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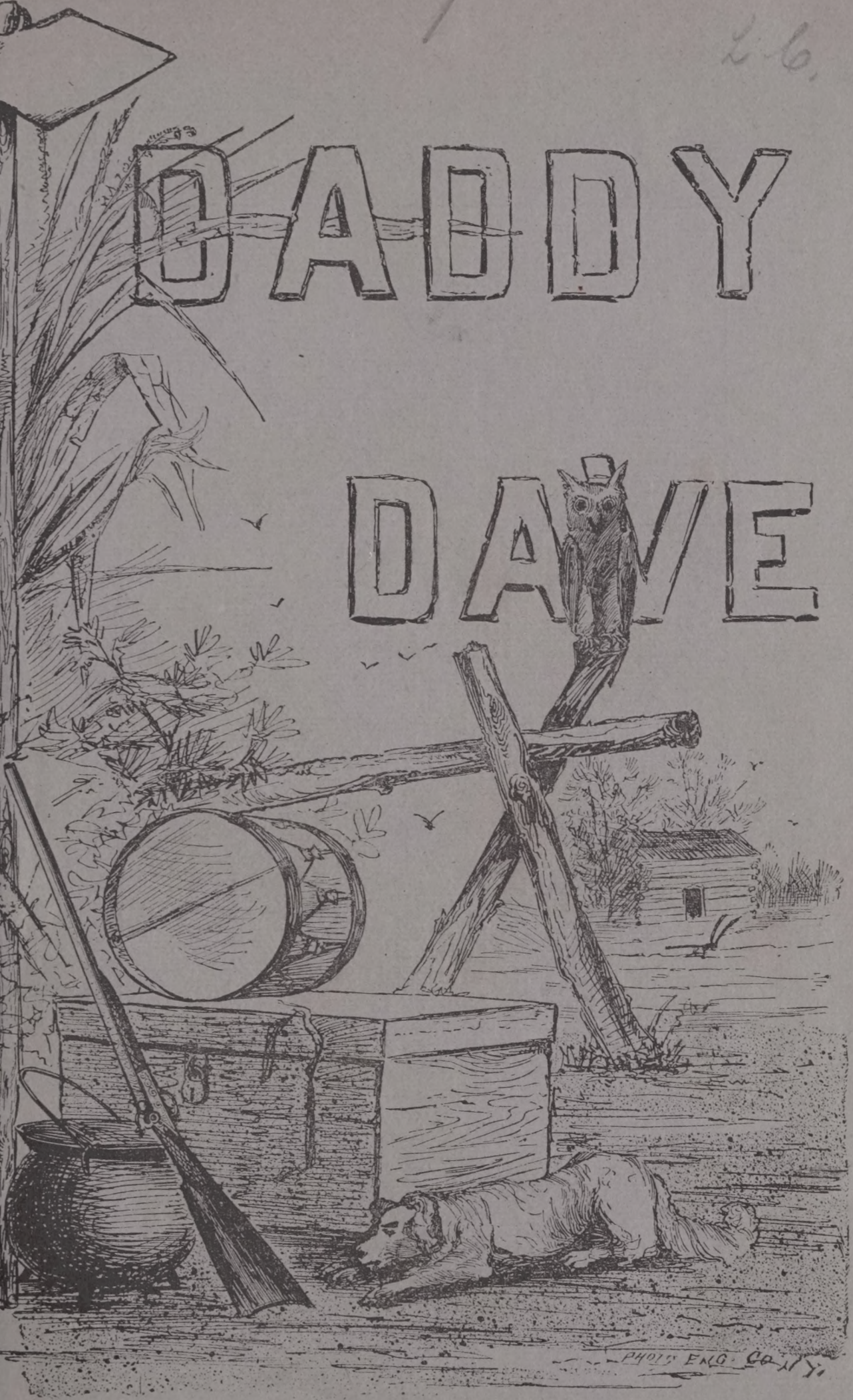


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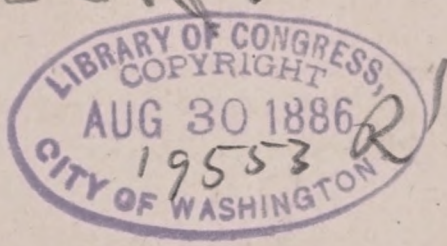
Will Carleton says: "It retains all the peculiar spicy flavor of her former works, and is better than any of them, because of its alternate pathos and humor."

FUNK & WAGNALLS, Publishers, 10 & 12 Dey St., N. Y.

DADDY DAVE.

BY
MARY FRANCES.

*Samuel
Witterop
Mason.*



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1886.

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To Those

WHO, AS SLAVES OR FREEDMEN, WERE FAITHFUL TO THEIR
MASTERS AND THEIR HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE
DARK AND SORROWFUL DAYS THAT ACCOM-
PANIED AND FOLLOWED

OUR CIVIL WAR,

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

IN preparing this little volume for the press, the main if not the only incentive has been to pay a tribute of affection to a faithful and beloved family servant, who, under the most trying circumstances, never faltered in his fidelity to the trusts confided to him. Faithful as a servant, kind and affectionate as a friend, he was the general adviser and protector of my widowed mother during long and weary years of severe trial, and with her desired earnestly and watched for the day-dawn of that dark night of civil war that for years enveloped the South as with a pall.

An additional design, also, in preparing this sketch, was to correct the too prevalent notion that the relation between *all* masters and *all* slaves in the South, while that relation existed, was one of cruelty and oppression, and that the slave, without exception, was under a bondage greater than that which has ever oppressed any people in a similar condition. It is not our intention to defend the system of slavery, nor to indorse it in any form, whether the subject be *black*, *red*, or *white*, but to demonstrate that among that certain class of persons known as slave-owners, who by inheritance found

themselves the possessors of those entirely dependent upon them, accepted the trust as a sacred one, and conscientiously gave themselves to the moral and religious instruction of those thus providentially placed under their care.

By kindness, example, and that familiarity that begets affection, a bond of love grew between the master, the mistress, the children, and the slave, which no subsequent circumstance, neither life nor death, nor principalities nor powers, could break in twain. This fact is illustrated in numerous instances, where the slave, now a freedman, clings to his master under all circumstances—an instance of fidelity and affection not surpassed in the history of any people.

And we know and can assert—and our testimony is true—that this book itself would not contain the names of those who might be inscribed, who as slaves and freedmen were alike trusty, faithful, and beloved servants under all surroundings as our “Daddy Dave.”

DADDY DAVE.

PART I.

GETTING READY FOR WAR.

It was the spring of the year 1861. The tocsin of war had sounded through that broad, sunny land, giving warning that the conflict was soon to begin. One failed to realize that anything so calamitous as war was near at hand in this calm, quiet country, with the sky so blue and the air so balmy. The trees were full of the song birds, and not yet had the mocking-bird learned to imitate the discord around him as he flitted from branch to branch of the great spreading oak, but still poured forth his own sweet song, heeding only the sunshine and not the shadow of the war-cloud. Yellow jasmine and long gray moss vied with each other in the graceful festoons that fell to the ground from the branches of the live oak. The atmosphere was redolent with perfume from the orange and magnolia, and the ear was soothed and charmed with strains of music wafted from the cotton-fields that spread far away on each side of the road. Methinks I can hear even now the sound of hundreds of voices, following the plough and the hoe in these vast

fields, carrying unconsciously the different parts of the tune in their own peculiar way. I am sure I shall never hear sweeter melody than came from their throats as they sang the "Old ship of Zion" and "Don't get weary, brudder." These strains, mingled with the sougning of the pines, were borne to us on the billowy air, and produced upon us a kind of dream life that now belongs to the "days that are no more."

The home at Greymoss was all astir; busy hands and aching hearts were contriving comforts for those soon to share the hardships of the soldier's life. The mother in this old Southern home had watched the war-cloud for a year past, from the time when it was no larger than "a man's hand" till now the heavens were overcast, and each day it seemed ready to burst in fury upon the land. She was a Christian mother, of noble heart; in the peaceful tenor of her life she illustrated the charms that form a character of exquisite refinement and cultivation; and now, when the country would be invaded and the foe must be faced, she was disclosing to those around her courage in danger, and fortitude to suffer the woes which her common-sense told her were ahead in the days to come.

Mrs. W—— was the type of a Southern matron; her hospitality was dispensed in a generous manner—not lavish, but in perfect taste, and in accord with her surroundings. Her husband had been dead several years, leaving her with a large estate, and only one of four sons old or wise enough to aid her in her business duties. I often think of her execu-

tive ability, and cannot understand how she planned and managed so wisely and well her various departments, unless we accept old Aunt Sibby's explanation of it all—"that ole missus kin neber stan' onder de lode onles she git strent f'om de trone, an' she go dere all time ob de day, an' you kin hyar 'em axin de Lord, an' He's alwais dar, an' lets de blessin' fall." Her presence was required on three plantations in different parts of the State; her boys were at college, and she could tell her visitors just where they were translating in Greek and Latin, and how far they had progressed in higher mathematics. A tutor or governess was a *sine qua non* at Greymoss in the education of the younger children who were girls. The home was ample in its appointments, and a large circle of friends and admirers considered it a privilege to be found in its shelter. This old ancestral place was one among many Southern homes from which the glory departed a score of years ago, but its picture will live in memory. The mansion was a few miles from town, and remote also from the scream of the steam-whistle. I used to think, on nearing the house through the avenue of live oaks, with the long gray moss hanging from every branch, surely this place was one of rest and peace. The big white gate, on the approach of a vehicle, was always thrown open wide by Cuffy, whose sole business seemed to be to stand there and laugh each visitor a welcome from his great mouth full of the whitest pearls. A carriage-round, in front of the gallery, was formed by hedges of mock-orange and banana

shrub, while the inside of the circle was gay with the many-colored japonicas, or camellias, as they are known in the North. On gaining the steps of the gallery Daddy Dave was in his place to open the carriage-door, wave you inside, and make you entirely at home.

After this long introduction to Greymoss, let me begin my sketch by describing this factotum to you ; though in the outset I disclaim all ability for the undertaking, and wish I could use the brush instead of my pen on this occasion.

He, with many others of his race, had been handed down from one generation to another, till at this period he was the oldest relic of the happy past. The snows of many winters seemed piled upon his head, leaving, as with intent, a forehead broad and high enough to hold his great silver-rimmed spectacles, whose ends were tied with a white cotton string at the back of his head, and lost in the great woolly mass. The spectacles performed their valuable service to him by "stayin' whar he put dem, and neber gittin' loss." These spectacles were almost the size and quite the form of the old silver watch that had rested, *silent*, in his pocket for the past fifty years, and which he took out every night and wound up carefully, shaking it, and holding it to his ear with the exclamation, "I wunder whut matter wid dis insterment ; it wus yo' gran'par's, honey." His great white crown was never molested, excepting on Sunday mornings, when he would be seen sitting on a bench in the sun outside his cabin door, using his "Jim Crow"

(very much like a pair of cotton cards, only of finer teeth, with which negroes used to loosen and cleanse their hair). This operation was peculiar to the negro in *ante-bellum* times, and required unusual perseverance and skill, and, as Daddy Dave used to tell us, "kin only be did wunce in a week, lessen nigger's ha'r all cum out by de rute." I never remember Daddy Dave but in a dress of his own style—one or two "swallow-tail" coats left by the old master, much too ample in their proportions for his stumpy little figure, but which were ever appropriate to all times and occasions. Around his neck he always wore a high-standing collar, which to my childish mind furnished the question why his ears were never cut off, and just beneath was one of the ancestral stocks, which, doubtless, served its purpose one or two generations back, but which was a remnant of aristocracy to which Daddy Dave fondly clung. His feet were usually clad in slippers down at the heels, "for no 'spectable nigger want to mek racket in de buckrer house." On state occasions his short, fat little hands were slipped into white cotton gloves too long in the fingers, which would flap in the breeze made by his swift gliding from room to room, doing the honors of the house so gracefully for "ole missus, now dat ole marster is gone and de boys too yung to tek charge." A hat was a useless piece of dress to him, and when the rare occasion of covering his head came about, it was done in the shape of a drab-colored silk hat, which he called his "churn," which never went out of fashion, and increased in dents as the years

wore on, but was always "'spectable," because "de ole-time gemmen wore jes' sich as dis." A new black hat was offered him when Colonel W—— died, as all the house servants were furnished with mourning, but he protested, "Dis churn wus wone by yo' gran'par, an' a finer gemmen neber lib'd; an' whut' mo', dat black hat neber kin mek de mo'nin' eny blacker; my h'art's ni' bustin' wid greef rite now."

We have seen Daddy Dave outside; now let us see his inner man. His character through life was always that of one of nature's noblemen, although with a black skin and kinky hair. Honest and truthful, affectionate and tender, and faithful to every trust. He was the *Fidus Achates* of that home, and when old master died—younger by many years than Daddy Dave—the widow and the children were left to his care, and most nobly did he fill his trust. What would the family at Greymoss have done without Daddy Dave and his old sister, Sibby, who was the "Mammy" of the home? His duties were not special, but many. Up at the "crack of day," and never abed till the big house was quiet and the lights all out. He was heard in the early hours appointing the work for the two gardeners, inspecting the dining-room boys, and seeing that the kitchen duties were promptly and properly done. When the carriage came to the door he was always there to help "ole missus" in, and see that the horses were well harnessed and the coachman and footman in order, for he said, "You kin neber trus' de yung trash to hab t'ings in

order.” Once when his mistress insisted upon his going with the family on a trip from home, thinking a change necessary for him, with a very low bow and flourish of his hands he said, “ Well, mis-sus, I be bery plese to go wid you, mam, but when I cum back I fine dis place gone to ’struction. You kan’t ’pend on dese niggers ; dey tek too much wachin’.” The truth was, Daddy Dave was never so happy as when following the “ hands.”

There was unusual activity at Greymoss. In the “ quarters” among the pines, a few hundred yards from the white house, one saw a restlessness among the women and children as they hurried to see every face that passed by their doors, and on going up to the house Daddy Dave was found in his usual garb and place on the gallery ready to admit visitors, but his old welcome was not seen in his bright eyes and smiling face. Once during the morning his pent-up feelings found vent in the following conversation to one who had called to bid the young soldiers farewell :

“ Bery mo’nful times hyar now ; glad ole master gone up hi’, ’fo’ dese t’ings happen. Our fo’ boys—eben leetle Johnny—’s gwine to de war, gwine to fite for de cuntry, gwine to Fort Sumter in two days ; an’ whut ’peers to me so cur’us, ole missus is gettin’ dem reddy, a-cryin’ an’ a-prayin’, an’ cryin’ an’ werkin’. An’ den sez I, ‘ Ole missus, ef de ’kashun is so tarryfiyin’ to you, whut mek you let de boys go ? ’ Den she sez, sez she, ‘ Dave, mi boys mus’ not stay at home ; dey mus’ fite for de cuntry ; ’ and den sez I, ‘ ’Sposen dey gits kill,

den what?' an' she say, 'Ef it's de Lord's will, den it'll all be rite.' Well, ole Dave doan see it in dat lite. I ain't no C'rishun; but ef I wus as hi' in grace as de 'Possle Paul, I would not gib *mi* boys to ketch de bullets of dem cussed Britishers. It's all a p'ece of 'tarnal foolishness—not to call it wuss !''

Daddy Dave's remarks were interrupted by Mrs. W——'s coming into the library with the stain of fresh tears upon her sad, sweet face. A red flannel shirt was on her arm, upon which she had fastened the last button. One could see her heart was breaking under the quiet attempt at cheerfulness, for around her on four chairs were spread the four new uniforms with the brass buttons and gilt tape, shining in the sunlight that came in so merrily at the window beside them, and all ready to be donned on the morning when they would march away. Donald, the eldest son, had graduated at the Law School, and now occupied his father's office in the town near by, but had closed and barred its doors, and was at home with his mother. Henry, the next son, had taken one course of lectures in the Medical College in Charleston, while James had been preparing himself for business in a college in Baltimore. John, the youngest, was in the Theological Seminary in Columbia, in order to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel. The four sons had enlisted in the regiment which volunteered from the town, where were most of their friends and comrades, and had come home to spend the last few days with their mother and sisters. They were en-

joying one of the last seasons of communion, when in came Daddy Dave, with something upon his mind evidently, which found expression after a few moments spent in tenderly and carefully handling the bright new uniforms. One of the boys said, "Well, Daddy Dave, you will be very lonesome when we all go away to the war."

We felt it to be a moment of great importance when we saw the old man go through the unnecessary performance of feeling for his spectacles in their usual place, for we never saw them anywhere else, and after assuring himself in this particular, with a prolonged clearing of his throat and a very low bow, he answered :

"I gwine wid you all," and turning to Mrs. W—— he continued, "It will never do to sen' de boys off wid de yung trash. Joe an' Pete an' Dan is bery good fellows, as far as dis worl' goes, but dey has neber bin to de battle as I is, an' dere mout be 'spicions ob dey ackshuns not bein' like dey ancesters, who, sum ob dem, carry bof de drum an' de muskit, an' wus no shame to de name, I can tell you."

"But who will take care of mother and the children and the plantations?" said the young master.

"Dat matter is all 'ranged. When de brash fus' spring on us, me an' bro Isaac an' bro Jacob an' bro John, we had a meetin' in mi hous', an' we 'greed dat, bein' as I is de ol'est an' no mo' 'bout war—you no I fo't tru de Rebolushun—dat I better go 'long to see dat t'ings goes ritely. 'Sposen dem boys git sick or tek de small-pox ;

Dan an' Pete an' Joe nos no mo' dan a baby whedder to gib dem sasafrac or catnip-tea, or whedder to keep de foot cole or de hed hot ; dem yung niggers no nuttin' 'bout de puls or de succulashun, an' all dese partikulas has to be looked atter ; an' den, mam, when ole marster died, he sed, sez he, ' Dave, I goin' home now, an' I want you to tek car' ob mi fambly ; stay by yo' missus an' raze mi chillun rite ; ' an' now it's not mi kalkelashun to hab fo' ob dem go off to de battle an' me stay wid dem dat's in no danger. An' den annudder considerashun is dis : bro Isaac an' bro John an' bro Jacob is good men, missus, 'ligious men dat kin carry on all de plantashun gangs, an' de hous' niggers, 'sides 'ten' to de pra'r meetin' ob nites, an' look atter ole missus an' de chillun. An' den, agin, dar's sis Sibby an' sis Betty an' ole Aunt Lucy dat kin 'ten' to de lyin'-in women an' de babies, an' see to de spinnin' an' de loom-hous in bad wedder, when ole missus kan't git out, an' 'sides dat keep t'ings pert in de hous. Eberyting is 'ranged, an' I jes' cum in to brek de news dat I gwine away to you.'"

