This he did by applying blisters to my hands, legs and feet, which bear the scars to this day. He continued until he drew up the dark skin from between the upper and the under one. He used to blister me at intervals of about two weeks. He also tried other experiments upon me, which I cannot dwell upon. Altogether, and from first to last, I was in his hands, under treatment, for about nine months, at the end of which period I had become so weak, that I was no longer able to work in the fields. I had never been allowed to knock off, I ought to say, during the whole of this time, though my bodily strength failed daily. Stevens always kept me employed: at hard work as long as I could do it, and at lighter labour, as my strength went away. At last, finding that the Doctor's experiments had so reduced me that I was useless in the field, he put me to his old trade of carpentering and joinery, which I took too very readily, and soon got a liking for.

I do not know what made Stevens so cruel-hearted to us poor slaves. We all led a dreadful

life; I did, I know; and this made me more and more anxious to get away. In this I was encouraged by one Buck Hurd, who was what is called a nigger-stealer. He belonged to a club, the head of which was a man of the name of Murrell, in Tennessee. This club was a company of "nigger and pony-stealers," and was composed of a great many persons. They had stations in various parts of the country, at convenient distances, and when a member of the club succeeded in stealing away a negro or a pony, he would pass him on as quickly as he could to the nearest stations, from which point he would be forwarded to another, and so on, till the negro or the horse was quite safely disposed of. By this system of stations they would run off a "nigger or a pony," three hundred miles sometimes, without stopping. The partners, or agents, belonging to this club, were always on the lookout for negroes and horses, and Buck Hurd used frequently to come round to our quarters of a night, and try to entice some of us away. I heard him say, more than once, that Murrell had got slaves to run from one master, and after selling them to another, would induce them to run from him, and then sell them to a third; and that he had been known to sell the same "nigger"

three or four times over. One of them, whom he had so sold, he was like to get into trouble about. The masters heard about it, and Murrell became alarmed. He did not know what to do with the stolen man—though he kept him closely concealed—fearing that the various masters should claim their property, and the facts come out. So he got the poor fellow to go down to the spring, in the woods, after some water, and there shot him.

But although I heard all these things, I was so hard used, that I gave in, and consented to run off with Buck. We started one night, walking on as fast as we could, until daylight, when we took to the woods and lay down to rest. I cannot say how far we went, for I was ignorant of that part of the country. I know it was a long way, for we were out some days, walking at night, and hiding in the woods and swamps by day. At last, however, we reached the station Buck Hurd had been making for, and there we heard that Murrell had been found out and was then in the States' prison. This frightened Buck, who said I must go back. I agreed to do so if he would get my master to promise not to flog me. To this he consented, and we made our way for

home. On the road, however, Buck called at his own house, and took a gun and a dog, to make it appear as though he had been out nigger hunting and caught me. At any rate he told Stevens so when we got to the house, and Stevens believed him and paid him thirty dollars for catching and bringing me home. Before he gave me up, he made me promise I would not run away any more. This I did, telling a downright lie, for I meant running off if ever I got the chance. However, I did not get flogged that time, and thought I had been very lucky.

I may here state that negro stealing is quite a trade in the States, and that it is carried on to a great extent.

Not very long after this, Stevens was struck with paralysis. He lost the use of one side, and of his speech. I was called in to watch and tend him, but I did not think it my duty to understand all he tried to say. This made him very savage. He would sometimes get my hand between his foot and the bed, and try to grind the bones. When the "people" learnt he was not likely to recover, they were much pleased, and used to be very merry at quarters, for they knew they could not have a worse master. At last he

died, and very glad we all were. I know I was ; and even now, at this distance of time, when my troubles are all over, I cannot help feeling that the world was well rid of him. I only hope he did not go where there is any chance of my meeting with him again. He was buried, any how, nobody regretting him ; not even his old dog, who wagged his tail when the coffin went by his kennel.

He left his property to his son De Cator Stevens.

CHAPTER VI.

JOHN MORGAN.

BEFORE I narrate what befel me next, I may perhaps as well mention a few facts which will serve to shew the workings of the system of Slavery.

I do not think people know what Slavery means. It is not possible they should be able to understand how wicked a thing it is, and how it affects the free, as well as the bond. Now, the poor whites are worse off in the Slave States than they ever can be in the Free States, because in the Slave States labour is made shameful, and a man does not like to go to work in his own fields for fear folks should look down upon him. So it happens that when these poor whites cannot obtain a living honestly, which they very seldom do, they get the slaves in their neighbourhood to steal corn, poultry, and such like, from their masters, and bring these things to them: corn especially. The slaves steal, because they are so poorly fed. They know very well that they can-

not get the corn they steal ground, without a danger of their being found out, so they are very glad to bargain to receive back in meal, half or less of what they pilfer in the husk. This system is carried on to a very great extent; and as the parties to it are interested in keeping the secret, it is not often the masters find out how much they are robbed. I never considered it wicked to steal, because I looked upon what I took as part of what was due to me for my labour. But whenever I was trusted with my master's property, money, or cattle, or any thing of this sort, I always had a kind of pride to keep a good account of what was given me to take care of.

Another result of Slavery is, that it makes the slaveholders jealous of every man who works with free labour. If such a man comes amongst them, they are sure to try to get rid of him, and they mostly succeed, some how or other. I will illustrate this by a case that came under my own knowledge.

John Morgan was a large, robust man from Scotland, who came to settle in Baldwin County, on an estate adjoining Stevens' plantation. I had been with Stevens about ten years when Morgan

came into our neighbourhood. He did not like Slavery, though he was not what people called an Abolitionist. He came quite resolved to employ only free-labour, and he hired free men, both coloured and white, to whom he paid regular wages, as agreed upon between them. He did much better than the planters his neighbours. His cotton was much better, and fetched a higher price in the market. The reason was that his men were not forced to pick the cotton in the wet, so the fibre came out cleaner. He made a good deal of money, and it was known to all the people about, that he said free-labour was better and more profitable than slave-labour. He was a good man, too, of a kind, Christian disposition, and always spoke gently to the black folks as well as to the white. The planters got jealous of him, because he always had the best of the market, and they began to frown upon him. They said he would spoil all their niggers, injure the settlement, and damage the system of Slavery, so he must be got rid of. They used to get together and talk the matter over, and they met in this way a good many times. We slaves knew something was going on, but we durst not say a word. At last Stevens was spoken to.

They asked him to try and "get shut" of Morgan. Stevens said he would consider how it was to be done. Some days after, he told them he had hit upon a plan. It was to buy his land. It seems the plan met their views, for they got very merry over it, and went away laughing and joking. But Morgan did not all at once fall into the trap. He declined parting with his land, because it was bringing him in a good living. Stevens, however, offered him a double price. The bait took, and he was paid in promissory notes. Soon after the purchase was completed, he left his own farmhouse, on the estate, and went to live in a smaller dwelling on the top of an adjoining hill, quite away from any other inhabited house, though still in the neighbourhood of the plantations. He soon found out that he had been tricked, for when the bills he held fell due, the parties who had signed them did not meet the demand, and Morgan could not get his money. On his applying to them, and complaining of the hardship of his case, they laughed at him; and when he threatened he would take the law of them, they defied him. And well they might, as they knew they could secure the lawyers on their side.

Well, John Morgan went to law, bringing suits

against the parties who owed him the money. On their side, they bribed the lawyers, besides setting them against Morgan by saying that he was a friend of the niggers; so he could not get his case fairly heard. In this way they kept the suits going on, until Morgan's means were exhausted, and he was thrown out of court, being unable to go on any further. So he was completely ruined.

He now had nothing to live upon, and at last was compelled to do as the other poor whites did; that is, to depend chiefly upon the coloured people. One day he came round to the back of our farm, where we were ploughing. A man named Jack, one of our fellow-slaves, was driving the team, and as he turned the horses' heads, Morgan tapped the fence with a stick, to attract his notice. Jack stopped, and Morgan then asked him whether he could not get him a little corn. Jack said "Yes," and they agreed that he should bring it round in a sack on a certain night, to a place they named. Morgan then went away. Jack, however, wanted somebody to help him, so he asked another man of the name of March, whether he would lend a hand, and he should have a share. March promised, but instead of

doing it, he told Stevens, in order that he might make a friend of him and not get flogged so often. Stevens laid his plans accordingly.

About three days after, Stevens called me to him. It was in the evening, and quite dark: that is, there was no moon, but the stars were shining brightly. He had his gun in his hand, and he bade me take a stout hickory club, and follow him. We went on till we came to a certain place on the highway, where we got into the bushes and hid ourselves. We had lain there about half an hour when we heard footsteps. I knew they were Jack's, and could tell he carried a load. Jack stopped near where we were, and we saw he had a sack of corn. He set down the sack, but we did not take any heed of him. Presently we heard somebody else coming. I felt very bad then, for I knew it was Morgan, and that there would be a scuffle. As soon as he and Jack met, my master poked me with the muzzle of his gun, and whispered me to leap out of the bushes into the road and lay hold of Morgan. I was obliged to do his bidding, knowing he had his gun, and fearing he would shoot me if I did not obey him. As soon as Jack heard a noise in the bushes, he ran off, and the next moment I

had seized fast hold of Morgan. The poor fellow struggled very hard to get away, but Stevens was by my side, shouting to me to hold on, and dodging round me and Morgan as we fought, and wrestled. I do not know whether he thought Morgan would get away, but all at once, and whilst we were still tussling, he lowered his gun, and discharged it. I thought I was shot, the fire and smoke were so close to me, but at the same moment Morgan gave a leap right out of my arms, and fell with a loud cry flat upon his face in the road. He had received the whole contents of the piece in his right side. Hardly knowing what I was doing, I took to my heels, and never stopped till I got safe to quarters, where I remained for about an hour and a half. I was very much terrified at what had taken place, and feared lest Stevens should accuse me of having killed Morgan, so I thought I would run round and tell his wife all about it, and she would then be able to clear me. I listened whether I could hear any one about, and as all seemed quiet, I slipped out, and made my way to her house, as fast as I could. It was between eleven and twelve when I knocked at the door. She was up, and dressed, and seemed to be

expecting her husband. I told her my master had shot a man that evening, and that I was sure it was her husband. She could not speak, but burst out crying. I told here where he was lying, and then ran back to my quarters.

It seems she was afraid to go out that night; but quite early in the morning she went down to the place, with three poor white men named Elias Cammel, James Cammel, and Bill Cannon. They found the poor fellow quite stiff dead, about a hundred and fifty yards from the spot where he had fallen. He had struggled hard, and they had traced him by his blood to the hedge where he had at last dropped down for good. The men who came were his friends, and they buried him in Cannon's wood, just across a little creek. They all persuaded Morgan's widow to take the case in hand, and lay an information against Stevens, so she went to a magistrate to get a warrant. But the magistrate asked her on whose evidence the warrant was to be granted. She told him that it was on that of Stevens' man, Fed; meaning me. He refused then to give her a warrant, because, as I was a slave, my evidence would not be received in the Courts. She said it was very hard, for she knew I had told the truth;

but he still refused, and sent her away, saying that "if she brought five hundred nigger witnesses, he would not give her a warrant." The poor woman was obliged to go then, and at last she got so frightened, lest Stevens should kill her too, that she quitted her house, and left that neighbourhood, quite ruined, a widow, and with two young children.

When I last heard of her, she was going about, up and down the country with them, begging.

CHAPTER VII.

SOMETHING ABOUT SOME OF MY FELLOW-SLAVES.

I SPOKE of Jack in the last chapter. I have something to tell about him and others, my companions in Slavery.

Stevens had bought Jack of a man named Jem Mallet, who lived about two miles from my master's. Of course he was obliged to leave his wife behind, and Stevens forbade his going to see her. However, Jack used to manage to creep out of a night and visit her, always taking care to be back betimes. Stevens at last got a suspicion of the truth, from seeing Jack's track across the field, and soon found him out. Next day he got all the people together, and had Jack stripped and tied up to a rough red oak tree, his hands being made fast round the tree, so that he embraced it. Stevens then took a branding-iron, marked T. S., which he heated red hot at the kitchen fire, and applied to the fleshy part of Jack's loins. The poor fellow screamed awfully, and began to move round the tree. Stevens was afraid this would

cause him to make what is called a miss-letter, so he followed Jack round the tree till the iron was quite buried in the flesh. Jack tore round the rough tree, the smoke from his burning flesh rising high and white above the top; he all the time screaming, and master swearing. At last the branding was done, and Jack was loosed, when we saw that in going round the tree, he had torn all the flesh from his chest, which was bleeding dreadfully. But he was obliged to go to his work directly, for all that, and I remember he anointed the wound the brand had made with soap. He was afterwards compelled to take a young woman named Hannah, as a wife, and to abandon his former one. By Hannah he had a good many children, but after he had been with her about eight years, he was sold away from her and their children, to one Robert Ware, of Decatur Town, in De Calb County, Georgia, about ten miles from Stevens' place.

It is all very well for Mrs. Tyler to say that families are not often separated. I know better than that, and so does she.

On one occasion, Jack's wife (Hannah) could not get her task of spinning cotton done. Stevens called her up, and after swearing at and abusing

her, made her strip stark naked, and then forced her to hug the shed post; that is, to clasp it round. He then made her husband go round and hold her hands, whilst he flogged her with the cow-hide some seventy or eighty lashes, after which he turned her loose. She was about twenty-five years old.

On another occasion he cruelly flogged her and another slave woman named Mimcy. It was one Sunday morning, and they were down at the spring washing their clothes. They quarrelled, and master hearing their noise came running down. He made them strip off all their garments, and sent me for the cow-hide, with which he beat them till he could not wag his arm any longer, they crying out all the time.

Amongst us we had a negro named Primus. His father and mother had been stolen right from Africa. They both belonged to a Methodist minister, the Reverend Mr. Woods, who lived on Fishing-Creek, about three miles from Stevens'. He had bought them off a slave-ship, directly they were landed. The vessel had come into the port of Savannah. The father was from Golah. The woman came from the Coast of Guinea. Woods owned a great many negroes. He was a cotton

planter as well as a preacher, but folks used to say his cotton was worth more than his sermons. When Primus was about twenty-four, he was sold to Stevens for six hundred dollars. Stevens bought him of Woods, about two years after he had purchased me. Doctor Woods was a tall, pleasant looking man, and was said to treat his slaves kindly. Primus had never known what cruel usage was, and did not shew fear of a white man, as the other negroes did. Stevens therefore made up his mind to tame him down, and used him all the more cruelly. Now this Doctor Woods had a son named Elisha, who owned a negro girl of the name of Annikie. He sold this girl to Stevens. Primus had married Annikie, and was very fond of her. It used to cut him to the heart to see her flogged, which Stevens often used to do. He treated them both so cruelly, indeed, that at last Primus made up his mind to have done with it. One day he tied a brace round his arm, and cut a vein, then ran home to kill Annikie, hoping they might both die together. But he bled too much, and Uncle Billy having seen him, loosed the cord, and saved his life. He hallooed after Primus as he was running home, and he was caught, and taken to the home-house.

Weak as he was from loss of blood, he was picketed, and turned loose.

It seems that Primus took a dislike to Uncle Billy from that time, because Billy had told upon him. He threatened to be revenged some day, and soon after Stevens heard of it. He got Tom and Elijah Wilson, neighbouring planters, to come in and help punish him; so they came one day and laid hold of him, Stevens assisting them. They stretched him, face downwards, on a carpenter's bench, his hands being tied underneath, as tightly as the cords could be drawn. They then cut his clothes off his back, and Stevens took a cobbing paddle and laid on to him as long as he could stand. This paddle was a piece of wood from eighteen inches to two feet long, having a handle about eight inches in length. It was made of oak, one end being broad and flat, and between five and six inches in width, with eight holes drilled through it. Before being used, it was wetted and rubbed in sand. When Stevens got tired, he handed the instrument over to John Wilson. During the infliction of this punishment, all of us slaves were made to stand by. Every blow they struck raised eight blisters, the blood starting underneath them, quite black. They

paddled him in this way, five minutes at a time, each of them, for about an hour; long before which, Primus was befooled. Then Stevens took a raw cow-hide and flogged him across the blisters till they burst, the blood flying out all over him, and round about the bench on to the ground. When he had flogged him till the poor fellow's back and loins were like a jelly, they rubbed the parts with red pepper and salt and water, and sent him to quarters. It was a horrible scene; the man screaming till he could not scream any longer. The punishment was awful, and it otherwise dreadfully injured him. However, after a long time, he got over it.

Another day he was sent for something to the still-house. Stevens was there and spoke to him, but Primus did not hear him. Stevens snatched up a barrel-stave, and immediately dealt him such a blow, that he fell like an ox. He laid there senseless for full two hours. Stevens got alarmed, and taking out his knife, cut him across the arm, to make him bleed. Billy threw whiskey in his face, and at last he came to, but he did not recover himself for several days. He always was subject to fits after that, and used to go about as though he was half foolish. I am sure I wonder now he

was not quite a lunatic with such horrible treatment. Two years after, he was quite "a done up nigger;" and Stevens finding him useless, gave him to his son-in-law, Billy Gay. He died three years after, in a fit.

I might add many other instances of cruel usage of slaves, but I have perhaps stated enough for the present. It may be thought that the female slaves are perhaps, as a rule, less badly treated. This is not the case. Men and women, boys and girls, receive the same kind of punishments, or I would say rather, that the same kind of tortures are inflicted upon them. I know full well that women in a state of pregnancy are not spared from the infliction of the most dreadful scourgings, with the cow-hide, the bull-whip, and the cobbing-paddle. Thousands of them never bring their burden into the world, and numbers of negro infants are overlaid and smothered by their mothers at night, in consequence of their having been overworked in the day.

Mrs. Stowe has told something about Slavery. I think she must know a great deal more than she has told. I know more than I dare to tell.

CHAPTER VIII.

I MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE. HOW IT ENDED.

DE CATOR STEVENS, my new master, to whom I had been willed, turned out to be a good deal worse than his father. He was naturally a stupid man, and had received no education to brighten him up. Under him we all led a terrible life. My mind had long been made up to run away. I was constantly dwelling on what John Glasgow had told me about freedom, and England, and becoming a man. During my old master's lifetime, I had frequently hidden away in the woods and swamps; sometimes for a few days only; at others for a fortnight at a stretch; and once for a whole month. I used to sneak out at night from my hiding-place and steal corn, fruit, and such like. As long as it lasted, the release from the severe labour put upon me was quite grateful; and though I always got cruelly flogged on my return, the temptation to get a rest this way was too great to be resisted. It may be asked why I

did not go right off when once I had made a start. I may as well tell the truth. I was frightened to take a long journey. I did not know the country, but I did know that if my master caught me and brought me back, I should get perhaps paddled or scourged nearly to death. I was, nevertheless, always on the look-out for a fair chance of escaping, and treasured up in my memory such scraps of information as I could draw out of the people that came to the plantation; especially the new hands. De Cator Stevens did not like to sell me, because I was too valuable to him. He used to say of me, that nothing came amiss to me; and in this, for once, he told the truth; for I may say, without unduly boasting, that at farming, at carpentering, and at any and all kinds of labour, I was a match for any two hands he could bring against me. In fact, I could and used to do two men's work, when I returned from my lying-out. At such times I could only compare myself to a man gone lunatic. Knowing Stevens would not sell me, and having made up my mind to suffer any amount of flogging, I grew defiant of my master, but I determined I would be killed in defending myself if he should use me too hard. I also took to studying his

countenance, until I became so accustomed to its expression and to his ways, that I could always tell whether he intended mischief. At such times I would get out of the way. The older I grew, and the stronger, the less fearful I became; and then I noticed that my master got frightened of me, lest I should run away. All this, however, did not save my poor back; but whenever Stevens wanted to spite me, he would not ask the men to hold me, for fear I should kill them, but used to creep up very sily, and hit me unawares, or throw sticks, chunks, and big stones at me, which sometimes hit and hurt me, and sometimes missed me and injured another. All this I bore. I wanted to get a clear start, for my mind was bent upon making tracks for England, which I fancied was not very far away. So I put up with the floggings and the ill-usage, and bided my time.

I remember once he wanted to punish me for a spite he had. He and I had been watching each other a good many days, and I had contrived to dodge him out of his revenge.

At length he invited one Jessie Cleveland, who lived in De Calb county, and five or six more of his companions, to go a fishing with him. He took me and the other negroes to draw the seine

through the river. We were to fish at night, so we lighted a great fire on the bank, and whilst they sat down by it, drinking, and smoking, and feasting, we went on fishing by torch-light. We remained at it the whole night, and Stevens kept on forcing us to drink rum until we were all drunk, like himself and his companions. At eight o'clock in the morning we left off, and then, seeing I could not help myself by running away, he set to and flogged me with a hickory rod: and how he did beat me that morning—oh dear!

At length I determined to be off. John Glasgow had been given away about two years before, to Stevens' son John. When he went I lost my only friend. But all he had told me rested on my mind. My whole thoughts dwelt upon England, and as things seemed to be getting worse with me, I considered the time was come for me to make a bold start for liberty.

Accordingly I laid in, by degrees, a stock of corn-bread, and having obtained a forged pass from a poor white man, for which I gave him an old hen, I stole off one night, about two months after I had procured the pass, and made for the high road, which I thought would lead me straight to England. I walked on all night, and

when morning came hid myself in the wood, starting again when it began to get dusk. I went on this way a great many nights, keeping to the main road, and concealing myself by day in the woods or swamps. My only direction was to take the biggest road. One night I came to one, which, after I had followed it for some time—still under the impression that it would take me to England—brought me to a dead stop, at a stone quarry, at the foot of the Blue Ridge of mountains. I staid here all night, walking about to keep clear of the wild cats, panthers, and cat-amounts which I could hear prowling about, and whose growling alarmed me very much. When morning broke I began to consider what I should do. I knew that I ought to go northwards, but having nothing to guide me, I began to look about for signs. I soon noticed that on one side of the trees the moss was drier and shorter than it was on the other, and I concluded it was the sun which had burnt it up, and checked its growth, and that the dry moss must therefore be on the south side. I examined a good many trees, and finding these signs on most of them, I set off in the direction towards which the long, green moss pointed, and went on, until late in the day, without any thing

happening to me, when all of a sudden I heard a man chopping wood. I soon came up to him. He was a white man, and he asked me where I was going.

