

**FOWLER  
CHARLES  
HENRY**

HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF  
THE AMERICAN NEGRO

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**the American Negro**

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*Historical Romance of the American Negro:*

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# Charles Henry Fowler

## Historical Romance of the American Negro

### PREFACE

For a number of years it has been on my mind to write a book regarding the principal events that have occurred to the colored race since the beginning of the agitation against slavery, going on from thence to the great Rebellion, passing through that war, and also dealing with all subjects of great importance that have arrested our attention under our glorious freedom.

At the same time it has occurred to me, as it has to many another writer, that my book would be far more interesting to the general reader, if I were to select a representative woman of our own race, and make her the mouthpiece of all I wished to say; in other words, to introduce the whole under the pleasing form of an historical romance, so that we might keep our heroine constantly before our eyes, and make her weave in a continuous tale of love, travel, war and peace, and thus portray the lady playing her own parts on that tremendous stage of Time that has been set forth for the gaze and astonishment of the whole country during the past fifty years. I hope those members of the general public who

favor me by a perusal of my book will be pleased with my plan.

"Peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war," and I have introduced into my book all the great advances that our race has made since the fall of Richmond, and, indeed, have brought things down to this year. The reader will find a number of things that are intended to introduce humor, and to brighten the darker portions of the story.

And as some fault-finding person may say that I have overdrawn my heroine, and made her far more clever than she could ever have naturally been, I venture to affirm that such a charge can by no means be just, for we have women among us, and men, too, who are as intelligent and clever as can be found among any other race on the face of the earth. I believe my book will prove the truth of this assertion in those cases, at least, where the heroines and heroes of the colored race are mentioned in its pages by name.

Beulah Jackson will therefore stand as a representative woman among our own people.

*CHARLES H. FOWLER.*

*Baltimore, Md., 1902.*

# INTRODUCTORY

In this period of the Negro's development so much has been wielded towards influencing him in the expression of manly sentiment, that when an unhampered and heartfelt defense is made in his behalf by one of his number, it should, and I believe will, secure a universal support by the defenders.

The eagerness to devour books is so prevalent in the present decade that the Anglo-Saxon litterateurs and publishers endeavor to withhold and suppress all that tends to prove the Negro a man and an equal, patting all of their writers and molders of public opinion on the back, who are cringing and palliating with the deceitful exclamation, "Behold, thee! thou art great!" The desire to secure this cowardly approbation has, indeed, become too numerous. Learned men, with ability to withhold the sentiments of their hearts and people, have too frequently sold the golden opportunities of their lives for paltry sums and positions to these literary hawks. But few of the public speakers and writers of these times dare utter the thoughts of Douglass, Turner, Price, Garnett, and that grand galaxy of post-bellum fighters, who knew no middle ground, but stood out for all that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution had embodied in them. They had no axe to grind, and even so, their oppressed feelings wouldn't permit them have it ground at the expense of the manhood of their four million brothers.

It is high time that the Negro judge whose utterances are fitting and suitable to his case, who stands for his utterances, and which have his sanction, not to allow those hostile to your very existence select, under the guise of friendship, those sentiments put forth by aggrandizing writers and leaders distasteful to you, and brand them as your daily thoughts and hourly prayers. Respect for the sycophant cannot exist long, even among them whom he traitorously serves. A tree is judged by its fruit; so is a race judged by its representative men. If they be honest, the race is placed in the category of men; if wicked, treacherous and deceitful, their place is fixed among the distrustful.

It therefore becomes a small part for us to perform in signaling the honest writer and leader by giving him our unanimous support. The author has spent months of effort and toil in compiling data and accounts, that Caucasian authors with alertness suppress. He has made a strong case and defense of the Negro's manhood and trustworthiness at a time when most men would have been honest with pain. The simplicity with which his data is compiled and presented to the reader stamps him neither in quest of gold or greatness, but striving to convince the ignorant that heroes and heroines can even be found among this despised race of America, whom some would brand as rapists and thieves. A tale is welded together in which every experience, occurrence and stage is passed through that can occur to a poor, struggling people; yet, no instance presents itself by which the character, the basal part of any people, can be impeached. 'Twill serve as

a firer of the ambition and aspirations of the young Negro, and at the same time, so thrilling are its narratives, that 'twill prove as interesting reading matter as many a romance. The eagerness with which our youth devour such tales as relates the better side of his ancestry's life, is too well known to us. The story of Beulah Jackson will fill a long-felt niche in the young Negro's reading matter, that will in itself prove highly beneficial.