Then Daddy Dave took from his pocket a piece of white cloth supposed to be his handkerchief, wiped his mouth vigorously, and again assuring himself of the safety of his spectacles, continued :

" Now, ole missus, I tink it my duty to go wid de boys, 'spechily leetle Johnny, what was gib to me to raze when his par die, an' ef enyting happen to dat boy widout ole Dave, den in de ju'gment-day I be 'sponsible, not you. Dar's no trubble

'bout de plase ; all de brudders an' sisters gwine look atter de young ones, an' I dun tell bro Isaac wheneber he drike you an' de chillun to de riber plantashun, he mus' hitch ole Ned an' ole Bill to de carrige, for nobody mus' drike dem two big skitish bays till I cum back, lessen it is when dey go up to de station for de prechers. You no if dey is good men, dey like to see dose bays pat de bred out de plate."

"All that you have said is true, Dave," replied the mistress. "I am willing that you shall go to the army with the boys ; but I shall feel that my right arm has been taken from me, though I know all the negroes will do their duty, and be kind and true to me. But I think, after you get the boys fixed in camp and their comforts arranged for them, you can return to us, for it will soon be time to plant the cotton, and after that the hoeing. I do not see what I will do when the picking season comes in the fall, for you are my main dependence at the cotton-gin, to weigh the baskets and manage the screw. It will be a new charge for John and Jacob, but we will be provided for, no doubt."

Clutching the back of the chair where he was standing, as if a new surprise had overtaken him, Daddy Dave said :

"I declar' to God, ole missus, you speak as if de war gwine las' always. All we want is jes' to sho' dem Britishers what stuff we's made on. I no dem like a book, has met dem befo', an' dey tink dese Suddern boys made fo' nuttin else but goin' to college, an' den cum home an' drike fas' horses, an'

go fox-huntin'. But dey'll fine out de mistake when dey see de pluck. We'll gib dem jes' wun roun', an' dey'll tun dey backs in a hurry. Ole missus, tain gwine las' long, when dey seed as we's in yarnest. You jes' be prayin' at home, an' we'll be fitin' in de war ; an' ef de Lord hyar dem pra'rs an' anser dem, sho 'nuff, we cum back to you in no time 'tall.'

“ Dave, you know life is very uncertain, and I am as anxious about you as about the boys. You are not prepared to meet your God, I am afraid. You have lived in sin a long time, and nothing seems to give you any anxiety about your immortal soul. And now you are going away, and may never return. I shall pray for you, that God will change your heart and make you one of His dear children, even in your old days.”

Daddy Dave was still standing, but with the grip of one hand upon the chair somewhat relaxed. Having paid the usual delicate attention to his spectacles with the other, and arranging his facial muscles into a very solemn expression, he answered :

“ Missus, all you say is de trute, mam. Dere neber was better niggers dan sis Sibby an' sis Betty, and bro Isaac and bro John. We's all de chillun ob de same fambly ; but sum seems call'd and sum don't, an' I is wun ob dem dat libs widout callin'. Yo' grate-gran'par, whut no'd me when I wus a boy, kin tell you neber a lik went on mi back, by oberseer [overseer] nor buckra ; de only beatin' eber dun wus by mi own daddy, and he draw de

blud ebery time ! Ole-time peeples tink lickin' mek young niggers grow. No, mam, I neber stole a poun' ob cotton, nor a pec' ob corn, not eben a pinder ; no lie eber res' in ole Dave's mouf, an' de mos'st sin I eber do was swarrin'. Ole marster in hebben, no hissef dere is sum mules an' sum niggers so t'ick-headed dat cussin' is de only ting dat kin mek dem move. It's better dan de lash. But I is too 'spectable to use dis kine ob languige fo' de buckra. Sis Sibby say dis is mi besottin' sin, an' will neber go out but by pra'r an' fastin'. Dis is de onliest sin I kin 'member at dis time, mam, an' dis doan cum fum de h'art ; an' I tink, considerin' how ole I is, an' dat I bin 'sosheatin' wid de buckra all mi life, ef Gabriel *do* blow de trumpit while I gone, de gate will open wide an' ole Dave go rite in. Leastwise, I hab lef' word for sis Sibby—you no she is bery hi' in 'ligion—an' de res' ob de niggers to pray bordaciously while I gone. I 'umbly tank you, mam, for yo'r intruss ; yo'r pra'rs is bery larn'd, an' will go ni' de trone."

Daddy Dave had for many years been under a delusion in regard to his services to his country. One of the uncles in the colonel's family had fought through the War of 1812, and the old man, then in his prime, had been body-servant. The children were often regaled with reminiscences of this part of his life, and in all of them he, his drum, and his gun bore conspicuous places. These equipments of war hung in his home till the day of his death. From many lessons in history overheard by him in the nursery concerning the Revolutionary War, he

fancied no harm could ever come to our land except from the British. The experience of the next few months dispelled this impression very thoroughly. For a short time before the last interview with Daddy Dave we would see him, late in the afternoons, go to his house, fasten a cockade on the side of his churn, and put the drum-strap over his shoulders and go off in the direction of the town. We always felt sure he was going to call together a torch-light secession parade !

That day and the next Daddy Dave's "swallow-tails" could be seen performing many tangents as he passed from house to house on the plantation, under his great burden of responsibility. His high-standing collar and ebony face, adorned by the inevitable spectacles, formed a striking contrast in the sunlight as he darted in and out of the pine grove. First in the blacksmith-shop, to tell old Pompey how many new ploughs would be needed, and how many old ones must be sharpened, for the incoming crop ; and then into the loom-house, to sis Binky, to see that the filling should be half cotton and half wool, so the cloth would go farther, now that soldiers' garments must be provided ; then to the dairy, to instruct Aunt Dinah to have the old cows turned into the pasture, and bring up the young heifers to be milked ; rock-salt must be used for the butter, and twenty stone jars of balls put up for winter use ; to be sure to give the babies plenty of milk, and the young children as much buttermilk and clabber as they could use ; and from each place he retreated with the admonition to "be fait'ful to

your trus', 'cos I be back some fine mornin' 'fore you no it !”

The last day at home was a quiet one ; all preparations for the going had been made, and the mother and sons were sitting in the library for the last time—for two of them at least—she giving them the tender admonition which only a Christian mother can give, and they in turn promising her ever to keep in mind her entreaties to be soldiers of the Cross, and, whether the return would be to her and the earthly home, or to a heavenly one, it would be well. Daddy Dave's slipper-heels were heard pattering the hall floor ; the conversation was interrupted, and in a moment he came into the room in an unusual excitement, and without much hesitation began :

“ Ole missus, one bery important ting you hab neber tort about, an' dat is mi unyform. Now, it doan matter what Pete an' Joe an' Dan war, so dey is clene an' got good warm close, but for a pusson who has fout tru one war, an' now gwine to anudder, it 'peers to me I ort to hab some marks 'bout me. An' I was gwine ter propose dat ole marster's fine unyform, whut's lyin' in dat drawer dere,” pointing to the drawer of the secretary, “ an' de morts etin' dem up, mout jes' as well be a-doin' good. I mout jes' as well hab a fu tings dat won't perish.”

Before Mrs. W—— could express herself in regard to this surprising demand, the drawer was opened and these sacred relics of the past were brought to view. The coat, pantaloons, vest, hat,

boots, gloves, and sword were taken out separately and gently, and the following conversation seemed to be awakened by the sight of each article :

“ Oh, chillun, I wish you could a seed yo’ par dat day ; he was a fine gemmen, sho nuff, an’ when I medetate on dese subjects de ways ob Providence is bery strange. I ’member when dat boy was born” (tapping the coat with his finger), “ an’ when dey name him, an’ den follow atter him till he was grow’d, an’ den ole marster—dat’s yo’ gran’par—sez ee, ‘ Dave, it’s time for Donal’ to go to de college, and I spec you hab to go wid him an tek car ob de hoss and him, when he git sick.’ ”

By this time each article was carefully laid on a chair, and Daddy Dave was on his knees by the drawer. “ Yes, chillun,” he continued, “ me and him stay at college tree year, your gran’par bo’din’ me an’ him an’ ’Sefalus—dat’s de hoss, you no—me a-ridin’ ’bout, an’ him a stud’in’ in gogafy an’ ’Sisro, an’ gettin’ shocks, an’ surbayin’ de groun’, an’ all dem hi’ books.” Running his fingers through the feather on the cocked hat, he kept on : “ As I wus a-tellin’ you, de da cum for de ’viewin’ de troops. Well, dat day yo’ par wus on de finest big bay, wid plenty ob trimmin’s, fust de hoss rare up on de fo’legs, an’ den on de hine legs, wid de epilets shinin’ like gole on de sholers, an’ de long white fedder in dat hat blowin’ in de win’.”

By this time Daddy Dave eased himself down on the floor, as the narrative was to be a protracted one, and continued : “ An’ when de hosses rare up behine an’ befo’, ole missus—yo’ mar, dere—she an’ yu

boys was ridin' in de carrige, an' bro Isaac, he wus a dribin', 'cos no nigger but Dave eber tech de colonel's hoss ; I walk on de pabement, wid wun eye on ole marster an wun eye on de carrige, and she moshun fer me, an' she sez, ' Dave, yo' marster will be fro'd from dat hoss an' be kill ; ' an' den I, sez I, ' Missus, doan yu be oneasy ; he not gwine ter fall ; he sottin' dere jes' like he in his cradle.' Chillun, yo' mar alwais wus nervus like, an' I no'd if she holler'd out, or fainted, or sich like, she mout sturb de meetin' ; but atter a while we got to de State Hous, an' dar wus ole Dave wid his han' on de hoss's bit fo' yu kin wink yo' eye. Dat wus a big day. Now, ole missus," carefully unfolding the coat and turning to Mrs. W——, " please, mam, gib me de two palmetto-trees on dis coller, an' dese epilets ; mite sho' de Britishers dat I wus no common nigger, 'sides lookin' fine in my Sunday cote ; sis Sibby gwine ter so some stripes down my briches' legs, an' I also gwine to ask for de tops ob dese cabalry boots, all molin' in de drawer fo' not bein' used ; an' as for dem glubs—well, niggers kan't bodder wid dem."

Here he paused for a reply to his several questions, when Donald remarked :

" Daddy Dave, if I were you I would not wear the epaulets, for they will make you too conspicuous ; why, they will be a fine target in the sun, and you will be shot as soon as you go on the battle-field." Donald felt his last remark to be a superfluous one, but mentioned this fresh danger that might arise to draw the old man out.

The old man arose from the floor, adjusted his spectacles, and said :

“ Tank you, young boss, for spekin’ de trute. I declar I neber see dat pint befo’. Sho ’nuff, I won’t hab dem epilets, for mi life am too serbicable to de cuntry to git shot rite in the start.” Looking at Mrs. W—— he said, “ Well, mam, ef de reques’ am satisfactory, I will tek a few ob de brass buttons, which sis Sibby gwine ter put on mi cote ; de palmetto-trees an’ de boot-tops.” The mistress nodded assent, and he began to replace the hat, pantaloons, and gloves in the drawer, when James, always full of fun, said :

“ Daddy Dave, why don’t you ask for the hat and feather ? It will be so becoming to your complexion !”

His hands were in the drawer, and keeping them there, Daddy Dave looked over his shoulder, and with his voice fallen deep into his chest and a most solemn expression of face, replied :

“ Boy, you stop dat racket. What kine of a boy is you, enyhow ? Dis no time for spote ; de cuntry all a mo’nin, an’ yo’ mar dere a-brakin’ her h’art, an’ you hab de feelin’s to poke fun on dis sad okashun ! No, sar, de churn, what yo’ grate-gran’par lef’ me, is good ’nuff, an’ I gwine ter sho de Britishers de aristocracy I usen to lib wid ; an’ den, too, if dey shute at de churn, dey won’t hit de skull, dat’s so !”

Shutting the drawer, and folding the coat across his arm, to be shorn of some of its ornaments by Aunt Sibby, with the boot-tops in his hand, he

glided out of the library with his usual complacence and his face beaming with satisfaction.

The next morning dawned its usual way at Grey-moss ; the yellow sunlight making long lines in the pines on one side, and at the same time played its hide-and-seek game in the moss-covered live-oaks on the other. Each little bird was giving its matin song as merrily as if every heart on the old place was as gay as its own. The flowers, too, in opening their sleepy eyes, sent out their sweet perfume to help in this beautiful spring scene. But nature was not in accord with the sorrowful mood of the old plantation. The bell that hung from the high pole in the main street of the "quarters" was not rung that day, as usual, for the hands to go to the fields. All were waiting—men, women, and children—to say good-by to the young masters, who went away that day. Mrs. W—— had sent out an order early that morning by Daddy Dave, that all the negroes should come up to the yard and stand around the gallery—even the babies in their mothers' arms—to shake hands with the boys. All were in their places at the appointed time. The large carriage with the bays was in front of the door for the young gentlemen, and the wagon to convey the servants behind it. The soldiers carried their baggage on their shoulders, carefully packed in their knapsacks, and were to take the train at the station a few miles away. These four robust, splendid specimens of manhood, in their uniforms fitting them so gracefully, were types of the Southern boy that many homes were giving up that day ! The

mother remained with her sons and the little daughters in the library till the good-bys were over, and we must draw a veil over the parting scene, even upon the double blessing she must have given her baby boy ! There was stillness both in and out the house, broken only by the tramping of the horses' feet and the sobs that came from the many throats, almost choking the prayer of each one, " God bless you, young marster !" as the hand was shaken and the good-by was spoken. Daddy Dave, followed by Joe, Pete, and Dan, went into the library to get " ole missus's " blessing, all silent except their leader, who with the tears running down his face, said : " Farwell, ole missus," and handing her an old rusty key, tied with a very much soiled cotton string, said : " Dis is de key to mi hous, whar all my property is, an' I no dat you will see to it dat nun ob de niggers go in dar till I cum back. Farwell, an' may de Lord persarve us all to mete agin."

This dark procession then proceeded to the gallery, where, after shaking hands with Aunt Sibby and the rest of the house servants, he waved a good-by to the crowd outside. Of course his example was followed in every particular by Joe, Pete, and Dan. Daddy Dave then mounted the box of the carriage, motioning to his dusky " companions-in-arms " to get into the wagon, and taking the reins out of Uncle Isaac's hands, said : " Lemme dribe dese bays wunce mo', an' see dem pat de bred out de plate."

A glance at Daddy Dave was enough to make

one laugh amid the crying! Sure enough, there were the cavalry boot-tops on the outside of his pantaloons, which sported a gay stripe of red flannel down each outer seam. His coat, one of the old "swallow-tails," was bedecked in yellow cuffs and profuse in brass buttons, and on the collar, each side, was a palmetto-tree, which he had doubtless sat up half the night to burnish. The old gray beaver hat, his "churn," was, of course, in its place, with the addition of an immense green cockade given to him by some of the "Minute Men." His general appearance was the combined effort of Uncle Dave and Aunt Sibby, who were regarded by their own color as *connoisseurs* in all matters of taste and propriety!

After the partings were over the hands went to the fields, and the women and children to their cabins, all filled with an indefinite idea of some approaching calamity, yet scarcely realizing the sadness or importance of its nature. Coming days were fraught with a burden of pain and sorrow. That beautiful sunny morning without made the darkness and gloom of the mistress's heart blacker by contrast—so black there seemed not one ray of light to cheer, and no voice to speak peace but the one that said, "Lo, I am with you always."

The home was lonely now, and the heart was emptied of its best treasure. When it was day she longed for the darkness and rest of the night, and finding this a disappointment, welcomed the morning light, praying for the flight of time, that the end might come, however heavy its burden.

PART II.

“TILL DEATH DO US PART.”

THREE days after the departure of the young soldiers the booming of cannon was heard in the distance at Greymoss from early in the morning till late in the afternoon.

The mother's heart was quivering with fear for her loved ones ; the negroes, young and old, quitted their work, and lingered around the big house for any word of comfort that “ole missus” could give them. Late in the evening Uncle Jacob mounted the pony and went to the station to see if there was news for the people at Greymoss from the battle. Messages had been flying along the wires all the afternoon, but nothing definite was known till near midnight, when the operator called out, “Here is a despatch for you, Uncle Jacob.” Many anxious old men were among the eager listeners, who were waiting at the station for news from their sons or relatives. Feeling there was a common interest in this telegram, the operator read aloud, “The boys are safe ; the battle is over ; we got the victory, and not a drop of blood shed.” Signed, “Old Dave.”

Can any one imagine the great joy and relief brought to these many anxious hearts by the old

negro man's tender thought for his mistress? To know that sons, brothers, and fathers were spared, and a bloodless victory, too, seemed too much of a blessing to these hearts that had been filled with bitter forebodings of ill. All was stilled in that one word—*safe!*

The good news of the fall of Fort Sumter was brought to the different camps on the adjacent islands around Charleston after nightfall, and the fact of no blood being spilled was beyond the comprehension of Daddy Dave; his mind was not quieted till he had seen the boys face to face, and had assured himself of their entire safety by “'zaminin' dem an' makin' sho dere wus no marks 'bout dem.”

On one of the first boats that went to the city after night Daddy Dave was a passenger—not to rejoice over the victory, but to “ease ole missus's mine” by a telegram. On arriving in the city he found his way to the telegraph-office, walked in with his churn in his hand, said to the man then busy clicking the wires:

“Is you de gemmen dat works dis machene?” On being assured of the fact, he went on: “I gwine ter sen' a 'spatch to mi ole missus; jes' as quic' as pos'ble, for she dun hyar dem guns all day, an' not a wink ob sleep gwine to her ise for prayin' an' cryin' ober dem boys whut's not got a scrach on one ob dem.”

This remarkable specimen in color, both in uniform and manner, attracted a score around him, who were ready to ask many questions in regard to

his belongings ; but seeing his earnestness and determination, allowed the following parley to proceed between the old man and the operator :

“ So please, marster, sen’ ’em as quic’ as yu kin, an’ ’member to put ’em in mi languige, for mi missus onderstan’s Dave widout eny big words or hi’ spellin’. Say, ‘ De boys is safe ; de battle is ober ; de bictry is ours, an’ not a drop ob blood spilt. Old Dave.’ Now, boss, kin you mek sho de ’spatch ’ll go dar fo’ bedtime, ’cos I no bro Isaac or sum ob de people from Greymoss boun’ to be at de station to tek home de good news. If wun of dose boys, ’specilly leetle Johnny, git kill, den ole missus go plum crazy wid greef.”