“ Into Ohio,” said I.

“ Are you free ?” he asked.

“ Yes, Sir,” I answered.

“ Where’s your pass, Sir ?” he said.

I took out the pass I had spoken of, and handed it to him. He saw at once that it was forged, and told me so. I drew out of him that a genuine pass was always signed by a great many individuals, and countersigned by the clerk of the district court, besides bearing the seal. He added, in answer to questions from me, that I was in Tennessee, and that no pass signed by one person would be of any use to enable me to go out of one State into another. I felt that I was caught, and hardly knew what to do. The man spoke very loud and strong at first, but I suppose there was something in my manner that made him feel timid, for he presently began to talk more softly, trying to calm me down. At last he said, if I would go home with him, he would see no harm came to me, and he would provide me with proper passes to take me through Tennessee, Ken-

tucky, and Ohio. He said he would number each, so that I might not mistake one for the other, and he advised me to throw them away, one by one, after they had served my turn. At length I agreed to go home with him. I remained there until night. His name was Posey, I afterwards learned. He went away in the early part of the evening to fetch the passes, as he said; but as the time wore on without his making his appearance, I began to get uncomfortable. I was pondering what I should do, when he suddenly came in, with five other men having guns. Then I knew I had been betrayed, and must give up.

The first thing Posey did was to bid me cross my hands before me. I did so. He then took a log chain and fastened it round my leg. When he had me fast, he began to question me in his old rough way.

“Who do you belong to, Sir?” he said.

I told him that De Cator Stevens was my master.

“Where does he live?” he asked then.

“In Georgia, Sir,” I answered.

“Then what are you doing here?” was his next question.

“ I got lost, Sir,” I replied.

“ Oh! You got lost, did you?” he said.
“ And pray, Sir, did you come here on purpose to get lost?”

“ No, Sir,” I answered. “ I got lost before I got here. I got lost before I saw you.”

They consulted together a few minutes, and then one of them said they would put me in a safe place where I should not “ get lost very soon,” and where the dogs could not catch me. We all set out together then, and I soon found I was going to be taken to the jail. I now began to consider whether I might not get out of their hands if I tried, for my mind was quite made up not to give up the hope of effecting my escape, so long as I saw there remained ever so slight a chance in my favour. I therefore began to talk with my captors, one of whom was named Wiggins, and another Arres. I told them I thought they were going to do a very foolish thing by taking me to jail. If they put me there, and sent for my master, he would pay them for catching me, but he would have to give the jailer his fees; but if they kept me safe somewhere, and sent for Stevens to fetch me away, they might get more out of him, on account of the trouble that would

be saved him getting me out of jail again. This idea seemed to find favour with them, and at last they agreed that I should be conveyed to Wiggins' house, and that Arres should go to Stevens and tell him about me. Having made up their mind to this, Arres took my bundle of clothes to his place, and set off, we turning into a road that led to Wiggins' house.

I remained nearly a week at Wiggins'. Every night he used to chain me to the post of the bed on which he slept, fastening me to the wall in the day-time, by means of a staple driven through it. I always remained here until after supper-time, with a little girl who was set to watch me. At the end of two or three days we became quite great friends, and I made up my mind to try and befool her, and get away if I could. One evening I pretended to be sulky, and would not answer her when she spoke to me. At last I stared at her very hard, till I noticed she seemed to get a little alarmed, when I told her that she must not talk to me, or look at me, for if anybody did so, when I felt as I did then, I should be sure to go mad. I saw she became more alarmed than before, and presently she moved away, and sat down with her back towards me.

Still she would peep round over her shoulder, every now and then, when I would shake my head, and glare at her, and rattle my chain, till she turned her head again.

I ought to state that all this was part of a plan I had made up in my mind. In order to fasten me up, some workmen had been employed to cut a hole in the wall, to fix the staple and secure my chain. They had left a chisel on the ground, which I had seen, and when I was taken away, the first night, to be fastened to Wiggins' bed-post, I threw my old blanket over the chisel to prevent any body else from spying it out. Next morning I drew it and my blanket to me, and laid upon them, and when night came, left it, as before, concealed by the blanket. In the course of the week, and from the moment I concluded to try again for liberty, I had constantly sent the little girl I have mentioned backwards and forwards to her father, telling him I wanted him to lead me out. In a few days he got tired of coming so often, and at length did not pay any heed to my messages. I had calculated upon this circumstance, which I felt might serve me, when the time came to take advantage of it.

On the evening in question, having quite suc-

ceeded in turning away my little jailer's attention from me, I thought the time was come for making another attempt to escape. I had heard that Arres was looked for every day, and, of course, my master with him. Wiggins was in the kitchen, which was thirty yards away from the dwelling-house, and I knew it would take but a very little while for the child to run there and back: but on the use I could make of those few minutes I felt all my present hopes of getting away depended. Watching my opportunity, I took the chisel and the whaffle-irons which the cook had left standing in the chimney-corner, and with the two tried to break a link of my chain. The whaffle-irons failed, so I put them down, and reached over to get an old pan-handle that did service as a poker. With it I succeeded in breaking the chain. I waited a few moments to fetch breath, for my heart beat so, at the thought that I was so far free, that I could scarcely sit still. Presently I told the child to go and tell her father I wanted him. She gave me one look and started off. No sooner was she gone than I made off too, only in another direction, bounding like a hare over every thing that came in my way.

After running a good distance, I stopped to listen for sounds, and to breathe, for I was quite blown. I could hear nothing, and concluded I was safe for the present. It was now past ten, and as I had no money nor clothes, nor any thing to eat, I thought I would go round to Posey's, and try and get my bundle. I found my way there, for I knew the direction of the house, and that it was not more than a mile from Wiggins', with no house or dwelling between them. When I got up to it I listened at the windows, and soon discovered that Posey was at home, so that any chance of getting my bundle was gone. What to do I did not know. To pursue my own inclination, and try to complete my escape, I felt would be exposing myself to certain re-capture, and most severe punishment; for I knew I could not remain long in the neighbourhood, and that it would be raised in search of me as soon as morning broke. On the other hand, I concluded that if I were to go back to my master I might get a flogging, but that another more favourable chance of escaping might offer, and my going back of my own accord, as I had done before, would perhaps be in my favour. After weighing the chances

over in my mind, I determined to return into Georgia and give myself up, trying to harden myself to meet the consequences.

So I set off back, and after a journey of several days, travelling by night to avoid being caught, and resting by day, I got to the plantation, and delivered myself into the hands of my master, telling him he was to do with me what he pleased.

It pleased him to tie me up and give me a dreadful flogging; and so ended my second determined attempt to escape from slavery.

CHAPTER IX.

MORE TRIBULATION.

HAVING got over this trouble, I began to ponder on what means I should employ to ensure the success of my next attempt to escape; for I was still bent upon accomplishing my object. I determined to do all that I could to delude my master into the belief that I was cured of running off, and by appearing very humble and submissive, first gain his confidence. I dare say the good people who read this confession will think I was very wicked, and I do not mean to say it is not wrong to deceive; but I do not think any one should judge me too harshly for following the example that was set by everybody around me. My master was always deceiving us slaves. If he promised us any thing we never got it, except it happened to be a flogging; and I must say he always kept his word in that. We used to know we were cheated, when having done our best, he swore we had skulked, and cowhided us for it. His dealings with everybody were all on the same principle of

trying to over-reach them. Then we could not help seeing many things we knew to be wrong, and which we could have set right if our evidence had been taken; but whenever it suited our master's purpose to require us to lie, we were obliged to do as he wished, or take the consequences. In fact, we felt we were living under a system of cheating, and lying, and deceit, and being taught no better, we grew up in it, and did not see the wrong of it, so long as we were not acting against one another. I am sure that, as a rule, any one of us who would have thought nothing of stealing a hog, or a sack of corn, from our master, would have allowed himself to be cut to pieces rather than betray the confidence of his fellow-slave; and, perhaps, my mentioning this fact may be taken as a set-off against the systematic deception we practised, in self-defence, on our master.

Having made up my mind now to cheat Stevens into a good opinion of me, I took to answering him very humbly, and pretended to be frightened of him. Every thing he bade me do, I did, until at length he got to think the last flogging he had given me, had done me good, and made me submissive. Then he would chuckle and crow over me, thinking it a great victory to

have succeeded, as he thought, in breaking down my spirit. Indeed, the experiment in my case seemed so satisfactory, that he thought he would try it on two rather unruly "boys" named Alfred and Harry. One day he sent them to catch four mules which were loose in the stable. This was only a pretext, for he beckoned me to him, and we followed them in. When we were in, he set his back against the door, and, drawing a bit of cord from under his coat, told me to catch the "boys," as he intended to flog them. As soon as they saw what he was after, they began dodging round and under the mules, I trying my hardest to lay hold of them. The mules, in running, rubbed against De Cator, and pushed him away from the door, which was no sooner open, than boys and mules bolted, Master swearing at me for letting them get away, and declaring that I had done so for the purpose. I told him I had done just the contrary; but in spite of all I could say, he got into a towering rage, and as I was going out at the door, leaped on my back, holding me fast round the neck, and calling out to Aunt Sally—one of the old negro women—to bring him down his gun. Aunt Sally ran into the house, and presently I saw her come out of it, holding

up the gun that my master's father had shot poor Morgan with. I do not know whether De Cator intended to shoot me, but I know I became dreadfully alarmed, and without being scarcely aware of what I did, I tipped him down off my shoulders, and he fell to the ground, severely hurting his neck. I immediately took to my heels and escaped into the wood near the plantation. I staid here all day, in fear and trembling, thinking of the law which punishes, with the loss of his right arm, any slave who shall inflict injury on or raise his arm against his master. By the time night had fallen I became so miserable, that I resolved to drown myself, and proceeded to the river for that purpose. When I got there, however, and saw the water looked so cold and so deep, my resolution was shaken. I candidly confess I did not like the prospect, even though death seemed preferable to the life I was leading, with its hourly miseries, and almost daily punishments. But I reflected that so long as I had life, there was hope; so I turned my back upon the river, and made my way to our old apple-orchard, where I laid down, and dozed till morning.

I wandered about here three days, eating berries—for there was no fruit—until, at the end

of that time, I was well nigh famished. I then concluded to return to my master, and to meet the consequences of his displeasure. I went round to where the coloured people were at work, who advised me to make for the house by the way of the spring, and I should see what was going on, and what was in store for me. Accordingly I bent my steps in that direction, until I came to a little knoll or rising ground, from which I could overlook the plantation and buildings. I saw two posts set upright in the ground, and a cross-beam reaching from one to the other, to which a block and a rope were attached. I concluded Stevens was going to hang me, so I set off running. I had, however, been perceived, and I soon found that I was being hunted down with dogs. I looked behind, and saw my master and a good many strange people, some on horses and some on foot, who were exciting the hounds to follow me. These were gaining fast upon me, but I observed that they minded the strange people, or any one who urged them on, so I determined I would give them the slip if I could. As they came up, I began to halloo and shout to them as lustily as any body, all the while running as fast as I could.

“Catch him, fellow,” said I, urging the dogs on; “catch him; hey, fellow, hey, fellow; catch him.”

The poor animals wagged their tails, and, excited by me, ran right ahead, quite fooled, and jumping and looking about, as though they sought to find out what we were all after. But at this moment, Billy Curtis, a planter, who was one of the party, and who was well mounted, rode up and struck me on the head with a dog-wood club. The blow felled me, as though I had been shot, completely stunning me. When I recovered, I found myself stretched on the ground, my head bleeding fearfully, and my master standing over me, with his foot on my forehead. The scar that blow made, I retain to this day.

I was now forced to get up, when they drove me to where I had seen the posts. Here they tied my hands and feet together, and passing the rope through the block and pulleys, hoisted me up and began to swing me backwards and forwards. Billy Curtis stood on one side, with a bull-whip in his hand, and David Barrett on the other, with a cowhide. My master stood a little further off, laughing, and as Curtis and Barrett could not whip and swing me too, a negro was set to keep me going. As I swung past them, these men hit

me each a lick with their whips, and they continued doing so until I fainted, when I was taken down.

But I was not done with yet.

Many people say that half of what Mrs. Stowe and others have written about the punishments inflicted on slaves is untrue. I wish, for the sake of those who are now in bonds, that it were so. Unfortunately it is too true; and I believe half of what is done to them never comes to light. This is what happened to me next.

To prevent my running away any more, Stevens fixed bells and horns on my head. This is not by any means an uncommon punishment. I have seen many slaves wearing them. A circle of iron, having a hinge behind, with a staple and padlock before, which hang under the chin, is fastened round the neck. Another circle of iron fits quite close round the crown of the head. The two are held together in this position by three rods of iron, which are fixed in each circle. These rods, or horns, stick out three feet above the head, and have a bell attached to each. The bells and horns do not weigh less than from twelve to fourteen pounds. When Stevens had fixed this ornament on my head, he turned me loose, and told me I might run off now if I liked.

I wore the bells and horns, day and night, for three months, and I do not think any description I could give of my sufferings during this time would convey any thing approaching to a faint idea of them. Let alone that their weight made my head and neck ache dreadfully, especially when I stooped to my work, at night I could not lie down to rest, because the horns prevented my stretching myself, or even curling myself up; so I was obliged to sleep crouching. Of course it was impossible for me to attempt to remove them, or to get away, though I still held to my resolution to make another venture as soon as I could see my way of doing it. Indeed, during those three long months, I thought more of John Glasgow, and getting off to England, than I had ever done all the time before, with such a firm purpose. I collected and arranged in my mind all the scraps of information I had been able to procure from others, or that I had acquired myself; and concealed, in the trunk of an old tree, a bundle of clothes and a flint and steel and tinder-horn: for though my case seemed desperate, I clung to hope, with a tenacity which now surprises me. It was a blessed consolation, and only for it I must have died.

CHAPTER X.

I MAKE ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE.

I OWE it to an accidental circumstance that I got rid, at last, of my uncomfortable head-dress.

After wearing it for about three months, I was set to pack corn into a crib. The bells and horns, however, prevented me from getting into the crib, so De Cator took them off, and set them down by the side of the corn-crib, ready for me to have them on again. It was one Saturday evening, and I had heard there was going to be a camp-meeting a little way off. To this I determined to go. I had frequently heard of these meetings, and often longed to attend one of them, but had never yet done so. Instead of packing the corn, as I was bidden, I took the opportunity—being now released from my bells and horns—to go to the camp-meeting, where I remained all night. Whilst there I turned over in my mind the chances I had of escaping, and concluded the favourable time had come for me to renew my attempt. In order to throw Stevens off his guard,

I thought I would go back next morning, as if he saw me, after lying out all night, he would believe I did not intend running off, as I had not taken advantage of that opportunity. It was a part of my calculation to run away under circumstances which should leave my master under the impression of my having gone off in a fright. Had I disappeared without any apparently sufficient cause, a hue and cry would have been raised after me directly. So I returned home early on Sunday morning.

When De Cator came round, a little later in the forenoon, and saw that I had not done my task, he began to swear at me dreadfully, and to threaten me. But I was a much stronger man than he, and if I looked as wicked as I felt, whilst he was abusing me so, I think it must have been from fear he did not put his threats into execution. I was a match for two such men as he, any day, and he knew it. He looked at me and at the bells and horns, which remained standing by the corn-crib, but I suppose he felt it was of no use for him to try to put them on again without help. I quite believe he intended to do so, in his sly way, by bringing two or three of the hands in suddenly to seize and hold me

whilst he put them on. Any how, he made no attempt now, but kept on swearing at and calling me dreadful names. He presently shouted to Minney, an old negro woman, and the mother of thirteen children, to come and do my work. The poor old creature began to run towards him, but she did not run fast enough to please him, so, stooping down, he picked up a huge white flint stone, and hove it at her. It struck her on the arm, and broke it just above the wrist. She shrieked out with the pain, but that only made our savage master laugh. I would gladly have saved the old woman that blow, had it been in my power, for I felt that De Cator had vented upon her the spite he had against me. I was, however, in danger myself, and seeing the other women come round the poor creature, I ran away and hid myself in the wood.

I lay concealed here until dark, pondering in my mind which way I should go. I at length resolved to take a road westward. I had come to know the road from Stevens' to Cass-ville, because we slaves used to have to take bacon to the Altoonah gold mines to sell to the miners. Cass-ville must be quite two hundred miles from Millidgeville, and I knew every step of the road. We

also used to go to New Echota, in the Cherokee purchase, on the Ooestennala river. A very large body of Indians, gathered from this territory, had been located there sometime between 1836 and 1838, where they remained six months, under guard, being on their way to their new location in Arkansas. There were some thousands in all, under the chiefs John Ross and John Ridge. Stevens used to send us to these people to sell them provisions, generally causing his son-in-law, Joe Stokes, to accompany us. So it was I came to know there was a good road open for me thus far.

As soon as it was dark enough to make it safe, I set out once more on my travels, with a full determination either to gain my freedom, or to die in the attempt.

The incidents of my journey, during the first eight or ten days, were not of sufficient note to need my dwelling particularly upon them. My plan was to walk all night, and to hide myself in the day. I used to listen with painful attention for the sounds of footsteps, and when I heard, or fancied I heard a noise, I would conceal myself behind a log, or in a tree, or anywhere else, until the party had gone by, or my fears were allayed.

I kept myself from starving by grubbing up sweet potatoes out of the fields by the way-side, which I cooked in a fire I made with dry sticks. When I came to such a field, I would get as many potatoes as I could conveniently carry for store; but as they were heavy and cumbersome, it may be supposed the stock I obtained on such occasions was not very large. In this way I travelled on out of Georgia into Alabama, until I reached a place, which I afterwards learned is called Tuscumbia, on the Tennessee river. I remember this place very well, for close to Tuscumbia there is a bubbling spring, and the landing-place is about two miles lower down.

When I got here, I became afraid to continue travelling by land. I considered what I should do; and concluding at last that the river must run into the sea, and that if I once got to the seaside, I should be sure to find some Englishmen there who would tell me the way to England, I determined to construct a raft, and float myself down upon it.

The reader will bear in mind that at this time I did not know where England was, but, foolishly enough, believed it was not very far off. Had I known where the Tennessee river would have

floated me to, I should probably have turned off in some other direction. But I now look upon my ignorance of the fact, at that time, as a happy circumstance, to which I am, in all probability, indebted for my liberty.

I now sought out a place of concealment, which I soon discovered, in the wood, not far from the landing-place, and here I watched for float-wood as it came down the river. I procured three sticks of this timber, each being about fifteen feet long, and perhaps a foot and a half in diameter. These I dragged into shallow water, and bound firmly together with the blue grape-vine, which grew in abundance in the wood; and having completed the raft, which was about five feet wide, I made it fast under the bushes that grew quite close down to the river-side, hanging quite over the water.

Prowling about at night, I had paid a visit to an old warehouse or shed that had been abandoned at the landing-place, it being now the fall-season, and the water in the river low. Here I found an old wedge-axe, and a piece of sheet-iron, that I afterwards conjectured had been part of the funnel of a steam-vessel; for, I need scarcely observe, I had not, at this time, ever seen a

steamer. The iron was a good find for me, for I at once perceived that it would serve me to kindle a fire upon; so I took it into the wood, and hammered it out flat on a log; and very useful I found it. I afterwards rummaged up a board, which I fashioned into a paddle with my jack-knife, and having picked out a pole of timber, to help me further in navigating my raft, my preparations for starting were complete.

I pushed off that evening, as soon as it became dark enough to allow of my doing so safely. I had put some sand on the iron plate, and made preparations to kindle a fire on it, so that any one by chance noticing me going down the river, might take me for a fisherman. The next morning I beached my raft at a convenient spot, and having jumped ashore, pulled it up under the bushes and brush, so as effectually to conceal it. I then laid down and slept, and after I had rested, sauntered about until nightfall, when I put off again.

I was about nine days going down the river in this manner. During that time I saw several people, but do not think they caught sight of me, because I was so very cautious not to shew myself. I travelled always by night, concealing myself by day. I usually selected a place to

land, in the neighbourhood of dwellings, as I was almost certain to find potatoe-fields near them. To these I paid as frequent visits as I could, prudently, bringing away with me as many potatoes as would last me for a couple or three days, and which I stored away on my raft. These, roasted, were my only food during the nine days, with one exception. One night my raft ran foul of a line stretched across the water. I traced it with my paddle and pole, and found it had a good many other smaller lines attached to it, each having a hook at the end. On one of them was a cat-fish, which I appropriated, and off which I made a famous feast.

At the end of about nine days I found the water becoming too deep for my pole, and the river widening considerably. Still I contrived to keep on, by using my paddle industriously, and not going far from the banks, until one evening, and whilst I was wondering where the great water, opening beyond, would take me to, I heard all of a sudden a great roaring and splashing. Almost directly after I saw two big, red eyes coming down full upon me, raised, as it appeared, only just above the level of the water. I also saw showers of sparks shooting up in the air,

mingling with red fiery smoke—all, as I thought, being belched up by this strange monster, as he came along, hissing and heaving, and splashing up the water. I fell into a horrible fear, for I verily believed it to be Old Sam,* and that he had waylaid and was going to catch me. With all the trouble in the world I reached the bank, and leaped ashore, and abandoning my raft, took to my heels, and ran on towards some lights I had noticed; which I afterwards found were those of a town called Paducah, about a mile from where I had landed, in my terror.

I had reached the Ohio river.

I need not inform my readers that the monster I took to be the devil was only a steam-boat. It seems to me now very foolish that I should have been so frightened; but if they had been placed in the same circumstances, and been as ignorant as I was, they would have felt quite as much alarmed, I am sure.

* The negroes so call the devil.—ED.

CHAPTER XI.

FORTUNE AND MISFORTUNE.

WHEN I look back upon the events of my life, I fancy I can perceive the directing hand of Providence in all that befel me at this particular time. My very ignorance may have proved one means of my safety, for if I had not been terrified into abandoning my raft, I do not see how I could have escaped again speedily falling into the hands of my enemies. The circumstances of my escape show me now, that every thing worked together for my ultimate good, though I did not, at the time, think so, nor easily reconcile myself to the various misfortunes which befel me, and delayed my obtaining my freedom.

