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William Wells Brown

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CLOTELLE: A TALE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES

by

William Wells Brown

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CHAPTER I

THE SLAVE'S SOCIAL CIRCLE.

With the growing population in the Southern States, the increase of

mulattoes has been very great. Society does not frown upon the man who

sits with his half-white child upon his knee whilst the mother stands,

a slave, behind his chair. In nearly all the cities and towns of the

Slave States, the real negro, or clear black, does not amount to more

than one in four of the slave population. This fact is of itself the

best evidence of the degraded and immoral condition of the relation of

master and slave. Throughout the Southern States, there is a class of

slaves who, in most of the towns, are permitted to hire their time from

their owners, and who are always expected to pay a high price. This

class is the mulatto women, distinguished for their fascinating beauty.

The handsomest of these usually pay the greatest amount for their time.

Many of these women are the favorites of men of property and standing,

who furnish them with the means of compensating their owners, and not a

few are dressed in the most extravagant manner.

When we take into consideration the fact that no safeguard is thrown

around virtue, and no inducement held out to slave-women to be pure and

chaste, we will not be surprised when told that immorality and vice

pervade the cities and towns of the South to an extent unknown in the

Northern States. Indeed, many of the slave-women have no higher

aspiration than that of becoming the finely-dressed mistress of some

white man. At negro balls and parties, this class of women usually make

the most splendid appearance, and are eagerly sought after in the

dance, or to entertain in the drawing-room or at the table.

A few years ago, among the many slave-women in Richmond, Virginia, who

hired their time of their masters, was Agnes, a mulatto owned by John

Graves, Esq., and who might be heard boasting that she was the

daughter of an American Senator. Although nearly forty years of age at

the time of which we write, Agnes was still exceedingly handsome. More

than half white, with long black hair and deep blue eyes, no one felt

like disputing with her when she urged her claim to her relationship

with the Anglo-Saxon.

In her younger days, Agnes had been a housekeeper for a young

slaveholder, and in sustaining this relation had become the mother of

two daughters. After being cast aside by this young man, the

slave-woman betook herself to the business of a laundress, and was

considered to be the most tasteful woman in Richmond at her vocation.

Isabella and Marion, the two daughters of Agnes, resided with their

mother, and gave her what aid they could in her business. The mother,

however, was very choice of her daughters, and would allow them to

perform no labor that would militate against their lady-like

appearance. Agnes early resolved to bring up her daughters as ladies,

as she termed it.

As the girls grew older, the mother had to pay a stipulated price for

them per month. Her notoriety as a laundress of the first class enabled

her to put an extra charge upon the linen that passed through her

hands; and although she imposed little or no work upon her daughters,

she was enabled to live in comparative luxury and have her daughters

dressed to attract attention, especially at the negro balls and parties.

Although the term "negro ball" is applied to these gatherings, yet a

large portion of the men who attend them are whites. Negro balls and

parties in the Southern States, especially in the cities and towns, are

usually made up of quadroon women, a few negro men, and any number of

white gentlemen. These are gatherings of the most democratic character.

Bankers, merchants, lawyers, doctors, and their clerks and students,

all take part in these social assemblies upon terms of perfect

equality. The father and son not unfrequently meet and dance alike at a

negro ball.

It was at one of these parties that Henry Linwood, the son of a wealthy

and retired gentleman of Richmond, was first introduced to Isabella,

the oldest daughter of Agnes. The young man had just returned from

Harvard College, where he had spent the previous five years. Isabella

was in her eighteenth year, and was admitted by all who knew her to be

the handsomest girl, colored or white, in the city. On this occasion,

she was attired in a sky-blue silk dress, with deep black lace

flounces, and bertha of the same. On her well-moulded arms she wore

massive gold bracelets, while her rich black hair was arranged at the

back in broad basket plaits, ornamented with pearls, and the front in

the French style (a la Imperatrice), which suited her classic face to

perfection.

Marion was scarcely less richly dressed than her sister.

Henry Linwood paid great attention to Isabella which was looked upon

with gratification by her mother, and became a matter of general

conversation with all present. Of course, the young man escorted the

beautiful quadroon home that evening, and became the favorite visitor

at the house of Agnes. It was on a beautiful moonlight night in the

month of August when all who reside in tropical climates are eagerly

grasping for a breath of fresh air, that Henry Linwood was in the

garden which surrounded Agnes' cottage, with the young quadroon by his

side. He drew from his pocket a newspaper wet from the press, and read

the following advertisement:--

NOTICE.--Seventy-nine negroes will be offered for sale on Monday,

September 10, at 12 o'clock, being the entire stock of the late John

Graves in an excellent condition, and all warranted against the common

vices. Among them are several mechanics, able-bodied field-hands,

plough-boys, and women with children, some of them very prolific,

affording a rare opportunity for any one who wishes to raise a strong

and healthy lot of servants for their own use. Also several mulatto

girls of rare personal qualities,--two of these very superior.

Among the above slaves advertised for sale were Agnes and her two

daughters. Ere young Linwood left the quadroon that evening, he

promised her that he would become her purchaser, and make her free and

her own mistress.

Mr. Graves had long been considered not only an excellent and upright

citizen of the first standing among the whites, but even the slaves

regarded him as one of the kindest of masters. Having inherited his

slaves with the rest of his property, he became possessed of them

without any consultation or wish of his own. He would neither buy nor

sell slaves, and was exceedingly careful, in letting them out, that

they did not find oppressive and tyrannical masters. No slave

speculator ever dared to cross the threshold of this planter of the Old

Dominion. He was a constant attendant upon religious worship, and was

noted for his general benevolence. The American Bible Society, the

American Tract Society, and the cause of Foreign Missions, found in him

a liberal friend. He was always anxious that his slaves should appear

well on the Sabbath, and have an opportunity of hearing the word of God.

CHAPTER II

THE NEGRO SALE.

As might have been expected, the day of sale brought an usually large

number together to compete for the property to be sold. Farmers, who

make a business of raising slaves for the market, were there, and

slave-traders, who make a business of buying human beings in the

slave-raising States and taking them to the far South, were also in

attendance. Men and women, too, who wished to purchase for their own

use, had found their way to the slave sale.

In the midst of the throne was one who felt a deeper interest in the

result of the sale than any other of the bystanders. This was young

Linwood. True to his promise, he was there with a blank bank-check in

his pocket, awaiting with impatience to enter the list as a bidder for

the beautiful slave.

It was indeed a heart-rending scene to witness the lamentations of

these slaves, all of whom had grown up together on the old homestead of

Mr. Graves, and who had been treated with great kindness by that

gentleman, during his life. Now they were to be separated, and form new

relations and companions. Such is the precarious condition of the

slave. Even when with a good master, there is no certainty of his

happiness in the future.

The less valuable slaves were first placed upon the auction-block, one

after another, and sold to the highest bidder. Husbands and wives were

separated with a degree of indifference that is unknown in any other

relation in life. Brothers and sisters were tom from each other, and

mothers saw their children for the last time on earth.

It was late in the day, and when the greatest number of persons were

thought to be present, when Agnes and her daughters were brought out to

the place of sale. The mother was first put upon the auction-block, and

sold to a noted negro trader named Jennings. Marion was next ordered to

ascend the stand, which she did with a trembling step, and was sold for

$1200.

All eyes were now turned on Isabella, as she was led forward by the

auctioneer. The appearance of the handsome quadroon caused a deep

sensation among the crowd. There she stood, with a skin as fair as most

white women, her features as beautifully regular as any of her sex of

pure Anglo-Saxon blood, her long black hair done up in the neatest

manner, her form tall and graceful, and her whole appearance indicating

one superior to her condition.

The auctioneer commenced by saying that Miss Isabella was fit to deck

the drawing-room of the finest mansion in Virginia.

"How much, gentlemen, for this real Albino!--fit fancy-girl for any

one! She enjoys good health, and has a sweet temper. How much do you

say?"

"Five hundred dollars."

"Only five hundred for such a girl as this? Gentlemen, she is worth a

deal more than that sum. You certainly do not know the value of the

article you are bidding on. Here, gentlemen, I hold in my hand a paper

certifying that she has a good moral character."

"Seven hundred."

"Ah, gentlemen, that is something like. This paper also states that she

is very intelligent."

"Eight hundred."

"She was first sprinkled, then immersed, and is now warranted to be a

devoted Christian, and perfectly trustworthy."

"Nine hundred dollars."

"Nine hundred and fifty."

"One thousand."

"Eleven hundred."

Here the bidding came to a dead stand. The auctioneer stopped, looked

around, and began in a rough manner to relate some anecdote connected

with the sale of slaves, which he said had come under his own

observation.

At this juncture the scene was indeed a most striking one. The

laughing, joking, swearing, smoking, spitting, and talking, kept up a

continual hum and confusion among the crowd, while the slave-girl stood

with tearful eyes, looking alternately at her mother and sister and

toward the young man whom she hoped would become her purchaser.

"The chastity of this girl," now continued the auctioneer, "is pure.

She has never been from under her mother's care. She is virtuous, and

as gentle as a dove."

The bids here took a fresh start, and went on until $1800 was reached.

The auctioneer once more resorted to his jokes, and concluded by

assuring the company that Isabella was not only pious, but that she

could make an excellent prayer.

"Nineteen hundred dollars."

"Two thousand."

This was the last bid, and the quadroon girl was struck off, and became

the property of Henry Linwood.

This was a Virginia slave-auction, at which the bones, sinews, blood,

and nerves of a young girl of eighteen were sold for $500; her moral

character for $200; her superior intellect for $100; the benefits

supposed to accrue from her having been sprinkled and immersed,

together with a warranty of her devoted Christianity, for $300; her

ability to make a good prayer for $200; and her chastity for $700 more.

This, too, in a city thronged with churches, whose tall spires look

like so many signals pointing to heaven, but whose ministers preach

that slavery a God-ordained institution!

The slaves were speedily separated, and taken along by their respective

masters. Jennings, the slave-speculator, who had purchased Agnes and

her daughter Marion, with several of the other slaves, took them to the

county prison, where he usually kept his human cattle after purchasing

them, previous to starting for the New Orleans market.

Linwood had already provided a place for Isabella, to which she was

taken. The most trying moment for her was when she took leave of her

mother and sister. The "Good-by" of the slave is unlike that of any

other class in the community. It is indeed a farewell forever. With

tears streaming down their cheeks, they embraced and commanded each

other to God, who is no respecter of persons, and before whom master

and slave must one day appear.

CHAPTER III

THE SLAVE SPECULATOR.

Dick Jennings the slave-speculator, was one of the few Northern men,

who go to the South and throw aside their honest mode of obtaining a

living and resort to trading in human beings. A more repulsive looking

person could scarcely be found in any community of bad looking men.

Tall, lean and lank, with high cheek-bones, face much pitted with the

small-pox, gray eyes with red eyebrows, and sandy whiskers, he indeed

stood alone without mate or fellow in looks. Jennings prided himself

upon what he called his goodness of heart and was always speaking of

his humanity. As many of the slaves whom he intended taking to the New

Orleans market had been raised in Richmond, and had relations there, he

determined to leave the city early in the morning, so as not to witness

any of the scenes so common the departure of a slave-gang to the far

South. In this, he was most successful; for not even Isabella, who had

called at the prison several times to see her mother and sister, was

aware of the time that they were to leave.

The slave-trader started at early dawn, and was beyond the confines of

the city long before the citizens were out of their beds. As a slave

regards a life on the sugar, cotton, or rice plantation as even worse

than death, they are ever on the watch for an opportunity to escape.

The trader, aware of this, secures his victims in chains before he sets

out on his journey. On this occasion, Jennings had the men chained in

pairs, while the women were allowed to go unfastened, but were closely

watched.

After a march of eight days, the company arrived on the banks of the

Ohio River, where they took a steamer for the place of their

destination. Jennings had already advertised in the New Orleans papers,

that he would be there with a prime lot of able-bodied slaves, men and

women, fit for field-service, with a few extra ones calculated for

house servants,--all between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five years;

but like most men who make a business of speculating in human beings,

he often bought many who were far advanced in years, and would try to

pass them off for five or six years younger than they were. Few persons

can arrive at anything approaching the real age of the negro, by mere

observation, unless they are well acquainted with the race. Therefore,

the slave-trader frequently carried out the deception with perfect

impunity.

After the steamer had left the wharf and was fairly out on the bosom of

the broad Mississippi, the speculator called his servant Pompey to him;

and instructed him as to getting the negroes ready for market. Among

the forty slaves that the trader had on this occasion, were some whose

appearance indicated that they had seen some years and had gone through

considerable service. Their gray hair and whiskers at once pronounced

them to be above the ages set down in the trader's advertisement.

Pompey had long been with Jennings, and understood his business well,

and if he did not take delight in the discharge of his duty, he did it

at least with a degree of alacrity, so that he might receive the

approbation of his master.

Pomp, as he was usually called by the trader, was of real negro blood,

and would often say, when alluding to himself, "Dis nigger am no

counterfeit, he is de ginuine artikle. Dis chile is none of your

haf-and-haf, dere is no bogus about him."

Pompey was of low stature, round face, and, like most of his race, had

a set of teeth, which, for whiteness and beauty, could not be

surpassed; his eyes were large, lips thick, and hair short and woolly.

Pompey had been with Jennings so long, and had seen so much of buying

and selling of his fellow-creatures, that he appeared perfectly

indifferent to the heart-rending scenes which daily occurred in his

presence. Such is the force of habit:--

"Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,

That to be hated, needs but to be seen;

But seen too oft, familiar with Its face,

We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

It was on the second day of the steamer's voyage, that Pompey selected

five of the oldest slaves, took them into a room by themselves, and

commenced preparing them for the market.

"Now," said he, addressing himself to the company, "I is de chap dat is

to get you ready for de Orleans market, so dat you will bring marser a

good price. How old is you?" addressing himself to a man not less than

forty.

"If I live to see next sweet-potato-digging time, I shall be either

forty or forty-five, I don't know which."

"Dat may be," replied Pompey; "but now you is only thirty years

old,--dat's what marser says you is to be."

"I know I is more den dat," responded the man.

"I can't help nuffin' about dat," returned Pompey; "but when you get

into de market and any one ax you how old you is, and you tell um you

is forty or forty-five, marser will tie you up and cut you all to

pieces. But if you tell urn dat you is only thirty, den he won't. Now

remember dat you is thirty years old and no more."

"Well den, I guess I will only be thirty when dey ax me."

"What's your name?" said Pompey, addressing himself to another.

"Jeems."

"Oh! Uncle Jim, is it?"

"Yes."

"Den you must have all them gray whiskers shaved off, and all dem gray

hairs plucked out of your head." This was all said by Pompey in a

manner which showed that he know what he was about.

"How old is you?" asked Pompey of a tall, strong-looking man. "What's

your name?"

"I am twenty-nine years old, and my name is Tobias, but they calls me

Toby."

"Well, Toby, or Mr. Tobias, if dat will suit you better, you are now

twenty-three years old; dat's all,--do you understand dat?"

"Yes," replied Toby.

Pompey now gave them all to understand how old they were to be when

asked by persons who were likely to purchase, and then went and

reported to his master that the old boys were all right.

"Be sure," said Jennings, "that the niggers don't forget what you have

taught them, for our luck this time in the market depends upon their

appearance. If any of them have so many gray hairs that you cannot

pluck them out, take the blacking and brush, and go at them."

CHAPTER IV

THE BOAT-RACE.

At eight o'clock, on the evening of the third day of the passage, the

lights of another steamer were soon in the distance, and apparently

coming up very fast. This was the signal for a general commotion on

board the Patriot, and everything indicated that a steamboat-race was

at hand. Nothing can exceed the excitement attendant upon the racing of

steamers on the Mississippi.

By the time the boats had reached Memphis they were side by side, and

each exerting itself to get in advance of the other. The night was

clear, the moon shining brightly, and the boats so near to each other

that the passengers were within speaking distance. On board the Patriot

the firemen were using oil, lard, butter, and even bacon, with woody

for the purpose of raising the steam to its highest pitch. The blaze

mingled with the black smoke that issued from the pipes of the other

boat, which showed that she also was burning something more combustible

than wood.

The firemen of both boats, who were slaves, were singing songs such as

can only be heard on board a Southern steamer. The boats now came

abreast of each other, and nearer and nearer, until they were locked so

that men could pass from one to the other. The wildest excitement

prevailed among the men employed on the steamers, in which the

passengers freely participated.

The Patriot now stopped to take in passengers, but still no steam was

permitted to escape. On the starting of the boat again, cold water was

forced into the boilers by the feed-pumps, and, as might have been

expected, one of the boilers exploded with terrific force, carrying

away the boiler-deck and tearing to pieces much of the machinery. One

dense fog of steam filled every part of the vessel, while shrieks,

groans, and cries were heard on every side. Men were running hither and

thither looking for their wives, and women wore flying about in the

wildest confusion seeking for their husbands. Dismay appeared on every

countenance.

The saloons and cabins soon looked more like hospitals than anything

else; but by this time the Patriot had drifted to the shore, and the

other steamer had come alongside to render assistance to the disabled

boat. The killed and wounded (nineteen in number) were put on shore,

and the Patriot, taken in tow by the Washington, was once more on her

journey.

It was half-past twelve, and the passengers, instead of retiring to

their berths, once more assembled at the gambling-tables. The practice

of gambling on the western waters has long been a source of annoyance

to the more moral persons who travel on our great rivers. Thousands of

dollars often change owners during a passage from St. Louis or

Louisville to New Orleans, on a Mississippi steamer. Many men are

completely ruined on such occasions, and duels are often the

consequence.

"Go call my boy, steward," said Mr. Jones, as he took his cards one by

one from the table.

In a few minutes a fine-looking, bright-eyed mulatto boy, apparently

about sixteen years of age, was standing by his master's side at the

table.

"I am broke, all but my boy," said Jones, as he ran his fingers through

his cards; "but he is worth a thousand dollars, and I will bet the half

of him."

"I will call you," said Thompson, as he laid five hundred dollars at

the feet of the boy, who was standing, on the table, and at the same

time throwing down his cards before his adversary.

"You have beaten me," said Jones; and a roar of laughter followed from

the other gentleman as poor Joe stepped down from the table.

"Well, I suppose I owe you half the nigger," said Thompson, as he took

hold of Joe and began examining his limbs.

"Yes," replied Jones, "he is half yours. Let me have five hundred

dollars, and I will give you a bill of sale of the boy."

"Go back to your bed," said Thompson to his chattel, "and remember that

you now belong to me."

The poor slave wiped the tears from his eyes, as, in obedience, he

turned to leave the table.

"My father gave me that boy," said Jones, as he took the money, "and I

hope, Mr. Thompson, that you will allow me to redeem him."

"Most certainly, Sir," replied Thompson. "Whenever you hand over the

cool thousand the negro is yours."

Next morning, as the passengers were assembling in the cabin and on

deck and while the slaves were running about waiting on or looking for

their masters, poor Joe was seen entering his new master's stateroom,

boots in hand.

"Who do you belong to?" inquired a gentleman of an old negro, who

passed along leading a fine Newfoundland dog which he had been feeding.

"When I went to sleep las' night," replied the slave, "I 'longed to

Massa Carr; but he bin gamblin' all night an' I don't know who I 'longs

to dis mornin'."

Such is the uncertainty of a slave's life. He goes to bed at night the

pampered servant of his young master, with whom he has played in

childhood, and who would not see his slave abused under any

consideration, and gets up in the morning the property of a man whom he

has never before seen.

To behold five or six tables in the saloon of a steamer, with half a

dozen men playing cards at each, with money, pistols, and bowie-knives

spread in splendid confusion before them, is an ordinary thing on the

Mississippi River.

CHAPTER V

THE YOUNG MOTHER.

On the fourth morning, the Patriot landed at Grand Gulf, a beautiful

town on the left bank of the Mississippi. Among the numerous passengers

who came on board at Rodney was another slave-trader, with nine human

chattels which he was conveying to the Southern market. The passengers,

both ladies and gentlemen, were startled at seeing among the new lot of

slaves a woman so white as not to be distinguishable from the other

white women on board. She had in her arms a child so white that no one

would suppose a drop of African blood flowed through its blue veins.

No one could behold that mother with her helpless babe, without feeling

that God would punish the oppressor. There she sat, with an expressive

and intellectual forehead, and a countenance full of dignity and

heroism, her dark golden locks rolled back from her almost snow-white

forehead and floating over her swelling bosom. The tears that stood in

her mild blue eyes showed that she was brooding over sorrows and wrongs

that filled her bleeding heart.

The hearts of the passers-by grew softer, while gazing upon that young

mother as she pressed sweet kisses on the sad, smiling lips of the

infant that lay in her lap. The small, dimpled hands of the innocent

creature were slyly hid in the warm bosom on which the little one

nestled. The blood of some proud Southerner, no doubt, flowed through

the veins of that child.

When the boat arrived at Natches, a rather good-looking,

genteel-appearing man came on board to purchase a servant. This

individual introduced himself to Jennings as the Rev. James Wilson. The

slave-trader conducted the preacher to the deck-cabin, where he kept

his slaves, and the man of God, after having some questions answered,

selected Agnes as the one best suited to his service.

It seemed as if poor Marion's heart would break when she found that she

was to be separated from her mother. The preacher, however, appeared to

be but little moved by their sorrow, and took his newly-purchased

victim on shore. Agnes begged him to buy her daughter, but he refused,

on the ground that he had no use for her.

During the remainder of the passage, Marion wept bitterly.

After a ran of a few hours, the boat stopped at Baton Rouge, where an

additional number of passengers were taken on board, among whom were a

number of persons who had been attending the races at that place.

Gambling and drinking were now the order of the day.

The next morning, at ten o'clock, the boat arrived at New Orleans where

the passengers went to their hotels and homes, and the negroes to the

slave-pens.

Lizzie, the white slave-mother, of whom we have already spoken, created

as much of a sensation by the fairness of her complexion and the

alabaster whiteness of her child, when being conveyed on shore at New

Orleans, as she had done when brought on board at Grand Gulf. Every one

that saw her felt that slavery in the Southern States was not confined

to the negro. Many had been taught to think that slavery was a benefit

rather than an injury, and those who were not opposed to the

institution before, now felt that if whites were to become its victims,

it was time at least that some security should be thrown around the

Anglo-Saxon to gave him from this servile and degraded position.

CHAPTER VI

THE SLAVE-MARKET.

Not far from Canal Street, in the city of New Orleans, stands a large

two-story, flat building, surrounded by a stone wall some twelve feet

high, the top of which is covered with bits of glass, and so

constructed as to prevent even the possibility of any one's passing

over it without sustaining great injury. Many of the rooms in this

building resemble the cells of a prison, and in a small apartment near

the "office" are to be seen any number of iron collars, hobbles,

handcuffs, thumbscrews, cowhides, chains, gags, and yokes.

A back-yard, enclosed by a high wall, looks something like the

playground attached to one of our large New England schools, in which

are rows of benches and swings. Attached to the back premises is a

good-sized kitchen, where, at the time of which we write, two old

negresses were at work, stewing, boiling, and baking, and occasionally

wiping the perspiration from their furrowed and swarthy brows.

The slave-trader, Jennings, on his arrival at New Orleans, took up his

quarters here with his gang of human cattle, and the morning after, at

10 o'clock, they were exhibited for sale. First of all came the

beautiful Marion, whose pale countenance and dejected look told how

many sad hours she had passed since parting with her mother at Natchez.

There, too, was a poor woman who had been separated from her husband;

and another woman, whose looks and manners were expressive of deep

anguish, sat by her side. There was "Uncle Jeems," with his whiskers

off, his face shaven clean, and the gray hairs plucked out ready to be

sold for ten years younger than he was. Toby was also there, with his

face shaven and greased, ready for inspection.

The examination commenced, and was carried on in such a manner as to

shock the feelings of anyone not entirely devoid of the milk of human

kindness.