Taking out an old leather purse, doubtless an heirloom handed down from the fourth generation, he took out a bill, laid it down on the desk after asking for the charge. The amount was paid, and running the purse as far as practicable down his breeches-pocket, Daddy Dave turned to the lookers-on, and bowing himself out, said :

“ Good-night, gemmen ; I mus’ hurry back bi de fust bote to de ilan, to hab de boys and dem young niggers reddy for de mornin’.”

Days lengthened into weeks. Letters were frequently received at Greymoss from the boys to their mother, but as the warm weather was advancing the news was not so cheerful. Donald had been in the hospital in Charleston with an intermittent fever, and John had chills in camp. Digging and throwing up the fresh earth for batteries and breast-works had produced malaria, and hundreds of

soldiers were suffering from it. Dan, Pete, and Joe were very well. The lazy life of blacking a pair of boots once a day, rubbing a gun, and preparing the scanty allowance of a soldier's fare agreed with them; and being accustomed to the hot sun of the cotton-field and the miasma of the rice-field, they were proof against chills and fevers. Daddy Dave performed the usual routine of duty quite pompously, as far as they related to the young persons of his own color, and in a very fatherly way to the “young bosses;” but *always* carried about him the consciousness of his own aristocracy.

Chills and fevers spread through the camps, and Daddy Dave became restless—indeed, was very unhappy over the health of the boys. One morning he was seen in his dress uniform making obeisance at the colonel's tent, and being a person of great interest to the officers, several of them gathered round him to listen to his talk, which was always very original. The colonel advanced and called out:

“Well, old man, what can I do for you?”

Daddy Dave, holding his churn in one hand, and fixing his specs with the other, bowed and scraped the ground with his left foot, and replied:

“Colonel, I cum hyar dis mornin' to consult wid yu 'pon a bery ser'us matter, and dat is mi young marsters. You no bery well how dey wus razed, an' neber use' to dese akomodashuns, dese kine ob etin', an' dis kine ob sleepin', an' de hot sun, an' de san' puttin' out dey ise. I not menin to hert yo' feelin's, colonel, for yu is doin' de bes' yu

kin in de situashun. Now, Joe an' Pete an' Dan, whut wus use to de sun, an' sleepin' hard, an' cookin' dey own bittles ob rice an' 'tater, dey doan mine, for, to tell de trute, niggers' skin wus made for de hot sun, an' dey dusn't hab chill an' feber. But I tellin' you de blessed trute, sar, ef you doan let my young marsters leve dis cuntry, dey'll be ete up wid de chill, an' after goin' to de trubble ob gettin' reddy for war, it's a tousand pities to be ruin'd hyar."

"There's good logic in what you say, Uncle Dave," replied the colonel, "but we must obey orders, you know; *somebody* will have to stay here, and I suppose General Beauregard thinks we are as able as any other brigade to stand it."

"Colonel, I mean no dis'spect, sar; but you no Donald is in de hospital in Charleston, an' Johnny down wid de chills in camp rite hyar, an' ole missus ritin' from home ebery day an' sayin, 'I will look to Dave to fotch de boys home ef dey is sick,' an' po' ole Dave neber so no 'count in all his bo'n days; kan't do dis an' kan't do dat an tudder wid-out goin' to Captain, or Colonel, or General Somebody—*enybody* 'ceptin' dose dat you ort ter ax—an' dat's de yung marsters deysefs. Ef you doan git me satsfacshun, den I gwine rite to de Gubner hissself, an' put de matter befo' him; an' eder hab de boys go home to dey mar, or den to a helty cuntry. Wid tankin' you for yo' 'tenshun, I bid you good-day, colonel."

Daddy Dave returned to the tent with more humility and less pomposity, and marvelled upon

what a queer thing “war is, and how a gemmen ob de ole stile gits to be nobody in de army, no matter whut kine ob close he wars, or how fine his unyform mout be.”

The old man’s desire was accomplished very soon without applying to the “Gubner,” for the eyes of the contending forces were turned to the frontier, and Virginia was becoming the camping-ground. The regiments, many of them, were sent up to Virginia, and among them the Fifth. Donald, after leaving the hospital, was transferred to the artillery, and, taking Pete with him, was ordered with the battery farther down the coast to Port Royal. The other three boys passed up to Virginia without getting a furlough, even for a few hours, to see their mother. Of course Dan and Joe had to endure the soldiers’ disappointment, and did not stop to see Aunt Dinah or Aunt Binky.

Daddy Dave felt the importance of his going to the plantation for a few hours to look around there, and appeared at Greymoss the morning that the soldiers passed on to Virginia; he arrived before breakfast, having sent a telegram to “ole missus” the night before, lest his sudden return might suggest some great sorrow. He was greeted with tears of joy from little and big, young and old, and on his own part rejoiced to see “ole missus,” and hugged and loved the little ones; but disclaimed all intention of abiding long at home, “becos de boys kan’t git along widout me, ’specilly goin’ to a nu cuntry wid dem yung niggers, whut neber trabel befo’; dere’s no tellin’ how wool-gaderin’ dey mout be an’

'tend to no comfort for de boys. No, I gwine roun' to-day an' see dat de bizness is squar, an' den git on de ole gray mare an' go ober de feles, an' see if de cotton is cumin' up reg'lar, an' whedder de corn is clene. Bro Isaac mete me up de abenue an' say dat I is home in anser to pra'r, an' bro Jacob an' Uncle John say de werk is bery hebby since I lef'. It is a dreful pity dat de bluded colt git kill on de rale-rode, an' de fine Jersey heifer git swamp in de mire; but den yu kan't 'spec de place to go on altogedder rite when de hed," putting his hand to his own head, "is gone, an' be jes' as if dey wus no war. I gwine back to-morrow, an' Johnny, he 'lowed he wus powerful bad off for sumting from home in de way ob bittles, an' you had better set Aunt Chloe and sis Liddy to werk an' git a box reddy by dat time, for I tell Colonel Williams I be dar twenty-fo' hours atter de regiment; you must hab a turky or two, an' ole ham, sebrul chickens, an' cakes an' bred cook, for de boys is mity tired ob 'hard-tac an' beef.' Dey dusn't need eny close, for dey got mo' dan dey gwine carry on dey backs dis hot wedder. Jes' sumting to ete. Please, missus, put in de box plenty ob shuger an' coffy, an' neber mine 'bout de bigness ob de box, for bro Isaac kin tek it in de spring wagin to de rale-rode, an' dar dey will tek enyting fum de size ob a hous to a shin-plaster [a ten-cent Confederate note], jes' so it's got de name ob a soldier on it."

Daddy Dave's visit seemed like a dream to the inmates of that home, it was so pleasant and so

quickly over. Mrs. W——, though thankful to see the old negro and receive such cheerful tidings from the sons, felt the old life of loneliness and suspense must be taken up again, and time would drag its slow length along as usual. The very monotony of the home days would wear them away, and each setting sun would bring her one day nearer the joy of having the loved ones again at her side, or—could she bear the thought!—of stilling that anxiety in the fact of their *never* coming again! “Thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.”

Daddy Dave’s welcome at camp was even greater than at home. He told of mother and the old home, how they were all doing, how fair the crops promised for the fall, and how “fait’ful an’ tru ebery nigger on de plase bin to ole missus an’ de chillun.” The contents of the box was enjoyed by the boys and their friends, and Daddy Dave was careful each meal to put away a good portion for Dan and Joe, as long as the box lasted, “lessen dey mout git de scuvvy.”

The troops had been on the march for several days, and were now in the neighborhood of Manassas Junction. It was night; the tents were pitched, and the evening meal was over, when John called the company together for the daily prayer-meeting. Daddy Dave was very particular to have Dan and Joe go to the prayer-meetings, for they were such “hardened sinners,” but rarely patronized such gatherings himself. It was a weird, solemn sight to see more than a hundred men kneeling in prayer under the spreading oak, with

no covering but the stars, and their seats upon the ground. The pulpit was furnished by the trunk of a tree, and here and there a hand bearing a torch to assist the young minister in reading a portion of God's Word and a hymn. Henry and James were always at these meetings, and on this occasion were attracted by a most reverential worshipper on the outside of the crowd. It proved to be Daddy Dave, and near him were Dan and Joe. The young master mentioned all those around him in prayer, and begged the dear Lord to fit each soul in His presence for either living or dying, and to those whose hearts had never been opened to the Gospel message he prayed that this very night the glad news of salvation might be carried by the Holy Spirit, and sealed for eternity. Then he remembered so tenderly the dear ones at home, the mothers, wives, and little ones, that "He would give His angels charge to keep them in all their ways."

After the return to the tents Daddy Dave said, "I always forgit to tell yo' boys whut yo' mar say 'bout de Bible an' pra'r-meetin', an' spen'in' Sunday, an' goin' to de chu'ch ; ef eber dar wus a good Crishun in dis world, it's ole missus, an' nun ob yo' 'parlor Crishuns' neder, fo' she act all she preech ; ef you b'l'eve me, de mornin' I git home, fo' de sun wus good up an' de grass a-sokin' wid due, I hyar a soun' in sis Binky's hous, as I wus gwine doun de abenue, an' I stop an' look in de do', an' dar wus ole missus, sho 'nuff, wid de leetle book, fus' a-redin', den doun on de nees a-prayin'

for 'Slena lyin' dar in de bed wid de plu'isy. I didn't 'sturb de meetin', but went rite on to de big hous an' see sis Sibby. She tell me de pra'r-meetin' bin kep' up *ebry* nite since we bin gone by bro Isaac an' bro Jacob 'seechin' de Lord to spar' all de boys, bof black an' white. An' now, boys, I ain't no Crishun, I tell you, but dar's a mity heep in pra'r, an' I b'leve all tree ob you gwine be spar'd in de big battle whut's comin' off. Johnny, he's reddy; an' I no dis preshus minite ole missus is reslin' in pra'r for Henry an' James. So den, I ain't gwine worry; tain't no use, nohow. Dem dat's for you is mo' dan dem dat's 'ginst you."

Two days after the last conversation the battle of Bull Run was fought near Manassas Junction, the first bloody battle of the great contest, the beginning of what was to come. The boys were in line of battle from early morning, and it was touching to see Daddy Dave when the fact confronted him that he was not going with them. The order was issued the night before that the negro men should remain at the rear with the wagon-train. The old man clasped first Henry and then James by the hand and said :

“ Good-by, chillun, an' de Lord be wid you, an' ole missus's pra'rs be ansered an' fotch you back when de battle ober, wid not a har ob yo' hed tech'd. But ef you *do* git struck, eder one, de udder mus' cum to de reer an' tell ole Dave sho 'nuff, an' let de ole man cum to dress de woun's. Dan an' Joe is not 'sperienced in dese matters.”

His grandeur completely vanished when John's

turn for good-by came. Daddy Dave took one hand in his old hard ones, and choking back the sobs to give utterance to his blessing, said :

“ Good-by, honey—our baby boy dat I raze, an’ neber tink it cumin’ to dis—tak car ob yo’self ; you ain’t ’feard to die, but doan run in danger ; an’ if yu fall, tink ob yo’ mar an’ how she’s a-prayin’.”

The smoke and din of battle was kept up till sunset. As each fresh volley of musketry or the booming of artillery was heard at the camp, Daddy Dave would call out to Joe and Dan as if to ease his restless soul :

“ Mek hase dere, you lazy niggers, an’ hab sum-ting nice ready before de boys when dey cum back, all hungry like de wolf. Whut’s de use ob yo’ cumin’ to de army ef you ain’t gwine be bizzy ?”

He knew well enough that “ something nice” consisted entirely of beef and hard biscuit ; but the desire to give orders and see every one busy around him allayed in some measure the dreadful anxiety he was suffering that day. His power of endurance gave out at sunset, and putting on his uniform he started for the battle-field, telling the “ young trash” to “ stay dar till dey wus needed.”

He had proceeded but a short distance when James and Henry met him in the road and called to him. Putting up his hand to shield his eyes from the setting sun, he exclaimed, “ Is dat you, boys, all safe an’ soun’ ? But whar’s Johnny—whar’s leetle Johnny ?”

“ He’s all right,” answered James ; “ but I’ve got a little scratch,” and opening his shirt he

showed the old man a slight wound on the chest and a small stain of blood made by a fragment of a bursting shell.

“De Lord be praised for dis much, but I mus’ go an’ fine mi chile.”

After wandering about over the field in the twilight, over broken branches of trees, wounded horses, wheels of the cannon, and the many up-turned faces of the dead, he heard a familiar voice. It was in prayer. Daddy Dave stooped to look and listen in the gray twilight, and there he found his boy hovering over the form of a dying comrade, trying to stay the life-blood till the soul was committed to the keeping of his Father in heaven. It was holy ground to Daddy Dave ; his great joy in having the young master returned to him “safe and sound” was lost in wonder and in awe at the scene before him ; and crouching down upon the ground, he sat in stillness. He was roused by John’s voice, which said, “It’s all over, Daddy Dave ; let us close his eyes, and again leave his soul to God’s keeping and his body to his friends here, who will take charge of it.”

Leaving the few comrades, all members of the same company, the old man and the young master began their way, by the light of the stars, back to camp in time for the evening prayer-meeting. It was a sad meeting. Many faces were missing who joined their voices in praise the evening before—some were in the hospital, and some had gone to meet their God !

Before the dawn of the next day Daddy Dave

was more than half way to the Junction to send a despatch to the mistress to "'leve her mine 'bout de boys.'" He told the operator, on entering the office, that he "needn't mine 'bout tellin' dat James got a scrach on his chist, 'cos ole missus mout tink it wus a bigger bizness dan it is. Jes' say, 'De boys safe, tank de Lord; a big battle an' de blud a-flowin', but ole Dave an' de boys not hurt."

The rest of the summer was spent in long marches, skirmishes, and battles, and the same report was made to "ole missus" after each one. The autumn passed and the armies went into winter quarters, and, much to the pleasure of Daddy Dave's energetic nature, there was ample scope for using his authority in bossing Joe and Dan in putting up a log-cabin for the masters and one for themselves. The making and daubing of the chimneys was also an anticipated pleasure, and fully realized by him when he saw the comfort and happiness afforded the soldiers when they gathered round the great wood fires whiling away the evening with their pipes, praising the old man for his success, and talking of home. Daddy Dave was, of course, the chief spokesman, much to the amusement of the officers and men, who came to the cabin from night to night to hear him spin his yarns. The "young trash" gained admittance on promise of silence "an' no'in dey place." As spring came on one could see the old man fail in strength; he was much drawn with rheumatism, but all entreaties for his return home, both from Greymoss and from the

young masters, proved unavailing. He insisted that the summer days would soon come and warm him up, and a little “goose-grease” sent from home by Aunt Sibby would be sure to supple his joints. He could not bear the thought of leaving the army and resigning the nominal responsibility of the care of the boys.

The campaign of '62 was already opened. Early in April General McClellan began marching upon Richmond by way of Yorktown and the peninsula. Henry, from a hurt to one of his feet, had been transferred to the cavalry, taking Dan with him, and had joined Stonewall Jackson in the valley. General Jackson's movement up the valley was to protect Richmond from the forces under General Banks, then bearing upon the Confederate capital. James and John were in General Lee's army, and seemed to have charmed lives, having passed through the hottest of the “seven days' battle” around Richmond, the last week in June, without being wounded; Uncle Dave seemed to believe there was luck about them, and looked for no trouble in the future. Having driven McClellan back, the Confederate Army moved northward in the direction of Washington, and there was fighting nearly every day. Finally, the last of August, the combined armies of Banks, Fremont, McDowell, and McClellan confronted the joint forces of Lee and Jackson, and the memorable battle of Manassas was fought on the 30th of August.

Poor old Daddy Dave was wearied with the marching and countermarching; but, being a great

favorite in the brigade, he had an unlimited pass to ride either on horseback or in the wagon-train, and managed to come up with the boys every night, and rejoice over them that they had escaped the field or the fever of the camp. Somehow between "ole missus's" prayers and his idea of good luck, he had ceased to associate the life with danger, and his good-by in the morning was no longer a benediction, but a cheery "Tek car ob yo'sefs, boys, an' doan drink no muddy water, an' doan ete nun ob dem green apples, 'cos I ain't gwine to de hors-pittal dis hot wedder to nus you, an' you no Dan an' Joe got no 'sperience."

On Friday evening, the 27th, there was a great massing of troops around Manassas; a double line of pickets were put out, and a general making ready for an encounter. Daddy Dave's penetration told him a great battle was to come off soon. He grew very restless, and when evening came went with the boys to the soldiers' prayer-meeting, and by his loud singing one knew he was unusually interested. After John had finished the hymn and a portion from the little Testament which he always carried in his pocket, and which was read by the light of a candle held by one of the men, he called the meeting to prayer. All was silent, when a queer sound came to them from the tree just above the young minister's head. Daddy Dave was quick to recognize this bird of ill-omen, the screech-owl, and to the negro a certain messenger of death. Little heeding the voice in prayer or the solemnity of the meeting, he called out :

“Yu Dan, yu Joe, dribe him away ; kill 'em, trow at 'em, de leetle debil, sho 'nuff cum hyar to fotch trubble,” all the while flourishing his staff among the tree branches and shouting to the two young trash. The unwelcome visitor was soon driven away and the prayer-meeting continued. But there was no more peace of mind for the old man that night. He followed the boys to their tent, but seemed inclined to talk and not sleep, and after midnight was seen going from camp to camp questioning the teamsters, who were trying to rest in their wagons, to know if the Stonewall Brigade had come into camp, so that he might get some tidings of Henry, whom he had not seen since early summer. He returned to the boys' tent at day-break rewarded for his fatigue, not with seeing Henry, but hearing he was well, and that the brigade would be in the fight the coming day.

Saturday was clear and bright, but very hot. The battle raged all day. The dark clouds of smoke, the booming of cannon, the clattering of the cavalry on the hills were sounds quite familiar to the ears of Daddy Dave ; but somehow to-day he was uneasy, and would have sought the battlefield but for a new honor which had been given him the night before for the morrow by General J——. There were a few men in camp with slight wounds ; not severe enough to require hospital attention, and yet serious enough to keep the soldiers from the field. The old man was made camp surgeon for the day and left in charge of these men, and fidelity to this trust kept him at his post.