*JACOB NICHOLSON.*

# CHAPTER I

Though this is the year of grace, just forty-seven years after the date when my adventurous story begins, my recollections of that bright morning in May, 1855, when I arose and at one bound broke loose from slavery, are as vivid as the lightning's flash. "A still tongue makes a wise head," and so I held my tongue and bided my time until I made at last that successful spring. And never do I behold the glorious sun rising over the hills and forests but the joyous recollection of that Wednesday morning in May comes back to me, like the rebounding reaction of the bow that is unbent.

I was born in the State of Kentucky, a few miles below Louisville, where my father's mansion stood on one of those sloping hills that faces the river Ohio, which the French named with justice, the "Beautiful River." That mansion, with all its splendid surroundings, belonged to my father and owner, a white man named Lemuel Jackson; but my own mother, a woman of uncommon beauty, belonged to the colored race. My mother, for some cause or other, was sold down the river in New Orleans, in the year 1853, when I was but fifteen years of age. I never got over that sudden separation, and I at once formed my own resolutions, of which I said nothing.

As my father was a rich man, who indulged me in many ways and appeared to love me, and as I often had occasion to

accompany him and Mrs. Jackson, or some of the other members of the family, to Louisville, he seldom refused to give me the cash I asked for, which I now began to carefully put away in a secret place only known to the Lord and myself. Two eventful years had passed away. I had by this time discovered the whereabouts of my mother, Harriet, in New Orleans, and my hopes of meeting her again grew stronger every day as the time approached for me to kick off the detested chains of slavery. For the coming of this happy deliverance I prayed to my good Lord both day and night.

At last that day dawned upon me, the spring-time of all my joys. The Lord heard my prayers, and He cleared the way to freedom. There was to be a big church gathering at Louisville, and the first session of that great time was to be on Wednesday morning – the first Wednesday in the month, as I very well remember, indeed.

The bishop and his wife, who were invited guests to our house, had arrived the day before. They were to spend the night with us, and all things breathed religion and excitement over the events of the morrow and the rest of the week to come.

Among the inmates of the house was one Tom, whom I was accustomed to call, Tom Lincoln – a tall, splendid young man, a shade darker in complexion than myself, and, like myself, a slave. Tom was now twenty-seven years old. He had been casting "sheep's eyes" at me for several years past, but who could think of marriage whilst in a state of slavery? Therefore I gave him no encouragement, but as he was thoroughly reliable, I said to him

one day in strict confidence, and in the most significant manner possible, "I will talk to you about that when we are free. While in a state of slavery it is a mockery to profane the names of love, courtship and marriage. I will never, so help me God, be married in the house of bondage!"

Tom Lincoln was a clever fellow, a general factotum, and acquainted with everything about the house. He was always relied on, and the great house, as it was called, would be left in his charge while the family and the upper servants attended the gathering at Louisville. Soon after the bishop and his wife arrived, I called Tom aside and laid before him my whole plan, which had been well formed for some time past in my mind.

"Capital!" said he, slapping his knee with his big hand. "Capital, indeed! Strike when the iron is hot, and kill chickens when they are fat! But, Beulah, will you marry me then?"

"Yes, with pleasure, when we are free from the chains of slavery."

When I gave Tom that answer his eyes flashed bright as the stars on a frosty night, and mine, no doubt, flashed back in a reflected lustre.

"All right," said he, and then, after some thought, he added: "Get your trunk ready by ten o'clock to-morrow morning, as all things will be in readiness by that time. Beulah, I will be a bondman no longer. Just think of it. Twenty-seven years old, and a slave!"

"That's right, Tom; stick to it! Minds are never to be sold!"

Stick to it!" was my instant reply.

With immediate freedom and all its joys before him, the brave Tom did not let much grass grow under his feet. We kept a boat near the house, and although not an expert oarsman, he knew enough to handle it when called upon. In the darkness and silence of Tuesday night, he slipped over to the other side of the stream, then made his way for a mile or two down the Indiana side, where he ran the boat up a creek, near which stood a little cabin in which some acquaintances of his lived. He confided his secret to his friends, and as the man of the house kept a horse and wagon, the latter consented to convey our trunks to the house of a mutual friend in New Albany next morning. Then leaving this cabin and the boat tied up in the creek, Tom made his way to New Albany on foot, where his mission was also successful. With these preliminary preparations, he returned to the great house in safety, and it was never known that he had so much as been out of his own room! Of course there was some risk to run, but who would not dare all for freedom?