"What are you wiping your eyes for?" inquired a fat, red-faced man,

with a white hat set on one side of his head and a cigar in his mouth,

of a woman who sat on one of the benches.

"Because I left my man behind."

"Oh, if I buy you, I will furnish you with a better man than you left.

I've got lots of young bucks on my farm."

"I don't want and never will have another man," replied the woman.

"What's your name?" asked a man in a straw hat of a tall negro who

stood with his arms folded across his breast, leaning against the wall.

"My name is Aaron, sar."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-five."

"Where were you raised?"

"In ole Virginny, sar."

"How many men have owned you?"

"Four."

"Do you enjoy good health?"

"Yes, sar."

"How long did you live with your first owner?"

"Twenty years."

"Did you ever run away?"

"No, sar."

"Did you ever strike your master?"

"No, sar."

"Were you ever whipped much?"

"No, sar; I s'pose I didn't deserve it, sar."

"How long did you live with your second master?"

"Ten years, sar."

"Have you a good appetite?"

"Yes, sar."

"Can you eat your allowance?"

"Yes, sar,--when I can get it."

"Where were you employed in Virginia?"

"I worked de tobacker fiel'."

"In the tobacco field, eh?"

"Yes, sar."

"How old did you say you was?"

"Twenty-five, sar, nex' sweet-'tater-diggin' time."

"I am a cotton-planter, and if I buy you, you will have to work in the

cotton-field. My men pick one hundred and fifty pounds a day, and the

women one hundred and forty pounds; and those who fail to perform their

task receive five stripes for each pound that is wanting. Now, do you

think you could keep up with the rest of the hands?"

"I' don't know sar but I 'specs I'd have to."

"How long did you live with your third master?"

"Three years, sar."

"Why, that makes you thirty-three. I thought you told me you were only

twenty-five?"

Aaron now looked first at the planter, then at the trader, and seemed

perfectly bewildered. He had forgotten the lesson given him by Pompey

relative to his age; and the planter's circuitous questions--doubtless

to find out the slave's real age--had thrown the negro off his guard.

"I must see your back, so as to know how much you have been whipped,

before I think of buying."

Pompey, who had been standing by during the examination, thought that

his services were now required, and, stepping forth with a degree of

officiousness, said to Aaron,--

"Don't you hear de gemman tell you he wants to 'zamin you. Cum,

unharness yo'seff, ole boy, and don't be standin' dar."

Aaron was soon examined, and pronounced "sound;" yet the conflicting

statement about his age was not satisfactory.

Fortunately for Marion, she was spared the pain of undergoing such an

examination. Mr. Cardney, a teller in one of the banks, had just been

married, and wanted a maid-servant for his wife, and, passing through

the market in the early part of the day, was pleased with the young

slave's appearance, and his dwelling the quadroon found a much better

home than often falls to the lot of a slave sold in the New Orleans

market.

CHAPTER VII

THE SLAVE-HOLDING PARSON.

The Rev. James Wilson was a native of the State of Connecticut where he

was educated for the ministry in the Methodist persuasion. His father

was a strict follower of John Wesley, and spared no pains in his son's

education, with the hope that he would one day be as renowned as the

leader of his sect. James had scarcely finished his education at New

Haven, when he was invited by an uncle, then on a visit to his father,

to spend a few months at Natchez in Mississippi. Young Wilson accepted

his uncle's invitation, and accompanied him to the South. Few Young

men, and especially clergymen, going fresh from college to the South,

but are looked upon as geniuses in a small way, and who are not invited

to all the parties in the neighborhood. Mr. Wilson was not an exception

to this rule. The society into which he was thrown, on his arrival at

Natchez, was too brilliant for him not to be captivated by it, and, as

might have been expected, he succeeded in captivating a plantation with

seventy slaves if not the heart of the lady to whom it belonged.

Added to this, he became a popular preacher, and had a large

congregation with a snug salary. Like other planters, Mr. Wilson

confided the care of his farm to Ned Huckelby, an overseer of high

reputation in his way.

The Poplar Farm, as it was called, was situated in a beautiful valley,

nine miles from Natchez, and near the Mississippi River. The once

unshorn face of nature had given way, and the farm now blossomed with a

splendid harvest. The neat cottage stood in a grove, where Lombardy

poplars lift their tops almost to prop the skies, where the willow,

locust and horse-chestnut trees spread forth their branches, and

flowers never ceased to blossom.

This was the parson's country residence, where the family spent only

two months during the year. His town residence was a fine villa, seated

on the brow of a hill at the edge of the city.

It was in the kitchen of this house that Agnes found her new home. Mr.

Wilson was every inch a democrat, and early resolved that "his people,"

as he called his slaves should be well-fed and not over-worked, and

therefore laid down the law and gospel to the overseer as well as to

the slaves. "It is my wish," said he to Mr. Carlingham, an old

school-fellow who was spending a few days with him,--"It is my wish

that a new system be adopted on the plantations in this State. I

believe that the sons of Ham should have the gospel, and I intend that

mine shall have it. The gospel is calculated to make mankind better and

none should be without it."

"What say you," said Carlingham, "about the right of man to his

liberty?"

"Now, Carlingham, you have begun to harp again about men's rights. I

really wish that you could see this matter as I do."'

"I regret that I cannot see eye to eye with you," said Carlingham. "I

am a disciple of Rousseau, and have for years made the rights of man my

study, and I must confess to you that I see no difference between white

and black, as it regards liberty."

"Now, my dear Carlingham, would you really have the negroes enjoy the

same rights as ourselves?"

"I would most certainly. Look at our great Declaration of Independence!

look even at the Constitution of our own Connecticut and see what is

said in these about liberty."

"I regard all this talk about rights as mere humbug. The Bible is older

than the Declaration of Independence, and there I take my stand."

A long discussion followed, in which both gentlemen put forth their

peculiar ideas with much warmth of feeling.

During this conversation, there was another person in the room, seated

by the window, who, although at work, embroidering a fine collar, paid

minute attention to what was said. This was Georgiana, the only

daughter of the parson, who had but just returned from Connecticut,

where she had finished her education. She had had the opportunity of

contrasting the spirit of Christianity and liberty in New England with

that of slavery in her native State, and had learned to feel deeply for

the injured negro. Georgiana was in her nineteenth year, and had been

much benefited by her residence of five years at the North. Her form

was tall and graceful, her features regular and well-defined, and her

complexion was illuminated by the freshness of youth, beauty, and

health.

The daughter differed from both the father and visitor upon the subject

which they had been discussing; and as soon as an opportunity offered,

she gave it as her opinion that the Bible was both the bulwark of

Christianity and of liberty. With a smile she said,--

"Of course, papa will overlook my difference with him, for although I

am a native of the South, I am by education and sympathy a Northerner."

Mr. Wilson laughed, appearing rather pleased than otherwise at the

manner in which his daughter had expressed herself. From this Georgiana

took courage and continued,--

'"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' This single passage of

Scripture should cause us to have respect for the rights of the slave.

True Christian love is of an enlarged and disinterested nature. It

loves all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, without regard

to color or condition."

"Georgiana, my dear, you are an abolitionist,--your talk is

fanaticism!" said Mr. Wilson, in rather a sharp tone; but the subdued

look of the girl and the presence of Carlingham caused him to soften

his language.

Mr. Wilson having lost his wife by consumption, and Georgiana being his

only child, he loved her too dearly to say more, even if he felt

disposed. A silence followed this exhortation from the young Christian,

but her remarks had done a noble work. The father's heart was touched,

and the sceptic, for the first time, was viewing Christianity in its

true light.

CHAPTER VIII

A NIGHT IN THE PARSON'S KITCHEN.

Besides Agnes, whom Mr. Wilson had purchased from the slave-trader,

Jennings, he kept a number of house-servants. The chief one of these

was Sam, who must be regarded as second only to the parson himself. If

a dinner-party was in contemplation, or any company was to be invited,

after all the arrangements had been talked over by the minister and his

daughter. Sam was sure to be consulted on, the subject by "Miss

Georgy," as Miss Wilson was called by all the servants. If furniture,

crockery, or anything was to be purchased, Sam felt that he had been

slighted if his opinion was not asked. As to the marketing, he did it

all. He sat at the head of the servants' table in the kitchen, and was

master of the ceremonies. A single look from him was enough to silence

any conversation or noise among the servants in the kitchen or in any

other part of the premises.

There is in the Southern States a great amount of prejudice in regard

to color, even among the negroes themselves. The nearer the negro or

mulatto approaches to the white, the more he seems to feel his

superiority over those of a darker hue. This is no doubt the result of

the prejudice that exists on the part of the whites against both the

mulattoes and the blacks.

Sam was originally from Kentucky, and through the instrumentality of

one of his young masters, whom he had to take to school, he had learned

to read so as to be well understood, and, owing to that fact, was

considered a prodigy, not only among his own master's slaves, but also

among those of the town who knew him. Sam had a great wish to follow in

the footsteps of his master and be a poet, and was therefore often

heard singing doggerels of his own composition.

But there was one drawback to Sam, and that was his color. He was one

of the blackest of his race. This he evidently regarded as a great

misfortune; but he endeavored to make up for it in dress. Mr. Wilson

kept his house servants well dressed, and as for Sam, he was seldom

seen except in a ruffled shirt. Indeed, the washerwoman feared him more

than any one else in the house.

Agnes had been inaugurated chief of the kitchen department, and had a

general supervision of the household affairs. Alfred, the coachman,

Peter, and Hetty made up the remainder of the house-servants. Besides

these, Mr. Wilson owned eight slaves who were masons. These worked in

the city. Being mechanics, they were let out to greater advantage than

to keep them on the farm.

Every Sunday evening, Mr. Wilson's servants, including the bricklayers,

assembled in the kitchen, where the events of the week were fully

discussed and commented upon. It was on a Sunday evening, in the month

of June, that there was a party at Mr. Wilson's house, and, according

to custom in the Southern States, the ladies had their maidservants

with them. Tea had been served in "the house," and the servants,

including the strangers, had taken their seats at the table in the

kitchen. Sam, being a "single gentleman," was unusually attentive to

the ladies on this occasion. He seldom let a day pass without spending

an hour or two in combing and brushing his "har." He had an idea that

fresh butter was better for his hair than any other kind of grease, and

therefore on churning days half a pound of butter had always to be

taken out before it was salted. When he wished to appear to great

advantage, he would grease his face to make it "shiny." Therefore, on

the evening of the party, when all the servants were at the table, Sam

cut a big figure. There he sat, with his wool well combed and buttered,

face nicely greased, and his ruffles extending five or six inches from

his bosom. The parson in his drawing-room did not make a more imposing

appearance than did his servant on this occasion.

"I is bin had my fortune tole last Sunday night," said Sam, while

helping one of the girls.

"Indeed!" cried half a dozen voices.

"Yes," continued he; "Aunt Winny tole me I's to hab de prettiest yallah

gal in de town, and dat I's to be free!"

All eyes were immediately turned toward Sally Johnson, who was seated

near Sam.

"I 'specs I see somebody blush at dat remark," said Alfred.

"Pass dem pancakes an' 'lasses up dis way, Mr. Alf, and none ob your

sinuwashuns here," rejoined Sam.

"Dat reminds me," said-Agnes, "dat Dorcas Simpson is gwine to git

married."

"Who to, I want to know?" inquired Peter.

"To one of Mr. Darby's field-hands," answered Agnes.

"I should tink dat gal wouldn't frow herseff away in dat ar way," said

Sally; "She's good lookin' 'nough to git a house-servant, and not hab

to put up wid a field-nigger."

"Yes," said Sam, "dat's a werry unsensible remark ob yourn, Miss Sally.

I admires your judgment werry much, I 'sures you. Dar's plenty ob

susceptible an' well-dressed house-serbants dat a gal ob her looks can

git widout takin' up wid dem common darkies."

The evening's entertainment concluded by Sam relating a little of his

own experience while with his first master, in old Kentucky. This

master was a doctor, and had a large practice among his neighbors,

doctoring both masters and slaves. When Sam was about fifteen years

old, his master set him to grinding up ointment and making pills. As

the young student grew older and became more practised in his

profession, his services were of more importance to the doctor. The

physician having a good business, and a large number of his patients

being slaves,--the most of whom had to call on the doctor when ill,--he

put Sam to bleeding, pulling teeth, and administering medicine to the

slaves. Sam soon acquired the name among the slaves of the "Black

Doctor." With this appellation he was delighted; and no regular

physician could have put on more airs than did the black doctor when

his services were required. In bleeding, he must have more bandages,

and would rub and smack the arm more than the doctor would have thought

of.

Sam was once seen taking out a tooth for one of his patients, and

nothing appeared more amusing. He got the poor fellow down on his back,

and then getting astride of his chest, he applied the turnkeys and

pulled away for dear life. Unfortunately, he had got hold of the wrong

tooth, and the poor man screamed as loud as he could; but it was to no

purpose, for Sam had him fast, and after a pretty severe tussle out

came the sound grinder. The young doctor now saw his mistake, but

consoled himself with the thought that as the wrong tooth was out of

the way, there was more room to get at the right one.

Bleeding and a dose of calomel were always considered indispensable by

the "old boss," and as a matter of course, Sam followed in his

footsteps.

On one occasion the old doctor was ill himself, so as to be unable to

attend to his patients. A slave, with pass in hand, called to receive

medical advice, and the master told Sam to examine him and see what he

wanted. This delighted him beyond measure, for although he had been

acting his part in the way of giving out medicine as the master ordered

it, he had never been called upon by the latter to examine a patient,

and this seemed to convince him after all that he was no sham doctor.

As might have been expected, he cut a rare figure in his first

examination. Placing himself directly opposite his patient, and folding

his arms across his breast, looking very knowingly, he began,--

"What's de matter wid you?"

"I is sick."

"Where is you sick?"

"Here," replied the man, putting his hand upon his stomach.

"Put out your tongue," continued the doctor.

The man ran out his tongue at full length.

"Let me feel your pulse;" at the same time taking his patient's hand in

his, and placing his fingers upon his pulse, he said,--

"Ah! your case is a bad one; ef I don't do something for you, and dat

pretty quick, you'll be a gone coons and dat's sartin."

At this the man appeared frightened, and inquired what was the matter

with him, in answer to which Sam said,

"I done told dat your case is a bad one, and dat's enuff."

On Sam's returning to his master's bedside, the latter said,

"Well, Sam, what do you think is the matter with him?"

"His stomach is out ob order, sar," he replied.

"What do you think had better be done for him?"

"I tink I'd better bleed him and gib him a dose ob calomel," returned

Sam.

So, to the latter's gratification, the master let him have his own way.

On one occasion, when making pills and ointment, Sam made a great

mistake. He got the preparations for both mixed together, so that he

could not legitimately make either. But fearing that if he threw the

stuff away, his master would flog him, and being afraid to inform his

superior of the mistake, he resolved to make the whole batch of pill

and ointment stuff into pills. He well knew that the powder over the

pills would hide the inside, and the fact that most persons shut their

eyes when taking such medicine led the young doctor to feel that all

would be right in the end. Therefore Sam made his pills, boxed them up,

put on the labels, and placed them in a conspicuous position on one of

the shelves.

Sam felt a degree of anxiety about his pills, however. It was a strange

mixture, and he was not certain whether it would kill or cure; but he

was willing that it should be tried. At last the young doctor had his

vanity gratified. Col. Tallen, one of Dr. Saxondale's patients, drove

up one morning, and Sam as usual ran out to the gate to hold the

colonel's horse.

"Call your master," said the colonel; "I will not get out."

The doctor was soon beside the carriage, and inquired about the health

of his patient. After a little consultation, the doctor returned to his

office, took down a box of Sam's new pills, and returned to the

carriage.

"Take two of these every morning and night," said the doctor, "and if

you don't feel relieved, double the dose."

"Good gracious," exclaimed Sam in an undertone, when he heard his

master tell the colonel how to take the pills.

It was several days before Sam could learn the result of his new

medicine. One afternoon, about a fortnight after the colonel's visit

Sam saw his master's patient riding up to the gate on horseback. The

doctor happened to be in the yard, and met the colonel and said,--

"How are you now?"

"I am entirely recovered," replied the patient. "Those pills of yours

put me on my feet the next day."

"I knew they would," rejoined the doctor.

Sam was near enough to hear the conversation, and was delighted beyond

description. The negro immediately ran into the kitchen, amongst his

companions, and commenced dancing.

"What de matter wid you?" inquired the cook.

"I is de greatest doctor in dis country," replied Sam. "Ef you ever get

sick, call on me. No matter what ails you, I is de man dat can cure you

in no time. If you do hab de backache, de rheumaties, de headache, de

coller morbus, fits, er any ting else, Sam is de gentleman dat can put

you on your feet wid his pills."

For a long time after, Sam did little else than boast of his skill as a

doctor.

We have said that the black doctor was full of wit and good sense.

Indeed, in that respect, he had scarcely an equal in the neighborhood.

Although his master resided some little distance out of the city, Sam

was always the first man in all the negro balls and parties in town.

When his master could give him a pass, he went, and when he did not

give him one, he would steal away after his master had retired, and run

the risk of being taken up by the night-watch. Of course, the master

never knew anything of the absence of the servant at night without

permission. As the negroes at these parties tried to excel each other

in the way of dress, Sam was often at a loss to make that appearance

that his heart desired, but his ready wit ever helped him in this. When

his master had retired to bed at night, it was the duty of Sam to put

out the lights, and take out with him his master's clothes and boots,

and leave them in the office until morning, and then black the boots,

brush the clothes, and return them to his master's room.

Having resolved to attend a dress-ball one night, without his master's

permission, and being perplexed for suitable garments, Sam determined

to take his master's. So, dressing himself in the doctor's clothes even

to his boots and hat, off the negro started for the city. Being well

acquainted with the usual walk of the patrols he found no difficulty in

keeping out of their way. As might have been expected, Sam was the

great gun with the ladies that night.

The next morning, Sam was back home long before his master's time for

rising, and the clothes were put in their accustomed place. For a long

time Sam had no difficulty in attiring himself for parties; but the old

proverb that "It is a long lane that has no turning," was verified in

the negro's case. One stormy night, when the rain was descending in

torrents, the doctor heard a rap at his door. It was customary with

him, when called up at night to visit a patient, to ring for Sam. But

this time, the servant was nowhere to be found. The doctor struck a

light and looked for clothes; they too, were gone.--It was twelve

o'clock, and the doctor's clothes, hat, boots, and even his watch, were

nowhere to be found. Here was a pretty dilemma for a doctor to be in.

It was some time before the physician could fit himself out so as to

mike the visit. At last, however, he started with one of the

farm-horses, for Sam had taken the doctor's best saddle-horse. The

doctor felt sure that the negro had robbed him, and was on his way to

Canada; but in this he was mistaken. Sam had gone to the city to attend

a ball, and had decked himself out in his master's best suit. The

physician returned before morning, and again retired to bed but with

little hope of sleep, for his thoughts were with his servant and horse.

At six o'clock, in walked Sam with his master's clothes, and the boots

neatly blacked. The watch was placed on the shelf, and the hat in its

place. Sam had not met any of the servants, and was therefore entirely

ignorant of what had occurred during his absence.

"What have you been about, sir, and where was you last night when I was

called?" said the doctor.

"I don't know, sir. I 'spose I was asleep," replied Sam.

But the doctor was not to be so easily satisfied, after having been put

to so much trouble in hunting up another suit without the aid of Sam.

After breakfast, Sam was taken into the barn, tied up, and severely

flogged with the cat, which brought from him the truth concerning his

absence the previous night. This forever put an end to his fine

appearance at the negro parties. Had not the doctor been one of the

most indulgent of masters, he would not have escaped with merely a

severe whipping.

As a matter of course, Sam had to relate to his companions that evening

in Mr. Wilson's kitchen all his adventures as a physician while with

his old master.

CHAPTER IX

THE MAN OF HONOR.

Augustine Cardinay, the purchaser of Marion, was from the Green

Mountains of Vermont, and his feelings were opposed to the holding of

slaves; but his young wife persuaded him in into the idea that it was

no worse to own a slave than to hire one and pay the money to another.

Hence it was that he had been induced to purchase Marion.

Adolphus Morton, a young physician from the same State, and who had

just commenced the practice of his profession in New Orleans, was

boarding with Cardinay when Marion was brought home. The young

physician had been in New Orleans but a very few weeks, and had seen

but little of slavery. In his own mountain-home, he had been taught

that the slaves of the Southern States were negroes, and if not from

the coast of Africa, the descendants of those who had been imported. He

was unprepared to behold with composure a beautiful white girl of

sixteen in the degraded position of a chattel slave.

The blood chilled in his young heart as he heard Cardinay tell how, by

bantering with the trader, he had bought her two hundred dollars less

than he first asked. His very looks showed that she had the deepest

sympathies of his heart.

Marion had been brought up by her mother to look after the domestic

concerns of her cottage in Virginia, and well knew how to perform the

duties imposed upon her. Mrs. Cardinay was much pleased with her new

servant, and often mentioned her good qualities in the presence of Mr.

Morton.

After eight months acquaintance with Marion, Morton's sympathies

ripened into love, which was most cordially reciprocated by the

friendless and injured child of sorrow. There was but one course which

the young man could honorably pursue, and that was to purchase Marion

and make her his lawful wife; and this he did immediately, for he found

Mr. and Mrs. Cardinay willing to second his liberal intentions.

The young man, after purchasing Marion from Cardinay, and marrying her,

took lodgings in another part of the city. A private teacher was called

in, and the young wife was taught some of those accomplishments so

necessary for one taking a high position in good society.

Dr. Morton soon obtained a large and influential practice in his

profession, and with it increased in wealth; but with all his wealth he

never owned a slave. Probably the fact that he had raised his wife from

that condition kept the hydra-headed system continually before him. To

the credit of Marion be it said, she used every means to obtain the

freedom of her mother, who had been sold to Parson Wilson, at Natchez.

Her efforts, however, had come too late; for Agnes had died of a fever

before the arrival of Dr. Morton's agent.

Marion found in Adolphus Morton a kind and affectionate husband; and

his wish to purchase her mother, although unsuccessful, had doubly

endeared him to her. Ere a year had elapsed from the time of their

marriage, Mrs. Morton presented her husband with a lovely daughter, who

seemed to knit their hearts still closer together. This child they

named Jane; and before the expiration of the second year, they were

blessed with another daughter, whom they named Adrika.

These children grew up to the ages of ten and eleven, and were then

sent to the North to finish their education, and receive that

refinement which young ladies cannot obtain in the Slave States.

CHAPTER X

THE QUADROON'S HOME

A few miles out of Richmond is a pleasant place, with here and there a

beautiful cottage surrounded by trees so as scarcely to be seen. Among

these was one far retired from the public roads, and almost hidden

among the trees. This was the spot that Henry Linwood had selected for

Isabella, the eldest daughter of Agnes. The young man hired the house,

furnished it, and placed his mistress there, and for many months no one

in his father's family knew where he spent his leisure hours.

When Henry was not with her, Isabella employed herself in looking after

her little garden and the flowers that grew in front of her cottage.

The passion-flower peony, dahlia, laburnum, and other plant, so

abundant in warm climates, under the tasteful hand of Isabella,

lavished their beauty upon this retired spot, and miniature paradise.

Although Isabella had been assured by Henry that she should be free and

that he would always consider her as his wife, she nevertheless felt

that she ought to be married and acknowledged by him. But this was an

impossibility under the State laws, even had the young man been

disposed to do what was right in the matter. Related as he was,

however, to one of the first families in Virginia, he would not have

dared to marry a woman of so low an origin, even had the laws been

favorable.

Here, in this secluded grove, unvisited by any other except her lover,

Isabella lived for years. She had become the mother of a lovely

daughter, which its father named Clotelle. The complexion of the child

was still fairer than that of its mother. Indeed, she was not darker

than other white children, and as she grew older she more and more

resembled her father.