Had it been broad day instead of quite dark, when I left my raft to be carried away by the current, my appearance in Paducah would certainly had led to my re-capture. I was dirty and miserable-looking from fatigue, travelling, and want of sufficient food, and my clothes were all worn and ragged. I got into the town, how-

ever, at an hour when few people were about, and it was easier for me to avoid them. After resting to take breath, I determined to look out for a barber's shop. In the United States, the barbers are generally coloured men, and I concluded I should be in safer hands with one of my own race. So I strolled about, up and down the streets, peeping in at doors and windows, until at length I found what I was seeking. After a moment's hesitation I knocked gently at the door. It was presently opened by a black man, who no sooner saw me, than he understood by my looks that I wanted assistance. He at once invited me in, and immediately closed and fastened the door.

Having made me take a seat he asked me which way I was going.

"My master's gone down to New Orleans," I said, "and I want to join him again."

I knew he did not believe me, and that he saw I was telling him a lie; but I felt afraid to tell him the truth right out.

"You're a runaway," he answered, almost directly. "Where have you come from?"

I did not hesitate now to confess the fact; and as I thought he looked friendly, I told him my story from beginning to end, in as few words as

I could, he listening attentively all the while. When I had finished, he said :

“ You must n't stop here: it would be dangerous for both of us. You can sleep here to-night, however, and I will try to get you away in the morning. But if you were seen, and it were found out I was helping you off, it would break me up.”

Concluding I was hungry, he gave me some fried fish and some hoe-cake for supper. I need not say I ate heartily. We chatted for an hour or so, and I learnt his name, and that he was a free man from Illinois. I must not repeat his name, but if ever this book reaches him, he will remember me, and I wish him to know that I have always thought of him with gratitude for his kindness to me that night, and for his fidelity to me in my sore trouble.

He put me to sleep on his sofa, but I could not close my eyes for fear, as well as for a kind of shivering, brought on by my long exposure to cold and wet. If I slept at all, it was only by snatches, so that I felt quite relieved when morning came. My benefactor then informed me he had been making inquiries, and there was a steamer ready to start for New Orleans, on board of which I must go. She was called the *Neptune*.

I did not desire any thing better than to be off, fancying still that if I got safely to New Orleans I should find no difficulty in reaching England. Accordingly I jumped up, and after a hurried breakfast, made the best of my way to the quay, where I soon saw the steamer.

I went straight on board, and saw the Captain, to whom I repeated the story of my master's having gone on to New Orleans; that I had missed him, and wanted to join him as soon as possible. He did not say much then, being very busy, and I went and stood aside, trying to avoid notice. After we started, he began walking about, contriving to draw near to me every now and then, when he would fix his eyes on me in a very doubting way. At length we got to the fork of the Mississippi, below Paducah and Cairo, where the Ohio joins it. Here there is, in the last-named river, a flat shallow, and here the steamer took ground, knocking off her two iron-chimneys, and receiving other damage. The confusion and bustle caused by this accident diverted the Captain's attention from me, for a time, and were quite a relief to me from his constant watching. After a while we got free again, and he recommenced walking the deck, as before. He

also began to put questions to me now and then ; asking about my master ; wanting to know his name ; where he lived ; the names of his neighbours, and such like, all of which questions I strove to answer as unconcernedly and as satisfactorily as I could. I noticed him, however, to shake his head as he turned away, and I concluded he doubted my story, and that having his suspicions of my being a runaway, he would sell me as soon as we reached our destination. So I made up my mind to the worst, resolving, notwithstanding, to give him the slip, if I could.

I have said I thought England was near New Orleans, for I had always heard it spoken of as being " only just across the water." Whilst on board, I endeavoured to ascertain how far it was from New Orleans, and whether there would be any difficulty in my getting from there to England. I felt much relieved when the men told me I had only to " step across" from New Orleans to England, and quite hugged myself in the anticipation of so soon being beyond the reach of the slave-holders. But it was not long before I discovered that, taking advantage of my ignorance and simplicity, they had poked fun at me, and altogether misled me.

In about four or five days, and at about nine in the morning, we reached New Orleans. Oh, how my poor heart did beat, as the steamer drew near to the wharf side, and I saw the negroes at work. I then began to suspect all was not right, and my fears of the Captain increased every minute. There was great confusion on deck, as soon as the steamer was made fast, so many people coming on board, and so much running backwards and forwards. Watching for an opportunity when the Captain's back was turned, and his attention engaged by parties conversing with him, I slunk to the gangway, and walked off in the crowd, increasing my pace as I got further from the quay. I made for a place where I saw a number of cotton-waggons, tended by the drivers, who were all, or nearly all, of my own colour. They were carting cotton from the dock to the presses, and seemed very busy. I went up to them, and after asking a few questions, learnt that I was in the very heart of slavery, and further off from England than when I was in Georgia. They were not long in discovering me to be a runaway, and told me I should be certain to be taken up before night, and put into the calaboose or prison; and that I should be

flogged every morning until I told the name of my master. Under these circumstances I did not know what to do, but having asked them a few questions about the city, I set off again, thinking, as I went along, what I should do for the best.

I had ascertained, of the men I have alluded to, that Murrell and Buck Hurd were well known in New Orleans, and I now thought that if I could meet with either of them, I might perhaps get them to sell me, and to say nothing about it, as they would pocket a good sum by the sale, and I might get a good master. It makes me smile, now, to think of the slender hope there was of my running up against either of these men; though at the time I felt quite sanguine that they must be there, and that every thing would fall out as I wished. But it did not, quite.

After wandering about for some time, without meeting the parties I was seeking, it occurred to me to look out for some one like them; or for a party who might be likely to fall in with the plan I had imagined for getting myself sold, in order to save my back, and preserve any chances of escape a change of masters might bring me.

I had nothing to guide me in this apparently mad search, but an instinctive knowledge of character which I had acquired from a long habit of studying the expression of the countenance. Nor will this surprise my readers when they bear in mind how closely I had been forced to watch the changes of my master's physiognomy, as well as those of the parties he associated with, so as to frame my conduct in accordance with what I had reason to believe was their prevailing mood at any given time. Anyhow, I may say, without boasting, that a man's countenance is my guide to his disposition, and I have found my judgment in this respect so unfailling, that I would never act contrary to it. With this idea in my mind then, and looking at the folks I met, I walked on, until I came to a large street, and almost ran up against the man whom I felt I wanted most at that moment. He was young, and indifferently well dressed, his clothes looking dusty and tumbled. He had a gold-headed cane in his hand, and walked lazily, with rather an irregular step. I observed that he looked sleepy, and that his eyes were blood-shotten and puffy, as though he had been up all night. I set him

down in my mind for a gambler and a drunkard, of whom I had seen many such at Steven's, and I concluded he might want money: so I stopped him.

"Master," said I, speaking low, "I've run away, Sir."

He stopped short and looked at me a moment very hard.

"Run away?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Sir," I answered.

"Where from, Sir?" he asked, speaking roughly.

"From the State of Georgia, Sir," I replied.

"Well, Sir," said he then, "what's that to me?"

"Sir," I made reply, "I thought may be you would take me and sell me, and put the money in your pocket, so that my old master may never get me any more."

"Hum!" he said. "What part of Georgia have you come from?"

I told him I used to live in Baldwin County, and that my name was Benford; and he then asked me a great many questions, mentioning the names of people I knew, and amongst others that of Dr. Hamilton. He seemed satisfied I told him the truth, and bade me remain where I

was for five minutes, and he would go and see what he could do.

This occurred not far from the St. Charles' Hôtel, opposite to which there was—as I subsequently found out—an auction-room for the sale of negroes. He went in, and presently came out with another man, whom I afterwards learnt was Theophilus Freeman the negro-trader. It was a crafty thing the stranger did, to bring Freeman out to me. By so doing he avoided observation, and gave the trader an opportunity of striking a bargain without being over-heard by any other dealer. Freeman looked at me a minute, and then examined me, but did not at first seem disposed to purchase me. He found fault with my age and my appearance, and said I should not go off well, as I was not smart-looking enough. The young man then informed him I was a carpenter, and I added that I was a good workman, and worth any man's money. Freeman upon this asked what the young man, my supposed master, wanted for me, and was told eight hundred dollars, and that I was quite a bargain at that price. The trader did not make any remark about the sum, but asked to see the bill of sale relating to me. The young man answered that he had no

bill of sale of me; his father had given me to him, so there had been no need of one. He added that really he did not want to part with me, for I was a "thorough good boy;" but he had been gambling; had lost a large sum, and was quite hard up for cash, so he had no other alternative but to raise money by disposing of me. Freeman replied that he was very sorry for him, but without a bill of sale he would not give more than four hundred dollars for me. This made the young man very angry, and he swore at Freeman, and cursed him for being so hard; but after more chaffering, seeing that Freeman was firm, he consented to take the sum offered: so the bargain was struck upon the spot, and they both conducted me to the negro-pen, where I was shut up with other slaves, after being treated to a meal of cold bacon and cabbage.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SLAVE-PEN IN NEW ORLEANS.

I HAVE stated that the slave-pen to which I was taken, stood facing the St. Charles' Hôtel. It had formerly been an old Bank. It consisted of a block of houses forming a square, and covering perhaps an acre of ground. The centre of this square had been filled quite up with rubbish and stones, as high as the back of the first floor of the houses, so as to form a solid foundation for the yard of the pen, which, it will be understood, was level with the first floor, and nicely gravelled for the slaves to take exercise in. The houses themselves were built upon brick pillars or piers, the spaces between which had been converted into stores. Of these there were a great number, one of them being used as the negro auction-room.

The accommodation for the negroes consisted of three tiers of rooms, one above the other, the yard I have spoken of being common to all. There were two entrances to the pen, one for the "niggers," the other for visitors and buyers.

The windows in front, which overlooked the street, were heavily barred, as were those which overlooked the yard. It was an awfully gloomy place, notwithstanding the bustle that was always going on in it.

I may as well describe here the order of the daily proceedings, as during the whole time I remained in the pen, they were, one day with the other, pretty much the same.

A mulatto named Bob Freeman, and who was called the Steward, had charge of the arrangements that concerned the slaves. He had a great deal of power of a particular kind, and did very nearly what he liked in the way of making them comfortable or otherwise; shutting them up if he disliked them, or they displeased him: according as they were favourites with him or not. The pen would contain about five hundred, and was usually full. The men were separated from the women, and the children from both; but the youngest and handsomest females were set apart as the concubines of the masters, who generally changed mistresses every week.

I could relate, in connection with this part of my subject, some terrible things I know of, that happened, and lay bare some most frightful scenes of

immorality and vice which I witnessed; but I abstain, for reasons which my readers will, I hope, appreciate. I think it only right, however, to mention the above fact, that people may get a glimpse of the dreadful fate which awaits the young slave women who are sold away South, where the slave-pen is only another name for a brothel.

As may be imagined, the slaves are brought from all parts, are of all sorts, sizes, and ages, and arrive in various states of fatigue and condition; but they soon improve in their looks, as they are regularly fed, and have plenty to eat. As soon as we were roused in the morning, there was a general washing, and combing, and shaving, pulling out of grey hairs, and dyeing the hair of those who were too grey to be plucked without making them bald. When this was over—and it was no light business—we used to breakfast, getting bread, and bacon, and coffee, of which a sufficiency was given to us, that we might plump up and become sleek. Bob would then proceed to instruct us how to show ourselves off, and afterwards form us into companies, according to our size; those who were nearly of the same height and make being put into separate lots; the men, the women, and

the children of both sexes, being divided off all alike. In consequence of this arrangement, the various members of a family were of necessity separated, and would often see the last of one another in that dreadful show-room. The buying commenced at about ten in the morning, and lasted till one, during which time we were obliged to be sitting about in our respective companies, ready for inspection. At one we used to go to dinner, our usual food being a repetition of the morning meal, varied with vegetables, and a little fruit sometimes. After dinner we were compelled to walk, and dance, and kick about in the yard, for exercise; and Bob, who had a fiddle, used to play up jigs for us to dance to. If we did not dance to his fiddle, we used to have to do so to his whip, so no wonder we used our legs handsomely, though the music was none of the best. When our exercises were over, we used to be "sized out" again, ready for the afternoon sale, which commenced at three, and ended at six. This over, we had tea, and were then free to do what we liked in the pen, until Bob rang us off to bed at ten.

Of course our ranks were constantly thinned by sales, and as constantly recruited by fresh

arrivals. Amongst other "nigger speculators" whom I remember bringing in their coffles, were Williams from Washington, and Redford and Kelly from Kentucky, and M'Cargo from Richmond, in Virginia, who was Freeman's partner. It was surprising what large gangs they brought in, frequently filling the pen.

At the top of the building there was an attic called the "flogging-room." It was quite empty. Screwed into the floor were several rows of wooden cleets, for the purpose of reaving cords through. The name of the room tells what used to be done here. Every day there was flogging going on. It is a rule amongst "nigger dealers," not to flog with any instrument that will cut the skin, because this would depreciate the value of the "property;" therefore the punishment is inflicted with what is called a "flopping paddle." The "flop" is of leather, about a foot-and-a-half long, and as broad as the palm of the hand; perhaps a little broader: the handle is of wood, and about two feet long. Men, women, and girls are all punished alike. They are brought in and stripped stark naked, and laid flat on the floor, with their face downwards, their hands being made fast to the cleets by means of the cords.

Sometimes their feet are bound in the same manner, but usually a negro, who is called in for the purpose, holds the victim's feet down by main force, whilst the whipper lays on, "flop, flop, flop," for half an hour, which is the usual time the flogging lasts. The punishment is dreadfully severe, for all no blood is drawn. I have frequently been forced to come in and hold the feet of women and girls, and sometimes to "flop" them, as well as men; but I was never myself punished in this manner. "Flopping" was inflicted for various offences, especially the unpardonable one of "not speaking up and looking bright and smart" when the buyers were choosing.

As the importance of "looking bright" under such circumstances may not be readily understood by the ordinary run of readers, I may as well explain that the price a slave fetches depends, in a great measure, upon the general appearance he or she presents to the intending buyer. A man or a woman may be well made, and physically faultless in every respect, yet their value be impaired by a sour look, or a dull, vacant stare, or a general dulness of demeanour. For this reason the poor wretches who are about to be sold, are

instructed to look "spry and smart:" to hold themselves well up, and put on a smiling, cheerful countenance. They are also told to speak up for, and recommend themselves; to conceal any defects they may have, and especially not to tell their age when they are getting past the active period of life. It is quite a truism that "a nigger never knows when he was born," for though he may be quite certain of the year, and might swear to it blindfold, he must say he is just as old as his master chooses to bid him do, or he will have to take the consequences. It may be conceived that "nigger trading" is as much a calling as any other, and that there is an enormous amount of cheating and roguery in it. There are "nigger jockeys" as well as horse jockeys, and as many tricks are played off to sell a bad or an unsound "nigger," as there are to palm off a diseased horse; and the man who succeeds in "shoving off a used up nigger," as one sound in wind and limb, takes as much pride in boasting of it, as the horse dealer does who has taken in a green-horn with a wall-eyed pony. Of course these "tricks of the trade" are known, and every means are employed to defeat attempts at dishonest sales. I dare not—for decency's sake—detail the various

expedients that are resorted to by dealers to test the soundness of a male or a female slave. When I say that they are handled in the grossest manner, and inspected with the most elaborate and disgusting minuteness, I have said enough for the most obtuse understanding to fill up the outline of the horrible picture. What passes behind the screen in the auction-room, or in the room where the dealer is left alone with the "chattels" offered to him to buy, only those who have gone through the ordeal can tell. But God has recorded the wickedness that is done there, and punishment will assuredly fall upon the guilty.

I do not think any pen could describe the scene that takes place at a negro auction. The companies, regularly "sized out," are forced to stand up, as the buyers come up to them, and to straighten themselves as stiffly as they can. When spoken to, they must reply quickly, with a smile on their lips, though agony is in their heart, and the tear trembling in their eye. They must answer every question, and do as they are bid, to show themselves off; dance, jump, walk, leap, squat, tumble, and twist about, that the buyer may see they have no stiff joints, or other physical defect. Here may be seen husbands separated

from their wives, only by the width of the room, and children from their parents, one or both, witnessing the driving of the bargain that is to tear them asunder for ever, yet not a word of lamentation or anguish must escape from them; nor when the deed is consummated, dare they bid one another good-bye, or take one last embrace. Even the poor, dear, little children, who are crying and wringing their hands after "daddy and mammy," are not allowed to exchange with them a parting caress. Nature, however, will not be thus controlled, and in spite of the terrors of the paddle and the cow-hide, the most fearful scenes of anguish and confusion too often take place, converting the auction-room into a perfect Bedlam of despair. I cannot think of it without a cold shiver. I often dream of it, and as often dwell upon it in the day-time.

Oh, that the fine ladies of England could see with my eyes!

CHAPTER XIII.

I AM ONCE MORE SOLD.

I HAD been sold to Freeman under the name of Benford, by which name I was known during the time I remained in the pen, and here, therefore, I lost that of Fed. The very same evening of the day on which I became Freeman's property, the young man who had sold me to him, came to the pen, on a pretence of business. He soon found me out, and asked me to run off with him to Mobile. I refused to do so. I felt afraid, and did not want to incur the risk of encountering fresh difficulties, let alone that I had my own plan of escape to carry out. I noticed that he was better dressed than when I met him in the morning, so I concluded he had rigged himself out afresh with some of the money he had received for me. He saw I was determined not to fall in with his proposal, so he did not press it. He kept on talking to me, however, about indifferent matters, I wondering what he wanted, when I observed that his attention seemed directed to

Freeman and Mac Cargo, (whom I have already mentioned,) and who were playing cards in the gambling saloon. Every now and then, Mac Cargo, who lost, would run across into his own room, and take a handful of gold out of his trunk, with which he would return, to stake and play again. We could see all this very plainly, as the rooms were on the same landing. The young man then set me to watch, giving me instructions to cough if any body stirred, and I saw him go into Mac Cargo's chamber, straight to the trunk, the lid of which he lifted just high enough to allow his hand to go in. He presently returned with a great handful of the gold pieces, six of which he gave to me, and then went away into the gambling and drinking room.

I took the money and concealed it. I did not see there was any wrong in it. I said to myself it had been got by selling "niggers," and I had as much right to it as anybody. I am free to confess now that the morality of my argument was none of the highest, but I judged according to the notions I had at that time. I do not know what became of the young man, as I was removed next day; nor did I ever learn his name.

The gold proved very servicable. Being in

want of tobacco, I asked the mulatto steward, Bob Freeman, to buy me some, and gave him one of the gold pieces for that purpose. He did so, and brought me the change honestly. Finding I had money, he selected me to accompany him out to purchase provisions, and the friendship and liking he showed for me ultimately induced his masters, Freeman and Mac Cargo, to place confidence in me too. I used to go everywhere with Bob, especially when he had to take negroes down to the smith's, to have their irons taken off or new ones put on. By taking advantage of the opportunities thus afforded me, I contrived to get a good deal of information, which I treasured up for use at a future time; for I still cherished my project of escape.

I remember one day a coloured man named George being brought in, heavily ironed. As usual, Bob and I went with him to the smith's, to have the irons removed, and on the way I asked him why he had been so heavily ironed. He said it was for running away. I questioned him then more closely, and learnt he had come down the Mississippi. He informed me of the route he had taken, and in answer to further questions, told me that I might always know the Mississippi

river, because its waters are muddy, and that if I kept to the muddy water, going up the stream, it would take me into Missouri. This was, in my circumstances, a most useful practical hint. I did not neglect profiting by it when the time came.

In like manner I picked up, from others, a good stock of valuable knowledge, and began to have a more definite idea of what was before me. I saw that my success would depend as much upon my prudence as upon my resolution, and as I now knew that my best chance would be to make for the north, I directed my attention to the best means of getting there.

I could very considerably extend the dimensions of this narrative, were I to relate all the incidents that occurred to me during the three months I remained in the slave-pen at New Orleans. At some future time, I may add to what this book contains. For the present, I wish to confine myself, as much as possible, to the narration of those things which more immediately relate to myself. One particular circumstance, however, occurred there, which I will just mention, as illustrating the working of the system under which I was.

It is a regulation established in New Orleans by the local authorities, to imprison strange negroes or coloured people who come into the city, should they be unable or unwilling to give such an account of themselves as shall be satisfactory to the police. Of course slaves do not often come without their masters, so that the regulation is especially oppressive to the free coloured people who may be compelled, in pursuit of their lawful calling, to visit the city. One day Freeman met a young woman, whom he knew. She was a beautiful mulatto; a perfect lady, and the *wife* and slave of a gentleman in Natchez, from which place she had come. Freeman probably threatened her, for he knew that by taking advantage of his knowledge of her, the law gave him a power over her; so to escape the ignominy of working in the public streets, in what is called "the chain-gang," she was compelled to have her trunks conveyed to his place, to let it be supposed she belonged to him, and to stay with him till his Natchez drove came in; which was nearly a fortnight.

From what I have related of the pen, it will be seen that when once a man is in it, there is little hope of his effecting his escape. Still, a few do

so, notwithstanding the sharp look-out that is kept after them. I remember one slipping through our fingers. He had been sold as a "guaranteed nigger;" that is, warranted not to run away. In such cases, should the man bolt, the seller is obliged to refund the sum he received for him. Bob and I had to conduct this man down to the ship, as he was going to a cotton farm. We took him, and saw him quite safely on board, but half-an-hour after, his new master came to look for him. Bob and I were sent to help in the search, but we never found him; so Freeman was obliged to "cash up" for him. I remember feeling envious of that "boy."

Although I had been in the pen now so long, and been put up to sale a good many times, I had not yet found a purchaser. One reason of this was that Mac Cargo and Freeman demanded a heavy price for me, but also in some measure because I did not care to speak up for myself, so that my looks did not recommend me to buyers. Freeman knew I should fetch a price when the spring-crops came on, as I was a good carpenter, so he was in no hurry at first. But as the time wore on, and he found I did not go off, he began to suspect the truth, and he and Mac Cargo got

angry, and in my hearing said I did not care to try and sell myself, but that if I did not do so soon, they must make me. I knew very well what that threat meant. I had used the flopping-paddle too often not to understand; so I thought I ought to make up my mind now to save my back, by endeavouring to find a master.

