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UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.—CAP. II.

THE MOTHER.—HISTORY OF GEORGE HARRIS.

ELIZA had been brought up by her mistress, from girlhood, as a petted and indulged favourite.

The traveller in the south must often have remarked that peculiar air of refinement, that softness of voice and manner, which seems in many cases to be a particular gift to the quadroon and mulatto women. These natural graces in the quadroon are often united with beauty of the most dazzling kind, and in almost every case, with a personal appearance prepossessing and agreeable. Eliza, such as we have described her, is not a fancy sketch, but taken from remembrance, as we saw her years ago in Kentucky. Safe under the protecting care of her mistress, Eliza had reached maturity without those temptations which make beauty so fatal an inheritance to a slave. She had been married to a bright and talented young mulatto man, who was a slave on a neighbouring estate, and bore the name of George Harris.

This young man had been hired out by his master to work in a bagging factory, where his adroitness and ingenuity caused him to be considered the first hand in the place. He had invented a machine for the cleaning of the hemp, which, considering the education and circumstances of the inventor, displayed quite as much mechanical genius as Whitney's Cotton-gin.*

He was possessed of a handsome person and pleasing manners, and was a general favourite in the factory. Nevertheless, as this young man was in the eye of the law not a man, but a thing, all these superior qualifications were subject to the control of a vulgar narrow-minded tyrannical master. This same gentleman, having heard of the fame of George's invention, took a ride over to the factory to see what this intelligent chattel had been about. He was received with great enthusiasm by the employer, who congratulated him on possessing so valuable a slave.

He was waited upon over the factory, shown the machinery by George, who, in high spirits, talked so fluently, hold himself so erect, looked so handsome and manly, that his master began to feel an uneasy consciousness of inferiority. What business had his slave to be marching round the country, inventing machines, and holding up his head among gentlemen? He'd soon put a stop to it. He'd take him back, and put him to hoeing and digging, and "see if he'd step about so smart." Accordingly, the manufacturer and all hands concerned were astounded when he suddenly demanded George's wages, and announced his intention of taking him home.

"But, Mr. Harris," remonstrated the manufacturer, "isn't this rather sudden?"

"What if it is? Isn't the man *mine?*"

"We would be willing, sir, to increase the rate of compensation."

"No object at all, sir. I don't need to hire any of my hands out, unless I've a mind to."

"But, sir, he seems peculiarly adapted to this business."

"Dare say he may be; never was much adapted to anything that I set him about, I'll be bound."

"But only think of his inventing this machine," interposed one of the workmen, rather unluckily.

"Oh, yes!—a machine for saving work, is it? He'd invent that, I'll be bound; let a nigger alone for that, any time. They are all labour-saving machines themselves, every one of 'em. No, he shall tramp!"

George had stood like one transfixed, at hearing his doom thus suddenly pronounced by a power that he knew was irresistible. He folded his arms, tightly pressed in his lips,—but a whole volcano of bitter feelings burned in his bosom, and sent streams of fire through his veins. He breathed short, and his large dark eyes flashed like live coals; and he might have broken out into some dangerous ebullition, had not the kindly manufacturer touched him on the arm, and said, in a low tone—

"Give way, George; go with him for the present. We'll try to help you yet."

The tyrant observed the whisper, and conjectured its import, though he could not hear what was said; and he inwardly strengthened himself in his determination to keep the power he possessed over his victim.

George was taken home, and put to the meanest drudgery of the farm. He had been able to repress every disrespectful word; but the flashing eye, the gloomy and troubled brow, were part of a natural language that could not be repressed—indubitable signs, which showed too plainly, that the man could not become a thing.