As time passed away, Henry became negligent of Isabella and his child,

so much so, that days and even weeks passed without their seeing him,

or knowing where he was. Becoming more acquainted with the world, and

moving continually in the society of young women of his own station,

the young man felt that Isabella was a burden to him, and having as

some would say, "outgrown his love," he longed to free himself of the

responsibility; yet every time he saw the child, he felt that he owed

it his fatherly care.

Henry had now entered into political life, and been elected to a seat

in the legislature of his native State; and in his intercourse with his

friends had become acquainted with Gertrude Miller, the daughter of a

wealthy gentleman living near Richmond. Both Henry and Gertrude were

very good-looking, and a mutual attachment sprang up between them.

Instead of finding fault with the unfrequent visits of Henry, Isabella

always met him with a smile, and tried to make both him and herself

believe that business was the cause of his negligence. When he was with

her, she devoted every moment of her time to him, and never failed to

speak of the growth and increasing intelligence of Clotelle.

The child had grown so large as to be able to follow its father on his

departure out to the road. But the impression made on Henry's feelings

by the devoted woman and her child was momentary. His heart had grown

hard, and his acts were guided by no fixed principle. Henry and

Gertrude had been married nearly two years before Isabella knew

anything of the event, and it was merely by accident that she became

acquainted with the facts.

One beautiful afternoon, when Isabella and Clotelle were picking wild

strawberries some two miles from their home, and near the road-side,

they observed a one-horse chaise driving past. The mother turned her

face from the carriage not wishing to be seen by strangers, little

dreaming that the chaise contained Henry and his wife. The child,

however, watched the chaise, and startled her mother by screaming out

at the top of her voice, "Papa! papa!" and clapped her little hands for

joy. The mother turned in haste to look at the strangers, and her eyes

encountered those of Henry's pale and dejected countenance. Gertrude's

eyes were on the child. The swiftness with which Henry drove by could

not hide from his wife the striking resemblance of the child to

himself. The young wife had heard the child exclaim "Papa! papa!" and

she immediately saw by the quivering of his lips and the agitation

depicted in his countenance, that all was not right.

"Who is that woman? and why did that child call you papa?" she

inquired, with a trembling voice.

Henry was silent; he knew not what to say, and without another word

passing between them, they drove home.

On reaching her room, Gertrude buried her face in her handkerchief and

wept. She loved Henry, and when she had heard from the lips of her

companions how their husbands had proved false, she felt that he was an

exception, and fervently thanked God that she had been so blessed.

When Gertrude retired to her bed that night, the sad scene of the day

followed her. The beauty of Isabella, with her flowing curls, and the

look of the child, so much resembling the man whom she so dearly loved,

could not be forgotten; and little Clotelle's exclamation of "Papa!

Papa" rang in her ears during the whole night.

The return of Henry at twelve o'clock did not increase her happiness.

Feeling his guilt, he had absented himself from the house since his

return from the ride.

CHAPTER XI

TO-DAY A MISTRESS, TO-MORROW A SLAVE

The night was dark, the rain, descended in torrents from the black and

overhanging clouds, and the thunder, accompanied with vivid flashes of

lightning, resounded fearfully, as Henry Linwood stepped from his

chaise and entered Isabella's cottage.

More than a fortnight had elapsed since the accidental meeting, and

Isabella was in doubt as to who the lady was that Henry was with in the

carriage. Little, however, did she think that it was his wife. With a

smile, Isabella met the young man as he entered her little dwelling.

Clotelle had already gone to bed, but her father's voice roused her

from her sleep, and she was soon sitting on his knee.

The pale and agitated countenance of Henry betrayed his uneasiness, but

Isabella's mild and laughing allusion to the incident of their meeting

him on the day of his pleasure-drive, and her saying, "I presume, dear

Henry, that the lady was one of your relatives," led him to believe

that she was still in ignorance of his marriage. She was, in fact,

ignorant who the lady was who accompanied the man she loved on that

eventful day. He, aware of this, now acted more like himself, and

passed the thing off as a joke. At heart, however, Isabella felt

uneasy, and this uneasiness would at times show itself to the young

man. At last, and with a great effort, she said,--

"Now, dear Henry, if I am in the way of your future happiness, say so,

and I will release you from any promises that you have made me. I know

there is no law by which I can hold you, and if there was, I would not

resort to it. You are as dear to me as ever, and my thoughts shall

always be devoted to you. It would be a great sacrifice for me to give

you up to another, but if it be your desire, as great as the sacrifice

is, I will make it. Send me and your child into a Free State if we are

in your way."

Again and again Linwood assured her that no woman possessed his love

but her. Oh, what falsehood and deceit man can put on when dealing with

woman's love!

The unabated storm kept Henry from returning home until after the clock

had struck two, and as he drew near his residence he saw his wife

standing at the window. Giving his horse in charge of the servant who

was waiting, he entered the house, and found his wife in tears.

Although he had never satisfied Gertrude as to who the quadroon woman

and child were, he had kept her comparatively easy by his close

attention to her, and by telling her that she was mistaken in regard to

the child's calling him "papa." His absence that night, however,

without any apparent cause, had again aroused the jealousy of Gertrude;

but Henry told her that he had been caught in the rain while out, which

prevented his sooner returning, and she, anxious to believe him,

received the story as satisfactory.

Somewhat heated with brandy, and wearied with much loss of sleep,

Linwood fell into a sound slumber as soon as he retired. Not so with

Gertrude. That faithfulness which has ever distinguished her sex, and

the anxiety with which she watched all his movements, kept the wife

awake while the husband slept. His sleep, though apparently sound, was

nevertheless uneasy. Again and again she heard him pronounce the name

of Isabella, and more than once she heard him say, "I am not married; I

will never marry while you live." Then he would speak the name of

Clotelle and say, "My dear child, how I love you!"

After a sleepless night, Gertrude arose from her couch, resolved that

she would reveal the whole matter to her mother. Mrs. Miller was a

woman of little or no feeling, proud, peevish, and passionate, thus

making everybody miserable that came near her; and when she disliked

any one, her hatred knew no bounds. This Gertrude knew; and had she not

considered it her duty, she would have kept the secret locked in her

own heart.

During the day, Mrs. Linwood visited her mother and told her all that

had happened. The mother scolded the daughter for not having informed

her sooner, and immediately determined to find out who the woman and

child were that Gertrude had met on the day of her ride. Three days

were spent by Mrs. Miller in this endeavor, but without success.

Four weeks had elapsed, and the storm of the old lady's temper had

somewhat subsided, when, one evening, as she was approaching her

daughter's residence, she saw Henry walking, in the direction of where

the quadroon was supposed to reside. Feeling satisfied that the young

man had not seen her, the old women at once resolved to follow him.

Linwood's boots squeaked so loudly that Mrs. Miller had no difficulty

in following him without being herself observed.

After a walk of about two miles, the young man turned into a narrow and

unfrequented road, and soon entered the cottage occupied by Isabella.

It was a fine starlight night, and the moon was just rising when they

got to their journey's end. As usual, Isabella met Henry with a smile,

and expressed her fears regarding his health.

Hours passed, and still old Mrs. Miller remained near the house,

determined to know who lived there. When she undertook to ferret out

anything, she bent her whole energies to it. As Michael Angelo, who

subjected all things to his pursuit and the idea he had formed of it,

painted the crucifixion by the side of a writhing slave and would have

broken up the true cross for pencils, so Mrs. Miller would have entered

the sepulchre, if she could have done it, in search of an object she

wished to find.

The full moon had risen, and was pouring its beams upon surrounding

objects as Henry stepped from Isabella's door, and looking at his

watch, said,--

"I must go, dear; it is now half-past ten."

Had little Clotelle been awake, she too would have been at the door. As

Henry walked to the gate, Isabella followed with her left hand locked

in his. Again he looked at his watch, and said, "I must go."

"It is more than a year since you staid all night," murmured Isabella,

as he folded her convulsively in his arms, and pressed upon her

beautiful lips a parting kiss.

He was nearly out of sight when, with bitter sobs, the quadroon

retraced her steps to the door of the cottage. Clotelle had in the mean

time awoke, and now inquired of her mother how long her father had been

gone. At that instant, a knock was heard at the door, and supposing

that it was Henry returning for something he had forgotten, as he

frequently did, Isabella flew to let him in. To her amazement, however,

a strange woman stood in the door.

"Who are you that comes here at this late hour?" demanded the

half-frightened Isabella.

Without making any reply, Mrs. Miller pushed the quadroon aside, and

entered the house.

"What do you want here?" again demanded Isabella.

"I am in search of you," thundered the maddened Mrs. Miller; but

thinking that her object would be better served by seeming to be kind,

she assumed a different tone of voice, and began talking in a pleasing

manner.

In this way, she succeeded in finding out the connection existing

between Linwood and Isabella, and after getting all she could out of

the unsuspecting woman, she informed her that the man she so fondly

loved had been married for more than two years. Seized with dizziness,

the poor, heart-broken woman fainted and fell upon the floor. How long

she remained there she could not tell; but when she returned to

consciousness, the strange woman was gone, and her child was standing

by her side. When she was so far recovered as to regain her feet,

Isabella went to the door, and even into the yard, to see if the old

woman was not somewhere about.

As she stood there, the full moon cast its bright rays over her whole

person, giving her an angelic appearance and imparting to her flowing

hair a still more golden hue. Suddenly another change came over her

features, and her full red lips trembled as with suppressed emotion.

The muscles around her faultless mouth became convulsed, she gasped for

breath, and exclaiming, "Is it possible that man can be so false!"

again fainted.

Clotelle stood and bathed her mother's temples with cold water until

she once more revived.

Although the laws of Virginia forbid the education of slaves, Agnes had

nevertheless employed an old free negro to teach her two daughters to

read and write. After being separated from her mother and sister,

Isabella turned her attention to the subject of Christianity, and

received that consolation from the Bible which is never denied to the

children of God. This was now her last hope, for her heart was torn

with grief and filled with all the bitterness of disappointment.

The night passed away, but without sleep to poor Isabella. At the dawn

of day, she tried to make herself believe that the whole of the past

night was a dream, and determined to be satisfied with the explanation

which Henry should give on his next visit.

CHAPTER XII

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW.

When Henry returned home, he found his wife seated at the window,

awaiting his approach. Secret grief was gnawing at her heart. Her sad,

pale cheeks and swollen eyes showed too well that agony, far deeper

than her speech portrayed, filled her heart. A dull and death-like

silence prevailed on his entrance. His pale face and brow, dishevelled

hair, and the feeling that he manifested on finding Gertrude still up,

told Henry in plainer words than she could have used that his wife, was

aware that her love had never been held sacred by him. The

window-blinds were still unclosed, and the full-orbed moon shed her

soft refulgence over the unrivalled scene, and gave it a silvery lustre

which sweetly harmonized with the silence of the night. The clock's

iron tongue, in a neighboring belfry, proclaimed the hour of twelve, as

the truant and unfaithful husband seated himself by the side of his

devoted and loving wife, and inquired if she was not well.

"I am, dear Henry," replied Gertrude; "but I fear you are not. If well

in body, I fear you are not at peace in mind."

"Why?" inquired he.

"Because," she replied, "you are so pale and have such a wild look in

your eyes."

Again he protested his innocence, and vowed she was the only woman who

had any claim upon his heart. To behold one thus playing upon the

feelings of two lovely women is enough to make us feel that evil must

at last bring its own punishment.

Henry and Gertrude had scarcely risen from the breakfast-table next

morning ere old Mrs. Miller made her appearance. She immediately took

her daughter aside, and informed her of her previous night's

experience, telling her how she had followed Henry to Isabella's

cottage, detailing the interview with the quadroon, and her late return

home alone. The old woman urged her daughter to demand that the

quadroon and her child be at once sold to the negro speculators and

taken out of the State, or that Gertrude herself should separate from

Henry.

"Assert your rights, my dear. Let no one share a heart that justly

belongs to you," said Mrs. Miller, with her eyes flashing fire. "Don't

sleep this night, my child, until that wench has been removed from that

cottage; and as for the child, hand that over to me,--I saw at once

that it was Henry's."

During these remarks, the old lady was walking up and down the room

like a caged lioness. She had learned from Isabella that she had been

purchased by Henry, and the innocence of the injured quadroon caused

her to acknowledge that he was the father of her child. Few women could

have taken such a matter in hand and carried it through with more

determination and success than old Mrs. Miller. Completely inured in

all the crimes and atrocities connected with the institution of

slavery, she was also aware that, to a greater or less extent, the

slave women shared with their mistress the affections of their master.

This caused her to look with a suspicious eye on every good-looking

negro woman that she saw.

While the old woman was thus lecturing her daughter upon her rights and

duties, Henry, unaware of what was transpiring, had left the house and

gone to his office. As soon as the old woman found that he was gone,

she said,--

"I will venture anything that he is on his way to see that wench again.

I'll lay my life on it."

The entrance, however, of little Marcus, or Mark, as he was familiarly

called, asking for Massa Linwood's blue bag, satisfied her that her

son-in-law was at his office. Before the old lady returned home, it was

agreed that Gertrude should come to her mother's to tea that evening,

and Henry with her, and that Mrs. Miller should there charge the young

husband with inconstancy to her daughter, and demand the removal of

Isabella.

With this understanding, the old woman retraced her steps to her own

dwelling.

Had Mrs. Miller been of a different character and not surrounded by

slavery, she could scarcely have been unhappy in such a home as hers.

Just at the edge of the city, and sheltered by large poplar-trees was

the old homestead in which she resided. There was a splendid orchard in

the rear of the house, and the old weather-beaten sweep, with "the

moss-covered bucket" at its end, swung majestically over the deep well.

The garden was scarcely to be equalled. Its grounds were laid out in

excellent taste, and rare exotics in the greenhouse made it still more

lovely.

It was a sweet autumn evening, when the air breathed through the

fragrant sheaves of grain, and the setting sun, with his golden kisses,

burnished the rich clusters of purple grapes, that Henry and Gertrude

were seen approaching the house on foot; it was nothing more than a

pleasant walk. Oh, how Gertrude's heart beat as she seated herself, on

their arrival!

The beautiful parlor, surrounded on all sides with luxury and taste,

with the sun creeping through the damask curtains, added a charm to the

scene. It was in this room that Gertrude had been introduced to Henry,

and the pleasant hours that she had spent there with him rushed

unbidden on her memory. It was here that, in former days, her beautiful

countenance had made her appearance as fascinating and as lovely as

that of Cleopatra's. Her sweet, musical voice might have been heard in

every part of the house, occasionally thrilling you with an unexpected

touch. How changed the scene! Her pale and wasted features could not be

lighted up by any thoughts of the past, and she was sorrowful at heart.

As usual, the servants in the kitchen were in ecstasies at the

announcement that "Miss Gerty," as they called their young mistress,

was in the house, for they loved her sincerely. Gertrude had saved them

from many a flogging, by interceding for them, when her mother was in

one of her uncontrollable passions. Dinah, the cook, always expected

Miss Gerty to visit the kitchen as soon as she came, and was not a

little displeased, on this occasion, at what she considered her young

mistress's neglect. Uncle Tony, too, looked regularly for Miss Gerty to

visit the green house, and congratulate him on his superiority as a

gardener.

When tea was over, Mrs. Miller dismissed the servants from the room,

then told her son-in-law what she had witnessed the previous night, and

demanded for her daughter that Isabella should be immediately sent out

of the State, and to be sure that the thing would be done, she wanted

him to give her the power to make such disposition of the woman and

child as she should think best. Gertrude was Mrs. Miller's only child,

and Henry felt little like displeasing a family upon whose friendship

he so much depended, and, no doubt, long wishing to free himself from

Isabella, he at once yielded to the demands of his mother-in-law. Mr.

Miller was a mere cipher about his premises. If any one came on

business connected with the farm, he would invariably say, "Wait tin I

see my wife," and the wife's opinion was sure to be law in every case.

Bankrupt in character, and debauched in body and mind, with seven

mulatto children who claimed him as their father, he was badly prepared

to find fault with his son-in-law. It was settled that Mrs. Miller

should use her own discretion in removing Isabella from her little

cottage, and her future disposition. With this understanding Henry and

Gertrude returned home. In the deep recesses of his heart the young man

felt that he would like to see his child and its mother once more; but

fearing the wrath of his mother-in-law, he did not dare to gratify his

inclination. He had not the slightest idea of what would become of

them; but he well knew that the old woman would have no mercy on them.

CHAPTER XIII

A HARD-HEARTED WOMAN.

With no one but her dear little Clotelle, Isabella passed her weary

hours without partaking of either food or drink, hoping that Henry

would soon return, and that the strange meeting with the old woman

would be cleared up.

While seated in her neat little bedroom with her fevered face buried in

her handkerchief, the child ran in and told its mother that a carriage

had stopped in front of the house. With a palpitating heart she arose

from her seat and went to the door, hoping that it was Henry; but, to

her great consternation, the old lady who had paid her such an

unceremonious visit on the evening that she had last seen Henry,

stepped out of the carriage, accompanied by the slave-trader, Jennings.

Isabella had seen the trader when he purchased her mother and sister,

and immediately recognized him. What could these persons want there?

thought she. Without any parleying or word of explanation, the two

entered the house, leaving the carriage in charge of a servant.

Clotelle ran to her mother, and clung to her dress as if frightened by

the strangers.

"She's a fine-looking wench," said the speculator, as he seated

himself, unasked, in the rocking-chair; "yet I don't think she is worth

the money you ask for her."

"What do you want here?" inquired Isabella, with a quivering voice.

"None of your insolence to me," bawled out the old woman, at the top of

her voice; "if you do, I will give you what you deserve so much, my

lady,--a good whipping."

In an agony of grief, pale, trembling, and ready to sink to the floor,

Isabella was only sustained by the hope that she would be able to save

her child. At last, regaining her self-possession, she ordered them

both to leave the house. Feeling herself insulted, the old woman seized

the tongs that stood by the fire-place, and raised them to strike the

quadroon down; but the slave-trader immediately jumped between the

women, exclaiming,--

"I won't buy her, Mrs. Miller, if you injure her."

Poor little Clotelle screamed as she saw the strange woman raise the

tongs at her mother. With the exception of old Aunt Nancy, a free

colored woman, whom Isabella sometimes employed to work for her, the

child had never before seen a strange face in her mother's dwelling.

Fearing that Isabella would offer some resistance, Mrs. Miller had

ordered the overseer of her own farm to follow her; and, just as

Jennings had stepped between the two women, Mull, the negro-driver,

walked into the room.

"Seize that impudent hussy," said Mrs. Miller to the overseer, "and tie

her up this minute, that I may teach her a lesson she won't forget in a

hurry."

As she spoke, the old woman's eyes rolled, her lips quivered, and she

looked like a very fury.

"I will have nothing to do with her, if you whip her, Mrs. Miller,"

said the slave-trader. "Niggers ain't worth half so much in the market

with their backs newly scarred," continued he, as the overseer

commenced his preparations for executing Mrs. Miller's orders.

Clotelle here took her father's walking-stick, which was lying on the

back of the sofa where he had left it, and, raising it, said,--

"If you bad people touch my mother, I will strike you."

They looked at the child with astonishment; and her extreme youth,

wonderful beauty, and uncommon courage, seemed for a moment to shake

their purpose. The manner and language of this child were alike beyond

her years, and under other circumstances would have gained for her the

approbation of those present.

"Oh, Henry, Henry!" exclaimed Isabella, wringing her hands.

"You need not call on him, hussy; you will never see him again," said

Mrs. Miller.

"What! is he dead?" inquired the heart-stricken woman.

It was then that she forgot her own situation, thinking only of the man

she loved. Never having been called to endure any kind of abusive

treatment, Isabella was not fitted to sustain herself against the

brutality of Mrs. Miller, much less the combined ferociousness of the

old woman and the overseer too. Suffice it to say, that instead of

whipping Isabella, Mrs. Miller transferred her to the negro-speculator,

who took her immediately to his slave-pen. The unfeeling old woman

would not permit Isabella to take more than a single change of her

clothing, remarking to Jennings,--

"I sold you the wench, you know,--not her clothes."

The injured, friendless, and unprotected Isabella fainted as she saw

her child struggling to release herself from the arms of old Mrs.

Miller, and as the wretch boxed the poor child's ears.

After leaving directions as to how Isabella's furniture and other

effects should be disposed of, Mrs. Miller took Clotelle into her

carriage and drove home. There was not even color enough about the

child to make it appear that a single drop of African blood flowed

through its blue veins.

Considerable sensation was created in the kitchen among the servants

when the carriage drove up, and Clotelle entered the house.

"Jes' like Massa Henry fur all de worl," said Dinah, as she caught a

glimpse of the child through the window.

"Wondah whose brat dat ar' dat missis bringin' home wid her?" said

Jane, as she put the ice in the pitchers for dinner. "I warrant it's

some poor white nigger somebody bin givin' her."

The child was white. What should be done to make it look like other

negroes, was the question which Mrs. Miller asked herself.

The callous-hearted old woman bit her nether lip, as she viewed that

child, standing before her, with her long, dark ringlets clustering

over her alabaster brow and neck.

"Take this little nigger and cut her hair close to her head," said the

mistress to Jane, as the latter answered the bell.

Clotelle screamed, as she felt the scissors going over her head, and

saw those curls that her mother thought so much of falling upon the

floor.

A roar of laughter burst from the servants, as Jane led the child

through the kitchen, with the hair cut so short that the naked scalp

could be plainly seen.

"Gins to look like nigger, now," said Dinah, with her mouth upon a grin.

The mistress smiled, as the shorn child reentered the room; but there

was something more needed. The child was white, and that was a great

objection. However, she hit upon a plan to remedy this which seemed

feasible. The day was excessively warm. Not a single cloud floated over

the blue vault of heaven; not a breath of wind seemed moving, and the

earth was parched by the broiling sun. Even the bees had stopped

humming, and the butterflies had hid themselves under the broad leaves

of the burdock. Without a morsel of dinner, the poor child was put in

the garden, and set to weeding it, her arms, neck and head completely

bare. Unaccustomed to toil, Clotelle wept as she exerted herself in

pulling up the weeds. Old Dinah, the cook, was as unfeeling as her

mistress, and she was pleased to see the child made to work in the hot

sun.

"Dat white nigger 'll soon be black enuff if missis keeps her workin'

out dar," she said, as she wiped the perspiration from her sooty brow.

Dinah was the mother of thirteen children, all of whom had been taken

from her when young; and this, no doubt, did much to harden her

feelings, and make her hate all white persons.

The burning sun poured its rays on the face of the friendless child

until she sank down in the corner of the garden, and was actually

broiled to sleep.

"Dat little nigger ain't workin' a bit, missus," said Dinah to Mrs.

Miller, as the latter entered the kitchen.

"She's lying in the sun seasoning; she will work the better by and by,"

replied the mistress.

"Dese white niggers always tink dey seff good as white folks," said the

cook.

"Yes; but we will teach them better, won't we, Dinah?" rejoined Mrs.

Miller.

"Yes, missus," replied Dinah; "I don't like dese merlatter niggers, no

how. Dey always want to set dey seff up for sumfin' big." With this

remark the old cook gave one of her coarse laughs, and continued:

"Missis understands human nature, don't she? Ah! ef she ain't a whole

team and de ole gray mare to boot, den Dinah don't know nuffin'."

Of course, the mistress was out of the kitchen before these last marks

were made.

It was with the deepest humiliation that Henry learned from one of his

own slaves the treatment which his child was receiving at the hands of

his relentless mother-in-law.

The scorching sun had the desired effect; for in less than a fortnight,

Clotelle could scarcely have been recognized as the same child. Often

was she seen to weep, and heard to call on her mother.

Mrs. Miller, when at church on Sabbath, usually, on warm days, took

Nancy, one of her servants, in her pew, and this girl had to fan her

mistress during service. Unaccustomed to such a soft and pleasant seat,

the servant would very soon become sleepy and begin to nod. Sometimes

she would go fast asleep, which annoyed the mistress exceedingly. But

Mrs. Miller had nimble fingers, and on them sharp nails, and, with an

energetic pinch upon the bare arms of the poor girl, she would arouse

the daughter of Africa from her pleasant dreams. But there was no one

of Mrs. Miller's servants who received as much punishment as old Uncle

Tony.