Accordingly I began to draw Bob, and having learnt from him that there would be buyers from up the Mississippi, in a few days, I determined to pick one out, if I got the chance. I wanted to go in that direction, for reasons which should be plain to my readers; and when at last Bob told me the buyers were come, I felt quite excited with hope, and eager to meet them.

So I was put up again in the auction-room, and I took good care to look my brightest and answer my smartest. Such a character I gave myself, never a "nigger" had before. I was careful, however, to draw out the buyers, in order to learn what they wanted me for; which I judged of by the questions they put to me. One day a man came in, and I was called out and made to stand in the middle of the floor. His name was Jepsey James. He was a great, big robust man, with dark features, and wore a long,

shabby blanket coat. His countenance was very sour-looking, and I did not at all like the looks of him. It seems, however, that mine pleased him, so he had me out, and felt my limbs, and squinted at me till my eyes ached staring back at him, and asked me all sorts of questions, which I answered quite smartly. At last he struck a bargain for me, and I was sold to him for twelve hundred dollars.

My new master bought a good many others, besides myself, who were at once chained and handcuffed. Freeman guaranteed me, so I was not served so; and when I learnt that he and my new master placed confidence in me, I made it a point of honour not to try and get away, so long as we were in the city, though had I been so minded, there was no lack of opportunities. Bob and I were charged with the conducting of the drove to the quay. We shipped on board the steamer *Occola*, when Bob and I parted company. We were soon off, and at about four in the afternoon of the second day, we reached a landing, within a stone's throw of Jepsey James' house, just below the *Shirt-tail* bend in the Mississippi.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW I GOT AWAY FROM JEPSEY JAMES'.

My new master's place was distant about a hundred and fifty yards from the landing. He and his family dwelt in a dirty log hut, which formed the principal building in a group of about thirty negro picket cabins, the whole enclosed within a large "yard," about four acres in extent. These cabins were made of four crotches set upright in the ground, with cypress slabs across. The floor was of plank laid on the bare earth. It was an uncomfortable, prison-looking sort of a place, and the sight of it did not cheer me much. His wife was a small, fiery woman, and as good a "man of business" as himself. They were both rich, and had about a hundred and fifty slaves. The farm was a cotton farm. James grew nothing else.

After we reached our quarters, we got supper and turned in to rest. At four next morning we were roused up by the "nigger bell." It hung upon a post in the yard, twenty feet high, and

was rung by a rope. It was, I think, the month of February, for it was towards the close of cotton-picking time, and we all went out into the field to pick cotton from the bole, the children from ten years of age going out with us. We picked until twelve o'clock, when the cotton was weighed by a negro driver named Jeff, and we got our first meal, consisting of potatoe soup, made of Indian corn meal and potatoes, boiled up. It is called "lob-lolly," or "mush," or "stirt-about." A pint was served to each hand. It was brought into the field in wooden pails, and each slave being provided with a tin pannikin buckled round his waist, the distribution and disposal of the mess did not take long. After the meal, we set to again until night-fall, when our baskets were weighed a second time, and each hand's picking for the day told up. I had outpicked all the new hands. The rule is a hundred pounds for each hand. The first day I picked five pounds over this quantity; much to my sorrow as I found, in the long run, for as I picked so well at first, more was exacted of me, and if I flagged a minute, the whip was liberally applied to keep me up to the mark. By being driven in this way, I at last got to pick a hundred and sixty

pounds a day. My good picking, however, made it worse for me, for, being an old picker, I did well at first; but the others, being new at the work, were flogged till they fetched up with me; by which time I had done my best, and then got flogged for not doing better.

I may here observe that the women pick much faster than the men, their fingers being naturally more nimble; but as their baskets get filled, they become heavier to lift, and they lose time in removing them from place to place, so that by the time evening comes the men have fetched up with or out-picked them. The baskets are hamper-shaped, and contain from eighty-five to a hundred and twenty-five pounds. For every pound that is found short of the task, the punishment is one stroke of the bull-whip. I never got flogged for short weight, but many of the others did, poor things; and dreadful was the punishment they received, for the bull-whip is a dreadful instrument of torture, which I may as well describe in this place.

First a stock is chosen of a convenient length, the butt of which is loaded with lead, to give the whip force. The stock is then cleverly split to within a foot or so of the butt, into twelve strips.

A piece of tanned leather, divided into eight strips, is then drawn on the stock, so that the split lengths of the wooden stock and the strips of leather can be plaited together. This is done very regularly, until the leather tapers down to quite a fine point, the whip being altogether about six feet long, and as limber and lithsome as a snake. The thong does not bruise, but cuts; and those who are expert in the use of it, can do so with such dexterity, as to only just raise the skin and draw blood, or cut clean through to the bone. I have seen a board, a quarter of an inch thick, cut through with it, at one blow. I have also seen a man fasten a bullet to the end of the thong, and after giving the whip a whirl round his head, send the thong whizzing forward, and drive the bullet into a door. This fearful instrument is called a "bull-whip," because it is the master of all whips. It is also employed to "whip down" savage bulls, or unruly cattle. I have seen many a horse cut with it right through the hollow of the flank, and the animal brought quivering to the ground. The way of using it is to whirl it round the head until the thong acquires a certain forward power, and then to let the end of the thong fall across the

back, or on the part intended to be cut, the arm being drawn back with a kind of sweep. But although it is so formidable an instrument, it is seldom employed on slaves in such a manner as to disable them, for the "licks" are always regulated to an extreme nicety, so as only to cut the flesh and draw blood. But this is quite bad enough, and my readers will readily comprehend that with the fear of this punishment ever before us at Jepsey James', it was no wonder we did our utmost to make up our daily weight of cotton in the hamper.

After our day's picking was done, we got for supper the same quantity of "mush" as we had for breakfast in the morning, and this was the only kind of food we had during the whole time I was with Jepsey James, except what we could steal.

We went on picking cotton for two weeks, by the end of which time the season was at an end. We then were set to packing, and I was put in the jin-house.

I suppose I had the misfortune to get a run of bad masters. Jepsey was as bad as any of my former ones, and things were done at his place which makes my blood curdle to speak of. For

instance, he would flog women when they were in a certain delicate condition, previously causing a hole to be dug in the ground for them to lie in more conveniently, so as not to injure the burden they were carrying. I have myself witnessed this, and even been forced to hold them down. The poor women were dreadfully hard worked. I have known them to be taken in travail when in the field, and immediately after their trouble was over, compelled to return to work. One of these women I well remember. She was as white as Ellen Craft: that is, she might have passed for a white person without much fear of detection. There were, however, it seems, but very few births on Jepsey James' plantation, the female slaves being over-driven and over-worked.

Several instances of cruelty occurred whilst I was there, of which I will relate one or two.

Thomas James, Jep's second son, had cast his eyes on a handsome young negro girl, to whom he made dishonest overtures. She would not submit to him, and finding he could not overcome her, he swore he would be revenged. One night he called her out of the jin-house, and then bade me and two or three more, strip her naked; which we did. He then made us throw her

down on her face, in front of the door, and hold her whilst he flogged her—the brute—with the bull-whip, cutting great gashes of flesh out of her person, at every blow, from five to six inches long. The poor unfortunate girl screamed most awfully all the time, and writhed under our strong arms, rendering it necessary for us to use our united strength to hold her down. He flogged her for half an hour, until he nearly killed her, and then left her, to crawl away to her cabin.

Poor girl! How my heart bled for her!

Another time John James, another of Jep's sons, and a married man, sought the wife of a slave named Abram. In order to gain access more easily to the man's cabin, he set a tree on fire, and then sent Abram to watch the fence, lest it should catch and burn down. Abram suspected John James' design upon his wife, and that this was a mere pretext to get rid of him for a while. His cabin was a full mile from the spot he had to watch, but he felt so uneasy about home, that instead of stopping at the fire, he ran to and from the fence to his hut. The consequence was that the fence—which was of solid wood—took fire, and burnt for the distance of three quarters of a mile. I mention this circum-

stance, because it happened on a certain Saturday night, when I had made preparations to run off on the Sunday, and I was compelled instead, to set to splitting timber to make the fence good. By "preparations," I mean that I had been looking out for chances, and made up a plan in my mind for taking a fresh start.

Jepsey James had all along inspired me with dread, and my old determination to get away from slavery had been quickened by sundry conversations I overheard on several occasions, all having reference to me.

One day master came in with a "nigger hunter" and his six dogs. He wished to frighten me: at least I concluded so. I had been sullen for some days, and he had observed it. On this occasion, he addressed one of the hands named Amos:

"Amos," he said, "when are any of you niggers going to run off again?"

"We does n't want to run away, Sir," Amos answered.

"Oh yes you do," said master. "You 'd better run off, some of you. We 've got some of the right kind of dogs now to fetch you back, quicker a heap than you can run a-head. You 'd

better start, some of you. In less than two days we 'll bring you back."

He looked at me very hard and suspiciously whilst he spoke: so, said I to myself:

"Old fellow, you 're speaking at me, I know. But I'll give you and your dogs a chance to track me yet, any how."

On another occasion I overheard him speaking to his son John, with whom, by the way, I was a bit of a favourite. He said I looked hard, as though I should give him some trouble to break me in. He added that I must be flogged, to see how I should stand it, and that it would have to be done before the summer came on, or the bushes sprouted into leaf, as, if I were flogged then, and should run off, it would be more difficult to find me out.

These conversations did not hold out a very encouraging prospect for me, and I therefore determined to be off as soon as I could. I arranged my plan in my head, which was to keep up the Mississippi, and make for the North as rapidly as possible. I only now waited for the favourable moment to start.

I have stated what circumstance prevented me from setting off on the day I had fixed upon for

making the attempt. On the Monday night, however, having now been at Jepsey James' three months, I started on my travels once more. I watched until the negro quarters had been inspected, then skulked out into the yard, where I had observed a small skiff. I dragged it down to the water, and crossed over to the Arkansas side, the river here being about a mile in width. Having reached the bank, I turned the skiff adrift. I had chosen this mode of making my escape, because I knew the skiff would be missed, and that James would naturally conclude I had gone towards New Orleans, and would hunt for me in that direction, never suspecting I should go up stream. I think I was right in this conjecture. Any how, here I was safe for the present, and I at once set off walking as hard as I could put foot to the ground.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW I CAME TO BE JOHN BROWN.

DURING my journey I observed the plan I had followed on former occasions; namely, walking by night, and lying by for rest and concealment in the day, sleeping behind logs, like a wild man. I guided my course by following the muddy waters of the Mississippi, but I was frequently balked by coming to inlets or *bayous*. These are considerably lower than the bed of the river, and are full of alligators. I used to hear these creatures at night, snorting and plashing about in the water—to my mortal terror—for I did not know but that I might, at any moment, unexpectedly fall into their hungry jaws. When I came to one of these *bayous* I would follow the bank until I came to a ferry. Here I would stop, and watching an opportunity, draw the staple that kept the boat fastened, and cross over in the boat to the opposite side, where I would leave it. I would then go down that bank until I reached the Mississippi again. I lived, or rather sustained

life, by eating raw corn, potatoes, pine roots, and sassafras buds. The country I passed through appeared to be quite thinly inhabited; there was, however, plenty of wood and reed cane, so that I found no sort of difficulty in hiding myself, even quite close down to the water's edge. From these places of concealment I used to watch the steamers going up and down the river; and these served to guide me in my course, for I knew they must start from somewhere, and I hoped that I might find friends there, and rest for a time.

At last I reached a great town where the steamers were in large numbers. I cannot say, with any accuracy, how long I was getting to it many weary days and nights I know. I judge it must have taken me at least three months. Being at a loss what to do, or where to go, without information, I took courage, and went on board one of the steamers. It was early in the morning, and there were not very many people about, on deck; but my appearance excited the suspicion of the captain, who pointed me out to the mate, and said I looked like a runaway. I observed them closely without appearing to do so, and went to the cook, who was a coloured man, to beg

something to eat. He gave me some bread and beef. I also learnt that the name of the steamer was the *Ellen Kirkman*, and that the great town was St. Louis, in Missouri. The cook asked me a great many questions, but I did not like to answer him too freely; especially as I was watched by the captain and the mate, who had now both placed themselves at the bow of the boat, evidently with the intention of capturing me, as they concluded I must pass them to get ashore. The *Ellen Kirkman* was one of the outside vessels. I had made my way to her, because I thought there would be less chance of my being noticed by the along shore people. Seeing how closely I was watched, and feeling quite satisfied that the captain and the mate intended me a mischief, I made up my mind how to circumvent them; and watching a favourable moment, suddenly slipped off on the opposite side of the vessel, at the stern, and crossed the other steamers till I reached the shore. As soon as I felt land again, I walked off at a tolerably rapid pace down the quay, and turned sharp round into the first street.

It was Sunday morning, and the people were going to meeting. I noticed a number of coloured people walking all in one direction, towards a

chapel, where some more were going in: for the State I was now in, bordering on a Free State, they were permitted the right—denied to them in other Slave States—to worship God like other folks. To avoid suspicion, I went in too and sat down, and waited till the meeting was over, and all the congregation gone, with the exception of the deacons and other principal men belonging to it. I followed them out, and after we had gone on a little way they closed up and began talking to me. They soon discovered me to be a stranger, and one of them then invited me to go home with him. I gladly accepted his offer, and he fed me, and gave me a hat and a clean shirt. I told him I was suspected of being a runaway, but was not. I did not like to tell him the truth, being afraid of getting him into trouble. In the afternoon I went to meeting again, staying till it broke up. I had learnt, of the friend who received me in the morning, the name of the minister of the chapel. It was Cole, and I did think of going to him, but gave up the idea, lest I might expose him to danger for helping me. All this I thought of whilst in chapel, and at last made up my mind to leave the town as soon as it got dark. When I set off, however, I found the watch about, and

became alarmed, as I knew they would capture me without ceremony. I therefore slunk back to the house of the man I have referred to, and, quite unknown to him, concealed myself all night in the out-house. Here I put on the clean shirt. I had a bundle with me, containing an old waistcoat, an old Kentucky coat, which I had procured at New Orleans, an old pair of trowsers, and an old shirt. I dressed myself in these things and put up my old ones in the bundle, intending to throw them away.

In the morning I went down to the water-side, and, on my way, disposed of my bundle on the top of a pile of steam-boat shafts and boilers. When I got to the quay I asked for work, saying I was a carpenter. I might have hired myself over and over again, but I really did not want to do so. I only wanted to avoid suspicion, and get safe into the woods again, so I asked such a high price for my labour that nobody would hire me. I soon found, however, that my conduct in this respect excited suspicion, therefore I at last accepted of a job, undertaking to come the next morning and bring my weekly pass; for I had, in reply to the questions put to me, given out that I was not free, but was allowed by my master to hire my-

self out: a thing that is often done. In this way I avoided many embarrassing questions, and got the opportunity of acquiring some very useful scraps of information; to do which, indeed, was one of my principal objects in coming down to the quay.

After striking my bargain, and sauntering about awhile, I started off till I came to the woods, a mile and a half from the town, where I remained the rest of the day. As soon as it got dark, I took the same road back, intending to return into the town; but I became alarmed, and coming to a steam-mill between two ferries, I crept along on my hands and knees to a place where I had noticed, in the morning, a little boat fastened to a tree, and which it was now my object to get. It lay between the two ferries, and nearly opposite to the upper point of an island that lies between St. Louis and the Illinois bank. I reached the boat, jumped into it, snapped the chain by a rude jerk, and put off. The current was rapid and very strong, and the river of considerable width, and full of snags. My object was to make the upper point of the island, for if I failed, and struck it at any other part, I knew that the current would draw me down to the steam-boat wharf

again, where I should be discovered by the watch. It was with the utmost difficulty I avoided the snags, but at length I touched the island, at the spot I have mentioned. On reaching the bank I encountered another difficulty. The current had undermined the turf, and made it so rotten, that I could not land, not being able to make the boat fast. I was so exhausted, too, by the efforts I had made to reach the Illinois side, that before I recovered myself, I drifted quite three quarters of a mile down, to a place where the stump of a tree stuck up, at the water's edge. Here I succeeded in securing the boat, and when the current brought her gunwale on, close enough to the bank, I leaped ashore.

By this time it was daylight, and therefore dangerous for me to be seen; but I had no alternative save to walk on till I should reach a convenient place of concealment. I had not proceeded very far, before I saw a white man, to whom I made up.

“If you please, Sir,” said I, “do you know of a coloured man living away about here?”

“What name?” asked he.

“Well, Sir,” I answered, “I can't remember his name. I've forgotten it. But I was told he used to live about here.”

“Name Cæsar?” asked the stranger.

“That’s it, I think,” said I.

“Well, yes, there’s a coloured man of that name does live on this side. He’s down away yonder, a good bit, cutting walnut cord-wood. If you go on, you’re sure to meet with him.”

With my heart leaping almost into my throat, I thanked the man, and went on, and some time after came to the place where Cæsar was very busy plying his axe. We were not long in coming to an understanding. I told him my story; he gave me shelter in his shanty, shared his food with me, and I sat with him till dark. I learnt from him that he was the only coloured man who lived on that side, close to the river, for there was no business doing there; so although the question I had put to the white man was quite a natural one, under the circumstances in which I was placed, I had every reason to congratulate myself on having been so fortunate as to fall in with Cæsar at this particular time.

This good fellow gave me the most precise information about the country, advising me what roads to take, and what towns to avoid. He advised me not to make for Chicago; to avoid Springfield, and to go to Indianapolis by way of Vandalia. He also directed me to call at a place,

the name of which, I think, is Rockville, where I should find a coloured man, a friend of his, from North Carolina, on whose aid I might rely. Accordingly I set off again at night, walking until day-break, through a small prairie, extending between the Mississippi and the forks of the Springfield and Vandalia roads. By the time it was light, however, I had not got further than about seven miles from the river, the road through the prairie being cut up into deep ruts by waggons and carts, and all filled with mud and water. As it was not safe for me to continue my journey, I looked about for a place of concealment, and soon found one, in the lock of a high wooden fence, the end of which went down to the water's edge. Here I intended staying till night. I made my walking-stick serve as a seat, by fixing it across the timbers of the fence, and then crouched down, so as to avoid being seen as much as possible; but, overcome by fatigue, I fell asleep.

I was awakened by a voice, crying out—

“Hallo, old fellow! Are you asleep?”

I looked up, and remembering the advice I had received from Cæsar, never to look frightened if I should be surprised by any one, I answered, without getting up :

“ No, I ’m not asleep ! I was asleep till you waked me, though.”

The party who spoke to me was a common-sized man, who had perched himself up on the top of the fence, which was from seven to eight feet high, and made of split timbers, ten feet and a half long. He held a fowling-piece across his lap, and had I started off, could easily have shot me, for I must have run before him, the fence preventing my getting away in one direction, the water in the other, and the prairie in a third.

“ Which way are you going ?” he asked.

“ I ’m not going anywhere,” I replied. “ I ’m sitting down.”

Bethinking myself that I ought to show a reason for being asleep so early in the morning, I scrambled up, and pretended to be drunk, staggering, and reeling, and looking foolishly at him.

“ Hie, old fellow !” he said, then ; “ you ’ve been drinking, I reckon.”

“ Yes, Sir, been drinking a little,” I answered.

“ Do you live in this part of the country ?” he inquired.

“ Oh no ! My home is in Buffalo,” I made answer ; for Cæsar had told me to say so, if any

one asked me such a question. "I've been following the water, and I got away round to New Orleans, and from there to St. Louis. Now I'm going on through the country, on by Vandalia, to see my cousin."

"Well, old fellow," the man said; "you had better hire yourself out to me. Don't you want to cut some cord wood?"

"What sort of pay will you give me?" said I.

"Half a dollar a-day," he answered.

"What will you pay me in?" I asked.

"Well, would n't you like to have a gun?"

"What sort of a gun?"

"This one," he said, patting the one he held.

"That gun's of no account," I said; and here I staggered again.

"It's very good to shoot ducks with," he made answer.

"Oh," I said; "the land's so wet that you can't travel by it, let alone going into the water after ducks. But I think I'll take your offer, for the weather is so bad, I don't suppose I shall be able to get along very well."

"Well," he answered, "you go up to the house yonder, and I'll go to Vandalia road to get some eggs."

So saying, he jumped down from the fence and went on.

The house was half a mile from this place. I made straight for it, but the mistress of the house, who was in the horse-yard, would not let me in when I knocked at the door. I suppose she was afraid, for I know she saw me as I was going by. I turned from the door, and observing that the men in the field had stopped their horses, and were leaning against the handles of their ploughs, watching me, I thought it best to go up boldly to them, so as to avert suspicion. I pretended to want work, and in answer to their questions, told them I was a carpenter and joiner. They said they did not want any mechanical workman, but that if I went on the Springfield road, down under the Bluff, there was a man there would employ me. As I saw woods in the direction they pointed out, their advice suited me very well; so I went on till I got into the woods on the Springfield road. Here I found a chunk of a blown-down tree. I got behind it, and as it was crooked, I could, by lying down, very conveniently peep out from under the crook. I watched to see whether any persons were following me, or dogging my steps, but saw no

one; so I remained till dark, when I set off again.

I had been wringing wet now for forty-eight hours, and when I got up, was all of a shiver; but I went on, notwithstanding, till morning came, by which time I was in the high road to Vandalia, having crossed the woods in the night. At last I reached the place to which Cæsar had directed me. Here I soon made out the man I wanted. I got a rest at his dwelling, and induced him to get me a free pass, for which I made him take an old watch. With that pass I assumed the name of John Brown, which I have retained ever since.

CHAPTER XVI.

I AM ADVERTISED AS A RUN-AWAY.