It was during the happy period of his employment in the factory, that George had seen and married his wife. During that period—being much trusted and favoured by his employer—he had free liberty to come and go at discretion. The marriage was highly approved of by Mrs. Shelby, who, with a little womanly complacency in match-making, felt pleased to unite her handsome favourite with one of her own class who seemed in every way suited to her: and so they were married in her mistress's great parlour, and her mistress herself adorned the bride's beautiful hair with orange-blossoms, and threw over it the bridal veil, which certainly could scarce have rested on a fairer head; and there was no lack of white gloves, and cake and wine—of admiring guests to praise the bride's beauty, and her mistress's indulgence and liberality. For a year or two, Eliza saw her husband frequently, and there was nothing to interrupt their happiness, except the loss of two infant children, to whom she was passionately attached, and whom she mourned with a grief so intense as to call for gentle remonstrance from her mistress, who sought, with maternal anxiety, to direct her naturally passionate feelings within the bounds of reason and religion.

After the birth of little Harry, however, she had gradually become tranquilized and settled: and every bleeding tie and throbbing nerve, once more entwined with that little life, seemed to become sound and healthful; and Eliza was a happy woman up to the time that her husband was rudely torn from his kind employer, and brought under the iron sway of his legal owner.

The manufacturer, true to his word, visited Mr. Harris, a week or two after George had been taken away, when, as he hoped, the heat of the occasion had passed away, and tried every possible inducement to lead him to restore him to his former employment.

"You needn't trouble yourself to talk any longer," said he, doggedly; "I know my own business, sir."

"I did not presume to interfere with it, sir. I only thought that you might think it for your interest, to let your man to us on the terms proposed."

"Oh, I understand the matter well enough. I saw your winking and whispering the day I took him out of the factory; but you don't come it over me that way. It's a free country, sir; the man's *mine*, and I do what I please with him—that's it."

And so fell George's last hope; nothing before him but a life of toil and drudgery, rendered more bitter by every little smarting vexation and indignity which tyrannical ingenuity could devise.

A very humane jurist once said, "The worst use you can put a man to is to hang him." No! there is another use that a man can be put to that is WORSE!

* A machine of this description was really the invention of a young coloured man in Kentucky.

CAP. III.

THE HUSBAND AND FATHER.—GEORGE AND ELIZA.—HUSBAND AND WIFE'S ARGUMENT.—GEORGE'S FAREWELL.

Mrs. Shelby had gone on her visit, and Eliza stood in the verandah, rather dejectedly looking after the retreating carriage, when a hand was laid on her shoulder. She turned, and a bright smile lighted up her fine eyes.

"George, is it you? How you frightened me! Well; I am so glad you's come! Missis is gone to spend the afternoon; so come into my little room, and we'll have the time all to ourselves."

Saying this, she drew him into a neat little apartment opening on the verandah, where she generally sat at her sowing, within call of her mistress.

"How glad I am!—why don't you smile?—and look at Harry—how he grows!" The boy stood shyly regarding his father through his curls, holding close to the skirts of his mother's dress. "Isn't he beautiful?" said Eliza, lifting his long curls, and kissing him.

"I wish he'd never been born!" said George, bitterly. "I wish I'd never been born myself!"

Surprised and frightened, Eliza sat down, and leaned her head on her husband's shoulder, and burst into tears.

"There now, Eliza, it's too bad for me to make you feel so, poor girl!" said he, fondly,—"it's too bad. Oh, how I wish you never had seen me—you might have been happy!"

"George! George! how can you talk so? What dreadful thing has happened, or is going to happen? I am sure we've been very happy till lately."

"So we have, dear," said George. Then drawing his child on his knee, he gazed intently on his glorious dark eyes, and passed his hands through his long curls.

"Just like you, Eliza; and you are the handsomest woman I ever saw, and the best one I ever wish to see; but, oh, I wish I'd never seen you, nor you me!"

"Oh, George, how can you?"

"Yes, Eliza, it's all misery, misery, misery! My life is bitter as wormwood; the very life is burning out of me. I'm a poor, miserable, forlorn drudge; I shall only drag you down with me, that's all. What's the use of our trying to do any thing, trying to know any thing, trying to be anything? What's the use of living? I wish I was dead!"