Fond of her greenhouse, and often in the garden, she was ever at the

gardener's heels. Uncle Tony was very religious, and, whenever his

mistress flogged him, he invariably gave her a religious exhortation.

Although unable to read, he, nevertheless, had on his tongue's end

portions of Scripture which he could use at any moment. In one end of

the greenhouse was Uncle Tony's sleeping room, and those who happened

in that vicinity, between nine and ten at night, could hear the old man

offering up his thanksgiving to God for his protection during the day.

Uncle Tony, however, took great pride, when he thought that any of the

whites were within hearing, to dwell, in his prayer, on his own

goodness and the unfitness of others to die. Often was he heard to say,

"O Lord, thou knowest that the white folks are not Christians, but the

black people are God's own children." But if Tony thought that his old

mistress was within the sound of his voice, he launched out into deeper

waters.

It was, therefore, on a sweet night, when the bright stars were looking

out with a joyous sheen, that Mark and two of the other boys passed the

greenhouse, and heard Uncle Tony in his devotions.

"Let's have a little fun," said the mischievous Marcus to his young

companions. "I will make Uncle Tony believe that I am old mistress, and

he'll give us an extra touch in his prayer." Mark immediately commenced

talking in a strain of voice resembling, as well as he could, Mrs.

Miller, and at once Tony was heard to say in a loud voice, "O Lord,

thou knowest that the white people are not fit to die; but, as for old

Tony, whenever the angel of the Lord comes, he's ready." At that

moment, Mark tapped lightly on the door. "Who's dar?" thundered old

Tony. Mark made no reply. The old man commenced and went through with

the same remarks addressed to the Lord, when Mark again knocked at the

door. "Who dat dar?" asked Uncle Tony, with a somewhat agitated

countenance and trembling voice. Still Mark would not reply. Again Tony

took up the thread of his discourse, and said, "O Lord, thou knowest as

well as I do that dese white folks are not prepared to die, but here is

Old Tony, when de angel of de Lord comes, he's ready to go to heaven."

Mark once more knocked at the door. "Who dat dar?" thundered Tony at

the top of his voice.

"De angel of de Lord," replied Mark, in a somewhat suppressed and

sepulchral voice.

"What de angel of de Lord want here?" inquired Tony, as if much

frightened.

"He's come for poor old Tony, to take him out of the world" replied

Mark, in the same strange voice.

"Dat nigger ain't here; he die tree weeks ago," responded Tony, in a

still more agitated and frightened tone. Mark and his companions made

the welkin ring with their shouts at the old man's answer. Uncle Tony

hearing them, and finding that he had been imposed upon, opened his

door, came out with stick in hand, and said, "Is dat you, Mr. Mark? you

imp, if I can get to you I'll larn you how to come here wid your

nonsense."

Mark and his companions left the garden, feeling satisfied that Uncle

Tony was not as ready to go with "de angel of de Lord" as he would have

others believe.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PRISON.

While poor little Clotelle was being kicked about by Mrs. Miller, on

account of her relationship to her son-in-law, Isabella was passing

lonely hours in the county jail, the place to which Jennings had

removed her for safe-keeping, after purchasing her from Mrs. Miller.

Incarcerated in one of the iron-barred rooms of that dismal place,

those dark, glowing eyes, lofty brow, and graceful form wilted down

like a plucked rose under a noonday sun, while deep in her heart's

ambrosial cells was the most anguishing distress.

Vulgar curiosity is always in search of its victims, and Jennings'

boast that he had such a ladylike and beautiful woman in his possession

brought numbers to the prison who begged of the jailer the privilege of

seeing the slave-trader's prize. Many who saw her were melted to tears

at the pitiful sight, and were struck with admiration at her

intelligence; and, when she spoke of her child, they must have been

convinced that a mother's sorrow can be conceived by none but a

mother's heart. The warbling of birds in the green bowers of bliss,

which she occasionally heard, brought no tidings of gladness to her.

Their joy fell cold upon her heart, and seemed like bitter mockery.

They reminded her of her own cottage, where, with her beloved child,

she had spent so many happy days.

The speculator had kept close watch over his valuable piece of

property, for fear that it might damage itself. This, however, there

was no danger of, for Isabella still hoped and believed that Henry

would come to her rescue. She could not bring herself to believe that

he would allow her to be sent away without at least seeing her, and the

trader did all he could to keep this idea alive in her.

While Isabella, with a weary heart, was passing sleepless nights

thinking only of her daughter and Henry, the latter was seeking relief

in that insidious enemy of the human race, the intoxicating cup. His

wife did all in her power to make his life a pleasant and a happy one,

for Gertrude was devotedly attached to him; but a weary heart gets no

gladness out of sunshine. The secret remorse that rankled in his bosom

caused him to see all the world blood-shot. He had not visited his

mother-in-law since the evening he had given her liberty to use her own

discretion as to how Isabella and her child should be disposed of. He

feared even to go near the house, for he did not wish to see his child.

Gertrude felt this every time he declined accompanying her to her

mother's. Possessed of a tender and confiding heart, entirely unlike

her mother, she sympathized deeply with her husband. She well knew that

all young men in the South, to a greater or less extent, became

enamored of the slave-women, and she fancied that his case was only one

of the many, and if he had now forsaken all others for her she did not

wish for him to be punished; but she dared not let her mother know that

such were her feelings. Again and again had she noticed the great

resemblance between Clotelle and Henry, and she wished the child in

better hands than those of her cruel mother.

At last Gertrude determined to mention the matter to her husband.

Consequently, the next morning, when they were seated on the back

piazza, and the sun was pouring its splendid rays upon everything

around, changing the red tints on the lofty hills in the distance into

streaks of purest gold, and nature seeming by her smiles to favor the

object, she said,--

"What, dear Henry, do you intend to do with Clotelle?"

A paleness that overspread his countenance, the tears that trickled

down his cheeks, the deep emotion that was visible in his face, and the

trembling of his voice, showed at once that she had touched a tender

chord. Without a single word, he buried his face in his handkerchief,

and burst into tears.

This made Gertrude still more unhappy, for she feared that he had

misunderstood her; and she immediately expressed her regret that she

had mentioned the subject. Becoming satisfied from this that his wife

sympathized with him in his unhappy situation, Henry told her of the

agony that filled his soul, and Gertrude agreed to intercede for him

with her mother for the removal of the child to a boarding-school in

one of the Free States.

In the afternoon, when Henry returned from his office, his wife met him

with tearful eyes, and informed him that her mother was filled with

rage at the mere mention of the removal of Clotelle from her premises.

In the mean time, the slave-trader, Jennings, had started for the South

with his gang of human cattle, of whom Isabella was one. Most quadroon

women who are taken to the South are either sold to gentlemen for their

own use or disposed of as house-servants or waiting-maids. Fortunately

for Isabella, she was sold, for the latter purpose. Jennings found a

purchaser for her in the person of Mr. James French.

Mrs. French was a severe mistress. All who lived with her, though

well-dressed, were scantily fed and over-worked. Isabella found her new

situation far different from her Virginia cottage-life. She had

frequently heard Vicksburg spoken of as a cruel place for slaves, and

now she was in a position to test the truthfulness of the assertion.

A few weeks after her arrival, Mrs. French began to show to Isabella

that she was anything but a pleasant and agreeable mistress. What

social virtues are possible in a society of which injustice is a

primary characteristic,--in a society which is divided into two

classes, masters and slaves? Every married woman at the South looks

upon her husband as unfaithful, and regards every negro woman as a

rival.

Isabella had been with her new mistress but a short time when she was

ordered to cut off her long and beautiful hair. The negro is naturally

fond of dress and outward display. He who has short woolly hair combs

and oils it to death; he who has long hair would sooner have his teeth

drawn than to part with it. But, however painful it was to Isabella,

she was soon seen with her hair cut short, and the sleeves of her dress

altered to fit tight to her arms. Even with her hair short and with her

ill-looking dress, Isabella was still handsome. Her life had been a

secluded one, and though now twenty-eight years of age, her beauty had

only assumed a quieter tone. The other servants only laughed at

Isabella's misfortune in losing her beautiful hair.

"Miss 'Bell needn't strut so big; she got short nappy har's well's I,"

said Nell, with a broad grin that showed her teeth.

"She tink she white when she cum here, wid dat long har ob hers,"

replied Mill.

"Yes," continued Nell, "missus make her take down her wool, so she no

put it up to-day."

The fairness of Isabella's complexion was regarded with envy by the

servants as well as by the mistress herself. This is one of the hard

features of slavery. To-day a woman is mistress of her own cottage;

to-morrow she is sold to one who aims to make her life as intolerable

as possible. And let it be remembered that the house-servant has the

best situation a slave can occupy.

But the degradation and harsh treatment Isabella experienced in her new

home was nothing compared to the grief she underwent at being separated

from her dear child. Taken from her with scarcely a moment's warning,

she knew not what had become of her.

This deep and heartfelt grief of Isabella was soon perceived by her

owners, and fearing that her refusal to take proper food would cause

her death, they resolved to sell her. Mr. French found no difficulty in

securing a purchaser for the quadroon woman, for such are usually the

most marketable kind of property. Isabella was sold at private sale to

a young man for a housekeeper; but even he had missed his aim.

Mr. Gordon, the new master, was a man of pleasure. He was the owner of

a large sugar plantation, which he had left under the charge of an

overseer, and was now giving himself up to the pleasures of a city

life. At first Mr. Gordon sought to win Isabella's favor by flattery

and presents, knowing that whatever he gave her he could take from her

again. The poor innocent creature dreaded every moment lest the scene

should change. At every interview with Gordon she stoutly maintained

that she had left a husband in Virginia, and could never think of

taking another. In this she considered that she was truthful, for she

had ever regarded Henry as her husband. The gold watch and chain and

other glittering presents which Gordon gave to her were all kept unused.

In the same house with Isabella was a man-servant who had from time to

time hired himself from his master. His name was William. He could feel

for Isabella, for he, like her, had been separated from near and dear

relatives, and he often tried to console the poor woman. One day

Isabella observed to him that her hair was growing out again.

"Yes," replied William; "you look a good deal like a man with your

short hair."

"Oh," rejoined she, "I have often been told that I would make a better

looking man than woman, and if I had the money I might avail myself of

it to bid farewell to this place."

In a moment afterwards, Isabella feared that she had said too much, and

laughingly observed, "I am always talking some nonsense; you must not

heed me."

William was a tall, full-blooded African, whose countenance beamed with

intelligence. Being a mechanic, he had by industry earned more money

than he had paid to his owner for his time, and this he had laid aside,

with the hope that he might some day get enough to purchase his

freedom. He had in his chest about a hundred and fifty dollars. His was

a heart that felt for others, and he had again and again wiped the

tears from his eyes while listening to Isabella's story.

"If she can get free with a little money, why not give her what I

have?" thought he, and then resolved to do it.

An hour after, he entered the quadroon's room, and, laying the money in

her lap, said,--

"There, Miss Isabella, you said just now that if you had the means you

would leave this place. There is money enough to take you to England,

where you will be free. You are much fairer than many of the white

women of the South, and can easily pass for a free white woman."

At first Isabella thought it was a plan by which the negro wished to

try her fidelity to her owner; but she was soon convinced, by his

earnest manner and the deep feeling he manifested, that he was entirely

sincere.

"I will take the money," said she, "only on one condition, and that is

that I effect your escape, as well as my own."

"How can that be done?" he inquired, eagerly.

"I will assume the disguise of a gentleman, and you that of a servant,

and we will thus take passage in a steamer to Cincinnati, and from

thence to Canada."

With full confidence in Isabella's judgment, William consented at once

to the proposition. The clothes were purchased; everything was

arranged, and the next night, while Mr. Gordon was on one of his

sprees, Isabella, under the assumed name of Mr. Smith, with William in

attendance as a servant, took passage for Cincinnati in the steamer

Heroine.

With a pair of green glasses over her eyes, in addition to her other

disguise, Isabella made quite a gentlemanly appearance. To avoid

conversation, however, she kept closely to her state-room, under the

plea of illness.

Meanwhile, William was playing his part well with the servants. He was

loudly talking of his master's wealth, and nothing on the boat appeared

so good as in his master's fine mansion.

"I don't like dese steamboats, no how," said he; "I hope when massa

goes on anoder journey, he take de carriage and de hosses."

After a nine-days' passage, the Heroine landed at Cincinnati, and Mr.

Smith and his servant walked on shore.

"William, you are now a free man, and can go on to Canada," said

Isabella; "I shall go to Virginia, in search of my daughter."

This sudden announcement fell heavily upon William's ears, and with

tears he besought her not to jeopardize her liberty in such a manner;

but Isabella had made up her mind to rescue her child if possible.

Taking a boat for Wheeling, Isabella was soon on her way to her native

State. Several months had elapsed since she left Richmond, and all her

thoughts were centred on the fate of her dear Clotelle. It was with a

palpitating heart that this injured woman entered the stage-coach at

Wheeling and set out for Richmond.

CHAPTER XV

THE ARREST.

It was late in the evening when the coach arrived at Richmond, and

Isabella once more alighted in her native city. She had intended to

seek lodgings somewhere in the outskirts of the town, but the lateness

of the hour compelled her to stop at one of the principal hotels for

the night. She had scarcely entered the inn before she recognized among

the numerous black servants one to whom she was well known, and her

only hope was that her disguise would keep her from being discovered.

The imperturbable calm and entire forgetfulness of self which induced

Isabella to visit a place from which she could scarcely hope to escape,

to attempt the rescue of a beloved child, demonstrate that

over-willingness of woman to carry out the promptings of the finer

feelings of the heart. True to woman's nature, she had risked her own

liberty for another's. She remained in the hotel during the night, and

the next morning, under the plea of illness, took her breakfast alone.

That day the fugitive slave paid a visit to the suburbs of the town,

and once more beheld the cottage in which she had spent so many happy

hours. It was winter, and the clematis and passion-flower were not

there; but there were the same walks her feet had so often pressed, and

the same trees which had so often shaded her as she passed through the

garden at the back of the house. Old remembrances rushed upon her

memory and caused her to shed tears freely. Isabella was now in her

native town, and near her daughter; but how could she communicate with

her? how could she see her? To have made herself known would have been

a suicidal act; betrayal would have followed, and she arrested. Three

days passed away, and still she remained in the hotel at which she had

first put up, and yet she got no tidings of her child.

Unfortunately for Isabella, a disturbance had just broken out among the

slave population in the State of Virginia, and all strangers were

treated with suspicion.

The insurrection to which we now refer was headed by a full-blooded

negro, who had been born and brought up a slave. He had heard the crack

of the driver's whip, and seen the warm blood streaming from the

negro's body. He had witnessed the separation of parents from children,

and was made aware, by too many proofs, that the slave could expect no

justice from the hands of the slave-owner. The name of this man was Nat

Turner. He was a preacher amongst the negroes, distinguished for his

eloquence, respected by the whites, loved and venerated by the negroes.

On the discovery of the plan for the outbreak, Turner fled to the

swamps, followed by those who had joined in the insurrection.

Here the revolted negroes numbered some hundreds, and for a time bade

defiance to their oppressors. The Dismal Swamps cover many thousand

acres of wild land, and a dense forest, with wild animals and insects

such as are unknown in any other part of Virginia. Here runaway negroes

usually seek a hiding-place, and some have been known to reside here

for years. The revolters were joined by one of these. He was a large,

tall, full-blooded negro, with a stern and savage countenance; the

marks on his face showed that he was from one of the barbarous tribes

in Africa, and claimed that country as his native land. His only

covering was a girdle around his loins, made of skins of wild beasts

which he had killed. His only token of authority among those that he

led was a pair of epaulettes, made of the tail of a fox, and tied to

his shoulder by a cord. Brought from the coast of Africa, when only

fifteen years of age, to the island of Cuba, he was smuggled from

thence into Virginia. He had been two years in the swamps, and

considered it his future home. He had met a negro woman, who was also a

runaway, and, after the fashion of his native land, had gone through

the process of oiling her, as the marriage ceremony. They had built a

cave on a rising mound in the swamp, and this was their home. This

man's name was Picquilo. His only weapon was a sword made from a scythe

which he had stolen from a neighboring plantation. His dress, his

character, his manners, and his mode of fighting were all in keeping

with the early training he had received in the land of his birth. He

moved about with the activity of a cat, and neither the thickness of

the trees nor the depth of the water could stop him. His was a bold,

turbulent spirit; and, from motives of revenge, he imbrued his hands in

the blood of all the whites he could meet. Hunger, thirst, and loss of

sleep, he seemed made to endure, as if by peculiarity of constitution.

His air was fierce, his step oblique, his look sanguinary.

Such was the character of one of the negroes in the Southampton

Insurrection. All negroes were arrested who were found beyond their

master's threshold, and all white strangers were looked upon with

suspicion.

Such was the position in which Isabella found affairs when she returned

to Virginia in search of her child. Had not the slave-owners been

watchful of strangers, owing to the outbreak, the fugitive could not

have escaped the vigilance of the police; for advertisements announcing

her escape, and offering a large reward for her arrest, had been

received in the city previous to her arrival, and officers were

therefore on the lookout for her.

It was on the third day after her arrival in Richmond, as the quadroon

was seated in her room at the hotel, still in the disguise of a

gentleman, that two of the city officers entered the apartment and

informed her that they were authorized to examine all strangers, to

assure the authorities that they were not in league with the revolted

negroes.

With trembling heart the fugitive handed the key of her trunk to the

officers. To their surprise they found nothing but female apparel in

the trunk, which raised their curiosity, and caused a further

investigation that resulted in the arrest of Isabella as a fugitive

slave. She was immediately conveyed to prison, there to await the

orders of her master.

For many days, uncheered by the voice of kindness, alone, hopeless,

desolate, she waited for the time to arrive when the chains should be

placed on her limbs, and she returned to her inhuman and unfeeling

owner.

The arrest of the fugitive was announced in all the newspapers, but

created little or no sensation. The inhabitants were too much engaged

in putting down the revolt among the slaves; and, although all the odds

were against the insurgents, the whites found it no easy matter, with

all their caution. Every day brought news of fresh outbreaks. Without

scruple and without pity, the whites massacred all blacks found beyond

the limits of their owners' plantations. The negroes, in return, set

fire to houses, and put to death those who attempted to escape from the

flames. Thus carnage was added to carnage, and the blood of the whites

flowed to avenge the blood of the blacks.

These were the ravages of slavery. No graves were dug for the negroes,

but their bodies became food for dogs and vultures; and their bones,

partly calcined by the sun, remained scattered about, as if to mark the

mournful fury of servitude and lust of power. When the slaves were

subdued, except a few in the swamps, bloodhounds were employed to hunt

out the remaining revolters.

CHAPTER XVI

DEATH IS FREEDOM.

On receiving intelligence of the arrest of Isabella, Mr. Gordon

authorized the sheriff to sell her to the highest bidder. She was,

therefore, sold; the purchaser being the noted negro-trader, Hope H.

Slater, who at once placed her in prison. Here the fugitive saw none

but slaves like herself, brought in and taken out to be placed in

ships, and sent away to some part of the country to which she herself

would soon be compelled to go. She had seen or heard nothing of her

daughter while in Richmond, and all hopes of seeing her had now fled.

At the dusk of the evening previous to the day when she was to be sent

off, as the old prison was being closed for the night, Isabella

suddenly darted past the keeper, and ran for her life. It was not a

great distance from the prison to the long bridge which passes from the

lower part of the city across the Potomac to the extensive forests and

woodlands of the celebrated Arlington Heights, then occupied by that

distinguished relative and descendant of the immortal Washington, Mr.

Geo. W. Custis. Thither the poor fugitive directed her flight. So

unexpected was her escape that she had gained several rods the start

before the keeper had secured the other prisoners, and rallied his

assistants to aid in the pursuit. It was at an hour, and in a part of

the city where horses could not easily be obtained for the chase; no

bloodhounds were at hand to run down the flying woman, and for once it

seemed as if there was to be a fair trial of speed and endurance

between the slave and the slave-catchers.

The keeper and his force raised the hue-and-cry on her path as they

followed close behind; but so rapid was the flight along the wide

avenue that the astonished citizens, as they poured forth from their

dwellings to learn the cause of alarm, were only able to comprehend the

nature of the case in time to fall in with the motley throng in

pursuit, or raise an anxious prayer to heaven as they refused to join

in the chase (as many a one did that night) that the panting fugitive

might escape, and the merciless soul-dealer for once be disappointed of

his prey. And now, with the speed of an arrow, having passed the

avenue, with the distance between her and her pursuers constantly

increasing, this poor, hunted female gained the "Long Bridge," as it is

called, where interruption seemed improbable. Already her heart began

to beat high with the hope of success. She had only to pass

three-quarters of a mile across the bridge, when she could bury herself

in a vast forest, just at the time when the curtain of night would

close around her, and protect her from the pursuit of her enemies.

But God, by his providence, had otherwise determined. He had ordained

that an appalling tragedy should be enacted that night within plain

sight of the President's house, and the Capitol of the Union, which

would be an evidence wherever it should be known of the unconquerable

love of liberty which the human heart may inherit, as well as a fresh

admonition to the slave-dealer of the cruelty and enormity of his

crimes.

Just as the pursuers passed the high draw, soon after entering upon the

bridge, they beheld three men slowly approaching from the Virginia

side. They immediately called to them to arrest the fugitive,

proclaiming her a runaway slave. True to their Virginia instincts, as

she came near, they formed a line across the narrow bridge to intercept

her. Seeing that escape was impossible in that quarter, she stopped

suddenly, and turned upon her pursuers.

On came the profane and ribald crew faster than ever, already exulting

in her capture, and threatening punishment for her flight. For a moment

she looked wildly and anxiously around to see if there was no hope of

escape. On either hand, far down below, rolled the deep, foaming waters

of the Potomac, and before and behind were the rapidly approaching

steps and noisy voices of her pursuers. Seeing how vain would be any

further effort to escape, her resolution was instantly taken. She

clasped her hands convulsively together, raised her tearful and

imploring eyes toward heaven, and begged for the mercy and compassion

there which was unjustly denied her on earth; then, exclaiming, "Henry,

Clotelle, I die for thee!" with a single bound, vaulted over, the

railing of the bridge, and sank forever beneath the angry and foaming

waters of the river!

Such was the life, and such the death, of a woman whose virtues and

goodness of heart would have done honor to one in a higher station of

life, and who, had she been born in any other land but that of slavery,

would have been respected and beloved. What would have been her

feelings if she could have known that the child for whose rescue she

had sacrificed herself would one day be free, honored, and loved in

another land?

CHAPTER XVII

CLOTELLE.

The curtain rises seven years after the death of Isabella. During that

interval, Henry, finding that nothing could induce his mother-in-law to

relinquish her hold on poor little Clotelle, and not liking to contend

with one on whom a future fortune depended, gradually lost all interest

in the child, and left her to her fate.

Although Mrs. Miller treated Clotelle with a degree of harshness

scarcely equalled, when applied to one so tender in years, still the

child grew every day more beautiful, and her hair, though kept closely

cut, seemed to have improved in its soft, silk-like appearance. Now

twelve years of age, and more than usually well-developed, her harsh

old mistress began to view her with a jealous eye.

Henry and Gertrude had just returned from Washington, where the husband

had been on his duties as a member of Congress, and where he had

remained during the preceding three years without returning home. It

was on a beautiful evening, just at twilight, while seated at his

parlor window, that Henry saw a young woman pass by and go into the

kitchen. Not aware of ever having seen the person before, he made an

errand into the cook's department to see who the girl was. He, however,

met her in the hall, as she was about going out.

"Whom did you wish to see?" he inquired.

"Miss Gertrude," was the reply.

"What did you want to see her for?" he again asked.

"My mistress told me to give her and Master Henry her compliments, and

ask them to come over and spend the evening."