HAVING now assumed such a name as I could safely travel by, I set off for Vandalia, which took me a week to reach, walking by night, and lying by in concealment in the day, to recruit myself by such sleep and rest as I could snatch. I ran very short of food the whole time, and experienced many serious difficulties from my ignorance of the roads, and my fears of being captured. I found the rivers a serious obstacle, too, for I did not always light upon canoes, ferries, or the proper fording-places. I incurred great risk besides, in seeking information respecting the best roads to distant places. My plan, however, was to lurk about in the neighbourhood of some isolated dwelling, until it was quite late in the night, and people were fast asleep. I would then knock them up out of their beds, when they would hasten to the window, and look out, half awake, to see what was the matter. I would then put the questions I wanted answered, and as they

could not see my colour in the dark, I never found them backward in replying, as they seemed always in too great a hurry to get back to bed. In this manner, and though I was in constant fear, I contrived to steer pretty clear of danger, keeping by the high-road from Vandalia, until I reached Terrehaute, on the Wabash river.

I crossed this river in a canoe which I found moored to the bank. It was in the night, and I had to walk about until morning, keeping a sharp look-out all round. I watched until I saw a coloured man, whom I addressed, and to whom I told my story. In the course of conversation we found out that the preacher at St. Louis was his brother. He was quite glad to hear of him through me, and took me home, where he gave me some refreshment. But I could not remain with him, he said, as it would expose him to danger, so he directed me to a settlement of coloured people, situated at about three miles from his place, where he intimated I could remain a while in safety. I reached it without difficulty, and passing myself off as a free man, staid in the place for two weeks, doing jobs of carpentering, at the end of which time I found it desirable to start off again on my travels, in consequence of

the people's suspicions becoming excited by my answers to their questions. So I set off for Indianapolis, the road to which I had ascertained.

Here I got a great fright. I chanced to fall in with a coloured man who was out white-washing. On my accosting him he looked at me very hard, and presently informed me I was in great and immediate danger, for that there were advertisements out, giving an accurate description of my person, and offering a very large sum for my apprehension. This was, indeed, sad news for me, though I might have expected it. Jepsey James had issued the notices, and sent them flying all through the country by means of the steamers and other modes of transmitting information. My friend—and a true friend he proved to me; may God bless him!—told me it would be more than his life was worth if we were seen together; but for all that, he took me to his house, and concealed me till night. On our way he pointed out the placards on the walls, and read what they said; and sure enough my master had drawn my picture so well, that nobody could have mistaken me, unless he had been blind. When we reached his house, he gave me plenty to eat—not before I

wanted it—and what I required then still more, good advice, of which he was not sparing. He told me that so many slaves were escaping from slavery, that the slave-holders were all roused, and determined to deal a terrible revenge on the first one they caught running off. Those in the more Southern states had sent forward to their friends north, who were all on the look-out to help them in defence of their common interests. A great many runaways had been traced to that neighbourhood, which was all in a commotion in consequence. He added that the Quakers were known to have helped off the runaways, by the Underground Railroad, and that they had been brought into great trouble through it, and through having otherwise protected the coloured people. Numbers of them, he said, had been ruined by law-suits, which the slave-holders had brought against them; others had had their farm-houses burnt down, their woods and plantations set on fire, their crops destroyed, their stock driven off; and many of them had been themselves seriously injured by the violence of mobs. Still, they kept on helping off as many slaves as ever, because they felt it to be their duty to do so, and nothing would turn them from it.

I felt very much distressed to hear of these things; and though I had never seen any of the people he spoke about, my gratitude to them was unbounded, for I felt that if I could once get into their hands, I should be safe. I have since learnt to love them, for what they did for me then, and for what they have done for me since. The memory of their kind deeds will ever live in my heart while it beats.

My friend gave me a full account of the Underground Railroad, for as I did not understand any thing about it, I asked him a good many questions. I have been permitted to add, in another chapter, a brief history of it, penned by the Editor of my Narrative. I have met with, I may say, many hundreds of persons in England, who do not know more about the Underground Railroad than I did once; and to those who are in similar ignorance, that chapter will be as interesting as any that relates to myself.

My good friend also informed me in what direction I should go that night, in order to reach a certain town on Blue River, within, say a hundred miles of Carthage, and where one of the managers of the line resided. He gave me his name, and precise instructions to find out his resi-

dence ; but, for obvious reasons, I do not think it prudent to mention his name, or that of the town in which he lived ; nay, perhaps lives now. His was the first station of the Underground line, in that part of the country, and it was absolutely necessary for me to reach it that night. It was thirty miles from my friend's house, and he impressed upon me the necessity of making up my mind to accomplish the distance before day-break, or I should certainly be lost ; that is, captured. Of course, with such a prospect before me, I had every inducement to task my remaining strength to the utmost, in order to cover the ground within the time, though, it being now the month of August, the space between night-fall and day-break was not any too long for me to do what was before me. As soon, however, as it set in quite dusk to make it safe for me to go, I took leave of my benefactor, and set out with a stout heart.

What I endured of anxiety that night will never be effaced from my memory. I had received general instructions for my guidance on the road, and been told what villages I should have to go through. But in order to avoid incurring unnecessary risk, when I reached a village, instead of passing through it, I would make a turn and go round it,

endeavouring to strike the road a little beyond. This did not always succeed. More than once, after going right round one side of a village, and coming to a road, my heart misgave me, and in obedience to a secret presentiment that all was not right, and which I found it impossible to resist, I turned back, and beat about until I struck another road, even retracing my steps, more than once, until I came to the road that left no misgiving on my mind, when I would go on again as brave as a lion.

Many people will say I was superstitious. And so I was. But the feeling was a kind of instinct, whose cautions, even at the present day, I cannot help minding.

In this way I walked and ran the whole night, but as day broke I had the satisfaction of seeing afar off, the town I was making for, and very soon after, I enjoyed the still greater pleasure of finding myself in a place of safety.

CHAPTER XVII.

I AM BOOKED TO CANADA, EXPRESS, BY THE
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD.

I HAD been instructed by my friend to seek out a certain coloured man, on my arrival at the town in which I now was, and where there was a considerable settlement of Quakers. He had given me a very precise description of the spot where his house stood, and by what signs I should know it. Accordingly I lost no time in seeking it, and soon found it out. My new friend was at home, and on my making myself known to him, which I did by mentioning the name of our mutual acquaintance, he knew what I wanted. He then gave me directions to go to a certain house, which he pointed out to me, where I should be in safety. He could not accompany me, as that would have been imprudent, and have exposed him to danger. I made straight for the place, and, on being seen, was instantly taken in.

Between nine and ten months had now elapsed since I left De Cator Stevens', the whole of which

time had been one of sore trial to me. Having, however, brought my readers with me to a place of rest, I wish to dwell a little on this part of my history, for what happened to me here, forms an era in my life.

I was introduced by two sturdy young men to their father, as "another of the travellers bound to the North Star." The old man laid a hand upon my shoulder, and taking my other hand in his, gave me a welcome, and then conducting me into the parlour, introduced me to his wife. It was now past sun-rise, and they were about going to breakfast. I was, however, taken to an upper room, where I had a good wash, in a white basin, and where clean linen and a complete suit of clothes were brought to me. After refreshing myself by this wholesome change, I was re-conducted to the parlour, and seated at the table.

It was the first time in my life I had found myself in such grand company. I was so completely abashed, and felt so out of my element, that I had no eyes, no ears, no understanding. I was quite bewildered. As to eating, it was out of the question.

"Come, friend John Brown, thee must eat," said the kind old lady, heaping my plate up with

fried ham and eggs. "Thee need'nt be afraid of eating."

"I'm sure thee must be hungry," added the old gentleman, handing me a great chunk of bread. "Eat away, and don't thee be afraid. We have plenty more in the house."

But it was all of no use, and though an hour or even half an hour before, I had felt that I could devour any thing, the smoking coffee, ham, eggs, and sausages, and the nice white bread could not tempt me. For a good half hour this continued: they pressing me to eat, and I quite unable to do so. At last I began, and picked a bit now and then, receiving encouragement as my courage seemed to increase. My appetite came with my courage, and then—oh! how I did eat!

I fear my readers may think I exaggerate when I tell them that "I ate straight on for an entire hour, quite steady." I demolished all the ham and eggs and sausages they placed before me, with their due accompaniment of bread, and then a round of cold salt beef was brought up, from which I was helped abundantly. I could not but notice the looks of my new friends. The old gentleman would cough and wipe his eyes now and then,

and the younger folks keep exchanging glances with one another. The old lady, fearing I should do myself an injury, made several ineffectual attempts to draw my attention off.

“Friend John Brown, we wish to talk with thee, as soon as thou can,” she said; “we want to hear all about thee.”

“Yes, ma’am,” I answered, without leaving off: “you can go on, ma’am; I can talk and eat too.”

I dare not say how long I might have gone on. I had not eaten a meal for so long, that now it seemed as though I never could satisfy my craving. At last the old lady said, decidedly:

“Friend, John Brown, thee must n’t take it unkindly, but thee must n’t eat any more now. Thou can’t have some more in the day-time if thou like; but thou wilt make thyself ill, if thou take more now.”

And so I was obliged to give in.

A chapter from the Scriptures was read after breakfast, which, including my “spell” at the table, had lasted two hours from the time we sat down.

I was then conducted into a safe retreat, where there was a comfortable bed provided for me,

into which I got, and soon fell asleep. I slept until I was awakened at three in the afternoon, when I was taken down to dinner. After that we sat and chatted until supper-time, and then I went to bed again. In the middle of the night I awoke, and finding myself in a strange place, became alarmed. It was a clear, starlight night, and I could see the walls of my room, and the curtains all of a dazzling whiteness around me. I felt so singularly happy, however, notwithstanding the fear I was in, at not being able to make out where I was, that I could only conclude I was in a dream, or a vision, and for some minutes I could not rid my mind of this idea. At last I became alive to the truth; that I was in a friend's house, and that I really was free and safe.

I had never learnt to pray; but if what passed in my heart that night was not prayer, I am sure I shall never pray as long as I live.

I cannot describe the blessed happiness I enjoyed in my benefactor's family, during the time I remained there, which was from the Friday morning to the Saturday night week. So happy I never can be again, because I do not think the circumstances in which I may be placed, will ever be of a nature to excite similar feelings in my breast.

At length the time came for me to go, though I was not previously told it was necessary for my own safety that I should quit my benefactors. On the Saturday afternoon week, there had been some talk of the camp of the coloured people, near, where they met for worship, and I was asked, quite cursorily, whether I would like to go and see it. I answered in the affirmative. When it was quite dark—perhaps it might be eight o'clock—I was called out to the door, as if to go and see the camp. There I saw three saddle-horses, on one of which one of the old gentleman's sons was mounted, holding the second horse by the bridle. The other son held the third horse, and was dismounted.

“Friend John,” he said, “it is not safe for thee to stay any longer ; nor for us to keep thee. Come, jump up.”

There was no alternative but for me to get across the beast that had been provided for me. I did so, not without suspicion that I was going to be taken back into slavery. I hope I may be forgiven for entertaining such a thought ; but after all I had passed through, I was not ready to place implicit confidence even in those who treated me as a friend. I am sure I am now very

sorry for ever having suspected my noble survivors.

They placed me between them, and off we set as hard as our animals could go. We frightened a lot of coloured people in a village we passed through, who were coming from their Saturday night's meeting; and not a few persons opened their doors to come and stare at us, we made such a clatter. At about twelve we reached our destination; the first station of the Underground line from head-quarters.

I remember very well the odd reception we met with, at the hands of the bluff old Quaker who received us:

“What! Only one, and coming at this time of night. Why I've room and food ready for a dozen. But come in, come in and rest.”

My conductors remained talking till half-past one, when they took leave of us. After they were gone, I sat up till three, telling the family of my escape and adventures, and then I retired to bed. The next day, being Sunday, the family went to Meeting. They brought in to dinner a middle-aged, strong-built Friend, who talked with me a good deal. At about three in the afternoon, I was told that horses were ready, and that I must start

with this gentleman, as we had a good way to go. It came very suddenly upon me, to leave so soon, but I complied, of course, and we set off.

All that afternoon, the whole night, and the whole of the next day, we travelled, only stopping at times to let our beasts graze. I suppose we went a hundred miles, crossing the Wabash again, and going through the Indian reserve on our way. At last, at about three on the Monday afternoon, we reached the station; and glad enough I was.

My Quaker friend of the pleasant countenance and sturdy frame, remained till next afternoon, when he started back. Finding I was safe, for the present, I thought I would stay here awhile. Accordingly I set to splitting rails, with my host's son, and shooting squirrels. But the suspicion of the folks around became excited, so that after I had been here a fortnight, I found it safer to start again. I was encouraged to do so by my host; and having been provided with an ample supply of corn-bread, and meat, I set off to another place, which my friends indicated, about a hundred miles off. I was three or four days getting to it, but was received kindly; and here I should have remained awhile, but was

informed it would be unsafe; so after resting four days, during which time I worked splitting rails, I set off one morning for Marshall, in Michigan.

It would not interest my readers much to follow me on my journey, for nothing of any consequence occurred to me. I travelled chiefly by night, that being the safest time. Indeed, I made very light of any real privations I now experienced. The sense of present security, and the certainty of freedom awaiting me, more than compensated me for temporary inconveniences. I felt quite happy, knowing I should meet with none but friends on my road to Canada. My way seemed perfectly clear, and the only description I can give of my sensations, is, that I felt like a new man.

I arrived in Marshall one morning, and was in search of a certain friend, when I was hailed, as I was going down the street, by a number of coloured people who were building a chapel, and who had been hired to do the work by Mr. Fitch. They asked me various questions, and I soon discovered that, like myself, they were fugitives from slavery. Their names were Samuel Patterson, Noel Johnson, Thomas Smith, a man named Samuel, Elias Earle, and Thomas

Christopher. They told me I need not fear any thing, as I was now quite out of danger, and asked me whether I would join them, and work for my living. I readily consented, and accordingly I was set to carry bricks and mortar. On the third day I felt unaccountably dull, and something told me not to go to my work, so, instead, I went into the woods to cut timber for the same building, which occupation suited me better, I being a carpenter. I had been there about half the day, when some one came and told me that the props of the chapel had given way, and that the men had only escaped by a sort of miracle.

Another curious circumstance also happened whilst I was employed here. Two of my mates, Noel Johnson and Thomas Smith, had belonged to one John Shelby, of Lexington, in Kentucky. They had been willed to his son-in-law, one West, and he had removed them into Missouri, whence they had run off. West traced them to Marshall (where I fell in with them,) after they had been there quite two years, and one day made his appearance for the purpose of claiming and taking them back into slavery. When we heard of it, we determined to stand by them; and all rose, as one man, to defend them, and prevent

them from being carried off. Finding us so resolute, West became very much alarmed, and actually appealed to his former slave, Johnson, for protection. Johnson at once extended it to him; took him home and gave him some dinner, and afterwards got him safely away.

But to return to myself. I remained in Marshall until the chapel was completed—that is, for about a twelvemonth—and then made straight for Detroit. Here I fell in with one Mr. Joseph Teague, captain of a party of Cornish miners, who were fitting out to explore the copper region on Lake Superior. I engaged myself to Captain Teague, believing that I should be safer with Englishmen in the mines than anywhere else. He was a native of Redruth, in Cornwall, where he resided when at home. He had come over under contract, to test the copper-mines belonging to Jones & Co., of Boston. We went from Detroit to Copper Harbour, by Mackinaw and Sault St. Mary, and thence to the mouth of the Ontonagon River, Michigan. From this place we went to Cyrus Mindenhall's location, and afterwards to the Porcupine Mountains. I remained working in the mines, as a miner's carpenter, for eighteen months, when Captain Teague started to return

to England. I engaged to follow him almost immediately, and to join him in Redruth; but having heard a great deal, since I had been in this part of the country, of the Dawn Institute, at Dawn, Canada West, I wished first to see something of it. Accordingly I made my way to it, and remained five or six months, working at the saw-mill. I helped to saw the walnut timber which was sent to the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, in 1851, and exhibited in the Canadian department, where I afterwards saw it again; and I also constructed a floating self-acting carway, designed to draw timber from the water to the saw, which answered very well, and for which I was praised.

I had not reason to be pleased with the manner in which the affairs of the Dawn Institute were managed. I will not mention names, because I do not want to speak disparagingly of any body. But, in consequence, I left Dawn, sooner than I intended, and having a little money to receive for work that I had done, I secured a berth on board the *Parliament*, Captain Brown, bound from Boston to Liverpool. We left the former port the last week in July 1850, and reached Liverpool on the 10th of August, after a surprising run of fifteen days.

Thus, after all my trials and sufferings, I found myself at last safely landed in the town where poor John Glasgow left his wife and children so many years before.

I lost no time in making my way to Redruth, as I was anxious to begin work under my old captain and friend, Joe Teague. To my great grief, when I reached the town, I learned that he had never returned to England, but had died in Boston. I saw his son William, however, and a friend of the captain's, one Mr. Richardson, and also the clergyman of the parish, from all of whom I obtained testimonials. There are now miners working in the mines there, with whom I worked in those of Lake Superior. Their names are Thomas Champion, Thomas Williams, James Vivian, Richard George, William George, Thomas Polkinghorn, and Richard Pascoe, who, with Captain Teague and his son Joseph, were in my mine, and worked by my side.

I staid two months at Redruth, earning enough to maintain me by reciting my adventures in meetings got up for me by my Cornish friends. I then went to Bristol, where I procured employment at a carpenter's shop. I remained here four weeks, but though I worked hard, I did not see my way

to rising, as a man, so I went to Heywood, in Lancashire, and engaged myself to Mr. John Mills, a builder. I worked here until I found that there is prejudice against colour in England, in some classes, as well as more generally in America; and as I had an object to accomplish—of which I shall speak presently—I thought I had better make my way to London, and set about seeking the means of carrying that object out. With this view I quitted my employment, after a proper understanding with Mr. Mills, with whom I was on the best of terms, and reached the metropolis, one Wednesday evening, some time in April 1851.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CULTIVATION OF COTTON, TOBACCO, AND
RICE.

BEFORE I address myself to set forth what is now the grand object of my life; the object to which I wish to devote the rest of my days, and the best of my energies; and before I venture to present my own reflections on Slavery, and my views as to what should be done to put it down, it may be useful that I should present my readers with a brief account of the mode of cultivating Cotton, and Tobacco, and Rice, as practised in the plantations on which I have myself worked, or have had opportunities of visiting.

COTTON being the staple production of the Southern States, much attention is paid to its cultivation. When the price rises in the English market, even but half a farthing a pound, the poor slaves immediately feel the effects, for they are harder driven, and the whip is kept more constantly going. I often think that if the ladies in this country could see the slave women, and

girls, and even little children, picking the cotton in the fields, till the blood runs from the tips of their fingers, where they have been pricked by the hard pod ; or if they could see them dragging their baskets, all trembling, to the scale, for fear their weight should be short, and they should get the flogging which in such a case they know they must expect ; or if they could see them, as I often have, bent double with constant stooping, and scourged on their bare back when they attempted to rise to straighten themselves for a moment : I say, if the ladies of this country could see this, or witness the infliction of what are called slight punishments on these unfortunate creatures, they would, I am sure, never in their lives wear another article made of slave-grown cotton.

But I am, perhaps, wandering a little from the subject immediately before me.

In the fall-season the ground is pulverized with the plough, with a view to cut up and destroy the worms and other insects which usually infest the cotton-fields, and which would, unless killed, commit great havoc in the growing season. These worms are large, thick creatures, that burrow in the ground till spring-time, when they come out

and nip off the young plants quite close. When we see them we tear them in two.

In March, the ground, having lain fallow during the winter, is ridged by throwing three furrows into one ridge, in which state it is left until April, when the ridge is split by a small plough, and the cotton seed sown by hand in the drill. The ridges are four feet apart, and a man used to sowing, can cast the seed to a distance of from five to eight feet straight before him. He is followed by a harrowing party, the harrow having two teeth. These rake the earth over the seed in the drill, whilst the hinder part of the harrow smoothes it over. In five or six days, in open weather, the seed generally shews itself, and when it has come up a little strong, it is chopped out with the hoe, in spaces from ten to twelve inches apart; ten or a dozen stalks being left in each bunch. A small plough, called the bull-tongued plough, is then run along up one side of the drills and down the other, so as to fill up the hoe-holes, and cover the crab-grass. The latter soon springs again, and is very troublesome to keep under. When it shews, the people go round with heavy hoes to scrape it down, and trim off the young grass. It is then ploughed again with the bull-tongued plough, to break

what are called the "baulks," or hard ground; between the drills, as the ground must be kept open to admit moisture and air, without which the young plants would shrivel up and die.

The cotton plant does not begin to grow very fast until the roots strike the sub-soil, which they do in about three weeks or a month. Meanwhile, all hands—men, women, and children—have to thin out the plants by hand-picking, a most painful process, because of the constant stooping. They are compelled to go across a thirty, forty, or fifty acre field without straightening themselves one minute, and with the burning sun striking their head and back, and the heat reflected upwards from the soil into their faces. It will take a good hand, from an hour to an hour and a half, to hand-pick such a row. The next thing done is to hoe up the ground close to the roots, and hoe out the grass and weeds. The overseer, or "nigger-driver," or the master himself sometimes, goes round to see that this is properly done; and for every sprig of grass or stray weed that has been left in the row which has been thus "dressed," the slave who has left it gets a flogging more or less severe. The hands usually go into the field at five in the morning, and work till twelve,

peditious mode of performing this operation; though, for saving the fibre, nothing can come up to it.

The seed is used to make oil from, and also oil-cake, on which sheep and horned cattle will do very well; but it is ruination to hogs. Sometimes, too, the seed is crushed and mixed up in the "mush" that is given to the negroes; but it is unwholesome, and soon brings them out in sores. I have been made to eat it, thus mixed, in my food, until I broke out in great ulcers, from my ankle-bone upwards. Experiments have been tried to ascertain what quantity a "nigger" could bear to swallow in this manner. It was found that a very little soon sent him a long way out of the reach of his master for ever; so, unless a man wants to kill his "niggers," or make them unfit for work, or to spite them, I do not think he would try the thing on any very large scale.

