Minnie's Sacrifice

by Frances E. W. Harper

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Transcriber's Note: This document is the text of Minnie's Sacrifice. Any

bracketed notations such as [Text missing], [?], and those inserting letters or other comments are from the original text.

Transcriber's Note About the Author: Francis Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911) was born to free parents in Baltimore, Maryland. Orphaned at three, she was raised by her uncle, a teacher and radical advocate for civil rights. She attended the Academy for Negro Youth and was educated as a teacher. She became a professional lecturer, activist, suffragette, poet, essayist, novelist, and the author of the first published short story written by an African-American. Her work spanned more than sixty years.

MINNIE'S SACRIFICE

A Rediscovered Novel by

Frances E.W. Harper

Edited By Frances Smith Foster

Chapter I

Miriam sat in her lowly cabin, painfully rocking her body to and fro; for a great sorrow had fallen upon her life. She had been the mother of three children, two had died in their infancy, and now her last, her loved and only child was gone, but not like the rest, who had passed away almost as soon as their little feet had touched the threshold of existence. She had been entangled in the mazes of sin and sorrow; and her sun had gone down in darkness. It was the old story. Agnes, fair, young and beautiful, had been a slave, with no power to protect herself from the highest insults that brutality could offer to innocence. Bound hand and foot by that system, which has since gone down in wrath, and blood, and tears, she had fallen a victim to the wiles and power of her master; and the result was the introduction of a child of shame into a world of sin and suffering; for herself an early grave; and for her mother a desolate and breaking heart.

While Miriam was sitting down hopelessly beneath the shadow of her mighty grief, gazing ever and anon on the pale dead face, which seemed to bear in its sad but gentle expression, an appeal from earth to heaven, some of the slaves would hurry in, and looking upon the fair young face, would drop a word of pity for the weeping mother, and then hurry on to their appointed tasks. All day long Miriam sat alone with her dead, except when these kindly interruptions broke upon the monotony of her sorrow.

In the afternoon, Camilla, the only daughter of her master, entered her cabin, and throwing her arms around her neck exclaimed, "Oh! Mammy, I am so sorry I didn't know Agnes was dead. I've been on a visit to Mr. Le Grange's plantation, and I've just got back this afternoon, and as soon as I heard that Agnes was dead I hurried to see you. I would not even wait for my dinner. Oh! how sweet she looks," said Camilla, bending over the corpse, "just as natural as life. When did she die?"

"This morning, my poor, dear darling!" And another burst of anguish relieved the overcharged heart.

"Oh! Mammy, don't cry, I am so sorry; but what is this?" said she, as the little bundle of flannel began to stir.

"That is poor Agnes' baby."

"Agnes' baby? Why, I didn't know that Agnes had a baby. Do let me see it?"

Tenderly the grandmother unfolded the wrappings, and presented the little stranger. He was a beautiful babe, whose golden hair, bright blue eyes and fair complexion showed no trace of the outcast blood in his veins.

"Oh, how beautiful!" said Camilla; "surely this can't be Agnes' baby. He is just as white as I am, and his eyes—what a beautiful blue—and his hair, why it is really lovely."

"He is very pretty, Miss, but after all he is only a slave."

A slave. She had heard that word before; but somehow, when applied to that fair child, it grated harshly on her ear; and she said, "Well, I think it is a shame for him to be a slave, when he is just as white as anybody. Now, Mammy," said she, throwing off her hat, and looking soberly into the fire, "if I had my way, he should never be a slave."

"And why can't you have your way? I'm sure master humors you in everything."

"I know that; Pa does everything I wish him to do; but I don't know how I could manage about this. If his mother were living, I would beg Pa to set them both free, and send them North; but his mother is gone; and, Mammy, we couldn't spare you. And besides, it is so cold in the North, you would freeze to death, and yet, I can't bear the thought of his being a slave. I wonder," said she, musing to herself, "I wonder if I couldn't save him from being a slave. Now I have it," she said, rising hastily, her face aglow with pleasurable excitement. "I was reading yesterday a beautiful story in the Bible about a wicked king, who wanted to kill all the little boys of a people who were enslaved in his land, and how his mother hid her child by the side of a river, and that the king's daughter found him and saved his life. It was a fine story; and I read it till I cried. Now I mean to do something like that good princess. I am going to ask Pa, to let me take him to the house, and have a nurse for him, and bring him up like a white child, and never let him know that he is colored."

Miriam shook her head doubtfully; and Camilla, looking disappointed, said, "Don't you like my plan?"

"Laws, honey, it would be fustrate, but your Pa wouldn't hear to it."

"Yes, he would, Mammy, because I'll tell him I've set my heart upon it, and won't be satisfied if he don't consent. I know if I set my heart upon it, he won't refuse me, because he always said he hates to see me fret. Why, Mammy, he bought me two thousand dollars worth of jewelry when we were in New York, just because I took a fancy to a diamond set which I saw at Tiffany's. Anyhow, I am going to ask him."

Eager and anxious to carry out her plan, Camilla left the cabin to find her father. He was seated in his library, reading Homer. He looked up, as her light step fell upon the threshold, and said playfully, "What is your wish, my princess? Tell me, if it is the half of my kingdom."

Encouraged by his manner, she drew near, perched upon his knee, and said; "Now, you must keep your word, Pa. I have a request to make, but you must first promise me that you will grant it."

"But I don't know what it is. I can't tell. You might want me to put my head in the fire."

"Oh no, Pa, you know I don't!"

"Well, you might wish me to run for Congress."

"Oh no, Pa, I know that you hate politics."

"Well, darling, what is your request?"

"No; tell me first that you will grant it. Now, don't tease me, Pa; say yes, and I will tell you."

"Well, yes; if it is anything in reason."

"Well, it is in reason, let me tell you, Pa. To-day, after I came home, I asked Annette where was Agnes, and she told me she was dead. Oh I was so sorry; and so before I got my dinner I hastened to Mammy's cabin, and found poor Mammy almost heart-broken, and Agnes lying dead, but looking just as natural as life."

"She was dead, but had left one of the dearest little babies I ever saw. Why, Pa, he is just as white as we are; and I told Mammy so, but she said it didn't matter; 'he is a poor slave, just like the rest of us.' Now, Pa, I don't want Agnes' baby to be a slave. Can't you keep him from growing up a slave?"

"How am I to do that, my little Abolitionist?"

"No, Pa, I am not an Abolitionist. I heard some of them talk when I was in New

York, and I think they are horrid creatures; but, Pa, this child is so white, nobody would ever know that he had one drop of Negro blood in his veins. Couldn't we take him out of that cabin, and make all the servants promise that they would never breathe a word about his being colored, and let me bring him up as a white child?"

"Well," said Mr. Le Croix, bursting into a hearty laugh, "that is a capital joke; my little dewdrop talk of bringing up a child! Why, darling, you would tire of him in a week."

"Oh no, Pa, I wouldn't! Just try me; if it is only for a week."

"Why, Sunbeam, it is impossible. Who ever heard of such a thing as a Negro being palmed upon society as a white person?"

"Negro! Pa, he is just as white as you are, and his eyes are as blue as mine."

"Still he belongs to the Negro race; and one drop of that blood in his veins curses all the rest. I would grant you anything in reason, but this is not to be thought of. Were I to do so I would immediately lose caste among all the planters in the neighborhood; I would be set down as an Abolitionist, and singled out for insult and injury. Ask me anything, Camilla, but that."

"Oh, Pa, what do you care about social position? You never hunt, nor entertain company, nor take any part in politics. You shut yourself up in your library, year after year, and pore over your musty books, and hardly any one knows whether you are dead or alive. And I am sure that we could hide the secret of his birth, and pass him off as the orphan child of one of our friends, and that will be the truth; for Agnes was our friend; at least I know she was mine."

"Well, I'll see about it; now, get down, and let me finish reading this chapter."

The next day Camilla went again to the cabin of Miriam; but the overseer had set her to a task in the field, and Agnes' baby was left to the care of an aged woman who was too old to work in the fields, but not being entirely past service, she was appointed as one of the nurses for the babies and young children, while their

mothers were working in the fields.

Camilla, feeling an unusual interest in the child, went to the overseer, and demanded that Miriam should be released from her tasks, and permitted to attend the child.

In vain the overseer plead the pressure for hands, and the busy season. Camilla said it did not matter, she wanted Miriam, and she would have her; and he, feeling that it was to his interest to please the little lady, had Miriam sent from the field to Camilla.

"Mammy, I want you to come to the house. I want you to come and be my Mammy. Agnes is dead; your husband is gone, and I want you to come and bring the baby to the house, and I am going to get him some beautiful dresses, and some lovely coral I saw in New Orleans, and I am going to dress him so handsomely, that I believe Pa will feel just as I do, and think it a shame that such a beautiful child should be a slave."

Camilla went home, and told her father what she had done. And he, willing to compromise with her, readily consented; and in a day or two the child and his grandmother were comfortably ensconced in their new quarters.

The winter passed; the weeks ripened into months, and the months into years, and the child under the pleasant dispensations of love and kindness grew to be a fine, healthy, and handsome boy.

One day, when Mr. Le Croix was in one of his most genial moods, Camilla again introduced the subject which she had concealed, but not abandoned.

"Now, father, I do think it is a shame for this child to be a slave, when he is just as white as anybody; I am sure we could move away from here to France, and you could adopt him as your son, and no one would know anything of his birth and parentage. He is so beautiful, I would like him for my brother; and he looks like us anyhow."

Le Croix flushed deep at these words, and he looked keenly into his daughter's face; but her gaze was so open, her expression so frank and artless, he could not think that

her words had any covert meaning in reference to the paternity of the child; but to save that child from being a slave, and to hide his origin was with her a pet scheme; and, to use her own words, "she had set her heart upon it."

Chapter II

Mr. Bernard Le Croix was the only son of a Spanish lady, and a French gentleman, who were married in Hayti a few months before the revolution, which gave freedom to the Island, and made Hayti an independent nation.

His father, foreseeing the storm which was overshadowing the land, contrived to escape, bringing with him a large amount of personal property; and preferring a climate similar to his own, he bought a plantation on Red river, and largely stocked it with slaves. Only one child blessed their union; Bernard Le Croix, who grew up sensitive, shy and retiring, with a taste for solitude and literary pursuits.

During the troubles in Hayti, his uncle and only daughter escaped from the Island, leaving every thing behind except the clothing upon their persons, and a few jewels they had hastily collected. Broken in spirits, feeble in health, Louis Le Croix reached Louisiana, only to die in his brother's arms and to leave his orphan daughter to his care. She was about ten years old and Bernard was twelve, and in their childhood was commenced a friendship which ripened into love and marriage. Bernard's father and mother lived long enough to see their first and only grandchild, and then died, leaving their son a large baronial estate, 500 slaves, and a vast amount of money.

Passionately fond of literature, aesthetic in his tastes, he devoted himself to poetry and the ancient classics; filled his home with the finest paintings and the most beautiful statuary, and had his gardens laid out in the most exquisite manner. And into that beautiful home he brought his young and lovely bride; but in that fair house where velvet carpets hushed her tread, and magnificence surrounded her path, she drooped and faded. Day by day her cheek grew paler, her footsteps slower, until she

passed away like a thing of love and light, and left her heart-broken husband and a child of six summers to mourn her loss.

Bernard, ever shy and sensitive, grew more so after the death of his wife. He sought no society; seemed to lose all interest in politics; and secluded himself in his library till he had almost passed from the recollection of his nearest neighbors. He superintended the education of his daughter, because he could not bear the thought of being separated from her. And she, seeing very little of society, and reading only from the best authors, both ancient and modern, was growing up with very little knowledge of the world, except what she learned from books.

Without any female relatives to guide her, she had no other associates than the servants of her household, and the family of Mr. Le Grange. Her mother's nurse and favorite servant had taken the charge of her after her death, and Agnes had been her nurse and companion.

Camilla, although [adored?] and petted by every one, and knowing no law but her own will, was still a very lovely child. Her father, wrapped in his literary pursuits, had left the entire control of his plantation to overseers, in whom he trusted almost implicitly. And many a tale of wrong and sorrow came to the ear of Camilla; for these simple-minded people had learned to love her, and to trust in her as an angel of mercy. Often would she interfere in their behalf, and tell the story of their wrongs to her father. And at her instance, more than one overseer had been turned away; which, coming to the ears of others, made them cautious how they offended the little lady, for young as she was they soon learned that she had great influence with her ease-loving father, who would comply with almost any fancy or request rather than see her unhappy or fretting.

And Camilla, knowing her power, insisted that Agnes' child should be raised as a white child, and the secret of his birth effectually concealed. At first, Mr. Le Croix thought it was a passing whim that she would soon forget; that the child would

amuse and interest her for awhile; and then she would tire of him as she had of other things; such as her birds, her squirrel, and even her Shetland pony. But when he found that instead of her intention being a passing whim it was a settled purpose, he made up his mind to accede to her wishes.

His plan was to take the child North, to have him educated, and then adopt him as his son. And in fact the plan rather suited him; for then he could care for him as a son, without acknowledging the relationship. And being a member of two nations having a Latin basis, he did not feel the same pride of race and contempt and repulsion for weaker races which characterizes the proud and imperious Anglo-Saxon.

The next Summer Mr. Le Croix took a journey to the North, taking Louis and Camilla with him. He found a very pleasant family school in New England; and having made suitable arrangements, he left Louis in the care of the matron, whose kindness and attentions soon won the child's heart; and before he left the North, Louis seemed perfectly contented with his new home.

Camilla was delighted with her tour; the constant companion of her father, she visited with him every place of amusement or interest they could find. She was much pleased with the factories; and watched with curious eyes the intelligent faces of the operatives, as they plied with ready fingers their daily tasks. Sometimes she would contrast their appearance with the laborers she had seen wending their way into their lowly huts; and then her face would grow sober even to sadness. A puzzled expression would flit over her countenance, as if she were trying to solve a problem which was inexplicable to her.

One day on the hunt for some new excitement, her father passed down Tremont St., and saw advertised, in large letters, on the entrance to Tremont Temple, "Anti Slavery Meeting;" and never having been in such a place before he entered, impelled by a natural curiosity to hear what could be said against a system in which he had

been involved from his earliest recollections, without taking the pains to examine it.

The first speaker was a colored man. This rather surprised him. He had been accustomed to colored men all the days of his life; and as such, he had known some of them to be intelligent, shrewd, and wide awake; but this was a new experience. The man had been a slave, and recounted in burning words the wrongs which had been heaped upon him. He told that he had been a husband and a father: that his wife had possessed (for a slave) the "fatal gift of beauty;" that a trader, from whose presence her soul had recoiled with loathing, had marked her as his prey. Then he told how he had knelt at his master's feet, and implored him not to sell her, but it was all in vain. The trader was rich in sin-cursed gold; and he was poor and weak. He next attempted to describe his feelings when he saw his wife and children standing on the auction block; and heard the coarse jests of the spectators, and the fierce competition of the bidders.

The speaker made a deep impression upon the minds of the audience; and even Le Croix, who had been accustomed to slavery all his life, felt a sense of guilt passing over him for his complicity in the system; whilst Camilla grew red and pale by turns, and clutching her little hands nervously together, said, "Father, let us go home."

Le Croix saw the deep emotion on his daughter's face, and the nervous twitchings of her lips, and regretted that he had introduced her to such an exciting scene.

When they were seated in their private parlor, Le Croix said: "Birdie, I am sorry that we attended that meeting this morning. I didn't believe a word that nigger said; and yet these people all drank it down as if every word were gospel truth. They are a set of fanatics, calculated to keep the nation in hot water. I hope that you will never enter such a place again. Did you believe one word that negro said?"

"Why, yes, Pa, I did, because our Isaac used to tell me just such a story as that. If I had shut my eyes, I could have imagined that it was Isaac telling his story."

"Isaac! What business had Isaac telling you any such stories?"

"Oh, Pa, don't get angry with Isaac. It wasn't his fault; it was mine.

"You know when you brought him home to drive the carriage, he used to look so sorrowful, and I said to him one day, Isaac, what makes you so sad? Why don't you laugh and talk, like Jerry and Sam?

