

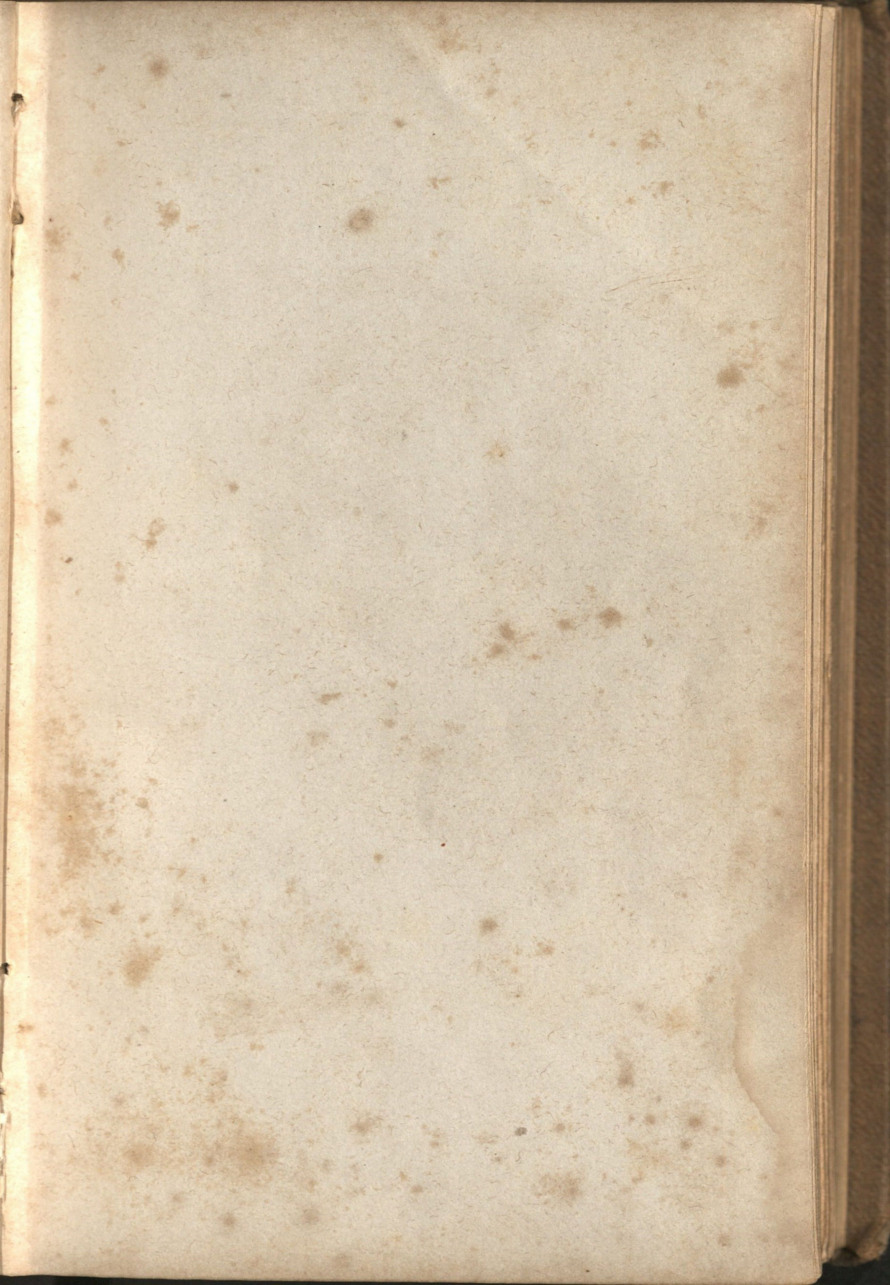
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1st edition
Garrison 37
DeRome II 530
350.00

2470

J. A. Worthington
Cleveland (H.O.)

1852





Emily P. Burke

REMINISCENCES
OF
G E O R G I A :

BY
EMILY P. BURKE.

“THESE I DISTINCTLY HOLD IN MEMORY STILL.”
Pollok.

JAMES M. FITCH.
MDCCL.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by
EMILY P. BURKE,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Ohio.

P R E F A C E .

THESE letters were originally written to avoid the trouble of verbal replies to the individual questions of many who were anxious to learn more of the private, domestic arrangements and manners of the South, than are found in the journals of those, who in their descriptions of places, usually delineate their general features rather than particular ones. In issuing these communications the authoress had in special view many of her New England pupils, who in anticipation of being engaged in teaching at the South, were desirous to collect as much information as possible relative to those customs by which their future comfort and happiness might be greatly enhanced or diminished.

I have now collected these articles which at first appeared in one of the New England journals, and in compliance with the earnest solicitations of friends and pupils at the West, consented to republish them in the form of a book, which I now most cheerfully dedicate to that noble hearted friend, whose house has been the home for the homeless and the refuge of the oppressed,

who, when I was a stranger in a strange land, gave me a cordial welcome beneath her hospitable roof, with the soul reviving assurance, that I "should have a larger place in her heart than she could give me in her house."

To this dear friend I would say, in view of that separation which must ere long take place between us,

"Farewell! If ever fondest prayer

For others' weal avails on high,

Mine shall not all be lost in air,

But waft thy name beyond the sky."

E. P. B.

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REMINISCENCES OF GEORGIA.

LETTER I.

Voyage at Sea—A Calm—Mother Carey's Chickens—Horses
Frightened.

In attempting to give you some account of my journey to Georgia, and my residence in that State, I can hardly expect to interest you who have read the journals of so many, who wield a much abler pen; but if an imperfect description of some of those objects and incidents which came under my observation after I left the shores of my own New England home, can in any wise contribute to your pleasure, I shall feel myself well compensated for my labor.

It will hardly be necessary for me to give an account of my journey to New York, or a particular description of my passage from thence to Savannah, as it did not differ essentially from accounts of the same kind that we see almost

daily in our newspapers; therefore the incidents that I shall relate as connected with my passage from New York to Savannah, I intend shall belong to that class of events which are usually passed over by tourists; the same course also, I shall pursue in speaking of other things with which I was conversant while in Georgia.

We sailed from New York on one of the most gloomy days of an equinoctial storm. The rain beat upon us so severely while we were making our way to the wharves, that we found our umbrellas to be of little service; and by the time we had passed through those muddy streets and over the decks of three or four vessels so slippery we could hardly retain an upright position, we saw after we were safely deposited in our own quarters, that we had brought away upon our shoes and the bottom of our dresses not a small share of the filth and dirt of the city: but I endured this inconvenience much better than I should have done, if I had not seen, by looking around upon my companions, that all were in the same predicament; and in this case, certainly, I felt that "misery loved company."

On board of the vessel, I found myself one of a hundred human beings, that were all crowded together in one not very large ship, besides vari-

ous animals, none of which appeared to be in the most pleasant mood.

It was a cold day ; the wind blew ; the rain poured down in torrents, the horses were impatient in their stables, the pigs squealed, and the fowls cackled ; the children cried, and the older passengers were cross, and the very patient captain and sailors, arrayed in oil cloth, were doing their best to put to sea, and get this little world of uproar and confusion set in order, but I learned that nothing proved so effectual in calming this fault-finding assembly, as a few heavy rockings of the vessel, when she had fairly got on her way to sea.

It was really quite amusing to me, although no one on board suffered more from sea-sickness than myself, to see how soon we were all brought down to a level after our ship began to sail. We had on board "the high and the low, the rich and the poor," the haughty aristocrat from the South, and the shrewd merchant from the North ; the proud cadet in full uniform from West Point, and the poor emigrant from the East, as well as the down-trodden slave ; and in less than one hour after we left the harbor, one was no higher in the world, in one sense of it, than another, unless we except those who were prostrated in berths instead of lying upon

the floor as the slaves were obliged to do. When I observed this, I could not help making this sage reflection, that though our stations in life may be one hour much elevated above that of our neighbors, the next we may, by some providence unforeseen by us, be reduced to a level with the meanest serf.

The first day of our voyage was so cold and stormy, the captain was obliged to set up a stove in the cabin, which was not needed, however, after we had sailed about three days towards the South. The next day it cleared off pleasant, the wind went down so that there was scarcely a breath to fill the sails; then followed what the sailors call a calm, which continued four or five days. I never experienced any thing more tedious and discouraging. The motion of the sea caused the ship to rock just enough to make us suffer from that most of all unpleasant sensations that one feels after having been performing a series of rapid revolutions upon his heel; and what made this still more disheartening was the consciousness that we had to suffer all this to no purpose; for we were making no progress all this time towards our much desired haven.

For several days we had nothing to cheer up our gloomy spirits but our own wise reflections,

for we were too sick to see and converse with each other, and we found our own thoughts but sorry comforters when rolling upon the wide ocean, deathly sick and far from our loved homes and all their comforts. During this time our eyes rested upon nothing beyond our own little floating world, save the blue arch above us and that same incessantly rolling ocean, beneath us.

But nothing seemed so homelike during my voyage as to be awakened every morning by the crowing of the fowls, and my first impressions were, invariably, on awaking, of being at home in my own chamber, and that I was aroused by the inhabitants of the same barn-yard which had in the days of my early youth so many times reminded me that it was morning.

The first part of our voyage was very monotonous, owing to the dead calm I mentioned before. The sailors went through their regular routine of duties: the cook laid the table three times a day, whether the passengers were able to eat or not; sometimes a passenger as pale as a corpse would crawl out of his berth to get a reviving breath of air upon the deck, while perhaps a couple more having strength enough to sit up an hour, would try to while away the tedious time by a game at chess or back-gammon.

But no incidents happened worthy of notice, till one morning we were visited by a flock of "Mother Carey's Chickens," a circumstance which created quite a sensation, not only among the sailors on board, but among the passengers also; for it is one of the easiest things in the world for people, after they have been out at sea a few days, to imbibe more or less of that superstition that seems to be so natural to sailors, and they believe beyond a doubt, that the appearance of these birds portends a storm. I did hope that this old-timed omen would fail this time; for I dislike to see what appears to be nothing but a most natural occurrence received as a special forewarning of some event; but I was disappointed; though at the time we saw the ominous birds, no one could have judged from any other circumstance that a storm was approaching. The day was unusually pleasant; not a cloud flitted across the sky, and the gentle breezes that fanned our brows, were scarcely strong enough to expand the sails; but before three hours had elapsed from the time we first saw the Stormy Petrel skimming over the face of the waters, the wind had arisen to a hurricane, and the blackest and the wildest clouds overspread the sky. I never experienced any thing more dreadful than the storm that ensued

and lasted three days. We could reasonably look for nothing but to be swallowed up in the frightful abyss that yawned beneath us. The ship was one scene of confusion. The children screamed, and the older passengers were terrified. Bottles and dishes were thrown from the shelves, trunks and boxes of all kinds were hurled from one side of the ship to the other; tables, chairs and settees, broke from their fastenings, and those who were reclining upon them were turned over backwards, being at the same time too weak and feeble to help themselves up again. The horses in the stables became so frightened by the violent pitching of the ship and the roaring of the wind among the ropes and shrouds, that they strove and dashed against the timbers, till their flesh, in many places, was torn from their bones. After the storm had abated a little, I went on deck to see one of these poor animals that was then almost dead. It was a noble creature, which a young man on board had purchased at the North for two hundred dollars, and was taking South. He was literally covered with blood, and to put an end to his sufferings as soon as possible when it became apparent that he could not recover from his bruises, he was thrown overboard.

LETTER II.

Irish People—Table Furniture—Sea Birds—Sea Monsters—
Cape Hatteras—Pilot Boat—The Savannah Bar.

THERE was nothing on board I commiserated so much as the Irish people. During the storm they were all shut down in the hole together, as many as sixty or seventy of them. As soon as the storm was over, the hatches were taken up, and these poor creatures began to crawl out, so sick and weak they could scarcely support their own weight, and for two or three days, I saw them lying all around on the barrels, boxes, timbers, and hen-coops, the most forlorn looking creatures I ever beheld.