As for that anxious Tuesday night, my excitement was such that I never slept a wink. I thought much of a similarly planned and quite successful dash for freedom that took place shortly before this near our place. A girl of fifteen and her brother, twelve years of age, were left alone one day to take care of the house while all the white people had gone away. They never suspected anything so unusual from a girl of fifteen, especially as she was mild and quiet.

But after they had gone, Muriel called her brother Willy, and said,

"Willie, do you see that boat? We are nothing but slaves, and yonder across the river lies Indiana – a free State. Master keeps money in the bureau, and I will burst it open and take what will carry you and me on the train to a place of safety and freedom. Let us take clothes along with us, and whatever we need. This is no robbery. It belongs to us by right, for slavery is nothing but a system of robbery, anyhow."

So Muriel and Willy crossed the Ohio river in the open day, walked to the nearest railway station, took a train for the North, and speedily arrived in a land where they were slaves no longer.

The longest night comes to an end, and the morning of that never-to-be-forgotten Wednesday in May brought lovely weather, lots of fine prayers from the bishop, and an immense show of devotion from Mrs. Jackson, the woman who caused my precious mother to be sent down to New Orleans. There was a grand breakfast at the big house, and, as usual, I figured like a flower girl at a wedding. I did my best to keep down my excitement, but, indeed, it would never have been noticed that morning, such was the stir on the account of our visitors and the coming glorious gathering of the "saints" at Louisville.

Horses and carriages, and all the rest of our rich display soon hove into sight, and in due time the coast was clear for Tom and me to strike for freedom. We packed two large leather trunks that had long done service on the steamboats and railways of the

sunny South.

We had clothing enough to put us through for a long time to come, both summer and winter. Tom being a big and powerful man, soon carried the trunks down to the boat, without exciting any undue suspicion among the few old folks and children about the house. It was wonderful, under the circumstances, to see him so cool and circumspect.

Tom heaped up some sacking and other things upon the trunks to give the whole the appearance of a trading skiff, and as the wind was blowing in the right direction, he put up a little sail.

To still further avoid unwelcome attentions, I insisted on lying flat on the bottom of the boat, and being covered with sacking (the Fugitive Slave Law was in force now, and the sleuth hounds of slavery might be upon our trail). At last the boat was cast loose and headed for a little ways down the Kentucky shore. Then my adventurous pilot crossed to the Indiana side, and concealed our little craft behind a string of barges floating down the Ohio. Several steamboats came puffing and blowing up the stream, and so, amid the general turmoil and confusion, we slipped into the little creek, ran our boat under the bushes, and in a short time had our trunks and belongings safe inside the cabin of our friends. O praise ye the Lord! for His mercy endureth forever! We had completed our first step towards liberty!

Our good friend next got out his horse and wagon, our trunks and things were speedily flung in, and he took his way alone for New Albany. After I had made many promises to write, and

given a thousand thanks, I started for the place of meeting, and my gallant Tom brought up the rear at a safe distance. Of course, we were now in a free State, but Kentucky still lay in full view of us.

One by one we arrived at the appointed number and street in New Albany, and here we dressed for the immediate journey by rail. Having blessed one another, and made many promises to write to these friends also, we hurriedly betook ourselves to the station. Tom marched up to the ticket office, two tickets were quickly secured, and at last the supreme moment of happiness arrived when we took our seats for the far-famed city of Cincinnati. I have seen many horses in my time, and mules like the sands of the sea, in my native State of Kentucky, but the nicest, dearest, most lamb-like and sweetest horse I ever saw in all my life was that strong, iron horse named "Steam Engine," that stood ready in the station waiting for the command to start.

We were now in the carriage: it was just twelve o'clock, and the glorious free sun shone down upon us. The train began to move, and when it did so, I felt as though I would faint for very joy. I don't believe that Tom was any better than myself, the transition from slavery to happiness came with such a rush. But, then, I was only a sensitive young woman of seventeen, whereas Tom was an experienced man ten years my senior, and, in appearance, at least, he managed to bear things with more composure than did I. As our train rushed along through the beautiful land, all adorned with the thousand beauties of the

pleasant month of May, all things looked to me like consecutive scenes in a new paradise, as when we look through rose-colored glasses all things are colored like the rose. The winds played, the sun shone brightly, and all nature's face was gay, and as our mighty iron steed sped along in his vigor. Tom and I talked but little. The time for talking would come another day, never fear! In truth, we were too happy to talk.