A few weeks previous John had been made captain, and James was a member of his company. It was the color company of the regiment. In charging up a long hill that day, in front of the enemy, eleven men had been shot with the flag in their hands, and seeing the last man fall and the colors trail in the dust, John reached forward, seized the flag, and held it aloft. Again the staff was struck, but not broken; James saw blood running down the captain's sleeve, and cried out, "Oh, John, you are wounded."

"Never mind," said John, "follow me; it's only a flesh wound in my wrist." They followed the captain and his banner; the top of the hill was gained, the battery was taken, the enemy was routed, the colors planted—but the arm that raised them aloft was *still*; the voice was hushed, the heart had ceased its beating, and there in the trench below the battery was the lifeless form of the young captain. Scarce twenty summers had passed over that beautiful face, and another precious life was sacrificed!

The regiment passed on, following up the retreat, and the captain and his men, the rest of the fallen, were left alone with God!

The sun had nearly hidden his red face behind the western sky; the din of the battle was over, and no sound stirred the air but the neighing of a riderless horse or the moans of a wounded, bleeding man. The living army had moved on, leaving the field to the dead and dying!

Daddy Dave was seen going in the direction of

the battle-field followed by Joe. Both were silent. On the old man's arm was wound the linen bandages that “ole missus” sent from home, and in his hand a small flask of brandy. This time he felt these things would be needed, for something impressed him, on leaving the camp, that a search must be made that night for one of the boys, perhaps for three. So with a heavy heart he set about the painful duty. On the way his thoughts wandered back to a little more than a year ago, when he had met two of the masters near the same place he was now passing over, both *safe*, and had found John at a post of duty on the battle-field; this time he could not look for such good luck, and as he drew nearer the scene of conflict his heart grew sick.

The dead and the dying were lying together, as the Ambulance Corps had but begun its work after the firing ceased. The old man, with bated breath, was picking his way along over the field, when he spied a soldier sitting against the trunk of a tree, and advancing to him quickly found he was not one of the boys, but a wounded man, who was trying in great feebleness to tighten the handkerchief around a limb that was bleeding. Daddy Dave knelt down beside the man, and handing the flask to Joe, took a piece of the bandage from his arm and gently and tenderly bound up the wound. Then motioning to Joe for the brandy, he unscrewed the stopper and put it to the sufferer's lips, saying :

“Here, chile, tek dis; it'll strenten you till de

amb'lance cum fo' yu," and while adjusting the cork and putting away the brandy in his pocket, he continued, "Me an' dis boy hyar is jes' huntin' mi tree yung marsters; dey wus all in de fite. Johnny, de yunges' ob 'em all, he is captain in de — Regement, an' James is in his company. Henry is fitin' wid Mars Stonewall Jackson, an' I doan no but I cumin' acrost him, too. I 'lowed mebbe yu mout tell me whar dis regement wus in de fite, an' I mout go to de spot an' seek dem. Dey is bin tru so meny fites dis summer, an' neber git a scrach, 'peers to me I kan't 'spec' dem to go tru alwais, an' ef de good Lord'll only let me hab dem *alive*, I kin nuss dem an' tek dem home to ole missus."

Here Daddy Dave broke down, could say nothing more, and easing himself down upon the root of the tree by the side of the soldier, sobbed like a child. The wounded man, strengthening himself against the tree, replied to the old man's question:

"Well, uncle, that regiment had a hard time to-day; the brigade was near us; they had eleven color-men killed right here, and the last I saw of them they were charging that battery up on the hill there," pointing with his finger, "with the colors flying, and you had better go in that direction."

Eager to know the worst, Daddy Dave pulled himself up from the tree-trunk, put the flask into his pocket, and, followed by Joe, again undertook the search. It was now quite dark. Not many steps were taken by these faithful negroes before they began to stumble over the bodies of the

wounded and slain in that memorable charge up the hill. The shadows cast by the trees, as well as the dimness of his old eyes, prevented Daddy Dave from recognizing many of the upturned faces which were familiar to him at home. Having put a box of matches in Joe's pocket just before they left the camp, he called to the young fellow to strike one. He took it and held it down among the faces until it burned out; then another match, and another, till the box was almost consumed, and saying after each scrutiny, “Tank God, nun ob mi chillun yet!”

The top of the hill was near, and the floating flag formed a silhouette against the western sky, still painted in rosy light. This attracted the attention of Joe, who exclaimed:

“Dis mus' be de plase de man tole 'bout; he say it a hi' hill, an' de flag is dar.”

“Sho 'nuff, son, dat's de plase,” said Daddy Dave. They climbed a few steps farther, reaching the battery, and looking down from it saw a trench. The old man stood still, looked into its darkness, was startled, and easing himself slowly down into its unknown depth, called for a fresh match. His foot, on finding the bottom of the trench, touched something. Striking the match with trembling fingers, he said, with bated breath, “O God, dis mout be wun ob de boys!” The match was held above the face of the body that his foot had touched; the suspense was ended; it was Johnny.

His hat had fallen from his head as he fell, and the beautiful boy lay there with the brown hair

curling on his temples, and his eyes closed as in sleep. There was not a drop of blood to be seen except upon the cuff of his right sleeve, which was hidden under the unbuttoned coat. Deep groans from out the old man's heart rent the evening air as he loosed the vest and shirt and ran his hand inside over the left breast, to see if there was not some life yet. Then taking each hand and feeling first one wrist and then the other to detect a slight pulsation, he found all still and cold; drawing out his flask of brandy from his pocket, and feeling this to be the last effort to bring the life-blood back into his boy, he tenderly lifted the dear young head with his left hand, and placing with his right hand the brandy to the cold, purple lips, he leaned his head down, with his ear close to the marble face, that he might hear the faintest sound to betoken a spark of life. After trying again and again to force the liquid into the young master's lips, he shook his head, laid the body again to its rest on the ground, and while securing the flask and putting it back in his pocket, he said to himself, "'Tain't no use nohow; he's dun gone to his par.'" Then feeling for his handkerchief, the old man took it and wiped away the dew, as well as the burning tears that fell from his old eyes upon the cold, pale face below. "Oh, Johnny, Johnny, yo' po' mar dat's home, an' de udder boys, dey will brake dey h'arts when dey no you is kill; de chile dat I raze an' whut yo' par tell me to keep for him. I kan't gib you up nohow; you look too nat'ul dere, wid yo' curly har, an' yo' red cheeks."

This monotone of grief was interrupted by Joe's announcement that there were no more matches in the box. Then the two friends sat quiet with the dead under the stars, with naught to break the stillness in the trench excepting the flapping of the flag in the evening air, which had been planted by the right hand, so cold and stiff, and now resting in the warm, loving palm of the old negro man. After a while Daddy Dave roused himself and said :

“ Joe, dis ting won't do ; dis chile not gwine to be berry by de men on de fele, dat's sho, 'cos I gwine to carry him to his mar, as sho as mi name is Dave, an' got a drop ob strent lef' in me. Joe, yu go back to de camp, an' go in Johnny's tent, no'—and then with a sob that prevented his speaking for a moment—“ well, yu foch me dat bes' blanket an' his 'napsack, jes' as he lef' dem, an' hurry an' cum back. Tell Mose, whut b'longs to Cap'n Nelson's mess, to look atter all our tings till James gits back, 'cos yu is gwine wid me till we cum up wid de rale-rode, an' den yu will be dar to 'tend to James. I spec de wagin-train gwine move atter de army any way to-morrow. Mek hase, son.”

Joe's retreating steps were hardly lost in the distance when Daddy Dave's sad reverie was broken by the appearance of some one who took his steps cautiously, and who let himself down into the trench as one who had a right to something held in its darkness. The old man knew it was a soldier, and putting his great sheltering arm over the young master as if to protect him, he called, “ Who's dat ?”

It was James. He recognized Daddy Dave's voice and said :

“ I am so glad you are here, Daddy Dave, for I was afraid the men would set about burying the dead before I could get here, and I could not leave ranks till the army halted, and have gotten here as soon as I could. I cannot remain with you long, for I must be back in camp before daylight.”

Stooping down in the dark and feeling for the dear face, so cold and still, he kissed it again and again, saying, half to himself :

“ Dear John, you were better fit than I to go, and that's the reason God took you.”

“ Mo's de reason, den, he mout a stayed in dis wicked world ; dat owil [owl] tole me las' nite at de pra'r-meetin' whut wus a-cumin', an' de moist I'm tinkin' 'bout now is ole missus, Miss Bessie, an' de gurls. I lef' Miss Bessie's magarrytipe in de pocket whar he put it, an' de ring on dis finger, whut I holdin' in mi han', an' when we git home dey kin see dem for deyselves.”

“ Daddy Dave, what are your plans about taking him home ? The wires are all down, and I do not think you can telegraph to mother until you get to Richmond. The railroad-track is torn up much of the way, and I think you have great trouble ahead of you. Should you come up with the wires, be sure to send mother a despatch that you are on the way home with John's body, and that I am safe, and Henry, too. I saw a man from his brigade about an hour ago, and he told me Henry was in the battle and came out all right.”

“De Lord be praised for dis ! Sho’ly ole missus got ’nuff to kill her now, widout car’in’ mo’ bad news. I jes’ now sen’ Joe back to de camp for de tings dat’s needful, an’ we will car’y po’ Johnny to W—— ’fo’ day brakes ; it’s ’bout fo’teen mile, an’ den we’ll git a wagin an’ tek him in dat till we ketch up wid de trane. You no I bin at dis bizness afo’ when I fotch yo’ par home, atter he die at de White Sulphur Springs in Virginny—jes’ ate year ago now.”

“But what will you do about money, Daddy Dave ? You will have great expense before you get home.”

“I gwine rite to Colonel B—— in W——, whut no’d yo’ par so well, an’ tell him to let me hab de money dat’s needful for de ’mergency, an’ when I ’rives at home at Greymoss, he will hab whut’s his own, an’ mo’ too.”

Just then Joe came up with all the articles sent for to be used in conveying the body of the captain to his home. He handed the knapsack to Daddy Dave, and he discovered upon opening it the half-burned candle which the young master had held in his hand the night before to read the little Testament at the prayer-meeting. James found a stray match in his pocket, with which he lighted the candle and gave it to Joe to hold. The two broken-hearted men, the master and the old slave, bowed in a common grief over the dead, and wet the dear young face afresh with their tears. They sat in silence for some time, each one awed in the presence of death, thinking, doubtless, how easy it was

for a good man to go out of life, to forsake all here for a more enduring inheritance. And how hard it would be for those whose only rest is *here*, and all beyond the dark river a mystery ! Daddy Dave's soliloquy fell upon the stillness ; still holding the cold hand in his warm one, and parting the matted curls from the temples with the other with the tenderness of a woman, he said :

“ Dem cussed Britishers ! Ef I had mi way de hole set ob dem wuld be lyin' rite hyar in dis trench, an' dis lubly boy gone home to his mar. De hole army ob dem not wort dis boy's life ; but it's no use settin' hyar an' talkin', for Johnny is ded an' kan't be no dedder.”

Looking up to the stars as if to find the time of the night, James said :

“ Daddy Dave, I must be going now ; must be with the company at daybreak, and as our roads do not go the same way, I must be off. Let me hear all about it when you get home. Don't let mother grieve too much ; try to comfort her, and don't you come back to the army ; you are getting old now, and cannot stand the winter. You know how you suffered with rheumatism last winter. I don't see what we are to do without you in camp, but mother will need you more than ever on the plantation now, since Uncle Isaac is dead.”

At this moment Joe opened his mouth for the first time, and said :

“ Why, Mars' James, I kin do all de tings fo' yu, habin' 'sperience wid Daddy Dave mo' dan a

yeer ; de ole man better stay at home an' nuss hissef, kase ob de rumatiz.”

“ You are all right,” said the young master, appreciating the offended dignity of the young negro. “ I am not afraid to trust you, Joe. You will be in camp with me to-morrow night ;” and turning to the old man, James continued, “ Tell old Aunt Binky that Joe's a good boy, and I will take good care of him.”

James then knelt down and kissed the marble face, first one cheek, then the other, saying :

“ This is for mother, this for Bessie ; good-by, my brother, till we meet again, and God knows how soon !”

This said, he vanished into the darkness.

The preparations for taking the young soldier's body home were made. The new blanket was unfolded and its strength was tested and attached to two rails which Joe had found in the *débris* of an old fence close by ; the twine cord which Daddy Dave always carried in his deep pockets in “ kase ob 'mergency” was brought out, and the blanket made sure between the two rails. A rude sort of litter was in this manner constructed and placed upon the ground above the trench. Then composing the limbs of the dead, and tying the face with a piece of linen bandage, the two men lifted the precious body from the trench where it had fallen, placed it in the blanket, and laid the hat over the quiet eyes—asleep in death. This much accomplished, the old man took the master's knap-

sack, strapped it over his own shoulders, uttering the words between his groans, "Mi po' chile, mi po' Johnny."

During these preparations the candle had nearly burned away. It had been fastened between two pieces of wood and stuck in the fresh earth of the new-made trench. It was blown out by the old man as he reached down and took it from its place, saying to himself, "I'll tek dis to his mar an' she'll cry ober it, sho 'nuff." Then telling Joe to take hold of the two rails at the feet of the body, he lifted those at the head, and placing them on their shoulders the long, lonely walk began. The old man looked back into the trench, then up into the stars, then at the flag, as if in appeal to watch over the slumbering dead left behind him, and said :

"Dose po' boys dat's lyin' dar, if I jes' had fo' legs an' fo' mo' han's, mo' ob yu would go home to yo' mars dis bery nite ; but de Lord kin tek car ob yu. He no's jes' whar He lef' yu."

Carrying the master's body home was a great undertaking for these two negroes in a strange country, and a burden to bear almost as heavy as their hearts. The old man was a *very* old man, and with one limb much drawn with rheumatism. But his faith was strong, and his heart knew no failing till home was gained. This melancholy procession of two had rested many times in the march of the first five miles, and during the last stopping they were overtaken by an ambulance. The day was now dawning ; the purple and gold in the east gladdened the hearts of the weary travellers, and

its light revealed the nature of their burden to the driver. Reining in his horse, and seeing this *very old* negro in the lead, the driver called out to them :

“Slide that body in here ; there’s room for one more, and I’ll give you a lift, old man, especially as the river is just ahead and the bridge burned away. We’ve got to ford the stream ; and if you have fetched that body all the way from the field between them two rails, you must be about worn out.”

The blanket was unfastened and folded around the body, which was carefully placed in the ambulance beside “somebody’s darling.” The twine was wound up and put in the old deep pocket, and the rails that had lent such aid were left on the roadside.

“Come, get up here by me, and I’ll make room for that young fellow till we get across the river ; then he’ll have to walk, for my load is pretty heavy now for this nag ; she’s livin’ on mighty light rations these days.”

The ambulance started on its way. After a short conversation it was found that the driver and his companions were bound for the same place, a town eight miles farther on. The two bodies first in the ambulance were brothers, killed in the fight the day before, and their bodies were to be buried in the cemetery in W—— till the father and mother in the far South could arrange for their transportation home.

It was always easy for Daddy Dave to give his

family history, which proved very interesting to his new-made friend. His plans for the sorrowful journey were given in detail, and the driver offered to take the old man and his precious charge straight to Colonel B——'s and introduce him, to make matters easy. To this last proposition Daddy Dave said :

“ Am bery much 'bleeged to yu, sar, fo' yo' 'tension, but Colonel B—— no me like a book ; he 'members de ole White Sulphur da's when he use to sot wid his foot on de baluster ob our cottige torkin' polytics wid ole marster. He no me, sar, an' de hole generashun ob mi peeple, an' Colonel B—— 'll take it an' honer to do enyting for de name. An' den de 'slemnity ob de 'kashun, too— all I got to do is to tell who I is.”

According to a promise made before entering the town, the driver stopped the ambulance near the woods on the side of the road, for Daddy Dave to “ fix himself up” before his meeting with Colonel B——.

One might have supposed the journey done and the errand accomplished to see the driver sitting on the wagon so amused and interested in the old negro's toilette. There was no recollection of war or its sad details on the young man's face as he sat there playing with the whip and eying every movement of Uncle Dave. Joe, glad of a rest, sat on a stump near the wagon, with a downcast, sad look upon his face ; whether it was of grief for the one who could never come back, or a longing for his home and mother, we cannot say. Daddy Dave re-

tired to the root of a large tree, laid aside his cap, and hung his coat to a branch of the tree, and began a vigorous search through his many pockets for the “Jim Crow.” This was found, and the tug of war began. First with the cotton string that tied the ends of his specs, and which had been lost to sight for many a day in the woolly mass at the back of his head. After many tugs and pulls the strings were found and disengaged from their mooring, the specs taken down and laid upon the ground. The “Jim Crow” was knocked several times, teeth downward, against the root upon which he was sitting, and being assured of its freedom from all impurities, it was applied laboriously to its one purpose. After a time this perseverance and the dexterous handling of this implement in the art of hair-dressing was rewarded, when he ran his fingers through his wool, teasing and piling it up on the top of his head, and exclaimed, “Dat’ll do.” The specs were again placed upon his forehead, and the cotton string, the same one that Aunt Sibby tied the morning he left home, sank into its old hiding-place. It was not the “churn” this time that he adjusted to his head, but a smoking-cap, much the worse for wear, which some fair hand had bestowed upon James. It was made of black velvet, and bedizzened with gilt braid, and a very elaborate tassel of the same suspended from its apex. Taking his “swallow-tail” down from the tree, he dived into the depths of those wonderful pockets, and brought out the inevitable stock and standing collar! The latter had been subjected to the clear-starching and

ironing of the camp, and was neither as much like a sword-blade in stiffness nor a snowflake in color as when it came from the hands of Aunt Sibby. The cap was donned and a complaisant look spread over his countenance till he looked down upon his worn and travel-stained shoes. Something had to be done. He called out :

“ Joe, cum hyar, son. Foteh me sum ob de biggest lebes off dat tree, an’ wibe de dus’ off mi shoes.”

This was done ; then tearing off a piece of the bandage cloth, which was put away in his pocket, and spitting upon it, he gave his shoes a powerful rubbing, and called again upon his man Friday to repeat the last-named performance, as he had a “ fresh chew ” in his mouth. Joe pronounced the toilette perfect, and Daddy Dave then advanced to the ambulance and got up to the seat, saying :

“ I alwais wus use to lookin’ ’spectable, an’ I want Colonel B—— to no dat ole Dave is not ’mor-lized by de war, but keeps up all de wais ob de aristoc’acy till de present time.”