"Oh, now, dear George, that is really wicked! I know how you feel about losing your place in the factory; and you have a hard master; but pray be patient, and perhaps something——"

"Patient!" said he, interrupting her; "haven't I been patient? Did I say a word when he came and took me away, for no earthly reason, from the place where everybody was kind to me? I'd paid him truly every cent of my earnings: and they all say I worked well."

"Well, it *is* dreadful," said Eliza, "but, after all, he is your master, you know."

"My master! and who made him my master? That's what I think of—what right has he to me? I'm a man as much as he is; I am a better man than he is; I know more about business than he does; I am a better manager than he is; I can read better than he can; I can write a better hand: and I've learned it all myself, and no thanks to him—I've learned it in spite of him; and now what right has he to make a dray-horse of me?—to take me from things I can do, and do better than he can, and put me to work that any horse can do? He tries to do it; he says, he'll bring me down and humble me, and he puts me to just the hardest, meanest, and dirtiest work, on purpose."

"Oh, George, George, you frighten me! Why I never heard you talk so: I'm afraid you'll do something dreadful. I don't wonder at your feelings, at all; but oh, do be careful—do, do—for my sake—for Harry's!"

"I have been careful, and I have been patient; but it's growing worse and worse—flesh and blood can't bear it any longer. Every chance he can get to insult and torment me, he takes. I thought I could do my work well, and keep on quiet, and have some time to read and learn, out of work-hours; but the more he sees I can do, the more he loads on. He says that, though I don't say anything, he sees I've got the devil in me, and he means to bring it out; and one of these days it will come out—in a way that he won't like, or I'm mistaken."

"Oh, dear, what shall we do?" said Eliza, mournfully.

"It was only yesterday," said George, "as I was busy loading stones into a cart, that young Mas'r Tom stood there, slashing his whip so near the horse, that the creature was frightened. I asked him to stop, as pleasant as I could; he just kept right on. I begged him again, and then he turned on me, and began striking me. I held his hand; and then he screamed, and kicked, and ran to his father, and told him that I was fighting him. He came in a rage, and said he'd teach me who was my master; and he tied me to a tree, and cut switches for young master, and told him that he might whip me till he was tired; and he did do it. If I don't make him remember it some time!"

And the brow of the young man grew dark, and his eyes burned with an expression that made his young wife tremble.

"Who made this man my master—that's what I want to know?" he said.

"Well," said Eliza, mournfully, "I always thought that I must obey my master and mistress, or I couldn't be a Christian!"

"There is some sense in it in your case; they have brought you up like a child—fed you, clothed you, indulged you, and taught you, so that you have a good education,—that is some reason why they should claim you. But I have been kicked, and cuffed, and sworn at, and at the best only let alone; and what do I owe? I've paid for all my keeping a hundred times over. I *won't* bear it—no, I *won't!*" he said, clenching his hand, with a fierce frown.

Eliza trembled, and was silent. She had never seen her husband in this mood before; and her gentle system of ethics seemed to bend like a reed in the surges of such passions.

"You know poor little Carlo, that you gave me?" added George; "the creature has been about all the comfort that I've had. He has slept with me nights, and followed me around days, and kind o' looked at me as if he understood how I felt. Well, the other day I was just feeding him with a few old scraps I picked up by the kitchen door, and Mas'r came along, and said I was feeding him up at his expense, and that he couldn't afford to have every nigger keeping his dog, and ordered me to tie a stone to his neck, and throw him in the pond."

"Oh, George, you didn't do it!"

"Do it!—not I; but he did. Mas'r and Tom pelted the poor drowning creature with stones. Poor thing! he looked at me so mournful, as if he wondered why I didn't save him. I had to take a flogging because I wouldn't do it myself. I don't care; Mas'r will find out that I am one that whipping won't tame. My day will come yet, if he don't look out."

"What are you going to do? Oh, George, don't do anything wicked: if you only trust in God, and try to do right, he'll deliver you."

"I an't a Christian, like you, Eliza; my heart's full of bitterness; I can't trust in God. Why does He let things be so?"

"Oh, George, we must have faith! Mistress says that, when all things go wrong to us, we must believe that God is doing the very best."

