

D R E D :

A TALE OF THE DISMAL SWAMP.

A Drama,

IN TWO ACTS,

(*From Mrs. Beecher Stowe's Popular Novel.*)

BY

W. E. SUTER, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF

"A Life's Revenge," "Tiger Slayer of the Savannah," "A Quiet Family,"
"The Life of an Actress," "Jupiter's Decree," &c. &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

89, STRAND, LONDON.

AB605

DRED; A TALE OF THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP.

As performed at the Queen's Theatre, October, 1856.

CHARACTERS.

TOM GORDON (<i>a slave owner</i>)	- - - - -	MR. G. KINGSTON. "An early age saw him an adept in every low form of vice."
HARRY GORDON (<i>his half brother</i>)	- - - - -	MR. BUTLER. "It was only in the presence of Tom Gordon, Colonel Gordon's lawful son, that he ever realised that he was a slave."
DRED (<i>the fugitive of the Great Dismal Swamp, and leader of the revolted slaves</i>)	- - - - -	MR. CHARLES BENNETT. "He felt himself an instrument of doom in a mightier cause."
UNCLE TIFF (<i>poor old black, faithful Tiff</i>)	- - - - -	MR. RANDALL. "Dese yere chill'en shall never come to want as long as I'se 'bove ground."
MR. CRIPPS (<i>a brute and a bully</i>)	- - - - -	MR. CROSBY. "His industrial career might be defined as comprising a little of everything, and a great deal of nothing."
HARK (<i>a fugitive slave</i>)	- - - - -	MR. FORTUNE. "Poor, tortured, murdered Hark."
JIM (<i>Tom Gordon's pet nigger</i>)	- - - - -	MR. MANDERS. "Me work all day, me sleep all night—me have no care, me heart is light."
TO M'TIT (<i>a juvenile nigger, the property of Mrs. Nesbit</i>)	- - - - -	MASTER CLARKE. "One of those restless and effervescent sprites who seem to be born for the confusion of quiet people."
TEDDY (<i>Cripps's son</i>)	- - - - -	MISS SLADE. <i>Overseers, Slaves &c.</i>
LISSETTE (<i>Harry's wife—a quadroon</i>)	- - - - -	MISS DANSOR. "A joyous, happy bride."
MILLY (<i>a Creole—Harry Gordon's mother</i>)	- - - - -	MRS. J. PARRY. "Her passions rolled and burned in her bosom with a tropical fervour."
AUNT NESBIT (<i>since Nina's death, the nominal house-keeper</i>)	- - - - -	MISS RODES.

✓ X 6360136

KATY *a slave on Mrs. Seaden's plantation, the favourite of her mistress, and the idolised of Massa Jem)* MISS C. GIBSON.

POLLY SKINFLINT,
(Cripps's Second Wife) - MISS PALMER.

"A bundle of tawdry, dirty finery."

FANNY *(Cripps's daughter)* MISS M. RODES.
"Poor, motherless lamb."

COSTUMES.

TOM.—Nankeen frock coat and trowsers.

HARRY.—White jacket, trowsers, &c.

DRED.—Red shirt, black arms and leggings; conical cap and feather, leopard's skin pouch, mocassins.

TIFF.—Shirt and trowsers, with coloured patches.

HARK. Dark jacket and trowsers.

JIM.—Striped jacket, vest, and trowsers.

PIKE.—Long-tailed blue coat, broad striped trowsers.

TOMTIT.—Pages' jacket, short coloured trowsers.

TEDDY.—Grey jacket and trowsers.

LISSETTE.—Striped jacket and shirt.

AUNT NESBIT.—Plain silk dress.

MILLY.—Plain dark dress; turban.

KATY.—Brown skirt and jacket. 2nd dress, large striped skirt, &c, small bonnet, with different coloured feathers.

POLL SKINFLINT.—Vulgar patterned muslin dress, red and yellow shawl, green bonnet.

FANNY.—Brown frock.

Programme of Scenery, Incidents, &c.

APARTMENT LOOKING ON PLANTATION.

The Slaves' enjoyment interrupted—A black sprite fond of dancing—A negro's idea of fun—A tale of sorrow—Woman, man's best comforter—Hope is the best—Sudden arrival of Tom Gordon, the slaves' new master—The threat of vengeance—The blow returned—The escape of Harry—Let loose the bloodhounds.

Chamber in Gordon's Mansion.

A negro in love—Jim feels the effects of his late encounter—Milly saves Lisette from the foul designs of Gordon.

OPEN COUNTRY WITH VIEW OF TIFF'S DWELLING. Appearance of Dred.

THE OLD LOG HUT.

Poor old Tiff and the children—A mother-in-law not very fond of the brats—The whip—The fearful struggle and leap for life—The fugitives saved by Dred—Defeat of Tom Gordon.

DISTANT VIEW OF THE PLANTATION.

The hidden document discovered—The resolve.

PORTION OF THE PLANTATION. Meeting of Jim and Katy.

Dense Wood near the Swamp.

Tiff's devotion—The sleeping children—The alarm—The hounds are out—The departure for the Swamp.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE JUNGLE.

The pursuit—Arrival of Tom Gordon and his Slaves—The document forced from Milly—She is struck to the earth—Determination of Hark.

THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP.

[With the secret winding path amid the death-threatening pit and treacherous bog—one step to the right or left from the track is assured destruction. In this Scene the whole of the stage will be thrown open, and every resource of scenic and mechanical effect introduced to give due effect to the novel and harrowing catastrophe.]

Dred's retreat—The fugitives protected—The heroism of Hark—The will discovered, and—

Destruction of the Villain Gordon!

D R E D.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Apartments looking on to Plantation. Large opening, R. C. window open, L. of F. Matting, ottomans, skins, &c. FEMALE SLAVES on stage, laughing and jabbering with MALE SLAVES, who are looking in at opening.*

Music.—AUNT NESBIT enters L. H.

AUNT. Lazy, good for nothing black rubbish, how dare you be idling and chattering here? away with you or the whip and your backs shall very soon become intimately acquainted.

SLAVES. Iss, missee—tank'ee, missee.

(SLAVES retire R.

AUNT. Poor dear Nina, during her lifetime spoiled them all by her ever indulgence, but when Tom Gordon has taken possession of the estate I warrant they will find the difference. But where is that little scapegrace Tomtit? I told him to bring me some tea, but he is the most graceless, incorrigible rascal—

Music.—TOMTIT dances on, L. H., with tray, teapot, cup and saucer, &c.

TOMTIT. Here I is, Missus. (*dancing about stage, and rattling tea things.*)

AUNT. Will you be quiet, oaf, and put the tray on the table.

TOMTIT. Iss, missus.

(puts tray on table, tosses up, and catches teacup, &c.

AUNT NESBIT strikes at him, he ducks his head and drops teacup.

TOMTIT. Dere, now, missus, oo hub been and gone
and break de teacup. Oh, missus, for shame ob ooself.

(*Music.—AUNT NESBIT chases him round stage, he dodges her, laughs, and runs off, c. and L., AUNT NESBIT goes to tray, takes up teapot and immediately sets it down again, uttering a cry of pain.*)

TOMTIT re-enters, c. from L., laughs and dances

TOMTIT. Oh, oo stoopid ole missus, now oo hab been
and gone and burnt oo finger—he, he, he !

AUNT. You bad boy—you have been at your old
tricks, placing the handle, instead of the spout of the
teapot to the fire.

TOMTIT. Now, hab I dough—shouldn't wonder,
'cause I always gets so boddered dat I don't know
which am de handle, and which am de spout—he, he,
he !

AUNT. Ah ! you'll never come to any good.

TOMTIT. But, tell oo what, missus, if de handle am
hot, missus, take hold ob de spout and pour de tea out
ob de handle—he, he, he ! (*AUNT NESBIT darts towards
him, he runs off, c. and R. singing.*) “I'm going to glory,
glory, glory !”

AUNT. The rogue will drive me crazy—and now, I
declare, he has brought me no sugar.

Enter LISETTE, c. from R.

LISETTE. Beg pardon, Mrs. Nesbit, can you tell me
where to find Harry ?

AUNT. No, my dear, he is here, there, and every-
where, for poor Nina left her affairs in such perplexity
that he has enough to do to get them straight, and, as
Tom Gordon will be here to-day—

LISETTE. Poor Miss Nina, to be taken off so young,
and so suddenly—and Tom Gordon, my husband says,
is such a bad man.

AUNT. Ay ! from boyhood the brothers, for they are
brothers, never agreed, and I fear that now—

Music.—TOMTIT dances on c. from R., with large band box.

TOMTIT. Oh, missus, here am bran new bonnet, big
as last Wen'sday week come for oo.

AUNT. Put it down yonder out of the way.

TOMTIT. (*placing box under window.*) Oh, him such jolly prime box—let him jump on him, missus.