These wretched beings had recently emigrated from Ireland, landing in New York first, where they expected to find all the luxuries of life in abundance without labor; but being disappointed, again set sail, directing their course south, still hoping to find somewhere in the "new country" those golden dreams of prosperity realized, for which they had abandoned their own coun-

try and homes. Here again as every where they are destined to disappointment. When they have gone as far as the Southern States, they generally give up the search for pleasures that are never seen only at a distance. Many females soon die of hardships and broken hearts, while the men, to drown thoughts of disappointment in the intoxicating cup, go to drinking whiskey which causes the climate fever to set in, from which they seldom recover. Thus ends every year the existence of thousands of these deluded beings.

Before I went to sea, I had often wondered how the plates, knives and forks, and so on, were made to retain their places on the tables. In the first place, the tables are furnished with small strips of wood nailed on so as to form little squares in which are placed all the plates and large dishes as well as knives and forks, and spoons; then all such dishes as castors, creamers, sugar bowls, etc., are fastened to the table by tying strings to them, and pinning them by a fork. Then after all this precaution, when the sea is rough they are often forced from their places, and dashed upon the floor. Sometimes our seats broke loose while sitting at our meals, and before we had time to help each other we would find ourselves on the opposite side of the cabin.

One day during the storm a lone sea-bird came and rested upon one of the yards. It was probably driven out to sea by the heavy winds, and had lost its reckoning. The bird had apparently been a long time on the wing not finding a resting place till it descried our vessel; for it could hardly move its wings when it reached us, and I seldom ever had my feelings more wounded, than when in mere wantonness, several young men seized their guns to shoot the poor bird, which had flown to us for refuge; but not finding it a place of safety, it again exerted every weary muscle to hasten from the abode of man, from whom instinct usually teaches the brute creation to fly.

Though the storm had abated, the sea continued rough for many days; a circumstance which seemed to give us an opportunity of seeing some of the monsters of the deep. Perhaps this had nothing to do in rousing up the inhabitants of the great sea, but it appeared so to me; for before the storm we saw not a fish, but afterwards the ocean seemed to be alive with whales, grampuses, porpoises, and other sea-monsters. For two or three days the porpoises passed our vessel by the thousand; they would be seen riding upon every wave as far as the eye could reach. I have stood for hours at a time leaning upon

the gunwale, to see these fishes swim by me, and sometimes they came so near I could almost reach them with my hand.

After the storm had passed, I learned that during the worst of it we were going round Cape Hatteras, where I had a great many times before heard that mariners usually found a storm. Whether it always storms there or whether it so happens that a storm always comes up just as a vessel is passing, is not known; but the fact that it is generally squally when a ship is off the point, is well authenticated. I have inquired of a great many persons who have been round the cape, if this was true; and in every instance they have told me it held true in their own as well as in all others' cases with which they were acquainted.

Finally, one morning after we had all become heartily tired of being crowded together in one small unwholesome apartment, the captain informed us we could go no further without a pilot, consequently all eyes were in search of a pilot boat. Some ascended the tops of the highest masts, while all either on the yards or deck, eagerly looked for the much desired object. At length a little speck was descried in the far off distance, which in the course of an hour, to our great joy, proved to be a pilot boat. A

flag was immediately hoisted, and all necessary preparations made to receive a pilot on board. Soon the pilot boat put out a little skiff containing a pilot with two sailors to row it, and when it came so near our vessel that the pilot could reach a rope from it, one was thrown to him, by means of which he ascended to the deck amid the loud huzzas of the passengers and crew. The ship waited till the captain had prepared a present for the pilot crew, then amid the hearty cheers of their sea-faring brethren, they retraced their path in the mighty deep, and soon disappeared from our view among the far off mountain waves.

As soon as the pilot had partaken of a little repast, he took the command of our ship, and communicated to us the joyful intelligence that we should see the port of Savannah by "sundown." About the middle of the afternoon, we came in sight of the shores of South Carolina, which really looked so green and sunny, I could hardly realize it was the fall of the year, having left the gardens and groves of New England in their robes of sere and yellow leaves. As the pilot had promised, we came in sight of the long and much desired haven, just as the sun was going down behind the distant steeples. Here we anticipated some trouble in passing the bar, for

in our last war with Great Britain, to prevent the ascent of the British ships up the river, our navy sank a row of vessels on the bar, reaching from one shore to the other; so that now all her Majesty's ships are obliged to remain out at sea, and all her imports and exports are conveyed to and from her ships in boats. Our vessels can usually pass the bar, as they have lighter bottoms than the British ships. We got over, however, without any difficulty, and while the gentlemen were shaving, a duty they had not ventured to undertake before, as they said "fearing suicide," the ladies enjoyed a portion of the twilight hour in watching the beautiful shores of the Savannah.

Here the weeping willow bent its pliant branches above many a little hut, and the tall marsh grass grew over the water's edge. We ascended the river as far as we could in our vessel, it being low tide, then took boats to go into the city. As soon as we cast anchor, which was at some distance from Savannah many gentlemen who had an interest in our arrival came in small boats to meet us, and gave us a welcome which appeared to be gratefully received by all. They informed us that they had spent the greater part of the day on the observatory, waiting to get a glimpse of that well-known banner they had so

many times seen floating from the top of our fine brig, that they began now to fear had been wrecked in the storm. As soon as we were ready to disembark, they accompanied us to the shore, where we took leave of those who had been companions during a long and tedious voyage.

It was about half past eight when we entered the city, and here let me say, I never pictured to myself any scene described in fictitious narrative half so novel and romantic as Savannah appeared to me, the first evening I entered her streets.

LETTER III.

Savannah—The Pride of India—Pulaski Monument—Market—A colored woman's head-dress—Low life in Georgia.

SAVANNAH received its name, originally, from its general appearance, which was justly called by its founders a savanna, a term that signifies an open, marshy plain, without timber, as its first settlers found it. But though it still retains its first name, with merely the addition of one letter, it can no longer be literally applied to it; for now it looks like a city built in a forest, so numerous are the shade trees in every part of it. Beneath these trees, the lamps are suspended that give light to the city in the evening. These lights, interspersed with the many long, black shadows, that fall every where around, heighten the romantic effect that the first sight of these streets would naturally produce in the mind of one unaccustomed to Southern scenes.

The city is laid out in squares, each of which is surrounded by a beautiful growth of orna-

mental trees. The Pride of India is the most common, the preference being given to these trees because they attain their full growth sooner than any others. They become large trees in six or seven years, and when they arrive at maturity, they are as large as our oldest elms. For a long time in the summer season, they are completely covered with blossoms, in color like our lilac, and growing in clusters like the snow-ball. Then the blossoms are succeeded by a yellow, dry kind of fruit, about as large as our English cherry, which remains on the tree till the blossoms again appear. Trees of all kinds come to maturity much sooner at the South than they do at the North, owing to the climate, which allows them to grow the year round, while here the severity of the climate, entirely stops vegetation during the greater part of the year.

Many of the squares in Savannah are left open for places of public resort and promenade, and planted with beautiful shade trees of various kinds. In the midst of these grounds, wells are dug for the accommodation of the public, there being but few, if any private wells and reservoirs of water. One of these beautiful sites is ornamented with a splendid monument, erected to the memory of General Pulaski, who

lost his life near this spot in the defence of our country's liberties.

As all these grounds are named from some particular circumstance, this is called the Monument square; another is called the Market square, because the city market stands upon it, and so on. On the evening of my arrival, seeing none but white people in the streets, the fact that I was in a land where the largest proportion of its inhabitants were slaves, did not occur to my mind, neither was I forcibly reminded of this unpleasant truth, till the following morning; for all the slaves in the city are obliged to retire within the precincts of their own dwellings at eight o'clock in the evening, the hour when the bell rings to summon the city patrol to their several posts. After that hour, every slave who is found in the streets without a passport is taken up and confined in the guard house till he has had a trial. If then he can prove he had a reasonable excuse for being out at an unreasonable hour, he is liberated. If it is found he is a run-away slave, then he is advertised for a certain number of days, and sold at public auction, if the owner of the slave does not make his appearance, and prove property before the advertisement is out. A pail carried by a slave in the evening serves

for a legal passport. The propriety of this law I do not understand unless it is this, that a slave, running away, would not be likely to encumber himself with so much of a burden; and besides, the pail would naturally signify an errand.

Soon after I had taken tea, I retired to a chamber already prepared for my reception, and never was a couch more grateful to one, than that which rested my weary body that night. I never experienced any thing half so comfortable as to be sensible that my bed once more stood upon "terra firma." Words cannot express how sweet it was to be once more where the creaking of masts and the eternal clattering of the ropes and sails, and the dashing of the waves against the sides of the ship, could no longer reach my ears. I could not for some time sleep, I so much enjoyed the consciousness of being where I was not constantly tumbled from one side of my bed to the other, and where too I was not expecting to be thrown out of my bed if I did not exert all my strength in clinging to it all night.

In the morning, no sooner had the sky began to look a little grey, than such a confused jargon of strange sounds broke upon my ear, that in a few moments I found the sweet influences

of sleep had entirely taken their flight and gone so far away they could not be recalled again that morning; therefore I arose and threw aside my curtain to learn the cause that had deprived me of my morning nap, when to my surprise I saw a great many colored persons, with now and then a white man among them, and animals of various kinds, among which mules were the most numerous, all of which were assembled together under a sort of shelter, that from the appearance of things I soon judged to be the city market, a description of which, perhaps, will not be uninteresting to those who have not visited the South. It is not a close building, like our markets at the North, but merely a roof, supported by pillars. This roof covers quite an extent of ground, laid with bricks for a floor. In the middle stands a pump, where water is obtained that is used in the market. This building is furnished with stalls, owned by individuals in the city, who send produce there to sell. In each of these stalls stands a servant woman to sell her masters property, who is careful to deck out his saleswoman in the most gaudy colors to make her as conspicuous as possible, that she may be successful in trade. I once heard a gentleman say, whose saleswoman had not been very successful, "he

must get her a new handkerchief for her head, and see if she would not sell more." Bonnets are not worn by the colored people at the South, not even to church. The fashion of their head dress is a sort of turban, made by folding a cotton handkerchief in that peculiar kind of way known only to themselves. They select for this purpose the most gaudy that can be found. As I never saw any of the kind before or since, I have concluded they were manufactured for this express purpose by those who well understand what was most congenial to their tastes. During my stay in Georgia, I saw so many of those red and yellow articles worn by the colored people, high colors have never been endurable to me since. These turbans are so arranged, as to entirely conceal their own hair; but those who are particularly desirous to make a good external appearance, wear false braids and curls as long as those that grace the face of any white lady. The market is free for trade from five o'clock in the morning till ten. Then the bell rings and all are obliged to disperse and take with them their unsold articles, for every thing that remains on the ground after ten o'clock belongs to the keeper. Trade is not allowed in the market excepting on Saturday evening, when it is more crowded than at any

other time; for the people come then to purchase for the Sabbath, and many go just because they want to see a great crowd. It has been estimated that on some pleasant evenings there are no less than four thousand people in the market at one time. Here almost every eatable thing can be found. Vegetables fresh from the garden are sold the year round. All kinds of fish, both shell and finny, may be had there; birds of all kinds, both tame and wild, and the most delicious tropical fruits, as well as those which are brought from cold countries. People travel a great distance for the purpose of buying and selling in the market. I have known women to come one hundred miles to sell the products of their own industry. Those who do this live in the northern part of the State, and differ much in their manners and customs from the people in the low country. They have no idea of style and refinement in living; a great many of them own slaves and they all work in the field together, white men and black men, white women and black women, without distinction. I have been told it is not an uncommon occurrence to see a white woman holding the plough, a task, however, not so difficult there as it would be at the North, owing to the lightness of the soil. When the morning's

work is done, they all repair to the house, both masters and slaves, where a pot of homony has been prepared for dinner, then all sit down on the floor, and help themselves out of the same dish.

LETTER IV.

Habits, Pursuits, and Ignorance of the People In the Northern Part of the State.