"That's easy to say, for people that are sitting on their sofas, and riding in their carriages—but let 'em be where I am, I guess it would come some harder. I wish I could be good; but my heart burns, and can't be reconciled any how. You couldn't in my place; you can't now, if I tell you all I've got to say. You don't know the whole yet."

"What can be coming now?"

"Well, lately Mas'r has been saying, that he was a fool to let me marry off the place; that he hates Mr. Shelby and all his tribe, because they are proud, and hold their heads up above him, and that I've got proud notions from you; and he says he won't let me come here any more, and that I shall take a wife and settle down on his place. At first he only scolded and grumbled these things; but yesterday he told me that I should take Mina for a wife, and settle down in a cabin with her, or he would sell me down river."

"Why, but you were married to *me* by the minister, as much as if you'd been a white man," said Eliza, simply.

"Don't you know a slave can't be married? There is no law in this country for that: I can't hold you for my wife, if he chooses to part us. That's why I wish I'd never seen you—why I wish I'd never been born; it would have been better for us both—it would have been better for this poor child if he had never been born. All this may happen to him yet!"

"Oh, but master is so kind!"

"Yes, but who knows? he may die; and then he may be sold to nobody knows who. What pleasure is it that he is handsome, and smart, and bright? I tell you, Eliza, that a sword will pierce through your soul for every good and pleasant thing your child is or has—it will make him worth too much for you to keep."

The words smote heavily on Eliza's heart; the vision of the trader came before her eyes, and, as if some one had struck her a deadly blow, she turned pale and gasped for breath. She looked nervously out on the verandah, where the boy, tired of the grave conversation, had retired, and where he was riding triumphantly up and down on Mr. Shelby's walking-stick. She would have spoken to tell her husband her fears, but checked herself.

"No, no, he has enough to bear, poor fellow!" she thought. "No, I won't tell him; besides, it an't true; missis never deceives us."

"So, Eliza, my girl," said the husband, mournfully, "bear up, now, and good bye; for I'm going."

"Going, George!—going where?"

"To Canada," said he, straightening himself up; "and when I'm there, I'll buy you—that's all the hope that's left us. You have a kind master, that won't refuse to sell you. I'll buy you and the boy—God helping me, I will!"

"Oh, dreadful!—if you should be taken!"

"I won't be taken, Eliza—I'll *die* first! I'll be free, or I'll die!"

"You won't kill yourself?"

"No need of that; they will kill me fast enough; they never will get me down the river alive."

"Oh, George, for my sake, do be careful! Don't do anything wicked; don't lay hands on yourself, or anybody else. You are tempted too much—too much; but don't—go you must—but go carefully, prudently; pray God to help you."

"Well, then, Eliza, hear my plan. Mas'r took it into his head to send me right by here with a note to Mr. Symmes, that lives a mile past. I believe he expected I should come here to tell you what I have, It would please him, if he thought it would aggravate 'Shelby's folks,' as he calls 'em. I'm going home quite resigned, you understand, as if all was over. I've got some preparations made, and there are those that will help me, and, in the course of a week or so, I shall be among the missing some day. Pray for me, Eliza: perhaps the good Lord will hear *you.*"

"Oh, pray yourself, George, and go trusting in Him; then you won't do anything wicked."

"Well, now, *good bye,*" said George, holding Eliza's hands, and gazing into her eyes, without moving. They stood silent; then there were last words, and sobs, and bitter weeping—such parting as those may make, whose hope to meet again is as the spider's web; and the husband and wife were parted.

THINGS TALKED OF IN LONDON.

December, 1852.

WHATEVER other topics have been talked about, that of the weather forces itself in everywhere. What with storms and inundations, to say nothing of earthquakes, it seems as though the times were getting out of joint; and we have the melancholy certainty that, if the wind stays where it is at present, the weather will never be otherwise. Is the Atlantic too full, that the south-westers continue to bring us such an overwhelming tribute of water? is a question on which meteorological statistics will throw a little light a month or two hence. For the moment, we must rest satisfied, with what the Registrar-general's Report tells us of the summer quarter. From the beginning of July to August 5, the temperature was five degrees above the annual average; it was one degree below, from the 3d to the 16th of August, and after September 11. Taking the three months, June, July, and August, the temperature of the air was more than one and a half degrees above the average of eighty years, and the rain-fall exceeded by three inches the average of thirty-seven years. Hail fell on thirteen days, and the aurora was seen ten times.