AUNT. You little villain!

(*chases TOMTIT off, R. H., he dancing and singing.*)
"I'm going to glory," &c.

Enter HARRY, C. from R.

LISETTE. Oh Harry, how sad you seem

HARRY. And not without reason, dear Lisette, Tom Gordon will presently be here.

LISETTE. Well, why should you fear—are you not brothers?

HARRY Yes, dearest! but Tom Gordon was born free—*his* mother was the *wife* of Colonel Gordon, and a white woman—*my* mother was a slave—her son is a slave—and yet my father loved me, educated me, so reared me, that now I am like the bat in the fable, neither bird nor beast; when Colonel Gordon died, he left this estate to poor Nina, another to Tom, and left, also, his command that Nina should be kept ignorant that I was her brother.

LISETTE. Why not have told me this before, dear Harry.

HARRY. For reasons which you will ere long comprehend. The colonel on his dying bed told me that he had given a sealed paper to Nina, which was not to be opened until she had attained the age of twenty-one, and when that period arrived I should find, he said, that he had done me full justice; till then, he desired that I should manage the estate for Nina as a servant, and a slave.

LISETTE. What could have been his motive?

HARRY. He feared that, rendered free, I might become as bad as Tom, who, almost from his cradle, had been a curse to his parents, and to all surrounding him. Poor Nina, though she knew not I was her brother, yet loved me like one, would have given me freedom, but, of course, dared not—nor did I desire that she should, for I felt certain that the paper left by my father, Colonel Gordon, would give me that and an ample provision—but who can foresee the decrees of

Providence! Three months since, poor Nina was suddenly stricken with a fatal malady, and died on the very morning of her twenty-first birth-day.

LISETTE. And the document left by the colonel—

HARRY. Can nowhere be found. Up to the present moment vain has been every search, and, in default of that paper, Tom Gordon claims this estate, and will presently arrive to take possession; he hates, has ever hated me—is a bold, bad man, caring naught for ties of blood, and I am his slave.

LISETTE. Horrible!

HARRY. And you, Lisette, my adored wife, are also his slave; for the deed that would have rendered you free, lacks poor Nina's signature, which was to have been appended on the very morning she died. You see plainly now, do you not, the horrors of our situation, and will no longer wonder that I am sad?

LISETTE. Yes, I perceive that we have no hope save in the discovery of the document left by Colonel Gordon.

HARRY. Yes, one other hope, Dred.

LISETTE. Dred!

HARRY. Ay, should Tom Gordon's oppression, as I fear, become too hard to bear, then we will escape to the Great Dismal Swamp—join Dred and the revolted slaves, and patiently await the moment when we may strike the blow that shall give us liberty.

LISETTE. Your father, had he loved you, would not have left your freedom to chance.

HARRY. Oh, the love that fathers have for such as *me* is not like the love they feel for their white children; they are half ashamed of us, and quite ashamed to show their love if they have it. Oh! how often I have wished that I were a good honest black nigger, then I should know what I was; now, I am neither one thing nor the other, I come just near enough to the condition of the white man to look into it, and to appreciate it. I have been educated as a gentleman, and am left a slave, and a slave to a devil, who will delight in goading me to despair.

LISETTE. Dear Harry, we will hope for the best, hope, and pray.

Shouts without—JIM runs on, c. from R.

JIM. Out ob de way oo niggers—him Massa, Misser Tom Gordon am come, him use him whip too, break oo eye, and black oo nose, he, he, he ! him reg'lar debil, he, he, he !

Music.—TOM GORDON enters, c. from R., followed by MALE and FEMALE SLAVES, OVERSEERS, &c.—shouting.

TOM. Stop your noise, you infernal niggers ; no whooping and dancing now I am your master, but work, work, and plenty of it—and hark ye, (*taking whip from OVERSEER.*) Do you see this ? I use it, mark that, and now, look at me well ! I'm your master—witness my signature. (*strikes SLAVES who shrink away.*) That's right, keep your distance—too close is unpleasant.

JIM. (L.) Golly, massa, oo so deb'lish droll.

TOM. Hold your prate, you black thief. (*striking him with whip.*)

JIM. (*rubbing his shoulder.*) Oh, oh ! oo is so berry funny—oo does make him laugh so, he, he, he ! only oo does hit so dam hard, massa. (*HARRY comes forward, R.*)

TOM. Now who are you ?

HARRY. You know well I am your brother.

TOM. Brother ! I know nothing about that—you are one of my niggers, my slave, that's all I know. Do you mark ? My slave ! and by every devil that ever reigned you shall soon find that I'm your master.

HARRY. You know your father intended I should be free, that the paper left in Nina's hands—

TOM. What paper ! Where is it ? I know nothing about papers—know only that you are my slave—that this estate is now mine, and you no longer cock of the walk; and dare so much as lift a finger to countermand one of my orders and I'll put a bullet through your head as soon as I would a buck's. If my niggers don't look sharp, they'll find out whether I am master or not, you see I give you fair warning.

HARRY. And I give you warning that one day

Heaven will requite you for the infamy of your conduct, atrocious ruffian that you are.

LISETTE. (*advancing to HARRY's side.*) Harry!
TOM. (*holding whip.*) Good! Exactly what I wanted—proceed.

JIM. (*aside.*) Golly, dare'll be a row, him get out ob de way and take care ob number one.

Goes off R. C., and past window.

HARRY. Sons of the same father, you hate me because I most resemble Colonel Gordon, hate me for my superiority, because, even as a schoolboy I ever distanced you. I know that for years you have been thirsting to wreck your cowardly revenge on me, and you are now exulting in the belief that you have the power to torture a brother who never injured you, and whom by every human tie you should be bound to love.

TOM. You are not my mother's son, and I acknowledge you only as my slave.

HARRY. Beware, lest the slave become the master, for better than you am I, to govern; my intellects are clear, thine clouded by drunkenness and debauchery, and my skin is no darker than thine, why then should I be a slave? My mother descended from a noble race—

MILLY appearing, c. from R.

MILLY. Was by the treacherous white man sold into captivity. (*advancing, c.*) But she has long been free, and happily, Tom Gordon, beyond the reach of thy base malice.

TOM. (L. C.) To the devil with you.

MILLY. That is well said to the woman whom your father loved, who bore him children—children all torn from me save this only one. Oh, Harry, better your father had made you work like a field negro than give you the education that he did and leave you under the foot of every white man that pleases to tread upon you.

LISETTE. Oh, sir, use nobly the power with which Heaven hath seen fit to entrust you, and a happy heart, and an approving conscience will be your blest reward.

Tom. Ah! Who is this pretty quadroon?

LISETTE. I—I am Harry's wife, sir.

Tom. And, like him, my slave; is't not so?

LISETTE. Alas, yes.

Tom. You are too pretty to belong to a nigger; you will have to give her up, Master Harry, for I need a housekeeper. (*putting his arm round her waist.*) What say you, my darling?

LISETTE. (*breaking away.*) Unhand me, sir.

HARRY. (*advancing to him.*) Beware, Tom, beware.

Tom. How, Tom, to your master! let that, you damned nigger, teach you better manners.

(*Music.*—**TOM** strikes **HARRY** across the face with his whip—**HARRY** darts upon him, and with one blow of his fist knocks him to the ground, then dashing slaves aside, rushes off c., **TOM** immediately rises, and is pursuing **HARRY**, when he is grasped and held back by **MILLY**—**LISETTE** following **HARRY**, is seized by **OVERSEERS**. **HARRY** is met, as he is passing the window, by **JIM**, who shouts out—"Here, massa, him got him!"—**HARRY** dashes him in at window, and disappears—**JIM** falls on to bonnet box, crushing it. **MRS. NESBIT** and **TOMTIT** enter, R. H., **MRS. NESBIT** beats **JIM**, who lies kicking and roaring. **SLAVES** hurry off after **HARRY**—**TOMTIT** jumps about, singing—"I'm going to glory," &c.

SCENE II.—*Front Chamber.*

Enter KATY, R. H.

KATY. Jim! Where is that fellow? he made a pintment with me, and he ain't a kept it, so glad that his master has brought him here, 'cause as massa Tom Gordon has sold me to Mrs. Leclerc, we shall always be close to one another—quite contagious I may say.

Enter JIM, L. H.

JIM. Oh, lawks a mercy, that ooman has dished ebery one ob him jints. Ah! Missee Katy, him so bery glad to see oo 'cause oo is so—so—(*rubbing his leg.*) Dam onpleasant.

KATY. Massa Jim, that's a very resulting speech, and if you don't mind I shall cast you off, infect you for somebody else.

JIM. Oh, Katty, don't oo do dat, 'cause him do doat on oo, better dan him lub pumpkin pie, but him being bery ill oosed, and bery much terrumfied, don't him look pale?