IN the northern part of the State of Georgia, the people manufacture all their own clothing, excepting their hats, and sometimes thin shoes. In the spring they go to work, and plough the soil, plant and raise the cotton, then card, spin and weave the cloth by hand. Next they gather the weeds from which they make their dyes, such as indigo, &c., and when the cloth is colored, it is ready to be made into all kinds of needful apparel. Then when their new garments are completed they are ready to take a journey to the city. Accordingly, they take their mules and fasten them with a parcel of white cotton cords to a little covered cart with one pair of wheels, very much such vehicles as the Irish people use on the railroads, then load them with chickens, ducks, geese, hominy, and perhaps a swine or two, or a wild deer; lastly, they put in their cooking utensils, not only to be

used on the way, but also in the city to save the expense of lodging at an inn. Thus equipped they set out on their journey. When night comes, they stop by the way side, detach their mules from their burdens, and turn them into the woods to seek their food, while they make preparations for their suppers. First they gather up a parcel of dried leaves and old limbs of trees, with which they kindle a fire, and then proceed to make their coffee and boil their homony. When they have partaken sufficiently of this simple repast, they creep into their carts for a night's repose. In this manner half a dozen of these women will perform a journey of eighty or a hundred miles. They make their calculations, so as to reach the city about night fall, in order to be ready to take their places in the market as soon as it is open in the morning.

When they arrive, they go directly to the market place, tie their mules round about upon the outside of market square, kindle up little fires in the street near the market, and cook their suppers as before described. But here, instead of sleeping in their carts, they camp down upon the cold, damp bricks in the market, exposed to the chilly and unhealthy air of a Southern climate at night, with no other bed than what one coarse blanket makes for them.

As a highway path leads through the market, I have often passed that way in the evening, and seen a good many of these miserable females lying fast in sleep. Early in the morning the poor mules arouse the whole neighborhood by their loud and doleful brayings, which is enough to frighten any one not accustomed to such sounds. It was this braying of the mules, together with the loud conversation carried on between the venders and the purchasers, and the squalking of the fowls brought alive to the market, that aroused me so early on my first morning in Savannah.

These people, who live in the manner above described, are known by the name of "Crackers," so called from the circumstance that they formerly pounded all their corn, which is their principal article of diet. It was done by placing the corn on a flat rock, and then beating it with another, but now the hand-mill is used by many, which facilitates the process of cracking the corn, although the meal made by the mill is not much finer. There are but a few water-mills in the south part of Georgia, owing to a want of falls; but in the upper part of the State it is owing to a want of enterprise in the people. The northern part of Georgia, I have been told, very much resembles New Hampshire, being

hilly and rocky. Those who have traveled much in that section of country, say that when compared with New England its inhabitants are all of one hundred years behind the times in education, and in all kinds of improvements. In building their houses, they change little, if any more, from one generation to another, than the robins do, who build their nests now just as the first robin did that gathered her sticks and moss, and hatched her innocent brood in the garden of Eden. As it respects conveniences for cooking, they have none. Ovens built of brick are seldom seen ; when they are used, they are built out of doors, separated from any building. Iron kettles with covers, sometimes called Ducth ovens, are used when any thing of the kind is needed. Most of the bread is baked before the fire on a piece of wood or earthenware. Cellars, which we consider so indispensable, are never dug, to my knowledge. I never saw one either in the city or country ; consequently, we never see good butter there in the warm season ; its fluid state always required a deep dish when it came upon the table. Meat is not salted and barreled as here, but smoked and dried, and generally tainted during the process. I never saw any meat preserved in this way that I could eat ; and it was more than I wished to do, to sit at

the table where it was. I was once passing a corn-house on a plantation with a servant woman, where I observed the smell of putrid flesh; and on making inquiry what it was, the woman informed me that it was beef drying upon the top of the house; for they dry all their meat in the summer, when they can have the benefit of a good hot July or August sun. To those educated in New England, the ignorance that is seen in many portions of the northern part of Georgia is truly astonishing; many cannot read a word, or write their own names. I have heard merchants say, that in transacting business with many men of great wealth, they have found them obliged to use a mark for their signature. This deplorable state of ignorance is owing to the circumstance, that the government has made no provision for common schools, and no children can be educated, unless they are sent from home; and board and tuition in the Southern cities are so expensive, that it requires a large fortune to educate a child; consequently but a few are educated.

Their religious privileges are very limited. They have some churches; but they are few and far between. Some can not hear preaching without traveling twenty, thirty, or forty miles; knowing this, how could we expect to see men

otherwise than illiterate? For nothing so speedily tends to ignorance and barbarism, as a deprivation of Sabbath day and sanctuary privileges, Georgia, as well as many other of the Southern States, affords abundant room for missionary labors, even now, and when the slaves are emancipated, if we are as solicitous to christianize and educate our own heathen as we are now those abroad, a great many more ministers and teachers must be raised up than we have now, or we shall have none to spare for foreign nations.

LETTER V.

Savannah—Its Churches—Destruction of the Pulaski.

As I began in a previous letter to describe some of the public buildings in Savannah by noticing the market, I will continue my description in this, beginning with the churches, of which there are two Presbyterian, one Lutheran, two Episcopal, one Roman Catholic, a Jewish Synagogue, one Baptist church, one Unitarian, one Methodist, a Seaman's Chapel, and two African churches. Some of these I shall notice particularly; of others I shall say nothing, as they do not differ enough from Northern churches to make a description of them interesting to you.

The Independent Presbyterian church, though rather old, is the most noble building of the kind in Savannah. It has an air of costliness within and without peculiar to itself. Its walls are built of fine hewn granite, which there is an expensive article, as every block of stone is imported. The house is surmounted with a steeple so much taller than all the others in the city, it

is often styled, "the High Steeple church." The finishing of the inner walls is quite as rich as that of the outward, and much more unique, being ornamented with many of the most beautiful specimens of ancient architecture. The floors in the aisles are composed of black and white marble, so arranged as to display a good deal of taste as well as skill. All around in the walls between the windows are niches, in which are placed slabs of various kinds of marble to commemorate the death of some distinguished individuals of the church. All these give the church a gloomy and very antique aspect. I have seen on some of these slabs the names of individuals lost in the steamboat Pulaski, an event of such recent date, and so melancholy, that it must be still fresh in the memory of all who ever knew any thing concerning it. At the time this noble steamer was blown up, seventy-five persons, mostly belonging to the first families in Savannah, lost their lives. The boat was a new one, and the captain held out as an inducement for many to accompany him on his first trip, that he should be only one night at sea in making a voyage from Savannah to New-York. Accordingly a great number of ladies and gentlemen embarked, while almost the whole city, assembled on the banks of the river,

sent their loud huzzas after them till they were out of sight, little dreaming how soon the same voices would be raised in lamentations and woes. It was near sunset when the Pulaski left the port, and to almost all that gay and light-hearted company it went down for the last time. Only a few hours' sail completed their last voyage on earth, and landed them in the haven of eternity. In the twinkling of an eye this entire assembly of people were scattered to the four winds, and the vessel in a thousand fragments floating every where at the will of the great deep. A very few escaped to tell the dreadful tale. I was acquainted with one gentleman who was taken up by a vessel at sea, after he had floated eight days in a potato box, at the mercy of the winds and waves. A recollection of this dreadful scene was always attended with so much distress to this gentleman, that his friends were careful never to allude to it in his presence, and they even cautioned others not to speak of it to him. I knew another, a young man about eighteen years of age, who swam almost all night, and finally, when life was nearly extinct, landed upon the shores of Georgia. A lady told me that as soon as the news reached Savannah in the morning, that men, women, children, and servants, bareheaded and barefooted, and some

not half dressed, it being very early in the day, almost frantic with agony, were rushing to the bank of the river, to learn something concerning the fate of some dear member of their own family, and she said that all day, nothing was hardly heard in any part of the city, but shrieks and cries, and groans, and of the most agonizing nature; and when the corpse of a dear friend washed on shore, then a new burst of anguish broke forth. The churches were dressed in black, and the whole city observed a season of mourning for several days. Some of the bodies washed ashore, but horribly mangled; some were recognized, others were not. Some limbs were washed up, and one arm and a hand of a female were recognixed by her husband, and decently interred in his front yard. I often passed a residence in the city while I was there, the exterior of which was so elegant and princely, it might almost be called a palace, and not unfrequently did I covet the ease, elegance, and comfort I doubted not was enjoyed within; but one day when passing this same mansion with a friend, she told me a tale, which taught me never to judge of happiness by external appearances. The owner of this beautiful dwelling, she informed me, lived there alone in solitude and grief, attended only by a few servants. His

wife, all his children, two or three sisters, and some other relatives belonging to the family, together with his house servants, were lost in the destruction of the Pulaski. My friend then directed my attention to some monuments in the court yard, that she said had been erected by the bereaved husband and father in memory of the sad fate of his entire family.

But to go on with my description of the churches. The Roman Catholic church is rather a small building, to which all the Irish people resort for worship; and as in all other places, the priests are careful to make them as bigoted and superstitious as possible. Many of them attend mass daily, and high mass as often as it occurs. Many will rise early, and take a long walk in the morning for the purpose of crossing themselves with the holy water that stands in the court, belonging to the church. The synagogue is a neat brick building, without a cupola, and withal very unique in its appearance. Here the Jews congregate on the last day of the week to observe all the ancient customs of worship practiced by their ancient fathers. They observe all their feasts, such as the passover, the feast of tabernacles, &c. When the period arrives for them to observe the feast of tabernacles, in memory of that time when the Israelites

wandered in the wilderness, they carry into the synagogue trees and shrubs, and place them all about, so that their branches may cover their heads, and then they come during seven days, and worship, according to the injunction, "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths. And ye shall take the boughs of goodly trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days."

The African churches are large, old but very decent buildings, formerly occupied by white people for places of worship, but now every Sabbath, as well as some week day evenings, well filled with colored people. The pastors of these churches are colored men also, who are the descendants of those persons in Savannah to whom freedom was granted at the time of the declaration of American Independence. They are very well educated, and indoctrinated in the great truths of the Bible. While looking in upon one of these congregations one evening, I was so much struck with the novelty of the scene, greatly increased by the multitude of those gaudy turbans I have before described, I could hardly realize that I was in my own country, and I do believe I should not have felt more

like a stranger, if I had been in a church among the South Sea Islanders.

Among the many other beautiful and public buildings of which much might be said, I will only notice those in these letters in which, on account of some particular circumstances, I feel the most interested. Of this class is the jail, the Female Orphan Asylum, the Soldiers' Barracks, and the city Hospital. These buildings are situated at a convenient distance from each other just in the suburbs of the city, and in my next letter I shall commence a somewhat particular description of them by beginning with the Asylum for Female Orphan children.

LETTER VI.

Orphan Asylum—Children of Different Nations—Piety and
Happy Death of an Orphan Girl nine years old.

THE Asylum was erected at a great expense by the ladies of Savannah, for those children whom Providence has deprived of natural guardians and the means of subsistence. It is a very large three storied brick building, plastered on the outside, and polished with hard finishing, to give it the appearance of being white marble. The steps leading up to the second story in front of the building, are built of pure white marble, costing twelve hundred dollars, and presented to the institution by a gentleman in Savannah. A beautiful wrought iron fence and gate enclose the front yard, and a high brick wall the back yard.

The greatest number of pupils at a time in the institution, is from twenty-five to thirty. At the time I taught the school, the scholars were mostly the descendants of foreigners, who had emigrated to this country, where sudden and

fatal diseases had caused their hapless offspring to be left to the mercy of strangers. There were at the same time in the family, all taking their meals at the same table, English, Irish, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Germans. It was not unfrequently the case, that those came into the institution who could not even call for a glass of water in a language we could understand. I remember one instance in particular, when a little girl tried for some time to make known her wants; but when she perceived that none of us understood her, she wept as though her heart would break; finally seeing that we were anxious to learn for what she asked, she put her hand to her mouth; and when one of the girls hastily handed her a glass of water, she seized the cup as though she was nearly famished. In studying the characters and dispositions of these children, I found them very just representatives of the several nations to which they belonged. The peculiar kind of honesty and simplicity that always characterizes the Irish people, readily distinguishes their children, even after they have for a long time associated with other children. The Portuguese I always found to be artful, sly, suspicious, and never to be trusted, of violent temper, knowing no bounds to their anger when irritated. The

French were gay, naturally easy and polite in their manners, but exceedingly fickle, one day the warmest friends, the next, if slightly provoked, the bitterest enemies. The Spanish, I could always depend upon; if I once succeeded in gaining their friendship there was nothing to fear of losing it; for they will give you the whole of their true and faithful hearts; but they are as capable of hating an enemy as they are of loving a friend. They make no loud professions of their love, but the sincere and deep devotedness of the inmost soul is expressed towards a friend by every glance of the eye and expression of the countenance. The purely English children, as soon as they can talk, exhibit all that dignity and nobleness of character, so natural to the English people, as well as those strong powers of the mind which have made that nation a mistress over so many others. I found that even in the little child, there was always something to command a sort of deference and respect from even those of superior age. The Germans were sober, grave, thoughtful, and one might say, in appearance rather cast down, of strong minds, and much given to study and reading. I had one German scholar, of very superior intellect; though of only fourteen years of age, she could read, write, and cipher, with

perfect ease, both in her own language and in English, and she spoke our language with so much correctness, that no one could ever mistrust she was German by birth. She read in her own language every day, and I observed when she read the Bible she always selected one in that language in preference to ours.