In the same quarter, ending September 30, we are told that 109,236 persons emigrated, of whom 38,000 were for Australia, 62,000 for the United States, and the remainder for Canada and other places. Seventy thousand of the number sailed from Liverpool alone, a proof that the Irish were in large proportion. Such a depletion is telling on the labour-market; those who 'want places' are not nearly so numerous as they were, and if it goes on, its effect will be felt in the next census. This may be judged of by another return for the same quarter; the deaths were 100,497, and the births 151,193 leaving the 'natural increase' 50,696; being at the rate of 3899 weekly, or 557 daily. Owing to epidemics, the increase is said to be less than usual; and then if the emigration be taken into the account, the sum-total of the population will be found to have diminished.

Fortunately, there is no lack of work for those who remain. Go ahead is the order of the day, and governments even will not get leave to lag behind—that is, leaving politics out of the question, so far as science and art are concerned. Pressure from without, as regards the two latter points, is to be applied; with what results the future will shew. Now that the heads of departments are all at their post, the British Association are beginning to act on the resolutions passed at their Belfast meeting. They state it to be 'expedient to proceed without delay with the establishment in the southern hemisphere of a telescope not inferior in power to a three-feet reflector.' This has been long talked of; and if the authorities will only do their part of the work, we shall soon have a reflector exploring the southern heavens as thoroughly as Lord Rosse's 'monster' is searching the northern. Then we are to have a 'report on the physical character of the moon's surface as compared with that of the earth,' which promises to be highly interesting, and to make us better acquainted than we are with the nature and appearance of our satelite. Considering that two of our best astronomers and an eminent geologist are to undertake this task, and that with the instruments at their service the Bass Rock could be easily seen were it in the moon, we shall doubtless get some valuable details. Measures are to be taken for a combined system of observations on the laws of storms; and the Board of Ordnance, who have supplied their engineer stations in all parts of the world with meterological instruments, are to be asked to furnish others for the Ionian Islands, 'for measuring the direction and amount of earthquake vibrations,' which there occur so frequently.

Something, too, is to be done for geography, in preparing 'a large outline map of the world for the use of geographers and ethnologers,' and for travellers. Such a sheet has long been wanted; by means of it, those who go exploring under difficulties, will be able to lay down the positions of places with more accuracy and less trouble than at present. Then 'with the view of obtaining an accurate knowledge of the countries on and near the eastern coast of Africa, from the Red Sea to 10 degrees south latitude,' the East India Company are to be asked to send an expedition to explore those regions. This would be a worthy enterprise, for we know very little of that part of Africa; Barth and Overweg will probably have penetrated it erelong: those persevering travellers have again been heard from, after a long and anxious interval of silence. They had gone far beyond Denham's furthest, in the rear of a Bornouese army, thro' a country of extraordinary richness and fertility. It would seem, that the time is fast coming when the interior of Africa shall cease to be a blank in our maps; for in addition to the explorations now going on, strong recommendations have been made by the Chamber of Commerce at Manchester, and the Geographical Society, for the carrying out of the proposed expedition to steam up the Niger, enter the Quorra, and ascend the latter river, which is the larger of the two, to its source. If this can be accomplished, what hitherto unknown wonders of the equatorial regions shall we not hear of?