After getting settled in his seat by the driver, he looked back into the ambulance, laid his hand tenderly upon the hidden contents of the blanket, and said, as if in apology for his apparent lightness, “ Po’ Johnny, yu’ll soon git home to yo’ mar.”

In a short time they had gained the residence of Colonel B——, and the wagon stood in front of the gate. Daddy Dave dismounted, went up the walk to the door, rung the bell, and was answered by Colonel B—— himself, who was then at home on

furlough, with his arm in a sling, from a wound received in Sunday's fight. Daddy Dave introduced himself in the manner before mentioned. His errand was explained, and in a few moments he, with the aid of a man-servant from within, was bearing the body, still wrapped in the blanket, into the house.

Colonel B—— stood on the piazza and superintended this mournful duty. On his face was a mingled look of pity and amusement—indeed, a serio-comic expression. He thought of the sadness of the coming of the body of this young soldier, the son of his old friend of better days. Then this remarkable specimen of the human family, his introduction, his appearance, his uniform—in fact, the *tout ensemble* furnished a picture that morning that the colonel often described in after years.

Mrs. B—— came into the parlor where the body of the young soldier lay upon the sofa, and with a woman's and a mother's heart and hand planned every minutiae connected with this sad occasion in the tenderest, most graceful manner. Joe was given a hearty breakfast, while Uncle Dave and Colonel B—— went into the town to send the telegram to Mrs. W—— and look for some kind of casket in which to ship the body home. Their first errand was quickly executed, and the sad tidings on the way to “ole missus” before many moments elapsed. The other, the more difficult one, was next undertaken. Colonel B——'s appearing on the street with this remarkable individual at his side attracted the attention of all beholders, consisting

mainly of gray-haired sires, small boys, and darkies, who were at every corner to get the news of the preceding day's battle. One of these gray-haired men approached the colonel with the question :

“ Have you heard whether Longstreet's division was in the fight ? I have two nephews from the far South, and have not heard from them yet.”

“ Yes, they were in the battle, and in the hottest part. This old man here, Uncle Dave, has just brought the body of his young master to my house ; he was a captain in the —— Brigade of that division. We are trying to find a suitable coffin to send the body home ; do you know if there is any such thing to be found in town ? Even a box, if we can get nothing else, or lumber to make a coffin.”

The old gentleman's face grew interested, and he replied by asking :

“ Was the captain a large man ?”

Colonel B—— looked at Uncle Dave for an answer, and received the following :

“ No, sar ; not so bery big, but de puttiest yung boy yu eber see, jes' twenty years old, an' his face like a gurl ; de blessedest boy dat eber wus in dis wurl.”

“ Well, come with me,” said the gentleman, “ and I will take you to a house in Jones Street where there is a real fine casket for sale. It was sent up from Richmond for Colonel Johnston, who died in the hospital here, and the casket was too small in every way. I think you may get it by paying a very good price for it.”

“De price is nuttin’, sar, to dis fambly,” placing his hand upon his breast, “an’ ole missus got plenty ob lan’ an’ niggers an’ stock an’ cotton, an’ she’s good for de money. Colonel B—— no’s mi peepie is ’sponsible peepie, dey is, sar.”

The three men then proceeded to the warehouse, saw the casket, found its proportions ample for their purpose, and in a half hour it was in Colonel B——’s parlor resting upon two chairs under the open window, and the fair young boy placed in it. The old man adjusted the stiffened limbs, brushed away the curls from the marble brow, and turning to Mrs. B——, who stood near weeping over this pitiful scene, said :

“Missus, will yu, please, mam, git de sissers, an’ tek off a lock ob har from behine, whar it won’t sho—one fur ole missus, an’ one fur Miss Bessie, de yung lady whut he wus gwine to marry when de war wus ober?”

This being done, Daddy Dave made another request.

“Missus, will yu, please, mam, put a few flowers in his bres, an’ a posy in his han’, fur his mar to see when she look at him. It will be nat’l like.”

During the execution of these last sad offices to the dead, Colonel B—— had been walking up and down through the parlor, with his eyes brimming over, watching the old man’s thoughtful care of both the ones at home and the one beside him, and realizing afresh, as he had done hundreds of times before, the sincerity of that affection between master and slave. He longed for those who

doubted this fact to be present at this scene, and witness for themselves the love and faith which can only be broken in death !

When the old man had finished the arrangement of the flowers and other small details before closing the casket, there seemed to be one thing more of importance that must not be omitted, and advancing toward the gentleman, he said :

“ Colonel, I hab a bery important reques’ to mek. I s’pose dar is no preacher roun’ dis plase now, but dis kiver,” pointing to the lid of the casket, which was placed against the wall, “ kan’t go on dat box widout a word ob pra’r. I ain’t no Chrishun, but fo’ de sake ob he an’ his mar, we mus’ hab sum ’ligious exercise.”

Colonel B—— was a Christian gentleman and an office-bearer in the church in W——, and most willingly complied with the old man’s wish. Joe was called in, and there around the casket knelt the four—two of them with white faces, two of them with black—to hear the blessing of comfort and peace asked for the mother and sisters in their far-away home, safety and health for the brothers now in the field, and a speedy, safe journey to Daddy Dave and his precious burden. Then with choking emotion the blessing of *life* was asked for his own two sons, who might be that very hour in the perils of the field. The prayer was ended, and at a signal from Daddy Dave Joe bade good-by to the gentleman and lady, and thanked them for their kindness. He then hung over the casket, smoothed the brow of the young master with his hard, horny hand,

brushed the flowing tears from his own eyes, and hurried away from the house to the camp. The wagon borrowed from the hospital that brought the casket to the house was at the gate still, waiting to receive it again, and when all was ready it moved off to the depot, followed by the *cortége* of two—Colonel B—— and Daddy Dave.

Fortunately for the old man and his errand, a box-car had been sent up from Richmond the night before filled with hospital stores, as many of the wounded were sent to this place. The car returned to-day, and through the entreaties of Colonel B—— the body and its protector were carried to Richmond. It arrived there that evening, and made immediate connection with the south-bound train, which as yet had not been destroyed.

On the following afternoon Daddy Dave was at the station with his precious charge. There had been changes at home as well as in the army. Instead of Uncle Isaac meeting the train his place was filled by Uncle Jacob, and the meeting between the old men was deeply affecting. The silent shake of those hands and the look of those tear-dimmed eyes were more eloquent than words!

The sun was hiding his face behind the hedges, as if in sympathy with the mournful occasion, when the wagon bearing the body of the young master turned into the long avenue at Greymoss. It was followed by the negroes from two plantations, who had been awaiting Daddy Dave's arrival. The old men and women walked next the wagon, and after them the women with the babes in their arms and

children around their skirts, all in silent grief, through the great white gate up to the steps, and there they halted. Aunt Sibby and Aunt Betty opened the doors, having placed the rests for the casket under the arch of the great wide hall. In all the fireplaces large knots of pine-wood were burning to purify the air, and everything arranged by these two thoughtful women to soothe the mistress in her grief. Daddy Dave superintended the moving of the body, by four strong plantation men, to its resting-place in the hall. The lid was removed, and all told to come in and look upon the dear young master. Daddy Dave, of course, stood at the head; they came in one by one, walked around, looked, and passed out. The grief of those black faces was silent, but true, and every sob came from a heart full of love to the form so still and cold.

It was far into the night when Aunt Sibby went into her mistress's room and told her the house was quiet and the people had gone to their homes. A chair had been placed for her at the head of the casket, and very soon Mrs. W——, Miss Bessie, and the girls came into the hall and were left alone in their grief.

It is a custom in the South for a few friends to come together to watch around the dead the short time allowed for the body to remain unburied—not more than twenty-four hours, except under peculiar circumstances. Several young ladies and two soldiers, who were at home with their wounds, offered themselves for this melancholy attention; but Daddy Dave declined their kindness, as he and

Uncle Jacob had determined to sleep beside the casket, and, if necessary, watch the dead. Consequently at bedtime the lights were put out and the doors closed, and on each side of the body, with a folded blanket under his head, was Daddy Dave and Uncle Jacob. During the night, as the weary hours passed slowly away, the mistress went into the library, which opened into the hall, and rested upon the sofa, feeling it would be a comfort to be near the body of her boy for the short time it would be in her keeping. A low monotone of conversation was going on between the old men. Daddy Dave was giving a detailed account of all that had happened in the past week, feeling assured that all he said and did would be rehearsed on both plantations by Uncle Jacob, and his deeds of valor and devotion would descend to posterity. Uncle Jacob, in his turn, related the incidents concerning the death and burial of Uncle Isaac; how “ole missus” came each day with the little book and read and prayed, and how Mr. Land, the chaplain of the two plantations, stayed with him and saw him go to glory; how they buried the old man at midnight with two hundred torches, and how they sung “Swing low, sweet chariot” and “I’m done with the trouble of the world” all the way from Uncle Isaac’s house to the graveyard! It would be exceedingly undignified for Daddy Dave to show surprise at anything that was told him, however startling, and during this prolonged recital his highest approbation, as well as his greatest amazement, was expressed in his old way, “Dat’s so, brudder.”

The next day at Greymoss was dark and dreary ; there was no sunlight to give cheer; the clouds sent down showers of rain in token of sympathy with the broken hearts and tearful faces on the old plantations that funeral morning. The ministers were all in the army, and even the chaplain on the plantations had but a few weeks before volunteered in the Army of the Potomac ; so there could be no religious service on this occasion. Daddy Dave's sense of propriety was much shocked at the thought of this omission, and he resolved in his own mind to have other arrangements ; so before it was light he had mounted the old mare and had gone into town to see the family physician, a very old man, to ask him to come to the home, and " ef yu kan't pray, jes' read a few verses from de Scripters, to ease ole missus's h'art, an' bro Jacob kin do de res', now dat bro Isaac gon' to de better lan'."

It was an early hour in the morning. Mrs. W—— and the girls stood at the head of the remains while the doctor read the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians, after which the casket was closed. There was a pause : the four men waited to bear it away, when Daddy Dave, with great impressiveness, drew from his breast a Confederate flag made of the silk dresses of the older sisters in the family, unfolded it, and laid it across the casket, saying :

" He fo't fur dis, an' it shall go wid him to de las'."

Uncle Jacob drove the carriage, and Daddy Dave took his seat in the wagon which carried the body.

After two miles they gained the cemetery, followed by an army of black faces, big and little, old and young, weeping and moaning as they went. Surely this cemetery is one of the most touching and beautiful spots in which to take the long sleep—the sleep that knows no waking. The little church, built of red brick and its blinds painted green, and four large pillars in front covered with plaster, stands upon a knoll. In front and at its sides are magnificent live-oaks covered with gray moss that sweeps the ground. At the back of the little church is the burial-ground, inclosed by a fence of the purest whiteness, where the immaculate grave-stones reflect the sunlight; these, to my childish mind, were associated with the spotless robes of the blest! Here the rich and the poor lay side by side, and a stone of the same pattern and quality marks alike the resting-place of each. The walks in the beautiful spot are divided by mock-oranges, ever green and beautiful, on whose branches the birds come at all seasons and sing their lullaby to those who rest so peacefully below them. The knoll upon which this dear old church stands slopes away into a stream a few hundred feet beyond, where the country road passes, where in summer clouds of dust rise from the horses' feet, but after the autumn rains the water is higher than the small wheel of the carriage. The reflections of light and shadow in this little stream, the “Church Branch,” none can forget. The water is still; almost a twilight is formed by the matted branches of oak, cypress, magnolia, sweet-bay, with tangled vines of jas-

mine and woodbine. Now and then the sun peeps through and makes fantastic pictures upon the quiet surface, with a foreground of alligators and turtles sunning themselves. They are too listless to fear the beautiful white crane that stalks majestically through the water seeking its prey among the smaller creatures, or the water-moccason, not quite so venturesome as its neighbor, stretching its length upon a rail or piece of broken wood in the middle of the stream. This little bit of life never disturbed those who rested on the hill; they still sleep the sleep of the just. This we do not find recorded in stone, for the same uniformity prevails with the epitaph as with the marble. God knows it all, and after our new-made grave is closed we will leave them to His care.

The casket was lifted out of the wagon and placed above the open grave. Mrs. W——, the girls, and the doctor stood at the head, and around it were the negroes. All were silent; every hat was off when Daddy Dave stepped to the front and said:

“Bro Jacob, will you lead us in pra’r?”

The old man, standing near the mistress according to Daddy Dave’s previous arrangement, with great humility raised his old hands and closed his eyes. These words came right out of the bottom of his heart:

“Our Farder in hebbin, we, Dy chillun, is in grate trubble dis day; dese is h’art-rendin’ times. De yung marster dat we raze an’ dat we lub so well is jes’ ’bout to be put onder de clay, an’ we got nowhar to tun our weepin’ eyes but to de Lord.

We no de Farder kin do nuttin' to hert His chillun, an' we feel dis grate stroke is fom Dy han' an' ment in lub ; but it am bery hard, an' we mus' hab Dy blessin'. Fus', gib de shower ob Dy grace to ole missus, for de promis is to de widder an' de orfin ; let her see by de eye ob fate her boy a-stanin' in de purly gate a-beckinin' fo' her to jine him in de meny manshuns. Doan let her git discurrige or de h'art git trubble, fo' it won't be long. Bless dem chillun dat's stanin' roun' dis grabe, wid a warnin' to prepar to mete dey God. Bless de boys dat's in danger dis day—all tree ob dem, whareber dey is. Dy eye is rite dar to see dem an' Dy han' to save dem. Let dem follow Johnny's track an' be solgers ob de cross, an' bless all de cumpny he lef', an' may dey trus' in God. An' now, deer Marster in hebben, all dese black peepel mus' hab sum ob de shower ; open de winder an' let 'em fall. Prepar de ole totterin' ones fo' de crossin' ob de riber ; sum dat's in Dy presens ain't reddy, an' bin a long time 'busin' de meens too much. Bless de middle-age peepel, an' help 'em to tro' way de wurl an' tek de yoke an' burdin, seekin' fo' Dy kingdom. Bless all dese leetle niggers, an' when de ole peepel pass away ober Jurdin, dey kin tek de plase. An' now, ole Marster in hebben, let us all, leetle an' big, mete roun' de grate white trone, marster and missus, dey chillun an' our chillun, an' when Gabrul blo' de trumpet, we all rise an' rane togedder, singin' de song ob Moses an' de Lam', an' all dis an' mo' too we ax, fur Chrise Jesus' sake. Amen.”

All was still. Daddy Dave threw in the first shovel of earth, which action was followed by the stronger men till the grave was filled. Then the old man shaped the mound and fixed the flower-pieces upon it which had been sent by friends from town. All turned to leave, and after helping "ole missus" in the carriage, Daddy Dave said :

"Bro Jacob, you dribe de wagin home ; I po'-fo'm de las' duty to mi yung marster, an' now I gwine ter tek car' ob his mar."

He climbed to the box and drove back to the lonely home, followed by the long procession of mourners.

Days passed after the funeral, and nothing was said by the mistress or Daddy Dave in regard to his return to Virginia ; she feeling it a help and support to have him at home, and he willing to abide in its comfort with his aches and infirmities. The long, anxious journey, with its great responsibility, proved too much for his strength, and although there was an apparent taking up of the old duties, we could all realize the change that the year had wrought in him. Letters came regularly from the young masters in the army insisting upon the old man's remaining at home for the winter, to rest his poor old tired body and weary heart. He must stay with mother and help her in the management of the plantations. These letters were all read to him on account of a sort of proprietorship which he felt, not only in the boys, but in the army entire—from General Lee down to the humblest private in the ranks. Many times in those long, weary

months of separation and suspense at Greymoss, when the papers were read to him, he would express a confidence that if *he* had only been there the line of march would have been a different one, and the battle fought in some other place than where it actually occurred. He was pleased and flattered to think he was necessary to the management at home, and a sense of great importance reconciled him to the old life.

Weeks vanished into months in the routine of plantation duty. It soon came time to send up to Conference for a chaplain for the two places, and as Uncle Isaac was gone, the duty devolved upon Uncle Jacob and Uncle John, as Daddy Dave was “no Christian, and could not attend to the spiritual affairs of the places.”

In a week's time the old men returned from the town of C---, where the Conference met, with the information that Mr. Martin was coming to them; he was a very old man, but all the young ministers had gone into service. In the old South most of the negroes were either Methodists or Baptists, as Daddy Peter once said in explanation of the fact, that “niggers hab to be in a chuch whar dey kin hab bod'ly exercise!”

Each month the ravages of war were greater than the last. Money was becoming daily of less value, and the people consequently lived by the barter of home productions. More corn and potatoes were raised and less cotton, for the home as well as army consumption. There was no market for the last-named commodity, and its shipment to Liverpool,

which was tried in many instances, involved great risk and much expense. Sheep, hogs, and cows were raised for the army ; the wool was woven into cloth on the plantations, and the hides of the cows tanned and made into boots and shoes for the soldiers, while the hogs' hides were made into shoes for the negroes. The life at Greymoss was a busy one to all, but especially to Daddy Dave in the way of over-seeing all these various departments of labor. He was never idle, from early in the morning till late at night, but ever carried with him that great dignity and self-respect that demanded a deference from all the black faces around him. The negroes were kind and affectionate to the mistress, and tried, in their faithful service, to soothe and comfort her each in his own peculiar way.

It was now the beginning of '65. The Confederacy had been rent in twain. The railroads were torn up, the bridges burned, the telegraph wires cut, and a more dismal outlook was never before imagined by the people in the South. Sherman had marched through the entire State of Georgia, burning and plundering as he passed. Savannah had fallen, and his army was resting before the ungloved sacking of South Carolina would begin. In front of him came the torch, and behind him followed famine and pestilence. Mrs. W—— had explained to all the negroes just what the coming of the army meant to them—offers of freedom and plenty if they would forsake their homes, or the alternative of starving if they remained true to their mistress and loyal to their home. She im-

pressed upon them the fact of their being free to do as they pleased—to go or stay. She promised to share with those who remained her scanty store. The experience of the Georgia people came ahead of the invading army, which proved there would be nothing left for her to share. The army was now within a few hours' march of this beautiful home, which, being in a most prosperous section of country, offered many allurements to an army whose purpose was not to fight, but to plunder and destroy. They met with no resistance; a score or two of women and children with white faces, and hundreds, yea, thousands, of black ones were the foes to dispute the way. The old negroes on the places were wild with terror over the coming of the army, while the younger ones were filled with curiosity and a desire for excitement. Reports had come in advance as to what Southern families might expect, and plans had to be formed to preserve all valuables in the way of silver, gold, and gems, as these articles might be the means of procuring bread for the future.