"And he said, 'Oh Missus, I can't! Ise got a mighty heap of trouble on my mind.' And he looked so down-hearted when he said this, I wanted to know what was the matter; but he said, 'It won't do, for a little lady like you to know the troubles of we poor creatures,' but one day, when Sam came home from New Orleans he brought him a letter from his wife, and he really seemed to be overjoyed, and he kissed the letter, and put it in his bosom, and I never saw him look half so happy before. So the next day when I asked him to get the pony ready, he asked me if I wouldn't read it for him. He said he had been trying to make it out, but somehow he could not get the hang of the words, and so I sat down and read it to him. Then he told me about his wife, how beautiful she was; and how a trader, a real mean man, wanted to buy her, and that he had begged his master not to sell her; but it was no use. She had to go; but he was glad of one thing; the trader was dead, and his wife had got a place in the city with a very nice lady, and he hoped to see her when he went to New Orleans. Pa, I wonder how slavery came to be. I should hate to belong to anybody, wouldn't you, Pa?"

"Why, yes, darling, but then the negroes are contented, and wouldn't take their freedom, if you would give it to them."

"I don't know about that, Pa; there was Mr. Le Grange's Peter. Mr. Le Grange used to dress him so fine and treat him so well that he thought no one would ever tempt Peter to leave him; and he came North with him every year for three or four summers, and he always made out that he was afraid of the abolitionists—bobolitionists he used to call them—and Mr. Le Grange just believed that Peter was in earnest, and somehow he got Mrs. Le Grange to bring his wife

North to wait on her. And when they both got here, they both left; and Mrs. Le Grange had to wait on herself, until she got another servant. She told me she had got enough of the North, and never wanted to see it again so long as she lived; that she wouldn't have taken three thousand dollars for them."

"Well, darling, they would have never left, if these meddlesome abolitionists hadn't put it in their heads; but, darling, don't bother your brain about such matters. See what I have bought you this morning," said he, handing her a necklace of the purest pearls; "here, darling, is a birth-day present for you." Camilla took the necklace, and gazing absently upon it said, "I can't understand it."

"What is it, my little philosopher, that you can't understand?"

"Pa, I can't understand slavery; that man made me think it was something very bad. Do you think it can be right?"

Le Croix's face flushed suddenly, and he bit his lip, but said nothing, and commenced reading the paper.

"Why don't you answer me, Pa?" Le Croix's brow grew darker, but he tried to conceal his vexation, and quietly said, "Darling, never mind. Don't puzzle your little head about matters you cannot understand, and which our wisest statesmen cannot solve."

Camilla said no more, but a new train of thought had been awakened. She had lived so much among the slaves, and had heard so many tales of sorrow breathed confidentially into her ears, that she had unconsciously imbibed their view of the matter; and without comprehending the injustice of the system, she had learned to view it from their standpoint of observation.

What she had seen of slavery in the South had awakened her sympathy and compassion. What she had heard of it in the North had aroused her sense of justice. She had seen the old system under a new light. The good seed was planted, which was yet to yield its harvest of blessed deeds.

Chapter III

"What is the matter?" said St. Pierre Le Grange, as he entered suddenly the sitting-room of his wife, Georgietta Le Grange, and saw her cutting off the curls from the head of little girl about five years old, the child of a favorite slave.

"Matter enough!" said the angry wife, her cheeks red with excitement and her eyes half blinded with tears of vexation. "This child shan't stay here; and if she does, she shall never again be taken for mine."

"Who took her for yours? What has happened that has brought about all this excitement?"

"Just wait a minute," said Georgietta, trying to frame her excitement into words.

"Yesterday I invited the Le Fevres and the Le Counts, and a Northern lady they had stopping with Mrs. Le Fevre, to dine with us. To-day I told Ellen to have the servants all cleaned up, and looking as well as possible; and so I distributed around more than a dozen turbans, for I wanted Mrs. King to see how much better and happier our negroes looked here than they do when they are free in the North, and what should Ellen do but dress up her little minx in her best clothes, and curl her hair and let her run around in the front yard."

"So she overdid the thing," said Le Grange, beginning to comprehend the trouble.

"Yes, she did, but she will never do it again," exclaimed Mrs. Le Grange, her dark eyes flashing defiantly.

Le Grange bit his lip, but said nothing. He saw the storm that was brewing, and about to fall on the head of the hapless child and mother, and thought that he would do nothing to increase it.

"When Mrs. Le Fevre," continued Georgietta, "alighted from the carriage, she noticed the child, and calling the attention of the whole party to her, said, 'Oh, how beautiful she is! The very image of her father.' 'Mrs. Le Grange,' said she, after

passing the compliments of the day, 'I congratulate you on having such a beautiful child. She is the very image of her father. And how large she is for her age.' Just then Marie came to the door and said 'She's not my sister, that is Ellen's child.' I saw the gentlemen exchange glances, and the young ladies screw up their mouths to hide their merriment, while Mrs. Le Fevre, with all her obtuseness, seemed to comprehend the blunder, and she said, 'Child, you must excuse me, for my poor old eyes are getting so good for nothing I can hardly tell one person from the other.' I blundered some kind of answer, I hardly know what I said. I was almost ready to die with vexation; but this shall never happen again."

"What are you going to do?"

"You see what I have begun to do. I am going to have all this curling business broken up, and I am going to have her dressed in domestic, like the other little niggers. I'll let Ellen know that I am mistress here; and as soon as a trader comes along I mean to sell her. I want a new set of pearls anyhow."

Le Grange made no reply. He was fond of the child, but knowing what a termagant his wife was, he thought that silence like discretion was the better part of valor, and hastily beat a retreat from her presence.

"Take these curls and throw them away," said Mrs. Le Grange to Sally, her waiting-maid. "Move quick, and take this child into the kitchen, and don't let me see her in the front yard again. Do you hear what I say?" said Georgiette in a sharp, shrill tone. "Don't you let me see that child in the front yard again. Here, before you go, darken this room, and let me see if I can get any rest. I am so nervous, I am almost ready to fly."

Sally did as she was bidden; and taking the child to the kitchen, exclaimed to Milly, the cook, "Hi! Oh! there's been high times upstairs to-day."

"What's the matter?" said Milly, wiping the dough from her hands, and turning her face to Sally.

"Oh! Missus mad 'bout Ellen's child. She's mad as a March hare. See how she's cut all her hair off."

"A debil," said Milly. "What did she do dat for? She is allers up to some debilment. What did that poor innercence child do to her? I wonder what she'll get at next!"

"I don't know, but to-day when Mrs. Le Ferre come'd here she kissed the child, and said it was the very image of its father, and Missus just looked mad enough to run her through."

Milly, in spite of her indignation could not help laughing. "Well, that's a good joke. I guess Missus' high as ninety. What did Massa say?"

"He neber said a word; he looked like he'd been stealin' a sheep; and Missus she jist cut up high, and said she was going to keep her hair cut short, and have her dressed in domestic, and kept in the kitchen, and when she got a good chance she meant to sell her, for she wanted a new set of pearls anyhow. Massa neber said beans. I jist b'lieve he's feared of her. She's sich a mity piece. I spect some night the debil will come and fly way wid her. I hope so anyhow."

To which not very pious wish Milly replied, "I am fraid there is no such good luck. Nothin' don't s'prise me that Miss Georgiette does 'cause she's a chip off the old block. Her mother's poor niggers used to be cut up and slashed all the time; for she was a horse at the mill. De debil was in dat woman big as a sheep. Dere was Nancy, my fellow servant; somehow she got a spite agin Nancy's husban', said he shouldn't come dere any more. Pore Nancy, her and Andy war libing together in dar nice little cabin, and Nancy did keep ebery ting shinin' like a new pin, 'cause she would work so hard when she was done her task for Missus. But one day Missus got de debil in her, and sayed Andy shouldn't come der any more, and she jist had all Nancy's tings took out de cabin and shut it up, and made her come and sleep in de house. Pore Nancy, she cried as if her heart would break right in two; and she says why does you take my husban' from me? and Missus said I did it to please my own self, and den

Nancy kneeled at her feet and said, 'Missus I'll get up before day and set up till twelve or one o'clock at night and work for you, but please don't take me from my husban'. An' what do you think ole Missus did? Why she jist up wid her foot and kicked Nancy in de mouf, and knocked out two of her teef. I seed her do it wid my own blessed eyes. An' I sed to myself de debil will never git his own till he gits you. Well she did worry dat pore cretur almost to death. She used to make her sleep in the room wid her chillen, and locked de door ebery night, and Sundays she'd lebe some one to watch her, she was so fraid she'd git to see her husban'. An' dis Miss Georgiette is de very moral of her Ma, and she's jist as big as a spitfire."

"Hush," said Milly, "here comes Jane. Don't say no more 'bout Missus, cause she's real white people's nigger, and tells all she knows, and what she don't."

Chapter IV

"I am really sorry, Ellen, but I can't help it. Georgiette has taken a dislike to the child, and there is no living in peace with her unless I sell the child or take it away."

"Oh! Mr. St. Pierre, you would not sell that child when it is your own flesh and blood?" Le Grange winced under these words.

"No, Ellen, I'll never consent to sell the child, but it won't do for her to stay here. I've made up my mind to send her North, and have her educated."

"And then I'll never see my darling any more."

"But, Ellen, that is better than having her here to be knocked around by Georgiette, and if I die to be sold as a slave. It is the best thing I can do,—hang old Mrs. Le Fevre's tongue; but I guess it would have come out some time or the other. I just tell you what I'll do, Ellen. I'll take the child down to New Orleans, and make out to Georgiette that I am going to sell her, but instead of that, I'll get a friend of mine who is going to Pennsylvania to take her with him, and have her boarded there, and educated. Nobody need know anything about her being colored. I'd send you both,

Ellen, but, to tell you the truth, the plantation is running down, and the crops are so short this year I can't afford it; but when times get better, I'll send you up there and tell you where you can find her."

"Well, Mr. St. Pierre, that is better than having Missus knocking her around or selling her to one of those old mean nigger traders, and never having a chance to see my darling no more. But, Mr. St. Pierre, before you take her away won't you please give me her likeness? Maybe I won't know her when I see her again."

Le Grange consented, and when he went to the city again he told his wife he was going to sell the child.

"I am glad of it," said Georgiette. "I would have her mother sold, but we can't spare her; she is so handy with her needle, and does all the cutting out on the place."

Le Grange's Plan

"The whole fact is this Joe, I am in an awkward fix. I have got myself into a scrape, and I want you to help me out of it. You were good at such things when we were at College, and I want you to try your hand again."

"Well, what's the difficulty now?"

"Well, it is rather a serious one. I have got a child on my hands, and I don't know what to do with it."

"Whose child is it?"

"Now, that's just where the difficulty lies. It is the child of one of my girls, but it looks so much like me, that my wife don't want it on the place. I am too hard up just now to take the child and her mother, North, and take care of them there. And to tell you the truth I am too humane to have the child sold here as a slave. Now in a word do you think that among your Abolitionist friends in the North you could find any one who would raise the child and bring it up like a white child."

"I don't know about that St. Pierre. There are a number of our people in the North,

who do two things. They hate slavery and hate negroes. They feel like the woman who in writing to her husband said, they say (or don't say) that absence conquers love; for the longer you stay away the better I love you. But then I know some who, I believe, are really sincere, and who would do anything to help the colored people. I think I know two or three families who would be willing to take the child, and do a good part by her. If you say so, I will write to a friend whom I have now in mind, and if they will consent I will take the child with me when I go North, provided I can do it without having it discovered that she is colored, for it would put me in an awkward fix to have it known that I took a colored child away with me."

"Oh, never fear," said St. Pierre, slapping his friend on the shoulder. "The child is whiter than you are, and you know you can pass for white."

True to his promise, Josiah Collins wrote to a Quaker friend, whom he knew in Pennsylvania, and told him the particulars of the child's history, and the wishes of her father, and the compensation he would give. In a few days he received a favorable response in which the friend told him he was glad to have the privilege of rescuing one of that fated race from a doom more cruel than the grave; that the compensation was no object; that they had lost their only child, and hoped that she would in a measure fill the void in their hearts.

Highly gratified with the kind letter of the friend, Le Grange gave the child into the charge of Josiah Collins, and putting a check for five hundred dollars in his hand, parted with them at the [station].

He went back into the country, and told his wife that he had found a trader, who thought the child so beautiful, and that he had bought her to raise as a fancy girl, and had given him five hundred dollars for her. "And here," said he, handing her a set of beautiful pearls, "is my peace offering."

Georgette's eyes glistened as she entertwined the pearls amid the wealth of her raven hair, and clasped them upon her beautifully rounded arms.

What mattered it to her if every jewel cost a heart throb, and if the whole set were bought with the price of blood? They suited her style of beauty, and she cared not what they cost. Proud, imperious, and selfish, she knew no law but her own will; no gratification but the enjoyment of her own desires.

Passing from the boudoir of his wife, he sought the room where Ellen sat, busily cutting and arranging the clothing for the field hands, and gazing furtively around he said, "here is Minnie's likeness. I have managed all right." "Thank Heaven!" said the sad hearted mother, as she paused to dry her tears, and then resumed her needle. "Anything is better—than Slavery."

Chapter V

Before I proceed any further with my story, let me tell the reader something of the Le Granges, whom I have so unceremoniously introduced.

Le Grange, like Le Croix, was of French and Spanish descent, and his father had also been a Haytian refugee. But there the similitude ends; unlike Le Croix, he had grown up a gay and reckless young man, fond of sports, and living an aimless life.

His father had on his plantation a beautiful quadroon girl, named Ellen, whom he had bought in Richmond because she begged him to buy her when he had bought her mother, who had been recommended to him as a first-rate cook. They had been servants in what was called one of the first families of Virginia, and had been treated by their mistress with more kindness and consideration than generally fell to the lot of persons in their condition. As long as she lived, they had been well fed and well clothed, and except the deprivation of their freedom, had known but few of the hardships so incident to slave life; but a reverse had fallen upon them.

Their mistress had intended to set them free, but, dying suddenly, she had failed to carry out her intention. Her property fell into the hands of distant heirs, who sold it all, and divided it among themselves. Ellen and her mother were put up at auction,

when a kindly looking old Frenchman bought the mother. Ellen stood trembling by; but, when she saw her mother's new master, she started forth, and kneeling at his feet, she begged him to buy her. The mother joined in and said, "Do, Massa, and I'll serve you faithful day and night; there is a heap of work in these old bones yet."

Mr. Le Grange told her to be quiet, and he would buy her. And, true to his word, although the bidding ran high, and the competition was fierce, he bought her; and the next day, he started with them for his plantation on Red River.

His son, Louis, had just graduated, and was spending the winter at home, in just that mood of which it is said that Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do. Milly, who knew the wiles of the world better than Ellen, tried to keep her as much as possible out of his way; but her caution was all in vain. She saw her child engulfed, as thousands of her race had been.

Mrs. Le Grange, when she became apprised of the condition of things, grew very angry; but, instead of venting her indignation upon the head of her offending son, she poured out the vials of her wrath upon the defenseless girl. She made up her mind to sell her off the place, and picked the opportunity, while her son was absent, to send her to a trader's pen in the city. When Louis came home, he found Milly looking very sullen and distressed, and her eyes red with weeping.

"What is the matter?" said Louis.

"Matter enough," said Milly. "Missus done gone and sold Ellen."

"Sold Ellen! Why, how did that happen?"

"Why, she found out all about her, and said she should not stay on the place another day, and so she sent her down to Orleans to the nigger traders, and my heart's most broke," and Milly sat down, wiping her tears with her apron.

"Never mind, Milly," said Louis, "I'll go down to New Orleans and bring her back. Mother sha'n't do as she pleases with me, as if I were a boy, and must always be tied to her apron string. I've got some money of my own, and I mean to find Ellen if I

have to look all over the country."

He entered the dining room, and saw his mother seated at the tea table, looking as bland and pleasant as a Spring morning, and asked, "Where is Ellen?"

The smile died from her lips, and she answered, curtly, "She is out of your reach [?]. I've sold her."

"But where have you sold her?"

"Out of your reach, and that is all I am going to tell you."

Louis, without saying another word went out to the coachman, and asked what time the cars left the station.

"Ten minutes to nine."

"Can you take me there in time to reach the train? I want to go to the city tonight."

"Dunno, massa; my best horse is lame, and what——"

"Never mind your excuse; here," said he, throwing him a dollar, "hitch up as quick as possible, and take me there without any 'buts' or 'ifs.'"