There is work to be done also in other quarters: three medical officers of the navy 'have proposed to undertake a thorough exploration of the countries watered by the river Magdelena, in South America, in respect to their botanical, zoological, and geological products;' and the government are to be urged to accede to their proposition. The Hudson's Bay Company intend to complete the survey of the northern coast-line of America, of which there are about 400 miles that have not yet been laid down on maps; and they are going to send Mr. Rae, with two boats to do the work. The expedition is to start from York Factory next June, travel to Chesterfield Inlet, cross over to and descend Back River, and then follow the western coast of Boothia as far as 72 degrees, which is probably the most northerly point of the American continent. The route lies across the locality of the north magnetic pole, and observations will be made to determine what change of position has taken place since it was discovered by Sir James Ross in 1831. If the season be favorable, Mr. Rae expects to be back at York Factory by the end of September; it not, he is prepared to winter whatever frost and foul weather may detain him.

Here may be mentioned the supplemental instalment of news brought by Captain Inglefield from the arctic regions. He went out in the *Isabel* steamer, a small vessel of 140 tons, equipped by Lady Franklin, and was away four months. In that time he made a careful search at the extremity of Baffin's Bay, and found reason to believe it not to be a bay, but a vast straight uniting the North Sea with the great Polar basin, for he sailed 120 miles further to the north than any one else in that region: he saw open water at the head of Smith's Sound, and got a glimps of the Polar Sea; and on the other side of the bay the appearances were such as to lead to the supposition of Greenland being an island. If, as is contemplated, he should make another attempt next year, passing between Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla, he will have a chance of finding the shortest way across to Behring's Strait. Happen what may, we shall rob that mysterious north of its secrets before many years are over.

Besides the undertaking hereinbefore mentioned as promoted by the British Association, they intend to continue their search of the sea bottom by dredging; to get government—if they can—'to connect with the survey of the Gulphstream an examination of the zoology and botany of that current, and also of the temperature of the sea round the shores of the British Islands;' 'to take into consideration the methods of cooling air for the ventilation of buildings in tropical climates by mechanical process;' and to form 'a systematic collection of the agricultural statistics of Great Britain.' No lack, therefore, of good work and manifold for the coming year. May it all be accomplished!

The Society of Arts, too, are not going to sleep. They have just issued the first number of a journal, in which they propose to publish a weekly summary of scientific progress; it is a step towards making 'the record of facts and phenomena more complete, more continuous, and more convenient than at present.' They have also put forth their list of 'subjects for premiums,' of which a few may be selected as sample. For the best essay on salt—on iron ore—for the discovery in England or any British possession, of plumbago—for the discovery of a new fuel which shall occupy less space, and be of less weight than any now in use, without diminution in the amount of heating power, or liability to injure metals in contact with it—for Australian wine, and dried fruits from any British colony, which may successfully compete with those brought from the Mediterranean—for the best samples of cotton from any of our colonies in Africa, India, or Australasia—for two tons of any vegetable fibre, applicable to all the purposes for which hemp is now used, and equally cheap, strong, and durable—for improvements in machinery, architecture, photophy, weaving, locks, lenses, besides a long list of other sujects connected with art, trade, or manufactures. All the communications and articles are to be sent in before the 31st of March 1853. In addition the Society offer 'the Swiney Prize'—£100 contained in a goblet of the same value—for the best published work on jurisprudence,' that branch 'which specially relates to art and manufactures;' and a 'special prize' of £50 'for the best essay on the history and management of Literary, Scientific, and Mechanics' Institutions; and especially how far, and in what manner, they may be developed and combined, so as to promote the moral well-being and industry of the country." Let the enterprising and the industrious take heart, and shew that they have skill and ingenuity enough to take the field and keep it against all comers.

There is one subject which excites considerable interest among our learned bodies—namely, the promise of domiciliating them all under one roof, as intimated in the Queen's speech. and in the statements made in the House recently by Mr. Disraeli. They—the learned bodies are discussing the probabilities with more or less contentment, according to circumstances. Some look forward to being assembled in a Royal or National Institute, as their *confreres* are in Paris, as an accession of honor, and an increase to their means of usefulness; others finding themselves well-off in their present quarters, regard such an eventuality as seriously detrimental to their real welfare; while others who are not to share in the proposed union, are concocting little volcanoes of indignation, which break out at times in a strange fashion, but, as