Daddy Dave was always ready in every emergency to suggest some wise way of escape. Rumors were flying that the enemy were coming—indeed, every horse's foot on the bridge a mile distant was supposed to be the cavalry, and all were on the *qui vive* ready for a panic at any moment. The old man came to Mrs. W—— in the evening feeling his own importance as well as that of securing her valuables, and after much bowing and scraping, said :

“ Missus, I neber sleep wun wink las’ nite tink-in’ ob dat army dat’s sho to cum to dis plase, an’ I hab no noshun ob lettin’ dem villuns pint dey guns at yu an’ de gurls, nor put de rope roun’ yo’ nek, to mek yu tell whar de tings is, an’ neder is I gwine to let dem hab dose two bays. So I med’tate on de plan an’ tink it bery sutable. It am dis : I want all de fambly silver pack up in dat tin trunk whut yung marster foch when he go abrode, an’ all de waches an’ finger-rings an’ sich stuff, an’ lemme tek de leetle carrige an’ de bays, an’ I gwine to de mountins, an’ when I no dey is pass by, den I cum back. Whut you tink ob it, mam ?”

There was a look of relief upon Mrs. W——’s face as the fact of saving her plate and jewels came into her mind ; but this soon vanished in the thought of Daddy Dave’s exposure and discomfort, and after a pause she replied :

“ The plan is a good one as far as the horses and the things are concerned, but we cannot afford to lose you or have you suffer.”

Being much gratified with the last part of the mistress’s remark, the old man, after great encounters with his specs and the old stock, now very shreddy, said :

“ Nebber yu mine ’bout dat. Eny man dat’s pass tru two wars doan mine a leetle oneasyness, speshilly when he’s doin’ good to de widder an’ de farderless.”

“ But how will you feed yourself and the horses ? There’s no money and no provisions in the country through which you will pass.”

“Dat’s all ’ranged in de plan, mam. I gwine to fill de carrige-box wid con an’ otes, an’ den two or tree sides ob bakin, a bag ob tetter is all I want, an’ I kin do mi own pot-luck, an’ ef de pervishun gin out whar I stais, I kin do a leetle hawlin’ an’ split sum rales fo’ dem, an’ in dat way pay fur me an’ de hosses.”

“But what if you should be robbed on the road, or meet those raiders?”

“Why, ole missus, yu doan tink I lib so long in dis wurl an’ doan no how to tek car ob misef! Dere’s mo’ ob de lion ’bout me dan de lam’, anyhow; an’ ole Dave sho dem ef he koch a chans. I gwine ter carry po’ Johnny’s revolver, whut I foch from Virginny, den mi ole muskit whut’s hangin’ in mi hous kin tork when de ’kashun cums. Oh, you ned’n be ’frade, ole missus.”

That musket was the traditional one that had slain its scores of Britishers in the Revolutionary War, and would be as effective now; though he said once, in showing this relic of the past, that “she kicked powerful when she got started,” and doubtless this propensity was still with her, and we considered it fortunate for him that her fighting proclivities were never tested.

Daddy Dave’s arguments with “ole missus” were always successful. The next day the articles were packed in the tin trunk and fastened with a small padlock, and the key was lost in the old man’s breast-pocket. The horse-feed and provisions were packed in the appointed place, and two comfortables were folded and put on the seat. All the

blankets in the house had been sent to the hospitals and camp long ago. The chiefest and last comfort was in the form of a large bottle of whiskey, which he called the "Oh be joyful," and thought so good in time of sickness !

All eyes were brimming over the morning Daddy Dave left. After pronouncing the benediction upon "ole missus" and the children, he turned to Uncle Jacob, who stood with the house-servants in the gallery, ready to bid him farewell, and said with much grandeur :

"Now, brudder, I leve de kar of dis fambly wid yu, de olest man on de plase ; now stan' up like a man an' a Chrishun dat yu is, an' when dem vil-luns cum hyar, an' yu no dey's cumin sho's yu bo'n, noboddy kar how much dey go migratin' ober de plase (yu no dey gwine do dat enyhow) ; but yu jes' wach an' ef yu see dem movin' dey foots to de big hous, yu jes' say, 'No, sar, yu kan't go in dar. Nuttin' in dar but ole missus an' her darters ; no silber, no waches, no brespins, no pervishuns, no nuttin' ;' an' ef dey mek as if dey gwine enyhow, yu mus' speke bery 'tarmin-like an' say, 'Now, gemmen, ef yu go in dat do', den it'll be ober mi ded body.' Now, brudder, noboddy 'specs yu ter do dis for sartin, but jes' mek b'leve. But ef it cums to drawin' guns an' bay-nets, den it's mo' pruden'-like jes' to step aside an' let dem pass in ; it's de bes' yu kin do onder de circumstans. But be sho yu sarce dem a plenty while dey doin' it !"

Uncle Jacob's body, during these profound direc-

tions, was swaying to and fro in full accord, while the whites of his eyes appealed to Heaven to witness his entire acquiescence, and when the remarks came to a close he said, with great emphasis, “Dat so, brudder David.”

Two days after Daddy Dave left, the Northern army passed over the plantation, remaining two days. In that short space of time they accomplished the utter destruction of the labor and acquisition of many generations. The cotton-gin, packing-house, saw-mill, grist-mill, were burned the first day. The work of the second day was to raze every cabin to the ground, even the blacksmith-shop, leaving the infirm old negroes without a shelter for their heads in the wintry months of January and February. One would think the besom of destruction satiated here ; but no : sheep, hogs, cows, chickens, and even the pet dogs of the little negroes were swept out of life ! The corn and potatoes were carried off in wagons by the army, and the dwelling-house for the family dismantled of everything useful and ornamental, but left standing as headquarters of one of the generals, who doubtless had an eye to comfort, and found a good bed more pleasant than the accommodations of a tent.

The morning the army left Greymoss nothing lived on either of the plantations except the hundreds of faces that were black, and *three white ones*, who suffered with them ! The stillness that reigned must have been like that of Paradise before the creation of man ! There was not a duty for the

slave to perform, and the depth of their despair was too great even for singing or prayer, which is ever to them a welcome alternative. They wandered about silently, wondering if that scene of desolation was ever their home. Could it be possible that this place, now marked by the charred remains of their old houses, the air filled with noxious vapors, the roads blocked with tangled masses of pine, oak, and magnolia trees, the very enclosure filled with broken hedges, matted vines, and even the old gallery robbed of its railing and steps—could it be possible that sunshine and gladness ever dwelt here? Could these old octogenarians realize that all their years had been spent here under blue skies, balmy air, golden sunlight, and God's own gift of peace and happiness?

Twenty years have gone their way since that withering sirocco passed over that beautiful land, bringing a blight with it that precludes all hope of this country ever knowing again its pristine glory. Many of the old slaves have gone up higher and have received the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant;" others are waiting—many of these on the same old ground, clinging to the memories of the old slave days. And I here record it as a tribute of love on *my* part, and of honor and respect to them, that not one soul of that great number left their home and mistress in those agonizing days, but clung to her and the old roof-tree.

During these four years of war—when the negro had it in his power to make himself master of the land, being in many parts of the South left in

charge of the mothers, wives and daughters whose fathers, husbands and brothers were yielding up their lives, either on the field or in the hospital—there has never been recorded an instance of insurrection or insubordination on their part, from the Potomac to the Rio Grande ! Their attitude during this time to their owners continued to be that of kindness and affection up to the day when the arbitrament of arms decided them to be no longer slaves, but a free, if not an independent, people. One's own experience must not be gainsaid in this testimony to the fidelity of the slave to his master, when the fact of having spent most of the war period in what is called the “black district” is here affirmed. In this section of the State the proportion toward the last part of the war was ten white people to two thousand blacks ; the whites being women and children, and every night was spent in great security of feeling, and many times with the doors unlocked ! Now, if the *lex talionis* of the negro heart is the same as of the white man, and if the wrongs were real of which every boy and girl who reads at all have been taught and told, and had dramatized before their eyes as *facts*, why is it that the negro, when such great occasions were offered him, did not avail himself of plunder, arson and bloodshed ? The fear of punishment was not before him, for there was no law in the land ; a jury could not have been impanelled unless it had been made up of the hoary heads of his own race. How can such inconsistency be explained ? The question is readily answered and the mystery solved

by those who lived with him, who knew him best, and loved him most !

Right glad were we that Daddy Dave was away. We were sure his heart would have broken to see the old people raking up the wasted corn around the feeding-places of the army horses, to boil it in ashes and eat themselves, and give to "ole missus" and the girls. It was all they had, and that without salt !

The bridges were all burned, the railroad-tracks were torn up, the wires were down, and Mrs. W—— was parted from her three sons by the army of invasion. Not a letter could be received, and even a message failed to find its way to the mother except as some stray soldier, on his way home, would leave a word of love which had been entrusted to him weeks before. The life on the plantation now was one of loneliness, sorrow and privation. Several of the old negroes, even in these few weeks, had died for want of food and warm clothing—which things were impossible for the mistress to provide. She longed to depart from a scene of distress, where sunshine and gladness once had its dwelling-place, but now was covered with a pall of clouds and darkness. At the end of three weeks, late one afternoon, something on wheels was spied turning into the long avenue—a sight so novel at Greymoss that the house-servants hastened to the gallery to conjecture as to who or what it might be. There was not a horse in the country around, and nothing left upon wheels that could be hauled away after the army. Aunt Sibby's old eyes were the

first to recognize the horses, and she came as fast as her old, weak frame would permit to give the first tidings to “ole missus.”

“De Lord be prased ! it’s bro Dave an’ de bays, as sho’s you bo’n.”

Cuffy’s nimble feet, no longer those of a child, could not overcome the early training, but ran to the outer inclosure to welcome the carriage. It was an echo of the old life ; and his face, that scarcely wore a smile in these days of hunger and idleness, actually broke out into a laugh at the sight of the old man and the horses. There was no white gate to open now—no, not even a piece of the fence ; in its stead a charred, blackened line to indicate what might have been. The old man’s heart was too heavy to grant Cuffy his accustomed nod and “howdy” as he drove past him around the old circle and up to the gallery steps, now made of blocks of wood cut from the trunks of trees. The very horses seemed bewildered, and did not know their home ; the trees cut down, the hedges levelled with the ground, and even the magnolias denuded of their evergreen branches. We can imagine Daddy Dave’s dismay, from the time he drove into the long avenue, on looking for the “quarters” that used to be on either side, to find not a single house standing, and the destruction going ahead of him up to the door of the old mansion !

Mrs. W—— and her daughters knew their first gleam of pleasure since the dark days began when they came out to give the old slave a welcome ; but the old heart was too full for a word ; he seemed

powerless to do anything but look ! A crowd soon gathered to see and hear. One of the men took the trunk of valuables into the house, while the boys, eager for something to do, lifted from the carriage a few small packages, and by this time Daddy Dave had speech enough to say :

“ Dar’s sum hom’ny an’ sum coffy dat I trade fur ’long de way. I no’d, yu mout be starbing ; dey tole me on de rode dat de villuns tek all yu hab fur ete.”

The horses were delivered to the care of Uncle Jacob, and Daddy Dave came into the house with the family to hear all that had happened during his absence, and to relate his own thrilling adventures with the raiders and bushwhackers, and his narrow escapes in keeping out of the way of the army. Aunt Sibby and Aunt Betty both stood in the room, holding up their chins in a most meditative attitude, and at each fresh detail shook their heads and ejaculated : “ ’Tane pos’ble, brudder David ! ” Mrs. W—— sat quiet, and allowed her faithful companions to relate the happenings at home, which they did in a most graphic manner. On this occasion the old man allowed himself to be surprised by their dreadful disclosures, and at each incident of loss would exclaim : “ Not a hoss lef’ ; eben dem leetle Shetlan’ ponies—neber’ll do dem eny good. It wus bordachus impidence, an’ dat’s sho’.”

The old man was so absorbed in his mistress’s losses as to apparently forget his own possessions or his house ; and the one silver lining to his dark

cloud shone out when Mrs. W—— assured him that his gun, his drum and his chest (his entire accumulation for more than eighty years) were safe and in her own room. When the army was near the plantation, fearing the soldiers would break open Daddy Dave's house, left in her care, she had his valuables brought to her own room, the drum and gun put under her bed, and the chest in a corner, feeling sure that its appearance would be sufficient to secure its safety. Poor old “Ring,” the yellow hound, suffered the fate of his companions, and was now numbered with those who had gone before. When Aunt Sibby mentioned this last episode of the grand sacking, he drew a long breath, placed his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands, looked up to the girls, and said: “No mo' 'possum now, chillun, sins dat dog ded; an' no nigger on dis plantashun kin ketch raccoon widout ‘Ring.’”

For many days after his return the old man roamed about the place in a restless way, looking up one avenue and then the other, as if in a painful dream. He wandered from one spot to another whose associations were those of a lifetime. Four-score years before he was born on the place, and had never known any other home; and since the master's death had rarely been away from the plantation. Fortunately, the younger set of men began the work of felling trees and splitting the ones already down, for building cabins for the old people and the little children; and Daddy Dave lost himself in superintending these jobs. The old love for “bossing” things came back, and he never allowed

himself to be idle ; he tried to keep from “ tink-in’.”

The surrender of General Lee’s army was known in less than two weeks after it happened—the news being brought to Greymoss, from mouth to mouth, as the soldiers would pass on their return to their homes. Although anticipated for many months past, the fact of its occurrence came with a crushing weight to the mother’s heart. Her very soul was in the cause, having sacrificed her all to its interest and given her own blood to sustain it. The negroes on both plantations knew that the success of the Northern army meant freedom for them ; but this did not change their deportment to their mistress, and the tender sympathy and affectionate manner of the old people, in her sorrows, her losses, and her great disappointment, is one of the beautiful pictures left of the old life !

Her characteristic sense of duty and her great energy led her to a wise conclusion as to what should be done forthwith in regard to the negro and his relation to freedom. They were free ; God had made them so, and they must know it from her lips, and the great change must be explained to them. After a consultation with the old heads a few nights after, it was deemed the best arrangement to send to the other plantation that evening and have all the negroes come to Greymoss and join them there, in assembling round the gallery the next morning at ten o’clock to hear the mistress read a paper.

The morning came ; all were in the appointed

place at the time specified. There were no hedges or flowers to be trampled upon now, and all came under the sound of her voice. Mrs. W—— sat in an arm-chair on the gallery, Daddy Dave stood on one side, and his sister Sibby on the other. The mistress of Greymoss was a woman of wonderful force of character, of broad intellect and great executive ability. She possessed a refined, beautiful physique, and was not old enough for the sobriquet which the negroes had given her almost as a bride. She was small and delicate, and old Aunt Dinah said, “She ’spec sum mornin’ to see em dun blow away, she so much like de angels.”

This scene was a study for a master in art, and nothing but his brush could ever give a faithful picture of it. One white face—all the purer by contrast, with its sweet, sorrowful expression—and hundreds of upturned black ones, from the baby prattling in its mother’s arms to the old ones stooped and gray, leaning on the staff. The paper was opened. It was a copy of Mr. Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. She began to read, feeling in her own heart that freedom meant to *her* the breaking up of all those ties as dear as life itself—a doing without that sympathy and love that had been hers from infancy, when one of the first words that came from her little lips was “Mammy.” For them she knew it meant, in the present, trial, hardship, poverty, loneliness, and *death* for the many in front of her who were tottering above the grave, who had spent a long life of happiness without the trouble of making it so. With these thoughts filling her

mind, we marvelled that she could still read, and read on, to the end.

The paper was folded, and all was still, except the gentle zephyr that danced in the leaves of the live-oaks under which they stood that April morning. The scene now grew in interest. The oldest people were nearest the mistress, that each word might be carried to their dulled ears; and as the truth sank into their hearts their old bodies swayed to and fro, while the big tears rolled from their eyes and fell upon the ground. It was a time of trouble to them, for the future, to many of them, though a short period at most, was unknown and untried, while all the days behind them were passed in certain comfort and happiness.

Those of the crowd in middle life came next, and their faces expressed mingled emotions of hope and fear—hope that freedom might bring to them a cessation of work—for indolence is a natural characteristic, handed down through a long line of progenitors—and of fear lest the glorious visions described to them by the chaplains in the army, while persuading them to leave their homes, would prove only a dream. Many of the younger set were leaning upon their hoes, listening to every word. They had been called from the fields, where they were attempting to break the ground with this implement, ready for a few grains of corn, found here and there along the passage of the army. The ploughs had all been broken, and there were no horses in the land. Their faces had a happy-go-lucky look upon them, their white teeth shining

round their ample mouths. Life had always been a gay affair to them, and why should it not be so now, when every negro was to have forty acres and a mule, all his own !

The mistress paused, and said :

“ This is an important day for you all ; for the first time in your lives, your future will be left to your own care. The men will now have to support their own families, provide their own houses, furnish their own provisions, buy their clothes, pay their doctor bills, supply their own medicines, and bury their own dead. My heart aches for you all. You see my own condition. I am stripped of everything—no money, no cotton, no stock, no houses or barns, no gin-house nor screw, and great bodies of land without a fence to protect them. I shall help you in every way that I can. The old people shall always share what I have, and shall never be neglected. You have been faithful friends and trusted servants when great sorrows pressed upon me ; I shall never forget your goodness and care of me during these four years when I have been alone, when you were ever ready and willing to serve me, and your faithfulness and sympathy when Sherman’s army was here will always stay upon my heart. The old people I will care for, but the younger men must work the crops, and be paid in cotton, corn and potatoes, or wait till the crops are sold, and then receive their portion of the money. I do not wish any of you to remain on either plantation if you think you can better your condition elsewhere. You are free and can do as you please. Your young

masters will each go to his own profession, and their return home will not alter my plans. My only hope for a crop this year is to buy, on time, a few of the broken-down army horses, and put in a small portion of the land. These horses can only work part of the day; but, with the help of the bays, we must do the best we can. The family silver from time to time will purchase corn and meal for those who remain on the place till the new crop comes in. Now go to your houses, talk the matter over, and come back in a few days and let me hear your decision.”

