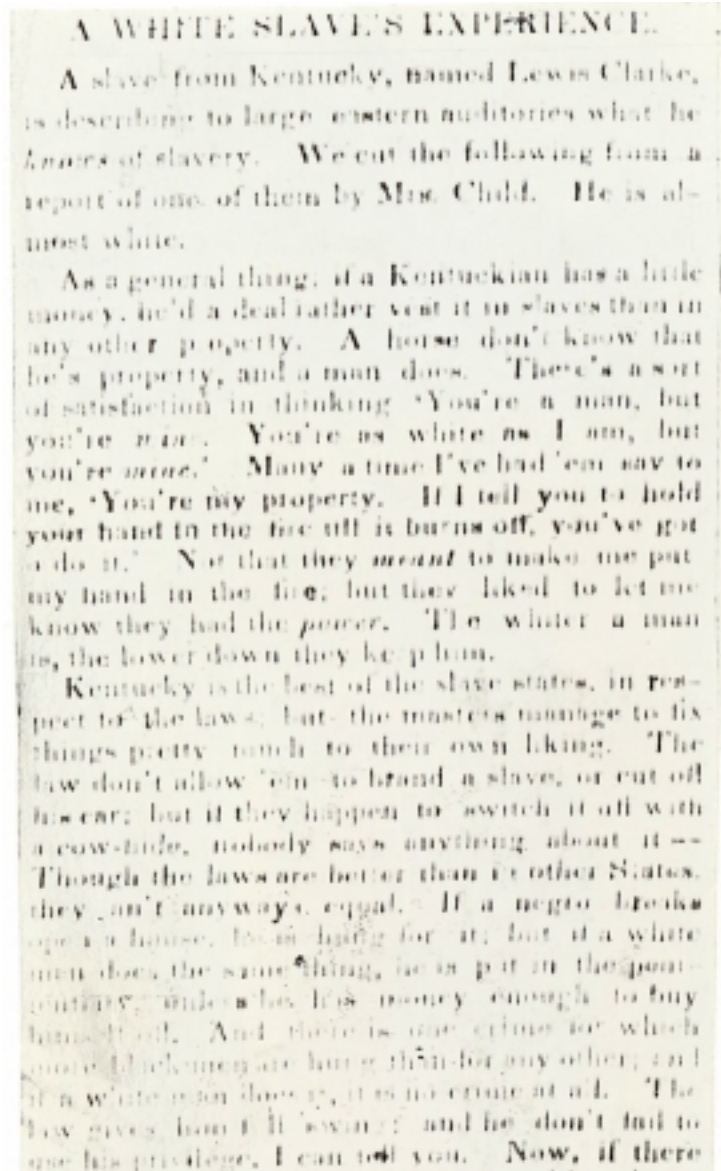


### A WHITE SLAVE'S EXPERIENCE.

[A slave from Kentucky, named Lewis Clarke, is describing to large eastern auditories what he *knows* of slavery. We [cut] the following from a report of one of them by Mrs. [Child]. He is almost white.]

As a general thing, if a Kentuckian has a little money, he'd a deal rather vest it in slaves than in any other property. A horse don't know that he's property, and a man does. There's a sort of satisfaction in thinking 'You're a man, but you're *mine*.' Many a time I've had 'em say to me, 'You're my property. If I tell you to hold your hand in the fire till it burns off, you've got to do it.' Not that they *meant* to make me put my hand in the fire, but they liked to let me know they had the *power*. The whiter a man is, the lower down they keep him.

Kentucky is the best of the slave states, in respect to the laws, but the masters manage to fix things pretty much to their own liking. The law don't allow 'em to brand a slave, or cut off his ear; but if they happen to switch it off with a cowhide, nobody says anything about it[.]— Though the laws are better than in other States, they ain't anyways equal. If a negro breaks open a house, he is hung for it; but if a white man does the same thing, he is put in the penitentiary, unless he has money enough to buy himself off. And there is one crime for which more black men are hung than for any other; and if a white man does it, it is no crime at all. The law gives him [full swing] : and he don't fail to use his privilege, I can tell you. Now, if there



was nothing else but this, it would make a slave's life as bad as death, many times. I can't tell these respectable people as much as I would like to, but think for a minute how you would like to have *your* sisters, *your* wives, and *your* daughters, completely, [tee]totality, and altogether, in the power of a master. You can picture to yourselves a [little], how you would feel: but oh, if I could *tell* you! A slave woman an't allowed to respect herself, if she would. I had a pretty sister; she was whiter than I am, for she took more after her father. When she was sixteen years old, her master sent for her. When he sent for her again, she cried, and did'n't want to go. She told her mother her troubles, and she tried to encourage her to be decent, and hold up her head above such things, if she could[.] Her master was so mad, to think she complained to her mother, that he sold her right off to Louisiana; and we heard afterward that she died there of hard usage.