KATY. Yes, as pale as a blackbeetle.

JIM. Blackbeetle—oo nassy beast, dat animal black as de debil, and eberybody say Jim's 'plexion bery indelicate—blackbeetle got four ugly legs, Jim got on'y two, but den dey's booties.

KATY. Yes, Jim, they'd make lubly corkscrews.

JIM. Now, Missee Katy, him seriosly defended mind oo, oo don't talk 'tall like a gentleman. But, oh, golly, here am Massa Tom Gordon—out ob de way, Katy.

They run off, R. H.

TOM GORDON enters, L. H., dragging on LISETTE.

LISETTE. Mercy! Mercy!

TOM. Mercy, yes, perhaps! Hark ye, girl, I have taken a fancy to you, besides, it would be the best revenge I could have on Master Harry, so promise not to be squeamish and I will be merciful; I'll not pursue the fellow, there; he shall make his way unmolested to the Swamp, or to the devil if he likes.

LISETTE. And would you make the wife's dishonour the price of her husband's safety?

TOM. Psha! What can dishonour a nigger? do you forget that you are my slave, and must obey me in everything—do you understand, in *everything*? Think you then that I shall sue for that which is my right, which I can claim, and you dare not deny? no half measures for me, where I hate, I hate; and when I say revenge, I mean it.

LISETTE. Oh! you are some fiend permitted to wander o'er the earth to torture and destroy. Oh, be merciful and kill me..

TOM. Kill! No, I'll use, then sell you, hunt to the death your husband, Master Harry, and as I shoot him down, will yell into his ear the fate that has befallen his charming wife.

LISETTE. Villain, let me pass.

TOM. No, you must be taught obedience to your master. (*Music.—Raises whip, she darts past him.*)

MILLY enters, R. H., and comes down between them presenting pistol at TOM.

MILLY. Away, girl! (*LISETTE hurries off R.H.*)

TOM. Back, woman, nor interfere with that which don't concern you—she is my slave.

MILLY. Thou art the slave of the arch-fiend, and bravely dost thou perform his work. Dare to follow, and I'll send thee to thy master. *Exit R. H.*

TOM. Curse her—she would not dare—Stop, you infernal hag, or—

(*hastening off, R. H. he stumbles against KATY, who enters.*)

KATY. Oh, oh! do you want to kill me? oh, oh! I'm very ill. (*clinging to TOM.*)

TOM. Away, you jade—I see, you are in league with those other women.

KATY. Don't know what you mean. (*he tries to get away—she holds him tighter.*) Oh, dear I'm taken worser.

TOM. Leave go, girl, or this whip—

KATY. (*standing bolt upright before him.*) What? I'm not your slave now! touch me, and I'll slap your face.

JIM enters, R. H.

TOM. You Jim! why the devil didn't you stop that girl—run.

JIM. Run—iss, massa! (*running about.*)

TOM. What are you about?

JIM. Don't know, massa, oo told him to run and him a doin' on it, hard as eber him can, massa. (*running about.*)

TOM. (*grasping him.*) You infernal nigger. (*flogs him with whip.*)

KATY. Oh you nasty great coward.

(*Music—JIM kicks and roars—KATY punches TOM with her fists.* *Exeunt L. H.*)

SCENE III—*Open Country.**Music.—HARRY enters, R. H.*

HARRY. No—no! I must not fly—my wife—what would be her fate? here I must skulk around like a partridge in the bushes, and all for what? because my younger brother chooses to domineer over me, and strike me, and insult my wife; and because the laws will protect him in it, if he does it. Who knows what he'll be saying and doing to Lisette while I am gone? I'll go back and face him like a man. Let him look out, he has but one life any more than I have. Oh, for some one to counsel me how to act—if Dred, now, were but here—

Music.—Enter DRED, L. H.

DRED. Behold him! So, Master Harry, it has at last come to your turn—your master struck you. Ay, I know all. How mean you—to kiss the rod—be meek and lowly—bend your neck, and ask to be struck again—wilt say to him—"When thou art tired of my wife, I pray you restore her to me."

HARRY. Dred, Dred, you are raising the devil within me.

DRED. Obedience in everything is, you know, the slave's creed. Hast thou not hid thine eyes from the oppression of our people—have not *our* wives been for a prey, and thou hast not regarded—hath not our cheek been given to the smiter—have we not been counted as sheep for the slaughterer? Go! you sleep in a curtained bed, I, on the ground in the Dismal Swamp—you eat of the fat of the land, I what ravens bring me, but no man *whips* me, no man touches my wife—you are a *slave*, I, a free man—free, by this—(*extending his rifle.*) —with which I gained and can defend my liberty.

HARRY. I, too, will be free, but for my wife—

LISETTE enters hurriedly, R. H.

LISETTE. Harry! oh, Heaven be praised.

HARRY. How got you here?

LISETTE. Your mother, Harry, rescued me; the ruffian was about to strike me.

HARRY. Dastardly wretch! but a time *shall* come—

DRED. Ah! now you are aroused—I read it in your eye. On to the hut of good old Tiff, there await my coming to conduct you to the Swamp. Fear not, Harry, ere long the slaves will be the masters, and our feet shall rest upon the necks of our oppressors

(*Music.—Exit, L. H.*)

LISETTE. Oh, Harry, what a sad change is this? what fearful misery is before us? (*distant voices heard.*)

HARRY. Ah! we are pursued.

LISETTE. Let us on, then, we will reach the Great Dismal Swamp, or die on the road,

(*Music.—Exeunt L. H. Voices again.*)

SCENE IV.—*Log Hut; window R. C., door L. C., truckle bed L. 2 E., on which are lying TEDDY and FANNY—TIFF is seated R. C. (in large roughly made chair,) with large spectacles, darning a stocking, and with his foot rocking a cradle. Music.*

TIFF. Oh, Tiff, Tiff, you ole fool—you mem'ry all gone—here you keep on rockin' de cradle, and de poor lilly piccaminy what used to lie in it am dead and buried, and de moder, too, am gone—dere, (*looking upcards.*) out ob de troubles ob dis bery bad world—and dem ere chil'en am left to ole Tiff—for do dey got a fader, yet dey am got no fader, 'cause him gone wasted all him prop'ty—sold all him niggers, 'cept poor Tiff, dat him want ta nuss de chil'en. Oh, goodness! hope him neber come back, 'cause him bery bad man, starve and beat de chil'en arter him broke him poor wife's 'art. Iss! hope him neber come back—ole Tiff find a way to feed de poor babbies. Tiff old man, but him bery strong yet—iss, and him work well wid him niddle, too—keep de lilly dears bery genteel. Iss! him de fader and moder, and uncle and aunt, and eberyting else besides to de poor lilly chil'en.

FANNY. (*awaking.*) Uncle Tiff, I am so hungry.

TEDDY. (*rising.*) You said if we went to sleep that when we woke you'd give us something nice

TIFF. And dere's a bit ob nice plum cake for oo—ole Tiff keep him word oo see.

FANNY. Father ought to be ashamed of himself to use us so now that we have lost poor mother, and—*(crying.)* and little baby.

TEDDY. *(crying.)* I did so love baby brother, and they have gone and put him in the pit hole; it's a great shame, so it is.

TIFF. No, Teddy, it is not a shame, my little man, him gone up dere, to Heaven, and dere him am now, 'mong all de angels, and some day, if we'm very good, p'rhaps we see filly baby broder once more agin.

TEDDY. Oh, I will be good then.

FANNY. And dear mamma, Uncle Tiff, shall we see her again?

TIFF. *(wiping his eyes.)* Oh, murcy's sake don't go on like dis! oo break poor ole Tiff's 'art right across, don't say 'noder word, goodness sake, don't, or how oo tink I find strength to look arter oo, and—and—*(aside.)* Oh, de poor dear missus, what him knowed and nussed when she war a baby; if it warn't a for her chil'en ole Tiff wish him dead too, so him would—so him would.

FANNY. *(crying.)* Don't cry, Uncle Tiff.

TEDDY. We'll never do so any more, Uncle Tiff.

(children caress him.)

TIFF. Ise better now, Teddy, and we'll behabe like men arter dis.

FANNY. Yes, that we will, Uncle Tiff.

TIFF. *(laughing, and wiping his eyes.)* Hear dat ere, Teddy! Miss Fanny say she behabe like a man; dat ere am droll—he, he, he!

TEDDY. She don't know what she's talking about—it's only you and me, Uncle Tiff, that's men. Girls can't never be men, can they, Uncle Tiff?

FANNY. I wonder whether father will ever come back.

TEDDY. I'm sure I don't want him to, he ill-used poor mamma, and I won't have him for my father any longer, and I won't mind a word he says.

TIFF. Teddy! Teddy! Dat am bery wrong, oo farder is oo farder, do him eber so bad, and oo know,

Teddy, dat ere good book dat me read so bery often—
dat ere book say, "Chil'en obey oo parents."