But as I am so partial to the English character, before I leave the Asylum I cannot fail to give a brief account of one of the most interesting children I ever met with, whose name was Margaret Pritchard. Though my acquaintance with this lovely child was short, it will ever be cherished with the tenderest emotions of sympathy and pleasure. She was a native of England; but at a very early age her parents emigrated with her to this country, and took up their residence in one of our northern cities. Here God in his wise providence saw fit to visit this family with affliction, and remove from it the husband and father, leaving Mrs. Pritchard with her little daughter, without friends or home—strangers in a strange land.

She then, with Margaret, removed to Savannah. But the great destroyer had not completed his work of devastation in this family. The delicate constitution of Mrs. Pritchard began to sink under her severe hardships and trials, and

it was evident that disease had already commenced its ravages upon her naturally feeble body. Her money was almost expended, and before she had time to make known her condition, disease had made such inroads upon her system as to prevent her from going out to procure food for herself and child. How long they had been languishing in this condition is not known; but just before Mrs. Pritchard breathed her last, their helpless situation was discovered by a humane gentleman, while seeking subjects for charity. The poor mother was beyond the reach of assistance; she needed but a little more than a coffin and a shroud. The little girl, who was nearly famishing, was kindly nourished for a few days in the gentleman's family, then placed in the Asylum. I was soon attracted by her correct deportment, and remarkably amiable disposition. She always wore a forlorn countenance, but still did not appear unhappy. There was something in her countenance calculated to excite pity from all who beheld her. She never appeared to feel an interest in the plays and amusements of her companions in the Asylum, and was always very careful not to soil or tumble her dress. I shall never forget how soon and quietly she would resume her seat in the school room in time of recess.

But I soon found she had a source of happiness not derived from this world. Although young in years, she had learned to love her Savior. She had given her affections to God, and it was her delight to be alone, where she might without interruption enjoy his presence. She was often found on her knees in prayer in some secret corner, and many times was overheard imploring mercy for herself, her teachers, and companions. It was evident to all who knew her, that she was speedily finishing her work in this world. She grew in grace every day, and made rapid advances in the divine life; she was not like many children, afraid to be alone, neither was the darkness of night any terror to her.

I remember one evening, a few weeks previous to her last illness, she was missing; and search being made for her, she was found alone in a dark chamber, in the third story of the institution, a room appropriated in time of illness to the sick and dying. She had retired to this gloomy apartment, into which the other children, on account of the many unpleasant associations connected with it, were afraid to enter, to commune with her Savior she so much loved. When the door was opened, she was walking, with her arms folded upon her bosom, up and

down her room, singing in a low, sweet tone some devotional words expressive of that sweet peace which pervaded her soul, and which at the same time lighted up her countenance with a smile more than earthly. Thus she continued to exhibit to all around her the reality of religion, every day giving an example worthy of imitation both by young and old. But her days were numbered and nearly finished; she had long been ripening for heaven, and God was about to take her to Himself.

She was suddenly seized with a fatal disease, and after a short and most distressing illness of only three days, which she endured with uncommon Christian fortitude, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, at the early age of nine years, and we followed her dear remains to the "potter's field," where dust was consigned to dust, till the morning of the resurrection, when that which was "sown in corruption" shall bloom in immortality.

LETTER VII.

Punishment of Slaves—Their Opinions—The Barracks.

NOT far from the Asylum stands the city jail, the occupants of which are mostly slaves, not only those who have been caught while endeavoring to obtain their freedom, but those also who have been sent there by their masters to undergo a course of punishment for some misconduct. The laws of the city forbid the master to whip his own slave; therefore when he considers his slave deserving of punishment, he sends him to the jail with orders to have him whipped so many times a day for a certain number of days; these seasons always occurred at stated intervals, so the poor victims knew when the hour was to arrive for them to endure their cruel discipline. I have seen the runaway slaves dragged to this place of cruelty with their hands tied behind them, attended by two or three white men, who made free use of the lash over their heads and shoulders, while they called upon all the powers of darkness, accompanied

by profane oaths, to curse their masters, or implored God to redress their wrongs, according to the spirit of the sufferer. I knew of one female slave while I was in Savannah, who was sent here and beat daily during one whole week, not for any particular crime, but because she did not happen to please her mistress. But this course of treatment so disheartened the woman, she was never afterwards of any service to her owners. After she was taken out of the jail, she began to grow ill, refused nourishment and medicine, till she had so far declined that her mistress, beginning to have some apprehensions that she was in danger of losing a valuable article of property, undertook to force medicine into her stomach; but all to no purpose; as her master said, and I presume it was even so, she was determined to die; all the means that could be used could not prevail upon her to take any thing into her mouth the least calculated to nourish her or invigorate her debilitated system. She said she had nothing to live for; she could look forward to nothing but hard labor and cruel treatment and she preferred to die; and God was pleased to grant to her her choice; she survived her cruel beating and incarceration in the jail but a few days, and was gathered to her unhappy and unfortunate fathers.

Just before she died she told a friend of mine, that her mistress was very cruel to all her slaves, and she believed God would not suffer her to go unpunished, even in this world; and as far as I am acquainted with that woman's history, she has already had so much trouble and misfortune as in some measure to verify this prediction. This same woman had a colored boy, about twelve years old, to whom she often entrusted the care of a young child. One afternoon while the mother was out making fashionable calls, the child was so fretful for the want of its mother, the boy was obliged to carry it in its arms from one place to another all the afternoon to pacify it; finally, near evening, when the babe had nearly exhausted itself by crying, and its nurse by carrying it about, it began to appear sleepy, and the boy laid it upon the bed, and then leaning over it, with his own face touching that of the child's while endeavoring to soothe it to sleep, his own wearied nature was soon overcome by sleep, and unconsciously sunk down upon the couch beside the sleeping infant, where the mistress, enraged at the sight, found him; and, as she boastingly informed a friend of mine, "gave him such a beating as he deserved for such an outrage." But she did not long enjoy the privilege of beating a poor harmless boy for acci-

dentally falling asleep on the bed with her child when overcome by fatigue; the same summer, and I believe only a few weeks after this event, he was seized with a fever which he survived only two or three days; by his death his master lost five hundred dollars, by the death of the woman I have just spoken of, he lost seven hundred, all the same season.

If a slave is to be punished only once for some act of omission or commission, he is not often sent to the jail, but accompanied by his master to the market place, where he receives as many lashes from the knotted thong as his master chooses to order, from the hand of the man who takes his place there every morning for this purpose, and is recompensed for his labor.

It was easy enough to know when the hour of flagellation in the jail had arrived, from the dreadful groans and shrieks that poured forth from the iron grated windows of that dark and gloomy abode of wretchedness and cruelty. During my residence in that city, two of those miserable beings were hung in the jail yard to atone for crimes which, if they had been perpetrated by white men either at the North or South, instead of meeting with such a fate, would not have debarred the perpetrators from the most honorable station in society.

In this place I will say one word respecting the singular notions of the future, maintained by the more ignorant portion of the black people. In the first place, they believe when people leave this world they go to some locality where they can converse with and enjoy each other's society free from interruption; and that persons on leaving this world, can carry messages from this to the one beyond the grave: accordingly a colored person about to be executed is surrounded by those who wish to send some endearing message to a departed father or mother, husband or wife, brother or sister or children. Further, they believe, and I have myself heard them assert the same, that in the life to come there will also be white people and black people; but then the white people will be slaves, and *they* shall have the dominion over them. I never saw a negro a Universalist; for they all believe in a future retribution for their masters, from the hand of a just God.

At a little distance from the jail were situated the barracks. It was quite a relief to turn my eyes from that ugly abode I have just been describing, to these fine buildings. While the old black exterior of the former exhibited a striking picture of what was within, so no one could but judge from the outward appearance of the lat-

ter that they were the homes of refinement and pleasure, for while I was there, only the officers of the army and their families resided in the barracks. These buildings were only two in number, fronting each other on the opposite sides of a square, leaving between them a beautiful little court-yard, in the middle of which stands the lofty standard from whose top on every pleasant day floated our country's star-spangled banner.

Both of these buildings were furnished with two piazzas each, which looked towards the court-yard, and each supported by twenty-four white pillars. On these places of promenade might be seen almost any hour of the day young officers standing in little groups, or reclining at their ease on sofas, smoking cigars, or half asleep. Sometimes it would seem that a romance had quite absorbed the attention of some one sitting apart from all the rest with his feet higher than his head, and resting upon the balustrade, while in another shady corner the more thoughtful and grave air of the politician told plainly enough that the columns he held in his hand had furnished him with matter for serious reflection concerning our country's interests. From these pleasant abodes also the sound of martial music often broke upon the stillness of

the evening, and the cheerful song from a light heart was not unfrequently mingled with the early matins of the birds, but nothing could be more discordant, both to the ear and heart, than when these sweet sounds on one hand went forth to meet the heart-rending sigh and groan that fell upon the ear from the other.

LETTER VIII.

The Hospital—A Little Friendless Girl—Her Sickness, Death
and Burial.

THE last public building I design to speak of at present, is the Strangers' Hospital. This stands alone beyond the city, just in the edge of the woods. It is an old moss-covered brick building, above which the tall overgrown pines have long stretched out their tall branches on every side, almost concealing it from the public eye. The gloomy air and dreary solitude that reigns everywhere around these premises, almost gives one the impression that he is approaching a charnel house, rather than the abode of the living, and indeed this feeling is not without a just cause; for when one takes a peep a little farther into the woods in the rear of the main building, he just catches a glimpse of a little brown house half concealed in a clump of small trees and vines, where dissecting operations and post mortem examinations are conducted by the young student and novice in the

“healing art.” I shall never forget the unpleasant sensations I experienced the first time I visited this Hospital. While I was in the Asylum, a little girl, apparently about eight years of age, came into the school, who could not utter a syllable we could understand. Her health appeared to be very feeble, but the cause was ascribed to a want of proper food and nursing, rather than to any disease; for she was found in a miserable old hut all alone with the corpse of a female, probably that of her mother. It appeared she had belonged to a family who all but herself had been swept off by some of those fatal diseases common to the sickly season of the year. As soon as the child’s situation was discovered, she was taken to that home for such fatherless strangers, the Asylum; but she remained with us only a few days, and was removed again before she had been taught to speak one word by which we could learn anything concerning her history. It soon became evident that she had some alarming disease upon her; and fearing contagion, it was thought advisable to place her in the Hospital. This circumstance first called me where afterwards I became a frequent visitor. Hearing one day soon after her removal, that the patients in the hospital often suffered from want of suitable atten-

tion and nourishment, I at once resolved to go and satisfy myself concerning the child's situation. Consequently I furnished myself with such necessaries as I thought she might need; and procuring an old German for my *cicerone* as well as interpreter, the latter being absolutely necessary, as the steward spoke German, I started on my errand. But I almost regretted, when I found myself in the street, that another time would not answer as well for the purpose I had in view, for the evening was one of those starless ones, when night's blackest curtains drop their folds so closely around us, we cannot discern the companion at our side. But going upon the principle not to "put the hand to the plow and look back," we proceeded on our way, and a few moment's walk across the common brought us in sight of here and there a dim light peering through the thick boughs of the trees that stood before the hospital. Soon we found ourselves before the gate, and while we waited without for the porter, I must confess I felt a sort of chilliness creep over my limbs, for even the sound of our own footsteps fell back again upon our ears. No sound was there to interrupt that death-like silence, save now and then a dying groan, heard above the gentle rustling of the leaves, so low and soft, it seemed to

me those poor dying, friendless, and homeless inmates might almost fancy they heard the whisperings of angels about their windows already waiting to bear them away from a world of sorrows. No sound of mirth echoed through those long dark halls, and a stranger would have known this was not the home of joy and gladness, and the half-hushed growl of the faithful watch-dog, as he eyed us askance without raising his head from his paw, seemed as if instinct had taught the brute to ward off the gay and thoughtless intruder.