"Who is your mistress?" he eagerly inquired.

"Mrs. Miller, sir," responded the girl.

"And what's your name?" asked Henry, with a trembling voice.

"Clotelle, sir," was the reply.

The astonished father stood completely amazed, looking at the now

womanly form of her who, in his happier days, he had taken on his knee

with so much fondness and alacrity. It was then that he saw his own and

Isabella's features combined in the beautiful face that he was then

beholding. It was then that he was carried back to the days when with a

woman's devotion, poor Isabella hung about his neck and told him how

lonely were the hours in his absence. He could stand it no longer.

Tears rushed to his eyes, and turning upon his heel, he went back to

his own room. It was then that Isabella was revenged; and she no doubt

looked smilingly down from her home in the spirit-land on the scene

below.

On Gertrude's return from her shopping tour, she found Henry in a

melancholy mood, and soon learned its cause. As Gertrude had borne him

no children, it was but natural, that he should now feel his love

centering in Clotelle, and he now intimated to his wife his

determination to remove his daughter from the hands of his

mother-in-law.

When this news reached Mrs. Miller, through her daughter, she became

furious with rage, and calling Clotelle into her room, stripped her

shoulders bare and flogged her in the presence of Gertrude.

It was nearly a week after the poor girl had been so severely whipped

and for no cause whatever, that her father learned of the circumstance

through one of the servants. With a degree of boldness unusual for him,

he immediately went to his mother-in-law and demanded his child. But it

was too late,--she was gone. To what place she had been sent no one

could tell, and Mrs. Miller refused to give any information whatever

relative to the girl.

It was then that Linwood felt deepest the evil of the institution under

which he was living; for he knew that his daughter would be exposed to

all the vices prevalent in that part of the country where marriage is

not recognized in connection with that class.

CHAPTER XVIII

A SLAVE-HUNTING PARSON.

It was a delightful evening after a cloudless day, with the setting sun

reflecting his golden rays on the surrounding hills which were covered

with a beautiful greensward, and the luxuriant verdure that forms the

constant garb of the tropics, that the steamer Columbia ran into the

dock at Natchez, and began unloading the cargo, taking in passengers

and making ready to proceed on her voyage to New Orleans. The plank

connecting the boat with the shore had scarcely been secured in its

place, when a good-looking man about fifty years of age, with a white

neck-tie, and a pair of gold-rimmed glasses on, was seen hurrying on

board the vessel. Just at that moment could be seen a stout man with

his face pitted with the small-pox, making his way up to the

above-mentioned gentleman.

"How do you do, my dear sir? this is Mr. Wilson, I believe," said the

short man, at the same time taking from his mouth a large chew of

tobacco, and throwing it down on the ship's deck.

"You have the advantage of me, sir," replied the tall man.

"Why, don't you know me? My name is Jennings; I sold you a splendid

negro woman some years ago."

"Yes, yes," answered the Natchez man. "I remember you now, for the

woman died in a few months, and I never got the worth of my money out

of her."

"I could not help that," returned the slave-trader; "she was as sound

as a roach when I sold her to you."

"Oh, yes," replied the parson, "I know she was; but now I want a young

girl, fit for house use,--one that will do to wait on a lady."

"I am your man," said Jennings, "just follow me," continued he, "and I

will show you the fairest little critter you ever saw." And the two

passed to the stern of the boat to where the trader had between fifty

and sixty slaves, the greater portion being women.

"There," said Jennings, as a beautiful young woman shrunk back with

modesty. "There, sir, is the very gal that was made for you. If she had

been made to your order, she could not have suited you better."

"Indeed, sir, is not that young woman white?" inquired the parson.

"Oh, no, sir; she is no whiter than you see!"

"But is she a slave?" asked the preacher.

"Yes," said the trader, "I bought her in Richmond, and she comes from

an excellent family. She was raised by Squire Miller, and her mistress

was one of the most pious ladies in that city, I may say; she was the

salt of the earth, as the ministers say."

"But she resembles in some respect Agnes, the woman I bought from you,"

said Mr. Wilson. As he said the name of Agnes, the young woman started

as if she had been struck. Her pulse seemed to quicken, but her face

alternately flushed and turned pale, and tears trembled upon her

eyelids. It was a name she had heard her mother mention, and it brought

to her memory those days,--those happy days, when she was so loved and

caressed. This young woman was Clotelle, the granddaughter of Agnes.

The preacher, on learning the fact, purchased her, and took her home,

feeling that his daughter Georgiana would prize her very highly.

Clotelle found in Georgiana more a sister than a mistress, who, unknown

to her father, taught the slave-girl how to read, and did much toward

improving and refining Clotelle's manners, for her own sake. Like her

mother fond of flowers, the "Virginia Maid," as she was sometimes

called, spent many of her leisure hours in the garden. Beside the

flowers which sprang up from the fertility of soil unplanted and

unattended, there was the heliotrope, sweet-pea, and cup-rose,

transplanted from the island of Cuba. In her new home Clotelle found

herself saluted on all sides by the fragrance of the magnolia. When she

went with her young mistress to the Poplar Farm, as she sometimes did,

nature's wild luxuriance greeted her, wherever she cast her eyes.

The rustling citron, lime, and orange, shady mango with its fruits of

gold, and the palmetto's umbrageous beauty, all welcomed the child of

sorrow. When at the farm, Huckelby, the overseer, kept his eye on

Clotelle if within sight of her, for he knew she was a slave, and no

doubt hoped that she might some day fall into his hands. But she shrank

from his looks as she would have done from the charm of the

rattlesnake. The negro-driver always tried to insinuate himself into

the good opinion of Georgiana and the company that she brought. Knowing

that Miss Wilson at heart hated slavery, he was ever trying to show

that the slaves under his charge were happy and contented. One day,

when Georgiana and some of her Connecticut friends were there, the

overseer called all the slaves up to the "great house," and set some of

the young ones to dancing. After awhile whiskey was brought in and a

dram given to each slave, in return for which they were expected to

give a toast, or sing a short piece of his own composition; when it

came to Jack's turn he said,--

"The big bee flies high, the little bee makes the honey: the black

folks make the cotton, and the white folks gets the money."

Of course, the overseer was not at all elated with the sentiment

contained in Jack's toast. Mr. Wilson had lately purchased a young man

to assist about the house and to act as coachman. This slave, whose

name was Jerome, was of pure African origin, was perfectly black, very

fine-looking, tall, slim, and erect as any one could possibly be. His

features were not bad, lips thin, nose prominent, hands and feet small.

His brilliant black eyes lighted up his whole countenance. His hair

which was nearly straight, hung in curls upon his lofty brow. George

Combe or Fowler would have selected his head for a model. He was brave

and daring, strong in person, fiery in spirit, yet kind and true in his

affections, earnest in his doctrines. Clotelle had been at the parson's

but a few weeks when it was observed that a mutual feeling had grown up

between her and Jerome. As time rolled on, they became more and more

attached to each other. After satisfying herself that these two really

loved, Georgiana advised their marriage. But Jerome contemplated his

escape at some future day, and therefore feared that if married it

might militate against it. He hoped, also, to be able to get Clotelle

away too, and it was this hope that kept him from trying to escape by

himself. Dante did not more love his Beatrice, Swift his Stella, Waller

his Saccharissa, Goldsmith his Jessamy bride, or Bums his Mary, than

did Jerome his Clotelle. Unknown to her father, Miss Wilson could

permit these two slaves to enjoy more privileges than any of the other

servants. The young mistress taught Clotelle, and the latter imparted

her instructions to her lover, until both could read so as to be well

understood. Jerome felt his superiority, and always declared that no

master should ever flog him. Aware of his high spirit and

determination, Clotelle was in constant fear lest some difficulty might

arise between her lover and his master.

One day Mr. Wilson, being somewhat out of temper and irritated at what

he was pleased to call Jerome's insolence, ordered him to follow him to

the barn to be flogged. The young slave obeyed his master, but those

who saw him at the moment felt that he would not submit to be whipped.

"No, sir," replied Jerome, as his master told him to take off his coat:

"I will serve you, Master Wilson, I will labor for you day and night,

if you demand it, but I will not be whipped."

This was too much for a white man to stand from a negro, and the

preacher seized his slave by the throat, intending to choke him. But

for once he found his match. Jerome knocked him down, and then escaped

through the back-yard to the street, and from thence to the woods.

Recovering somewhat from the effect of his fall, the parson regained

his feet and started in pursuit of the fugitive. Finding, however, that

the slave was beyond his reach, he at once resolved to put the dogs on

his track. Tabor, the negro-catcher, was sent for, and in less than an

hour, eight or ten men, including the parson, were in the woods with

hounds, trying the trails. These dogs will attack a negro at their

master's bidding; and cling to him as the bull-dog will cling to a

beast. Many are the speculations as to whether the negro will be

secured alive or dead, when these dogs once get on his track. Whenever

there is to be a negro hunt, there is no lack of participants. Many go

to enjoy the fun which it is said they derive from these scenes.

The company had been in the woods but a short time ere they got on the

track of two fugitives, one of whom was Jerome. The slaves immediately

bent their steps toward the swamp, with the hope that the dogs, when

put upon their scent would be unable to follow them through the water.

The slaves then took a straight course for the Baton Rouge and Bayou

Sara road, about four miles distant. Nearer and nearer the whimpering

pack pressed on; their delusion begins to dispel. All at once the truth

flashes upon the minds of the fugitives like a glare of light,--'tis

Tabor with his dogs!

The scent becomes warmer and warmer, and what was at first an irregular

cry now deepens into one ceaseless roar, as the relentless pack presses

on after its human prey.

They at last reach the river, and in the negroes plunge, followed by

the catch-dog. Jerome is caught and is once more in the hands of his

master, while the other poor fellow finds a watery grave. They return,

and the preacher sends his slave to jail.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRUE HEROINE.

In vain did Georgiana try to console Clotelle, when the latter heard,

through one of the other slaves, that Mr. Wilson had started with the

dogs in pursuit of Jerome. The poor girl well knew that he would be

caught, and that severe punishment, if not death, would be the result

of his capture. It was therefore with a heart filled with the deepest

grief that the slave-girl heard the footsteps of her master on his

return from the chase. The dogged and stern manner of the preacher

forbade even his daughter inquiring as to the success of his pursuit.

Georgiana secretly hoped that the fugitive had not been caught; she

wished it for the sake of the slave, and more especially for her

maid-servant, whom she regarded more as a companion than a menial. But

the news of the capture of Jerome soon spread through the parson's

household, and found its way to the ears of the weeping and

heart-stricken Clotelle.

The reverend gentleman had not been home more than an hour ere come of

his parishioners called to know if they should not take the negro from

the prison and execute Lynch law upon him.

"No negro should be permitted to live after striking a white man; let

us take him and hang him at once," remarked an elderly-looking man,

whose gray hairs thinly covered the crown of his head.

"I think the deacon is right," said another of the company; "if our

slaves are allowed to set the will of their masters at defiance, there

will be no getting along with them,--an insurrection will be the next

thing we hear of."

"No, no," said the preacher; "I am willing to let the law take its

course, as it provides for the punishment of a slave with death if he

strikes his master. We had better let the court decide the question.

Moreover, as a Christian and God-fearing people, we ought to submit to

the dictates of justice. Should we take this man's life by force, an

All-wise Providence would hold us responsible for the act."

The company then quietly withdrew, showing that the preacher had some

influence with his people.

"This" said Mr. Wilson, when left alone with his daughter,--"this, my

dear Georgiana, is the result of your kindness to the negroes. You have

spoiled every one about the house. I can't whip one of them, without

being in danger of having my life taken."

"I am sure, papa," replied the young lady,--"I am sure I never did any

thing intentionally to induce any of the servants to disobey your

orders."

"No, my dear," said Mr. Wilson, "but you are too kind to them. Now,

there is Clotelle,--that girl is completely spoiled. She walks about

the house with as dignified an air as if she was mistress of the

premises. By and by you will be sorry for this foolishness of yours."

"But," answered Georgiana, "Clotelle has a superior mind, and God

intended her to hold a higher position in life than that of a servant."

"Yes, my dear, and it was your letting her know that she was intended

for a better station in society that is spoiling her. Always keep a

negro in ignorance of what you conceive to be his abilities," returned

the parson.

It was late on the Saturday afternoon, following the capture of Jerome

that, while Mr. Wilson was seated in his study preparing his sermon for

the next day, Georgiana entered the room and asked in an excited tone

if it were true that Jerome was to be hanged on the following Thursday.

The minister informed her that such was the decision of the court.

"Then," said she, "Clotelle will die of grief."

"What business has she to die of grief?" returned the father, his eyes

at the moment flashing fire.

"She has neither eaten nor slept since he was captured," replied

Georgians; "and I am certain that she will not live through this."

"I cannot be disturbed now," said the parson; "I must get my sermon

ready for to-morrow. I expect to have some strangers to preach to, and

must, therefore, prepare a sermon that will do me credit."

While the man of God spoke, he seemed to say to himself,--

"With devotion's visage, and pious actions, We do sugar over the devil

himself."

Georgiana did all in her power to soothe the feelings of Clotelle, and

to induce her to put her trust in God. Unknown to her father, she

allowed the poor girl to go every evening to the jail to see Jerome,

and during these visits, despite her own grief, Clotelle would try to

comfort her lover with the hope that justice would be meted out to him

in the spirit-land.

Thus the time passed on, and the day was fast approaching when the

slave was to die. Having heard that some secret meeting had been held

by the negroes, previous to the attempt of Mr. Wilson to flog his

slave, it occurred to a magistrate that Jerome might know something of

the intended revolt. He accordingly visited the prison to see if he

could learn anything from him, but all to no purpose. Having given up

all hopes of escape, Jerome had resolved to die like a brave man. When

questioned as to whether he knew anything of a conspiracy among the

slaves against their masters, he replied,--

"Do you suppose that I would tell you if I did?"

"But if you know anything," remarked the magistrate, "and will tell us,

you may possibly have your life spared."

"Life," answered the doomed man, "is worth nought to a slave. What

right has a slave to himself, his wife, or his children? We are kept in

heathenish darkness, by laws especially enacted to make our instruction

a criminal offence; and our bones, sinews, blood, and nerves are

exposed in the market for sale.

"My liberty is of as much consequence to me as Mr. Wilson's is to him.

I am as sensitive to feeling as he. If I mistake not, the day will come

when the negro will learn that he can get his freedom by fighting for

it; and should that time arrive, the whites will be sorry that they

have hated us so shamefully. I am free to say that, could I live my

life over again, I would use all the energies which God has given me to

get up an insurrection."

Every one present seemed startled and amazed at the intelligence with

which this descendant of Africa spoke.

"He's a very dangerous man," remarked one.

"Yes," said another, "he got some book-learning somewhere, and that has

spoiled him."

An effort was then made to learn from Jerome where he had learned to

read, but the black refused to give any information on the subject.

The sun was just going down behind the trees as Clotelle entered the

prison to see Jerome for the last time. He was to die on the next day

Her face was bent upon her hands, and the gushing tears were forcing

their way through her fingers. With beating heart and trembling hands,

evincing the deepest emotion, she threw her arms around her lover's

neck and embraced him. But, prompted by her heart's unchanging love,

she had in her own mind a plan by which she hoped to effect the escape

of him to whom she had pledged her heart and hand. While the

overcharged clouds which had hung over the city during the day broke,

and the rain fell in torrents, amid the most terrific thunder and

lightning, Clotelle revealed to Jerome her plan for his escape.

"Dress yourself in my clothes," said she, "and you can easily pass the

jailer."

This Jerome at first declined doing. He did not wish to place a

confiding girl in a position where, in all probability, she would have

to suffer; but being assured by the young girl that her life would not

be in danger, he resolved to make the attempt. Clotelle being very

tall, it was not probable that the jailer would discover any difference

in them.

At this moment, she took from her pocket a bunch of keys and unfastened

the padlock, and freed him from the floor.

"Come, girl, it is time for you to go," said the jailer, as Jerome was

holding the almost fainting girl by the hand.

Being already attired in Clotelle's clothes, the disguised man embraced

the weeping girl, put his handkerchief to his face, and passed out of

the jail, without the keeper's knowing that his prisoner was escaping

in a disguise and under cover of the night.

CHAPTER XX

THE HERO OF MANY ADVENTURES.

Jerome had scarcely passed the prison-gates, ere he reproached himself

for having taken such a step. There seemed to him no hope of escape out

of the State, and what was a few hours or days at most, of life to him,

when, by obtaining it, another had been sacrificed. He was on the eve

of returning, when he thought of the last words uttered by Clotelle.

"Be brave and determined, and you will still be free." The words

sounded like a charm in his ears and he went boldly forward.

Clotelle had provided a suit of men's clothes and had placed them where

her lover could get them, if he should succeed in getting out.

Returning to Mr. Wilson's barn, the fugitive changed his apparel, and

again retraced his steps into the street. To reach the Free States by

travelling by night and lying by during the day, from a State so far

south as Mississippi, no one would think for a moment of attempting to

escape. To remain in the city would be a suicidal step. The deep sound

of the escape of steam from a boat, which was at that moment ascending

the river, broke upon the ears of the slave. "If that boat is going up

the river," said he, "why not I conceal myself on board, and try to

escape?" He went at once to the steamboat landing, where the boat was

just coming in. "Bound for Louisville," said the captain, to one who

was making inquiries. As the passengers were rushing on board, Jerome

followed them, and proceeding to where some of the hands were stowing

away bales of goods, he took hold and aided them.

"Jump down into the hold, there, and help the men," said the mate to

the fugitive, supposing that, like many persons, he was working his way

up the river. Once in the hull among the boxes, the slave concealed

himself. Weary hours, and at last days, passed without either water or

food with the hidden slave. More than once did he resolve to let his

case be known; but the knowledge that he would be sent back to Natchez

kept him from doing so. At last, with lips parched and fevered to a

crisp, the poor man crawled out into the freight-room, and began

wandering about. The hatches were on, and the room dark. There happened

to be on board a wedding party, and, a box, containing some of the

bridal cake, with several bottles of port wine, was near Jerome. He

found the box, opened it, and helped himself. In eight days, the boat

tied up at the wharf at the place of her destination. It was late at

night; the boat's crew, with the single exception of the man on watch,

were on shore. The hatches were off, and the fugitive quietly made his

way on deck and jumped on shore. The man saw the fugitive, but too late

to seize him.

Still in a Slave State, Jerome was at a loss to know how he should

proceed. He had with him a few dollars, enough to pay his way to

Canada, if he could find a conveyance. The fugitive procured such food

as he wanted from one of the many eating-houses, and then, following

the direction of the North Star, he passed out of the city, and took

the road leading to Covington. Keeping near the Ohio River, Jerome soon

found an opportunity to cross over into the State of Indiana. But

liberty was a mere name in the latter State, and the fugitive learned,

from some colored persons that he met, that it was not safe to travel

by daylight. While making his way one night, with nothing to cheer him

but the prospect of freedom in the future, he was pounced upon by three

men who were lying in wait for another fugitive, an advertisement of

whom they had received through the mail. In vain did Jerome tell them

that he was not a slave. True, they had not caught the man they

expected; but, if they could make this slave tell from what place he

had escaped, they knew that a good price would be paid them for the

negro's arrest.

Tortured by the slave-catchers, to make him reveal the name of his

master and the place from whence he had escaped, Jerome gave them a

fictitious name in Virginia, and said that his master would give a

large reward, and manifested a willingness to return to his "old boss."

By this misrepresentation, the fugitive, hoped to have another chance

of getting away. Allured with the prospect of a large sum of the

needful, the slave-catchers started back with their victim. Stopping on

the second night at an inn, on the banks of the Ohio River, the

kidnappers, in lieu of a suitable place in which to confine their prize

during the night, chained him to the bed-post of their

sleeping-chamber. The white men were late in retiring to rest, after an

evening spent in drinking. At dead of night, when all was still, the

slave arose from the floor, upon which he had been lying, looked around

and saw that Morpheus had possession of his captors. For once, thought

he, the brandy bottle has done a noble work. With palpitating heart and

trembling limbs, he viewed his position. The door was fast, but the

warm weather had compelled them to leave the window open. If he could

but get his chains off, he might escape through the window to the

piazza. The sleepers' clothes hung upon chairs by the bedside. The

slave thought of the padlock-key, examined the pockets, and found it.

The chains were soon off, and the negro stealthily making his way to

the window. He stopped, and said to himself, "These men are villains;

they are enemies to all who, like me, are trying to be free. Then why

not I teach them a lesson?" He then dressed himself in the best suit,

hung his own worn-out and tattered garments on the same chair, and

silently passed through the window to the piazza, and let himself down

by one of the pillars, and started once more for the North.

Daylight came upon the fugitive before he had selected a hiding-place

for the day, and he was walking at a rapid rate, in hopes of soon

reaching some woodland or forest. The sun had just begun to show

itself, when the fugitive was astounded at seeing behind him, in the

distance, two men upon horseback. Taking a road to the right, the slave

saw before him a farmhouse, and so near was he to it that he observed

two men in front of it looking at him. It was too late to turn back.

The kidnappers were behind him--strange men before him. Those in the

rear he knew to be enemies, while he had no idea of what principles

were the farmers. The latter also saw the white men coming, and called

to the fugitive to come that way. The broad-brimmed hats that the

farmers wore told the slave that they were Quakers.

Jerome had seen some of these people passing up and down the river,

when employed on a steamer between Natchez and New Orleans, and had

heard that they disliked slavery. He, therefore, hastened toward the

drab-coated men, who, on his approach, opened the barn-door, and told

him to "run in."

When Jerome entered the barn, the two farmers closed the door,

remaining outside themselves, to confront the slave-catchers, who now

came up and demanded admission, feeling that they had their prey secure.

"Thee can't enter my premises," said one of the Friends, in rather a

musical voice.

The negro-catchers urged their claim to the slave, and intimated that,

unless they were allowed to secure him, they would force their way in.

By this time, several other Quakers had gathered around the barn-door.

Unfortunately for the kidnappers, and most fortunately for the

fugitive, the Friends had just been holding a quarterly meeting in the

neighborhood, and a number of them had not yet returned to their homes.

After some talk, the men in drab promised to admit the hunters,

provided they procured an officer and a search-warrant from a justice

of the peace. One of the slave-catchers was left to see that the

fugitive did not get away, while the others went in pursuit of an

officer. In the mean time, the owner of the barn sent for a hammer and

nails, and began nailing up the barn-door.

After an hour in search of the man of the law, they returned with an

officer and a warrant. The Quaker demanded to see the paper, and, after

looking at it for some time, called to his son to go into the house for

his glasses. It was a long time before Aunt Ruth found the leather

case, and when she did, the glasses wanted wiping before they could be

used. After comfortably adjusting them on his nose, he read the warrant

over leisurely.

"Come, Mr. Dugdale, we can't wait all day,"' said the officer.

"Well, will thee read it for me?" returned the Quaker.

The officer complied, and the man in drab said,--

"Yes, thee may go in, now. I am inclined to throw no obstacles in the

way of the execution of the law of the land."

On approaching the door, the men found some forty or fifty nails in it,

in the way of their progress.

"Lend me your hammer and a chisel, if you please, Mr. Dugdale," said

the officer.

"Please read that paper over again, will thee?" asked the Quaker.

The officer once more read the warrant.

"I see nothing there which says I must furnish thee with tools to open

my door. If thee wants a hammer, thee must go elsewhere for it; I tell

thee plainly, thee can't have mine."

The implements for opening the door are at length obtained and after

another half-hour, the slave-catchers are in the barn. Three hours is a

long time for a slave to be in the hands of Quakers. The hay is turned

over, and the barn is visited in every part; but still the runaway is

not found. Uncle Joseph has a glow upon his countenance; Ephraim shakes

his head knowingly; little Elijah is a perfect know-nothing, and, if

you look toward the house, you will see Aunt Ruth's smiling face, ready

to announce that breakfast is ready.