FANNY. You are our parents, Uncle Tiff, for if it
wasn't for you, father would put us in the pit hole
along with poor mama, and baby, I know he would.

TIFF. Whateber habben, chil'en, al'ays rebember
dat oo young lady and gentleman, for do oo moder did
marry Misser Cripps, who am nobody, yet she
b'long to de fam'ly of de Peyton's, de Peyton blood in
oo veins, rebember dat, neber forget dat oo is ob de
Peyton blood—ole Tiff, too, him b'long to the fam'ly
eber since him born, so course him Peyton, too.

TEDDY. I wish I belonged to somebody that would
give me something nice for supper.

TIFF. Well, well, who knows? oo got rich 'lations
'bout som'eres, and p'rhap some ob dese ere days dey
leabe oo loads of money, on'y tink ob dat, ah, den—

TEDDY. Then we'd take care of you, Uncle Tiff, and
give you as much as ever you could eat, wouldn't we,
Fanny?

FANNY. Ah, that we would, and instead of these old
patched clothes, we'd dress you all over gold and
diamonds.

TIFF. (*embracing them.*) Bless oo, chil'en—bless oo,
bless oo.

CRIPPS. (*without.*) Now, Tiff, you infernal old nigger,
where are you? (*TIFF and CHILDREN are panic stricken.*)

FANNY. Oh, dear! father has come back.

TIFF. And we was so happy—oh, dear!

Enter CRIPPS, D. L. C., half drunk.

CRIPPS. Now then, wake up here, I've come back,
you see—thought I was dead—I dare say, but, ha, ha!
Not dead, only married. Ha, ha, ha!

TIFF. (*amazed.*) Married, massa?

CRIPPS. Yes, married, you old crow. I thought I'd
bring the children a mother to take care of them.
(*calling.*) Come in, Polly. Here she is, this is my wife,
and a devilish nice gal, too. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter POLL SKINFLINT, door L. C.

POLL. (L.) Yes, I'm your new mother, how do you
like me?

TEDDY. Don't like you at all, and I won't have you for my mother.

FANNY. No, my mother was a lady.

POLL. And what the devil am I! Not a gentleman, am I? Ha, ha!

CRIPPS. Do you hear, go and kiss your new mother.

TEDDY. I won't—don't want a new mother; uncle Tiff is our father and mother, too, now.

POLL. Told you how it would be—told you I didn't want no brats of t'other woman's; plague enough when I get some of my own. Come here and kiss me, and be cursed to you.

FANNY. } (R.) No, we won't!
TEDDY. }

POLL. Come here, you young rips, or I'll break every bone in your unruly carcases. (*advancing, L. C.*)

TIFF. Keep off—oo shan't touch 'em—oo arn't got the right; oo isn't no ooman—oo'm a she debil! and if de chil'en's own fader 'on't perfect 'em, den Tiff will—'pend 'pon it him will as long as him got a bit ob breath left in him poor ole body.

POLL. Very pretty. Cripps, didn't you tell me this old nigger was to be my property, to do as I liked with?

CRIPPS. (L.) Yes, my love—to be sure I did.

POLL. (*striking TIFF.*) Then—there, you black trash, take that.

TIFF. Ole Tiff neber struck afore; and if it warn't for de chil'en de disgrace ud kill him. De Peyton's neber strike him, neber. Ooman, de cuss ob Heben will fall heaby on oo 'art for usin' duss de on'y purtector ob de poor moderless, and wuss dan faderless, chil'en.

POLL. Cripps, if you don't thrash him I'll go straight back to my mamma, and never come near you again.

CRIPPS. Never you fear, Poll, I'll give the old thief a lesson shall teach him better than preach disobedience to my children.

(*Music.—Gets whip. POLL drags CHILDREN from TIFF, who is seized by CRIPPS and hurled to the ground, and then lashed by him. The door flies open and DRED darts on, snatches whip from CRIPPS, grasps him by the throat, forces him on his knees, and*

flogs him. Cripps shrieking for mercy—Poll releases the Children and runs off screaming. Teddy claps his hands and dances. Dred drags Cripps up stage, opens window and hurls him out of it. Children run to Tiff and embrace him.)

TIFF. (*on his knees.*) Oh, Heben ! I tank de dat has raised up a friend to purtect de poor ole man and de chil'en, and to chastise de wicked.

DRED. They will not return to molest you ; or if they should, only say that you need but raise your voice to summon me, and they'd as soon hang themselves as touch a hair of your head.

TEDDY. I don't know who you are—but you are a first-rate fellow ; and only wait till I am a man, that's all.

DRED. Tiff, Harry Gordon and his wife will presently be here ; bid them wait my coming, which will not be long—I mistake, or there will be more work for me to do. Daily and hourly are my feelings harrowed and lacerated at the cruelties that I witness, and my dreams made frightful by the appalling recollection ; but the poor slaves have dared to raise their manacled hands to Heaven and have been heard. The avenger is at hand—ere long our tyrants will tremble, will prostrate their coward forms before him, and, in their turn, will wildly, vainly shriek for mercy ! *Exit, door L. C.*

TIFF. Dat am a man—got a 'art for all dat him on'y a nigger, and rewolted nigger, too. What, if dey got de chance dey would shoot or hang widout marcy.

FANNY. He's a real good fellow—didn't he make father jump ?

TIFF. Hush, chil'en, hush ! he *is* oo fader—(*aside.*) but him bery great blackguard for all dat. (*voices without.*) Gracious, what am dat ?

Music.—HARRY and LISETTE enter, D. L. C.

HARRY. They are at our heels.

LISETTE. Conceal and save us.

TIFF. Harry, him got no where to hide oo. (*voices again nearer.*) P'rhaps dey not suspec ole Tiff. Oo crouch down dere, missee. (*pointing to truckle-bed—Lisette lies down behind it.*) Oo, chil'en, lie on de bed,

go to sleep 'rectly minute, and, goodness sake, don't say single word 'bout dissere.

TEDDY. 'Tisn't likely; we're too wide awake for that. (*CHILDREN lie down on the bed.*)

TIFF. Massa Harry, down here—hind him chair; p'rhaps dey not see oo. (*HARRY crouches behind chair.*)

(*TIFF sits down and darns stockings, rocking cradle with his foot; the door is dashed open and TOM GORDON, JIM, OVERSEERS, and SLAVES enter.*)

TOM. (*by Tiff's side.*) Now, you black vermin—

TIFF. (*coolly darning stocking.*) Tank'ee, massa—same to oo.

TOM. Where are they?—Quick!

TIFF. Oh, dere now, massa—oo joggle him arm and de niddle gone in him finger.

TOM. (*seizing and dragging him forward.*) No nonsense—they must be here. Speak! or I'll cut the secret out of you. (*raising whip.*)

TIFF. Him don't know what oo mean. If oo lost anything, go and find him—he got noting to say to oo.

TOM. Then I'll have something to say to you. (*throwing him round.*) Take this old nigger and hang him up to the door post; he ain't my property, I know, but a very little money will set the matter right with Cripps.

TEDDY. } FANNY. } (*coming forward.*) Oh, no, no—don't hurt Uncle Tiff.

TOM. String him up, I say.

(*Music.—SLAVES are dragging TIFF away—the CHILDREN clinging to him. HARRY comes from behind and plants himself before TOM GORDON.*)

HARRY. There will come a day when all this shall be visited upon you; the measure you have filled to us, shall be filled to you double, mark my words.

TOM. Ah, I thought you weren't far off. Now we'll see whether you'll acknowledge me for your master. Do you see this? (*holding up his whip.*) This is what I whip dogs with when they don't know their place. Now, sir, down on your knees and ask pardon for your impudence, or I'll thrash you within an inch of your life.

HARRY. I won't kneel to my younger brother.

TOM. Oh, won't you? wait a bit! And you think to keep your wife out of my way, don't you?—we shall see. Come, where is she? Quick! Where is she? I say.

JIM. (*looking behind bed.*) Here she am, massa.

TOM. All right! Secure her.

TIFF. (*having stolen unperceived to door, and holding it open.*) Away wid oo, missee.

(*Music—LISETTE darts past men, and out of door, which TIFF closes rapidly, and places his back against it.*)

TOM. Drag him away!

(*Music—TIFF is seized—HARRY is struggling with SLAVES—the CHILDREN belabour JIM with bamboos—JIM gets into cradle—TIFF is dragged from door—HARRY, rushing up, is met by TOM, they struggle forward—TIFF takes up the two children in his arms, and goes off at door—HARRY throws TOM off, fights his way past men, and leaps out of window—TOM is following HARRY, when DRED appears at the window, with his rifle levelled—ALL start.*)

ALL. Dred!

Enter DRED, at window.

DRED. Ay, Dred, the Avenger!