The cotton being jinned, is now ready for packing. There are two ways of doing this; box-packing and bag-packing. The former mode is done in this wise. A box of convenient dimensions is prepared, say about five feet by three; in a word, of the same size as the bales which any one may see lying on the wharves in Liverpool. This

box is open at top and bottom, and a packing-cloth, made of what is called "gunny," is placed inside, having cords which pass underneath, and hang over the sides of the box. The latter is placed beneath a screw-press, or one weighted by hydraulic pressure, and the cotton is thrown into the box, as regularly and evenly as possible, and pressed down quite hard, so that its bulk is reduced to the narrowest compass. The cords are then brought round and fastened, and the bale is ready for shipment. Each bale may weigh, on an average, about four hundred pounds.

Bag-packing is a different operation. It takes five yards of "gunny" to make a bag. In the mouth of the bag a hoop is sewn. There is a hole in the floor, through which the bag is dropped, so that it hangs by the hoop. The cotton is now packed into it by hand, as fast as it comes from the jin, and rammed down with a packing-iron. This implement is a bar of iron from four feet and a half to five feet long, and about an inch and a half thick, of an eight-sided shape all the way down to the bottom, where it is flattened out at the end into the form of a wedge, till it is only about a quarter of an inch thick. This must be constantly used, or the cotton, which is naturally

elastic, will "swell back," and the bag will not weigh the right weight, namely, from three hundred and fifty pounds, or over. The packer has no guide but the hardness of the cotton to go by; so that it is pretty much guess-work with him. If his bag should be short in weight, or he does not keep up with the jin, he gets a flogging. The average day's packing is two bags for each man. Packing is very hard, oppressive work. The dust and fibres fly about in thick clouds, and get into the chest, checking respiration, and injuring the lungs very seriously. It is a common thing for the slaves to sicken off with chest diseases, acquired in the packing-room or jin-house, and to hear them wheezing and coughing like broken-winded horses, as they crawl about to the work that is killing them.

As a closing remark on the subject of cotton-growing, I may say that cotton-lands work out in two years, when they require rest. Corn is sown on them for a rotation, one year, which is often ploughed in green. The fourth year the land is quite fit for another sowing of cotton. The average produce per acre varies more than any thing else that is grown.

I will now give an account of the cultivation of
TOBACCO.

In the month of February they begin what is called "burning the beds," that is, the dry brush is burnt off from the beds intended to be sown and planted. The ground is then broken up with the grubbing-hoe, an implement something like a pick-axe, only that it is four inches wide, and heavy. The ground must be well manured before it is broken up, because the tobacco-plant is greedy of food, and likes good living. Indeed, without it, it would soon pine, and grow up a starveling. The usual manure is that from the stable or the cattle-pen. It is better to break up the ground with the grubbing-hoe, because it pulverizes the soil more effectually; but it is sometimes done with the plough. When the seed-beds have been properly broken up, they are raked level, and the tobacco-seed, having been previously mixed with weak wood-ashes, is sown broad-cast over them. The first rain that comes, settles the seed into the ground, and if the weather is warm, it springs up in about five days. During this interval, the ground is being still further prepared to receive the young plants, which have to be transplanted. Mounds are raised, called tobacco-hills, about three or four inches above the level of the soil, and about four feet in area.

This is to permit the water to flow off from the plants, otherwise they would be drowned. A very little water will do this, so great care is necessary. In about a fortnight or three weeks the plant is fit to remove from the bed into the field, and when the favourable moment arrives, all the hands, men, women, and children, are forced to set to, transplanting as hard as they can, working early and late, Sundays as well as week-days; for when young the seedling is very delicate, and unless it is transplanted just at the proper time, it dies. The transplanting time lasts from the middle of April through May. Two seedlings are generally planted in each hill, and when they have struck, that is, rooted, the weakest is pulled up. As soon as it begins to grow, the ground has to be kept constantly stirred around the roots, or it would clod; and it must also be kept free from weeds. It is a terrible hard time for the slaves, young and old, but especially for the small children, who are better able to creep amongst the plants and pick out the weeds with their little fingers, than grown-up men and women are; and they are also, for the same reason, more suitable to do the transplanting. It comes very hard at times, too, to the old slaves, some of whom I have seen, who, from con-

stant stooping, could not stand straight up to save their lives. The driver is very sharp and active during this season; and if he sees a hand "straighten" from his work, that is, stand up a minute to rest his back, down comes the bull-whip, across the shoulders of the unfortunate man or woman, with a loud crack like a pistol-shot.

The next process is called "priming," that is, pulling off the lower, scorched and withered leaves, which are left on the ground. We have also to look for a worm called the "bud-worm," a grub that nips off the sprouting plant and conceals itself in the ground, and which as much damages the plant in its present state, as the one I have previously mentioned does in its earlier stage of growth. We also now flat-weed the hills, that is, hoe up the grass that grows about the plants, with a flat hoe, after which the ground is well ploughed between the hills, in order to enable the fibres of the roots to spread kindly.

By this time, the plant is getting strong; but now it is requisite to be more vigilant than ever, for the tobacco-fly is looking out for a place to lay her eggs. She comes out of an evening, and lays one on each leaf. If the egg is not picked

off, it is hatched by the next night, and in two days there is a caterpillar, or grub, as big as a man's little finger. Early every morning gangs are sent round, children and all, to hunt for the eggs and grubs, and pick them off, as also for any worms that may be about.

Disgusting as it may seem, the slaves have to pull these grubs in two. They are tough and "blobby," and are very filthy things to handle. I have, however, known my old master, James Davis, go round, and if, after the plants had been picked, he found a grub left, he would call to the slave in whose row he had found it, and forcing his mouth open, rub the vermin against his teeth, to teach him to have sharper eyes in future.

Another good hoeing is now also given to the plants, and if any of them are high enough to "top," the bud is nipped off. This "topping," however, is systematically done, as the plant shoots. It has the effect of strengthening it, and causing buds to spring out at the sides, which are all nipped, in order to prevent blossoming, and to cause the leaves to grow luxuriantly. When the plant is getting ripe, the leaves become "snarly," like a bull's face. They are tried every morning, by doubling them up between the finger and the

thumb. If the leaf breaks, it is ripe, and then comes gathering time.

The plant is now slit down the stalk, close to the ground, with a long knife, fashioned like a chase-knife, and then cut off. It is then set butt upwards, and left to wither, when it is picked up, thrown across the arm, carried to a pile, and laid flat. Here it remains until it has heated. It is next shaken and hung on a tobacco-scaffold. This is formed of sticks about eight feet long, driven into the ground. The upper end of them is crotched, or forked, and smaller sticks are laid in them. Across these the tobacco is hung, the cleft in the plant keeping it fast, and the leaves hanging downwards, the tips of them being about five feet from the ground. When the plant is first gathered it is as green as a cabbage, and has to be left on the scaffold until it turns brown. Should it "cure green," a fire is made underneath the scaffold, which is kept burning until the leaves dry, and are ready to crumble to pieces when touched. As soon as any signs of damp appear in the atmosphere, the tobacco is gathered and put into barns. Here all the slaves set to—children and all—pulling the leaves off the stalks, and tying them up into bundles, called "hands,"

the stalks being thrown aside for manure. Some "knowing ones," called "sorters," are selected to pick out the different qualities: that which is known by the name of "bird's-eye," is merely the ordinary leaf cut up, stem and all, the stem constituting the "eye:" the sort called "Cavendish" is the same ordinary leaf, only stripped from the stem, then rolled up and pressed under a screw-press.

The best tobacco is grown in Virginia, and the land on which it is grown requires rest every other year.

I will now say a little about the growth of RICE, which is perhaps the most unhealthy occupation in which a slave can be engaged.

It is usually grown on low lands, which are useless for any other purpose, and which are easy to flood, either naturally or by sluices constructed for that purpose. In the spring the slaves take hoes, about ten to twelve inches wide in the blade, and draw, in the mud, trenches of the same width, and about an inch deep, with the corner of the hoe. These trenches are very regular, and in them the rice is sown in the month of March. The seed is covered in lightly by drawing the back of the hoe over the ground, and in about a week the

plant peeps up. There is a kind of grass, called bull-grass, which is very troublesome in rice-fields, as it springs up amongst the rice, and between the rows or "in-steps," and being of singularly rapid growth, would soon choke the rice. This grass has to be hoed out of the in-steps, and pulled up as it springs amongst the rice. Should any be left, the slaves are most severely flogged. When the plant is about half leg high, the land is flooded to the depth of from six to eight inches. The growing crop remains under water three or four days, during which time the slaves are obliged to go into these swamps, grubbing up the grass between the rows. It is awful work. Men, women, and children are all employed incessantly, for it is a busy time. They work naked, or nearly so, and contract all sorts of maladies. There is the muddy soil into which you sink knee-deep, and which sends up the foulest smell and vapour, causing fever and sickness. The heat, too, from the sun over-head, reflected back into your face from the water, is intolerably painful, frequently bringing on giddiness and sun-stroke. Then the feet get water-poisoned, or you take the toe or ground-itch, when the flesh cracks and cankers. You also

catch the "chiggers," a small insect that punctures the skin under the toe, where it deposits an egg. This soon turns into a live, but very minute, maggot, which breeds in the flesh very fast, causing a great lump to swell up, and an unendurable irritation. You have also to run the risk of getting bitten by all kinds of water-reptiles, and are sure to have some sickness or other. Fevers, agues, rheumatism, pleurisies, asthmas, and consumptions, are amongst the maladies the slaves contract in the rice-swamps, and numerous deaths result. It is very much more trying than either cotton or tobacco cultivation.

But bad as the work is whilst the water lies on the land, it is as nothing compared with what it becomes after the water is drawn off, when the slaves have to go in and weed with their fingers. The stench is much worse, and the labour heavier, because the feet stick in the miry ground, and it is difficult to drag them out. During the growth of the rice the land is flooded three times. The hands are regularly tasked—every man, woman, and child having their allotted portion of ground marked, or, as it is called, "staked" out, and that portion he or she must do. The usual task is one acre for a man, three-quarters of an acre

for the women, and proportionately less for the children; or a certain number of them are told off to one man's or one woman's task, as the case may be. It must not be supposed, however, that the masters are very particular about keeping to any average. It is not an uncommon thing, by any means, for the task to be doubled, for it is always "staving times" with them; they are always in a hurry to get the crops in, and always in a hurry to get them out.

The overseer or "nigger driver" is also ever near by, with his long shot-gun to bring down a run-away, and with his bunch of "chinkey-pen" switches. These are roasted to make them tough, and are from four to six feet long. They "lick" the body very badly, scratching and tearing the skin as they are drawn across it. More flogging, perhaps, takes place in a rice-field than in any other, on account of the hands leaving grass in the "in-steps," the whole of which it is impossible to root up.

The plant ripens its seed towards the latter part of August, and through September. It is then cut, and left to dry or "cure," and when dried, it is stacked away in long ricks. During winter the rice is thrashed out, then gathered up, and put

into large mortars, to be beaten. Each mortar will contain about a bushel. It is pounded to loosen the husk, which is very hard to get off. Sometimes it is passed through a mill. After this it is sieved, riddled, and fanned; the broken, that is useless for sale, is given to the negroes, and the rest is put up into barrels, ready for sending to market.

CHAPTER XIX.

A FEW WORDS ON THE TREATMENT OF SLAVES.

It will be expected of me that I should say something concerning the general treatment of slaves, as far as my own experience goes. I have had a little, and consider myself qualified to speak. I have been a slave nearly all my life, and seen as much of the system as any body. I have not narrated half of what I know, for there are some things I could not speak of in a public way. The little I have told may afford an insight into the system of Slavery, but it is only a "small peep." I have suffered enough myself, but others have endured and are daily enduring, perhaps, much more. When will it end?

It is not true—so far as my experience goes—to say that the masters treat their slaves well, because it is their interest to do so. The cattle are better treated than we are. They have warm stables to lie down in; they are tended and regularly fed, and get plenty to eat; and their owners know that if they over-work them they

will knock up and die. But they never seem to know when we are over-worked, or to care about it when they do know. If we fall off our work, they call us idle, and whip us up to their mark. They look upon us only as working cattle, but seem to act on the principle that there are no bounds to human endurance. Half the floggings I have had at any one time would have killed the strongest horse. Our huts, or what are called the "nigger quarters," are only of logs, with a flooring of mud, like I have described in the opening chapter of this narrative. The wind and the rain come in, and the smoke will not go out. We are indifferently clad, being nearly naked half our time; and our doctor, when we are sick, is generally some old "Aunt" or "Uncle" who has "caught" a little experience from others; and that not of the best. Our food is insufficient, and of bad quality. We never get but two meals a day: breakfast at twelve, and supper when our work is done. The general allowance is a peck of Indian corn a week, which may cost at the rate of about a shilling a bushel. It ought to be good, sound corn; but, more frequently than not, it is shrivelled up, and does not give any thing like what it ought in meal. Once a fortnight, or per-

haps once a week, we get about two ounces to a quarter of a pound of old bacon, which is generally alive with "skippers," or honey-combed by them. If we did not steal, we could scarcely live. I believe every master is plundered of corn, hogs, chickens, turkeys, and such like, to a very large extent, by his slaves. They are forced to do it. Hunger drives them to it, though they know they will be flogged if they are found out. But the fear of punishment, instead of deterring them from committing thefts, only makes them more cunning in trying not to be found out.

I could say a good deal, too, about the laws, but I should have to write a large book if I did. One thing I know, and that includes all. The laws are made for the master, not for the slave. How should it be otherwise, when, in the eye of the law, the slave is only a "chattel?" It is all nonsense to say that the law protects the slave. It does no such thing for the slave; indeed, a coloured free man cannot give evidence against a white man, so that even murder on the person of a slave cannot be brought home to the man who commits it. The law says you may give a slave thirty-nine lashes if he is found roaming about without a pass. I warrant that ten with the bull-

whip, properly laid on, will cut any man's life out; and this is twenty-nine "licks" within the law. Flogging niggers has got to be a science almost. But niggers are not all alike. Some will stand harder than others; and if those that are weak should die under a licking that another has had and got over, where is the law that can touch the master? There is no cruelty under the sun that hard-hearted men can devise, that has not been employed to bring "niggers" into subjection. The masters call the slave a "chattel," but they know and feel he is a man, and they try all they can to tame him, and break down his spirit, and the law supports him in it.

Then the work. The time a slave works depends upon his master. I do not think we get, as a general rule, more than five hours' rest; if that can be called rest which is nothing but a broken doze. All the time we are at work, we work in right down earnest. No matter whether it is by the day, under the overseer's eye and whip, or by the piece; for slaves are often set to labour by the task, both in the cotton and the rice-fields. This is a great deal harder than working in the ordinary way, because the amount of labour required to be done, is usually fully equal to what

an able-bodied slave, male or female, can accomplish, work as hard as they may. Some work harder than others. This makes it worse for the rest, as what these do is adopted as a guide or standard for the others, who are strained to the utmost to keep pace with the nimbler hands. My old master, Stevens, had a way of his own to get the most out of his folks, at task-work. He would pick out two or more of the strongest and sturdiest, and excite them to race at hoeing or picking, for an old hat, or something of the sort. He would stand with his watch in his hand, observing their movements, whilst they hoed or picked across a certain space he had marked out. The man who won the prize set the standard for the rest. Whatever he did, within a given time, would be multiplied by a certain rule, for the day's work, and every man's task would be staked out accordingly.

I have heard it said by some people who want to make out that this system of task-work is the best for the slave, that when his task is done he has the rest of the day to himself. And so he has; but then he never gets done till night-fall, and often cannot finish his task at all, and is then so fatigued he can scarcely crawl to his wretched

cabin. He is very glad, when he gets there, to throw himself down and sleep. Many and many a time I have gone to sleep without my supper, quite dead beat with fatigue: and I am a strong man. Then, again, you are never sure but the overseer or the master will find fault with your work, and make you go over it again to mend it, besides giving you a flogging for your negligence. There is often too good reason for fault-finding; and no wonder. The task is usually so heavy, that in the hurry to get through the day's work, the ground will not be clean hoed, or the plants will be broken: faults which never escape severe punishment. But the system of task-work is not, I think, usual, except on the smaller plantations, where the master does his own overseeing and flogs his own "niggers;" which some of them like to do. There is an economy in this system, because it enables the master to do without an overseer. After he has ascertained the speed of his "niggers" in hoeing, picking cotton, or such like, he tasks and leaves them. He has then only to go over their work, and can at once detect if any of the hands have fallen off; and as each had his task, he is in no difficulty to find out the delinquent. The ordinary day's labour in hoeing,

at task-work, is about from eight to ten rows across a fifteen acre field, the rows being about four feet apart, when the cotton is growing. If it is a ten acre field, there are more rows; if a twenty acre field, fewer. I set, what, from hard experience, I know to be the average. The task for women is from seven to eight rows of fifteen acres across, or in the same proportion as the men. It is very laborious work. It breaks the back, as the body is constantly bent, and the arms are continually going; the perspiration, meanwhile, streams from every pore of the body till the whole of it, head, hair, and all, are covered with a crust of mud. When the cotton is older in growth, the day's labour is increased one-third, or thereabouts, as by this time the weeds and grass are pretty well under. In North Carolina and in Virginia, the tasking system is not so bad as in Georgia and in South Carolina. Where there is overseering, the negroes are driven as hard as possible, but the work is done less regularly, and by fits and starts. The negroes will flag and rest if they can get the chance. Whilst they do so, one of the number is usually set to watch the overseer, and when he sees them coming, they give a signal, and all hands fall to again as fast as

they can. Some days he is not in a flogging humour, and then he will ease off the hands a little. On others it is just the reverse. Then, again, there is all the difference in the work. Some fields are easy; some hard; some have more grass; others more roots; and it very often happens that the hands are hardest pressed where the land is most difficult to clean, and that they are eased off when the work is comparatively light. In picking cotton, an ordinary fair day's pick is a hundred pounds. In Georgia, a day's task picking is a hundred and fifty pounds: in Mississippi about two hundred. In hoeing corn, thirty-five rows of ten acres across is a task. The hoers are generally led by the fastest hand, and the rest are compelled to strain their utmost to keep up with him. I have no hesitation in saying that the task system is very bad indeed for the negroes; and any one who considers the facts I have given, must, I think, come to the same conclusion.

Having alluded to the food and lodging of slaves, I may, perhaps, put in a word here about their raiment. We get two suits a year, consisting of a cotton shirt of coarse cloth, and pantaloons of the same; the whole cost of which does

not exceed half a crown. We get a blanket once a year, and sometimes only once in two years; value not more than from one shilling and six-pence to two shillings. I should say that the cost of a negro's clothing does not exceed eight shillings a year, and that his rations do not cost more than a shilling a week; so that Three Pounds sterling will cover his keep and clothing. There is then his first cost to be considered. But the calculation of the master is, that in two years one slave earns enough to buy another; that is, that he pays for himself, and henceforward all he earns, over and above the expense of keeping him, is clear profit.

Before I close this chapter, I wish to add a remark or two about the slave-trade. It is supposed that there are no slaves imported into the South from Africa. I am quite sure that the reverse is the case. There was a planter lived on an estate adjoining my old master, Stevens. His name was Zachariah Le Mar, and he was called Squire. That man had, to my knowledge, five hundred of them, all fresh from Africa, and I know that new ones were constantly brought in. We call them "Salt-backs." I remember, too, that one day, being still at Stevens', I was down in our apple-orchard shooting red-headed wood-peckers with a

bow and arrow. John Glasgow was with me, and there came across to see him, one Tony Wilson, a negro belonging to John Wilson, whose farm adjoined our's; and one Boatswain Smith, another negro, who belonged to a Doctor Smith, living three miles from us. They were native Africans, and could speak English only very imperfectly. They met in the orchard, and had not long been in conversation, before Tony Wilson discovered that Boatswain Smith was the very man who had sold him from his country, within the last two years. He got into a great rage, and fell upon Smith directly, and they both began to fight, butting at one another furiously. We had a great deal of trouble to part them, but we succeeded at last, and learnt that they had both been brought direct to Savannah in Georgia, with a great many more. Boatswain Smith had been kidnapped not very long after he had been the means of sending his countryman into Slavery. This little incident may serve as a proof of the fact I am quite sure would be borne out by close inquiry, that the slave-trade is still carried on between the Coast of Africa and the Slave States of the American Union.

CHAPTER XX.

MY REFLECTIONS.

WHEN I think of all I have gone through, and of the millions of men, women, and children I have left behind me in slavery, every one of whom may be undergoing similar or even greater sufferings, I ask myself when this is all to end? and how it is to be ended? I look upon it that slavery is kept up entirely by those who make it profitable as a system of labour. Bad as slaveholders are, if they did not find their account in working slaves, they would soon leave off doing it. Their badness arises out of the system. They must get work out of their "niggers" any how, or else they will not get profit. To make them work they must have complete control over them, and the laws are framed with an eye to this object. Now, "niggers" will work well enough for themselves, but they do not care to work for the benefit of another, unless they are forced to do it. And who can blame them? In order to compel them to labour for the sole advantage of another, the

whip and all sorts of coercive means are employed, and this is how the cruelty begins. A man soon gets hardened into it, and then he can go any lengths. Cruelty is inseparable from slavery, as a system of forced labour; for it is only by it, or through fear of it, that enough work is got out of slaves to make it profitable to keep them. Every slave works against his heart, because he knows he is labouring for the benefit of another man. But my firm belief is, that, if they were set free to-morrow, the most part of them would work for the planters ten times better for fair wages than they do for cow-hidings, and that the masters would find themselves much better off. It is all very well to talk about kind masters. I do not say there are none. On the contrary, I believe there are a few, though I never had the experience of them. But if there are any, they are good in spite of the laws, which would make the best master bad, because they give him such an almighty power over his slaves, he cannot help abusing it. If he does not do so himself, those about him do; and that brings it to the same thing, as far as we are concerned. It is not of any use to talk to the slaveholder about the wrongfulness of holding slaves. The chinking of the dollars in

his pocket makes such a noise that he cannot hear you; and so long as his pocket is full you may talk, but he only keeps on never minding you. Now, if you could prevent his getting the dollars, he would begin to think there must be something very wrong in slave-holding; and as the dollars slipped away, his notion of the system's being wrong would grow bigger and bigger, till he would be so full of it he could not but abandon it. And this is what I should like folks—especially the anti-slavery folks—to understand better than it seems to me they do.