"All right, massa," said Sam, grinning with delight. "I'll have you over there in short order."

The carriage harnessed, Samuel found no difficulty with his horses, and reached the depot almost a half hour before the time.

Louis arrived in the city after midnight, and the next day he devoted to hunting for Ellen. He searched through different slave pens, inquired of all the traders, until at last, ready to abandon his search in hopelessness, he heard of a private jail in the suburbs of the city. Nothing daunted by his failure, he found the place and Ellen also.

The trader eyed him keenly, and saw from his manner that he was in earnest about having the girl.

"She is not for sale in this city. Whoever buys her must give me a pledge to take her

out of this city. That was the bargain I made with her mistress. She made me promise her that I would sell her to no one in the vicinity of the city. In fact, she wanted me to sell her out of the way of her son. His mother said she had dedicated him to the Blessed Virgin, and I reckon she wanted to keep him out of the way of temptation. Now what will you give me for her?"

"Will you take a thousand for her?"

"Now you ain't saying nothing," said the trader, shutting one eye, and spitting on the floor.

"How will twelve hundred do?"

"It won't do at all, not for such a fancy article as that. I'd rather keep her for myself than sell her at such a low figure. Why, just look at her! Why, she's pretty as a picture! Look at that neck, and her shoulders. See how she carries her head! And look at that splendid head of hair. Why some of our nabobs would give three thousand dollars; but I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll let you have her for two thousand dollars; fancy article is cheap at that."

Louis demurred, but the trader was inexorable, and rather than let the opportunity to rescue Ellen from him escape he paid the exorbitant price, and had her brought to his hotel. His next work was to get a house for Ellen, and have her taken there, installed as his mistress. He then went back to the plantation as if nothing had happened, and his mother soon thought he was reconciled about the loss of Ellen. Only Milly knew his secret, and she kept it as a secret thing.

"I've got some pleasant news for you, Louis," said Mrs. Le Grange, one day to her son: "your uncle and cousin are coming down from Virginia, and I want you to be all attention to your cousin, for she is very rich. She has a fortune in her right, which was left her by her grandmother, and besides she will have another one at her father's death, added, to which they say, she is a very beautiful girl."

Great preparations were made for the expected guests. Georgiette was Mrs. Le

Grange's brother's child, and having been separated from him for more than fifteen years she was full of joyful anticipations, when he apprised her of his intention of visiting her in company with his daughter. At length the welcome day arrived, and Mrs. Le Grange stood arranging her jewels and ribbons to receive the guests.

"You are welcome to Louisiana," said she, removing Georgiette's shawl, and tenderly kissing her, "and you too, brother," she said, as Mr. Monteith followed his daughter. "How beautiful Georgiette has grown since I saw her. Why darling you look charming! I'm afraid I shan't be able to keep you long for some of the beaux will surely run away with you." "My son," said Mrs. Le Grange, introducing Louis, who just then entered the door.

Louis bowed very low, and expressed his pleasure in seeing them; and hoped they would have a happy time, and that nothing should be wanting on his part, to make it so. Very pleasantly passed the time away; Georgiette was in high and charming spirits; and many a pleasant ride and delightful saunter she took with her cousin through the woods, or in visiting other plantations. She was very popular among the planters' sons; admired by the young men, but feared and envied by the girls.

And thus the hours passed in a whirl of pleasurable excitement, until Louis actually imagined himself in love with her, and found himself one pleasant afternoon offering her his hand and heart.

She blushed and sighed, and referred him to her papa; and in a few weeks they were engaged.

At length the time of their departure came; and Louis, after accompanying them to New Orleans, returned to make ready for the wedding. His father made him a present of a large plantation, which he stocked from his own purse, with three hundred slaves; and installed Ellen there as housekeeper till the arrival of the new mistress.

Chapter VI

"Thee is welcome to S.," said the cheerful voice of Thomas Carpenter, as Josiah Collins alighted, bringing with him his charge; "and is this the little child thee wrote me about? I am heartily glad thee has rescued her from that dreadful system!"

"Anna," said he, turning to his wife, who had just entered the room, "here is our friend, Josiah Collins, and the little girl I told thee about."

"I am glad thee has come," said Anna, "sit down and make thyself at home. And this is the little girl thee wrote Thomas about. She is a beautiful child," continued Anna, gazing admiringly at the child. "I hope she will be contented. Does she fret about her mother?"

"Not much; she would sometimes ask, 'where is mamma?' But the ladies in the cars were very kind to her, and she was quite at home with them. I told them I was taking her North; that I thought the North would better agree with her; and that it was not convenient for her mother to come on just now. I was really amused with the attention she received from the Southern ladies; knowing how they would have shrunk from such offices if they had known that one drop of the outcast blood ran in her veins."

"Why, Josiah," said Anna, "I have always heard that there was more prejudice against the colored people in the North than in the South. There is a difference in the manifestations of this feeling, but I do not think there is as much prejudice here as there. [Here?] we have a prejudice which is [formed from?] traditional ideas. We see in many parts of the North a very few of the colored people, and our impressions of them have received their coloring more or less from what the slaveholders have said of them."

"We have been taught that they are idle, improvident, and unfitted for freedom, and incapable of progression; and when we see them in the cities we see them

overshadowed by wealth, enterprise, and activity, so that our unfavorable impressions are too often confirmed. Still if one of that class rises above this low mental condition, we know that there are many who are willing to give such a one a healthy recognition."

"I know that there are those that have great obstacles to overcome, but I think that while Southerners may have more personal likings for certain favorite servants, they have stronger prejudices than even we have, or if they have no more than we have, they have more self-restraint, and show it more virulently."

"But I [think?] they do not seem to have any horror of personal contact."

"Of course not; constant familiarity with the race has worn away all sense of physical repulsion but there is a prejudice which ought to be an American feeling; it is a prejudice against their rising in the scale of humanity. A prejudice which virtually says you are down, and I mean to keep you down. As a servant I tolerate you; you are useful as you are valuable, but rise one step in the scale of being, and I am ready to put you down. I see this in the treatment that the free colored people receive in parts of the South; they seem to me to be the outcasts of an outcast race. They are denied the right to walk in certain public places accessible to every class unless they go as nurses, and are forbidden to assemble in evening meetings, and forced to be in the house unless they have passes, by an early hour in the night, and in fact they are hampered or hemmed in on every side; subject to insults from any rude, coarse or brutal white, and in case of outrages, denied their testimony. Prejudiced as we are in Pennsylvania, we do not go that far."

"But, Josiah, we have much to blush for in Pennsylvania; colored people are denied the privilege of riding in our street cars. Only last week when I was in Philadelphia I saw a very decent-looking colored woman with a child, who looked too feeble to walk, and the child too heavy for her to carry. She beckoned to a conductor, but he swept by and took no more heed of her than if she had been a dog. There was a

young lady sitting in the car, who remarked to her mother, as a very filthy-looking white man entered, 'See, they will let that filthy creature ride and prohibit a decent respectable colored person!' The mother quietly assented.

"From her dress I took her to be a Quakeress, for she had a lovely dress of dove-colored silk. The young lady had scarcely uttered the words when a young man who sat next the mother deliberately arose, and beckoned to the man with the sooty clothes to take his seat; but fortunately for the Quakeress, a lady who was sitting next her daughter arose just at that moment, and left the seat, and the old man without noticing the manoeuvre passed over to the other side, and thus avoided the contact. I was amused, however, about one thing; for the young man who gave up his seat was compelled to ride about a mile standing."

"Served him right," said Thomas Carpenter; "it was a very contemptible action, to attempt to punish the hardihood of the young lady by attempting to soil her mother's dress; and yet little souls who feel a morbid satisfaction in trampling on the weak, always sink themselves in the scale of manhood."

While this conversation was going on, the tea bell rang, and Josiah and his little charge sat down to a well supplied table; for the Friends, though plain and economical, are no enemies to good living.

Anna had brought the high-chair in which their own darling had sat a few months before, when she had made gladness and sunshine around her parent's path.

There was a tender light in the eye of the Quakeress as she dusted the chair, and sat Minnie at the table.

"Do you think," said Thomas, addressing Josiah, "that we will ever outgrow this wicked, miserable prejudice?"

"Oh, yes, but it must be the work of time. Both races have their work to do. The colored man must outgrow his old condition of things, and thus create around him a new class of associations. This generation has known him as a being landless, poor,

and ignorant. One of the most important things for him to do is to acquire land. He will never gain his full measure of strength until (like Anteus) he touches the earth. And I think here is the great fault, or misfortune of the race; they seem to me to readily accept their situation, and not to let their industrial aspirations rise high enough. I wish they had more of the earth hunger that characterizes the German, or the concentration of purpose which we see in the Jews."

"I think," said Thomas, "that the Jews and Negroes have one thing in common, and that is their power of endurance. They, like the negro, have lived upon an idea, and that is the hope of a deliverer yet to come; but I think this characteristic more strongly developed in the Jews than in the Negroes."

"Doubtless it is, but their origin and history have been different. The Jews have a common ancestry and grand traditions, that have left alive their pride of race. 'We have Abraham to our father,' they said, when their necks were bowed beneath the Roman yoke."

"But I do not think the negro can trace with certainty his origin back to any of the older civilizations, and here for more than two hundred years his history has been a record of blood and tears, of ignorance, degradation, and slavery. And when nominally free, prejudice has assigned him the lowest positions and the humblest situations. I have not much hope of their progress while they are enslaved in the South."

"Well, Josiah, I have faith enough in the ultimate triumph of our principles to believe that slavery will bite the dust before long."

"I don't know, friend Carpenter; for the system is very strongly rooted and grounded in the institutions of the land, and has entrenched itself in the strongholds of Church and State, fashion, custom, and social life. And yet when I was in the South, I saw on every hand a growing differentiation towards the Government."

"Do you know, Josiah, that I have more hope from the madness and folly of the

South than I have from the wisdom and virtue of the North? I have read too 'whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.'"

Chapter VII

Ten years have elapsed since Minnie came to brighten the home of Thomas Carpenter, and although within the heart of Anna there is a spot forever green and sacred to the memory of her only child, yet Minnie holds an undivided place in their affections.

There is only one subject which is to them a source of concern. It is the connection of Minnie with the colored race. Not that they love her less on account of the blood that is in her veins, but they dread the effect its discovery would have upon the pleasant social circle with which she is surrounded, and also the fear that the revelation would be painful to her.

They know that she is Anti-Slavery in her principles. They have been careful to instil into her young mind a reverence for humanity, and to recognize beneath all externals, whether of condition or color, the human soul all written over with the handmarks of divinity and the common claims of humanity.

She has known for years that their home has been one of the stations of the underground railroad. And the Anti-Slavery lecturer, whether white or colored, has always been among the welcomed guests of her home. Still they shrink from the effect the knowledge would have on her mind. They know she is willing to work for the colored race; but they could not divine what it cost her to work with them.

"It seems to me, Anna, that we ought to reveal to Minnie the fact of her connection with the colored race. I am afraid that she will learn in some way that will rudely shock her; whereas we might break it to her in the tenderest manner. Every time a fugitive comes I dread that our darling will be recognized."

"Nay, Thomas; thy fears have made thee over sensitive. Who would imagine he saw

in this bright and radiant girl of fifteen the little five-year-old child we took to our hearts and home? I never feel any difference between her and the whitest child in the village as far as prejudice is concerned. And if every body in the village knew her origin I would love her just as much as I ever did, for she is a dear good child."

"Well, dear, if you think it is best to keep it a secret, I will not interfere. But we must not forget that Minnie will soon be a young lady; that she is very beautiful, and even now she begins to attract admiration. I do not think it would be right for us to let her marry a white man without letting her know the prejudices of society, and giving her a chance to explain to him the conditions of things."

"Yes," said Anna, "that is true; I have heard that traces of that blood will sometimes reappear even in grandchildren, when it has not been detected in the first. And to guard against difficulty which might arise from such a course, I think it is better to apprise her of the facts in the case."

"It is time enough for that. I want her to finish her education before she thinks of marrying, and I am getting her ready to go to Philadelphia, where she will find an excellent school as I have heard it very highly spoken of. She is young and happy, trouble will come time enough, let me not hasten its advent."

But if time has only strewed the path of Minnie with flowers, and ripened the promised beauty of her childhood, it has borne a heavy hand upon the destiny of the La Croix family.

La Croix is dead; but before his death he took the precaution to have Louis emancipated, and then made him a joint heir with his daughter. The will he entrusted to the care of Camilla; but the deed of emancipation he placed in the hands of Miriam, saying, "Here are your free papers, and here are Louis'. There is nothing in this world sure but death; and it is well to be on the safe side. Some one might be curious enough to search out his history; and if there should be no legal claim to his freedom, he might be robbed of both his liberty and his inheritance; so keep these

papers, and if ever the hour comes when you or he should need them, you must show me."

Miriam did as she was bidden; but her heart was lighter when she knew that freedom had come so near her and Louis.

Le Croix, before his death, had sold the greater part of his slaves, and invested the money in Northern bonds and good Northern securities. Camilla had married a gentleman from the North, and is living very happily upon the old plantation. She does not keep an overseer, and tries to do all in her power to ameliorate the condition of her slaves; still she is not satisfied with the system, and is trying to prepare her slaves for freedom, by inducing them to form, as much as possible, habits of self-reliance, and self-restraint, which they will need in the freedom which she has determined they shall enjoy as soon as she can arrange her affairs to that effect. But she also has to proceed with a great deal of caution.

The South is in a state of agitation and [foment?]. The air is laden with rumors of a [rising?] conflict between the North and the South, and any want of allegiance to Southern opinions is punished either as a crime if the offender is a man, or with social ostracism and insult if a woman.

The South in the palmy days of her pride and power would never tolerate any heresy to her creed, whose formula of statement might have been written we believe in the divine right of the Master, to take advantage of the weakness, ignorance, and poverty of the slave; that might makes right, and that success belongs to the strongest arm.[1]

Some of her former friends were beginning to eye her with coldness and suspicion because she would not join in their fanatical hatred of the North and because she would profess her devotion to the old flag, while they were ready to spit upon and trample it under foot.

Her adopted brother was still in the North, and strange to say he did not share her

feelings; his sympathies were with the South, and although he was too young to take any leading part in the events there about to transpire, yet year after year when he spent his vacations at home, he attended the hustings and political meetings, and there he learned to consider the sentiment, "My country right or wrong," as a proper maxim for political action.

This difference in their sentiments did not produce the least estrangement between them; only Camilla regretted to see Louis ready to raise his hand against the freedom of his mother's race, although he was perfectly unconscious of his connection with it, for the conflict which was then brewing between the North and the South was in fact a struggle between despotism and idea; between freedom on one side and slavery on the other.

Chapter VIII

"Commencement over, what are you going to do with yourself?"

"I don't know; loaf around, I suppose."

"Why don't you go to Newport?"

"Don't want to; got tired of it last year."

"Saratoga?"

"A perfect bore!"

"Niagara?"

"Been there twice."

"A pedestrian tour to the White Mountains?"

"Haven't got energy enough."

"What will you do?"

"Stay at home and fight mosquitoes."

"Very pleasant employment. I don't envy you, but I can tell you something better than that."

"What is it?" said his companion, yawning.

"Come, go home with me."

"Go home with you! Where is that, and what is the attraction?"

"Well, let me see, it is situated in one of the most beautiful valleys of Western Pennsylvania, our village is environed by the most lovely hills, and nestling among the trees, with its simple churches and unpretending homes of quiet beauty and good taste, it is one of the most pleasant and picturesque places I ever saw. And, besides, as you love to hunt and fish, we have one of the finest streams of trout, and some of the most excellent game in the woods."

"Is that all?"

"Why, isn't that enough? You must be rather hard to please this morning."

"Think so?"

"Yes, but I have not told you the crowning attraction."

"What is it?"

"Oh, one of the most beautiful girls I ever saw! We call her the lily of the valley."

"Describe her."

"I can't. It would be like attempting to paint a sun beam or doing what no painter has ever done, sketch a rainbow."

"You are very poetical this morning, but I want you to do as our President sometimes tells us, proceed from the abstract to the concrete."