"The nigger is not in this barn," said the officer.

"I know he is not," quietly answered the Quaker.

"What were you nailing up your door for, then, as if you were afraid we

would enter?" inquired one of the kidnappers.

"I can do what I please with my own door, can't I," said the Quaker.

The secret was out; the fugitive had gone in at the front door and out

at the back; and the reading of the warrant, nailing up of the door,

and other preliminaries of the Quaker, was to give the fugitive time

and opportunity to escape.

It was now late in the morning, and the slave-catchers were a long way

from home, and the horses were jaded by the rapid manner in which they

had travelled. The Friends, in high glee, returned to the house for

breakfast; the man of the law, after taking his fee, went home, and the

kidnappers turned back, muttering, "Better luck next time."

CHAPTER XXI

SELF-SACRIFICE.

Now in her seventeenth year, Clotelle's personal appearance presented a

great contrast to the time when she lived with old Mrs. Miller. Her

tall and well-developed figure; her long, silky black hair, falling in

curls down her swan-like neck; her bright, black eyes lighting up her

olive-tinted face, and a set of teeth that a Tuscarora might envy, she

was a picture of tropical-ripened beauty. At times, there was a

heavenly smile upon her countenance, which would have warmed the heart

of an anchorite. Such was the personal appearance of the girl who was

now in prison by her own act to save the life of another. Would she be

hanged in his stead, or would she receive a different kind of

punishment? These questions Clotelle did not ask herself. Open, frank,

free, and generous to a fault, she always thought of others, never of

her own welfare.

The long stay of Clotelle caused some uneasiness to Miss Wilson; yet

she dared not tell her father, for he had forbidden the slave-girl's

going to the prison to see her lover. While the clock on the church

near by was striking eleven, Georgiana called Sam, and sent him to the

prison in search of Clotelle.

"The girl went away from here at eight o'clock," was the jailer's

answer to the servant's inquiries.

The return of Sam without having found the girl saddened the heart of

the young mistress. "Sure, then," said she, "the poor heart-broken

thing has made way with herself."

Still, she waited till morning before breaking the news of Clotelle's

absence to her father.

The jailer discovered, the next morning, to his utter astonishment,

that his prisoner was white instead of black, and his first impression

was that the change of complexion had taken place during the night,

through fear of death. But this conjecture was soon dissipated; for the

dark, glowing eyes, the sable curls upon the lofty brow, and the mild,

sweet voice that answered his questions, informed him that the prisoner

before him was another being.

On learning, in the morning, that Clotelle was in jail dressed in male

attire, Miss Wilson immediately sent clothes to her to make a change in

her attire. News of the heroic and daring act of the slave-girl spread

through the city with electric speed.

"I will sell every nigger on the place," said the parson, at the

break-fast-table,--"I will sell them all, and get a new lot, and whip

them every day."

Poor Georgiana wept for the safety of Clotelle, while she felt glad

that Jerome had escaped. In vain did they try to extort from the girl

the whereabouts of the man whose escape she had effected. She was not

aware that he had fled on a steamer, and when questioned, she replied,--

"I don't know; and if I did I would not tell you. I care not what you

do with me, if Jerome but escapes."

The smile with which she uttered these words finely illustrated the

poet's meaning, when he says,--

"A fearful gift upon thy heart is laid, Woman--the power to suffer and

to love."

Her sweet simplicity seemed to dare them to lay their rough hands amid

her trembling curls.

Three days did the heroic young woman remain in prison, to be gazed at

by an unfeeling crowd, drawn there out of curiosity. The intelligence

came to her at last that the court had decided to spare her life, on

condition that she should be whipped, sold, and sent out of the State

within twenty-four hours.

This order of the court she would have cared but little for, had she

not been sincerely attached to her young mistress.

"Do try and sell her to some one who will use her well," said Georgiana

to her father, as he was about taking his hat to leave the house.

"I shall not trouble myself to do any such thing," replied the

hard-hearted parson. "I leave the finding of a master for her with the

slave-dealer."

Bathed in tears, Miss. Wilson paced her room in the absence of her

father. For many months Georgiana had been in a decline, and any little

trouble would lay her on a sick bed for days. She was, therefore,

poorly able to bear the loss of this companion, whom she so dearly

loved.

Mr. Wilson had informed his daughter that Clotelle was to be flogged;

and when Felice came in and informed her mistress that the poor girl

had just received fifty lashes on her bare person, the young lady

fainted and fell on the floor. The servants placed their mistress on

the sofa, and went in pursuit of their master. Little did the preacher

think, on returning to his daughter, that he should soon be bereft of

her; yet such was to be his lot. A blood-vessel had been ruptured, and

the three physicians who were called in told the father that he must

prepare to lose his child. That moral courage and calmness, which was

her great characteristic, did not forsake Georgiana in her hour of

death. She had ever been kind to the slaves under her charge, and they

loved and respected her. At her request, the servants were all brought

into her room, and took a last farewell of their mistress. Seldom, if

ever, was there witnessed a more touching scene than this. There lay

the young woman, pale and feeble, with death stamped upon her

countenance, surrounded by the sons and daughters of Africa, some of

whom had been separated from every earthly tie, and the most of whose

persons had been torn and gashed by the negro-whip. Some were upon

their knees at the bedside, others standing around, and all weeping.

Death is a leveler; and neither age, sex, wealth, nor condition, can

avert when he is permitted to strike. The most beautiful flowers must

soon fade and droop and die. So, also, with man; his days are as

uncertain as the passing breeze. This hour he glows in the blush of

health and vigor, but the next, he may be counted with the number no

more known on earth. Oh, what a silence pervaded the house when this

young flower was gone! In the midst of the buoyancy of youth, this

cherished one had drooped and died. Deep were the sounds of grief and

mourning heard in that stately dwelling when the stricken friends,

whose office it had been to nurse and soothe the weary sufferer, beheld

her pale and motionless in the sleep of death.

Who can imagine the feeling with which poor Clotelle received the

intelligence of her kind friend's death? The deep gashes of the cruel

whip had prostrated the lovely form of the quadroon, and she lay upon

her bed of straw in the dark cell. The speculator had bought her, but

had postponed her removal till she should recover. Her benefactress was

dead, and--

"Hope withering fled, and mercy sighed farewell."

"Is Jerome safe?" she would ask herself continually. If her lover could

have but known of the sufferings of that sweet flower,--that polyanthus

over which he had so often been in his dreams,--he would then have

learned that she was worthy of his love.

It was more than a fortnight before the slave-trader could take his

prize to more comfortable quarters. Like Alcibiades, who defaced the

images of the gods and expected to be pardoned on the ground of

eccentricity, so men who abuse God's image hope to escape the vengeance

of his wrath under the plea that the law sanctions their atrocious

deeds.

CHAPTER XXII

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

It was a beautiful Sunday in September, with a cloudless sky, and the

rays of the sun parching the already thirsty earth, that Clotelle stood

at an upper window in Slater's slave-pen in New Orleans, gasping for a

breath of fresh air. The bells of thirty churches were calling the

people to the different places of worship. Crowds were seen wending

their way to the houses of God; one followed by a negro boy carrying

his master's Bible; another followed by her maid-servant holding the

mistress' fan; a third supporting an umbrella over his master's head to

shield him from the burning sun. Baptists immersed, Presbyterians

sprinkled, Methodists shouted, and Episcopalians read their prayers,

while ministers of the various sects preached that Christ died for all.

The chiming of the bells seemed to mock the sighs and deep groans of

the forty human beings then incarcerated in the slave-pen. These

imprisoned children of God were many of them Methodists, some Baptists,

and others claiming to believe in the faith of the Presbyterians and

Episcopalians.

Oh, with what anxiety did these creatures await the close of that

Sabbath, and the dawn of another day, that should deliver them from

those dismal and close cells. Slowly the day passed away, and once more

the evening breeze found its way through the barred windows of the

prison that contained these injured sons and daughters of America. The

clock on the calaboose had just struck nine on Monday morning, when

hundreds of persons were seen threading the gates and doors of the

negro-pen. It was the same gang that had the day previous been stepping

to the tune and keeping time with the musical church bells. Their

Bibles were not with them, their prayer-books were left at home, and

even their long and solemn faces had been laid aside for the week. They

had come to the man-market to make their purchases. Methodists were in

search of their brethren. Baptists were looking for those that had been

immersed, while Presbyterians were willing to buy fellow Christians,

whether sprinkled or not. The crowd was soon gazing at and feasting

their eyes upon the lovely features of Clotelle.

"She is handsomer," muttered one to himself, "than the lady that sat in

the pew next to me yesterday."

"I would that my daughter was half so pretty," thinks a second.

Groups are seen talking in every part of the vast building, and the

topic on 'Change, is the "beautiful quadroon." By and by, a tall young

man with a foreign face, the curling mustache protruding from under a

finely-chiseled nose, and having the air of a gentleman, passes by. His

dark hazel eye is fastened on the maid, and he stops for a moment; the

stranger walks away, but soon returns--he looks, he sees the young

woman wipe away the silent tear that steals down her alabaster cheek;

he feels ashamed that he should gaze so unmanly on the blushing face of

the woman. As he turns upon his heel he takes out his white hankerchief

and wipes his eyes. It may be that he has lost a sister, a mother, or

some dear one to whom he was betrothed. Again he comes, and the

quadroon hides her face. She has heard that foreigners make bad

masters, and she shuns his piercing gaze. Again he goes away and then

returns. He takes a last look and then walks hurriedly off.

The day wears away, but long before the time of closing the sale the

tall young man once more enters the slave-pen. He looks in every

direction for the beautiful slave, but she is not there--she has been

sold! He goes to the trader and inquires, but he is too late, and he

therefore returns to his hotel.

Having entered a military school in Paris when quite young, and soon

after been sent with the French army to India, Antoine Devenant had

never dabbled in matters of love. He viewed all women from the same

stand-point--respected them for their virtues, and often spoke of the

goodness of heart of the sex, but never dreamed of taking to himself a

wife. The unequalled beauty of Clotelle had dazzled his eyes, and every

look that she gave was a dagger that went to his heart. He felt a

shortness of breath, his heart palpitated, his head grew dizzy, and his

limbs trembled; but he knew not its cause. This was the first stage of

"love at first sight."

He who bows to the shrine of beauty when beckoned by this mysterious

agent seldom regrets it. Devenant reproached himself for not having

made inquiries concerning the girl before he left the market in the

morning. His stay in the city was to be short, and the yellow fever was

raging, which caused him to feel like making a still earlier departure.

The disease appeared in a form unusually severe and repulsive. It

seized its victims from amongst the most healthy of the citizens. The

disorder began in the brain by oppressive pain accompanied or followed

by fever. Fiery veins streaked the eye, the face was inflamed and dyed

of a dark dull red color; the ears from time to time rang painfully.

Now mucous secretions surcharged the tongue and took away the power of

speech; now the sick one spoke, but in speaking had foresight of death.

When the violence of the disease approached the heart, the gums were

blackened. The sleep broken, troubled by convulsions, or by frightful

visions, was worse than the waking hours; and when the reason sank

under a delirium which had its seat in the brain, repose utterly

forsook the patient's couch. The progress of the fever within was

marked by yellowish spots, which spread over the surface of the body.

If then, a happy crisis came not, all hope was gone. Soon the breath

infected the air with a fetid odor, the lips were glazed, despair

painted itself in the eyes, and sobs, with long intervals of silence,

formed the only language. From each side of the mouth, spread foam

tinged with black and burnt blood. Blue streaks mingled with the yellow

all over the frame. All remedies were useless. This was the yellow

fever. The disorder spread alarm and confusion throughout the city. On

an average more than four hundred died daily. In the midst of disorder

and confusion, death heaped victims on victims. Friend followed friend

in quick succession. The sick were avoided from the fear of contagion,

and for the same reason the dead were left unburied. Nearly two

thousand dead bodies lay uncovered in the burial-ground, with only here

and there a little lime thrown over them, to prevent the air becoming

infected. The negro, whose home is in a hot climate, was not proof

against the disease. Many plantations had to suspend their work for

want of slaves to take the places of those who had been taken off by

the fever.

CHAPTER XXIII

MEETING OF THE COUSINS.

The clock in the hall had scarcely finished striking three when Mr.

Taylor entered his own dwelling, a fine residence in Camp Street, New

Orleans, followed by the slave-girl whom he had just purchased at the

negro-pen. Clotelle looked around wildly as she passed through the hall

into the presence of her new mistress. Mrs. Taylor was much pleased

with her servant's appearance, and congratulated her husband on his

judicious choice.

"But," said Mrs. Taylor, after Clotelle had gone into the kitchen, "how

much she looks like Miss Jane Morton."

"Indeed," replied the husband, "I thought, the moment I saw her that

she looked like the Mortons."

"I am sure I never saw two faces more alike in my life, than that

girl's and Jane Morton's," continued Mrs. Taylor.

Dr. Morton, the purchaser of Maron, the youngest daughter of Agnes, and

sister to Isabella, had resided in Camp Street, near the Taylors, for

more than eight years, and the families were on very intimate terms,

and visited each other frequently. Every one spoke of Clotelle's close

resemblance to the Mortons, and especially to the eldest daughter.

Indeed, two sisters could hardly have been more alike. The large, dark

eyes, black, silk-like hair, tall, graceful figure, and mould of the

face, were the same.

The morning following Clotelle's arrival in her new home, Mrs. Taylor

was conversing in a low tone with her husband, and both with their eyes

following Clotelle as she passed through the room.

"She is far above the station of a slave," remarked the lady. "I saw

her, last night, when removing some books, open one and stand over it a

moment as if she was reading; and she is as white as I am. I almost

sorry you bought her."

At this juncture the front door-bell rang, and Clotelle hurried through

the room to answer it.

"Miss Morton," said the servant as she returned to the mistress' room.

"Ask her to walk in," responded the mistress.

"Now, my dear," said Mrs. Taylor to her husband, "just look and see if

you do not notice a marked resemblance between the countenances of Jane

and Clotelle."

Miss Morton entered the room just as Mrs. Taylor ceased speaking.

"Have you heard that the Jamisons are down with the fever?" inquired

the young lady, after asking about the health of the Taylors.

"No, I had not; I was in hopes it would not get into our street;"

replied Mrs. Taylor.

All this while Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were keenly scrutinizing their

visitor and Clotelle and even the two young women seemed to be

conscious that they were in some way the objects of more than usual

attention.

Miss Morton had scarcely departed before Mrs. Taylor began questioning

Clotelle concerning her early childhood, and became more than ever

satisfied that the slave-girl was in some way connected with the

Mortons.

Every hour brought fresh news of the ravages of the fever, and the

Taylors commenced preparing to leave town. As Mr. Taylor could not go

at once, it was determined that his wife should leave without him,

accompanied by her new maid servant. Just as Mrs. Taylor and Clotelle

were stepping into the carriage, they were informed that Dr. Morton was

down with the epidemic.

It was a beautiful day, with a fine breeze for the time of year, that

Mrs. Taylor and her servant found themselves in the cabin of the

splendid new steamer "Walk-in-the-Water," bound from New Orleans to

Mobile. Every berth in the boat wad occupied by persons fleeing from

the fearful contagion that was carrying off its hundreds daily.

Late in the day, as Clotelle was standing at one of the windows of the

ladies' saloon, she was astonished to see near her, and with eyes fixed

intently upon her, the tall young stranger whom she had observed in the

slave-market a few days before. She turned hastily away, but the heated

cabin and the want of fresh air soon drove her again to the window. The

young gentleman again appeared, and coming to the end of the saloon,

spoke to the slave-girl in broken English. This confirmed her in her

previous opinion that he was a foreigner, and she rejoiced that she had

not fallen into his hands.

"I want to talk with you," said the stranger.

"What do you want with me?" she inquired.

"I am your friend," he answered. "I saw you in the slave-market last

week, and regretted that I did not speak to you then. I returned in the

evening, but you was gone."

Clotelle looked indignantly at the stranger, and was about leaving the

window again when the quivering of his lips and the trembling of his

voice struck her attention and caused her to remain.

"I intended to buy you and make you free and happy, but I was too

late," continued he.

"Why do you wish to make me free?" inquired the girl.

"Because I once had an only and lovely sister, who died three years ago

in France, and you are so much like her that had I not known of her

death I should certainly have taken you for her."

"However much I may resemble your sister, you are aware that I am not

she; why, then, take so much interest in one whom you have never seen

before and may never see again?"

"The love," said he, "which I had for my sister is transferred to you."

Clotelle had all along suspected that the man was a knave, and this

profession of love at once confirmed her in that belief. She therefore

immediately turned away and left him.

Hours elapsed. Twilight was just "letting down her curtain and pinning

it with a star," as the slave-girl seated herself on a sofa by the

window, and began meditating upon her eventful history, meanwhile

watching the white waves as they seemed to sport with each other in the

wake of the noble vessel, with the rising moon reflecting its silver

rays upon the splendid scene, when the foreigner once more appeared

near the window. Although agitated for fear her mistress would see her

talking to a stranger, and be angry, Clotelle still thought she saw

something in the countenance of the young man that told her he was

sincere, and she did not wish to hurt his feelings.

"Why persist in your wish to talk with me?" she said, as he again

advanced and spoke to her.

"I wish to purchase you and make you happy," returned he.

"But I am not for sale now," she replied. "My present mistress will not

sell me, and if you wished to do so ever so much you could not."

"Then," said he, "if I cannot buy you, when the steamer reaches Mobile,

fly with me, and you shall be free."

"I cannot do it," said Clotelle; and she was just leaving the stranger

when he took from his pocket a piece of paper and thrust it into her

hand.

After returning to her room, she unfolded the paper, and found, to her

utter astonishment that it contained a one hundred dollar note on the

Bank of the United States. The first impulse of the girl was to return

the paper and its contents immediately to the giver, but examining the

paper more closely, she saw in faint pencil-marks, "Remember this is

from one who loves you." Another thought was to give it to her

mistress, and she returned to the saloon for that purpose; but on

finding Mrs. Taylor engaged in conversation with some ladies, she did

not deem it proper to interrupt her.

Again, therefore, Clotelle seated herself by the window, and again the

stranger presented himself. She immediately took the paper from her

pocket, and handed it to him; but he declined taking it, saying,--

"No, keep it; it may be of some service to you when I am far away."

"Would that I could understand you," said the slave.

"Believe that I am sincere, and then you will understand me," returned

the young man. "Would you rather be a slave than be free?" inquired he,

with tears that glistened in the rays of the moon.

"No," said she, "I want my freedom, but I must live a virtuous life."

"Then, if you would be free and happy, go with me. We shall be in

Mobile in two hours, and when the passengers are going on shore, you

take my arm. Have your face covered with a veil, and you will not be

observed. We will take passage immediately for France; you can pass as

my sister, and I pledge you my honor that I will marry you as soon as

we arrive in France."

This solemn promise, coupled with what had previously been said, gave

Clotelle confidence in the man, and she instantly determined to go with

him. "But then," thought she, "what if I should be detected? I would be

forever ruined, for I would be sold, and in all probability have to end

my days on a cotton, rice, or sugar plantation." However, the thought

of freedom in the future outweighed this danger, and her resolve was

taken.

Dressing herself in some of her best clothes, and placing her veiled

bonnet where she could get it without the knowledge of her mistress,

Clotelle awaited with a heart filled with the deepest emotions and

anxiety the moment when she was to take a step which seemed so rash,

and which would either make or ruin her forever.

The ships which leave Mobile for Europe lie about thirty miles down the

bay, and passengers are taken down from the city in small vessels. The

"Walk-in-the-Water" had just made her lines fast, and the passengers

were hurrying on shore, when a tall gentleman with a lady at his side

descended the stage-plank, and stepped on the wharf. This was Antoine

Devenant and Clotelle.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE LAW AND ITS VICTIM.

The death of Dr. Morton, on the third day of his illness, came like a

shock upon his wife and daughters. The corpse had scarcely been

committed to its mother earth before new and unforeseen difficulties

appeared to them. By the laws of the Slave States, the children follow

the condition of their mother. If the mother is free, the children are

free; if a slave, the children are slaves. Being unacquainted with the

Southern code, and no one presuming that Marion had any negro blood in

her veins, Dr. Morton had not given the subject a single thought. The

woman whom he loved and regarded as his wife was, after all, nothing

more than a slave by the laws of the State. What would have been his

feelings had he known that at his death his wife and children would be

considered as his property? Yet such was the case. Like most men of

means at that time, Dr. Morton was deeply engaged in speculation, and

though generally considered wealthy, was very much involved in his

business affairs.

After the disease with which Dr. Morton had so suddenly died had to

some extent subsided, Mr. James Morton, a brother of the deceased, went

to New Orleans to settle up the estate. On his arrival there, he was

pleased with and felt proud of his nieces, and invited them to return

with him to Vermont, little dreaming that his brother had married a

slave, and that his widow and daughters would be claimed as such. The

girls themselves had never heard that their mother had been a slave,

and therefore knew nothing of the danger hanging over their heads.

An inventory of the property of the deceased was made out by Mr.

Morton, and placed in the hands of the creditors. These preliminaries

being arranged, the ladies, with their relative, concluded to leave the

city and reside for a few days on the banks of Lake Ponchartrain, where

they could enjoy a fresh air that the city did not afford. As they were

about taking the cars, however, an officer arrested the whole

party--the ladies as slaves, and the gentleman upon the charge of

attempting to conceal the property of his deceased brother. Mr. Morton

was overwhelmed with horror at the idea of his nieces being claimed as

slaves, and asked for time, that he might save them from such a fate.

He even offered to mortgage his little farm in Vermont for the amount

which young slave-women of their ages would fetch. But the creditors

pleaded that they were an "extra article," and would sell for more than

common slaves, and must therefore be sold at auction.

The uncle was therefore compelled to give them up to the officers of

the law, and they were separated from him. Jane, the oldest of the

girls, as we have before mentioned, was very handsome, bearing a close

resemblance to her cousin Clotelle. Alreka, though not as handsome as

her sister, was nevertheless a beautiful girl, and both had all the

accomplishments that wealth and station could procure.

Though only in her fifteenth year, Alreka had become strongly attached

to Volney Lapie, a young Frenchman, a student in her father's office.

This attachment was reciprocated, although the poverty of the young man

and the extreme youth of the girl had caused their feelings to be kept

from the young lady's parents.

The day of sale came, and Mr. Morton attended, with the hope that

either the magnanimity of the creditors or his own little farm in

Vermont might save his nieces from the fate that awaited them. His

hope, however, was in vain. The feelings of all present seemed to be

lost in the general wish to become the possessor of the young ladies,

who stood trembling, blushing, and weeping as the numerous throng gazed

at them, or as the intended purchaser examined the graceful proportions

of their fair and beautiful frames. Neither the presence of the uncle

nor young Lapie could at all lessen the gross language of the officers,

or stay the rude hands of those who wished to examine the property thus

offered for sale. After a fierce contest between the bidders, the girls

were sold, one for two thousand three hundred, and the other for two

thousand three hundred and fifty dollars. Had these girls been bought

for servants only, they would in all probability have brought not more

than nine hundred or a thousand dollars each. Here were two beautiful

young girls, accustomed to the fondest indulgence, surrounded by all

the refinements of life, and with the timidity and gentleness which

such a life would naturally produce, bartered away like cattle in the

markets of Smithfield or New York.

The mother, who was also to have been sold, happily followed her

husband to the grave, and was spared the pangs of a broken heart.

The purchaser of the young ladies left the market in triumph, and the

uncle, with a heavy heart, started for his New England home, with no

earthly prospect of ever beholding his nieces again.

The seizure of the young ladies as slaves was the result of the

administrator's having found among Dr. Morton's papers the bill-of-sale

of Marion which he had taken when he purchased her. He had doubtless

intended to liberate her when he married her, but had neglected from

time to time to have the proper papers made out. Sad was the result of

this negligence.

CHAPTER XXV

THE FLIGHT.