The afternoon wore on, and we crossed the Indiana State line and entered Ohio, the sight of which gave our eyes the most unbounded pleasure. On, on, sped our devoted iron horse, until at last he came to the end of his race in the beautiful city of Cincinnati. When we two fugitives from the land of slavery stepped on the platform here, all safe and sound, we were reminded of a ship entering, after many risks in the voyages of life, the port of Heaven, with all sails spread, and never an injured plank. I looked across the "beautiful river," and beheld the hills of my native State coming down to the water's edge, and laving their feet in the cooling waves. An immense traffic was rolling down, down, down to the Mississippi and the Gulf States, and everything was hum and bustle.

Thus I stood musing at the top of one of the steep streets that run down to the Ohio river, while Tom nearby entered into some serious conversation with a gentleman. At last he came back to me and said,

"Beulah, let us go this way."

After walking for some time we found the right address, the

home of the Rev. John Robinson, a minister of the A. M. E. Church. In the most polite manner possible we were asked in, and invited into the parlor. Mr. Robinson, a jolly, fat-faced, pleasant-looking Reverend, was on hand at once. Tom told him the main points of our history in a few minutes, and finished by requesting him to marry us any time that night.

When the question arose as to whether the marriage should be performed in private or public, I insisted on it being done as publicly as possible, and that a newspaper reporter should be called in, too.

Now, as good luck would have it, there was to be a great gathering at the Methodist Church that night, so it was decided that the wedding should take place an hour after the meeting commenced. Mrs. Robinson and the entire family were now called into the parlor, when we were all introduced to one another, and there was a mighty season of rejoicing. Tea was prepared, and we adjourned to the dining-room.

In the meantime some of the friends and neighbors were sent for, a reporter was notified, and the news of our safe arrival and prospective marriage spread like wildfire throughout the good city of Cincinnati. The ladies, both white and colored, were tremendously interested in my case. They lavished attentions upon me, and caressed me to such an extent that I was afraid I would faint!

In due time, however, we took up our grand march to the church, and here I will give the account of our wedding as it

appeared next morning in the Cincinnati News:

### "WEDDING AT THE A. M. E. CHURCH.

"Last night we were called in to witness a happy wedding, which reminded us of that of Jacob and Rachel. The contracting parties were Mr. Thomas Lincoln and Miss Beulah Jackson.

"This Thomas Lincoln, aged twenty-seven, a fine, tall young man, was formerly the house steward and general factotum of Lemuel Jackson, Esq., of Riverside Hall, below Louisville, Ky. The beautiful seventeen-year-old bride is the daughter of Mr. Jackson himself, by one Harriet, a slave woman of many graces, whom Mrs. Jackson two years ago, through jealousy, caused to be sold to New Orleans.

"Miss Beulah was indeed 'a bride adorned for her husband,' and the ladies had her duly arrayed in orange blossoms and the regulation wedding costume. 'The Flower Girl of Riverside Hall,' as she has been often called, it seems, carried a beautiful bouquet. The church was filled to suffocation, and the interest in the ceremony was intense.

"After the knot was tied, a gentleman advanced to the front, placed a five-dollar bill on the table, and called for a wedding present 'for these two ex-slaves from the State of Kentucky.' The call was readily responded to, and a good sum was contributed. The young couple passed the night at the home of the Rev. Mr. Robinson, who performed the ceremony. They leave this morning for Columbus, Ohio, and points beyond. Lincoln stated that he could have left Kentucky at almost any time, but remained

until he could find an opportunity to assist in the escape of the girl.

"As the immense assemblage at the A. M. E. Church looked upon this splendid couple, all hearts were filled with compassion to think that the South should call such men and women 'goods and chattels.' It was the outspoken opinion that a day of reckoning is coming; a day of war, a holy war, sent by God Himself, that will end this system of robbery and oppression."