(*Music—TOM draws pistol, and fires at DRED, missing him—DRED fires his rifle, wounding TOM, who falls—ALL rush on DRED, who, with the butt end of his rifle, strikes down two men, then, casting it through the window, as the rest are rushing upon him, he presents a brace of pistols—ALL are transfixed—Picture.*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment. Large open window, reaching to the ground, c., through which view of Plantation. Curtain on each side of window; table, L. C.; couch, R. H., on which TOM GORDON is reclining—his left arm in a sling.*

THEOPHILUS KITE seated at table, on which are bottles and glasses. SLAVES standing near TOM.

KITE. Come, try a drop, Tom—it can't hurt you, man. TOM. I tell you I daren't yet, curse it! and that's where it is—as I very seldom go sober to bed, you may be certain that I feel the miss of the stuff; but I must have my arm well, 'tis not far off, now—for I have work to do, on which I have set my heart.

KITE. Ah, you are a formidable adversary, and I would caution the abolitionists to avoid you, because, though you sometimes fail in argument, yet you always conquer by the cudgel and the bludgeon.

TOM. Ay, those are arguments there's no resisting. You, sir, (*to Slave.*) bid them be ready with the dogs, for we shall start for the Swamp within an hour.

Exit Slave at window.

(*rising.*) Oh, it stings me to frenzy when I think that every effort which I have hitherto made for the recovery of Harry has failed. In vain have I sent out hunters and dogs. The Swamp has been tracked to no purpose—that is to say, the small portion of it in which men dare venture. Oh! I boil and burn with passion, as I think of him, in his security, defying my power.

KITE. You are bound to have the fellow; publish a proclamation of outlawry, and offer a reward for his head, that will bring it in I'm thinking.

TOM. Ay! his head would be better than nothing, but if I could only catch him alive, and make an example of him! I'd take him the long way round, that I would; the fellow has been an eye-sore to me ever since I was a boy. I believe all the devils that are in me are up about him.

KITE. Tom, you've got the devil in you—no mistake.

TOM. To be sure I have; I only want a chance to fetch him out; I wish I could get hold of the fellow's wife; I could make him wince there, I guess. I'll get her too, before long. But the fact is, Kite, they are with that fellow Dred, and his lair has not been discovered.

KITE. I know it, and that's a pity; for he has got a lot of runaways with him, and they mean mischief.

TOM. Oh, I shall have them; now, look ye here, Kite, one of my niggers, Hark—you know the growling, discontented vagabond. Well I have found out that he is in league with Dred and his set, has been in the habit of conducting runaways to Dred, so of course he knows the safe path across the Swamp.

KITE. Good! I see.

TOM. Well, the fellow bolted himself the other day, but Jim Bokee nabbed and brought him back—you may be sure I gave him a taste of the whip.

KITE. Why didn't you shoot him as an example?

TOM. Couldn't afford it; you see, he's a strong, able bodied nigger, and worth a trifle, so I have promised him all sorts of things if he will only conduct me to Dred's lair.

KITE. And he has promised?

TOM. Of course he has, and when he has kept his word I'll keep mine, though not perhaps exactly in the way that he understood it—the canting, whining thief.

KITE. Well, good day, I must go now, I shall expect soon to hear that you have got your grip on Master Harry—and, then, lawks a mercy on him, that's all.

Exit at window.

TOM, Ay, I'll tear him limb from limb, and his friend, too, Master Dred, to whom I am indebted for this splendid arm; I'll burn him from the earth, and scatter his ashes to the wind.

Enter JIM, at window.

TOM. Now, you black cur, where have you been again? you are always sneaking off somewhere—are you trying to bolt—eh, dog?

JIM. Don't oo call him dog, massa, 'cause him specable nigger.

TOM. Arn't I a kind master, you black scum?

JIM. (*aside.*) Kind ! oh lord—oh lord.

TOM. (*looking hard at him.*) What's that you mutter ?

JIM. Him was saying dat oo de best massa as neber was, and dat him lub oo bery much. (*aside.*) Ugh ! de words bery nigh choke him.

TOM. You say, then, that I am a kind master.

JIM. Iss ! bless oo 'art. (*aside.*) Dam tief.

TOM. Then, there—(*striking him with whip.*) take that for telling an infernal lie.

JIM. Iss, tank oo, kind massa.

TOM. And now, once more, where have you been ?

JIM. (*aside.*) Him run away dis bery night, blowed if him don't.

TOM. (*raising whip.*) Are you going to speak.

JIM. Iss, massa ! him been to meetin'—him gettin' bery pious, massa—bilin' all ober wid religius feelin'.

TOM. Meeting, eh ? I don't believe it. What was the text ?

JIM. (*puzzled.*) Text, massa ?

TOM. Yes—quick—out with it, or— (*raising whip.*)

JIM. Text, massa ? him war de—de ninety-fourth chapter ob Jerusalenum.

TOM. Oh, was it ? and what were the words ?

JIM. De words, massa—him know dem ebery one.

TOM. Quick, then, let's have them.

JIM. Dey was—"Ye shall seek in the mornin' and ye shall not find me." (*aside.*) And him blowed if oo shall needer.

TOM. Pah ! you haven't been to meeting at all.

JIM. Oh, yes, him hab, massa. (*aside.*) Him bin meetin' Katy down among the shoogar canes.

TOM. (*striking him with whip.*) Now be off with you.

JIM. Iss, massa ! bless oo, massa, oo de kindest and de bestest, and de fondest, and de—(*aside.*)—biggest dam blackguard as neber was. *Exit at window.*

TOM. Now, then, for the Dismal Swamp, and Master Harry—(*going up.*)

MILLY enters at window—advances, R.

Now, why come you here ?

MILLY. To remind you once again that Harry is your father's son, and that, had the colonel's will been found—

Tom. You will preach in vain—I am *all* devil now—have sworn to snatch from your son—my *slave*—his darling wife, and after, to scourge the life out of him. You know, now, what to expect and are satisfied I hope.

Milly. Mark my words, Tom Gordon, and, as you value life, forbear. The cup of your iniquity is filled unto the brim. (*goes up, but stops at window.*)

TOMTIT runs on, L. 1 R., with small box.

TOMTIT. Oh, Massa Gordon, him found this purty box in Missee Nina's room dat was.

Milly. (together.) { Ha!

Tom. { Silence!

(**Milly** rapidly conceals herself behind table—**Tom** looks anxiously around.)

Tom. Ah! she is gone, and only just in time. Now, you young Tomtit; you found the box, you say?

TOMTIT. Iss, massa, him hab bit ob play up in Missee Nina's room, ben, all at once, him happen kick agin de wainscot and him fly open, and him see dis lilly box, (grinning.) He, he! what oo goin' to gib him, massa?

Tom. (taking a box.) There's a dollar for you.

TOMTIT. (dances and sings.) "I'm goin' to glory," &c.

Tom. And mind, not a word of this, or—(shaking whip.)

TOMTIT. Him neber say noting, massa. (aside.) Wonder what in dat ere box—wish him hab kep' him—blest if him don't find out. (*goes out at window, dancing and singing.*) "I'm goin' to glory," &c.

Tom. If this box, now, should contain the lost document—shouldn't wonder—'twould be a glorious slice of luck. (*places box on table.*) We'll soon see—but stop, this affair may as well, for the present, be kept to myself, so I'll close the window, and draw the curtains, and then I shall be sure there will be no spy upon my actions.)

(*Music.*—Goes to window—as he passes up behind table,

Milly comes round to the front of it. **Tom** closes

window and draws curtains, and, as he comes forward

Milly creeps round again to back of table.

Tom. Now all is secure. (*trying box.*) Locked, of course; but, 'tis no matter. (*draws knife from girdle*)

and forces open box.) Now, what's this? (taking out a sealed paper.—reads.) "The seal of this document not to be broken until my daughter Nina shall have reached the age of twenty-one." Ha, ha! glorious! (throwing it on to table.) Anything more? (feeling in box. MILLY, unseen by him, rapidly takes paper from table and darts behind window curtain.) No! nothing more—ha! all right now. (looks on table—misses paper.) Gone! is the devil at my elbow? ha! I see—yonder curtain stirs—that Milly is there—was concealed all along—no matter! this is how I serve a thief on my premises.

(Music.—Draws pistol and fires at curtain—a loud yell, and TOMTIT rolls from behind curtain kicking and roaring. TOM casts away his pistol and rushes out at window. TOMTIT jumps up, dances and sings "I'm going to glory," &c.

SCENE II.—*View of Plantation.*

KATY enters, l. h., extravagantly dressed.

KATY. Now, it my 'pinion, and nobody never said I was a 'ceited gal, that 'bout these parts there isn't no female young woman half as handsome, nor half as boofully dressed as this gal; and then I'm sich a lovely figger. Oh, didn't the white trash look at me as I comed along! They just did neither.