On once gaining the wharf, Devenant and Clotelle found no difficulty in

securing an immediate passage to France. The fine packet-ship Utica lay

down the bay, and only awaited the return of the lighter that night to

complete her cargo and list of passengers, ere she departed. The young

Frenchman therefore took his prize on board, and started for the ship.

Daylight was just making its appearance the next morning when the Utica

weighed anchor and turned her prow toward the sea. In the course of

three hours, the vessel, with outspread sails, was rapidly flying from

land. Everything appeared to be auspicious. The skies were beautifully

clear, and the sea calm, with a sun that dazzled the whole scene. But

clouds soon began to chase each other through the heavens and the sea

became rough. It was then that Clotelle felt that there was hope of

escaping. She had hitherto kept in the cabin, but now she expressed a

wish to come on deck. The hanging clouds were narrowing the horizon to

a span, and gloomily mingling with the rising surges. The old and

grave-looking seamen shook their weather-wise heads as if foretelling a

storm.

As Clotelle came on deck, she strained her eyes in vain to catch a

farewell view of her native land. With a smile on her countenance, but

with her eyes filled with tears, she said,--

"Farewell, farewell to the land of my birth, and welcome, welcome, ye

dark blue waves. I care not where I go, so it is

'Where a tyrant never trod,

Where a slave was never known,

But where nature worships God,

If in the wilderness alone.'"

Devenant stood by her side, seeming proud of his future wife, with his

face in a glow at his success, while over his noble brow clustering

locks of glossy black hair were hanging in careless ringlets. His

finely-cut, classic features wore the aspect of one possessed with a

large and noble heart.

Once more the beautiful Clotelle whispered in the ear of her lover,--

"Away, away, o'er land and sea,

America is now no home for me."

The winds increased with nightfall, and impenetrable gloom surrounded

the ship. The prospect was too uncheering, even to persons in love. The

attention which Devenant paid to Clotelle, although she had been

registered on the ship's passenger list as his sister, caused more than

one to look upon his as an agreeable travelling companion. His tall,

slender figure and fine countenance bespoke for him at first sight

one's confidence. That he was sincerely and deeply enamored of Clotelle

all could see.

The weather became still more squally. The wind rushed through the

white, foaming waves, and the ship groaned with its own wild and

ungovernable labors, while nothing could be seen but the wild waste of

waters. The scene was indeed one of fearful sublimity.

Day came and went without any abatement of the storm. Despair was now

on every countenance. Occasionally a vivid flash of lightning would

break forth and illuminate the black and boiling surges that surrounded

the vessel, which was now scudding before the blast under bare poles.

After five days of most intensely stormy weather, the sea settled down

into a dead calm, and the passengers flocked on deck. During the last

three days of the storm, Clotelle had been so unwell as to be unable to

raise her head. Her pale face and quivering lips and languid appearance

made her look as if every pulsation had ceased. Her magnificent large

and soft eyes, fringed with lashes as dark as night, gave her an

angelic appearance. The unreserved attention of Devenant, even when

sea-sick himself, did much to increase the little love that the at

first distrustful girl had placed in him. The heart must always have

some object on which to centre its affections, and Clotelle having lost

all hope of ever again seeing Jerome, it was but natural that she

should now transfer her love to one who was so greatly befriending her.

At first she respected Devenant for the love he manifested for her, and

for his apparent willingness to make any sacrifice for her welfare.

True, this was an adventure upon which she had risked her all, and

should her heart be foiled in this search for hidden treasures, her

affections would be shipwrecked forever. She felt under great

obligations to the man who had thus effected her escape, and that noble

act alone would entitle him to her love.

Each day became more pleasant as the noble ship sped onward amid the

rippled spray. The whistling of the breeze through the rigging was

music to the ear, and brought gladness to the heart of every one on

board. At last, the long suspense was broken by the appearance of land,

at which all hearts leaped for joy. It was a beautiful morning in

October. The sun had just risen, and sky and earth were still bathed in

his soft, rosy glow, when the Utica hauled into the dock at Bordeaux.

The splendid streets, beautiful bridges, glittering equipages, and

smiling countenances of the people, gave everything a happy appearance,

after a voyage of twenty-nine days on the deep, deep sea.

After getting their baggage cleared from the custom-house and going to

a hotel, Devenant made immediate arrangements for the marriage.

Clotelle, on arriving at the church where the ceremony was to take

place, was completely overwhelmed at the spectacle. She had never

beheld a scene so gorgeous as this. The magnificent dresses of the

priests and choristers, the deep and solemn voices, the elevated

crucifix, the burning tapers, the splendidly decorated altar, the

sweet-smelling incense, made the occasion truly an imposing one. At the

conclusion of the ceremony, the loud and solemn peals of the organ's

swelling anthem were lost to all in the contemplation of the

interesting scene.

The happy couple set out at once for Dunkirk, the residence of the

bridegroom's parents. But their stay there was short, for they had

scarcely commenced visiting the numerous friends of the husband ere

orders came for him to proceed to India to join that portion of the

French army then stationed there.

In due course of time they left for India, passing through Paris and

Lyons, taking ship at Marseilles. In the metropolis of France, they

spent a week, where the husband took delight in introducing his wife to

his brother officers in the French army, and where the newly-married

couple were introduced to Louis Phillippe, then King of France. In all

of these positions, Clotelle sustained herself in a most ladylike

manner.

At Lyons, they visited the vast factories and other public works, and

all was pleasure with them. The voyage from Marseilles to Calcutta was

very pleasant, as the weather was exceedingly fine. On arriving in

India, Captain Devenant and lady were received with honors--the former

for his heroic bravery in more than one battle, and the latter for her

fascinating beauty and pleasing manners, and the fact that she was

connected with one who was a general favorite with all who had his

acquaintance. This was indeed a great change for Clotelle. Six months

had not elapsed since her exposure in the slave-market of New Orleans.

This life is a stage, and we are indeed all actors.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HERO OF A NIGHT.

Mounted on a fast horse, with the Quaker's son for a guide, Jerome

pressed forward while Uncle Joseph was detaining the slave-catchers at

the barn-door, through which the fugitive had just escaped. When out of

present danger, fearing that suspicion might be aroused if he continued

on the road in open day, Jerome buried himself in a thick, dark forest

until nightfall. With a yearning heart, he saw the splendor of the

setting sun lingering on the hills, as if loath to fade away and be

lost in the more sombre hues of twilight, which, rising from the east,

was slowly stealing over the expanse of heaven, bearing silence and

repose, which should cover his flight from a neighborhood to him so

full of dangers.

Wearily and alone, with nothing but the hope of safety before him to

cheer him on his way, the poor fugitive urged his tired and trembling

limbs forward for several nights. The new suit of clothes with which he

had provided himself when he made his escape from his captors, and the

twenty dollars which the young Quaker had slipped into his hand, when

bidding him "Fare thee well," would enable him to appear genteelly as

soon as he dared to travel by daylight, and would thus facilitate his

progress toward freedom.

It was late in the evening when the fugitive slave arrived at a small

town on the banks of Lake Erie, where he was to remain over night. How

strange were his feelings! While his heart throbbed for that freedom

and safety which Canada alone could furnish to the whip-scarred slave,

on the American continent, his thoughts were with Clotelle. Was she

still in prison, and if so, what would be her punishment for aiding him

to escape from prison? Would he ever behold her again? These were the

thoughts that followed him to his pillow, haunted him in is dreams, and

awakened him from his slumbers.

The alarm of fire aroused the inmates of the hotel in which Jerome had

sought shelter for the night from the deep sleep into which they had

fallen. The whole village was buried in slumber, and the building was

half consumed before the frightened inhabitants had reached the scene

of the conflagration. The wind was high, and the burning embers were

wafted like so many rockets through the sky. The whole town was lighted

up, and the cries of women and children in the streets made the scene a

terrific one. Jerome heard the alarm, and hastily dressing himself, he

went forth and hastened toward the burning building.

"There,--there in that room in the second story, is my child!"

exclaimed a woman, wringing her hands, and imploring some one to go to

the rescue of her little one.

The broad sheets of fire were flying in the direction of the chamber in

which the child was sleeping, and all hope of its being saved seemed

gone. Occasionally the wind would lift the pall of smoke, and show that

the work of destruction was not yet complete. At last a long ladder was

brought, and one end placed under the window of the room. A moment more

and a bystander mounted the ladder and ascended in haste to the window.

The smoke met him as he raised the sash, and he cried out, "All is

lost!" and returned to the ground without entering the room.

Another sweep of the wind showed that the destroying element had not

yet made its final visit to that part of the doomed building. The

mother, seeing that all hope of again meeting her child in this world

was gone, wrung her hands and seemed inconsolable with grief.

At this juncture, a man was seen to mount the ladder, and ascend with

great rapidity. All eyes were instantly turned to the figure of this

unknown individual as it disappeared in the cloud of smoke escaping

from the window. Those who a moment before had been removing furniture,

as well as the idlers who had congregated at the ringing of the bells,

assembled at the foot of the ladder, and awaited with breathless

silence the reappearance of the stranger, who, regardless of his own

safety, had thus risked his life to save another's. Three cheers broke

the stillness that had fallen on the company, as the brave man was seen

coming through the window and slowly descending to the ground, holding

under one arm the inanimate form of the child. Another cheer, and then

another, made the welkin ring, as the stranger, with hair burned and

eyebrows closely singed, fainted at the foot of the ladder. But the

child was saved.

The stranger was Jerome. As soon as he revived, he shrunk from every

eye, as if he feared they would take from him the freedom which he had

gone through so much to obtain.

The next day, the fugitive took a vessel, and the following morning

found himself standing on the free soil of Canada. As his foot pressed

the shore, he threw himself upon his face, kissed the earth, and

exclaimed, "O God! I thank thee that I am a free man."

CHAPTER XXVII

TRUE FREEDOM.

The history of the African race is God's illuminated clock, set in the

dark steeple of time. The negro has been made the hewer of wood and the

drawer of water for nearly all other nations. The people of the United

States, however, will have an account to settle with God, owing to

their treatment of the negro, which will far surpass the rest of

mankind.

Jerome, on reaching Canada, felt for the first time that personal

freedom which God intended that all who bore his image should enjoy.

That same forgetfulness of self which had always characterized him now

caused him to think of others. The thoughts of dear ones in slavery

were continually in his mind, and above all others, Clotelle occupied

his thoughts. Now that he was free, he could better appreciate her

condition as a slave. Although Jerome met, on his arrival in Canada,

numbers who had escaped from the Southern States, he nevertheless

shrank from all society, particularly that of females. The soft,

silver-gray tints on the leaves of the trees, with their snow-spotted

trunks, and a biting air, warned the new-born freeman that he was in

another climate. Jerome sought work, and soon found it; and arranged

with his employer that the latter should go to Natchez in search of

Clotelle. The good Scotchman, for whom the fugitive was laboring,

freely offered to go down and purchase the girl, if she could be

bought, and let Jerome pay him in work. With such a prospect of future

happiness in view, this injured descendant of outraged and bleeding

Africa went daily to his toil with an energy hitherto unknown to him.

But oh, how vain are the hopes of man!

CHAPTER XXVIII

FAREWELL TO AMERICA.

Three months had elapsed, from the time the fugitive commenced work for

Mr. Streeter, when that gentleman returned from his Southern research,

and informed Jerome that Parson Wilson had sold Clotelle, and that she

had been sent to the New Orleans slave-market.

This intelligence fell with crushing weight upon the heart of Jerome,

and he now felt that the last chain which bound him to his native land

was severed. He therefore determined to leave America forever. His

nearest and dearest friends had often been flogged in his very

presence, and he had seen his mother sold to the negro-trader. An only

sister had been torn from him by the soul-driver; he had himself been

sold and resold, and been compelled to submit to the most degrading and

humiliating insults; and now that the woman upon whom his heart doted,

and without whom life was a burden, had been taken away forever, he

felt it a duty to hate all mankind.

If there is one thing more than another calculated to make one hate and

detest American slavery, it is to witness the meetings between

fugitives and their friends in Canada. Jerome had beheld some of these

scenes. The wife who, after years of separation, had escaped from her

prison-house and followed her husband had told her story to him. He had

seen the newly-arrived wife rush into the arms of the husband, whose

dark face she had not looked upon for long, weary years. Some told of

how a sister had been ill-used by the overseer; others of a husband's

being whipped to death for having attempted to protect his wife. He had

sat in the little log-hut, by the fireside, and heard tales that caused

his heart to bleed; and his bosom swelled with just indignation when he

thought that there was no remedy for such atrocious acts. It was with

such feelings that he informed his employer that he should leave him at

the expiration of a month.

In vain did Mr. Streeter try to persuade Jerome to remain with him; and

late, in the month of February, the latter found himself on board a

small vessel loaded with pine-lumber, descending the St. Lawrence,

bound for Liverpool. The bark, though an old one, was, nevertheless,

considered seaworthy, and the fugitive was working his way out. As the

vessel left the river and gained the open sea, the black man appeared

to rejoice at the prospect of leaving a country in which his right to

manhood had been denied him, and his happiness destroyed.

The wind was proudly swelling the white sails, and the little craft

plunging into the foaming waves, with the land fast receding in the

distance, when Jerome mounted a pile of lumber to take a last farewell

of his native land. With tears glistening in his eyes, and with

quivering lips, he turned his gaze toward the shores that were fast

fading in the dim distance, and said,--

"Though forced from my native land by the tyrants of the South, I hope

I shall some day be able to return. With all her faults, I love my

country still."

CHAPTER XXIX

A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND.

The rain was falling on the dirty pavements of Liverpool as Jerome left

the vessel after her arrival. Passing the custom-house, he took a cab,

and proceeded to Brown's Hotel, Clayton Square.

Finding no employment in Liverpool, Jerome determined to go into the

interior and seek for work. He, therefore, called for his bill, and

made ready for his departure. Although but four days at the Albion, he

found the hotel charges larger than he expected; but a stranger

generally counts on being "fleeced" in travelling through the Old

World, and especially in Great Britain. After paying his bill, he was

about leaving the room, when one of the servants presented himself with

a low bow, and said,--

"Something for the waiter, sir?"

"I thought I had paid my bill," replied the man, somewhat surprised at

this polite dun.

"I am the waiter, sir, and gets only what strangers see fit to give me."

Taking from his pocket his nearly empty purse, Jerome handed the man a

half-crown; but he had hardly restored it to his pocket, before his eye

fell on another man in the waiting costume.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Whatever your honor sees fit to give me, sir. I am the tother waiter."

The purse was again taken from the pocket, and another half-crown

handed out. Stepping out into the hall, he saw standing there a

good-looking woman, in a white apron, who made a very pretty courtesy.

"What's your business?" he inquired.

"I am the chambermaid, sir, and looks after the gentlemen's beds."

Out came the purse again, and was relieved of another half-crown;

whereupon another girl, with a fascinating smile, took the place of the

one who had just received her fee.

"What do you want?" demanded the now half-angry Jerome.

"Please, sir, I am the tother chambermaid."

Finding it easier to give shillings than half-crowns, Jerome handed the

woman a shilling, and again restored his purse to his pocket, glad that

another woman was not to be seen.

Scarcely had he commenced congratulating himself, however, before three

men made their appearance, one after another.

"What have you done for me?" he asked of the first.

"I am the boots, sir."

The purse came out once more, and a shilling was deposited in the

servant's hand.

"What do I owe you?" he inquired of the second.

"I took your honor's letter to the post, yesterday, sir."

Another shilling left the purse.

"In the name of the Lord, what am I indebted to you for?" demanded

Jerome, now entirely out of patience, turning to the last of the trio.

"I told yer vership vot time it vas, this morning."

"Well!" exclaimed the indignant man, "ask here what o'clock it is, and

you have got to pay for it."

He paid this last demand with a sixpence, regretting that he had not

commenced with sixpences instead of half-crowns.

Having cleared off all demands in the house, he started for the railway

station; but had scarcely reached the street, before he was accosted by

an old man with a broom in his hand, who, with an exceedingly low bow,

said,--

"I is here, yer lordship."

"I did not send for you; what is your business?" demanded Jerome.

"I is the man what opened your lordship's cab-door, when your lordship

came to the house on Monday last, and I know your honor won't allow a

poor man to starve."

Putting a sixpence in the old man's hand, Jerome once more started for

the depot. Having obtained letters of introduction to persons in

Manchester, he found no difficulty in getting a situation in a large

manufacturing house there. Although the salary was small, yet the

situation was a much better one than he had hoped to obtain. His

compensation as out-door clerk enabled him to employ a man to teach him

at night, and, by continued study and attention to business, he was

soon promoted.

After three years in his new home, Jerome was placed in a still higher

position, where his salary amounted to fifteen hundred dollars a year.

The drinking, smoking, and other expensive habits, which the clerks

usually indulged in, he carefully avoided.

Being fond of poetry, he turned his attention to literature. Johnson's

"Lives of the Poets," the writings of Dryden, Addison, Pope, Clarendon,

and other authors of celebrity, he read with attention. The knowledge

which he thus picked up during his leisure hours gave him a great

advantage over the other clerks, and caused his employers to respect

him far more than any other in their establishment. So eager was he to

improve the time that he determined to see how much he could read

during the unemployed time of night and morning, and his success was

beyond his expectations.

CHAPTER XXX

NEW FRIENDS.

Broken down in health, after ten years of close confinement in his

situation, Jerome resolved to give it up, and thereby release himself

from an employment which seemed calculated to send him to a premature

grave.

It was on a beautiful morning in summer that he started for Scotland,

having made up his mind to travel for his health. After visiting

Edinburgh and Glasgow, he concluded to spend a few days in the old town

of Perth, with a friend whose acquaintance he had made in Manchester.

During the second day of his stay in Perth, while crossing the main

street, Jerome saw a pony-chaise coming toward him with great speed. A

lady, who appeared to be the only occupant of the vehicle, was using

her utmost strength to stop the frightened horses. The footman, in his

fright, had leaped from behind the carriage, and was following with the

crowd. With that self-forgetfulness which was one of his chief

characteristics, Jerome threw himself before the horses to stop them;

and, seizing the high-spirited animals by the bit, as they dashed by

him, he was dragged several rods before their speed was checked, which

was not accomplished until one of the horses had fallen to the ground,

with the heroic man struggling beneath him.

All present were satisfied that this daring act alone had saved the

lady's life, for the chaise must inevitably have been dashed in pieces,

had the horses not been thus suddenly checked in their mad career.

On the morning following this perilous adventure, Col. G----called at

Jerome's temporary residence, and, after expressing his admiration for

his noble daring, and thanking him for having saved his daughter's

life, invited him to visit him at his country residence. This

invitation was promptly accepted in the spirit in which it was given;

and three days after, Jerome found himself at the princely residence of

the father of the lady for whose safety he had risked his own life. The

house was surrounded by fine trees, and a sweet little stream ran

murmuring at the foot, while beds of flowers on every hand shed their

odors on the summer air. It was, indeed, a pleasant place to spend the

warm weather, and the colonel and his family gave Jerome a most cordial

welcome. Miss G. showed especial attention to the stranger. He had not

intended remaining longer than the following day: but the family

insisted on his taking part in a fox-hunt that was to come off on the

morning of the third day. Wishing to witness a scene as interesting as

the chase usually proves to be, he decided to remain.

Fifteen persons, five of whom were ladies, were on the ground at the

appointed hour. Miss G. was, of course, one of the party. In vain

Jerome endeavored to excuse himself from joining in the chase. His plea

of ill-health was only met by smiles from the young ladies, and the

reply that a ride would effect a cure.

Dressed in a scarlet coat and high boots, with the low, round cap worn

in the chase, Jerome mounted a high-spirited horse, whip in hand, and

made himself one of the party. In America, riding is a necessity; in

England, it is a pleasure. Young men and women attend riding-school in

our fatherland, and consider that they are studying a science. Jerome

was no rider. He had not been on horseback for more than ten years, and

as soon as he mounted, every one saw that he was a novice, and a smile

was on the countenance of each member of the company.

The blowing of the horn, and assembling of the hounds, and finally the

release of the fox from his close prison, were the signals for the

chase to commence. The first half-mile the little animal took his

course over a beautiful field where there was neither hedge nor ditch.

Thus far the chase was enjoyed by all, even by the American rider, who

was better fitted to witness the scene than to take part in it.

We left Jerome in our last reluctantly engaged in the chase; and though

the first mile or so of the pursuit, which was over smooth meadow-land,

had had an exhilarating effect upon his mind, and tended somewhat to

relieve him of the embarrassment consequent upon his position, he

nevertheless still felt that he was far from being in his proper

element. Besides, the fox had now made for a dense forest which lay

before, and he saw difficulties in that direction which to him appeared

insurmountable.

Away went the huntsmen, over stone walls, high fences, and deep

ditches. Jerome saw the ladies even leading the gentlemen, but this

could not inspire him. They cleared the fences, four and five feet high

with perfect ease, showing they were quite at home in the saddle. But

alas for the poor American! As his fine steed came up to the first

fence, and was about to make the leap, Jerome pulled at the bridle, and

cried at the top of his voice, "Whoa! whoa! whoa!" the horse at the

same time capering about, and appearing determined to keep up with the

other animals.

Away dashed the huntsmen, following the hounds, and all were soon lost

to the view of their colored companion. Jerome rode up and down the

field looking for a gate or bars, that he might get through without

risking his neck. Finding, however, that all hope of again catching up

with the party was out of the question, he determined to return to the

house, under a plea of sudden illness, and back he accordingly went.

"I hope no accident has happened to your honor," said the groom, as he

met our hero at the gate.

"A slight dizziness," was the answer.

One of the servants, without being ordered, went at once for the family

physician. Ashamed to own that his return was owing to his inability to

ride, Jerome resolved to feign sickness. The doctor came, felt his

pulse, examined his tongue, and pronounced him a sick man. He

immediately ordered a tepid bath, and sent for a couple of leeches.

Seeing things taking such a serious turn, the American began to regret

the part he was playing; for there was no fun in being rubbed and

leeched when one was in perfect health. He had gone too far to recede,

however, and so submitted quietly to the directions of the doctor; and,

after following the injunctions given by that learned Esculapius, was

put to bed.

Shortly after, the sound of the horns and the yelp of the hounds

announced that the poor fox had taken the back track, and was repassing

near the house. Even the pleasure of witnessing the beautiful sight

from the window was denied to our hero; for the physician had ordered

that he must be kept in perfect quiet.

The chase was at last over, and the huntsmen all in, sympathizing with

their lost companion. After nine days of sweating, blistering and

leeching, Jerome left his bed convalescent, but much reduced in flesh

and strength. This was his first and last attempt to follow the fox and

hounds.

During his fortnight's stay at Colonel G.'s, Jerome spent most of his

time in the magnificent library. Claude did not watch with more

interest every color of the skies, the trees, the grass, and the water,

to learn from nature, than did this son of a despised race search books

to obtain that knowledge which his early life as a slave had denied him.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE MYSTERIOUS MEETING.

After more than a fortnight spent in the highlands of Scotland, Jerome

passed hastily through London on his way to the continent.

It was toward sunset, on a warm day in October, shortly after his

arrival in France, that, after strolling some distance from the Hotel

de Leon, in the old and picturesque town of Dunkirk, he entered a

burial ground--such places being always favorite walks with him--and

wandered around among the silent dead. All nature around was hushed in

silence, and seemed to partake of the general melancholy that hung over

the quiet resting-place of the departed. Even the birds seemed imbued

with the spirit of the place, for they were silent, either flying

noiselessly over the graves, or jumping about in the tall grass. After

tracing the various inscriptions that told the characters and

conditions of the deceased, and viewing the mounds beneath which the

dust of mortality slumbered, he arrived at a secluded spot near where

an aged weeping willow bowed its thick foliage to the ground, as though

anxious to hide from the scrutinizing gaze of curiosity the grave

beneath it. Jerome seated himself on a marble tombstone, and commenced

reading from a book which he had carried under his arm. It was now

twilight, and he had read but a few minutes when he observed a lady,

attired in deep black, and leading a boy, apparently some five or six

years old, coming up one of the beautiful, winding paths. As the lady's

veil was drawn closely over her face, he felt somewhat at liberty to

eye her more closely. While thus engaged, the lady gave a slight

scream, and seemed suddenly to have fallen into a fainting condition.