"Well, let me begin: she has the most beautiful little feet. I never see her stepping along without thinking of Cinderella and the glass slipper. As to eyes, they are either dark brown or black, I don't know which; but I do know they are beautiful; and her hair, well, she generally wears that plain in deference to the wishes of her Quaker

friends, but sometimes in the most beautiful ripples of golden brown I ever saw."

"That will do, now tell me who she is? You spoke of her Quaker friends. Is she not their daughter?"

"No, there seems to be some mystery about her history. About ten years ago, my father brought her to Josiah Carpenter's but he's always been reticent about her, in fact I never took the pains to inquire. She's a great favorite in the village, and everybody says she is as beautiful as she is good, and vice versa."

"Well, I'd like to see this paragon of yours. I believe I'll go."

"Well, let us get ready."

"When do you start?"

"To-morrow."

"All right. I'll be on hand." And with these words the two friends parted to meet again the next day at the railroad station.

The first of the speakers is the son of Josiah Collins, and his friend is Louis Le Croix, Camilla's adopted brother. He is somewhat changed within the last ten years. Time has touched the golden wealth of his curls with a beautiful deep auburn, and the rich full tones of his voice tell that departed is written upon his childhood.

He is strongly Southern in his feelings, but having been educated in the North, whilst he is an enthusiast in defense of his section, as he calls the South, he is neither coarse and brutal in actions, nor fanatical in his devotion to slavery. He thinks the Negroes are doing well enough in slavery, if the Abolitionists would only let matters rest, and he feels a sense of honor in defending the South. She is his mother, he says, and that man is an ingrate who will not stand by his mother and defend her when she is in peril.

He and Charles Collins are fast friends, but [on the subject of slavery they are entirely opposed?]. And so on that point they have agreed to disagree. They often

have animated and exciting discussions, but they [pass?] and Josiah and Louis are just as friendly as they were before.

There were two arrivals the next evening in the [quiet?] village of S. One was Charles Collins, the other his Southern friend, who was received with the warmest welcome, and soon found himself at home in the pleasant society of his friend's family. The evening was enlivened with social chat and music, until ten o'clock, when Josiah gathered his children and having read the Bible in a deeply impressive manner, breathed one of the most simple and fervent prayers he had ever heard.

While they were bending at prayer in this pleasant home, a shabby looking man came walking slowly and wearily into the village. He gazed cautiously around and looked anxiously in the street as though he were looking for some one, but did not like to trust his business to every one.

At length he saw an elderly man, dressed in plain clothes, and a broad brim hat, and drawing near he spoke to him in a low and hesitating voice, and asked if he knew a Mr. Thomas Carpenter.

"My name is Carpenter," said the friend, "come with me."

There was something in the voice, and manner of the friend that assured the stranger. His whole manner changed. A peaceful expression stole over his dark, sad face, and the drooping limbs seemed to be aroused by a new infusion of energy.

"Come in," said Thomas, as he reached his door, "come in, thee's welcome to stop and rest with us."

"Anna," said Thomas,[2] his face beaming with kindness, "I've brought thee a guest. Here is another passenger by the Underground Railroad."

"I'm sure thee's welcome," said Anna, handing him a chair, "sit down, thee looks very tired. Where did thee come from?"

Moses, that was the fugitive's name, hesitated a moment.

"Oh, never fear, thee's among friends; thee need not be afraid to tell all about thyself."

Moses then told them that he had come from Kentucky.

"And how did thee escape?"

He said, "I walked from Lexington to Covington."

"Why, that was almost one hundred miles, and did thee walk all that way?"

"Yes, sir," said he, "I hid by day, and walked by night."

"Did no one interrupt?"

"Yes, one man said to me, 'Where's your pass?' I suppose I must have grown desperate, for I raised my fists and said dem's my passes; and he let me alone. I don't know whether he was friendly or scared, but he let me alone."

"And how then?"

"When I come to Covington I found that I could not come across the river without a pass, but I watched my chance, and hid myself on a boat, and I got across. I'd heard of you down home."

"How did you?"

"Oh, we's got some few friends dere, but we allers promise not to tell."

Anna and Thomas[3] smiled at his reticence, which had grown into a habit.

"Were you badly treated?"

"Not so bad as some, but I allers wanted my freedom, I did."

"Well, we will not talk about thee any more; if thee walked all that distance thee must be very tired and we'll let thee rest. There's thy bed. I hope thee'll have a good night's rest, and feel better in the morning."

"Thankee marm," said Moses, "you's mighty good."

"Oh no, but I always like to do my duty by my fellow men! Now, be quiet, and get a

good night's sleep. Thee looks excited. Thee mustn't be uneasy. Thee's among friends."

A flood of emotions crept over the bosom of Moses when his kind friends left the room. Was this freedom, and was this the long wished for North? and were these the Abolitionists of whom he had heard so much in the South? They who would allure the colored people from their homes in the South and then leave them to freeze and starve in the North? He had heard all his life that the slaveholders were the friends of the South, and the language of his soul had been, "If these are my friends, save me from my foes." He had lived all his life among the white people of the South, and had been owned by several masters, but he did not know that there was so much kindness among the white race, till he had rested in a Northern home, and among Northern people.

Here kindness encouraged his path, and in that peaceful home every voice that fell upon his ear was full of tenderness and sympathy. True, there were rough, coarse, brutal men even in that village, who for a few dollars or to prove their devotion to the South, would have readily remanded him to his master, but he was not aware of that. And so when he sank to his rest a sense of peace and safety stole over him, and his sleep was as calm and peaceful as the slumber of a child.

The next morning he looked refreshed, but still his strength was wasted by his great physical exertion and mental excitement; and Thomas[4] thought he had better rest a few days till he grew stronger and better prepared to travel; for Thomas[5] noticed that he was nervous, starting at the sound of every noise, and often turning his head to the door with an anxious, frightened look.

Thomas would have gladly given him shelter and work, and given him just wages, but he dared not do so. He was an American citizen it is true, but at that time slavery reigned over the North and ruled over the South, and he had not the power under the law of the land to give domicile, and break his bread to that poor, hunted and flying

man; for even then they were hunting in the South and sending out their human bloodhounds to search for him in the North.

Throughout the length and breadth of the land, from the summit of the rainbow-crowned Niagara to the swollen waters of the Mexican Gulf; from the golden gates of sunrise to the gorgeous portals of departing day, there was not a hill so high, a forest so secluded, a glen so sequestered, nor mountain so steep, that he knew he could not be tracked and hailed in the name of the general government.

"What's the news, friend Carpenter? any new arrivals?" said Josiah Collins in a low voice to Thomas.

"Yes, a very interesting case; can't you come over?"

"Yes, after breakfast. By the way, you must be a little more cautious than usual. Charley came home last night, and brought a young friend with him from college. I think from his conversation that he is either a Southerner himself, or in deep sympathy with the South."

Both men spoke in low tones, for although they were Northerners, they were talking about a subject on which they were compelled to speak with bated breaths.

After breakfast Josiah came over, but Moses seemed so heavy and over wearied that they did not care to disturb him. There was a look of dejection and intense sadness on the thin worn face, and a hungry look in the mournful eyes, as if his soul had been starving for kindness and sympathy. Sometimes he would forget his situation, and speak hopefully of the future, but still there was a weariness that he could not shake off, a languor that seemed to pervade every nerve and muscle.

Thomas thought it was the natural reaction of the deep excitement, through which he just passed, that the tension of his nerves had been too great, but that a few days rest and quiet would restore him to his normal condition; but that hope soon died away.

The tension, excitement, and consequent exhaustion had been too much. Reason tottered on its throne, and he became a raving maniac; in his moments of delirium he

would imagine that he was escaping from slavery; that the pursuers were upon his back; that they had caught him, and were rebinding him about to take him back to slavery, and then it was heartrending to hear him beg, and plead to be carried to Thomas Carpenter's.

He would reach out his emaciated hands, and say "Carry me to Mr. Carpenter's, that good man's house," for that name which had become more precious to him than a household to his soul, still lingered amid shattered cells. But the delirium spent its force, and through the tempests of his bosom the light of reason came back.

One night he slept more soundly than usual; and on the next morning his faithful friends saw from the expression of his countenance and the light in his eyes that his reason had returned. They sent for their family physician, a man in whose honor they could confide. All that careful nursing and medical skill could do was done, but it was in vain; his strength was wasted; the silver cord was loosed, and the golden bowl was broken; his life was fast ebbing away. Like a tempest tossed mariner dying in sight of land, so he passing away from earth, found the precious, longed for, and dearly bought prize was just before, but his hand was too feeble to grasp, his arms too powerless to hold it.

His friends saw from the expression of his face that he had something to say; and they bent down to catch the last words of the departing spirit.

"I am dying," he said, "but I am thankful that I have come this near to freedom."

He attempted to say no more, the death rattles sounded in his throat; the shadows that never deceive flitted o'er his face, and he was dead. His spirit gone back to God, another witness against the giant crime of the land.

Josiah came again to see him, and entered the room just as the released spirit winged its flight. Silently he uncovered him as if paying that reverence to the broken casket which death exacts for his meanest subjects. With tenderness and respect they prepared the body for the grave, followed him to the silent tomb, and left him to his

dreamless sleep.

[Installment missing.]

Chapter IX

"Friend Carpenter, I have brought a friend to see you. He is a real hot-headed Southerner, and I have been trying to convert him, but have been almost ready to give it up as a hopeless task. I thought as you are so much better posted than I am on the subject, you might be able to convert him from the error of his ways. He is a first-rate fellow, my College chum. He has only one fault, he will defend Slavery. Cure him of that, and I think he will be as near perfect as young men generally are."

Friend Carpenter smiled at this good-natured rally, and said, "It takes time for all things. Perhaps your friend is not so incorrigible as you think he is."

"I don't know," said Charley, "but here he is; he can speak for himself."

"Oh the system is well enough of itself, but like other things, it is liable to abuse."

"I think, my young friend," said Thomas, "thee has never examined the system by the rule of impartial justice, which tells us to do to all men as we would have them do to us. If thee had, thee would not talk of the abuses of Slavery, when the system is an abuse itself. I am afraid thee has never gauged the depth of its wickedness. Thy face looks too honest and frank to defend this system from conviction. Has thee ever examined it?"

"Why, no, I have always been used to it."

Louis, who liked the honest bluntness of the Quaker, would have willingly prolonged the conversation, simply for the sake of the argument, but just then Minnie entered, holding in her hand a bunch of flowers, and started to show them to her father, before she perceived that any company was in the room.

"Oh father," said she, "see what I have brought you!" when her eye fell upon the

visitors, and a bright flush overspread her cheek, lending it additional beauty.

Charles immediately arose, and giving her his hand, introduced her to his friend.

"I am glad to see you, Minnie; you are looking so well this summer," said Charles, gazing on her with unfeigned admiration.

"I am glad you think so," said she, with charming frankness.

Some business having called friend Carpenter from the room, the young people had a pleasant time to themselves, talking of books, poetry, and the current literature of the day, although being students, their acquaintance with these things was somewhat limited. By the time they were ready to go, Thomas had re-entered the room and bidding them good-bye, cordially invited them to return again.

"What do you think of her?" said Charles to his friend.

"Beautiful as a dream. The half had not been told. Her acquaintance pays me for my trip; yes, I would like to become better acquainted with her; there was such a charming simplicity about her, and such unaffected grace that I am really delighted with her. How is it that you have never fallen in love with her?"

"Oh, I have left that for you; but in fact we have almost grown together, played with each other when we were children, until she appears like one of our family, and to marry her would be like marrying my own sister."

"How does thee like Charles' friend?" said Minnie, to her adopted father.

Thomas spoke slowly and deliberately, and said, "He impresses me rather favorably. I think there's the making of a man in him. But I hear that he is pro-slavery."

"Yes, he is, but I think that is simply the result of former associations and surroundings. I do not believe that he has looked deeper than the surface of Slavery; he is quite young yet; his reflective faculties are hardly fully awakened. I believe the time will come, when he will see it in its true light, and if he joins our ranks he will be an important accession to our cause. I have great hopes of him. He seems to be

generous, kind-hearted, and full of good impulses, and I believe there are grand possibilities in his nature. How do you like him?"

"Oh, I was much pleased with him. We had a very pleasant time together."

In a few days, Charles and Louis called again. Minnie was crocheting, and her adopted mother was occupied with sewing; while Thomas engaged them in conversation, the subject being the impending conflict; Louis, taking a decided stand in favor of the South, and Thomas being equally strong in his defense of the North.

The conversation was very animated, but temperate; and when they parted, each felt confident of the rightfulness of his position.

"Come, again," said Thomas, as they were leaving; "we can't see eye to eye, but I like to have thee come."

Louis was very much pleased with the invitation, for it gave him opportunity to see Minnie, and sometimes she would smile, or say a word or two when the discussion was beginning to verge on the borders of excitement.

The time to return to College was drawing near, and Louis longed to tell her how dear she was to him, but he never met her alone. She was so young he did not like to ask the privilege of writing to her; and yet he felt when he left the village, that it would afford him great satisfaction to hear from her. He once hinted to Friend Carpenter that he would like to hear from his family, and that if he was too busy perhaps Miss Minnie might find time to drop a line, but Thomas did not take the hint, so the matter ended; he hoping in the meantime to meet her again, and renew their very pleasant acquaintance.

Chapter X

[Text missing.]

Chapter XI

"Is Minnie not well?" said Thomas Carpenter, entering one morning, the pleasant room, where Anna was labelling some preserves. "She seems to be so drooping, and scarcely eats anything."

"I don't know. I have not heard her complain; perhaps she is a little tired and jaded from her journey; and then I think she studies too much. She spends most of her time in her room, and since I think of it, she does appear more quiet than usual; but I have been so busy about my preserves that I have not noticed her particularly."

"Anna," said Thomas suddenly, after a moment's pause, "does thee think that there is any attachment between Louis and Minnie? He was very attentive to her when we were in Boston."

"Why, Thomas, I have never thought anything about it. Minnie always seems so much like a child that I never get her associated in my mind with courtship and marriage. I suppose I ought to though," said Anna, with the faintest sigh.

"Anna, I think that something is preying on that child's mind, and mother, thee knows that you women understand how to manage these things better than we men do, and I wish thee would find out what is the matter with the child. Try to find out if there is anything between her and Louis, and if there is, by all means we must let her know about herself; it is a duty we owe her and him."

"Well, Thomas, if we must we must; but I shrink from it. Here she comes. Now I'll leave in a few minutes, and then thee can tell her; perhaps thee can do it better than I can."

"What makes thee look so serious?" said Thomas, as Minnie entered the room.

"Do I, father?"

"Yes, thee looks sober as a Judge. What has happened to disturb thee?"

"Nothing in particular; only I was down to Mr. Hickman's this morning, and they

have a colored woman stopping with them. She is a very interesting and intelligent woman, and she was telling us part of her history, and it was very interesting, but, mother, I do think it is a dreadful thing to be a colored person in this country; how I should suffer if I knew that I was hated and despised for what I couldn't help. Oh, it must be dreadful to be colored."

"Oh, don't talk so, Minnie, God never makes any mistakes."

"I know that, mother; but, mother, it must be hard to be forced to ride in smoking cars; to be insulted in the different thoroughfares of travel; to be denied access to public resorts in some places,—such as lectures, theatres, concerts, and even have a particular seat assigned in the churches, and sometimes feel you were an object of pity even to your best friends. I know that Mrs. Heston felt so when she was telling her story, for when Mrs. Hickman said, 'Well, Sarah, I really pity you,' I saw her dark eyes flash, and she has really beautiful eyes, as she said, 'it is not pity we want, it is justice.'"

"In the first place, mother, she is a widow, with five children. She had six. One died in the army,—and she had some business in Washington connected with him. She says she was born in Virginia, and had one little girl there, but as she could not bear the idea of her child growing up in ignorance, she left the South and went to Albany. Her husband was a barber, and was doing a good business there. She was living in a very good neighborhood, and sent her child to the nearest district school.

"After her little girl had been there awhile, her teacher told her she must go home and not come there any more, and sent her mother a note; the child did not know what she had done; she had been attentive to her lessons, and had not behaved amiss, and she was puzzled to know why she was turned out of school.

"'Oh! I hated to tell Mrs. Heston,' said the teacher; 'but the child insisted, and I knew that it must come sooner or later. And so, said she, I told her it was because she was colored.'