A few faint streams of light fell upon us from the casements above, just enough to make darkness more perceptible and to reveal to the sight fitful shadows of all surrounding objects, so that one might fancy he saw the ghosts of the departed, still hovering around their late abode, as if loth to leave the place.

At length the porter arrived and ushered us into a spacious but antiquated hall, and from thence into the third story of the building, where we found the object of our visit lying upon a little mattress on the floor in one corner of the room. We did, indeed, find the poor child in a most wretched state; she could ask for nothing she wanted, for she spoke a language that not even the old German understood; and

those who had the care of her, I judged, did not take much pains to anticipate her wants; but God in his infinite goodness soon saw fit to close her earthly sufferings and take this little, forsaken lamb to Himself. After my first visit, I went regularly every day to see her, as long as she lived. Finally on the sixth day, when I requested to be admitted to her, I was conducted to a room that had been occupied by masons and carpenters as a work shop. There, after clambering over all sorts of tools, boards, shavings, and heaps of clay and lime, I came to the emaciated remains I sought for, laid on a joiner's bench, merely covered with the fragment of a coarse tattered sheet. The body had not been washed, and the little uncombed, flaxen locks, hung carelessly over that cold marble brow, and not one of those duties had been observed generally practised previous to interment.

I proposed to have the corpse moved to the Asylum, decently laid out, and funeral services performed; but this was not considered prudent on account of the disease she died with; consequently the corpse was put into a rough unstained coffin, and carried away without ceremony to that last home for all strangers, "the potter's field," and there its little grave lies un-

noticed and unknown. There no fond mother comes at the evening twilight to bedew the low grassy mound with her tears, or to plant around it the willow and the myrtle, to mark the sacred spot; but there its guardian angel will watch over all its dust "till God shall bid it rise."

LETTER IX.

The Stranger's Hospital—Sickness, Burial, and Death of the
Deserted Woman.

DURING my visits to the sick child, I spoke of in my last letter, I had an opportunity to become acquainted with some other persons confined there by illness. Generally in the summer and fall, the hospital is crowded with these unfortunate strangers, who are sick there at the public expense. This accounts for the neglect and ill treatment they often receive. I believe thousands die there, who might recover if properly taken care of. Young physicians are permitted to go there and try such experiments as they choose upon those patients, and it is not unreasonable to suppose, under such circumstances, more would be killed than cured. In one of those rooms I found a very pretty female, in whom I soon became much interested. She informed me she had been there seven years, and for the last five had not once supported her weight upon her feet. Notwithstanding her

extreme helplessness, she always contrived, somehow, to keep everything belonging to her own dress and bed remarkably clean and white, making quite a contrast between her appearance and that of many around her. This woman was a native of one of the Northern States, where at an early age she had, as she supposed, married a man worthy of her hand. For a time they prospered and were happy; but at length he began to form unsteady habits; and when he had spent nearly all his property, in order to retrieve his wasted fortune, took up his residence in Savannah. But he carried his evil practices with him, till finally he deserted his wife entirely, leaving her among strangers, without a farthing to purchase bread. Then she sought for employment among the families of the rich, and at last was obliged to accept of a situation as kitchen maid. In this capacity she toiled till she had accumulated five hundred dollars, when she was taken ill; but not considering her sickness alarming, she administered to herself a dose of calomel; and instead of resting from her labors during the operation of it, went to washing windows and doors on one of the coldest days of a southern winter; the consequence was, she caught a severe cold, then the fever followed, which finally terminated in

ulcers, which broke out in every limb. When I saw her she had lost so many of the bones in her limbs they were not only useless but utterly deformed. I never saw a person who was more an object of commiseration. Without money, without friends, in a land of strangers, supported by public charity, and exposed to the caprices of a hard-hearted old steward, who would, or would not, just according to the disposition which governed his actions at the time she asked for it, grant her a few drops of some soothing antidote, or any other little necessary she might want. Yet she was a perfect example of the utmost resignation. It was early in the spring when I first saw this female, and I continued my visits to her till the latter part of the summer when the sickly season set in, which in common with many others prostrated me upon a bed of languishing, from which I did not rise until thousands had been conveyed to their long homes, among whom was my friend, whose suffering on earth had ended. From the situation of my room, through the whole of my sickness and confinement I could see what was passing round about the hospital, without raising my head from the pillow; and here, day after day, and a good many times a day, I saw coffin after coffin removed to the "potter's field,"

which was located but a stone's throw from it, as if to remind those whose unfortunate lot had fallen in that unhappy place, that they had taken their last step towards their final home.

Though what transpires after death does in no wise affect the inanimate mass of clay, yet it was melancholy to see those bodies laid in the grave, with not much more ceremony than would have been observed if they had been brutes. As soon as the soul had taken its flight from the body, without even being disrobed of its death-bed apparel, it was put into a coffin, of which a large supply was always kept on hand, and buried as soon as possible, without even one short prayer being repeated. The good old sexton, who had so long been in company with the dead that he seemed to have forgotten how to smile, with a faithful servant who conducted the hearse, made up the whole funeral procession, and certainly, so far as their deportment was concerned, it was not wanting in becoming seriousness and respect for the dead; and even while the old slave and his master walked along slowly and silently on either side of the hearse, the slow and measured steps of the old gray mule seemed as though he had learned becoming reverence for the scene and the spot he was approaching. When the corpse

is brought to the grave, it is carefully lowered into its narrow house; and then, as is the custom on all occasions of the kind, the sexton takes up a handful of earth, and assuming a respectful and solemn attitude a few moments, he lets it fall slowly upon the coffin, while he repeats, "and dust returns to dust."

As soon as I was able to walk out, I hastened to the hospital to learn if my friend was still living, or whether she had shared the same doom of so many others there. I went to the gate, and finding it unfastened, I entered the yard; then seeing no living objects about the premises, I stood awhile, and listened to ascertain if there were voices within the building; but not a sound fell upon my ear; even the faithful watch-dog, with whom I had become so familiar that he would always wag his tail as soon as he saw me approaching, being no longer needed at the gate, was gone. I ascended the steps, and rang the bell; but when I found there was no porter to answer to its call, I applied my hand to the door, and it readily gave me admittance to those halls of utter solitude. I passed from hall to hall; and while every step reverberated from the top to the bottom of the building, I became more and more convinced I should find no human being there. I opened every door on

each side of the hall as I passed along, and everything told plainly of the dreadful havoc death had made. I went into the repository of coffins, where a few still remained; but from the great number that had disappeared in my absence, I learned how great the work was that fell destroyer had completed. At last I ascended to the room, where I had been accustomed to find my friend; but that voice, which once was so ready to hail my approach with the expressive words, "O, I knew it was you, as soon as I heard your steps on the stair case," was not there to bid me a cheerful welcome after so long an absence. I went to the door, satisfied I should never behold that calm and heavenly face again. I opened it; there stood the bedstead, stripped of all its furniture excepting the light pavilion which was thrown carelessly upon the frame above it; but the body it had so long protected from the depredations of the mosquitoes was gone. There was the small stand near the head of the bed, just where it formerly stood, with a few vials and a cup or two upon it; but the medicine was no longer needed; all was as silent as the grave; that voice which had so long been heard there, not only in groans and sighs, but in prayer and praise, was hushed in death; and that body

which long had endured so much pain, had returned to its kindred dust; while its tried spirit, I doubted not, had returned to the bosom of its Father. I felt sad while I reflected upon these things, but could not regret the happy exchange. I could only wish that I had been favored with a parting interview, and received her last blessing.

After I had walked through those halls and rooms, reflecting upon the end and instability of all earthly things as long as I desired, without seeing any human creature, I took my departure from a place where I had witnessed so much sorrow and distress, never to return to it; and now, fearing I have already wearied your patience by a detail of such gloomy scenes, I will also take my leave for the present of this kind of subjects; and in my succeeding letters I will try to throw more light into my pictures, though to my eye, every picture in human life presents more "shadows than light."

LETTER X.

Streets of Savannah—Bay Street—Ships in the Harbor—The Bluff—Resort for men of business—Death of a Cotton Merchant's son.

BEFORE carrying my description into the country, which I design shortly to do, I must dwell a little longer in the city, in order to note a few particulars, in whose relation I hope you will be interested. And first, I could wish that my descriptive powers would enable me to give you a somewhat correct idea of the beauty of some of the streets in Savannah, as well as of some of those places of resort that lie beyond it. But, at the best I can do, my delineation will fall so far short of the reality, I almost shrink from the undertaking.

Running parallel with the Savannah river there are six, which are called the principal streets. The first lying adjacent to the river is called the Bay street. Upon this most of the business in the city is transacted. No respectable families reside there. The buildings on

this street are mostly stores, besides a few dwellings for colored people and sailors' boarding houses. The seaman's chapel is on the south end of the street, and the Exchange about the middle way of it; besides these I do not recollect that there are any other buildings of note there. The Exchange is a fine new building, and has the only observatory in the city, and this is, at all seasons of the year much resorted to, by those who are anxiously waiting the arrival of some friend at sea. This street is always so thronged by sailors, slaves, and rowdies of all grades and color, that it is not safe for ladies to walk there alone, and it is considered very disreputable for them to be seen there unaccompanied by a gentleman, even if several ladies are together. I regretted much that this was the case, for nature has done more for this part of the city than any other. Savannah is built upon a high bluff, and this is the first street that lies upon it; so there is from that side of it nearest the river a sudden descent towards the water, of perhaps twelve or fifteen feet, which gives to one standing upon the highest part of the bluff a most delightful view of the broad river that rolls below. Bay street runs the whole length of the city, and the greater part of it is shaded by trees on both sides so tall, and having

branches so broad, that in many places they overlap each other, making the cool arch-way beneath one of the most delightful retreats from the feverish air, and the hot, red brick walls of the inland streets. It was one of the greatest luxuries I could enjoy, to escape the burning sands of the city, and spend a few moments of pastime upon those shady banks, and while the soft cooling breezes from the ocean's bosom fanned our heated brows, to stand and view the busy world "who go down to the sea and do business in great waters." There the observing and reflective mind sees scenes so emblematical of human life, he can not fail to draw fresh instruction from what is passing around him. There, beyond the bar, the eye rests upon the noble ship that first was launched in British seas, lying at ease in all her proud majesty, unmoved and as little heeding the movements of all smaller barques, as the lordly nabob revelling in wealth and luxury, does the every day events of a laboring world. Still farther on, the eye just catches a glimpse of the powerful steamer, as it irresistibly ploughs its deep path in the great sea, and forces itself against wind and tide into the long sought for haven, reminding one of that class of persons on life's theatre, who, regardless of the rights and wrongs, lives and

possessions of their fellow creatures, rush on through seas of blood to glory and to fame. Then again, nearer to the shore, the light skiff almost destitute of ballast, not venturing its frail timbers among the heavy waves of deeper seas, skims along so lightly and smoothly above the rocks and quicksands that lie below, one is at first almost ready to believe the situation of those thoughtless gay, and almost brainless people, to whom these light barques are slightly analogous, was far the most desirable of any; for while many, whose hearts are more capacious, and whose brains have more solidity, are constantly not only mourning over their own ills, but also lamenting the woes of others, these careless, unconcerned beings seem to float along upon the surface of society far above human cares and sorrows; but like the little skiff which is suddenly capsized if only a squall strikes her sails, so let but the blast of adversity sweep over their fortunes, and having none of that ballast in the day of trouble, which is acquired only by cares and toils, and all their bright hopes and prospects for the future are wrecked forever.