I have often been asked how we slaves, being so ignorant, come to know that holding a human creature as a slave is wrong and wicked. I say that, putting the cruelties of the system out of the question, we cannot be made to understand how any man can hold another man as a slave, and do right. A slave is not a human being in the eye of the law, and the slaveholder looks upon him just as what the law makes him; nothing more, and perhaps even something less. But God made every man to stand upright before him, and if the slave law throws that man down; tramples upon him; robs him of his right, as a man, to the use of his own limbs, of his own faculties, of his own

thoughts; shuts him out of the world up in a world of his own, where all is darkness, and cruelty, and degradation, and where there is no hope to cheer him on; reducing him, as the law says, to a "chattel," then the law unmakes God's work; the slaveholder lends himself to it, and not all the reasonings or arguments that can be strung together, on a text or on none, can make the thing right. I have heard long preachments from ministers of the Gospel to try and shew that slavery is not a wrong system; but somehow they could not fix it right to my mind, and they always seemed to me to have a hard matter to bring it square to their own. When I have been asked the question, I have had in my mind the death-bed scenes I have witnessed of slaveholders, who all their lives had rioted in cruelty to their slaves, but who, when the dark hour came, could not leave the world without asking pardon of those they had ill-used.

There was my old master Thomas Stevens. Ever so many times before he really did die, he thought his time was come. But though he made a mistake on all these occasions, and recovered from his illnesses, in his frights he sent for us all and asked us to forgive him. Many a time

he would exclaim, that he wished "he'd never seen a nigger." I remember his calling old Aunt Sally to him, and begging and praying of her to get the devil away from behind the door, and such like. It is a common belief amongst us that all the masters die in an awful fright, for it is usual for the slaves to be called up on such occasions to say they forgive them for what they have done. So we come to think their minds must be dreadfully uneasy about holding slaves, and therefore there cannot be any good in it. All this may seem to be trifling, but it is the truth. In our ignorance, we have no light but what comes to us through these little chinks, and I only give what I have myself experienced.

Then, again, when the masters die, we cannot but feel that somebody is stronger than they are. The masters always try to make us believe that they are superior to us in every thing, and a different order of beings, almost next to God himself. They do this to make us fear them. I will just relate an anecdote that may illustrate this point.

My old master Stevens once missed a hen, and wanted to find out who had stolen it. We were all called up and asked about it, but nobody knew any thing of it. He said that it was of no use

trying to deceive him, for he should be sure to find out the thief. He got a lot of slips of paper, all of the same length, and made us each take one, telling us that the paper would grow in the hands of him who had stolen the hen. Next day we were all called up again to give him our slip of paper, and he at once picked out the thief, who, it seems, being afraid his should grow, tore off a bit of his slip, and so convicted himself. We found this out afterwards, of course; but at the time, we thought he must be a wizard at the very least, and we dreaded him all the more.

To such tricks as these the masters stoop, in order to acquire an influence over their slaves. But when we see them sick, and hear them cry out with pain and fear on their death-bed, just like we do when we are being flogged, we understand that there is some one superior to them, who can make them feel pain and torment too; so, after all, we come at last to learn that they are only poor human creatures like ourselves.

So this is the way we get to learn that there is something wrong in slave-holding. When a man cannot die happy, it is a sure sign his mind is heavy about something, and our masters do not leave us in doubt what it is.

But, as I have already said, slaveholders are not sensible to moral arguments, because they believe their interests are bound up in maintaining the system of slavery. I would not advise the anti-slavery party to leave off arguing out the question on moral grounds; but I would urge them to pay a little more attention to the commercial part of the subject. I do not hesitate to say, that so long as anti-slavery people, or those who profess anti-slavery sentiments, continue to use up slave-grown articles, the slaveholders will keep on, thinking their professions are hollow. I do not see how the system is to be put down except by undermining it. I mean by underselling it in the markets of the world. I believe there is very little or no difficulty in getting free-labour Sugar and Rice. The chief difficulty is in procuring a sufficient supply of free-labour Cotton. Yet there is no doubt, that if proper encouragement were given, a very large quantity could be soon procured from Africa, where it grows wild, and might be very cheaply cultivated; or from the West Indies; or from India; or from Australia. I have been spoken to by many gentlemen who are interested in this subject; but they complain of the indifference of the anti-slavery public, who

will not pay a small advance on the price of an article made of free-labour cotton; nor encourage enterprises set on foot to increase the supplies of the raw staple. But they will cry over the sufferings of the poor slave, who labours under the lash, from morning till night, in the cotton, rice, or sugar-cane fields, and who, when these commodities rise ever so little in price, soon has the figure scored into his flesh, and so finds out the markets have improved. I am quite convinced that if slavery is to be put down, one of the most certain means—if it is not, indeed, the only one—is to reduce the value of its products in the markets, by bringing into them as much cotton, sugar, rice, &c.—but especially cotton—as can be raised by free-labour. This cannot be done all at once; but it can be done. To do it well, it must be set about in right down earnest, and systematically; and I intend to devote the rest of my days to doing my part.

I do not want charity help. Thank God, I am a strong man yet, in spite of the privations, hardships, and sufferings I have undergone. I have no education, and until I can settle down I am not likely to pick much up. But I have just that sort of experience which I believe I could turn to

account were the field open. I am what is called a "handy fellow." I am a good carpenter, and can make just what machinery I want, give me only tools. I understand all about the growth of cotton, from the time of preparing the land to receive the seed, till the wool is jinned and packed. I am a good judge of its quality, too, and know what is the best kind of jin for the various sorts. I do not say this for the sake of boasting. My knowledge has not come naturally to me. I have acquired it in a very hard school, and I want to turn it to account.

And why do I say I do not ask for charity-help? Because I feel that with a fair field I can earn my own living. I want to do it. I want to rise. I do not want to stay in this country any longer than is necessary for me to get enough money to purchase me some tools, and to set me going in the world. I hope to realize sufficient for this by the sale of my Narrative, and intend to place myself under the guidance of the good friends I have found, and who have promised to use their influence and interest in my behalf, to secure me a fair chance. I want to show the world that a "nigger" has quite as much will, and energy, and purpose in him, as any white

man, if you only give him fair play. I also want to show my coloured brethren who are in Canada, that they might do something great for our people in the South, by turning their attention to growing cotton in the West Indies or in Africa. By so doing, they would strike slavery a hard blow, just where it is most likely to feel it. I have been to Canada, and though the coloured people there may, some of them, be doing tolerably well, snow does not agree with their complexion. They ought to look into the future. They ought to consider those they have left behind them, and how they can help them. My opinion is, they could do so better in the West Indies or in Africa, than in Canada. Cotton is the King of Slavery. So long as there is a good market for slave-grown cotton, so long will it pay slave-holders to produce it. The coloured people must do their own work. If they stand by till other folks do it for them, slavery may take a long lease yet. But only let them once come to this conclusion, that they have a work to do, and set about it in earnest, and Slavery may call in all the doctors the South can muster—including old Sam himself—but it must die, in spite of every thing they can do to keep it alive.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD.

(From the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, April 1853.)

No railroad in the world deserves greater encouragement than the one which bears this name, at once so peculiar and so expressive. It was originally projected to connect the Southern States of the American Union with the Northern : Slavery with Freedom. It may be said properly to commence at what is technically known as Mason and Dixon's line ; that is at the junction of the Slave States with the Free States : and to terminate at the southern frontier of Canada. Its course is by no means regular, for it has to encounter the Alleghany range of mountains and several considerable rivers, including the Ohio. Lake Erie too lies in its track, nor is it altogether independent of forests. In spite, however, of all these, and numerous minor obstacles, the line has been constructed with admirable skill, as they can

testify whose circumstances have compelled them to avail themselves of this mode of transit. Travelling by it cannot strictly be said to be either pleasant or altogether safe; yet the traffic is greatly on the increase. It is exclusively a passenger traffic; the trains are all express, and strange to add, run all one way, namely, from South towards the North: there are no *return tickets*. The stations are numerous, but by no means conspicuous. The principal aim of the projectors having been to get the line itself into good working condition, the stations were selected for convenience more than for show. They lie from ten to fifteen miles apart, having nothing in their external appearance to distinguish them particularly, though they are never, or very rarely missed. Once the passenger is fairly on the line, he seldom fails reaching his ultimate destination. Owing to the great danger and the numerous difficulties that attend the running of a train, extreme caution is requisite in regulating the hour of its departure, and no small amount of ingenuity and dexterity is brought into play to secure the safety of the passengers. The character of the train varies according to circumstances and the exigencies of the case; but in this respect, comfort is disre-

garded as a matter of trifling importance, in comparison with the principal object, which is individual security. The Underground Railroad being for the exclusive use of slaves, who are running for freedom, its managers are not known, in a general way. It is rather a point with them to evade popularity, for detection would bring with it no end of fines and imprisonment. Yet they derive no pecuniary advantage from what is called "the forwarding business." They work, like noble heroes as they are, for suffering and oppressed humanity, and for no other reward than the satisfaction of their conscience. The station-masters belong to almost every class of society, and are dispersed all over the regions through which the underground line passes: for its branches are very numerous, and require extensive and constant supervision, not only to prevent accidents, (that is, seizures,) but also to gather information. It frequently happens that a train is kept waiting several days, sometimes two or three weeks, when the "danger" signal has been made, which usually means "look out for slave-hunters." Then it is that the self-possession, the courage, and the resources of the particular station-master who has the convoy under his care, are largely drawn upon. His

situation at these times is most critical, for though the cunning and daring of the reckless and experienced slave-hunter may be baffled, it is a far more difficult feat to delude the sagacity of the four-footed colleagues that frequently accompany him, and who can "snuff a nigger an eternal distance off, and nose him out anywhere," so admirably are they trained to their cruel work. It may be observed, by way of parenthesis, that the above quotation is a genuine recommendation of "some prime dogs," that were advertised for sale a short time since in the *New Orleans Picayune*. It illustrates at once the nature of the advertiser's trade, and the peculiar qualities of his blood-hounds. But the runaways and their friends possess a secret which enables them to deceive even the keen scent of these fierce animals, and it is at no time more serviceable than when the hunters are nearest to their prey. Instances have been known of fugitives being tracked to the very threshold of their lurking-place, yet lying close in safety, until the dogs, utterly baffled, have cast off again with a wild howl of disappointment. Such, however, have been trying times for all parties. As may be imagined, the travellers by this line have frequent recourse to disguises; and

exciting indeed are the narrations of hair-breadth escapes, under similar circumstances, and admirable the acts of heroism to which they have led. Perhaps no fact is more worthy of being dwelt upon in this place than the fidelity of the station-masters to their trust. No pecuniary consideration has hitherto induced them to violate a secret involving the fate of so many thousands of their fellow-creatures, and it is not reckoning too much upon their future fidelity, to say that they never will; though the passing of the Fugitive-slave Law has increased the risks of their undertaking, and raised the price of blood. The slave-owners would doubtless pay a heavy sum to the man who would point out to them exactly where the underground line commences, and thus enable them to complete its survey for their own purposes. But Abolition knows its duty better. When Emancipation has taken place, the Managers of the Underground Line will make them a present of the secret.

A word now on the origin of the "underground railroad to Freedom," the projector of which, like many more benefactors of the human species, fell a victim to his philanthropy. His name—and long will it and his memory live, in the hearts of the

friends of humanity—was Charles Turner Torrey. He was born in Scituate, Massachusetts, November the 1st, 1813. At the tender age of four, he became an orphan, but was received by his maternal grand-parents, and subsequently educated at Exeter Academy, Yule College, and Andover Seminary. He finally settled in the ministry at Providence, Rhode Island, but did not long remain there. He continued his labours in various places, until in 1842 we find him in the prison of Annapolis, Maryland. The Reverend Mr. Torrey's uncompromising views as an Abolitionist were well known. He had urged them with all the energy of his strong mind and earnest convictions. With his fine talents, improved by learning and observation; his clear and intensely active intellect; and a heart full of sympathy and genial humanity, he could not but be an energetic and zealous advocate of any cause; and devoting himself, as he did, to that of Abolition, no wonder its friends held him in more than ordinary esteem, or that the pro-slavery party marked him as a man to be feared and to be punished if the opportunity presented itself; as indeed it soon did. In 1842, the slave-holders of Maryland convened a meeting at Annapolis, for the purpose of making what further

aggressions they could devise, upon the rights of the free-coloured people of this State. (A similar meeting has recently been held in Virginia, Carolina Co. for a similar purpose, which has resulted in the passing of resolutions, that, if carried out, will reduce this class of its citizens to slavery.) Mr. Torrey, ever active, repaired to the place of assembly at Annapolis, and took his seat in the gallery, where he was soon observed, taking notes of the proceedings; his intention being to publish a report of them in an anti-slavery paper. For this offence, in a free country with a free press, he was incarcerated for a week. During his imprisonment, his busy thoughts were directed to devising some plan by which slaves might be assisted in effecting their escape. The idea all at once occurred to him, that if a number of persons resident in the Free States, and located at convenient distances from one another, could be induced to pledge themselves to help forward fugitive slaves to Canada, it would be the means of preventing numerous run-aways from being recaptured and carried back into Slavery. Having determined upon the general outline of the plan, he was no sooner released than he commenced operations for carrying it out in all its details. In

for poor Torrey died. During his incarceration, and rather with a view to terminate the severe privations he was designedly subjected to, than to evade a trial, he sought to escape, but his attempt was frustrated, the plan having been betrayed by a fellow prisoner of the name of Doyle, a notorious negro-trader. At length he was brought up. The proceedings lasted three days; November 29th and the two succeeding days. He was found guilty on the perjured testimony of the witnesses suborned to establish the charge, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment in the Penitentiary. In the autumn of 1845 his health began to fail, and on the 9th May, 1846, he died, at the early age of thirty-three, a victim to the intense malignity of the slave-power.

From the published reports of the proceedings, it would appear that every effort was made to procure a conviction. In the case of Taylor, who had sworn to the identity of Torrey, it subsequently came out that he had never set eyes on him until *after* his arrest. In that of Heckrotte, whose accomplices swore that Torrey had actually himself enticed the slaves away, it was satisfactorily established that he had never seen them until they were thirty miles beyond Baltimore;

and he might at any time have cleared himself from this second charge, by giving up the name of the party (a lady) who planned their escape; but this he refused to do. As, however, it was elicited that Torrey had really aided slaves in running off, the establishment of the general fact was considered sufficient to fix him with the guilt of the particular offences for which he was tried; hence his condemnation. The whole affair created intense excitement; the sentence was regarded as vindictive, and when Torrey died, the event shed a general gloom over the circles that were familiar with him and his efforts in the anti-slavery cause. A public ceremonial graced the passage of his remains to their last resting-place at Mount Auburn, Boston, where a monument has since been erected to his memory. The Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society also marked their high respect for him, and their deep sympathy with his mourning friends, in a series of resolutions embodying these sentiments, and recording their protest against the vile and unholy system to the malignity of which he fell a sacrifice.

Torrey's death did not, however, in the least degree affect the success of the "underground

railroad." From the period of its establishment to that of the passing of the Fugitive Slave-law, the average number of passengers by it exceeded a thousand a year. But since 1850, the number has greatly increased, not only owing to the fact becoming known to the slave-community through various channels, that if a fugitive only strike a certain track, he will find friends to help him on to Canada, but also because that atrocious enactment has roused a spirit of opposition to the power which carried it through the Senate, and which has by its means attempted to convert the Free States into man-traps, and free citizens into man-stealers and kidnappers for the South. The escapes are at present so much on the increase, that the slave-owners are adopting the most active measures to check the traffic by the underground line.

It may be readily conceived that to accomplish the safe transit of a convoy, much precaution and forethought are indispensable. Usually, means are taken to signal, from one station to another, the arrival and the departure of each train of passengers; (for as such we will consider the runaways :) so that the lookers-out at the station a-head may be on the watch. The main dif-

ficulty is to convey the travellers across the rivers. The ordinary ferry-boats would not, for obvious reasons, be the most eligible water-conveyance. Against this contingency due provision is made, and "pilots" are appointed for this special service, whose duty it is to lie in wait at or near the place which has been signalled as the point for which the convoy will make. This service involves much anxious and patient watching, as the safety of the fugitives wholly depends upon their meeting with the expected "pilot" at the specified crossing-place. We will illustrate, by two anecdotes, the danger and accidents incidental to a trip by the underground line, and the consequences of slips by the way.

At a certain village on the Ohio river, not a hundred miles from Cincinnati, and in Ohio State, there came one evening in the spring of 1851, to the house of an Abolitionist—one of the managers of the underground line—a fugitive-slave seeking shelter. He was soon at home, and informed our friend that himself and nineteen others had just escaped out of Kentucky. At a particular place they were to have fallen in with a "pilot." They had reached it but found no pilot there. Not knowing what to do, and dreading discovery, he

had broken away from his companions, and wandered on in the dark in search of a secure hiding-place. It is needless to add, that he found one with our friend the Abolitionist, who forthwith despatched him to Canada. The next day the village was in an uproar. The Kentuckians, the masters of the run-aways, accompanied by their friends, invaded the place in search of their lost property. They had tracked them to the village, and now threatened vengeance against the coloured people and the known Abolitionists for enticing away their slaves. Being armed to the teeth, with bowie-knives, revolvers, and rifles, their presence and threatening manner caused great excitement and alarm, for they effected a forcible entry into the premises of every suspected person. It was fortunate for our friend the Abolitionist that he had already dismissed his *protégé* on the road to freedom. Meanwhile, the Abolitionists were not idle, but sent out scouts in various directions, in order to ascertain what had become of the missing nineteen. Their efforts, however, proved unsuccessful. They only ascertained that the pilot, who had come from another town, had repaired to the appointed place, expecting the fugitives there at a particular time. After waiting considerably be-

yond the hour specified, and finding they did not arrive, he concluded they would not come that night, and returned home. It was supposed, that finding they had missed their expected guide, the slaves had taken to the woods, where they would disperse and lie concealed, and hopes were entertained that they might still elude the vigilance of their pursuers. It ultimately turned out that this was not the fact. On their arrival near the appointed place, they had sent one of their number on to look for the pilot. Finding him not there, they strayed about in the dark until dawn, when they took refuge in a sugar-house owned by a Methodist. The sequel is soon told. This man finding them there, and tempted by the large reward which was offered for their recovery, quietly assembled a few of his neighbours, and captured the whole gang. They were all surrendered into the hands of their owners, and again consigned to slavery and to the horrible punishments inflicted on recaptured runaways. Amongst them was a mother and her seven children.

The second adventure had a more cheerful termination.

Some three or four years since a party of fugitives had reached Oberlin, Ohio, a few miles south

of Lake Erie. They were congratulating themselves on their security, seeing they were so near to Canada, when, to their utter dismay, intelligence came that the slave-hunters were on their track, and already near the building where they had found a temporary resting-place. No time was to be lost if they were to be saved. The managers of this branch of the underground line—chiefly students belonging to the Oberlin Institute—immediately devised a plan for rescuing the fugitives, which they as speedily put into execution. A carriage was procured into which the slave-hunters, who were now near enough to perceive what was passing, saw the party enter of which they were in search. They counted their number, and took note of their sex. The carriage drove rapidly off, the slave-hunters following in hot pursuit. The pace was terrific; but the latter gained on their prey, and succeeded in overtaking the whole party as they got into the next town. They were taken, carriage and all, to the court-house, when they were thrust into a room, to await the arrival of the magistrate. Here they were accommodated, as a special favour, with a little water. In due time, the magistrate having inspected his law-books for the purpose of ascertaining how the

statutes had provided for such a case, the delinquents were summoned before him ; when lo ! the whole party presented themselves with perfectly white, and it must be added, indecorously grinning faces. The slave-hunters at once perceived the *ruse* which had been practised upon them. In their eagerness they had only noticed the colour, the garb, the number, and the apparent sex of the parties who had rushed with such precipitancy into the carriage. As these tallied with the description of the fugitives, they thought of nothing but of their recapture. It need scarcely be explained, that the lads were indebted for their sable hue, to a convenient chimney, and to the slaves themselves for their disguise. The magistrate, however, who was not at all in the secret, looked gravely at the young men, and then at the slave-hunters, asking whether they claimed these white people as their slaves. Now although a coloured man may be arrested, carried before a judge, and claimed as a slave, with perfect impunity, (his discharge of course depending upon his disproving the fact of his being the claimant's property,) it is an extremely grave offence so to treat a white. Probably if the slave-hunters who had been thus tricked, could have safely revenged themselves upon the young

men, by subjecting them to even a temporary imprisonment, until they had procured the requisite proof of their own identity, they would not have scrupled to assert a claim to them. But this would have been too serious an affair. They had, therefore, no other alternative but to reply that they had been duped, and that the young men were free. This they accordingly did, and hastily withdrew, amidst the derisive shouts of the assembled crowd.

Meanwhile the party of real fugitives were sent on to Canada by the Underground Railroad.

May it prosper until emancipation leaves it no more work to do, or until it has run off every slave now in bondage.

DECLARATION.

[The following Declaration of John Brown, made before a Notary Public of the City of London, and setting forth the facts relating to the seizure, enslavement, and torturing of John Glasgow, a free-born British subject, is inserted here, in order that any person disposed, to make inquiries respecting John Glasgow's English wife and family, may have legal evidence on which to proceed.]

To all to whom these Presents shall come. I, ALEXANDER RIDGWAY, of London, Notary Public by Royal Authority duly admitted and sworn (and by the Statute 5th and 6th William the 4th, chapter 62, especially empowered in this behalf), do hereby certify that on the day of the date hereof before me at my Office, No. 28,

Royal Exchange, in the City of London personally came and appeared Mr. John Brown of No. 26, Stonecutter Street Farringdon Street in the County of Middlesex Carpenter and Joiner named and described in the Declaration hereunto annexed vouched for to me by Louis Alexis Chamerovzow Esq. as being a person well-known and worthy of full credit and by solemn declaration which the said John Brown then made before me he did solemnly and sincerely declare to be true the several matters and things mentioned and contained in the said annexed Declaration.