Now, who would like to be a slave, even if there was nothing bad about it but such treatment of his sisters and daughters? But there's a worse thing yet about slavery; the worst thing in the whole lot: though it's all bad, from the but end to *[pint]*. I mean the *patter rollers* (patrols.) I suppose you know that they have patter-rollers to go round o'nights, to see that the slaves are all in, and not planning any mischief? Now, these are jus[t] about the worst fellows that can be found: as bad as any you could pick up on the wharves. The reason is, you see, that no decent

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man will undertake the business. Gentlemen in Kentucky are ready enough to hire such jobs done; but if you wish to make any of them to *be* a patter-roller, he would look upon it as a right[-] down insult, and likely enough would blow out your brains for an answer. They're mighty handy with pistols down there; and if a man don't resent anything that's put upon him, they call him Poke[-]easy. The slaves catch it, too; and them as won't fight, is called Poke-easy.— But as I was telling ye, they [hire] these patter-rollers, and they have to take the meanest fellows above ground; and because they are so mortal sure the slaves don't *want* their freedom, they have to put all power into their hands, to do with the niggers just as they like.— If a slave don't open his door to them, at any time of night, they break it down. They steal his money, if they can find it, and act jest as they please with his wives and daughters. If a husband dares to say a word, or even look as if he wasn't quite satisfied, they tie him up give him thirty-nine lashes. If there's any likely young girl in a slave's hut, they're mighty apt to have business there; especially if they think any colored young man takes a fancy to any of 'em.[.]— May be he'll get a pass from his master, and go to see the young girl for a few hours. The patter-rollers break in and find him they'll abuse the girl as bad as they can, on purpose to provoke him. If he looks cross, they give him a flogging, tear up his pass, turn him out of doors, and then take him up and whip him for being out

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without a pass. If the slave says they tore it up, they swear he lies, and nine times out of ten the master won't come out [agin] 'em, for they say it won't *do* to let the niggers suppose they may complain of their patter-rollers; they must be taught that it's their business to obey 'em in everything; and the patter-roller knows that very well. Oh, how often I've seen the poor girls sob and cry, when there[s] been such goings on! May be you think, because they're slaves, they an't got no feeling and no shame! A woman's being a slave, don't stop her genteel ideas; that is, according to their way, and far as they can.— They know they must submit to their masters; [besides], their masters, may be, dress 'em up, and make 'em little presents, and give 'em more privileges, while the whim lasts; but that an't like having a parcel of low, dirty, swearing, drunk patter-rollers let loose among 'em, like so many hogs. This breaks down their spirits dreadfully, and makes 'em wish they were dead.

Now, who among you would like to have *your* wives, and daughters, and sisters, in *such* a situation? This is what every slave in all these States is exposed to. Yet folks go from these parts down to Kentucky, and come back, and say the slaves have enough to eat and drink, and they are very happy, and they would'nt mind it much to be slaves themselves. I'd like to have 'em to try it; it would teach 'em a little more than they know now. I'm not going to deny that Kentucky is better than other slave States, in respect of her laws, and she has the best name,

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too, about treating her slaves. But one great reason of that is, they are proud about punishing in *public*. If a man ties his slave up in the market-place, and flogs him till he can't stand, the neighbors all cry out, 'What a shame! The man had no regard to his character. What an abominable thing to have that nigger screaming where *everybody can hear!* Shame on him, to do such a thing in public!'

But if the same man flogs his slave ten times as bad, up garret or down cellar, with his mouth stopped, that he mayn't make a noise, or off in the woods, out of hearing—its all well enough. If his neighbor hear of it, they only say, 'Well, of course there's no managing niggers without letting 'em know who's master.' And there's an end of the business. The law, to be sure, don't allow such cruel floggings: but how's a slave going to get the law of his master? The law won't let him, nor any of his slaves, testify; and if the neighbors know anything about it, they *won't* testify. For it won't *do* to let the slaves think they would be upheld in complaining of master or overseer. I told you in the beginning, that it wouldn't *do* to let the slave think he is a *man*. That would spoil slavery, clean, entirely. No: this is the cruelty of the thing—  
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