Enter JIM, l. h.

JIM. Oh, Katy! oh—what a pictur oo is, oo'm a blaze ob booty, and make him feel all ober like—like dat ere sun what am up dere in de funnyment 'mong de lot ob stars what de men ob skyence call de consternation.

KATY. Well, really, Master Jim, that's a wery purty nobservation. Oh, Jim if my missus was to buy you of your master, we might be married unimedgently, and have a grand wedding party, what the great folks call a sore eye.

JIM. Sore eye! Dat dere ain't de name, it's a swaddy.

KATY. T'other's the unproper grammeretical pronounshashun of the word. But, Jim, don't you think your master would sell you cheap? Tain't as if you was bran new, you know he took you for debt, so you are only a second-hand nigger.

JIM. What oo mean—why oo consult me like dat ere? him brim full of slingdignashun.

KATY. No imprence, Misser Jim, please remember we am not equals, and that I'm quite stewperior to you.

JIM. Oh, get out wid oo—I is all ober ob a booful black, oo is nothing more dan whitey brown.

KATY. Go 'long, you second hand nigger.

JIM. Ain't Ise good as new, look at de polish ob de article, but don't let we row one 'noder, cause we am goin' some day to lead one 'noder to de halter.

KATY. Well, Massa Jim, I bears no malice, and you know I've got a detachment for you, and you shouldn't take no disadvantage of my infection. Oh, ah! (*leaning on JIM.*) I feels so bery weak.

JIM. And him don't feel so bery strong; and if you don't stand up, Katy, him most afeared him let oo go down bang wallop.

KATY. I'm a good deal better now, Jim, quite discovered.

JIM. Him berry glad to hear it, and now him go, 'cause him got to go wid Massa Tom Gordon arter Harry.

KATY. Tom Gordon is a ruffian, a perfect cillion, and missus shall buy you from him, Jim; she will, 'cause she 'ticlarly impartial to me, and you'll have a very good time ob it.

JIM. Him ain't bery pertickler, so long as him do nothing and get plenty to eat and drink for doin' on it, him neber complain.

KATY. Glad to see you am of a contented indisposition, Jim.

JIM. Iss, bery—and den we go to de church, and hab one anoder for betterer, or p'rhaps a good deal worserer.

MEDLEY—DUET.—AIR, "Nelly Bly."

KATY. Jim, my boy ! oh, what joy,
Free from care and strife ;
Hope you'll be—first-rate boy,
And never whack oor wife.

JIM. Him is black, oo is brown,
Both am nobby figger ;
And, no doubt, our first born
Will be a piebald nigger.

BOTH. Oh, crikey !—ah, crikey !
What a jolly spree !
Bells 'll ring—dance and sing,
Rum te diddle de !

AIR, "Lucy Neal."

KATY. If that you was ill,
I'd hover round about ;
If doctor sent a pill,
I'd cram it down oor throat.

JIM. And, oh ! how Jim would cry,
If death for oo a bidder ;
So, say you neber die,
And leabe poor Jim a widder.

KATY. Oh, I'm a charming gal !

JIM. Oh, oo'm a charming gal !

BOTH. Grief ne'er on us shall steal ;

KATY. When you've got me for oor bride,

JIM. When him got oo for him bride,

BOTH. How happy I shall feel.

AIR, "Buffalo Gals."

JIM. When dat ere gal she am him wife,
Am him wife, am him wife—

KATY. Oo will be happy all oor life,
When I am by oor side.

KATY. (together.) Then, Jim, my darling, I will come
out to-night,

Come out to-night, come out to-night—
Jim, my darling, I'll come out to-night,
And we'll dance by the light ob the moon.

JIM. (*together.*) Den, Katy, my darlin', oo'l come out
to-night,
Oo'll come out to-night, oo'll come out to-
night—
Katy, my darlin', oo'll come out to-night,
And um dance by de light ob de moon.
(*they dance off, L. H.*)

SCENE III.—Jungle, in the neighbourhood of the Swamp.

Music.—FANNY and TEDDY are sleeping, huddled together, at the foot of a tree.

TIFF. Weary, footsore, hungry, here dey lie—and dem Peyton's, too! and pcör ole Tiff hab noting to gib dem, noting; but him don't despair. Him dat feed de meanest insec' dat crawl upon de 'arth wi'l not forget de poor chil'en dat hab none but ole Tiff to watch ober and care for dem.

FANNY. (*rising.*) Oh, uncle Tiff, I am so frightened. I dreamt that father was killing us.

TEDDY. (*rising.*) And I dreamt that I was eating such a prime piece of hickory cake. Oh, don't I wish was.

TIFF. Chil'en, chil'en, oo must larn to control oo appetites. S'pose him hab got noting to eat just now—dare say him get someting some time or oder; oo must raly hab patience. (*aside.*) De lilly dears, it a'most break him 'art to look at 'em—and him noting to gib 'em, noting.

TEDDY. I wouldn't mind waiting if I wasn't so hungry.

TIFF. (*aside.*) Dred not forget me—no, no! him keep him word—eberyting come all right, him sure ob dat—him not a bit afeard.

FANNY. (*up stage—starting.*) Oh, goodness, Uncle Tiff, look here—here's a little basket!

TIFF. What? (*TIFF and TEDDY look behind tree—TIFF brings forward small basket and looks in it.*) Oh, Teddy, here am de bery hiccory cake oo bin dreamin' 'bout.

TEDDY. Oh, giminy! give us a bit, Uncle Tiff.

TIFF. Dred—bless him kind heart!—hab done dis; and here am flask—someting nice, no doubt 'bout it. Sit oo down, chil'en. (*they sit—TIFF between the CHILDREN.*) Bit for oo, Miss Fanny. (*giving cake.*) Don't oo be in a hurry, Teddy; ladies al'ays served fust—so now, (*giving cake.*) dat for oo.

TEDDY. (*his mouthful.*) Oh, isn't it prime!

TIFF. Him not at all hungry, Miss Fanny. (*aside.*) Him sabe it for de poor chil'en, 'cause long time p'haps fore dem get any more. (*aloud.*) him hab drop ob dis do. (*drinks.*) Ah, bery good! take drop, Miss Fanny. (*she drinks.*) Now, Massa Teddy. (*he drinks.*) Stop, Massa Teddy! oo get 'tosslicated, oo rogue: dere, behabe proper; (*they rise.*) recollect oo Peyton, and dat General Peyton is oo 'lashun. Uh! him great man; oosed to hab six 'sses to him coach—'sses as high as to-day and to-morrow, and wid tails as long as him arm. Oo neber see sich sight, Massa Teddy, in all oo born days.

FANNY. Shall we stop here much longer, Uncle Tiff?

TIFF. No, Miss Fanny. Do Dred forced to gone on widout us, yet him come back soon—take us to de Great Dismal Swamp, and um be out ob reach ob cruel fader, and dat ere drefful new moder.

POLL SKINFLINT. (*without, R.*) There they are!

TIFF Oh, powers ob marcy!

Music.—CHILDREN cling to **TIFF.** **CRIPPS** and **POLL** enter, **R. H.**

POLL. So, you nigger, a pretty race you have given us!

CRIPPS. Oh, we don't want him now; he may go when I have given him a taste of the whip. Come here, brats.

TIFF. Massa, him don't a mean to be sarcy, but onless oo kill ole Tiff, oo neber—no, neber—take de chil'en from me.

CRIPPS. Kill you! Well, I shan't stand nice about that. You are my property, and I have a right to do it.

POLL. Don't stand prating there, but knock him down, and I'll take care of the brats.

TIFF. Oh, ooman, ooman, does oo forget dat after dis
dere am anoder world?

CRIPPS. I must have the children; their aunt in
Canada is dead, and has left 'em heaps of money. I'm
their natural guardian, and while I live will have the
fingering of it.

POLL. To be sure; with the brats' money—which,
of course, is the same as our own—we shall be able to
do things stylish.

TIFF. Massa, massa, oo ain't got no right to de money;
it am left to 'em by a Peyton—dem's Peytons—

CRIPPS. Curse the Peytons!

TIFF. Oo broke de 'art ob dere poor moder, brought
her and de chil'en to beggary; don't, as oo hope for
marcy, massa, don't oo now plun'er de poor ofins,
what's got on'y Heben and ole Tiff to help 'em.

CRIPPS. (*striking TIFF.*) Take that, you dam'd niger!
Now give up the children to their father and be
off with you.

TIFF. Neber, massa, neber! (*pressing them closely.*)

FANNY. You are not my father; you are a bad,
wicked man, and I hate you!

TEDDY. If I was a man I'd knock you down, that's
what I would.

POLL. Do you hear, Cripps? Stop his meddling.

CRIPPS. Ay—curse him!—I will.