At the bottom of the bluff there is quite a space of land, furnishing room for numerous store houses and for the unlading of ships and

boats as well as for all the exports in cotton, corn, rice, and tobacco, brought there from the country. If the situation on the top of the bluff is one of the coolest and most desirable in a hot summer's day, the one at the foot is one of the hottest and most undesirable. There not a tree spreads out its branches to ward off a single ray from the scorching sun, neither does a spear of grass spring up there to protect the feet from the burning sands, yet here through all the long tedious days of a Southern summer, where the height of the bluff forbids almost every current of air, not only colored people, but many white men, are compelled by the love of filthy lucre, to pass their hours from morning till evening in the vending and purchasing of goods. I knew one young man, whose father dealt largely with English merchants in the trade of cotton, who had been long kept in this unhealthy situation, because his father considered his services indispensable. Finally, after much persuasion on the part of the son, the father condescended to let him go for a while into the country, giving him some encouragement that he would put him in charge of a plantation there. It so happened that I was staying at the place where he came to spend a few months, and I often heard him express the

most ardent desires that his father would let him remain in the country, and not call him back again to that burning place. I shall never forget the almost childish enthusiasm with which, from morning till night, he roamed the woods for wild deer and turkies, or sailed the creeks for fish; and when his father sent for him to return to his old post again, I heartily pitied him, it was with such deep regrets he took leave of his rural sports. But he immediately obeyed the summons, and almost the first news we heard from him was, that he was dead and buried. The heat of the sun to which he was compelled to be exposed through the long days of summer, seemed to be unusually intense that season, and it caused one of those fatal fevers which sweep off many in those hot climates; and, when it was too late, the father in the deepest anguish of his soul learned that he had sacrificed a son, one of the most beautiful specimens of blooming manhood, to his own avarice.

LETTER XI.

Browton Street, and an old Dilapidated Building—Its aged occupant—South Broad Street—A Rural Retreat—
Captain Abraham's Place.

THE next street that runs parallel with the river, and is worthy of particular notice in these letters, is Browton street, so named in honor of an old pilot, who had amassed great riches in his seafaring profession. This street is very broad and beautifully shaded by rows of trees extending through the whole length of it. As this was one of the first streets laid out in the city, we see more ancient dwellings here, than we do in many other parts of it. I remember one old building in particular, that had not been altered or repaired for more than half a century. It was a very long building and rather low, for a house having two floors; old clay covered chimneys stood upon each end on the outside, and a piazza extended the entire length in front of it. There I frequently saw the ancient tenant of this ancient dwelling sitting upon a bench

with his chin resting on his hands clasped above the top of his staff, while the long silver locks, bleached by a hundred summers, fell upon his shoulders, causing him to look so old, I could not wonder he did not wish to have any thing around him assume a more youthful appearance. The same three cornered hat that had covered the locks of blooming manhood, still sat upon that head, and the long waisted coat with wide skirts, the small clothes, and large silver buckles at the knees and smaller ones on the tops of the shoes, were all in strict keeping with the old dilapidated moss-covered tabernacle of its aged master. I could not help reflecting how unlike and how much more becoming was the garb of this old man than that of many at the present day, who, so, it would seem, endeavor to retard the wheels of time, by various repairs and white washings of their decaying clayey tenements, supplying the place of the long wasted 'grinders,' and with false wigs and curls trying to conceal the blossoms for the tomb, making every thing around them look youthful but deep furrows upon the face, which art has never yet been able to fill up.

Now I must speak of the most beautiful street in all Savannah, which is South Broad street, laid out on the south side of the city, and of

great width as its name implies. In this street there are five paths, two for carriages and three for foot passengers. Between each of these is a row of trees which are of the largest size, whose widely extended branches mingle with each other from one side of the street to the other, forming long leafy archways which on a moonlight evening resemble so many shadowy and mystic aisles in some old Gothic Cathedral, which to one at the entrance continually diminish in magnitude till they are finally lost in darkness and distance. The middle pathway being overgrown with grass is only promenaded in pleasant weather and during those hours of the day when the ground is free from dew. In the morning and evening, and on rainy days, the side-walks paved with bricks are resorted to. There are but a very few paved walks in Savannah, owing to the circumstance that all the stone used there is imported, and if bricks were extensively used, the atmosphere would become unhealthy from the moisture they would collect. I never saw a rock even of the smallest size while in Georgia; even gravel could not be obtained there, consequently those kinds of walks which at the North are graveled, at the South are filled with sea-shells, laid down with the rounded side up. Though there may be some-

thing lost in a pecuniary point of view in being obliged to have recourse to such an expedient, yet certainly there is not as far as the beauty of the walks is concerned.

I have often thought how great the wonder and surprise of a person would be, who had never been out of the low country in Georgia, if he was to be suddenly transported to the North and dropped down among some of the rocks and hills of New Hampshire, for there are many so unaccustomed to any thing but extensive plains they can hardly realize what a mountain or ledge of rocks looks like. I have frequently thought if the people in Savannah could have our old Kearsarge set down among them, they would almost fall down and worship it, and surely I could not much blame them if they did, for I believe when I was there, if I could have caught a glimpse of its old hoary head or inhaled one pure breath right from its top, I should, for once at least, have been guilty of mountain idolatry; for all the time I was South my eye never rested upon any thing that even resembled a little hillock, excepting the embankment that was thrown up round about the city in our last war with Great Britain. This formed a rather pleasant little rise of ground, and it seemed to be a luxury to many besides myself

to resort thither, for a walk at the close of a hot summer's day.

There was also another beautiful little retreat not far from the old fortification, where I spent many a pleasant half hour when it was not occupied by its lawful owners. It was a little sweet romantic grove, just out of the city, that on Saturdays was frequented by the coit club, an association of those young men in the city, who, by their noble birth, or wealthy parents, or professions, consider themselves entitled to the appellation, the "Aristocracy." They had selected this spot for the theatre of their pastimes, and cut down all the small trees and shrubs, leaving only a sufficient number of the largest growth to make one of the most delightful of nature's arbors. In one corner of the grove stood a small lodge, where they store their coits, footballs, and settees, the latter being taken out and placed around in different parts of the grove when they assemble together. Here also they keep their eating and drinking establishments. I imagined from appearances that it was not a small proportion of the company that loved a good jolly hour over the convivial glass.

About eight miles from the city was a plantation that every stranger, even, was told he

must visit before leaving Savannah, called Captain Abraham's place, a term meaning no more nor less than the plantation where Captain Abraham, an eccentric old bachelor, enjoyed all the sweets of solitude; and found his amusement in causing the trees and plants to assume all those fantastic forms, which his own odd fancy might happen to suggest; he was one of those men of whom Pollok said,

“ He made acquaintanceship with plants and flowers,
And happy grew in telling all their names.”

His plantation was seven or eight miles from the city, isolated from all others, and laid out in a beautiful romantic spot bordering upon the South Newport River. Every part of the plantation not only gave evidence of high cultivation, but also showed that its lord took pleasure in sporting with the vegetable kingdom. Here the trees were growing in all shapes according to the will of the cultivator. Some were in the form of cones and pyramids, some grew like the spires of a church, and many cedars bore a perfect resemblance to center tables. The fences were all overgrown with vines and the walks were everywhere adorned with the choicest flowers, even, the twining vines and fast accumulating moss was not suffered to be disturbed by the workman's hammer in repairing the old

decaying cottage; and all was so still and peaceful around this little shady covert, the feathered tribes were not afraid to congregate there to chant their early matins, and when all other birds had gone to sleep in their leafy bowers, the whipporwill gladly hastened back to this enchanted spot to repeat her evening serenade, and if justice had been done to the beauties of this place, it would have long ago been called Captain Abraham's Paradise.

LETTER XII.

Boniventure—Thunderbolt—Extract from a letter from a friend in New Orleans.

A PLACE called Boniventure is another favorite resort for all who desire the luxury of the shady forest, and on certain days, particularly for those gentlemen who are fond of rolling ninepins and of other like sports. It was a little spot in the midst of a thick wood, where a good many years ago all the trees were cut down excepting those that formed seven or eight rows for a considerable distance. These trees have now grown to the size of our largest elms, the branches of which not only overlap each other on either side, but also in many places reach the ground.

But what makes this place appear unusually romantic and delightful to the stranger's eye, is the moss with which these trees are heavily loaded. This moss, if suffered to grow, in a few years so accumulates that the tree looks as if covered with coarse tow cloth; that which

hangs upon the lowest limbs often touches the ground; then that which grows upon the next branches reaches those beneath, and so on to the topmost branches of the tree. After all, to have a correct idea of one of those moss covered trees, one must see it with his own eyes. This moss is gathered in large quantities by the colored people to be used in filling mattresses; when dried it looks like coarse black hair, though one would think it was already dry, when he saw it on the tree, if he did not examine it. In this place stood a large, fine monument, erected over the grave of a distinguished citizen of Georgia, and enclosed by a high brick wall that time is now fast leveling to the ground. When I stood by this solitary grave I could not but reflect how great his surprise must be at the resurrection, who had selected this lone spot for his last repose, to find myriads springing into life on all sides of him, "and claiming their proper dust from the same spot." Though I am one of those who are always ready to think that every excursion of pleasure, whether by land or water, is attended by a thousand pleasures, yet I think I never enjoyed any thing of the kind half as much as an equestrian excursion among the shades of Boniventure, accompanied by twelve or fourteen choice

companions, each having perfect command of his own beast. There one party was often met by two or three more, each of which would appear to be not a little solicitous to see which could exhibit the most skill in horsemanship; and it was not uncommon for the ladies to vie with each other in the speed of their horses or in endeavoring to see who would show the most dexterity in guiding them through the most difficult labyrinths that could be found among the deep entangled thickets round about Boniventure. While some would be running races over the fallen trees, and among the vines and bushes of the deeper woods, others would secure their beasts beneath a wide spreading and moss covered oak, to amuse themselves at the nine-pin alley, and others again more fond of rural scenes than such sports would walk about the old monument, gathering from it here and there a bit of moss, or a creeping vine as a pleasing memento of Boniventure. Never did I visit a spot that seemed so classical; and while the student might here fancy he enjoyed the sweets of "Academus sacred shade," a Walter Scott might there recline upon a grassy mound, and while the chattering squirrels hopped from branch to branch, "and dropped their nutshells on his head," and while the music from the

neighboring boughs enchanted his soul, he might lay the scene of a romance not inferior to those which have long been read with so much interest. Here the poetical "miseltoe" might be seen in large bunches growing upon the trunks and limbs of the oak, and I wondered how squirrels could be so numerous there, if the sportsman's gun had often frightened them from their beautiful haunts. The fox squirrel was the largest animal of the kind I ever saw there, and of the same color as our fox, perfectly resembling the grey squirrel in form, and in size about half way between the grey squirrel and the fox; and a stranger seeing these merry little creatures skipping from bough to bough, would almost think a parcel of young foxes had taken to the trees.

From what circumstance *Thunderbolt* derived its name I never knew, but now the same might be said of it, as of ancient Tyre, "it is a place for the spreading of nets." This also is about seven or eight miles from the city. It is a little settlement of fishermen upon the bank of the river, where boats of all sizes might be seen upon the water, or drawn upon the shore for the purpose of being dried and repaired. Fishing nets and lines were spread all around to be dried, and many an old fisherman might be seen

here, taking his noon-day nap beneath the shade of a weeping willow, while his favorite spaniel, couched at his side, enjoyed the same repose. I remember the last time I ever visited this spot was on horseback, and feeling very thirsty, I rode up to one of the fisherman's huts and asked for a glass of water, and presently the good mistress of the house herself appeared with the cooling beverage. When I handed her back the cup and was about turning to go away, she said, "You must call again when you ride out this way." I told her it was the last time I ever expected to see that place; with a good deal of surprise depicted on her countenance, she asked, "why." I told her I was a stranger there, and in a few days I was going to my own loved home; she then replied, "O well, you will come back again; for any one who has once quenched his thirst from these wells will thirst for this water again." And O! how many times since, when I have sat alone in the dreariness of my own chamber, through a long winter's evening, and listened to the cold northern blasts as they swept past my window, have I remembered that good dame's words. It is not merely the cup of water I now pine for, but the luxury of those soft, cooling breezes, as they blow from the

bosom of the ocean, and of those sunny skies and ever green groves. But after all, if I was now in Georgia, I might long for some of the good things that are to be had only in our favored New England. The human mind is seldom satisfied with its present enjoyments. It is prone to magnify the evils of its present situation and enhance the blessings that may be enjoyed in those far off. As far as my own experience can testify, where there are great advantages to be possessed, there are also disadvantages equally great to balance them; and I have about come to the conclusion that good and evil in this world are more equally dispensed than at first we are apt to suppose. I was never more forcibly reminded of this than one evening while taking a walk with a dear friend at the South. To enjoy a sweet twilight hour, at the close of a hot summer's day, we had retired to the shores of a beautiful creek, which at a little distance from us opened into the Atlantic. The tall cedar and bending cypress darkened our path in many places, and among their thick branches the birds that had sung all day, warbled out their last sweet strains before retiring to rest. The stars were just peeping out one by one, and afar off in the east, where the blue mountain waves seemed to dash against