I bought several copies of the paper that contained the account of our wedding, and posted one to Riverside Hall, one to our friends at New Albany, and another to our benefactors in the little cabin by the creek. Next morning at breakfast the fun was delightful, and I was obliged to laugh when Mrs. Robinson called me "The flower girl of Riverside Hall." Breakfast over, our host and hostess insisted on accompanying us to the station to see us off, and here we took leave of our kind friends, whom we felt that we could never thank enough.

As we steamed away for Columbus, all things were still new and delightful, and I never tired of beholding the fair face of nature as our train wound along the banks of the Little Miami. I was immensely pleased with the beautiful State of Ohio, its fine churches along the way, its fair and fertile farms, and all its magnificent forest-clad hills. In due time we arrived at Columbus, the State capital, and were much impressed with the beauty of the sweet little city.

We continued our journey on through Ohio until we crossed

into Pennsylvania, by the shores of Lake Erie, that flowed away towards Canada like a little inland sea. Thus we continued on to Buffalo, New York, where we left the train. Here we determined to settle down, at least for some time. For a few days we put up at a friend's house, for we were both very much fatigued, indeed, with our long journey and its incidental bustle and confusion. I was only seventeen years old at this time, the most romantic age of a woman's life – or rather she is standing on the borderland with girlhood just behind her, and all the joys of womanhood and matrimony just before. Anticipation invests all things with the glories of the rainbow. It is certainly a good time to get married, for then a girl's nature is soft and pliable, and she has had neither time nor opportunity to become possessed of cast-iron ways of her own.

During the few days that we were resting ourselves we became acquainted with a few most worthy colored families who belonged to the A. M. E. Church on Vine street, as good and loving a congregation as I have found up to this year. God bless that loving flock!

Just at this time Tom and I had a good deal of conversation about my writing a letter to my father at Riverside Hall. If it was to be done at all, it had better be done soon, lest the door between us be permanently closed. Had my father done the right thing he would have married my mother, Harriet. She was ten times more amiable and lady-like than Mrs. Jackson, a woman whom he married for fashion's sake; but he never did or could

love her as he did my mother, or even myself. It was the identical case of Rachel and Joseph over again. If all the rest had died, and Harriet and Beulah had remained alive, it would have been all right to him. Thus were there two wives in the same house – Rachel and Leah once more. The one was loved and the other hated. So it came to pass that through jealousy that raged in her heart, Mrs. Jackson had my beloved mother sold down the river to New Orleans.

I ran no risk in writing to Lemuel Jackson, as everyone at Riverside opened his own letters. So we decided that I should write home in a week or two, when we were settled down to practical house-keeping. And, besides all that, the old gentleman liked a good letter, and I knew mine would be doubly welcome.

It is very true that the Fugitive Slave Bill was on the statute books of Congress, but that bill was practically a dead letter, and it was now only one chance in ten thousand that anyone would attempt to come after us all the way to Buffalo. It is quite true that immediately after the passage of that infamous bill there were several fugitive slaves caught close to the border, and carried back to slavery, but the true spirit of the North arose against such Southern barbarism, and after a few slave-hunters had been shot, the South ceased to send her couriers even to the borderland, but remained at home nursing her sullen wrath, cursing the Underground Railroad and all Christian abolitionism, and flaunting her oft-repeated threat in the face of the nation, that unless she could have her own way in the Union she would

have it out of it.

We did not consider, therefore, that we had any risk to run in settling down here in Buffalo, or even in writing to my father and giving him our street address. Mrs. Jackson would have no doubt been capable of setting the man-hunters on our track, but father, though a rich man, would never have made the outlay of money necessary. Besides it would have exposed his shame and disgrace.

In the meantime, then, we rented a small and cosy cottage not far from the sweet little church on Vine street, furnished it cheaply, but comfortably, and at the appointed time we invited the pastor of the church and his good wife to come and spend the evening and take tea, that the Lord might bless us in our happy home.

After we had been settled in Buffalo about a month, I wrote the following letter to my father, which he duly received:

"Lemuel Jackson, Esq., Riverside Hall, Ky.

"My dear Father: —

"With great pleasure I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines. It is but natural that your daughter should take a delight in writing to you, and we have lived too long under the same roof for me not to know that you will be glad to receive a letter from me. I can never forget you, my own dear father.

"I have great pleasure in informing you that Tom is a very thoughtful, considerate and loving husband, and is most indulgent and kind to your own dear Beulah. If I had searched the whole

United States I don't believe that I could ever have found a better man than Tom. He promised to be good to me when we were married in Cincinnati, and I believe he always will.