"'Is that all.' Poor child, she didn't know, that, in that fact lay whole volumes of insult, outrage, and violence. I made up my mind, she continued, that I would leave the place, and when my husband came home, I said, 'Heston, let us leave this place; let us go farther west. I hear that we can have our child educated there, just the same as any other child.' At first my husband demurred, for we were doing a good business; but I said, let us go, if we have to live on potatoes and salt.

"True, it was some pecuniary loss; but I never regretted it, although I have been pretty near the potatoes and salt. My husband died, but I kept my children together, and stood over the wash-tub day after day to keep them at school. My oldest daughter graduated at the High School, and was quite a favorite with the teachers. One term there was a vacancy in her room, caused by the resignation of one of the assistant teachers, and the first teacher had the privilege of selecting her assistants from the graduates of the High School, their appointment, of course, being subject to the decision of the Commissioner of Public Schools.

"'Her teacher having heard that she was connected by blood with one of the first families of Virginia, told the Commissioner that she had chosen an Assistant, a young lady of high qualifications, and as she understood, a descendant of Patrick Henry.

"'Ah, indeed,' said the Commissioner, 'I didn't know that we had one of that family among us. By all means employ her;' but as she was about to leave, she said: 'I forgot to tell you one thing, she is colored.'

"A sudden change came over him, and he said: 'Do you think I would have you walk down the street with a colored woman? Of course not. I'll never give my consent to that.' And there the matter ended. And then she made us feel so indignant when she told us that on her way to Washington to get her son's pension, she stopped in Philadelphia, and the conductor tried to make her leave the car, and because she would not, he ran the car off the track."

"Oh, father," said she, turning to Thomas, "how wicked and cruel this prejudice. Oh, how I should hate to be colored!"

Anna and Thomas exchanged mournful glances. Their hearts were too full; and as Minnie left the room, Thomas said, "Not now, Anna. Not just yet." And so Minnie[6] was permitted to return again to school with the secret untold.

* * * * *

"Minnie, darling, what are you doing? moping as usual over your books? Come, it is Saturday morning, and you have worked hard enough for one week; got all good marks; so now just put up that Virgil, and come go out with me."

"Where do you wish to go?" said Minnie, to her light-hearted friend, Carrie Wise.

"I want to go out shopping. Pa has just sent me twenty dollars, and you know a girl and her money are soon parted."

"What do you wish to get?"

"Well, I want a pair of gloves, some worsted to match this fringe, and a lot of things. Come, won't you go?"

"Oh, I don't know, I didn't intend going out this morning."

"Well, never mind if you didn't, just say you will go. Where's your hat and mantle?" said Carrie, going to her wardrobe.

"Well, just wait till I fix my hair; it won't take long."

"Oh, Minnie, do let me fix it for you! If ever I have to work for my living, I shall be a hair-dresser. I believe it is the only thing that I have any talent for."

"What an idea! But do, Minnie, won't you, let me arrange your hair? You always wear it so plain, and I do believe it would curl beautifully. May I, Minnie?"

"Why yes."

So Carrie sat down, and in a short time, she had beautifully arranged Minnie's hair with a profusion of curls.

"Do you know what I was thinking?" said Carrie, gazing admiringly upon her friend. "You look so much like a picture I have seen of yours in your father's album. He was showing me a number of pictures which represent you at different ages, and the one I refer to, he said was our Minnie when she was five years old. Now let me put on your hat. And let me kiss you for you look so pretty?"

"Oh, Carrie, what an idea! You are so full of nonsense. Which way will we go first?"

"First down to Carruther's. I saw a beautiful collar there I liked so much; and then let us go down to Mrs. Barguay's. I want to show you a love of a bonnet, one of the sweetest little things in ribbon, lace, and flowers I ever saw."

Equipped for the journey the two friends sauntered down the street; as they were coming out of a store, Carrie stopped for a moment to speak to a very dear friend of her mother's, and Minnie passed on.

As she went slowly on, loitering for her friend, she saw a woman approaching her from the opposite side of the street. There was something in her look and manner which arrested the attention of Minnie. She was a tall, slender woman about thirty five years old, with a pale, care-worn face—a face which told that sorrow had pressed her more than years. A few threads of silver mingled with the wealth of her raven hair, and her face, though wearing a sad and weary expression, still showed traces of great beauty.

As soon as her eyes fell on Minnie, she raised her hands in sudden wonder, and clasping her in her arms, exclaimed: "Heaven is merciful! I have found you, at last, my dear, darling, long-lost child. Minnie, is this you, and have I found you at last?"

Minnie trembled from head to foot; a deadly pallor overspread her cheek, and she stood still as if rooted to the ground in silent amazement, while the woman stood anxiously watching her as if her future were hanging on the decision of her lips.

"Who are you? and where did you come from?" said Minnie, as soon as she gained her breath.

"I came from Louisiana. Oh, I can't be mistaken. I have longed for you, and prayed for you, and now I have found you."

Just then, Carrie, who had finished speaking with her friend, seeing Minnie and the strange woman talking together, exclaimed, "What is the matter?"

Noticing the agitation of her friend, "Who is this woman, and what has she said to you?"

"She says that she is my mother, my long-lost mother."

"Why, Minnie, what nonsense! She can't be your mother. Why don't you see she is colored?"

"Where do you live?" said Minnie, without appearing to notice the words of Carrie.

"I don't live anywhere. I just came here yesterday with some of the Union soldiers."

"Come with me then, and I will show you a place to stop."

"Why, Minnie, you are not going to walk down the street with that Nig—colored woman; if you are, please excuse me. My business calls me another way."

And without any more ceremony Carrie and Minnie parted. Silently she walked by the side of the stranger, a thousand thoughts revolving in her mind. Was this the solution of the mystery which enshrouded her young life? Did she indeed belong to that doomed and hated race, and must she share the cruel treatment which bitter, relentless prejudice had assigned them?

Thomas Carpenter and Anna were stopping in P., at the house of relatives who knew Minnie's history, but who had never made any difference in their treatment of her on that account.

"Is father and mother at home?" said Minnie to the servant, who opened the door. She answered in the affirmative.

"Tell them to come into the parlor, they are wanted immediately."

"Sit down," said Minnie to the stranger, handing her a chair, "and wait till father

comes."

Anna and Thomas soon entered the room, and Minnie approaching them said, "Father, this woman met me on the street to-day, and says she is my mother. You know all about my history. Tell me if there is any truth in this story."

"I don't know, Minnie, I never saw thy mother."

"But question her, father, and see if there is any truth in what she says; but tell me first, father, am I white or colored?"

"Minnie, I believe there is a small portion of colored blood in thy veins."

"It is enough," said Minnie, drawing closer to the strange woman. "What makes you think that I am your child?"

"By this," said she, taking a miniature from her bosom. "By this, which I carried next to my heart for more than twelve years, and never have been without it a single day or night."

Thomas looked upon the miniature; it was an exact likeness of Minnie when she first came to them, and although she had grown and changed since the likeness was taken, there was too close a resemblance between it and one which had been taken soon after she came, for him to doubt that Minnie was the original of that likeness.

Thomas questioned the woman very closely, but her history and narrative corresponded so well with what he had heard of Minnie's mother, that he could not for a moment doubt that this was she, and as such he was willing to give her the shelter of his home, till he could make other arrangements.

"But why," said Anna, somewhat grieved at the shock, that Minnie had received, "did thee startle her by so suddenly claiming her in the street? Would it not have been better for thee to have waited and found out where she lived, and then discovered thyself to her?"

"I'spect it would, 'Mam," said Ellen, very meekly and sorrowfully, "but when I saw

her and heard the young lady say, Minnie, wait a minute, I forgot everything but that this was my long-lost child. I am sorry if I did any harm, but I was so glad I could not help it. My heart was so hungry for my child."

"Yes, yes," said Anna sadly, "I understand thee; it was the voice of nature."

Minnie was too nervous and excited to return to her school that day; the next morning she had a very high fever, and Thomas concluded it would be better to take her home and have her mother accompany her.

And so on Monday morning Anna and Thomas left P., taking Minnie and her mother along.

Once again in her pleasant home, surrounded by the tenderest care (for her mother watched over her with the utmost solicitude) the violence of her fever abated, but it was succeeded by a low nervous affection which while it produced no pain yet it slowly unstrung her vitality.

Ellen hovered around her pillow as if she begrudged every moment that called her from her daughter's side, and never seemed so well contented as when she was performing for her some office of love and tenderness. A skilful nurse, she knew how to prepare the most delicate viands to tempt the failing appetite, and she had the exquisite pleasure of seeing her care and attention rewarded by the returning health and strength of her child.

One morning as she grew stronger, and was able to sit in her chair, she turned her eyes tenderly towards Ellen and said, "Mother, come and sit near me and let me hold your hand."

"Mother," Oh how welcome was that word. Ellen's eyes filled with sudden tears.

"Mother," she said, "It comes back to me like a dream. I have a faint recollection of having seen you before, but it is so long I can scarcely remember it. Tell me all about myself and how I came to leave you. I always thought that there was some mystery about me, but I never knew what it was before, but now I understand it."

"Darling," said the mother, "you had better wait till you get a little stronger, and then I will tell you all."

"Very well," said Minnie, "you have been so good to me and I am beginning to love you so much."

It was touching to see the ripening love between those two long-suffering ones. Ellen would comb Minnie's hair, and do for her every office in her power. Still Minnie continued feeble. The suffering occasioned by her refusal of Louis; the hard study and deep excitement through which she had passed told sadly upon her constitution; but she was young, and having a large share of recuperative power she slowly came back to health and strength, and when the spring opened Thomas decided that she should return again to her school in P.

Chapter XII

Let us now return to Carrie Wise, whom we left parting with Minnie.

"Where is Minnie?" said two of her schoolmates, who observed that Carrie had come home alone.

"Oh," said she, "one of the strangest things I ever heard of happened!"

"Well, what was it?" said the girls; and by this time they had joined another group of girls.

"Why this morning, Minnie and I walked out shopping, and just as I came out of Carruthers' I met an old friend of mother's, and stopped to speak with her, and I said 'Minnie, just wait a minute.'"

"She passed on, and left me talking with Mrs. Jackson. When I joined her, I found a colored woman talking to her, and she was trembling from head to foot, and just as pale as a ghost; and I said, 'Why, Minnie, what is the matter?'"

"She gasped for breath, and I thought she was going to faint, and I got real scared.

And what do you think Minnie said?"

"Why," she said, "Carrie, this woman says she's my mother!"

"Her mother!" cried a half dozen voices. "Why you said she was colored!"

"Well, so she was. She was quite light, but I knew she was colored."

"How did you know? Maybe she was only a very dark-complexioned white woman."

"Oh no, she wasn't, I know white people from colored, I've seen enough of them."

"A colored woman! well that is very strange; but do tell us what Minnie said."

"She asked her where she came from, and where she lived. She said she came in yesterday with the Union soldiers, and that she had come from Louisiana, and then Minnie told her to come with her, and she would find a place for her to stop."

"And did she leave you in the street to walk with a Nigger?" said a coarse, rough-looking girl.

"Yes, and so I left her. I wasn't going to walk down the street with them!"

"Well, did I ever?" said a pale and interesting-looking girl.

"That is just as strange as a romance I have been reading!"

"Well, they say truth is stranger than fiction. A deceitful thing to try to pass for white when she is colored! If she comes back to this school I shan't stay!" said the coarse rough girl, twirling her gold pencil. "I ain't a going to sit alongside of niggers."

"How you talk! I don't see that if the woman is Minnie's mother, and is colored, it makes any difference in her. I am sure it does not to me," said one of Minnie's friends.

"Well, it does to me," said another; "you may put yourself on an equality with niggers, but I won't." "And I neither," chimed in another voice. "There are plenty of colored schools; let her go to them."

"Oh, girls, I think it real cruel the way you talk!"

"How would you like any one to treat you so?" "Can't help it, I ain't a coming to school with a nigger." "She is just as good as you are, Mary Patuck, and a great deal smarter." "I don't care, she's a nigger, and that's enough for me."

And so the sentiment of the school was divided. Some were in favor of treating her just as well as usual, and others felt like complaining to their parents that a Negro was in school.

At last the news reached the teacher, and he, poor, weak, and vacillating man, had not manhood enough to defend her, but acted according to the prejudices of society, and wrote Thomas a note telling him that circumstances made it desirable that she should not again come to school.

In the meantime the news had reached their quiet little village, and of course it offered food for gossip; it was discussed over tea-tables and in the sewing circle. Some concluded that Thomas should have brought her up among the colored people, and others that he did perfectly right.

Still there was a change in Minnie's social relations. Some were just as kind as ever. Others grew distant, and some avoided having anything to say to her, and stopped visiting the house. Anna and Thomas, although superior people, were human, and could not help feeling the difference, but some business of importance connected with the death of a relative called Thomas abroad, and he made up his mind that he would take Anna and Minnie with him, hoping that the voyage and change of scene would be beneficial to his little girl, as he still called Minnie, and so on a bright and beautiful morning in the spring of '62 he left the country for a journey to England and the Continent.

Let us now return to Louis Le Croix, whom we left disappointed and wounded by Minnie's refusal. After he left her he entered his room, and sat for a long time in silent thought; at last he rose, and walked to the window and stood with his hands

clenched, and his finely chiseled lips firmly set as if he had bound his whole soul to some great resolve—a resolve which he would accomplish, let it cost what it might.

And so he had; for he had made up in his mind within the last two hours that he would join the Confederacy. "That live or die, sink or swim, survive or perish," he would unite his fortunes to her destiny.

His next step then was to plan how he could reach Louisiana; he felt confident that if he could get as far as Louisville he could manage to get into Tennessee, and from thence to Louisiana.

And so nothing daunted by difficulties and dangers, he set out on his journey, and being aided by rebels on his way in a few weeks he reached the old plantation on Red River; he found his sister and Miriam there both glad to see him.

Camilla's husband was in Charleston, some of the slaves had deserted to the Union ranks, but the greater portion she still retained with her.

Miriam was delighted to see Louis, and seemed never weary of admiring his handsome face and manly form. And Louis, who had never known any other mother seemed really gratified by her little kindnesses and attention; but of course the pleasant and quiet monotony of home did not suit the restless and disquieted spirit of Louis. All the young men around here were in the army or deeply interested in its success.

There was a call for more volunteers, and a new company was to be raised in that locality. Louis immediately joined, and turned his trained intellect to the study of military tactics; day and night he was absorbed in this occupation, and soon, although Minnie was not forgotten, the enthusiasm of his young life gathered around the Confederate cause.

He did not give himself much time to reflect. Thought was painful to him, and he continued to live in a whirl of excitement.

News of battle, tidings of victory and defeats, the situation of the armies, and the

hopes and fears that clustered around those fearful days of struggle made the staple of conversation.

Louis rapidly rose in favor with the young volunteers, and was chosen captain of a company who were permitted to drill and stay from the front as a reserve corps, ready to be summoned at any moment.

Chapter XIII

Miriam and Camilla watched with anguish Louis' devotion to the Confederation, and many sorrowful conversations they had about it.

At last one day Miriam said, "Miss Camilla, I can stand it no longer;—that boy is going to lift his hand agin his own people, and I can't stand it no longer; I'se got to tell him all about it. I just think I'd bust in two if I didn't tell him."

"Well, Mammy," said Camilla, "I'd rather he should know it than that he should go against his country and raise his hand against the dear old flag."

"It's not the flag nor the country I care for," said Miriam, "but it is that one of my own flesh and blood should jine with these secesh agin his own people."

"Well, Miriam, if you get a chance you can tell him."

"Get a chance, Miss Camilla, I'se bound to get that."

Louis was somewhat reticent about his plans; for he knew that Camilla was a strong Union woman; that she not only loved the flag, but she had taught her two boys to do the same; but he understood from headquarters that his company was to march in a week, and although on that subject there was no common sympathy between them, yet he felt that he must acquaint her with his plans, and bid her and Miriam good-bye.

So one morning he came in looking somewhat flushed and excited, and said: "Sister, we have got our marching orders; we leave on Thursday, and I have only three days

to be with you. I am sorry that I have seen so little of you, but my country calls me, and when she is in danger it is no time for me to seek for either ease or pleasure."

"Your country! Louis," said Miriam, her face paling and flushing by turns. "Where is your country?"

"Here," said he, somewhat angrily, "in Louisiana."