the vaulted sky, a little red spot began to make its appearance, as the harbinger of the rising moon. The evening sea breezes stole most agreeably upon us, and to an eye taking a perspective view of us, it would seem there was nothing to mar the pleasure of our walk; but alas! there must always be a thorn to sting the fingers that plucks the rose; so in our case, among the thickly matted grass, that, to look upon, appeared to form a soft green carpet for our feet, there lurked ten thousand little prickly burs that compelled us every few moments to stop and pick them from our shoes and the bottom of our dresses, to prevent them from wounding our feet. Speaking with my friend about the little vexations we must always endure, even when the prospect for pleasure seems brightest, she remarked, that a friend of hers, who had traveled a great deal in every quarter of the globe, told her that "all things considered, one place in the world was as good as another." To conclude this article I will quote a few lines written by a friend at New Orleans, as they will better express what I wish further to say upon this subject than my own words. "And now for the contrast between the North and the South. How often in my imagination have I compared my situation this winter with

that of my friends in New Hampshire. Whilst you are all wading through snow and ice, I am walking on nature's green carpet; and while you are crowding and shivering around great fires, I am carrying an umbrella to protect my head from the scorching sun. While you are listening to the whistling wind and the jingling sleigh bells, I am charmed by the music of the grove, the martin and the mocking bird. While you are peeping out of your frosty windows, to catch a glimpse of your snow-capped hills, I am gazing upon the green foliage, and trees covered with blossoms, and plucking flowers from the field, and oranges from the trees; and whilst you are feasting yourselves upon baked beans and pickles, tables here are loaded with green peas and lettuce, fresh from the garden. But I have carried the comparison far enough. You can imagine the rest. Let me say, however, that with all this seeming preponderance in favor of the South, there are drawbacks here, that, with me, give the counterpoise, or rather turn the scale completely in favor of the North. Yes, to say nothing of her institutions, just think of the misery of writing this letter with one hand and fighting mosquitoes with the other; and after my day's work is over, and 'tired nature

seeks repose,' instead of enjoying the free circulation of air in my room, I must needs crawl under musquito bars, like a whipped dog into his kennel, to protect my body from being eaten up alive. O horrible! give me a New Hampshire snow-bank."

LETTER XIII.

Condition of the Slaves—Two Little Girls trying to learn the Letters of the Alphabet—The Colored People's Asylum—Dogs—The Militia of Georgia.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great precaution which is used to prevent the mental improvement of the slaves, many of them steal knowledge enough to enable them to read and write with ease. It is often the case, that the white children of a family impart much of that information they have acquired at school to those among the black children who happen to be their favorites; for it must be understood that not only every little boy and girl has each a favorite slave, but also every young man and woman have their favorite servants, to whom they not only often impart much useful information, but confide in them more as companions than merely waiting men and women; and it is not uncommon to see the favorite slave nearly as wise as his master. A lad about eleven years of age, in the family where I once visited, made it his prac-

tice, unknown to the family, to spend an hour or two every day in teaching a black boy to read; an act exposing the father of the noble hearted boy to a heavy fine if found out. This fact come to my knowledge by a colored woman, who had sufficient confidence in me to believe I should not betray the child. Clerks often instruct the slaves who labor in the back stores, and many by this means acquire a decent education. I have often seen a young man belonging to one of the largest firms in Savannah, who could read, write, cipher, and transact business so correctly, that his masters often committed important trusts to his care. The firm valued him at fifteen hundred dollars. He read with great eagerness every northern paper that came within his reach, and had by this means gained a good knowledge of the political state of our country. At the time I was there, he was deeply interested in the election of President Harrison, as were the slaves generally in the Southern States, for they were all Harrison men, and they were bold enough to assert publicly that "when William Henry Harrison became President of the United States, they should have their freedom;" and, believing as they did, who could lament the death of the worthy President more than the poor slaves?

I do not know that ever I was more deeply impressed with a sense of the cruelty of depriving the slaves of the means of instruction than one evening while on my way to my room I met two little colored children, apparently about eight years old, trying to find out between themselves some of the letters of the alphabet. It appeared that one of them had found an old, crumpled, soiled leaf torn from a toy-book, upon which a few of the large letters were still legible; and then they had seated themselves upon the stairs to study them out. One of the children was saying just as I reached them, that she heard somebody say that the round letter was O; the other replied that "she heard such a little girl say the straight letter was L;" so alternately each was teacher and scholar. O, if the children at the North, who are almost compelled to go to school, could have witnessed that scene, it would I think have taught them a lesson not soon to be forgotten. I longed for an opportunity to give them that information they seemed so desirous to obtain; but I hastened up to my room, fearing to be found there, lest it might be thought I was attempting to instruct them.

As a general thing the slaves in the city wear good clothing. Many even dress extravagantly and decorate their persons with a great

deal of costly jewelry. I have seen colored men with no less than six or eight rings upon one finger. Many in the city have good houses and expensive furniture. I have seen ladies in the streets with such light complexions and dressed so elegantly that when told they were negroes I could not willingly credit the assertion. I ought here to say that at the South all who have a drop of the African blood in their veins, however white their skins may be, are called negroes. But those who dress and live in the manner above described, purchase their time, and all they can earn besides paying a certain sum per week or month to their masters, they use in any manner they choose. A gentleman informed me he had a slave who accumulated more property than himself, after paying nine dollars per month for his time. It is quite common for a master to give his slave all his time, if he will take care of himself after he has become so old and worn out as to be of no service to him. It often happens that infirm old slaves are by the death or failure of their masters left without any sort of a home or means of subsistence. As a remedy for this evil in Savannah, a kind of asylum has been prepared for all such helpless old people among the black population; but from what I have been able to

learn respecting the institution, it is next to having no home at all; and those who avail themselves of the comforts it affords, only do it when every other resource for the means of subsistence fails them. I have known poor old men almost bent to the ground by hard labor, with locks which age had bleached as white as newly washed wool, rather than to go to this asylum, travel from one plantation to another, begging a potato from one slave and a morsel of homony from another, sleeping at night in some corner of an old out-house or in the woods, till they were finally compelled by those who thought themselves doing a deed of mercy, to take up their residence in a place as much dreaded by these unfortunate creatures as the alms house is at the North by poor people.

But those among this down-trodden race of people in our country, whom I commiserated as much as any while in Savannah, were the little chimney sweeps. These were the most forlorn, half-starved, emaciated looking beings I ever beheld. Their masters always accompanied them about the city, because they could not trust them to go to their labor alone; for they were invariably obliged to beat them before they would ascend a chimney, the task was so revolting even to those who are accustomed to this

barbarous practice of using live flesh and blood for chimney brooms. But notwithstanding this task seemed so dreadful, extreme hunger often compelled them to climb upon the outside of the house in the night time, and then descend the chimney to steal something to eat.

I suppose every one who knows anything about slavery would expect, if he went South, to see all shades of color among the slaves; yet after all it is an odd sight to see them with light complexions, red hair, and blue eyes; and as strange as this might seem, I have seen all these characteristics of the European blended with the short curly hair, (though red,) flat noses, and thick lips of the African race. I have seen heads about half covered with red hair, and the other half with black, and all of it short and curly.

The slaves carry all their burdens upon their heads, and to me it is quite unaccountable how they can sustain such weights as they do in this manner. They will transport from one place to another, tubs of water, large, heavy, iron-bound trunks, or any other burden they can raise to their heads. I have seen the man who had the care of the city lamps going from one street to another, with a ladder in one hand, a large wooden box in the other, and a heavy can

of oil on his head. Even the white children often learn from their nurses to carry things in this way. It is quite common to see a little group of school girls with all their books on their heads going to or returning from school, and almost the first thing the little child tries to do when it begins to walk is to balance its toys upon its head. I have often heard the old washerwomen complain of pain in their necks after supporting on their heads a large tub of water or basket of wet clothes.

The dog is the negro's favorite pet, and almost every man and woman owns one or two of these faithful animals; consequently they are exceedingly numerous in the city. Efforts are often made to diminish their numbers, but they seldom avail much, as their owners generally succeed in concealing them when their lives are threatened. For myself I was glad the poor slaves had something they could call their own, and think it extremely cruel in those who would take from the oppressed servant the only thing he might venture to set his heart upon. In the day time the dogs usually left the city to seek their food in the woods, but they always returned at night to the city; and they often collected together in such companies on moonlight nights that people could not sleep in consequence of

their howling and barking: this circumstance made the poor beasts many enemies, though I could not see why it should, for it is a sound I always like to hear; for there is something so painful to me in the solemn stillness of the night that the barking of a dog, or even the hooting of an owl, is preferable to total silence. I was never more deeply impressed with the beauty and force of an expression of the Psalmist, than I have been while listening hour after hour to the howling of these dogs, as they answered one another from every part of the city. "They return at evening, they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city."

Just hearing the sound of martial music, I am reminded of the appearance and of the manner in which military parades are conducted at the South, of which I will say a few words before I close this letter. In the first place all their musicians are colored men; for the white gentlemen would consider it quite beneath their dignity to perform such a piece of drudgery as to play for a company while doing military duty. These colored musicians are dressed in the full uniform of the company to which they belong, and on the morning of the day in which the several companies are to be called out, each band in uniform, one at a time, marches through

all the streets to summon all the soldiers to the parade ground. This performance also calls out all the servants that can obtain permission to attend the training; and it is not a few of them, that not only follow, but go before the companies wherever they march. They are excessively fond of such scenes, and crowds of men, women, and children, never fail of being present on all such occasions, some carrying their master's young children on their heads and shoulders, while many are seen with large trays on their heads, loaded with fruit, sweetmeats, and various kinds of drinks to sell, to those who always wish to purchase on such days. In Savannah there are five of that kind of companies that exist in all the States, and are called by all names, composed of all such persons as only perform military duty because they are obliged. In Savannah they are called ragmuffins, and I never heard a name more appropriately applied. Scarcely any two were dressed alike or took the same step; and whenever I saw them approaching some with a shoe on one foot and a boot on the other, some with their guns wrong end up, and others with them on their shoulders, wearing their knapsacks bottom up, and wrong side out, I could not help thinking one might suppose they were learning how to catch up their guns

and knapsacks and effect the most speedy escape in time of danger instead of facing an enemy. The independent companies are a credit to the militia system. They are well disciplined and wear elegant and expensive uniforms. The hussars are a noble and splendid company, mounted on fine spirited steeds so well-trained that they understand the word of command nearly as well as their riders.

LETTER XIV.

A journey into the country—The Church in the woods—A dinner by the way side—Wells on the highway—The little haven—Arrival at the Plantation.