She arose from the chair and went into the house. The long procession that passed down the avenue that morning was a very thoughtful one; much more so, than before they realized, what freedom was in the present. The old people's hearts were sad at the hardness of the situation for them. It would indeed be a new experience to live in hired cabins, to need the doctor's attention and not have it, because there was no money to pay him for each call. It would be hard to be sick and in pain, and feel the aches might be driven away if the usual winter present of warm red flannel garments were provided to protect their poor old bodies. And how could they live without the hot, nutritious soup furnished every day, whenever they chose to call for it? Poor old creatures! they had always been full of faith—that faith which removed mountains. Now they would pray, “Be ye warmed and fed,” but would it warm them with clothing or strengthen them with food?

The young people left the big house in a bewildered condition of mind, and had the question been put to them as to its cause they would have failed to answer it ; but the next few months' experience put the reality of the meaning of freedom beyond a doubt.

Six months had passed. The young masters had returned home, mere wrecks of their former selves. Donald had received an injury in the artillery which was to make him unfit for active life the rest of his days. Henry came home upon two crutches, with a wounded knee, and James's eyes were almost without sight from a fragment of a shell, which injured the nerves, and for the remainder of life must give up his profession and engage in such employment as might be done in the sunlight. He took charge of both plantations, letting out the land in small shares to the negroes, and receiving the rent in portions of the crop.

The younger negroes left the old places and went to live on strange plantations, and their places at home were filled by new hands. The foolish idea filled their brains that no colored man could be free who remained on the place where he had been a slave ! The old slaves were glad of the care and protection of the mistress ; and, though unlike the old time, it was *home*, where they hoped to end their days and have their bones laid with their ancestors who had gone before them for many generations. This last wish was speedily accomplished, for, before the first anniversary of the emancipation came round, a score of them had been gathered to

their people. Daddy Dave said, after coming from the funeral of Uncle Jacob, that "Dey stumiks wus empty, dey backs wus cole, an' dere wus nuttin' to do but to die."

And this commentary was not confined to the colored people alone, those melancholy years after the war, for the sufferings, privations and hardships of the white people now was in proportion to the luxury and comfort of the better days. It was hard for the young, but heartrending for the old who had lived so long and so well, who never knew a care and but few mental or physical pains ; and the effort to adjust themselves to the new *régime* came too late to their furrowed cheeks and hoary locks ; nature failed to bear the strain, and their brave, generous spirits yielded in the struggle, and they sought a better country, where the inhabitants are never sick for want of food, or cold for lack of clothing—where "there is fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore."

PART III.

DADDY DAVE AS A FREE MAN.

ANOTHER year passed. The little town close by had been garrisoned with two companies of infantry, besides cavalry and a few pieces of artillery, and their presence was a license for the negro to roam the country over, pilfering for their daily sustenance. Work and freedom were by no means synonymous to them, and they looked confidently to their late benefactors to supply all needs while they enjoyed their own sweet wills in a life of idleness. Each month ahead of them was the promised time for the coming of the mule to work the forty acres which Uncle Sam was sure to give them. The country was in a state of confusion. Even the old heads were bewildered, and a sort of demoralization was apparent in them all. The young negroes who had left the home at Greymoss did not feel like showing their faces again at the big house, but came every Sunday to the brush shelter which they had erected on the site of the old chapel after it was burned, not for religious motives, but to hear the news, and to persuade the old people of better advantages and greater privileges on some other plantation than the old home. Of course, since the surrender of the Southern army, no white minister had

had the opportunity of preaching to the negro, and the result of this lack of association with the white people, and of their religious performances being in their own way, can be better imagined than described. From the sounds that rent the midnight air, and the flashing of their torches, one might have felt suddenly let down among the Hottentots and Bushmen ; and a surprising fact connected with this new religion was, the old negroes joined in it all—whether through fear of the taunts of the young set, if they remained away, or from a desire to find comfort in the “ meetin’ ” which had once been their solace and comfort, one cannot say.

Daddy Dave was too respectable to attend their meetings ; but, from the wild stories he would bring “ ole missus ” on Monday morning—having met with the people when they came to Greymoss on Sunday, and listened to them—it was evident to the family that he, too, had become restless and meditated a change. “ Bro Pompey tell me dis, an’ bro Danton tell me dat, an’ ebry man mus’ tri fur hissef, to no’ sumtin mo’ ’bout dis freedum bizness, an’ all de yung trash mek sport ’kase I sta’ by de white fokes, an’ I git no peece nohow.”

Of course the mistress used every argument to induce him to give up this foolish idea of going away, but when she saw his mind shaken on the subject, she acquiesced, and told him it would be the best thing he could do to go away and try freedom for a while, at any rate.

On Monday morning early an old broken-down cart came to the door of his cabin to “ move him.”

To this cart was hitched a calf, held in its place by a network of rope—not that it required a harness to keep its spirits down, for every bone could be counted, and we found out afterward that this forlorn steed moved only by shouts from its master and the most vigorous blows inflicted by a long pine pole kept for the purpose of urging it onward. The household stuff consisted of the aforesaid gun, drum and chest, with the addition of an iron pot and spoon and a few pieces of old quilts. These latter had been burned into rags by the fire—as he wrapped himself up in them and slept on the great, old hearth of his cabin. He could never be induced to sleep on a bed, declaring that such “pamperin’ alwais mek niggers no ’count, an’ gib dem cole besides.” The old pine logs in the chimney sent forth numberless sparks while he slept, and these played a game of havoc among his quilts. The mistress always retired with the feeling of his insecurity, and told him it was the goodness of God that kept him alive. Watch, his dog, was dragged out from under the cabin, where he had sought refuge, yelping between the kicks from his master; a rope was fastened round his neck, and tied under the cart. Poor dog! from the longing looks he gave to the “big house” we knew he wished there was no such thing as emancipation. He did not like freedom, and considered his master a very unwise man to go off in this plebeian way after occupying such a position in society as seemed accorded to Daddy Dave. Watch’s tail was entirely lost to sight—though usually of very respectable

length—as he walked up the avenue with his head hanging and his great yellow ears flopping over his homesick countenance.

When all preparations for the moving were ended, Daddy Dave came into the house, to find the mistress and the young ladies sobbing out their hearts. He advanced to Mrs. W—— with the key and padlock in his hand, and gave them to her, saying :

“ Well, madam ” (not “ ole missus ” this time), “ I hab jes’ step in to say good-by, an’ gib you de lock an’ key.” Here, seeing their tears, he choked back his own, and said :

“ Well, madam, de time hab cum when de ralashun ob missus an’ slabe dun broke up, an’ de time hab also cum for we to part. I gwine ter mek a home fur misef, bein’ a free sit’zen at dis time, an’ trus’ yu an’ de yung ladies” (not “ chillun ” now) “ will git on well an’ tek kar’ ob yo’ selbes.”

Here his eyes filled and his lips quivered ; and when he shook their hands, he broke down, sobbed out, and said : “ I mus’ go ; I *mus’* go. Ef I sta’ on dis plase eny longer I luze de ’spect ob mi own kuller. I no I gwine ter hab trubble, but I mus’ go.”

With these words he went quickly out of the house, as if he feared the giving away of his own resolution. He walked down the avenue at the side of the cart, for the would-be ox was not strong enough to pull the driver, the goods, and their owner. Mrs. W—— and her daughters stood on the gallery gazing after the old man till the pro-

cession was but a speck in the distance, then went in the house and cried together, wondering what life would be without Daddy Dave, who had been their father and friend for all the years that had passed away. This was the month of July. Fire was not necessary for comfort, vegetables were plenty, and fruits were hanging in their mellowness from all the trees. Nature was unusually lavish in her gifts this year, and Mrs. W—— knew that the old man would not suffer as long as the cold weather kept its fingers off the poor old body, so full of pains and so illy clad for the attacks of rheumatism.

The month of November came. The nights and mornings were cold, and a few days before, the frost glistened in the sunrise on the vegetables and flowers laid low by its icy touch. Daddy Dave had never been back to his old home—not that he was disinclined, but for shame's sake he kept away. The loving hearts at Greymoss knew the place of his exile, and, only the night before, had been contriving some comforts for him and planning how they should reach him safely, for pilfering was the order of the day, and even the mail and express were far from safe. James had promised to deliver the package safely to the old man the next time he came to the plantation.

The following morning was one of the beautiful November days in the South—crisp and cold, with clear skies and bright, yellow sun rising. Tom, the little negro—who was now man-of-all-work at Greymoss—was on the gallery, sweeping, before the ladies were out of their chambers, and seeing a

very queer-looking vehicle coming toward the house, gazed until the near approach revealed the old man and Watch. He was quite overjoyed, and lingered for a hand-shaking before he spread the good news in the family. Then running into the mistress's room in breathless excitement, he said :

“Ole missus, whut you tink? Old Uncle Dave out dar, an' want to see you. Him an' Wach is mity hongry, an' de ole man's sic'.”

At this joyful tidings from Tom the young ladies hurried through a limited toilet, and went to their mother's room in time to welcome the old man. He came in feebly and slowly, followed by the dog. All his grandeur gone, there was nothing to remind one of the fine old negro gentleman who had spurned a free negro in years gone by, and who prided himself on his good looks and comfort. His face was gaunt with hunger ; the two garments he had on—a coat and a pair of breeches—were only so in name, being a collection of rags held together by thorns that the trees of the wood had furnished as he came by, to hide his ashy nakedness from those who loved and mourned over him. Some pieces of leather were tied about his feet, to resemble shoes, which kept out neither the cold nor the rain, but left his toes out, to mock the idea of respectability. In his hand he held the remnant of a straw hat, plaited doubtless by his own fingers, but now without a rim, and little crown to speak of. The use of the “Jim Crow” was a thing of the past, as his hair was flattened into a thick mass on the top of his head ; but the specs, the dear old specs, were

in their place ! Hunger, pain, privation had not altered *them*, and this was the one thing, the only one, that remained of our old Daddy Dave ! Watch came to get his welcome, too—in circumstance and condition very like his master, his skeleton very Gothic in its architecture and covered over with a loose, mangy hide ; his great yellow eyes too feeble and dull to smile their gladness to be at home once more ; and the pitiful wag of his hairless tail was the most melancholy part of the home-coming, but spoke volumes to us of his happiness as well as determination never to suffer again !

The old man advanced to the bed, where the mistress still rested ; the hand-shaking was done in silence and tears, and to little Tom, who stood near, the welcome was a queer one. He wondered why people cried so, when he knew they were happy ; for they had been longing for the old man, and now when he had come home, they could not tell him a word ! A chair was placed at the fire, and the old man told to occupy it. He sat a few minutes, silently thawing out his poor old body—his heart did not need it—and after a time turned his face toward the bed, and began :

“ Ole missus, I’s e cum home to die. Mi h’art all broke up ; an’ mi po’ boddy all gon to skin an’ bone ”—looking down at his wasted frame—“ mi close all gon to rags, an’ fassend wid tho’ns, an’ mi boddy rack wid panes. Doan tork to me ’bout freedum ; it’s a lie frum beginnin’ to en’, an I gwine ter de barraks quic’ as I git wom an’ tell dem whut I tink.”

Here his sobs echoed through the room, and all the eyes there except Tom's were dimmed with tears. Mrs. W—— interrupted the silence, saying :

“ I am glad you have come back to us again. Your house is just as you left it. I knew you would come sooner or later, and no one has been in it since you went away. The key hangs there by you, and after you get some nice hot coffee and a warm breakfast, take it and get your things fixed in it, and never be so foolish as to go away again, for you are too old to work now, and we will take care of you.”

“ De Lord be prased fur dem words !—wort' mo' dan all de lies 'bout freedum. I dun tase 'em an' I *no*—no boddy but a fule gwine ter ete de hole apple atter wun bite tell him it's rotten. But I gwine into toun an' tell dem villuns whut I tink, 'fo' dis da' is dun.”

He kept his word in regard to his delivery at the barracks, and soon after the inner man was strengthened, and before he took possession of his house, he set out for the journey to town.

Donald was sitting in his office busy at his writing when a messenger came for him to hurry to the barracks to keep Daddy Dave out of trouble, for he had gone to the quarters, swearing his intentions.

Donald hastened the few blocks to the barracks, and there was presented to him a scene in which the sublime and ridiculous were equally mingled. It was office hours. The colonel and his staff were sitting around a table covered with papers ; the

guard was walking in front of the entrance, and from the various accoutrements around him, one would suppose that Daddy Dave's resolution would have failed him. But no ; with his voice strengthened by the coffee, and pitched on a very high key, and interspersed with most dreadful oaths, he was saying :

“ Look at me rite in de eye ; do yu call dis freedum, yu cussed villuns ? In de fus plase, whar's dat forty akers an' dat mule an' dat burow bizness dat we wus all gwine git rich on ? Look at me, I sa', wid mi skin lookin' ashy like a fo'-de-wah free nigger, an' not a poun' ob mete on mi boddy. Wus I dis wa' in slabery ? Wus I lookin' like dis when mi ole marster keep me ? Did I eber dres in rags like dis on de ole plantashun, whar de good, warm wool grow on de sheeps' back, an' all nigger hab to do is to shar 'em an' spin 'em, an' den mek close. De buzzard doan want me now. Doan yu tork to me 'bout edecation. I got la'nin' 'nuff dis minit to sho me whut yu is—a pack ob cussed villuns, an' wusser dan eny Britishers dat eber plant dey foot on dis lan'. We wus all doin' bery well, wid pece an' plenty an' happynes in ebery cabin on de two plases, an' all on a sudin' yu git too smart an' tink yu do sumtin' grate an' sot de niggers free. An' whut did dat do fo' de nigger, 'cepin' jes' to mek him a liar an' a teef. It wusn't *lub* fur de nigger atter all ; yu felt like we wus gittin' on too good down hyar, an' gittin' too rich wid razin' cotton an' cuttin' rice, an' yu cum an' spile it all. Well, yu git yo' wish, an' mi kal-

kilashuns is dat yu better go back whar yu cum fom, an' let de nigger be. Yu dun him like yu do yo' ole hosses when yu kan't git no mo' werk out ob him—yu tun him out to graze whar dar's no gras."

Donald stepped into the quarters, and, seeing how excited the old man was, insisted upon his going back to Greymoss, for fear of further trouble, and succeeded in getting him into the street. As Daddy Dave left the officers, he looked back, shook his fist, and shouted to them :

"Doan lemme eber see wun ob yo' cussed faces at Greymoss no mo' ; doan yu cum to dat orchid no mo', nor to de tater pach. Min', I home now, sottin' rite in mi hous', an' ef I hyar eny ob yo' rackit dar, mi ole muskit will tell yu sumtin' you kin neber forgit, an' neber want ter hyar agin. Min' whut I sa'."

Daddy Dave was a *character* in his own country, and a privileged one. The whole garrison, officers and men, were fully acquainted with this old hero, and knew there was no uncertain sound about him, either in war or politics, and were somewhat prepared for this piece of his mind, having heard of his experience in freedom. Their surprise gave way to amusement as his speech proceeded, and, when the old man went away from them, a roar of laughter was heard through the building, and three cheers were sent up for "Uncle Dave and Freedom !"

Several years have gone their way, and their passage was marked by few changes at Greymoss. The

great, wide house, the old mansion, is still occupied by the mistress and her daughters. Daddy Dave, now almost blind, and feeble, too, is their sole friend and companion. Tom asserted his freedom months ago and went away; Aunt Sibby, faithful to the end, sought a better country several years ago.

Mrs. W—— was truly old now. Her hands had lost their cunning, her step its fleetness, and her shoulders were bent, not with the weight of years, but with the burden of care and sorrow which seemed to press heavier each day. Her beautiful sunny hair was folded in snow-white bands across her brow, and those brown eyes, that were her charm in the other life, were faded—perhaps the color had gone out with the tears, the many tears, that had washed them since the evil days came. And they seemed to be looking into the depths beyond, and spoke to us of her longing to cross to the other side, of her yearning for those who had gone before her. These longings were soon satisfied.

One morning the long avenue leading to the old mansion presented a grotesque sight. Along the old drive, now almost grown over with weeds and grass, were seen a crowd of faces, both black and white, all going with earnest purpose to the big house. Some were on foot—some were in carts drawn by oxen, calves and mules so lean and halt that one realized at a glance the poverty of the land, and felt that the old rope harness was strong enough to hold these worn-out, ill-fed beasts. In these dilapidated vehicles were the few old faithful

people who clung to "ole missus," but had been compelled to seek a home with their children away from the plantation. As these neared the house and were lifted from their seats, the tears were seen to roll from their eyes, while their bodies swayed to and fro with grief. "Ole missus" was to be buried to-day.

Her casket rested beneath the arch in the hall, just where her boy's had been placed eight years before. At the head stood faithful old Dave while the procession of black faces passed, one by one, and looked upon the form which had always been to them a vision of truth and beauty. The poor old man's eyes were too blind to see the beautiful marble that rested beneath his wonted gaze; but now and then he tenderly laid his old horny hand on her brow, and lovingly put his fingers in her cold, stiff hands, bending over and letting his tears fall upon them, saying, between a sob and a moan:

"Mi bes' fr'en' gon, de las' fr'en' I got on dis 'arth; all ob yu kin cry now, fur dis blessed angel dun wid de trubble ob de wurl, an' she lookin' down rite now, an' see de h'arts dat's brakin' for her."

All the negroes, young and old, hearing of her illness and death, had come from far and near—some of them forty miles on foot—to attend her funeral. It was the last link in the chain of their once happy life. It would require a longer time than the six years of their life of freedom for any real benefit to accrue to them from this new relation. Indeed, their *little ones* may rise up and call

the day of emancipation blessed, but this fitness or satisfaction will never crown their hoary heads. *Their* graves will be made in hardness, and their peace and comfort will come to them after an entrance into the celestial city. And this great crowd followed her to the cemetery, refusing to allow the undertaker to perform any offices for the dead. Daddy Dave was in his old place on the box, and in his hands were the reins that guided the old bays—now shadows of what they used to be. He could not see to drive, and the driving was really managed by a coachman at his side ; but it was a great comfort to him to feel he was carrying the “ole missus” to her last resting-place. At the grave the family and a large number of friends had gathered, and then came the army of black faces who knew and loved her so well.

The coffin was lowered, and a shovel was handed to Daddy Dave, who, with tottering step, came forward, and feeling for the upturned ground, threw in the first earth, then gave the shovel to one next to him and stood there—the picture of a broken-hearted, friendless, despairing old negro—with the last tie severed and all of life behind him.