"My country," said Camilla,[7] "is the whole Union. Yes, Louis," said she, "your country is in danger, but not from the Abolitionists in the North, but from the rebels and traitors in the South."

"Rebels and traitors!" said Louis, in a tone like one who felt the harsh grating of the words.

"Whom do you mean?"

"I mean," said she, "the ambitious, reckless men who have brought about this state of things. The men who are stabbing their country in their madness and folly; who are crowding our graves and darkening our homes; who are dragging our young men, men like you, who should be the pride and hope of our country, into the jaws of ruin and death."

Louis looked surprised and angry; he had never seen Camilla under such deep excitement. Her words had touched his pride and roused his anger; but suppressing his feelings he answered her coolly, "Camilla, I am old enough to do my own thinking. We had better drop this subject; it is not pleasant to either of us."

"Louis," said she, her whole manner changing from deep excitement to profound grief, "Oh, Louis, it will never do for you to go! Oh, no, you must not!"

"And why not?"

"Because,"—and she hesitated. Just then Miriam took up the unfinished sentence,"—because to join the secesh is to raise your hands agin your own race."

"My own race?" and Louis laughed scornfully. "I think you are talking more wildly

than Camilla. What do you mean, Miriam?"

"I mean," said she, stung by his scornful words, "I mean that you, Louis Le Croix, white as you look, are colored, and that you are my own daughter's child, and if it had not been for Miss Camilla, who's been such an angel to you, that you would have been a slave to-day, and then you wouldn't have been a Confederate."

At these words a look of horror and anguish passed over the face of Le Croix, and he turned to Camilla, but she was deadly pale, and trembling like an aspen leaf; but her eyes were dry and tearless.

"Camilla," said he, turning fiercely to his adopted sister, "Tell me, is there any truth in these words? You are as pale as death, and trembling like a leaf,—tell me if there is any truth in these words," turning and fixing his eyes on Miriam, who stood like some ancient prophetess, her lips pronouncing some fearful doom, while she watched in breathless anguish the effect upon the fated victim.

"Yes, Louis," said Camilla, in a voice almost choked by emotion. "Yes, Louis, it is all true."

"But how is this that I never heard it before? Before I believe this tale I must have some proof, clear as daylight. Bring me proofs."

"Here they are," said Miriam, drawing from her pocket the free papers she had been carrying about her person for several days.

Louis grasped them nervously, hastily read them, and then more slowly, like one who might read a sentence of death to see if there was one word or sentence on which he might hang a hope of reprieve.

Camilla watched him anxiously, but silently, and when he had finished, he covered his bowed face with his hands as he said with a deep groan, "It is true, too true. I see it all. I can never raise my hand against my mother's race."

He arose like one in a dream, walked slowly to the door and left the room.

"It was a painful task," said Camilla, with a sigh of relief, as if a burden had fallen from her soul.

"Yes," said Miriam, "but not so bad as to see him fighting agin his own color. I'd rather follow him to his grave than see him join that miserable secesh crew."

"Yes," said Camilla, "It was better than letting him go."

When Louis left the room a thousand conflicting thoughts passed through his mind. He felt as a mariner at midnight on a moonless sea, who suddenly, when the storm is brewing, finds that he has lost his compass and his chart.

Chapter XIV

Where was he steering; and now, the course of his life was changed, what kind of future must he make for himself?

Had it been in time of peace, he could have easily decided, as he had a large amount of money in the North, which his father left him when he came of age.

He would have no difficulty as to choosing the means of living; for he was well supplied, as far as that was concerned; but here was a most unpleasant dilemma in which he had placed himself.

Convinced that he was allied to the Negro race, his whole soul rose up against the idea of laying one straw in its way; if he belonged to the race he would not join its oppressors. And yet his whole sympathy had been so completely with them, that he felt that he had no feeling in common with the North.

And as to the colored people, of course it never entered his mind to join their ranks, and ally himself to them; he had always regarded them as inferior; and this sudden and unwelcome revelation had not changed the whole tenor of his thoughts and opinions.

But what he had to do must be done quickly; for in less than three days his company

would start for the front. To desert was to face death; to remain was to wed dishonor. He surveyed the situation calmly and bravely, and then resolved that he would face the perils of re-capture rather than the contempt of his own soul.

While he was deciding, he heard Camilla's step in the passage; he opened the door, and beckoned her to a seat, and said, very calmly, "I have been weighing the whole matter in my mind, and I have concluded to leave the South."

"How can you do it?" said Camilla. "I tremble lest you should be discovered. Oh slavery! what a curse. Our fathers sowed the wind, and we are reaping the whirlwind! What," continued she, as if speaking to herself, "What are your plans? Have you any?"

"None, except to disguise myself and escape."

"When?"

"As soon as possible."

"Suppose I call Miriam. She can help you. Shall I?"

"Yes."

Camilla called Miriam, and after a few moments consultation it was decided that Louis should escape that night, and that Miriam should prepare whatever was needed for his hasty flight.

"Don't trust your secret to any white person," said Miriam, "but if you meet any of the colored people, just tell them that you is for the Linkum soldiers, and it will be all right; we don't know all about this war, but we feels somehow we's all mixed up in it."

And so with many prayers and blessings from Miriam, and sad farewells from Camilla, he left his home to enter upon that perilous flight, the whole current of his life changed.

It was in the early part of Winter; but the air was just as pleasant as early Spring in

that climate. Louis walked all that night, guiding himself northward at night by the light of the stars and a little pocket compass, Camilla had just given him before starting, and avoiding the public roads during the day.

And thus he travelled for two days, when his lunch was exhausted, his lips parched with thirst, and his strength began to fail.

Just in this hour of extremity he saw seated by the corner of a fence a very black and homely-looking woman; there was something so gloomy and sullen in her countenance that he felt repelled by its morose expression. Still he needed food, and was very weary, and drawing near he asked her if she would give him anything to eat.

"Ain't got nothing. De sojers done been here, and eat all up."

Louis drew near and whispered a few words in her ear, and immediately a change passed over her whole countenance. The sullen expression turned to a look of tenderness and concern. The harsh tones of her voice actually grew mellow, and rising up in haste she almost sprang over the fence, and said, "I'se been looking for you, if you's Northman you's mighty welcome," and she set before him her humble store of provisions.

"Do you know," said Louis, "where I will find the Lincoln soldiers, or where the secesh are encamped?"

"No," said she "but my old man's mighty smart, and he'll find out; you come wid me."

Nothing doubting he went, and found the husband ready to do anything in his power to help him.

"You's better not go any furder to-day. I'll get you a place to hide where nobody can't find you, and then I'll pump Massa 'bout the sojers."

True to his word, he contrived to find out whether the soldiers were near.

"Massa," said he, scratching his head, and looking quite sober, "Massa, hadn't I better hide the mules? Oh I's 'fraid the Linkum sojers will come take 'em, cause dey gobbles up ebery ting dey lays dere hans on, jis like geese. I yerd dey was coming; mus' I hide de mules?"

"No, Sam, the scalawags are more than a hundred miles away; they are near Natchez."

"Well, maybe, t'was our own Fedrate soldiers."

"No, Sam, our nearest soldiers are at Baton Rouge."

"All right Massa. I don't want to lose all dem fine mules."

As soon as it was convenient Sam gave Louis the desired information. "Here," said Sam, when Louis was ready to start again, "is something to break your fast, and if you goes dis way you musn't let de white folks know what you's up to, but you trust dis," said he, laying his hand on his own dark skin.

His new friend went with him several miles, and pointing him out the way left him to pursue his journey onward. The next person he met with was a colored man, who bowed and smiled, and took off his hat.

Louis returned the bow, and was passing on when he said, "Massa, 'scuse me for speakin' to you, but dem secesh been hunting all day for a 'serter, him captin dey say."

Louis turned pale, but bracing his nerves he said, "Where are they?"

"Dey's in the house; is you he?"

"I am a Union man," Louis said, "and am trying to reach the Lincoln soldiers."

"Den," said the man, "if dat am de fac I's got a place for you; come with me," and Louis having learned to trust the colored people followed him to a place of safety.

Soon it was noised abroad that another deserter had been seen in that neighborhood, but the colored man would not reveal the whereabouts of Louis. His master beat him

severely, but he would let neither threats nor torture wring the secret from his lips.

Louis saw the faithfulness of that man, and he thought with shame of his former position to the race from whom such unswerving devotion could spring. The hunt proving ineffectual, Louis after the search and excitement had subsided resumed his journey Northward, meeting with first one act of kindness and then another.

One day he had a narrow escape from the bloodhounds. He had trusted his secret to a colored man who, faithful like the rest, was directing him on his way when deep ominous sounds fell on their ears. The colored man knew that sound too well; he knew something of the nature of bloodhounds, and how to throw them off the track.

So hastily opening his pen-knife he cut his own feet so that the blood from them might deepen the scent on one track, and throw them off from Louis's path.

It was a brave deed, and nobly done, and Louis began to feel that he had never known them, and then how vividly came into his mind the words of Dr. Charming: "After all we may be trampling on one of the best branches of the human race." Here were men and women too who had been trampled on for ages ready to break to him their bread, aye share with him their scanty store.

One had taken the shoes from his feet and almost forced him to take them. What was it impelled these people? What was the Union to them, and who were Lincoln's soldiers that they should be so ready to gravitate to the Union army and bring the most reliable information to the American General?

Was it not the hope of freedom which they were binding as amulets around their hearts? They as a race had lived in a measure upon an idea; it was the hope of a deliverance yet to come. Faith in God had underlain the life of the race, and was it strange if when even some of our politicians did not or could not read the signs of the times aright these people with deeper intuitions understood the war better than they did.

But at last Louis got beyond the borders of the confederacy, and stood once more on

free soil, appreciating that section as he had never done before.

Chapter XV

[Text missing.]

Chapter XVI

"And I," said Minnie, "will help you pay it."

And so their young hearts had met at last, and with the approval and hearty consent of Anna, Minnie and Louis were married.

It was decided that Minnie should spend the winter in Southern France, and then in the spring they returned to America. On their arrival they found the war still raging, and Louis was ready and anxious to benefit that race to whom he felt he owed his life, and with whom he was connected by lineage.

He had plenty of money, a liberal education, and could have chosen a life of ease, but he was too ardent in his temperament, too decided in his character, not to feel an interest in the great events which were then transpiring in the country.

He made the acquaintance of some Anti-Slavery friends, and listened with avidity to their doctrines; he attended a number of war meetings, and caught the enthusiasm which inspired the young men who were coming from valley, hill, and plain to fill up the broken ranks of the Union army.

Minnie, educated in peace principles, could not conscientiously encourage him, and yet when she saw how the liberty of a whole race was trembling in the balance she could not help wishing [success?] to the army, nor find it in her heart to dissuade him from going.

Others had given their loved and cherished ones to camp and field. The son of a dear friend had said to his mother, "I know I shall be killed, but I go to free the slave."

His presentiment had been met, for he had been brought home in his shroud.

Another dear friend had said, "I have drawn my sword, and it shall never sleep in its scabbard till the nation is free!" And she had heard that summer of '64 how bravely the colored soldiers had stood at Fort Wagner, when the storms of death were sweeping through the darkened sky. How they summoned the world to see the grandeur of their courage and the daring of their prowess.

How Corny had held with unyielding hand the nation's flag, and even when he was wounded still held it in his grasp, and crawling from the scene of action exclaimed, "I only did my duty, the old flag, I didn't let it trail on the ground."

And she felt on reading it with tearful eyes, that if she belonged to that race they had not shamed her by their want of courage; and so when Louis came to her and told her his intention, she would not attempt to oppose him, and when he was ready to depart, with many prayers, and sad farewells, she gave him up to fight the battles of freedom, for such it was to him, who went with every nerve in his right arm tingling to strike a blow for liberty.

Hitherto Louis had known the race by their tenderness and compassion, but the war gave him an opportunity to become acquainted with men brave to do, brave to dare, and brave to die.

A colored man was the hero of one of the most tender, touching, and tragic incidents of the war. A number of soldiers were in a boat exposed to the fire of the rebels; on board was a colored man who had not enrolled as a soldier, though his soul was full of sublime valor. The bullets hissed and split the water, and the rowers tried to get out of their reach, but all their efforts were in vain; the treacherous mud had caught the boat, and some one must peril life and limb to shove that boat into the water. And this man, the member of a doomed, a fated race, who had been trodden down for ages, comprehending the danger, said, "Some one must die to get us out of this, and it mout's well be me as anybody; you are soldiers, and you can fight. If they kill

me it is nothing."

And with these words he arose, gave the boat a push, received a number of bullets, and died within two days after.

Louis acquitted himself bravely, and rapidly rose in favor with his superior officers. To him the place of danger was the post of duty. He often received letters from Minnie, but they were always hopeful; for she had learned to look on the bright side of everything.

She tried to beguile him with the news of the neighborhood, and to inspire him with bright hopes for the future; that future in which they should clasp hands again and find their duty and their pleasure in living for the welfare and happiness of our race, as Minnie would often say.

A race upon whose brows God had poured the chrism of a new era—a race newly anointed with freedom.

Oh, how the enthusiasm of her young soul gathered around that work! She felt it was no mean nor common privilege to be the pioneer of a new civilization. If he who makes two blades of grass grow where only one flourished before is a benefactor of the human race, how much higher and holier must his or her work be who dispenses light, instead of darkness, knowledge, instead of ignorance, and over the ruins of the slave-pen and auction-block erects institutions of learning.

She would say in her letters to Louis that the South will never be rightly conquered until another army should take the field, and that must be an army of civilizers; the army of the pen, and not the sword. Not the destroyers of towns and cities, but the builders of machines and factories; the organizers of peaceful industry and honorable labor; and as soon as she possibly could she intended to join that great army.

Sometimes Louis would shake his head doubtfully, and tell her that the South was a very sad place to live in, and would be for years, and, while he was willing to bear

toil and privation in the cause he had learned to love, yet he shrank from exposing her to the social ostracism which she must bear whether she identified herself with the colored race or not.

However, her brave young heart never failed her, but kept true to its purpose to join that noble band who left the sunshine of their homes to help build up a new South on the basis of a higher and better civilization.

Louis remained with the army till Lee had surrendered. The storm-cloud of battle had passed away, and the thunders of contending batteries no longer crashed and vibrated on the air.

And then he returned to Minnie, who still lived with Thomas Carpenter. Very tender and joyous was their greeting. Louis thought he would rest awhile and then arrange his affairs to return to the South. In this plan he was heartily seconded by Minnie.

Thomas and Anna were sorry to part with her, but they knew that life was not made for a holiday of ease and luxury, and so they had no words of discouragement for them. If duty called them to the South it was right that they should go; and so they would not throw themselves across the purpose of their souls.

Chapter XVII

Before he located, Louis concluded to visit the old homestead, and to present his beautiful young bride to his grandmother and Camilla.

He knew his adopted sister too well to fear that Minnie would fail to receive from her the warmest welcome, and so with eager heart he took passage on one of the Mississippi boats to New Orleans, intending to stop in the city a few days, and send word to Camilla; but just as he was passing from the levee to the hotel, he caught a glimpse of Camilla walking down the street, and stopping the carriage, he alighted, and spoke to her. She immediately recognized him, although his handsome face had become somewhat bronzed by exposure in camp and field.

"Do not go to the hotel," she said, "you are heartily welcome, come home with me."

"But my wife is along."

"Never mind, she's just as welcome as you are."

"But, like myself, she is colored."

"It does not matter. I should not think of your going to a hotel, while I have a home in the city."

Camilla following, wondering how she would like the young wife. She had great kindness and compassion for the race, but as far as social equality was concerned, though she had her strong personal likings, yet, except with Louis, neither custom nor education had reconciled her to the maintenance of any equal, social relations with them.

"My wife," said Louis, introducing Camilla to Minnie. Camilla immediately reached out her hand to the young wife, and gave her a cordial greeting, and they soon fell into a pleasant and animated conversation. Mutually they were attracted to each other, and when they reached their destination, Minnie had begun to feel quite at home with Camilla.

"How is Aunt Miriam, or rather, my grandmother?" said Louis.

"She is well, and often wonders what has become of her poor boy; but she always has persisted in believing that she would see you again, and I know her dear old eyes will run over with gladness. But things have changed very much since we parted. We have passed through the fire since I saw you, and our troubles are not over yet; but we are hoping for better days. But we are at home. Let us alight."