Jerome sprang from his seat, and caught her in time to save her from

falling to the ground.

At this moment an elderly gentleman, also dressed in black, was seen

approaching with a hurried step, which seemed to indicate that he was

in some way connected with the lady. The old man came up, and in rather

a confused manner inquired what had happened, and Jerome explained

matters as well as he was able to do so. After taking up the

vinaigrette, which had fallen from her hand, and holding the bottle a

short time to her face, the lady began to revive. During all this time,

the veil had still partly covered the face of the fair one, so that

Jerome had scarcely seen it. When she had so far recovered as to be

able to look around her, she raised herself slightly, and again

screamed and swooned. The old man now feeling satisfied that Jerome's

dark complexion was the immediate cause of the catastrophe, said in a

somewhat petulant tone,--

"I will be glad, sir, if you will leave us alone."

The little boy at this juncture set up a loud cry, and amid the general

confusion, Jerome left the ground and returned to his hotel.

While seated at the window of his room looking out upon the crowded

street, with every now and then the strange scene in the graveyard

vividly before him, Jerome suddenly thought of the book he had been

reading, and, remembering that he had left it on the tombstone, where

he dropped it when called to the lady's assistance, he determined to

return for it at once.

After a walk of some twenty minutes, he found himself again in the

burial-ground and on the spot where he had been an hour before. The

pensive moon was already up, and its soft light was sleeping on the

little pond at the back of the grounds, while the stars seemed smiling

at their own sparkling rays gleaming up from the beautiful sheet of

water.

Jerome searched in vain for his book; it was nowhere to be found.

Nothing, save the bouquet that the lady had dropped and which lay

half-buried in the grass, from having been trodden upon, indicated that

any one had been there that evening. The stillness of death reigned

over the place; even the little birds, that had before been twittering

and flying about, had retired for the night.

Taking up the bunch of flowers, Jerome returned to his hotel.

"What can this mean?" he would ask himself; "and why should they take

my book?" These questions he put to himself again and again during his

walk. His sleep was broken more than once that night, and he welcomed

the early dawn as it made its appearance.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE HAPPY MEETING.

After passing a sleepless night, and hearing the clock strike six,

Jerome took from his table a book, and thus endeavored to pass away the

hours before breakfast-time. While thus engaged, a servant entered and

handed him a note. Hastily tearing it open, Jerome read as follows:--

"Sir,--I owe you an apology for the abrupt manner in which I addressed

you last evening, and the inconvenience to which you were subjected by

some of my household. If you will honor us with your presence to-day at

four o'clock, I shall be most happy to give you due satisfaction. My

servant will be waiting with the carriage at half-past three.

I am, sir, yours, &c, J. DEVENANT.

JEROME FLETCHER, Esq."

Who this gentleman was, and how he had found out his name and the hotel

at which he was stopping, were alike mysteries to Jerome. And this note

seemed to his puzzled brain like a challenge. "Satisfaction?" He had

not asked for satisfaction. However, he resolved to accept the

invitation, and, if need be, meet the worst. At any rate, this most

mysterious and complicated affair would be explained.

The clock on a neighboring church had scarcely finished striking three

when a servant announced to Jerome that a carriage had called for him.

In a few minutes, he was seated in a sumptuous barouche, drawn by a

pair of beautiful iron-grays, and rolling over a splendid gravel road

entirely shaded by trees, which appeared to have been the accumulated

growth of many centuries. The carriage soon stopped at a low villa,

which was completely embowered in trees.

Jerome alighted, and was shown into a superb room, with the walls

finely decorated with splendid tapestry, and the ceilings exquisitely

frescoed. The walls were hung with fine specimens from the hands of the

great Italian masters, and one by a German artist, representing a

beautiful monkish legend connected with the "Holy Catharine," an

illustrious lady of Alexandria. High-backed chairs stood around the

room, rich curtains of crimson damask hung in folds on either side of

the window, and a beautiful, rich, Turkey carpet covered the floor. In

the centre of the room stood a table covered with books, in the midst

of which was a vase of fresh flowers, loading the atmosphere with their

odors. A faint light, together with the quiet of the hour, gave beauty

beyond description to the whole scene. A half-open door showed a fine

marble floor to an adjoining room, with pictures, statues, and

antiquated sofas, and flower-pots filled with rare plants of every kind

and description.

Jerome had scarcely run his eyes over the beauties of the room when the

elderly gentleman whom he had met on the previous evening made his

appearance, followed by the little boy, and introduced himself as Mr.

Devenant. A moment more and a lady, a beautiful brunette, dressed in

black, with long black curls hanging over her shoulders, entered the

room. Her dark, bright eyes flashed as she caught the first sight of

Jerome. The gentleman immediately arose on the entrance of the lady,

and Mr. Devenant was in the act of introducing the stranger when he

observed that Jerome had sunk back upon the sofa, in a faint voice

exclaiming,--

"It is she!"

After this, all was dark and dreary. How long he remained in this

condition, it was for others to tell. The lady knelt by his side and

wept; and when he came to, he found himself stretched upon the sofa

with his boots off and his head resting upon a pillow. By his side sat

the old man, with the smelling-bottle in one hand and a glass of water

in the other, while the little boy stood at the foot of the sofa. As

soon as Jerome had so far recovered as to be able to speak, he said,--

"Where am I, and what does all this mean?"

"Wait awhile," replied the old man, "and I will tell you all."

After the lapse of some ten minutes, Jerome arose from the sofa,

adjusted his apparel, and said,--

"I am now ready to hear anything you have to say."

"You were born in America?" said the old man.

"I was," he replied.

"And you knew a girl named Clotelle," continued the old man.

"Yes, and I loved her as I can love none other."

"The lady whom you met so mysteriously last evening was she," said Mr.

Devenant.

Jerome was silent, but the fountain of mingled grief and joy stole out

from beneath his eyelashes, and glistened like pearls upon his ebony

cheeks.

At this juncture, the lady again entered the room. With an enthusiasm

that can be better imagined than described, Jerome sprang from the

sofa, and they rushed into each other's arms, to the great surprise of

the old gentleman and little Autoine, and to the amusement of the

servants who had crept up, one by one and were hid behind the doors or

loitering in the hall. When they had given vent to their feelings and

sufficiently recovered their presence of mind, they resumed their seats.

"How did you find out my name and address?" inquired Jerome.

"After you had left the grave-yard," replied Clotelle, "our little boy

said, 'Oh, mamma! if there ain't a book!' I opened the book, and saw

your name written in it, and also found a card of the Hotel de Leon.

Papa wished to leave the book, and said it was only a fancy of mine

that I had ever seen you before; but I was perfectly convinced that you

were my own dear Jerome."

As she uttered the last words, tears--the sweet bright tears that love

alone can bring forth--bedewed her cheeks.

"Are you married?" now inquired Clotelle, with a palpitating heart and

trembling voice.

"No, I am not, and never have been," was Jerome's reply.

"Then, thank God!" she exclaimed, in broken accents.

It was then that hope gleamed up amid the crushed and broken flowers of

her heart, and a bright flash darted forth like a sunbeam.

"Are you single now?" asked Jerome.

"Yes, I am," was the answer.

"Then you will be mine after all?" said he with a smile.

Her dark, rich hair had partly come down, and hung still more loosely

over her shoulders than when she first appeared; and her eyes, now full

of animation and vivacity, and her sweet, harmonious, and

well-modulated voice, together with her modesty, self-possession, and

engaging manners, made Clotelle appear lovely beyond description.

Although past the age when men ought to think of matrimony, yet the

scene before Mr. Devenant brought vividly to his mind the time when he

was young and had a loving bosom companion living, and tears were wiped

from the old man's eyes. A new world seemed to unfold itself before the

eyes of the happy lovers, and they were completely absorbed in

contemplating the future. Furnished by nature with a disposition to

study, and a memory so retentive that all who knew her were surprised

at the ease with which she acquired her education and general

information, Clotelle might now be termed a most accomplished lady.

After her marriage with young Devenant, they proceeded to India, where

the husband's regiment was stationed. Soon after their arrival,

however, a battle was fought with the natives, in which several

officers fell, among whom was Captain Devenant. The father of the young

captain being there at the time, took his daughter-in-law and brought

her back to France, where they took up their abode at the old homestead.

Old Mr. Devenant was possessed of a large fortune, all of which he

intended for his daughter-in-law and her only child.

Although Clotelle had married young Devenant, she had not forgotten her

first love, and her father-in-law now willingly gave his consent to her

marriage with Jerome. Jerome felt that to possess the woman of his

love, even at that late hour, was compensation enough for the years

that he had been separated from her, and Clotelle wanted no better

evidence of his love for her than the fact of his having remained so

long unmarried. It was indeed a rare instance of devotion and constancy

in a man, and the young widow gratefully appreciated it.

It was late in the evening when Jerome led his intended bride to the

window, and the magnificent moonlight illuminated the countenance of

the lovely Clotelle, while inward sunshine, emanating from a mind at

ease, and her own virtuous thoughts, gave brightness to her eyes and

made her appear a very angel. This was the first evening that Jerome

had been in her company since the night when, to effect his escape from

prison, she disguised herself in male attire. How different the scene

now. Free instead of slaves, wealthy instead of poor, and on the eve of

an event that seemed likely to result in a life of happiness to both.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE HAPPY DAY.

It was a bright day in the latter part of October that Jerome and

Clotelle set out for the church, where the marriage ceremony was to be

performed. The clear, bracing air added buoyancy to every movement, and

the sun poured its brilliant rays through the deeply-stained windows,

as the happy couple entered the sanctuary, followed by old Mr.

Devenant, whose form, bowed down with age, attracted almost as much

attention from the assembly as did the couple more particularly

interested.

As the ceremonies were finished and the priest pronounced the

benediction on the newly-married pair, Clotelle whispered in the ear of

Jerome,--

"'No power in death shall tear our names apart,

As none in life could rend thee from my heart.'"

A smile beamed on every face as the wedding-party left the church and

entered their carriage. What a happy day, after ten years' separation,

when, both hearts having been blighted for a time, they are brought

together by the hand of a beneficent and kind Providence, and united in

holy wedlock.

Everything being arranged for a wedding tour extending up the Rhine,

the party set out the same day for Antwerp. There are many rivers of

greater length and width than the Rhine. Our Mississippi would swallow

up half a dozen Rhines. The Hudson is grander, the Tiber, the Po, and

the Minclo more classic; the Thames and Seine bear upon their waters

greater amounts of wealth and commerce; the Nile and the Euphrates have

a greater antiquity; but for a combination of interesting historical

incidents and natural scenery, the Rhine surpasses them all. Nature has

so ordained it that those who travel in the valley of the Rhine shall

see the river, for there never will be a railroad upon its banks. So

mountainous is the land that it would have to be one series of tunnels.

Every three or four miles from the time you enter this glorious river,

hills, dales, castles, and crags present themselves as the steamer

glides onward.

Their first resting-place for any length of time was at Coblentz, at

the mouth of the "Blue Moselle," the most interesting place on the

river. From Coblentz they went to Brussels, where they had the greatest

attention paid them. Besides being provided with letters of

introduction, Jerome's complexion secured for him more deference than

is usually awarded to travellers.

Having letters of introduction to M. Deceptiax, the great lace

manufacturer, that gentleman received them with distinguished honors,

and gave them a splendid soiree, at which the elite of the city were

assembled. The sumptuously-furnished mansion was lavishly decorated for

the occasion, and every preparation made that could add to the novelty

or interest of the event.

Jerome, with his beautiful bride, next visited Cologne, the largest and

wealthiest city on the banks of the Rhine. The Cathedral of Cologne is

the most splendid structure of the kind in Europe, and Jerome and

Clotelle viewed with interest the beautiful arches and columns of this

stupendous building, which strikes with awe the beholder, as he gazes

at its unequalled splendor, surrounded, as it is, by villas, cottages,

and palace-like mansions, with the enchanting Rhine winding through the

vine-covered hills.

After strolling over miles and miles of classic ground, and visiting

castles, whose legends and traditions have given them an enduring fame,

our delighted travellers started for Geneva, bidding the picturesque

banks of the Rhine a regretful farewell. Being much interested in

literature, and aware that Geneva was noted for having been the city of

refuge to the victims of religious and political persecution, Jerome

arranged to stay here for some days. He was provided with a letter of

introduction to M. de Stee, who had been a fellow-soldier of Mr.

Devenant in the East India wars, and they were invited to make his

house their home during their sojourn. On the side of a noble mountain,

whose base is kissed by the waves of Lake Geneva, and whose slopes are

decked with verdure to the utmost peak of its rocky crown, is situated

the delightful country residence of this wealthy, retired French

officer. A winding road, with frequent climbs and brakes, leads from

the valley to this enchanting spot, the air and scenery of which cannot

be surpassed in the world.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CLOTELLE MEETS HER FATHER.

The clouds that had skirted the sky during the day broke at last, and

the rain fell in torrents, as Jerome and Clotelle retired for the

night, in the little town of Ferney, on the borders of Lake Leman. The

peals of thunder, and flashes of vivid lightening, which seemed to leap

from mountain to mountain and from crag to crag, reverberating among

the surrounding hills, foretold a heavy storm.

"I would we were back at Geneva," said Clotelle, as she heard groans

issuing from an adjoining room. The sounds, at first faint, grew louder

and louder, plainly indicating that some person was suffering extreme

pain.

"I did not like this hotel, much, when we came in," I said Jerome,

relighting the lamp, which had been accidentally extinguished.

"Nor I," returned Clotelle.

The shrieks increased, and an occasional "She's dead!" "I killed her!"

"No, she is not dead!" and such-like expressions, would be heard from

the person, who seemed to be deranged.

The thunder grew louder, and the flashes of lightning more vivid, while

the noise from the sick-room seemed to increase.

As Jerome opened the door, to learn, if possible, the cause of the

cries and groans, he could distinguish the words, "She's dead! yes,

she's dead! but I did not kill her. She was my child! my own daughter.

I loved her, and yet I did not protect her."

"Whoever he is," said Jerome, "he's crack-brained; some robber,

probably, from the mountains."

The storm continued to rage, and the loud peals of thunder and sharp

flashes of lightening, together with the shrieks and moans of the

maniac in the adjoining room, made the night a fearful one. The long

hours wore slowly away, but neither Jerome nor his wife could sleep,

and they arose at an early hour in the morning, ordered breakfast, and

resolved to return to Geneva.

"I am sorry, sir, that you were so much disturbed by the sick man last

night," said the landlord, as he handed Jerome his bill. "I should be

glad if he would get able to go away, or die, for he's a deal of

trouble to me. Several persons have left my house on his account."

"Where is he from?" inquired Jerome.

"He's from the United States, and has been here a week to-day, and has

been crazy ever since."

"Has he no friends with him?" asked the guest.

"No, he is alone," was the reply.

Jerome related to his wife what he had learned from the landlord,

respecting the sick man, and the intelligence impressed her so

strongly, that she requested him to make further inquiries concerning

the stranger.

He therefore consulted the book in which guests usually register their

names, and, to his great surprise, found that the American's name was

Henry Linwood, and that he was from Richmond, Va.

It was with feelings of trepidation that Clotelle heard these

particulars from the lips of her husband.

"We must see this poor man, whoever he is," said she, as Jerome

finished the sentence.

The landlord was glad to hear that his guests felt some interest in the

sick man, and promised that the invalid's room should be got ready for

their reception.

The clock in the hall was just striking ten, as Jerome passed through

and entered the sick man's chamber. Stretched upon a mattress, with

both hands tightly bound to the bedstead, the friendless stranger was

indeed a pitiful sight. His dark, dishevelled hair prematurely gray,

his long, unshaven beard, and the wildness of the eyes which glanced

upon them as they opened the door and entered, caused the faint hope

which had so suddenly risen in Clotelle's heart, to sink, and she felt

that this man could claim no kindred with her. Certainly, he bore no

resemblance to the man whom she had called her father, and who had

fondly dandled her on his knee in those happy days of childhood.

"Help!" cried the poor man, as Jerome and his wife walked into the

room. His eyes glared, and shriek after shriek broke forth from his

parched and fevered lips.

"No, I did not kill my daughter!--I did not! she is not dead! Yes, she

is dead! but I did not kill her--poor girl Look! that is she! No, it

cannot be! she cannot come here! it cannot be my poor Clotelle."

At the sound of her own name, coming from the maniac's lips, Clotelle

gasped for breath, and her husband saw that she had grown deadly pale.

It seemed evident to him that the man was either guilty of some

terrible act, or imagined himself to be. His eyeballs rolled in their

sockets, and his features showed that he was undergoing "the tortures

of that inward hell," which seemed to set his whole brain on fire.

After recovering her self-possession and strength, Clotelle approached

the bedside, and laid her soft hand upon the stranger's hot and fevered

brow.

One long, loud shriek rang out on the air, and a piercing cry, "It is

she!---Yes, it is she! I see, I see! Ah! no, it is not my daughter! She

would not come to me if she could!" broke forth from him.

"I am your daughter," said Clotelle, as she pressed her handkerchief to

her face, and sobbed aloud.

Like balls of fire, the poor man's eyes rolled and glared upon the

company, while large drops of perspiration ran down his pale and

emaciated face. Strange as the scene appeared, all present saw that it

was indeed a meeting between a father and his long-lost daughter.

Jerome now ordered all present to leave the room, except the nurse, and

every effort was at once made to quiet the sufferer. When calm, a

joyous smile would illuminate the sick man's face, and a strange light

beam in his eyes, as he seemed to realize that she who stood before him

was indeed his child.

For two long days and nights did Clotelle watch at the bedside of her

father before he could speak to her intelligently. Sometimes, in his

insane fits, he would rave in the most frightful manner, and then, in a

few moments, would be as easily governed as a child. At last, however,

after a long and apparently refreshing sleep, he awoke suddenly to a

full consciousness that it was indeed his daughter who was watching so

patiently by his side.

The presence of his long absent child had a soothing effect upon Mr.

Linwood, and he now recovered rapidly from the sad and almost hopeless

condition in which she had found him. When able to converse, without

danger of a relapse, he told Clotelle of his fruitless efforts to

obtain a clew to her whereabouts after old Mrs. Miller had sold her to

the slave-trader. In answer to his daughter's inquiries about his

family affairs up to the time that he left America, he said,--

"I blamed my wife for your being sold and sent away, for I thought she

and her mother were acting in collusion; But I afterwards found that I

had blamed her wrongfully. Poor woman! she knew that I loved your

mother, and feeling herself forsaken, she grew melancholy and died in a

decline three years ago."

Here both father and daughter wept at the thought of other days. When

they had recovered their composure, Mr. Linwood went on again:

"Old Mrs. Miller," said he, "after the death of Gertrude, aware that

she had contributed much toward her unhappiness, took to the free use

of intoxicating drinks, and became the most brutal creature that ever

lived. She whipped her slaves without the slightest provocation, and

seemed to take delight in inventing new tortures with which to punish

them. One night last winter, after having flogged one of her slaves

nearly to death, she returned to her room, and by some means the

bedding took fire, and the house was in flames before any one was

awakened. There was no one in the building at the time but the old

woman and the slaves, and although the latter might have saved their

mistress, they made no attempt to do so. Thus, after a frightful career

of many years, this hard-hearted woman died a most miserable death,

unlamented by a single person."

Clotelle wiped the tears from her eyes, as her father finished this

story, for, although Mrs. Miller had been her greatest enemy, she

regretted to learn that her end had been such a sad one.

"My peace of mind destroyed," resumed the father, "and broke down in

health, my physician advised me to travel, with the hope o recruiting

myself, and I sailed from New York two months ago."

Being brought up in America, and having all the prejudice against color

which characterizes his white fellow-countrymen, Mr. Linwood very much

regretted that his daughter, although herself tinctured with African

blood, should have married a black man, and he did not fail to express

to her his dislike of her husband's complexion.

"I married him," said Clotelle, "because I loved him. Why should the

white man be esteemed as better than the black? I find no difference in

men on account of their complexion. One of the cardinal principles of

Christianity and freedom is the equality and brotherhood of man."

Every day Mr. Linwood became more and more familiar with Jerome, and

eventually they were on the most intimate terms.

Fifteen days from the time that Clotelle was introduced into her

father's room, they left Ferney for Geneva. Many were the excursions

Clotelle made under the shadows of Mont Blanc, and with her husband and

father for companions; she was now in the enjoyment of pleasures

hitherto unknown.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE FATHER'S RESOLVE.

Aware that her father was still a slave-owner, Clotelle determined to

use all her persuasive power to induce him to set them free, and in

this effort she found a substantial supporter in her husband.

"I have always treated my slaves well," said Mr. Linwood to Jerome, as

the latter expressed his abhorrence of the system; "and my neighbors,

too, are generally good men; for slavery in. Virginia is not like

slavery in the other States," continued the proud son of the Old

Dominion.

"Their right to be free, Mr. Linwood," said Jerome, "is taken from

them, and they have no security for their comfort, but the humanity and

generosity of men, who have been trained to regard them not as

brethren, but as mere property. Humanity and generosity are, at best,

but poor guaranties for the protection of those who cannot assert their

rights, and over whom law throws no protection."

It was with pleasure that Clotelle obtained from her father a promise

that he would liberate all his slaves on his return to Richmond. In a

beautiful little villa, situated in a pleasant spot, fringed with hoary

rocks and thick dark woods, within sight of the deep blue waters of

Lake Leman, Mr. Linwood, his daughter, and her husband, took up their

residence for a short time. For more than three weeks, this little

party spent their time in visiting the birth-place of Rousseau, and the

former abodes of Byron, Gibbon, Voltaire, De Stael, Shelley, and other

literary characters.

We can scarcely contemplate a visit to a more historic and interesting

place than Geneva and its vicinity. Here, Calvin, that great luminary

in the Church, lived and ruled for years; here, Voltaire, the mighty

genius, who laid the foundation of the French Revolution, and who

boasted, "When I shake my wig, I powder the whole republic," governed

in the higher walks of life.

Fame is generally the recompense, not of the living, but of the

dead,--not always do they reap and gather in the harvest who sow the

seed; the flame of its altar is too often kindled from the ashes of the

great. A distinguished critic has beautifully said, "The sound which

the stream of high thought, carried down to future ages, makes, as it

flows--deep, distant, murmuring ever more, like the waters of the

mighty ocean." No reputation can be called great that will not endure

this test. The distinguished men who had lived in Geneva transfused

their spirit, by their writings, into the spirit of other lovers of

literature and everything that treated of great authors. Jerome and

Clotelle lingered long in and about the haunts of Geneva and Lake Leman.

An autumn sun sent down her bright rays, and bathed every object in her

glorious light, as Clotelle, accompanied by her husband and father set

out one fine morning on her return home to France. Throughout the whole

route, Mr. Linwood saw by the deference paid to Jerome, whose black

complexion excited astonishment in those who met him, that there was no

hatred to the man in Europe, on account of his color; that what is

called prejudice against color is the offspring of the institution of

slavery; and he felt ashamed of his own countrymen, when he thought of

the complexion as distinctions, made in the United States, and resolved

to dedicate the remainder of his life to the eradication of this

unrepublican and unchristian feeling from the land of his birth, on his

return home.

After a stay of four weeks at Dunkirk, the home of the Fletchers, Mr.

Linwood set out for America, with the full determination of freeing his

slaves, and settling them in one of the Northern States, and then to

return to France to end his days in the society of his beloved daughter.

THE END.

NOTE.--The author of the foregoing tale was formerly a Kentucky slave.

If it serves to relieve the monotony of camp-life to the soldiers of

the Union, and therefore of Liberty, and at the same time kindles their

zeal in the cause of universal emancipation, the object both of its

author and publisher will be gained. J. R.

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