"The first thing we did, after we had furnished our cosy little cottage and settled down, was to join the sweet little A. M. E. Church on Vine street. We desired to have the approbation of the Almighty upon ourselves and on our works and ways. Therefore we joined the church of God first of all. I do believe that if people would always put God first they would have more luck.

"I don't know how it is, but the people of Buffalo, both white and colored have taken a very great liking indeed to Tom and myself from the very first hour when we left the train here and set our wandering feet within the Queen City of the Lakes. The sweet ladies of Buffalo have been here to see me in numbers, and I also have been to their homes, where I am received as a daughter or a younger sister. Indeed my lines have fallen in pleasant places, and I cannot but believe that the good Lord sent us to Buffalo.

"We have been over on a visit to Canada, which lies across the Niagara River, for the city of Buffalo, as you are aware, lies at the foot of Lake Erie just where it enters the Niagara River. There is a settlement of colored people at St. Catherine's, in Canada, only a few miles back from the river, and Tom and I were greatly interested in them.

"They all fled from slavery in the South, and many of them have come up on the rough side of the mountain. I can assure you, when Tom and I saw the marks of their horrible treatment,

we praised the Lord that our own cases had been so mild and bearable at Riverside Hall.

"We consider that we are lucky in coming here at this delightful season of the year, for the pleasant month of May seems to surpass all the other months of the year for sweetness and flowers. All around Lake Erie and the Niagara River, both in Canada and the State of New York, the fair face of Nature is just blooming; all the woods are dressed in their mantle of green, the countless birds sing among the branches, and all things hereabout clearly shows that the self-same God that has adorned the State of Kentucky has done as much in these parts.

"I am not aware whether you have ever visited Niagara Falls or not, as I have never heard you say, but whether or not, it is a most wonderful place, and one well worth the trouble of coming even from the ends of the earth to see. It is well for Buffalo and all the towns and villages that lie around about this river, that they are so located, that is, so near the falls, because there is always a great tide of people coming here from every land beneath the sun, almost; and these same people seem never, never to grow weary of one of the most stupendous works that the great Creator has made.

"After we had settled down at home here, and before Tom went to work as house steward in one of the first mansions on Delaware Avenue, the leading avenue for private residences in Buffalo, we took a special day and went to see Niagara Falls. As we had read and heard so much of these celebrated falls, I might

almost say since the time we were born, we were both in a state of great excitement on the morning of this expedition. Really, my dear papa, there are some things that we really never, never can forget.

"There were hundreds on the early morning train with us – almost all strangers, and all in a state of highest excitement. We soon drew out of the railway station, and left the city behind. Now we were on the bank of the Niagara River, which flows on almost a perfect level with the fields, and on the opposite, or Canadian side, the tall pines were beautiful to behold. As we drew near to the station at the falls, the roaring of the mighty waters struck with great force upon our astonished ears, and when we got out, what astonished us more and more was the grand stampede of every person down the road in the direction of the great river. No need to ask which way to go; we had but to follow the sound. At last, through the tall trees we beheld the flying waters, and there we saw Niagara Falls before us in all their grand and terrible array!

"For about three-quarters of a mile above where we stood, the Rapids of Niagara came thundering down the steep incline, and the great waves leaped like the waves of a troubled ocean. It was just one continuous and eternal yell. I was completely dumfounded. I could do nothing but quote from the Bible, and shout the praises of the great Creator. But who heard me then? For the Rapids made such a noise that nobody else could hear!

"The American Fall, on our own side, is the smaller one; the

opposite, or Canadian Fall, which assumes the shape of a gigantic horseshoe, is the grandest one. The waters are deeply green, and at the top are said to be eighteen feet deep. Oh, my! What a place it is, to be sure!

"We now crossed a light wooden bridge that connects our side with Goat Island. This portion of the Rapids of Niagara was now just under our feet, and it required all the nerve we had to allow us to even look down upon the flying, yelling, and most tremendous waters! This is one of the places to which so many come for the purpose of committing suicide. But we are Christians, my dear father, and we could never think of doing such a very foolish thing.

"My dear papa, I shall have to stop now, and continue my narrative at another time. Here comes Tom home for his tea, and our minister and his wife along with him. Our love to you all. Au revoir!