And Louis and Minnie were ushered into a home whose quiet and refined beauty were very pleasant to the eye, for Camilla had inherited from her father his aesthetic tastes; had made her home and its surroundings models of loveliness. Half a dozen varieties of the sweetest and brightest roses clambered up the walls and arrayed

them with a garb of rare beauty. Jessamines breathed their fragrance on the air; magnolias reared their stately heads and gladdened the eye with the exquisite beauty of their flowers.

"This is an unexpected pleasure," said Camilla, removing Minnie's bonnet, and gazing with unfeigned admiration upon her girlish face, "but really some one must enjoy this pleasure besides myself."

Camilla rang the bell; a bright, smiling girl of about ten years appeared. "Tell Miriam," she said, "to come; that her boy Louis is here."

Miriam appeared immediately, and throwing her arms around his neck, gave vent to her feelings in a burst of joy. "I always said you'd come back. I's prayed for you night and day, and I always believed I'd see you afore I died, and now my word's come true. There's nothing like having faith."

"Here's my wife," said Louis, turning to Minnie.

"Your wife; is you married, honey? Well I hopes you'll have a good time."

Minnie came forward and gave her hand to Miriam, as Louis said, "This is my grandmother."

A look of proud satisfaction passed over the old woman's face, and a sudden joy lit up her eyes at these words of pleasant recognition.

"Ah, my child," said Miriam, "We's had a mighty heap of trouble since you left. Them miserable secesh searched the house all over for you, when you was gone, and they was mighty sassy; but we didn't mind that, so they didn't ketch you. How did you get along? We was dreadfully uneasy about you?"

Louis then told them of the kindness of the colored people, his thrilling adventures, and hair-breadth escapes, and unfolded to them his plans for the future.

Camilla listened with deep interest, and turning to Minnie, who had left the peaceful sunshine of her mother's home to dwell in the midst of that rough and rude state of

society, she said, "I cannot help feeling sad to see you exposing yourself to the dangers that lay around your path. The few Southern women who have been faithful to the flag have had a sad experience since the war. We have been ostracized and abused, and often our husbands have been brutally murdered, in a number of instances when they were faithful to the dear old flag. A friend of mine, who was an angel of mercy to the Union prisoners, dressing their wounds and carrying them relief, had a dear son, who always kept a Union flag at home, which he regarded with almost religious devotion. This made him a marked boy in the community, and during the war he was so cruelly beaten, by some young rebels, that he never recovered, and colored women who would wend their way under the darkness and cover of night to aid our suffering soldiers, were in danger of being flogged, if detected, and I understand that one did receive 75 lashes for such an offence, and I heard of another who was shot down like a dog, for giving bread to a prisoner, who said, 'Mammy, I am starving.' I think, (but I have no right to dictate to you) had I been you, and my home in the North, that I would have preferred staying there, where, to say the least, you could have had pleasanter social relations. You and Louis are nearer the white race than the colored. Why should you prefer the one to the other?"

"Because," said Minnie, "the prejudices of society are so strong against the people with whom I am connected on my mother's side, that I could not associate with white people on equal terms, without concealing my origin, and that I scorned to do. The first years of my life passed without my knowing that I was connected with the colored race; but when it was revealed to me by mother, who suddenly claimed me, at first I shrank from the social ostracism to which that knowledge doomed me, and it was some time before I was reconciled to the change. Oh, there are lessons of life that we never learn in the bowers of ease. They must be learned in the fire. For months life seemed to me a dull, sad thing, and for a while I did not care whether I lived or died, the sunshine had suddenly faded from my path, and the future looked

so dark and cheerless. But now, when I look back upon those days of gloom and suffering, I think they were among the most fruitful of my life, for in those days of pain and sorrow my resolution was formed to join the fortunes of my mother's race, and I resolved to brighten her old age with a joy, with a gladness she had never known in her youth. And how could I have done that had I left her unrecognized and palmed myself upon society as a white woman? And to tell you the truth, having passed most of my life in white society, I did not feel that the advantages of that society would have ever paid me for the loss of my self-respect, by passing as white, when I knew that I was colored; when I knew that any society, however cultivated, wealthy or refined, would not be a social gain to me, if my color and not my character must be my passport of admission. So, when I found out that I was colored, I made up my mind that I would neither be pitied nor patronized by my former friends; but that I would live out my own individuality and do for my race, as a colored woman, what I never could accomplish as a white woman."

"I think I understand you," said Camilla; "and although I tremble for you in the present state, yet you cannot do better than live out the earnest purpose of your life. I feel that we owe a great debt to the colored race, and I would aid and not hinder any hand that is ready to help do the needed work. I have felt for many years that slavery was wrong, and I am glad, from the bottom of my heart, that it has at last been destroyed. And what are your plans, Louis?"

"We are going to open a school, and devote our lives to the upbuilding of the future race. I intend entering into some plan to facilitate the freedmen in obtaining homes of their own. I want to see this newly enfranchised race adding its quota to the civilization of the land. I believe there is power and capacity, only let it have room for exercise and development. We demand no social equality, no supremacy of power. All we ask is that the American people will take their Christless, Godless prejudices out of the way, and give us a chance to grow, an opportunity to accept life, not merely as a matter of ease and indulgence, but of struggle, conquest, and

achievement."

"Yes," said Camilla, "what you want and what the nation should be just enough to grant you is fair play."

"Yes, that is what we want; to be known by our character, and not by our color; to be permitted to take whatever position in society we are fitted to fill. We do not want to be bolstered and propped up on the one hand, nor to be crushed and trampled down on the other."

"Well, Louis, I think that we are coming to that. No, I cannot feel that all this baptism of fire and blood through which we have passed has been in vain. Slavery, as an institution, has been destroyed. Slavery, as an idea, still lives, but I believe that we shall outgrow this spirit of caste and proscription which still tarnishes our civilization, both North and South."

Chapter XVIII

After spending a few weeks with Camilla, Louis resolved to settle in the town of L——n, and as soon as he had chosen his home and made arrangements for the future, he sent for Ellen, and in a few days she joined her dear children, as she called Louis and Minnie. Very pleasant were the relations between Minnie and the newly freed people.

She had found her work, and they had found their friend. She did not content herself with teaching them mere knowledge of books. She felt that if the race would grow in the right direction, it must plant the roots of progress under the hearthstone. She had learned from Anna those womanly arts that give beauty, strength and grace to the fireside, and it was her earnest desire to teach them how to make their homes bright and happy.

Louis, too, with his practical turn of mind, used his influence in teaching them to be saving and industrious, and to turn their attention towards becoming land owners.

He attended their political meetings, not to array class against class, nor to inflame the passions of either side. He wanted the vote of the colored people not to express the old hates and animosities of the plantation, but the new community of interests arising from freedom.

For awhile the aspect of things looked hopeful. The Reconstruction Act, by placing the vote in the hands of the colored man, had given him a new position. There was a lull in Southern violence. It was a great change from the fetters on his wrist to the ballot in his right hand, and the uniform testimony of the colored people was, "We are treated better than we were before."

Some of the rebels indulged in the hope that their former slaves would vote for them, but they were learning the power of combination, and having no political past, they were radical by position, and when Southern State after State rolled up its majorities on the radical side, then the vials of wrath were poured upon the heads of the colored people, and the courage and heroism which might have gained them recognition, perhaps, among heathens, made them more obnoxious here.

Still Louis and Minnie kept on their labors of love; their inner lives daily growing stronger and broader, for they learned to lean upon a strength greater than their own; and some of the most beautiful lessons of faith and trust they had ever learned, they were taught in the lowly cabins of these newly freed people.

Often would Minnie enter these humble homes and listen patiently to the old story of wrong and suffering. Sympathizing with their lot, she would give them counsel and help when needed. When she was leaving they would look after her wistfully, and say,

"She mighty good; we's low down, but she feels for we."

And thus day after day of that earnest life was spent in deeds and words of love and kindness.

But let us enter their pleasant home. Louis has just returned from a journey to the

city, and has brought with him the latest Northern papers. He is looking rather sober, and Minnie, ready to detect the least change of his countenance, is at his side.

"What is the matter?" Minnie asked, in a tone of deep concern.

"I am really discouraged."

"What about?"

"Look here," said he, handing her the New York Tribune. "State after State has rolled up a majority against negro suffrage. I have been trying to persuade our people to vote the Republican ticket, but to-day, I feel like blushing for the party. They are weakening our hands and strengthening those of the rebels."

"But, Louis, they were not Republicans who gave these majorities against us."

"But, darling, if large numbers of these Republicans stayed at home, and let the election go by default, the result was just the same. Now every rebel can throw it in our teeth and say, 'See your great Republican party; they refuse to let the negro vote with them, but they force him upon us. They don't do it out of regard to the negro, but only to spite us.' I don't think, Minnie, that I am much given to gloomy forebodings, but I see from the temper and actions of these rebels, that they are encouraged and emboldened by these tidings from the North, and to-day they are turning people out of work for voting the radical ticket. A while ago they tried flattery and cajolery. You could hear it on almost every side—'We are the best friends of the colored people.' Appeals were made to the memories of the past; how they hunted and played together, and searched for birds' nests in the rotten peach trees, and when the colored people were not to be caught by such chaff, some were trying to force them into submission by intimidation and starvation."

Just then a knock was heard at the door, and a dark man entered. There was nothing in his appearance that showed any connection with the white race. There was a tone of hopefulness in his speech, though his face wore a somewhat anxious expression.

"Good morning, Mr. Jackson," said Louis, for, in deference to their feelings he had

dropped the "aunt" and "uncle" of bygone days.

"Good morning," replied the man, while a pleasant smile flitted over his countenance.

"How does the world use you?" said Louis.

"Well, times are rather bilious with me, but I am beginning to pick up a little. I get a few boots and shoes to mend. I always used to go to the mountains, and get plenty of work to do; but this year they wouldn't give me the situation because I had joined the radicals."

"What a shame," said Louis; "these men who have always had their rights of citizenship, seem to know so little of the claims of justice and humanity, that they are ready to brow-beat and intimidate these people for voting according to their best interests. And what saddens me most is to see so many people of the North clasping hands with these rebels and traitors, and to hear it repeated that these people are too ignorant to vote."

"Ignorant as they are," said Minnie, "during the war they knew more than their masters; for they knew how to be true to their country, when their masters were false to it, and rallied around the flag, when they were trampling it under foot, and riddling it with bullets."

"Ah!" said uncle Richard, "I knows them of old. Last week some of them offered me $500 if I would desert my party; but I wasn't going to forsake my people. I have been in purty tight places this year. One night when I come home my little girl said to me, 'Daddy, dere ain't no bread in de house.' Now, that jist got me, but I begun to pray, and the next day I found a quarter of a dollar, and then some of my colored friends said it wouldn't do to let uncle Jack starve, and they made me up seventy-five cents. My wife sometimes gets out of heart, but she don't see very far off."

"I wish," said Louis, after Mr. Jackson had left, "that some of our Northern men would only see the heroism of that simple-minded man. Here he stands facing an

uncertain future, no longer young in years, stripped by slavery, his wife not in full sympathy with him, and yet with what courage he refused the bribe."

"Yes," said Minnie, "$500 means a great deal for a man landless and poor, with no assured support for the future. It means a comfortable fire when the blasts of winter are roving around your home; it means bread for the little ones, and medicine for the sick child, and little start in life."

"But on the other hand," said Louis, "it meant betrayal of the interests of his race, and I honor the faithfulness which shook his hands from receiving the bribe and clasping hands politically with his life-long oppressors. And I asked myself the question while he was telling his story, which hand was the better custodian of the ballot, the white hand that offered the bribe or the black one that refused it. I think the time will come when some of the Anglo Saxon race will blush to remember that when they were trailing the banner of freedom in the dust black men were grasping it with earnest hands, bearing it aloft amid persecution, pain, and death."

"Louis" said Minnie very seriously, "I think the nation makes one great mistake in settling this question of suffrage. It seems to me that everything gets settled on a partial basis. When they are reconstructing the government why not lay the whole foundation anew, and base the right of suffrage not on the claims of service or sex, but on the broader basis of our common humanity."

"Because, Minnie, we are not prepared for it. This hour belongs to the negro."

"But, Louis, is it not the negro woman's hour also? Has she not as many rights and claims as the negro man?"

"Well, perhaps she has, but, darling, you cannot better the condition of the colored men without helping the colored women. What elevates him helps her."

"All that may be true, but I cannot recognize that the negro man is the only one who has pressing claims at this hour. To-day our government needs woman's conscience as well as man's judgment. And while I would not throw a straw in the way of the

colored man, even though I know that he would vote against me as soon as he gets his vote, yet I do think that woman should have some power to defend herself from oppression, and equal laws as if she were a man."

"But, really, I should not like to see you wending your way through rough and brawling mobs to the polls."

"Because these mobs are rough and coarse I would have women vote. I would soften the asperity of the mobs, and bring into our politics a deeper and broader humanity. When I see intemperance send its floods of ruin and shame to the homes of men, and pass by the grog-shops that are constantly grinding out their fearful grist of poverty, ruin and death, I long for the hour when woman's vote will be levelled against these charnel houses; and have, I hope, the power to close them throughout the length and breadth of the land."

"Why darling," said Louis, gazing admiringly upon the earnest enthusiasm lighting up her face, "I shall begin to believe that you are a strong-minded woman."

"Surely, you would not have me a weak-minded woman in these hours of trial."

"But, darling, I did not think that you were such an advocate for women's voting."

"I think, Louis, that basing our rights on the ground of our common humanity is the only true foundation for national peace and durability. If you would have the government strong and enduring you should entrench it in the hearts of both the men and women of the land."

"I think you are right in that remark," said Louis. And thus their evenings were enlivened by pleasant and interesting conversations upon the topics of the day.

Once when a union friend was spending an evening at their home Louis entered, looking somewhat animated, and Minnie ever ready to detect his moods and feelings, wanted to know what had happened.

"Oh, I have been to a wedding since I left home."

"And pray who was married?"

"Guess."

"I don't know whom to guess. One of our friends?"

"Yes."

"Was it Mr. Welland?"

"Yes."

"And who did he marry? Is she a Northern woman, and a staunch unionist?"

"Well, I can't imagine who she can be."

"Why he married Miss Henson, who sent you those beautiful flowers."

"Why, Louis, is it possible? Why she is a colored woman."

"I know."

"But how came he to marry her?"

"For the same reason I married you, because he loved her?"

"Well," said the union man, who sat quietly listening, "I am willing to give to the colored people every right that I possess myself, but as to intermarrying with them, I am not prepared for that."

"I think," said Louis, "that marrying and social equality among the races will simply regulate itself. I do not think under the present condition of things that there will be any general intermarrying of the races, but this idea of rooted antagonism of races to me is all moonshine. I believe that what you call the instincts of race are only the prejudices which are the result of custom and education, and if there is any instinct in the matter it is rather the instinct of nature to make a Semi-tropical race in a Semi-tropical climate. Welland told me that he had met his wife when she was a slave, that he loved her then, and would have bought her had it been in his power, but now that freedom had come to her he was glad to have the privilege of making her his wife. He is an Englishman by birth and he intends taking her home with him

to England when a favorable opportunity presents itself. And that is far more honorable and manly than living together after the old order of things. I think," said Louis facing the floor "that a cruel wrong was done to Minnie and myself when life was given to us under conditions that doomed us to hopeless slavery, and from which we were rescued only by good fortune. I have heard some colored persons boasting of the white blood, but I always feel like blushing for mine. Much as my father did for me he could never atone for giving me life under the conditions he did."

"Never mind," said Minnie, "it all turned out for the best."

"Yes, Darling," said Louis, growing calmer, "for it gave me you. And that was life's compensation. But the question of the intermingling of the races in marriage is one that scarcely interests this question. The question that presses upon us with the most fearful distinctness is how can we make life secure in the South. I sometimes feel as if the very air was busting with bayonets. There is no law here but the revolver. There must be a screw loose somewhere, and this government that taxes its men in peace and drafts them in war, ought to be wise enough to know its citizens and strong enough to protect them."

Chapter XIX

But the pleasant home-life of Louis and Minnie was destined to be rudely broken up. He began to receive threats and anonymous letters, such as these: "Louis Lecroix, you are a doomed man. We are determined to tolerate no scalawags, nor carpetbaggers among us. Beware, the sacred serpent has hissed."