(*Music.*—POLL seizes and drags CHILDREN from TIFF.)

CRIPPS seizes TIFF and hurls him to the ground,
draws his bowie knife and is stooping to strike when a
shot is fired without. DRED enters, R. H. CRIPPS
falls dead. POLL runs off, R. H.)

DRED. So, one villain less to encumber the earth;
too long had he been suff-ered to riot in his atrocities.

TIFF. (*rising.*) Massa Dred, tank oo—oo hab sabed
poor ole Tiff's life; him don't care much 'bout dat, but
de chil'en, de chil'en! and dey am rich now—wordy
ob de Peytons—bery rich; on'y tink ob dat, Massa
Dred.

TEDDY. Though he was my father, he was a wicked
man, and will go to the naughty place.

TIFF. Hush, Massa Teddy, hush! him dead now.

Kneel, chil'en, kneel, and pray dat Heben will hab marcy on him.

(*Music.*—The CHILDREN kneel, clasp their hands and appear to pray; TIFF sinks on his knees between them, places a hand on each of their heads, and casts his eyes upwards. DRED stands with one hand resting on the barrel of his rifle, and the other upraised. Voices and bark of dogs—very distant)

DRED. The hunt is up ; but the hunters may become the hunted. Come on, Tiff, and fear not for yourself or children ; you have served him who was ready to perish—betrayed not Harry at his need, and the preservation of your life is the requital of the worthy deed. Come then ; the men now who pursue are ruthless as the bloodhounds that accompany them ; in my lair, you'll be safe till the struggle is over. You may then boldly stand forth and claim for the children the wealth that is left to them—to be still their guardian and protector, till Heaven shall think fit to call you to a peaceful and an honoured grave.

TIFF. Oh, Massa Dred, oo ought to hab been a king—why, oo but a rebolted slave.

DRED. Oh, that all slaves would revolt, and so destroy the curse and scourge of this fair land. My master struck my poor old father before my very eyes ; I struck the monster to my feet a corpse, and fled to the Swamp, to herd with snakes and alligators, less venomous than our masters ; and there, if I may nothing more effect, I can at least live free. But come, let us on ; our way is thorny and tangled. Bear you the girl, Tiff ; my little man, wilt come to me ?

TEDDY. (running to him.) Ay, that I will.

TIFF. Dere—he isn't a bit askeared ob oo.

DRED. Not he. I never saw a child or dog that I could not make come to me. (*throwing TEDDY over his shoulder.*) Hold fast now, my little man ; trees have long arms and may rake you off. Tiff, when we come to the thick of the swamp, mind you tread right in my path, or you and the girl will be lost beyond the power of man to save you. Come on ! for safety, and the Great Dismal Swamp !

(*Music.—Exeunt, L. H.*)

SCENE IV.—*Comencement of the Swamp—Twilight.*

Music.—Enter TOM GORDON, HARK, JIM, OVERSEERS,
and SLAVES, dogs heard to bark, R. H.

TOM. Silence those hounds! d'ye hear?—don't want their howling yet. I shall have you Mistress Milly—I shall have you.

JIM. No, massa, better go back, massa—'pend 'pon it she safe now, with Dred, in de Great Dismal Swamp.

TOM. Silence, you black imp—we have headed her, I know, she'll be here presently, and we shall have her safe in the Swamp—eh, none are safe in the Swamp now, for Hark, here, knows the right path, and will lead us to it—eh, Hark? or—but you know what I am?

HARK. I do, indeed, Master Gordon, you sold my wife from me—tore the child from her breast, and then sold it to another master. Yes, yes, I do indeed know you.

TOM. (*turning away.*) Then beware you attempt not to lead us wrong.

HARK. (*aside.*) I'll never lead you to the retreat of Dred—you can but kill; and wife and child taken from me, why should I fear to die?

TOM. And you, Mister Jim, come here—I suspect more than ever that you wish to bolt—don't let me catch you at it, that's all.

JIM. Oh, massa, oo hurt him feelin's—him neber tink 'bout run away from sich um booful massa. (*aside.*) If him stop 'noder hour wid oo, oo dam tief, him wish him may be blowed.

TOM. (*looking off, R. H.*) Hush! Did I not tell you we had headed her? here she is.

(*Music.*—They conceal themselves.

MILLY staggers on, R. H.

MILLY. Faint, weary, almost exhausted, I fear my strength will wholly desert me, and I shall perish by the way. My prize within my Harry's grasp, then gladly would I die; I must not linger, but on, on—

(going L. H., is met by TOM GORDON, who advances,

MILLY. Lost, lost!

TOM. Now, Mistress Milly, the paper that you stole.

MILLY. It is not yours—belongs to my son, to Harry, to him only will I give it.

TOM. Good, you confess then that you have it? That is something.

MILLY. I never lie—lying is a trick taught by civilisation, and belongs of right to white men, such as you.

TOM. Let me have it. (*snatching at paper, the end of which is protruding from her dress.*)

MILLY. (*dashing his hand aside.*) Cowardly villain.

(*Music.—Attempts to fly R. H., but is stopped by Two SLAVES who seize her, TOM GORDON approaches her, and snatches the paper (still sealed) from her breast.*)

TOM. Now, you hag, I am again secure, and your Harry still my slave.

(*Music.—MILLY breaks from SLAVES, rushes on TOM and grapples with him—he strikes her to the earth with the handle of his whip. HARK hurries forward.*)

HARK. More murder! How long will Heaven permit such monsters to go unpunished?

TOM. Dog of a nigger take that.

(*Music.—Gives him a lash with whip. HARK rushes towards TOM but is seized by SLAVES.*)

TOM. And that, and that.

(*HARK, writhing, is dragged off, L. H. by SLAVES, TOM lashing him furiously; all off, except MILLY, who is lying on the ground. A short pause, and JIM puts his head on from behind L. H. wing.*)

JIM. If Massa Tom Gordon ain't de debil 'issel, him take him oat' him a bery near relashun. (*going to MILLY.*) Poor Milly—wake up, Milly—all de black-guards gone 'cept Jim, and him 'specable member ob sercity.

MILLY. (*recovering.*) Gone—his only hope on earth, for ever gone! Oh, good fellow, leave me—here let me die.

JIM. Die, Milly—dear 'art, no—time 'nuff to die when 'um can't live no longer—stan' up, Milly. (*she rises.*) Dere! oo quite peart agin. Him take oo to

Harry, and to Massa Dred ; him know de right path,
bless oo. He, he, he! Massa Tom Gordon neber
suspec' dat, for all him so dam cunnin'

MILLY. Well for you, poor fellow, that he did not.

JIM. Iss ! him tink so ! Jim 'ticklar friend ob Massa
Dred, and him tell oo secret—him goin' to run 'way,
too—iss ! him mean be off, him know Massa Tom
break him poor 'art—he, he, he !

MILLY. Beware ! should you be captured—

JIM. He, he ! him know better nor dat. Him sabed
up money and him know how to get right slick away
to Can'da—den Katy buy 'erself off, and 'er come too,
'cause noting ain't mine now, and him don't mean to
hab a wife till he can get one that her 'long to him, and
to nobody else—dat ere's a ting dis ere chile's per-
ticklar 'bout.

MILLY. I am stronger now—let us on to the Great
Dismal Swamp, and to Harry. Oh ! how joyfully I
thought to have met him, but now— (totters—JIM
supports her.)

JIM. 'Old him 'ead up, Missee Milly; neber say die,
Missee Milly. No, bless oo 'art, neber say die.

(Music.—*Exeunt L. H.*)

SCENE THE LAST.—*The Great Dismal Swamp by
moonlight. A zigzag path from the extreme back, L. H.,
leads to Dred's Hut, which is R. H. 1 E. (put on).
Practicable bushes, L. 1 E. (also put on.)*

Music.—HARRY and LISETTE enter from Hut.

LISETTE. Dearest Harry, do not droop.

HARRY. But, are we not outcast?

LISETTE. 'Tis not so dreadful to be an outcast as to
be within the power of that bold, bad Tom Gordon.
The sun shines for us here—the birds sing—nature
smiles on us, and, to my mind, more cheerfully than it
has ever smiled before—for oh, Harry ! are we not
free ?

HARRY. Free—yes, till hunted down, as ere long we
surely shall be. Chance or treachery will reveal the

path across the Swamp—and, oh Lisette! what will—would be our fate?

LISETTE. How can you talk so despondingly when you know that brave, good Dred has prepared for our flight to Canada?

HARRY. And shall I, like a coward, leave him; shall I not lend my aid in the great struggle which will give to the poor slaves their liberty (*mournfully.*) or death?

LISETTE. Well, if you wish it, here we'll stay; so smile, dear Harry, smile. How can you be sad in the gay summer time, with the wife who loves you by your side?