AFTER having spent several months in the city, I left it for a residence in the country during the summer season. As we had a journey of fifty or sixty miles to perform in one day, by private conveyance, it was necessary to set out very early in the morning. Accordingly, long before the dawn of day, or the morning sun began to lift the dense white fog from the tops of the trees and houses, the carriages were at the door, and all things ready for our departure. Here I took a reluctant leave of those friends whose acquaintance, though it had been short, I highly valued, to go again among entire strangers. One friend abundantly supplied me with the richest tropical fruits and sweet meats for my journey, another loaded me with papers, periodicals and books, very opportunely remembering that the mind as well as the body needed refreshment, while all heaped upon me their

best farewell wishes. Never did I feel sadder when taking leave of a place than I did that morning. When I looked back to catch the last glimpse of the place where lived the few in a strange land who cared for me or I for them, and when I cast my eye around upon the companions of my journey, and saw not one among them whom I had ever seen before, my heart misgave me for the step I was taking. On leaving the city, we took a south-easterly course, and a few moments' ride carried us into the dark woods, where certainly, if I had not been traveling in a little caravan, I should have had some apprehensions concerning our safety; but our company was large and well provided with means of defence, which is always necessary when traveling in the woods of Georgia, and was particularly so at that time on account of the Indians, by whom many were robbed and killed that year while traveling. Seeing that our personal safety had been cared and provided for, I endeavored to make myself as comfortable as possible in my no wise enviable situation, thinking, too, we should shortly come to open land and cultivated fields, but in this I was disappointed. The further we went the more dark and gloomy every thing grew. Trees on each side of us, heavy with moss,

stretched out their limbs over our pathway, shutting out almost every cheerful ray from the sun, which at that time, we greatly needed, it being the winter season, and the morning was cold and damp. In this manner we rode, hour after hour, meeting with nothing to vary the scene save now and then a little country cart drawn by a mule and conducted by a woman, or a slave with a swine, or deer, or bunch of live fowls upon his head, going to market. Occasionally our approach would start a timid hare from the path, or scare up some large wild bird, which then would flap its lazy wings and disappear from our sight. Finally, about the middle of the forenoon, we passed a building in the woods, by the way side, that I supposed was a barn, yet why it should be there, so far from any cultivated field or human habitation, I could not divine; consequently I made inquiry concerning the matter of the gentleman I was riding with. He looked quite surprised at my interrogation, and certainly I was no less so at his answer, when he said it was a meeting house. I then asked, as a matter of course, where the people came from who worshipped there? He replied: "Oh, out of the woods, all around here." But I was no more enlightened upon the subject; it was all beyond my comprehen-

sion what the church was there for, or from whence the people could come who assembled in it, for we had then rode perhaps twenty miles and had not before seen a single spot of cleared land, or any thing that bore the least resemblance to a building, and the whole remained a mystery to me till I had been in the country long enough to know more of its manners and customs. I had observed, all the way along, little dark avenues leading off into the woods on our right and left, but never for once dreamed they were more than such paths are at the North, which we often see while traveling on a road through the woods. Here such roads are made by lumber men while clearing timber in the winter, but there each one of them leads to a plantation. In all that country one might travel a week on the main road, and see nothing of the plantations. To have a view of these, one must turn off from the highway and pass through one of those narrow avenues for two, three, or four miles, then after passing a gate he will soon find himself among luxuriant crops of corn, cotton, and tobacco. So I was much nearer the abodes of men than I supposed through all that long day in which I thought we were all the time going farther and farther from human habitations. If

I had known this at the time, it would have saved me a good many unhappy regrets for having left the city. In such a path as this we traveled long after I had begun anxiously to look out for an inn, greatly needing rest and refreshment; but just as I began to despair of finding the desired entertainment that day, as the woods all the time seemed to grow thicker and darker, the gentleman in the forward carriage who took the lead of our little party stopped and called out to the company, "if it was not time for dinner." I was not a little surprised as well as amused, and began to think this was going to be another incomprehensible meeting-house affair, but all mystery vanished when I saw saddle-bags, portmanteaus, and wallets brought out and emptied of their contents upon a cloth spread upon the ground. Then I found, for the first time, how convenient it was to be independent of a public house, and that our necessities could be well supplied right in the woods, and save our half dollars into the bargain; for our good host had well considered our wants before leaving the city. After a little rest, and man and beast had sufficiently partaken of their repast, we set forward on our journey again, while the plumed songsters sent forth their sweetest and most en-

chanting notes to cheer us on. We often passed in the course of the day wells of water by the way-side, dug for the comfort of the way-faring man and his beast in that "dry and thirsty land," where there are no cooling streams nor fountains of water. Here "the old oaken, iron-bound bucket hung in the well," from which our horses many times during the day quenched their thirst. About the middle of the forenoon we came to a river where we had a toll-bridge to pass. Here was a toll-house and blacksmith's shop, the first buildings we had seen, excepting the meeting-house, after leaving Savannah. We tarried there a little while to have one of the carriages repaired, and then plunged into the dark woods again. Near evening we reached a small settlement on a wide creek where large boats and sloops run up from South Newport river to land various kinds of merchandise. It was one of the sweetest little spots I ever saw. Weeping willows grew plentifully up and down the shores of the creek, extending their slender branches over the barges there lying upon their oars, while the sailors who manned them, added the sound of the bugle and violin to the music of the surrounding forest in chanting the evening's parting lay to setting sun. Now for a short season we en-

joyed the evening twilight, then the darkness of night began to close in upon us. Trees on either hand formed arches above our heads, and though occasional openings among the boughs suffered us to get a peep at a star or two, the darkness before us the remainder of the evening appeared impenetrable, yet we always found the darkness to recede as we advanced. So we may always find it in life's pathway. When our course appears the darkest and most hedged up, if we but persevere we shall find when we arrive at the spot which seems impassable at a distance, like Mary at the tomb of our Savior, that "the stone is already rolled away." If Bunyan's Pilgrim when he saw the lions on the hill of Difficulty, had then turned back he never would have known that they were bound. So we should never give up a laudable undertaking because doubts and uncertainties often seem to obstruct our path; these are placed before us to test our fortitude and perseverance rather than to prevent us from doing what we thought to be our duty. At length we came to one of those dark avenues I have before spoken of. After having gone about two miles in this road, so narrow we were often obliged to make use of much adroitness in order to avoid the limbs of the trees, we came to a gate which

opened upon an extensive plantation, as I rightly judged was the one to which we were bound. At the farther extremity of this wide plain we saw faint lights through the branches of a cluster of trees, when one of the company observed that when we reached the spot where those lights were we should complete our day's journey. It was grateful news to me, for then it was past eight o'clock, and besides being chilled through by a cold December dew, I was never more faint and weary, but still the thought almost froze my soul that those warm hearts which would gladly have welcomed me to a good warm New-England fire, were not waiting there to greet my coming. When we arrived at the planter's house we were met at the gate by half a score of servants, who came out to take the horses and assist us from our carriages. I was then conducted beneath a beautiful growth of shade trees, then up a short flight of steps on to a broad piazza, and from thence into one of the principal rooms of the house, of which in my next letter I will try to give you some description, and if I succeed in giving you a good idea of this, you will well understand the general appearance and situation of all the buildings of the kind in that region.

LETTER XV.

A Southern Planter's House.

THE house of which I promised in my last letter to give a description, according to general custom, stood upon four posts about five feet from the ground, allowing a free circulation of air beneath, as well as forming a fine covert for the hounds, goats, and all the domestic fowls. It was only one story high, though much taller than buildings of the same description at the North. It was divided into four apartments below, and two in the roof, and furnished with two broad piazzas, one in front of the building, which there is always the gentleman's sitting room, and one on the back of the house, where the servants await their master's orders. Houses are built low on account of the high winds they are exposed to, their foundations being so frail that if high they would be easily thrown down in one of their heavy gales. The building was slightly covered with boards, arranged like clapboards to shed the rain. This was the

entire thickness of the walls, there being no ceiling, lathing, or plastering within. The floors were all single and laid in so unworkman like manner, I could often see the ground beneath, when the carpets were not on the floor, and they are always taken up in the summer to make the apartments cooler. The roof was covered with long shingles nailed to the timbers, to save the expense of boards beneath, the ends of one tier just lapping upon the next, and this executed so shamfully that not only the wind, but the light and rain often finds free access into the upper apartments, through ten thousand holes among the shingles. Two chimneys, one upon each end, built of turfs, sticks, blocks of wood, and occasionally a brick, plastered over with clay, ornamented the outside of the house. The windows were furnished with panes of glass, a luxury but few enjoy; after all glazed windows were used more for ornament than comfort, for in the coldest weather they were always raised, and in stormy weather the piazzas protected the inner rooms. The above is as true a description as I can give of the singular fashioned house to which I was conducted on my arrival in the country. My appearance there was altogether unexpected by the whole family, therefore there was no small

stir, nor little inquiry among the negroes and the younger members of the family, what I was there for, who I was, and from whence the strange lady had come, who had so unexpectedly dropped in among them. From the room in which I sat, I could look into all the other apartments about me, and I was not a little amused to see the many dark forms with bare feet and noiseless steps flitting about from one place to another, to get a peep at the new comer, and to hear the whisperings on all sides of me, of which I well understood I was the subject. The servants would come to the windows on the outside, and lift up one corner of the curtain to steal a look at me, others would creep softly up the steps of the piazza and peep into the door, while one old woman, less bashful than the others, ventured into the room, dressed in a coarse ozenburg gown, extending a little below the knees, with bare feet, neck, and arms, and came before me and made a low courtesy, accompanied by the formal salutation, "how de Misse," and then sat down on the floor at a little distance from me, and in a very respectful manner entered into conversation. She was one of the oldest women on the plantation, and though she was one of the field hands, she had free access to her master's house,

and she possessed such a good share of common sense that her master and mistress always consulted her on important matters, and she was looked up to and revered by the whole family as a sort of mother. While I remained on the plantation she frequently called at my room to spend an hour or two in conversation, and I never failed of obtaining some useful information from her on these occasions. All this time I was eagerly watching to see if I could discover any preparations going on preliminary to a supper, but as I could discover none, and it was then near nine o'clock, I had just summoned all my fortitude to meet my hungry fate with the most becoming resignation, when a robust young woman made her appearance up the steps of the back piazza into the room where I was, and brought out two or three large tables, nearly reaching from one side of the room to the other, and began to lay them for supper. Presently another of the same description came from the same quarter, bringing the eatables. When all these preparations were complete, the tea-bell was rung from the piazza, which to my great surprise, for I had seen only two or three white persons, excepting those I came with, brought around the table a family of twenty or twenty-five persons, consisting partly of tran-

sient members and visitors. Where they all came from, was as mysterious to me as where those people lived who attended the church, for I had not yet forgotten about the meeting house in the woods. Soon after tea I was conducted to the room I was to occupy while a resident in the family, one of the chambers in the roof. Though my first impressions concerning my future comfort in it were very unfavorable, yet I found, after I had learned that my accommodations for that place were of a superior order, and when I had had a view of the surrounding scenery from my windows, that it was one of the most delightful of situations, but the darkness of evening when I first entered my apartment shutting out from my view every object but the rough walls around me, it could not be thought strange if my forebodings were not of the most pleasing kind. Though the house was of but one story, it was so constructed that I had three windows in my chamber; these were closed with heavy board shutters. The floor was smooth and white, and the walls ceiled to the windows, the remainder being rough boards. Over head there was nothing to be seen but the unfinished timbers and shingles, warped into all shapes. The furniture was brought from the North, and consisted of all those articles usual-

ly used in furnishing such rooms, and looked very natural, all but my bed. This had very high posts, and was covered with a spread so small that it gave the bed the appearance of standing on stilts. My doubts concerning my future convenience did not at all diminish by taking a view of the surrounding objects; nevertheless I made haste to avail myself of all the comforts my apartment afforded, and shortly was nicely ensconced beneath the quilts and coverlets; but when I had extinguished my light I was utterly thrown into the horrors, to find instead of a close warm shelter for my head, a complete seive was stretched out over me, and being raised in a land where every one is taught to be afraid of the least crevice that will admit the cold air, I could not shut my eyes to sleep for perfect terror at those thousand of holes in the roof, through which the light of the then rising moon was staring in upon me; they seemed to me, through the greater part of that night, to be so many cold and freezing eyes trying to look me out of countenance. In the morning, on throwing open my blinds, and taking a view of the surrounding scenery, I began to feel much more reconciled to my situation than on the previous evening. At the south east the ever rolling Atlantic stretched itself out

as far as the eye could reach, and where the sky and water seemed to meet, now and then a sloop would lose itself to the sight, or a little white speck would appear which would grow larger and larger till a ship under full sail would ride majestically over the mighty waves. On all other sides of the plantation the dark green forest of the long leafed pines completely hemmed us in, separating us from all other plantations and leaving us a little world by ourselves. As I said before, the plantation was an extensive plain, which at this season of the year was covered with the decaying stalks of the last years' crops, waiting to be gathered and burned to make room for a new harvest. The dry, black cotton stalks were still standing, and though it was very early in the morning the slaves were busy in pulling from the bursting burs the snow-white cotton. Here and there in different parts of the field the little curling smokes betrayed the bon-fires at which the poor women warmed their frost-chilled fingers. The plantation was beautifully dotted with oak and mulberry trees that fortunately for those who love to hear the birds sing, did not share in the general wreck when the plantation was cleared. I found, also, that on this as all other plantations, it required more than one building to make up a

family residence, and that instead of having all the necessary apartments under one roof as at the North, there were nearly as many roofs as rooms. In my next letter I will speak of all these separate little buildings.