But Louis, brave and resolute, kept on the even tenor of his way, although he never left his home without some forebodings that he tried in vain to cast off. But his young wife being less in contact with the brutal elements of society in that sin-cursed region, did not comprehend the danger as Louis did, and yet she could not

help feeling anxious for her husband's safety.

They never parted without her looking after him with a sigh, and then turning to her school, or whatever work or reading she had on her hand, she would strive to suppress her heart's forebodings. But the storm about to burst and to darken forever the sunshine of that home was destined to fall on that fair young head.

Imperative business called Louis from home for one night. Minnie stood at the door and said, "Louis, I hate to have you go. I have been feeling so badly here lately, as if something was going to happen. Come home as soon as you can."

"I will, darling," he said, kissing her tenderly again and again. "I do feel rather loath to leave you, but death is every where, always lurking in ambush. A man may escape from an earthquake to be strangled by a hair. So, darling, keep in good spirits till I come."

Minnie stood at the door watching him till he was out of sight, and then turning to her mother with a sigh, she said, "What a wretched state of society. When he goes I never feel easy till he returns. I do wish we had a government under which our lives would be just as safe as they were in Pennsylvania."

Ellen felt very anxious, but she tried to hide her disquietude and keep Minnie's spirits from sinking, and so she said, "This is a hard country. We colored people have seen our hard times here."

"But, mother, don't you sometimes feel bitter towards these people, who have treated you so unkindly?"

"No, Minnie; I used to, but I don't now. God says we must forgive, and if we don't forgive, He won't forgive."

"But, mother, how did you get to feeling so?"

"Why, honey, I used to suffer until my heart was almost ready to burst, but I learned to cast my burden on the Lord, and then my misery all passed away. My burden fell

off at the foot of the cross, and I felt that my feet were planted on a rock."

"How wonderful," said Minnie, "is this faith! How real it is to them! How near some of these suffering people have drawn to God!"

"Yes," said Ellen, "Mrs. Sumpter had a colored woman, to whom they were real mean and cruel, and one day they whipped her and beat her on her feet to keep her from running away; but she made up her mind to leave, and so she packed up her clothes to run away. But before she started, I believe she kneeled down and prayed, and asked what she should do, and something reasoned with her and said, 'Stand still and see what I am going to do for you,' and so she unpacked her clothes and stayed, and now the best part of it was this, Milly's son had been away, and he came back and brought with him money enough to buy his mother; for he had been out begging money to buy her, and so Milly got free, and she was mighty glad that she had stayed, because when he'd come back, if she had been gone, he would not have known where to find her."

"Well, it is wonderful. Somehow these people have passed through the darkness and laid their hands on God's robe of love and light, and have been sustained. It seems to me that some things they see clearer through their tears."

"Mother," said Minnie, "As it is Saturday I will visit some of my scholars."

"Well, Minnie, I would; you look troubled, and may be you'll feel better."

"Yes, Mother, I often feel strengthened after visiting some of these good old souls, and getting glimpses into their inner life. I sometimes ask them, after listening to the story of their past wrongs, what has sustained you? What has kept you up? And the almost invariable answer has been the power of God. Some of these poor old souls, who have been turned adrift to shift for themselves, don't live by bread alone; they live by bread and faith in God. I asked one of them a few days since, Are you not afraid of starving? and the answer was, Not while God lives."

After Minnie left, she visited a number of lowly cabins. The first one she entered

was the home of an industrious couple who were just making a start in life. The room in which Minnie was, had no window-lights, only an aperture that supplied them with light, but also admitted the cold.

"Why don't you have window-lights?" said Minnie.

"Oh we must crawl before we walk;" and yet even in this humble home they had taken two orphan children of their race, and were giving them food and shelter. And this kindness to the orphans of their race Minnie found to be a very praiseworthy practice among some of those people who were not poorer than themselves.

The next cabin she entered was very neat, though it bore evidences of poverty. The woman, in referring to the past, told her how her child had been taken away when it was about two years old, and how she had lost all trace of him, and would not know him if he stood in her presence.

"How did you feel?" said Minnie.

"I felt as I was going to my grave, but I thought if I wouldn't get justice here, I would get it in another world."

"My husband," said another, "asked if God is a just God, how would sich as slavery be, and something answered and said, 'sich shan't always be,' and you couldn't beat it out of my husband's head that the Spirit didn't speak to him."

And thus the morning waned away, and Minnie returned calmer than when she had left. A holy peace stole over her mind. She felt that for high and low, rich and poor, there was a common refuge. That there was no corner so dark that the light of heaven could not shine through, and that these people in their ignorance and simplicity had learned to look upon God as a friend coming near to them in their sorrows, and taking cognizance of their wants and woes.

Minnie loved to listen to these beautiful stories of faith and trust. To her they were grand inspirations to faith and duty. Sometimes Minnie would think, when listening to some dear aged saint, I can't teach these people religion, I must learn from them.

Refreshed and strengthened she returned home and began to work upon a dress for a destitute and orphaned child, and when night came she retired quite early, being somewhat wearied with her day's work.

During his absence Louis had been among the freedmen in a new settlement where he had lately established a school, where, notwithstanding all their disadvantages, he was pleased to see evidences of growth and progress.

There was an earnestness and growing manliness that commanded his respect. They were beginning to learn the power of combination, and gave but little heed to the cajoling words, "We are your best friends."

"Don't you think," Louis said to an intelligent freedman, "that the rebels are your best friends?"

"I'll think so when I lose my senses."

"But you are ignorant," Louis said to another one. "How will you know whom to vote for?"

"Well if I don't, I know how not to vote for a rebel."

"How do you know you didn't vote for a rebel?" said Louis to another one who came from one of the most benighted districts.

"I voted for one of my own color," as if treason and a black skin were incompatible.

In the evening Louis called the people together, and talked with them, trying to keep them from being discouraged, for the times were evil, and the days were very gloomy. The impeachment had failed. State after State in the North had voted against enfranchising the colored man in their midst. The spirit of the lost cause revived, murders multiplied. The Ku Klux spread terror and death around. Every item of Northern meanness to the colored people in their midst was a message of hope to the rebel element of the South, which had only changed. Ballot and bullet had failed, but another resort was found in secret assassination. Men advocating

equal rights did so at the peril of their lives, for violence and murder were rampant in the land. Oh those dark and weary days when politicians were flattering for place and murdered Union men were sleeping in their bloody shrouds. Louis' courage did not desert him, and he tried to nerve the hearts of those that were sinking with fear in those days of gloom and terror. His advice to the people was, "Defend your firesides if they are invaded, live as peaceably as you can, spare no pains to educate your children, be saving and industrious, try to get land under your feet and homes over your heads. My faith is very strong in political parties, but, as the world has outgrown other forms of wrong, I believe that it will outgrow this also. We must trust and hope for better things." What else could he say? And yet there were times when his words seemed to him almost like bitter mockery. Here was outrage upon outrage committed upon these people, and to tell them to hope and wait for better times, but seemed like speaking hollow words. Oh he longed for a central administration strong enough to put down violence and misrule in the South. If Johnson was clasping hands with rebels and traitors was there no power in Congress to give, at least, security to life? Must they wait till murder was organized into an institution, and life and property were at the mercy of the mob? And, if so, would not such a government be a farce, and such a civilization a failure?

With these reflections passing through his mind he fell asleep, but his slumber was restless and disturbed. He dreamed (but it seemed so plain to him, that he thought it was hardly a dream,) that Minnie came to his side and pressed her lips to his, but they were very pale and very cold. He reached out his hand to clasp her, but she was gone, but as she vanished he heard her say, "My husband."

Restless and uneasy he arose; there was a strange feeling around his soul, a great sinking and depression of his spirits. He could not account for his feelings. He arose and walked the floor and looked up at the heavens, but the night was very bright and beautiful, still he could not shake off his strange and sad forebodings, and as soon as it was light he started for home.

* * * * *

[Installment missing.]

Chapter XX

In the afternoon when the body had been prepared for the grave, the sorrowing friends gathered around, tearfully noting the look of peace and rest which had stolen over the pale, dead face, when all traces of the death agony had passed away by the contraction of the muscles.

"That is just the way she looked yesterday," said a sad-eyed woman, whose face showed traces of a deep "and fearful sorrow."

Louis drew near, for he was eager to hear any word that told him of Minnie before death had robbed her of life, and him of peace. He came near enough to hear, but not to interrupt the conversation.

"She was at my house yesterday, trying to comfort me, when I was telling her how these Secesh used to cruelize us."

"I was telling her about my poor daughter Amy, and what a sprightly, pert piece she was, and how dem awful Secesh took my poor chile and hung'd her."

"Hung'd? Aunt Susan, Oh how was dat?" said half a dozen voices.

"Well, you see it was jist dis way. My darter Amy was a mighty nice chile, and Massa could truss her wid any ting. So when de Linkum Sogers had gone through dis place, Massa got her to move some of his tings over to another place. Now when Amy seed de sojers had cum'd through she was mighty glad, and she said in a kine of childish way, 'I'se so glad, I'm gwine to marry a Linkum soger, and set up house-keeping for myself.' I don't spect she wer in arnest 'bout marrying de sojer, but she did want her freedom. Well, no body couldn't blame her for dat, for freedom's a mighty good thing."

"I don't like it, I jist loves it," said one of Aunt Sue's auditors.

"And I does too, 'cause I'd rather live on bread and water than be back again in de old place, but go on, Aunt Susan."

"Well, when she said dat, dat miserable old Heston——"

"Heston, I know dat wretch, I bound de debil's waiting for him now, got his pitch fork all ready."

"Well, he had my poor girl tookened up, and poor chile, she was beat shameful, and den dey had her up before der sogers and had her tried for saying 'cendiary words, and den dey had my poor girl hung'd." And the poor old woman bowed her head and rocked her body to and fro.

"Well," she continued after a moment's pause, "I was telling dat sweet angel dere my trouble, and she was mighty sorry, and sat dere and cried, and den she said, 'Mrs. Thomas, I hope in a better world dat you'll see a joy according to all the days wherein you have seen sorrow!' Bless her sweet heart, she's got in de shining gate afore me, but I bound to meet her on de sunny banks of deliberance.

"And she was at my house yesterday," said another. "She cum'd to see if I wanted any ting, and I tell'd her I would like to hab a little flannel, 'cause I had the rheumatiz so bad, and she said I should hab it. Den she asked me if I didn't like freedom best. I told her I would rather live in a corn crib, and so I would. It is hard getting along, but I hopes for better times. And den she took down de Bible, and read wid dat sweet voice of hers, about de eagle stirring up her nest, and den she said when de old eagle wanted her young to fly she broked up de nest, and de little eagles didn't known what was de matter, but some how dey didn't feel so cumfertable, 'cause de little twigs and sticks stuck in 'em, and den dey would work dere wings, and dat was de way she said we must do; de ole nest of slavery was broke up, but she said we mus'n't get discouraged, but we must plume our wings for higher flying. Oh she did tell it so purty. I wish I could say it like she did, it did my

heart so much good. Poor thing, she done gone and folded her wing in de hebenly mansion. I wish I was 'long side of her, but I'se bound to meet her, 'cause I'm gwine to set out afresh for heben and 'ternal glory."

And thus did these stricken children of sorrow unconsciously comfort the desolate and almost breaking heart of Louis Lacroix. And their words of love and hope were like rays of light shimmering amid the gloomy shadows that overhung his suddenly darkened life.

Surely, thought Louis, if the blessings and tears of the poor and needy and the prayers of him who was ready to perish would crystalize a path to the glory-land, then Minnie's exit from earth must have been over a bridge of light, above whose radiant arches hovering angels would delight to bend.

While these thoughts were passing through his mind, a knock was heard at the door, and Louis rose to open it, and then he saw a sight which shook all his gathered firmness to tears. Headed by the eldest of Minnie's scholars came a procession of children, each one bearing a bunch of fairest and brightest flowers to spread around the couch of their beloved teacher. Some kissed her, and others threw themselves beside the corpse and wept bitter, burning tears. All shared in Louis' grief, for all had lost a dear, good friend and loving instructor.

Louis summoned all the energies of his soul to bear his mournful loss. It was his task to bow to the Chastener, and let his loved one go, feeling that when he had laid her in the earth that he left her there in the hope of a better resurrection.

Life with its solemn responsibilities still met him; its earnest duties still confronted him, and, though he sometimes felt like a weary watcher at the gates of death, longing to catch a glimpse of her shining robes and the radiant light of her glorified face, yet her knew it was his work to labor and to wait.

Sorrow and danger still surrounded his way, and he felt his soul more strongly drawn out than ever to share the fortunes of the colored race. He felt there were

grand possibilities stored up in their future. The name of the negro had been associated with slavery, ignorance and poverty, and he determined as far as his influence could be exerted to lift that name from the dust of the centuries and place it among the most honored names in the history of the human race.

He still remained in the South, for Minnie's grave had made the South to him a sacred place, a place in which to labor and to wait until peace like bright dew should descend where carnage had spread ruin around, and freedom and justice, like glorified angels, should reign triumphant where violence and slavery had held their fearful carnival of shame and crime for ages. Earnestly he set himself to bring around the hour when

Peace, white-robed and pure, should move O'er rifts of ruin deep and wide, When her hands should span with lasting love The chasms rent by hate and pride.

And he was blessed in his labors of love and faith.

Conclusion

And now, in conclusion, may I not ask the indulgence of my readers for a few moments, simply to say that Louis and Minnie are only ideal beings, touched here and there with a coloring from real life?

But while I confess (not wishing to mis-represent the most lawless of the Ku-Klux) that Minnie has only lived and died in my imagination, may I not modestly ask that the lesson of Minnie shall have its place among the educational ideas for the advancement of our race?

The greatest want of our people, if I understand our wants aright, is not simply wealth, nor genius, nor mere intelligence, but live men, and earnest, lovely women, whose lives shall represent not a "stagnant mass, but a living force."

We have wealth among us, but how much of it is ever spent in building up the future of the race? in encouraging talent, and developing genius? We have intelligence, but how much do we add to the reservoir of the world's thought? We have genius among

us, but how much can it rely upon the colored race for support?

Take even the Christian Recorder; where are the graduates from colleges and high school whose pens and brains lend beauty, strength, grace and culture to its pages?

If, when their school days are over, the last composition shall have been given at the examination, will not the disused faculties revenge themselves by rusting? If I could say it without being officious and intrusive, I would say to some who are about to graduate this year, do not feel that your education is finished, when the diploma of your institution is in your hands. Look upon the knowledge you have gained only as a stepping stone to a future, which you are determined shall grandly contrast with the past.

While some of the authors of the present day have been weaving their stories about white men marrying beautiful quadroon girls, who, in so doing were lost to us socially, I conceived of one of that same class to whom I gave a higher, holier destiny; a life of lofty self-sacrifice and beautiful self-consecration, finished at the post of duty, and rounded off with the fiery crown of martyrdom, a circlet which ever changes into a diadem of glory.

The lesson of Minnie's sacrifice is this, that it is braver to suffer with one's own branch of the human race,—to feel, that the weaker and the more despised they are, the closer we will cling to them, for the sake of helping them, than to attempt to creep out of all identity with them in their feebleness, for the sake of mere personal advantages, and to do this at the expense of self-respect, and a true manhood, and a truly dignified womanhood, that with whatever gifts we possess, whether they be genius, culture, wealth or social position, we can best serve the interests of our race by a generous and loving diffusion, than by a narrow and selfish isolation which, after all, is only one type of the barbarous and anti-social state.

Notes

1. The following two paragraphs are for the most part illegible. I have reproduced

below as much of the text as can be deciphered.

The whole South is in a state of excitement […] [ ] nurture [ ] and re- [ ] high [ ] be for [ ] they are [ ] and only remember they are rebels[?].

They [urge the agenda?] and their brothers in their [mistaken?] folly. Like the women of Carthage [ ] ancient and magnificent city was [ ] they were ready to sacrifice their [ ] and if need be would have cut [but it have been] so dear to their hearts [ ]

2. The original reads "Josiah."

3. The original reads "Joseph."

4. The original reads "Josiah."

5. The original reads "Josiah."

6. The original reads "Anna."

7. The original reads "Minnie."

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