All was over ; the last sad rites had been performed, and he must return to a cheerless, lonely home. The old man pulled himself up into the carriage, and looked back toward the new-shaped mound, as if he longed for the rest that comes through the silent grave. On the way home, Donald and his sisters assured the old negro that he would be cared for as long as he lived, and after death be

buried by the side of Aunt Sibby, Uncle Isaac and Uncle Jacob.

After this mournful event, we noticed the decline in Daddy Dave daily. His sight was now gone; but his old energy asserted itself, and he would grope his way around his house, working his vegetables and cooking his own and his dog's food. His drum, his gun and his chest were in his house—built by himself after the burning of the place on the old site, and after the old pattern. He would sit in the door of his house, looking with those sightless eyes up into the skies, and when asked what he was thinking about, would reply:

“Nuttin’, honey, but ’bout de days dat’s all gon; ’bout yo’ par an’ yo’ mar an’ leetle Johnny, an’ all de ole niggers whut’s in glory—whar I gwine fo’ long.”

Ever since John's death, Daddy Dave seemed to be a changed man in regard to his religious feeling. He asked now and then to have the Bible read to him, and after driving the family to church, would go inside and hear the sermon, instead of his old custom, to lie upon the ground and go fast asleep till time to “hitch up.” Once when Donald twitted him about the language he used at the barracks that day, he said: “Well, son, de Lord no's I wus mad dat da', an' I doan' bleve I gwine suffer fo' dis. Kase sich blarsted menners as dat kan't be kyur'd 'cept by cussin'. Dat's de las' cus eber sot on mi lip, cos I no whut I promis' Johnny—an' I gwine keep it, too.” Many months before his death, we could hear him in the still hours of

the night at prayer, it being a peculiarity of the race to pray very loud. We knew he would not be with us much longer.

One day, groping his way into the big house on his staff, with his eyes wandering in different parts of the room from beneath his green shade, he called out, "Honey, is you dar?"

On being satisfied of the presence of the young mistress, he continued :

"I want yu to rite mi will, fur I goin' bery fas' now ; de ole man gwine quic', too, when he *do* start. I not got much to lebe, but whut I is got is gwine to dem dat's good to me, an' not to be waste by de yung trash, I kin tell yu."

"When do you wish it written, Daddy Dave?"

"Jes' as soon as yu kin, chile, fur we neber no whut a da' is gwine ter bring fort'."

"Why don't you get Donald to make your will ; he's a lawyer, and knows all about such things?"

"Dere's bery pertikler reson dat he not no 'bout dis matter ; bime by, yu will onerstan' de kase better ; an' ef yu doan' mine, I rudder hab de will mek in mi own hous', an' jes' 'tween us two."

After being assured that his request would be granted the next afternoon, he sat down and rested, comforted, no doubt, in the thought of leaving this world prepared, as far as his business matters were concerned. We knew his spiritual matters had not been neglected, for his thoughts seemed to run upon heavenly things. He took a chair placed for him, assumed his old attitude, with his chin upon

his hands and his elbows on his knees. Pushing up the shade from his eyes, he said :

“ Honey, rede me 'bout de nu Jrewslem wid de strete ob gole an' de gate ob purl. I gwine tru' de gate fo' long, an' stanin' rite inside will be ole missus, an' she gwine sa' to de gate-keeper, ' Let ole Dave in ; he ain't bin a Chrishun long, but he mek up fo' de los' time. De blud ob Jesus dun wash him clene.' ” The last chapter of Revelation was also read to him, and as the voice ceased he reached out his hand for the book—“ ole missus's Bible ”—felt it all over, put it to his lips, and repeated, “ Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, an' tek me to de o'ner ob dis Bible.”

“ Honey, I tink I goin' ter die in de nite, an eff I dus, yu look at de ole man in de mornin' an' sa', ' Po' Daddy Dave. I no he's gon to Heben ;' but yu mus'n't cri like yu did when sis Sibby die, fo' *I'll* be so much better orf, habin' mi two ise, an' no rumatiz in de legs, an' 'bov' all, hyar no mo' 'bout 'mansipashun. Sho 'nuff, I'se sic' ob freedum.”

Donald was interviewed that night, and furnished a formula from which to write the will, and also the legal cap and the piece of red tape to tie it—the last detail being necessary to Daddy Dave's peace of mind. The afternoon came. The old man tidied up his house, placed the three-legged stool for the young mistress, and left the unoccupied doorstep for himself. Watch, feeling the importance of this occasion, sat upon his hind legs, outside, gazing wistfully in the door, and looking as solemn as a

judge, wondering what this unusual preparation could mean—his eyes having never before seen a sweeping and dusting going on in his master's house. The old quilts and blankets, or rather what used to be articles of this sort, were rolled up and taken from their accustomed place on the old wide hearth, and put in the corner, and the skillet and big iron spoon were put down by the old chest behind the door. The iron pot hung in the chimney, with the one meal of the day cooking in it, which was a mixture of hominy, peas and bacon, with plenty of red pepper added. The old man was never known to eat but one meal a day, and that a hearty one of his own preparing. To waste no time, the cooking was to go on while the will was making. The young mistress came out to the cabin, took her seat on the stool, arranged her portfolio, copied from the model the first part of the will, in order that the old man should hear the scratching of her pen and realize she was in earnest.

“Now, Daddy Dave, I am ready for you. Let's begin.”

He ceased his groping around to feel if things were in order, eased himself down on the doorstep, rested his back against the sill of the door, fixed his specs, and said :

“Well, honey, I no yu gwine ter tink it bery cur'us, but atter a grate deel ob tinkin' on dis matter, I'se 'tarmin'd to lebe all mi 'state to Donal', yo' ol'est brudder, cos he's alwais bin a feelin'-h'arted boy an' trete me wid de 'spect dat's b'longin' fom wun gemmen to anudder.”

“ But, Daddy Dave, how about your children ? You ought to leave them your property. There’s Sam, who still remains on the old plantation, and Ike and John—and I don’t know how many more.”

“ ’Tain’t no use torkin’ ’bout dat, honey. De Lord no’s I hab no ’spect fur mi own kuller nohow ; an’ no cussed nigger gwine ter git eny ob mi b’longin’s, I kin tell yu dat ! Dat drum—whut kin tell a mity tale—an’ dat gun whut’s bro’t down meny a Britisher ; an’ dat chist, dat yo’ gran’par gin me when I fus went to hous’-kepin’, now dus yu tink eny nigger in dis settelment gwine git dese tings ? No, mam !”

“ Daddy Dave, who did you marry when you went to housekeeping at Grandpa Donald’s ?”

Raising himself up from the doorstep with a grunt, as he moved his stiffened limbs, and gathering his staff in one hand and fixing his shade with the other, he replied :

“ Jes’ lemme see ef dat pot’s a-bilin’, an’ den I cum back an’ tell yu dat hole tale—it’s a bery long story.” Feeling his way to the corner for the big iron spoon, he found it, and with his staff picked his way to the fireplace, gave two or three vigorous stirs in the pot, pinched off a pod of red-pepper from its many gay companions hanging on a string in the chimney, and muttered, half aloud, “ Pepper’s a good ting when a body’s feelin’ a mis’ry hangin’ roun’.” Laying the spoon down upon the board that served as a mantelpiece, he returned to his seat, made himself comfortable, and began his story :

“ Well, chile, dis is de beginnin’. When I was a yung buck I tuk it in mi hed to marry, an’ yo’ gran’par, when I consult wid him on de subjeck, sed, sez ’ee, ‘ Dave, it’s de bes’ ting yu kin do—git a wife, an’ it’ll keep yu out ob badness. Yu better tek Jo’anna, she’s a fine helty yung woman, an’ I’ll git yu a hous, an’ yu kin hab a yung heffer, an’ two ob de bes’ pigs, an’ yo’ patch, an’ do as well az eny ob de oler niggers.’ Well, me an’ Jo’anna we git marry, an’ lib like de buckrer, lemme see”—counting on his fingers—“ ’bout ten yeers, an’ in dat time we hab six ob de liklyest yung wuns yu eber see—an’ den I lef’ her.”

The young mistress was surprised at this very sudden turn in the story of his happiness, and at his calm deliberation in telling it. She interrupted this romance with the question :

“ Why did you leave her, Daddy Dave? Did you not love her? Didn’t you care for your children ?”

A merry look came into the old face, and pushing up his shade and turning in the direction of the voice, he replied :

“ Oh, honey, dem tings kan’t be ’splaned, ’spechilly to chillun. An’ as to de ‘*lubin*’ ”—here one of his old-time laughs, which we had heard so seldom in the last few years, broke from his countenance as he continued—“ ole marster sa’ he bleve I’d git tired ob eny black face, eben mi own chillun, ef I see too much ob dem, an’ he wus mity rite ’bout dat. Well, az I tole yu, we quit. I neber car’ fo’ no udder nigger till yo’ par wus

married. Yo' grate-gran'par sed to me dat as I tuk car ob him when he wus a boy, an' den went wid him tru collige, I mus go wid him home an' see dat ebryting wus manige ritely. An' I went wid him. Yo' mar, she fotch yo' par a big plantashun full ob de liklyest niggers I eber see. An' de fusing I no, mi ise wus sot rite on 'Nerva. You no, honey, in slabery time, when de gal lib on de same plantashun, dar wus no axin' to be dun, cos de buckrer doan car how much yu marry, jes' so yu doan go orf de plase fo' de wife. Well, sir, dey gin us a big weddin'. Oh, I neber forgit dat nite! Yo' mar gib 'Nerva a fine white frock, an' a vale, too; an' I dres jes' like a dandy, an' we marry rite in de dinin'-room. Ole Uncle Ned, he speke a fu werds, an' den pernounce us man an' wife. You no 'Nerva wus a fat, shiny-lookin' gal, jes' as blak as dat pot in de chimbly dar, an' yo' mar—she wus ful ob nonsense dem da's—an' she tell yo' par dat 'Nerva in her white fixin's 'mine her ob a fi in a pan ob milk, an' dat, ob cose, set all de niggers to larfin! Well, we got on bery well fur sum time, an' we hab ten fine-lookin' chillun—sum ob dem wus gals, an' sum ob dem wus boys. But atter a while 'Nerva an' me got to 'sputin' 'bout wun ting an' anudder, tell wun nite we got to fitin'. Den she run to de big hous an' tole yo' par, an' on de rode dar she scrach sum blud out ob hersef, an', grate Gemeny! yo' par, wusn't he mad! Well, sar, he tuk me an' shet me up in de korn-hous fur two da's an' nites, an' gib me nuttin' to ete but bred an' water. But dat didn't kyur de disese, an' I tell

ole marster I neber goin' bak to dat nigger agin, an' I neber did. Sebrul yeers pass atter dis brash. I lib to myself in dat same hous whut de Yankees bu'n doun, rite on dis spot. Den I sorter git lonesum, an' want 'nudder wife. But nun on our plase sute me. Yu no dey all sorter 'frade ob me, atter dem spats wid Jo'anna an' 'Nerva. So I sot mi eye on Wenus dat lib ober at Mr. Cranson plase. Den old marster, dat's yo' par, say he kan't hab me warkin ten mile to her hous, I brake myself all doun, an' he tink I mus gib it up. De trubble begin rit dar. I want Wenus, an' she want me, an' de boss not willin'. So I kan't stan' de 'spense, so I go to de big hous wun da' an' ole marster wus sottin' on de gallery wid his foot on de baluster, an' I sa', 'Ole marster, I kan't do no mo' werk. I cum to speke a werd to yu 'bout Wenus. De fac' is, I jes pinin' fo' dat nigger, an' I tink yo' mout by her fur me. Mr. Cranson sa' he ax one tousan dollar fur her, I tell him yu kin pa' dat, an' mo' too.' Ole missus, yo' mar, wus a sottin' by him, an' she lissen till I cum to de plase 'bout byin Wenus, an' den she sa', 'I wudn't tink ob byin' Wenus fur Dave; he wudn't hab her six monts fo' he'll beat her, an' dribe her 'way. Yu promis me yu neber will by or sell a slabe. We hab 'nuff 'speriense wid Dave, an' I tink he's better widout a wife, an' 'cidedly mo' peas'ble.' Den I tole dem dar wus no mo' good in dis nigger, an' I gwine brake mi h'art. Yo' par look sorry, an' he say, 'Go to yo' werk, Dave, an' I see 'bout it.' 'Bout a week atter dis conbersashun on de gallery, yo' par

rite a letter to Mr. Cranson, an' he writ wun bak, an' de matter all fix 'tween dem ; an' I gon ober wid de wagin an' fotch Wenus, an' we hab a nu hous an' start all ober agin."

The young mistress, touched by the sorrows of the unhappy Johanna and Minerva, ventured the question, "What became of Johanna and Minerva when you married Aunt Venus?"

"Jo'anna, she lib on de udder plase, an' 'Nerva lib on dis wun ; but dey sa' nuttin' to me, an' I nuttin' to dem. Yu no, honey, it's different wid niggers an' white fokes."

"What became of Venus, Daddy Dave?"

"Why, she libin' yet, de las' time I hyar 'bout her."

"Is old Aunt Venus, on the old plantation, the one you are talking about?"

"In cose, chile ; an' de reson she libin' ober dar an' I ober hyar is dis : she an' me part jes' fo' yo' par die, an' den he sa' to me, 'Dave, I want to hyar no mo' 'bout a wife fur yu ; yu ain't fit to hab a nice nigger, an' I bleve yu git tired of de angels, ef yu hab 'em. I'll git Wenus a nice hous fur her an' her chillun on de udder plantashun, an' yu sta' in yo' hous on dis plase, an' yu'll kotch it ef I hyar ob yo' goin' ober dere.'"

"Did Aunt Venus have any children, Daddy Dave?"

"To be sho, chile, an' plenty ob dem. Well, ni az I kin 'member, dar wus nine or ten ob dem."

"Why did you part from her, Daddy Dave?"

"Now yu is too hard fo' me. Sum sa' wun

ting, sum sa' anudder, but I tink it wus dis—Wenus onertook to jaw me 'bout sis Hannah, an' lubin' her de moist ; I alwais sed I neber tek sarce fom mi own kuller, an' so I ups an' frales her, an' den ole marster he steps in, an' sez 'ee, 'Wenus, yu are too good fur dat quar'lsum old nigger. I am goin' to git yu a nice hous on de udder plase.' An' he did. It's fifteen yeers now, an' I lib in mi own hous whar I is now ('cep' dem tree monts of freedum, but I doan tork 'bout dat fulin'), an' has alwais enjoy pece an' quiet ; sosheatin' wid buckrer, an' habin' leetle to do wid mi own kuller."

"Daddy Dave, how many children did you have altogether?"

He pushed back his shade, paused over this perplexing question, which, perhaps, had never been suggested to him before, and answered :

"Well, I 'clar to God, I doan no fur sho, but de las' time I tuk a reckinin' on dis subjeck, I tink I hab sunwhar in sebenty hed. Dey is sprinkle all ober Virginy, clene doun to dis plase in South Car'lina."

This last declaration was startling to the fair amanuensis, and she burst in upon his arithmetic with : "How *could* you have so many children, Daddy Dave ? I *never* heard of a man having so many children !" Here the old man laughed outright, and reaching forward his hand for the soft palm of the young girl, took it, and gave it a little squeeze, and answered :

"Bless yo' h'art, honey, yu kan't 'spec' to no ebryting, an' I doan' 'spec' to tell yu ebryting ;

but I will sa' dis—sum ob dem chillun cum bi law, an' sum didn't—an' dat's de en' ob mi tale, an' now we gwine on wid de will.'"

The will was not returned to immediately, for this thrilling narrative had put the legal transaction far from the thoughts of the young mistress, and she sat awhile with her pen poised above the paper, as if in a dream. The blind old man, failing to account for the silence, broke in upon her reverie with the question :

"Whut's de matter wid yu, honey? Yu needn't bodder 'bout dat tale, cos two ob dem nigger's gon to glory long 'go, an' Wenus ort to be dere ef she ain't. Don't bodder 'bout dese tings—yu'll hab 'nuff to grieve ober, sho's yu bo'n, ef yu lib long 'nuff."

The will progressed, and was soon finished, making Donald sole heir to this large estate. Then placing his finger, by direction, on the handle of the pen, which was held over the paper by the young girl, he wrote: "Dave Donald." Two young gentlemen visitors at Greymoss were called to the old man's house, and witnessed and signed the will. It was sealed, then folded and tied with red tape and handed to him. He felt it all over, and said :

"Tank yu, honey, fur de trubble; an' mine, doan yu neber tell Donald, fur den James an' Henry mout hab dey feelin's hert, an' de ole man didn't mene no harm. Ef de 'state was bigger, ef dere wus mo' propity, den dey kin hab sum ob it."

He groped his way behind the door. The hasp

was drawn, and lifting the lid of the chest, the will was put carefully away, and having again secured the fastening, he turned to the young mistress, as he walked to the door, and said :

“ It won't be long till dey fin' it, an' den yu kin tell de secret ; an' when dey see yo' ritin, den dey'll no it wus dun 'cordin' to law.”

A few weeks after the will-making, one morning Daddy Dave failed to come for his usual hot coffee while the breakfast was preparing. This caused some anxiety, and the young mistress—the one who wrote the will—went to his house to know the reason of his absence. Watch was sitting in his accustomed place in front of the door, waiting for it to be opened, when he would jump and catch his morning bread in his mouth. She knocked and waited, but there was no answer ; then pulled the latch, opened the door, and entered. There, rolled in the blanket on the hearth, was the lifeless form of Daddy Dave, still in death ! She called to him, but the ears were filled with the music of heaven, and heard not the earthly wail from her breaking heart. She stooped down and looked into the old face. She found no struggle there, but the gentle, kind expression he always wore when with those he loved. That morning he had caught a little of the sunlight of heaven and left it upon his face to tell her in her grief that he had gone through the pearly gate and left it ajar !

The day after, the body was buried as he desired, like the “ buckrer,” no torches, and in daylight. As it was borne along the streets of the town,

gentlemen came out from their places of business, with hats off, and stood till the procession passed—a tribute of respect to the old slave who had been faithful in life, and now honored in death.

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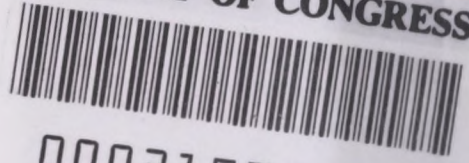
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