In Testimony whereof I have set unto my hand and Notarial Seal and have caused mentioned and referred to (Seal) in and by the said Declaration to be hereunto also annexed. Dated in London the Twenty-ninth day of May One thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

ALEXANDER RIDGWAY,
Notary Public.

I, JOHN BROWN, of No. 26 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, in the City of London, Carpenter and Joiner, formerly known by the

single name of Fed, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows: I was born, as I believe, about the year One thousand eight hundred and eighteen, in a state of slavery, upon an estate called "Betty Moore's plantation," in Southampton County in the state of Virginia, about three miles from Jerusalem Court House in the said county. I was sold when ten years of age or thereabouts to one Starling Finnie, a negro speculator, and by him re-sold a few weeks after to Thomas Stevens, of Baldwyn County, in the State of Georgia, whose plantation was situated within eight miles of Millageville, in the said county. I well remember that on my arrival in this plantation I found a slave named John Glasgow, who was then a new hand, having been recently purchased at a slave auction at Savannah. It was reported and believed amongst the slaves on the plantation that this John Glasgow had been a free British subject, and this circumstance, which caused some to chuckle and others to sympathize, has tended to fix the following facts strongly in my recollection. He also felt for me in my grief at parting from my former relations, and endeavouring to console me as best he could, frequently spoke to me of his own previous history, particularly of his residence

and relatives in England. These are the facts I thus learnt and believe. John Glasgow was a native of Demerara, born of free negro-parents: when quite small he took to the sea, first as cabin boy, working his way up till he became an able-bodied seaman, and was so rated on the ships' books. His first voyages were made on board the small coasters that trade between the West-India Islands; but he abandoned the coasting trade after a few years, and went to and fro to England, improving his opportunities so much that he saved money and was regarded as a prosperous man. He then sought a wife. In the immediate neighbourhood of Liverpool, the port he had most frequented, there resided a small farmer who had a daughter. John Glasgow was a fine fellow, tall of stature and powerful in frame, having a brave look and a noble carriage. The farmer's daughter married him with the approbation of her relatives. Having saved money, John Glasgow, through the father's interest, got into a small farm in the neighbourhood, and purchased (as he was fond of repeating to the slaves) three horses, a plough and a cart. As his wife had been accustomed to farming operations she agreed to attend to the concerns of the farm, whilst he, finding that

he knew nothing at all about farming, determined to continue his calling, and engaged himself as an able-bodied seaman on board one of the many vessels trading between Liverpool and the West Indies. At the end of his second voyage he found himself a father, and from this time he and his wife continued to prosper, he in his vocation, she at her farm. About the year One thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, being then about twenty-five years of age, he engaged to go out to Savannah, in Georgia, in an English vessel, and under an English captain, for a cargo of rice: he was now the father of two children. He sailed, and in due course arrived with his vessel at Savannah. By virtue of certain provisions of the Black Law of Georgia, like that of South Carolina, John Glasgow, though a free-born British subject, was conveyed to gaol, and incarcerated until the vessel that brought him to the port should discharge her cargo, be re-laden, and on the point of sailing away again. By the same provisions he would then have been released on payment of the gaol fees by the captain. The ship was detained considerably beyond the time the captain had reckoned upon, owing to delays in procuring the cargo. Slave labour was dear, and the captain

had to pay high wages to the slave who had been hired to him to do John Glasgow's work. When, therefore, the time came for the ship to set sail, he found that the gaol fees for John's release had run up enormously high, so the captain refused to pay them, and set sail without him. John Glasgow was then taken out of the gaol and sold on the auction block for three hundred and fifty dollars to Thomas Stevens, on whose plantation I found him as above described. From this point I can declare to the facts stated as within my personal knowledge. I remember his naturally brave look: this offended his master, who swore he "would flog his nigger pride out of him." When he had been some three or four years on the plantation his master bade him take a wife. John told him he had one in England, and two children. Then his master flogged him for saying so and for insisting upon it he was free, and a British subject. At last, to save his body from the cow-hide and the paddle, he promised his master never to say as much again, and to look out for a wife. In Jones County, and about five miles from Stevens' plantation, there lived another planter named John Ward. John Glasgow having to go backwards and forwards on errands, saw and at length

selected a young coloured girl named Nancy, and they were married in the way that slaves are, that is, nominally. This did not please Stevens, because Nancy, being Ward's property, her children would be Ward's also; so John was flogged for marrying Nancy instead of one of Stevens' "likely gals," and was forbidden to visit her: still he contrived to do so without his master's discovering it. The young woman was of a very sweet disposition, and knew all about John's misfortunes and his having a wife and children in England: she was very kind to him. On Christmas Day, a holiday for all, he thought he would slip away from the other slaves who were having a feast before Stevens' house, and go see Nancy. Accordingly, watching his opportunity, he soon succeeded in getting away. His master saw him, but instead of calling him back, allowed him to get a good distance off, when, beckoning to him three other slaves, of whom I, declarant, was one, they started in pursuit, and soon came up with the object of their search. John Glasgow struggled ineffectually to release himself. He was secured and brought back to quarters, and the other slaves were called together to witness the infliction upon him of a punishment called bucking. Having

been stripped stark naked, his hands were fast tied and brought down over his knees, he being compelled for this purpose to assume a sitting posture with his knees doubled up under his chin. A stout stake was then thrust under his hams, so that he was rendered completely powerless. In this position he was turned first on one side then on the other, and flogged with willow switches by me, the declarant, and with the cow-hide by his master until the blood ran down in streams and settled under him in puddles. For three hours he endured this punishment, groaning piteously all the time, whilst his master looked on and chuckled. At last he was taken out of the buck, and his lacerated body washed down with salt, red pepper, and water. It was two weeks before he went to work again.

Severe as this torture was, it did not smother John Glasgow's affection for the poor mulatto girl who shared his sorrows. As soon as he felt able to go so far, that is in about three months, he made another attempt to see her, was missed, pursued, and caught. Then Thomas Stevens swore an oath that he would cure him of "wife-hunting. If he must have a wife, there was a plenty of likely yellow gals on the plantation for such as he to

choose from. He might have the pick of 'em. But he (Stevens) wasn't going to let his niggers breed for another man's benefit, not he: so if he (John) couldn't get a wife off the plantation, he should't have one at all; but he'd cure him of Nancy any how."

John Glasgow was taken to the whipping post, which, on Stevens' estate, consisted of two solid uprights, some ten feet high, with a cross-beam at the top, forming a kind of gallows. Along the cross-beam were three or four massive iron cleets, to which pulleys were fixed, having a fine but closely twisted cord passing over them. John Glasgow, having been stripped as on the previous occasion, the end of one of these cords was tightly fastened round his wrists. His left foot was then drawn up and tied, toes downwards, to his right knee, so that his left knee formed an angle by means of which, when swung up, his body could conveniently be turned. An oaken stake about two feet long was now driven into the ground beneath the cross beam of the whipping post, and made sharp at the top with a draw-knife. He was then hoisted up by his hands by means of the pulley and rope in such wise that his body swung by its own weight, his hands being high over his head

and his right foot level with the pointed end of the oaken "stob," or stake.

This punishment is called "the Picket," and by the body being swung in this manner the skin of the back is stretched till it shines and cuts more readily under the lash : on the other hand, if the negro, swinging "between heaven and earth," as it is called, desires to rest, he can do so only by placing the foot that is at liberty on the sharp end of the stake. The excessive pain caused by being flogged while suspended, and the nausea excited by twirling round, causes the person undergoing "the picket" to seek temporary relief by staying himself on the "stob." On his doing so for ever so brief a space, one of the bystanders, taking hold of the bent knee and using it as a handle, gives him a twirl and sends him spinning round on the hard point of the stake, which perforates the heel or sole of the foot, as the case may be, quite to the bone.

John Glasgow, thus suspended, was flogged and twisted for an hour, receiving "five licks," or strokes of the raw cow-hide at a time, with an interval of two or three minutes between, to allow him "to come to and to fetch his breath." His shrieks and groans were most agonizing, and could

be heard at first a mile and a quarter off, but as the punishment proceeded they subsided into moans scarcely audible at the distance of fifty paces. All Stevens' slaves were made to stand by during the infliction of the torture, and some of them took turns at the whipping, according to the instructions of their master, who swore he would serve them the same if they refused, or ever disobeyed him as "that cussed nigger there had done." At the end of an hour he was "dropped from the beam," his back being fearfully lacerated, his wrists deeply cut with the cord, and his foot pierced through in three places. Beneath the beam there was a pool of coagulated blood, whilst the oaken stake was dyed red with that which had streamed from his foot. He could not stand, much less walk, so they carried him to his quarters, where the usual application of salt and water and red pepper was made to his wounds. It was a month before he stirred from his plank, and five months elapsed ere he could walk. Ever after he had a limp in his gait. I made my escape from Thomas Stevens' plantation some time after this punishment had been inflicted on John Glasgow, and the last I know of his history is, that in One thousand eight hundred and forty, or thereabouts,

the poor fellow was felling a white oak in the woods, which in falling struck him on his right thigh, just above the knee, and broke it in two. As he was thus rendered comparatively useless for field work, Thomas Stevens gave him to his son John, who kept him to shell corn off the cob. Lastly, I declare, in respect to myself personally, that upon my escape from Mr. Stevens' plantation I passed into the free state of Michigan, and there remained for about three years with a company of Cornish miners. Thence I went to Canada, and after remaining in the Dawn Institution for some months, came to England, led by the descriptions of John Glasgow and the suggestions of Captain Joe Teague, Captain of the mine in Michigan, a native of Redruth in Cornwall.

And I make this solemn declaration, conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the Sixth year of the reign of His Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled, "An Act to repeal an Act of the present Session of Parliament, intituled 'An Act for the more effectual abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various departments of the State, and to substitute declarations in lieu thereof,

and for the more entire suppression of voluntary and extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits, and to make other provisions for the abolition of unnecessary Oaths.' ”

Declared at my Office, No. 28 North side of the Royal Exchange, in the City of London, this twenty-ninth day of May, One thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

JOHN BROWN.

Before me,

ALEXANDER RIDGWAY,
Notary Public.

JOHN BROWN'S TESTIMONIALS.

WE the undersigned do certify our knowledge of John Brown, who was a Slave in America, in the state of Georgia, and was four times sold. He came to Lake Superior, for refuge, in 1847, and was employed by our Company. He was employed by our Company for one year and a half; during that time we found him quiet, honest, and industrious. His object in coming to England was to see Captain Joseph Teague, by whom he was promised support. Unfortunately the Captain died in America, and J. Brown not knowing of his death till he came to Redruth, Cornwall, by that means he is thrown out in a strange country for a little support. We have helped him all that lay in our power, and would heartily do more for him if we could. We have heard him several times lecture on Slavery and also on Tectotalism. We hope the object he seeks will induce the sympathy of English Christians.

*Dated, Redruth,
February 26th, 1851.*

JAMES VIVIAN, Redruth.
RICHARD PASCOE, Redruth.
THOMAS WILLIAMS, Redruth.
THOMAS CHAMPION, Redruth.

St. Austell, March 20th, 1851.

I beg to testify to my firm conviction of the forestated case of John Brown. When he called on me in the first instance, there happened to be a relative of the said Captain Teague present, who, after very considerable conversation, expressed his full conviction of his, J. B. having been engaged under

his relative, Captain Teague. I believe John Brown is entitled to sympathy and assistance from common humanity, especially from Christians.

SAMUEL BARLOW.

Bodmin, March 25th, 1851.

The bearer, John Brown, has been in this town a few days, and lectured in the Union Hall to a large assemblage of persons, to whom he delivered a narrative of his life during the time that he was a slave in the State of Georgia.

I privately questioned him previous to this, as to the treatment received by slaves from their masters, the route he pursued at the time of his escape, &c. ; and having resided in those parts for several years, I have a firm conviction in my own mind as to the truth of his statements and the sincerity of his objects.

CHARLES PEARSE,
House Surveyor.

Liskeard, 3d Month, 31st, 1851.

Having conversed with John Brown, a coloured man, now here, but who was formerly a slave in the United States, I have reason to be satisfied, from the accounts which he gives of persons and places that are known to me in that country, that he is not an impostor ; and judging from his conduct while here, I am disposed to encourage him to spread the knowledge of the cruelties of Slavery, and recommend him to the kind notice of the public, trusting that he will continue to conduct himself well.

JOHN ALLEN.

Plymouth, April 12th, 1851.

The undersigned are desirous of recommending John Brown to the notice of philanthropists in other parts of England which he may visit.

From an examination of his testimonials, as well as from their own observation, they are fully satisfied of his veracity, and consider the object he has in view worthy of the support and encouragement of all friends of the Negro race.

J. B. has addressed a crowded meeting at the Guildhall, and his simple narrative of his sufferings in his escape from Slavery was listened to with great interest and attention.

E. JONES, *Independent Minister.*

RICHARD BISHOP, *Draper.*

WILLIAM SMITH.

CHARLES FOX HINTON, *Chemist.*

HENRY HEYDON, *Printer and Stationer.*

John Brown, a fugitive slave, has been giving an interesting account at public meetings in Exeter of his sufferings in Slavery, and escape therefrom. We believe him to be a person fully deserving of credit.

R. WERE FOX.

JOHN DYMOND.

THOMAS HINCKS.

SAMUEL DAVIS.

Exeter. { There is no date to this testimonial,
but it will easily be seen that it
closely follows the above.—ED.

27, *New Broad Street, London,*

20th June, 1851.

The bearer of this, John Brown, has been recommended to me as an honest and industrious man. The information I have received privately about him is quite satisfactory.

JOHN SCOBLE,

Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society.

3, *Winchester Buildings*, June 23d, 1851.

John Brown has brought very satisfactory testimonials to me, and from what I have seen of him, he appears to be a steady and deserving character.

EDMUND FRY.
ELIHU BURRITT.

Wrexham, May 5th, 1852.

Although I was entirely unacquainted with the bearer, John Brown, until his arrival in Wrexham, I am so satisfied with the high testimonials he brings with him, that I have no hesitation of adding my name to those by which he is already recommended to the public.

JOSEPH CLARE.

27, *New Broad Street*, 18th May, 1853.

I am desirous of adding my testimony to those which John Brown, the bearer, already has in his possession. I have had many opportunities, as extraordinary as they were unexpected, of testing the accuracy of his narrative of his life and sufferings, and am quite satisfied that he is altogether trustworthy in this respect.

I also believe him to be a man of upright views and sound principles, and who is most anxious to do something for his race, in calling attention to the capabilities of the free negroes of Canada to grow cotton in Africa and in Australia. He is directing their energies in the right way, and is also advancing the Anti-Slavery cause; for in proportion as free labour can be made to compete with slave labour, especially in the article of cotton, will Slavery be undermined.

I hope he will meet with consideration from all the friends of the slave.

L. A. CHAMEROVZOW,

Secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

The bearer, John Brown, is a total abstainer.

Reading, 11 mo., 24, 1851.

W. WESTMACOTT,
Goddard's Arms Hotel,
Swindon.

John Brown spent about a week here, during which time I saw some little of him, and he took a meal or two at my house. I looked over his testimonials, and know several of the parties whose names are attached to them, and fully satisfied myself that he was worthy of the attention of the friends of the poor slave. I presided at a meeting here, which was satisfactory. I understand that he is now wishing to excite a sympathy for the slaves of America, and raise a little fund for himself that will enable him to get to Canada; and I hope the people of Swindon will do their little to provide him the means for this purpose.

I am, respectfully,
GEORGE PALMER.

February 19th, 1852.

I have examined Mr. John Brown's testimonials, and, as far as I can judge, they appear to me to be correct, and that he is a deserving person.

WM. KER.

The Parsonage,
Tipton.

February 21st, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,

The bearer of this note, Mr. John Brown, has presented me with testimonials in his favour; among these is a note from yourself, stating that you have examined him, and think him a deserving person. If you think any thing can be done for him or his cause—which, from extraneous appear-

ance, is certainly a good one—I shall be happy to give the use of my room for the purpose of a lecture, &c.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours very respectfully,
RICHARD WARMINGTON.

The Rev. W. KER, M.A.

Bridgewater, March 31st, 1853.

DEAR SIR,

The bearer, Mr. John Brown, an escaped slave, is desirous of visiting Manchester, in order to advance what appears to me a very practical plan for the amelioration of the condition of the coloured population of America. His testimonials, which I have examined, seem to me to recommend him strongly, and his plan shows him to be a man of strong mind.

I am sure you will exert your influence on his behalf, and if you can procure him a favourable opportunity of advocating his views in Manchester you will oblige

Yours most sincerely,
S. ALFRED STEINTHAL.

Rev. J. R. BEARD, D.D.

The testimonials which John Brown has produced satisfy us that his narrative is a truthful one, and as such, its being related must give a very affecting picture of American slavery, and tend to increase the feeling of abhorrence of that system of iniquity.

E. WIGHAM,
*Secretary to the Edinburgh Ladies'
Emancipation Society.*

10th mo., 1853.

John Brown, a fugitive Slave, happily escaped from that hell of sin and misery, "a Slave State," waited on me some weeks ago. His testimonials—some from persons known to me in this country and in America—established his truthfulness to my conviction. I presided at a meeting which he addressed with interesting power, especially considering his being shut out from the mental training enjoyed by the "Free." He gave a simple, graphic narrative of his escape, &c. The audience was gratified. I introduced him to my friend, the Rev. William Parlane, of Tranent. John addressed a meeting in Tranent with approval, and also at Prestonpans. I gave him a testimonial, and I thus repeat it for the following reason.

Mr. Smith, one of the Magistrates of Glasgow, wrote me that John had been shewing his testimonials, had, after a few minutes' interval, returned to the shop, saying some one had rudely jostled him on the street, and, on searching, he found that his pocket-book, containing all his testimonials, had been abstracted. The Messrs. Smith, knowing that John could not have been in improper company, that his tale was true, took means, by advertisement, &c., for the recovery of John's testimonials. Finding all efforts vain, they kindly applied to me and others for duplicates; hence this minuteness on my part—the more, that I have since conversed with Mr. Smith at large on poor John's misfortune.

John professes to be practically acquainted with the rearing of cotton from the seed to the bale, and I should think him, from his constitutional strength and energy, well fitted to superintend the operative department, in the valuable scheme of raising Free Labour Cotton, say in Natal, or Australia, or India.

JOHN RITCHIE.

19, *Salisbury Road, Edinburgh,*
17th Nov. 1853.

173, *Irongate, Glasgow,*
November 18, 1853.

The bearer, John Brown, a self-emancipated negro, called upon me on Saturday last, 12th inst., and shewed me several testimonials of a highly satisfactory character. He had not left my place of business above fifteen minutes, when he returned, saying he had been jostled by a man in Argyle Street, and he immediately discovered the loss of his pocket-book and all his certificates: fortunately no money was stolen, however. We immediately gave notice to the police, and got bills printed and posted, but no appearance of the missing book and contents has yet been discovered. In these circumstances I have procured for him one or two duplicates of his testimonials from his friends in Edinburgh, and have much pleasure in giving my own. John Brown seems a most worthy, honest man, and I hope he may be successful in obtaining the support requisite to reach Natal, or some other of our colonies, where his knowledge of cotton growing and packing may be turned to good account.

I should have stated that the time at which J. B. called on me was early in the afternoon, I think between two and three o'clock.

JOHN SMITH,
Secretary, Glasgow New Association
for the Abolition of Slavery.

Glasgow, 18th Nov. 1853.

The bearer, John Brown, having been robbed of his pocket-book on the public streets of this city, and during daylight, has thereby been deprived of all his testimonials to character, and other papers, but, happily for him, the pocket-book contained no money; and we, the Subscribers, having seen the said testimonials, hereby certify that they were of the most satisfactory description, and cannot but express our regret that he should have been thus deprived of them, inasmuch

as the want of these documents must obviously be to him a most serious deprivation. In these circumstances, we shall be glad if this certificate may be of any service to him.

(Signed) Wm. SMEAL,

Sec. and Treas. to the Glasgow Emancipation Soc.

ANDREW PATON.

JOHN KNOX.

John Brown states that he escaped from slavery in the year 1847, was employed in a copper mine in Michigan, United States, for eighteen months, in Canada, as a carpenter, eight months. He has also gained his bread in the same line of business in this country, but latterly he has been giving lectures, detailing the slave system, and giving a history of his life. In these departments he has given proof of industry, and a determination to gain his bread by his own efforts, and not to be burthensome to any one. John Brown is desirous of being sent out to the west coast of Africa, where he could teach the farmers and labourers to grow cotton, as he professes *thoroughly* to understand this process in *all* its parts, and can even make the machinery used in dressing cotton. I much wish to see John Brown placed in this situation, where, in the course of time, the Slave Trade may be stopped by employing the natives in their own country as free labourers. In Africa wages are so low as to afford grounds to expect that cotton-growers would be able to rival those in the United States, and thus to compel them to abandon slavery.

I know that the Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society in London has a good opinion of J. B., and intends to promote his views; and all that I hear and see induces me to believe that he is an industrious, honest man, who is desirous to do well.

JOHN WIGHAM, JUN.

10, *Salisbury Road, Edinburgh.*

26th day of Eleventh Month, 1853.

John Brown, the bearer of this, gives a most interesting narrative of his sufferings while in a state of slavery, and his escape to Canada, after many fruitless attempts, which brought on him severe punishment. My full persuasion is that he is an honest man, and that his statements may be relied on. In his projected attempts to raise Free-Labour Cotton on the coast of Africa, though I am not competent to decide on the merits of the plan, I sincerely wish him success.

J. Brown delivered a lecture at the Mechanics' Institute in this town, on Monday evening last, on which occasion I took the chair. The attendance was good; and the simplicity and shrewd common sense with which he delivered his statements and made his remarks, very strongly interested the audience.

B. GODWIN, D.D.

*Bradford, Yorkshire,
March 10, 1854.*

Concurring in the views expressed by Dr Godwin, on the other side, respecting John Brown, I think that he claims the kind and judicious notice of those who may have it in their power to aid him in his object.

BENJ. SEEBOHM.

Bradford, 3 mo. 11, 1854.