HARRY. But winter will come—

LISETTE. And let it. Winter would reach us everywhere; 'tis not alone in the Great Dismal Swamp that winter comes; and why need we fear it, Harry, so long as we have summer in our hearts? Trust me, love, all will yet be well: there is a lightness at my heart which would not be, I'm snre, if some great joy were not in store for us.

HARRY. Dear girl!

LISETTE. Ay, you were wont to call me child; you see now I am a woman, to comfort and console you.

HARRY. (*looking across the Swamp.*) Dred lingers.

LISETTE. Let us in, and patiently await his return; and look less gloomily, dear Harry—indeed you must, or (*playfully.*) I shall be angry, *very* angry.

(they go off into hut.)

Music.—DRED, with TEDDY on his shoulder, and with his rifle—and TIFF, with FANNY in his arms, appear at back on Swamp; they pause—the strong moonlight on their figures.

DRED. Be careful, Tiff—one step aside, now, and you are lost beyond the power of man to rescue you.

TIFF. Him take care, Massa Dred, not for hisself, but for de chil'en, de chil'en. (*they proceed cautiously—dogs heard, distant.*) What am dat?

DRED. The bloodhounds; but fear not, the scent will not lie on the Swamp: they cannot reach us here, nor their masters, the two-legged bloodhounds.

HARRY and LISETTE enter from hut.

HARRY. I'll swear I heard the dogs ; we are pursued even here.

DRED reaches stage followed by TIFF.

DRED. No, no, we are now where the dogs cannot find us—nor anybody else. Lisette, take Uncle Tiff, and the children into the hut ; they need rest, perhaps food. (LISETTE, TIFF, and CHILDREN *exeunt into hut*.

HARRY. Oh, Dred, how glad I am that you have returned.

DRED. Ay, I have come back to my den ! foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, and in the habitations of dragons Heaven hath opened a way for its outcasts. Harry, more butchery has taken place—more negroes murdered ; each morning seems to break red with the blood of my friends. Oh, how gladly would I lay down my life were the craving of my soul for justice but assuaged.

HARRY. More torture—more life destroyed.

DRED. Life ! what is the worth of negro life ? I left a man dead in the Swamps, whom their dogs have torn ; his wife is a widow—his children orphans ; our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleareth wood. Oh, Heaven, avenge us of our adversaries. A man but wisheth to eat the fruit of his labour, and the hunters are set upon him, the decree goes forth against him, even the curse of Cain, so that whosoever findeth him shall kill him. Have I not seen it all ? and Harry, it is because we *will* bear this, that we have to bear it.

HARRY. But what can we do ?

DRED. Do ! what does the wild horse do ? Launch out our hoofs, rear up, and come down on them. What does the rattlesnake do ? lie in their path and bite. Why did they make slaves of us ? they tried the wild Indians first—why didn't they keep to them ? *they* wouldn't be slaves, and we *will* ; they that *will* bear the yoke, may bear it.

HARRY. But, Dred, this is all utterly hopeless,

without any means or combination, or leaders, we should only rush on to our own destruction.

DRED. Let us die, then; what if we do die—what great matter is that? if they bruise our head, we can sting their heel. Die, why not die? has your heart dropped out of you, that you can't die? that you'll crawl like worms for the sake of living.

(JIM and MILLY appear at back, on Swamp.

LISETTE enters from hut.

LISETTE. See, see, some one on the path.

DRED. (turning quickly and levelling rifle.) Their latest moment has arrived.

JIM. (on Swamp stooping down.) Golly, Massa Dred, don'to shoot, him on'y Jim.

(DRED lowers his rifle.

HARRY. My mother.

MILLY. Ay, Harry, your wretched mother.

JIM and MILLY reach stage.

The paper left by Colonel Gordon was in my hands, I fled with it, was overtaken by Tom Gordon, the precious document wrested from me, and I, felled to the earth by a blow of his ruffian hand.

HARRY. (greatly agitated.) Oh!

DRED. Heaven requite me if I do not that and more to him, the demon.

JIM. Massa Tom Gordon comin' here, him got poor Hark, and force him to be him guide.

DRED. Hark! He would perish rather than betray me.

JIM. Him tink so, Massa Dred, for eber so many ob de rascals what's wid Tom Gordon ab tumble ober de Swamp, and nobody neber see dem neber no more. He, he, he?

TOM GORDON. (without.) On, you nigger varmint, on.

(DRED goes on Swamp, bending almost to the ground, and watching.)

HARRY. Ha, 'tis he; but alas, I can but kill him. That which, I doubt not contains my freedom, he has I fear destroyed.

DRED. (*on Swamp.*) But three of his followers are left to him. Hark has done his work well, and will do still more, or I mistake him. (*returning to stage.*) Those who obey my very nod are within sound of my voice, should need be, I will summon them. But Tom Gordon will never reach this spot alive—they ~~call~~ me—back, back.

(*Music.*—HARRY, LISSETTE, and JIM go into hut—DRED conceals himself amidst the bushes, L. H., HARK, TOM, and THREE SLAVES appear at back—they pause.)

TOM. Go on!

HARK. Not a step, Tom Gordon. I have brought you thus far to be a mark for Dred's unerring rifle. No further will I betray the secret path, lest one of you should, by chance, escape, to return and prate of it.

TOM. It is as I suspected, then—the loss of my slaves was not an accident; but no matter for the present, I have sworn to have Harry, and I will—so go on, or your life—(*presenting pistol.*)

HARK. My life! Inhuman monster! I am weary of it; my wife and child torn from me, I have existed but for this, the day of vengeance, which has come at last. Tom Gordon, your fate is sealed.

TOM. (*presenting pistol.*) Is it? Yours, at least, certain.

HARK. Ay, but not from your hand—no; the Great Dismal Swamp, before my shelter, now shall be my grave.

(*Music.*—As TOM fires, HARK plunges headlong into the swamp and disappears. DRED, at same moment, half emerges from bushes, and covers Tom with rifle.)

DRED. (*aside—lowering rifle.*) No, there is no need—his fate is sealed there; yet should he not have destroyed the will. (*conceals himself in bush, L.*)

TOM. (*looking where HARK has sunk.*) Humph—clean gone! (*turning to SLAVES.*) A pretty prospect for us, my friends—but ah! stop! (*looking down.*) The print of a mocassin—I'll try. Better death anywhere than in this infernal swamp.

(*Music.*—Treads very cautiously, looking for footmarks—he and SLAVES reach stage.)

HARRY, LISETTE, and MILLY enter from hut.

Oh, there you are, and here am I—didn't expect to see me here, I dare say. I've got you, and I'll make you mine now. Your friend, Dred, and his vagabond companions, they tell me, are now away from here; so the game is all my own. Yes, I've got you now, and I'll have your wife from you—do you understand what that means, eh?

HARRY. Colonel Gordon's will, villain! you know that I am free.

TOM. Oh, your worthy mother there has told you—so much the better; and, Hark'ye—but first, men, place yourselves there; (*pointing.*) I am not to be caught like a rat in a trap. (*the SLAVES stand in a line down centre, and presenting pistols at HARRY, &c., who are R. H.—TOM is L. c.*) Now, (*holding up paper.*) look at this, and then I shall destroy it. I have kept it till now, because I knew the sight of it would be a treat to you. I have read it; you are left, not only free, but, Nina being dead, the plantation and the slaves are all your own—if you but had this bit of paper; without it you are still my slave. (*laughing.*) Ah, I told you I should make you wince. (*shaking paper.*) Look at it for the last time—'tis mine—mine!

(*Music.—DRED emerges suddenly from bush, snatches the paper from Tom's hand, hurls him round to L. H., and presenting rifle at him with one hand, with the other holds aloft the paper.*)

DRED. No—mine! mine!

TOM. Curse you! (*to SLAVES.*) Down with him, lads!

(*Music. — Fugitive SLAVES enter through bushes, levelling guns; Tom's SLAVES throw away their pistols and kneel.*)

JIM enters from hut.

JIM. Now, Massa Tom, oo dam tief! oo go hang ooself as soon as oo tink proper.

TOM. Every devil is leagued against me.

DRED. (*giving paper.*) Harry, take thou the precious gift !

TOM. Take thou that !

(*Music.—Rushing on DRED, and stabbing him in the back, then hurrying on to Swamp.* DRED staggers, but instantly levels his rifle and fires at TOM, who falls and disappears. DRED sinks to the ground. TIFF and CHILDREN enter from hut—all surround DRED.

ALL. Wounded !

DRED. To death ! Ah ! the poor slave's chain is now more firmly than ever riveted ; but I can see far into the future—can behold the time when white and black shall be of equal worth. Grieve not for me ; I go where all are free ; go where my colour is no crime, there—to the abode of bliss—and—liberty—liberty !

(*Music—DRED Dies—Tableau.*

CURTAIN.

Printed by Thomas Scott, Warwick Court, Holborn.