"From your most affectionate daughter,

*"BEULAH LINCOLN."*

I ran to the nearest box and posted my letter, and in ten days received the following reply from my dear papa:

*RIVERSIDE HALL, NEAR LOUISVILLE, June, 1855.*

"Mrs. Beulah Lincoln,

"My Dear Daughter: —

"I duly received your nice, kind and most welcome letter. I am heartily glad to hear that you are both in good health, and so

very comfortable in every way. I did not take your sudden leaving so much to heart as you might imagine – I mean in the way of vexation – but Mrs. Jackson was so much disturbed that she has not recovered from the effects of it yet, as she did not think you and Tom would leave us. However, now that you have gone, I wish you well, and I enclose herein a postoffice order for \$50.00, which is my wedding gift to yourself and Tom. Please excuse my short letter; you know I am not fond of writing. Please send me a letter at any time that you feel like writing. I am,

"Your most affectionate papa,

*"LEMUEL JACKSON."*

As far as my father was concerned, then, it seemed that we were safe. From him, at least, we had nothing to fear.

## CHAPTER II

*Beulah's Journey to New Orleans – Rescues Her Mother From Slavery, and Mother and Daughter Return to Buffalo on the Good Boat Columbia, by Way of Havana, in the Island of Cuba, West Indies and New York City.*

The present was a great time among all classes of the abolition party, the "Underground Railroad," and all that sort of thing. There were the border ruffians in Kansas, where John Brown, that hero of fame, led on the fray, and fugitive slaves escaped over the lines into the free States, whence their owners were unable to get them back. The Fugitive Slave Law was a dead letter, for the great gospel guns over all the North had denounced it as a shame and a disgrace to a Christian nation; and when the South found that fugitive slaves would resist their pursuers unto death, and that their messengers were likely to be shot down, they ceased to send them, at the same time making the slave laws worse than ever before. However, the tighter and more oppressive they made them, in greater numbers did the slaves escape from the house of bondage, for who can stem the spirit of the brave? Slavery is an abomination before the Lord!

We had at this time all the anti-slavery leaders coming round the country – the greatest speakers I ever heard. I never had a more wonderful experience than turning out with Tom at night to the halls and churches to listen to such arguments and eloquence

as I had never dreamed had any existence in this or any other country. William Lloyd Garrison came to Buffalo, and Fred. Douglass, and all the rest were there. We listened to men and women who had seen slavery in all parts of the South, people who had been in Kansas, and almost everywhere else, and such tales of truth and horror I never heard before in all my life.

It is true that even slavery had its backers in the North, and too many of them at that, but the entire Christian portion of the population was determined that slavery should come no further, although the South seemed to demand, with the most unblushing impudence, that they should carry their slaves into every State and territory under the stars and stripes. The South acted like a violent, high-strung woman, whose husband tries to reason with her in vain. She seemed to say, "I shall have my own way, or I will fight with you, Sam! I'll be no submissive wife! I'll be master and mistress, too! I'll fight and have my own way!"

At this time, freemen from Europe were pouring into the United States in legions. They had no slavery in those countries from which they came, and coming here while the tidal wave of anti-slavery sentiment was at its height, they were ready not only to attempt to stem the encroachments of slavery, but to resist them by force, if the worst came to the worst. The Quakers were also in the field, and they gave Congress no rest. The Southern senators and representatives resisted them at Washington, and demanded that the whole subject be laid upon the shelf. Here they were opposed by such men as Charles Sumner, Thaddeus

Stevens, and a host of others. Thus things went on from bad to worse in the halls of Congress, and all over the free North. The heavens grew darker and darker as the months rolled by, and the South prepared to leave the Union unless she had her own way.

There was very little sign, indeed, of her ever getting it, for how could freedom and slavery ever be dominant in the United States at one and the same time? It is very true that slavery was a legacy left the thirteen original States by England, but we had gone ahead and spread the iniquity ourselves, after the disposal of it was left entirely in our hands; whereas England had long since abolished both slavery and the slave trade throughout her dominions. She had even paid the owners full indemnity for the loss of their slaves.

I dwell the more fully on these things because they led up to the war of secession, and actually brought it on in the year 1861.

How did the South treat the oppressed African? She bought, she sold, she stole, she killed for gold. She hurled all revealed religion to the winds, and set the Almighty at open defiance. Thus millions of backs had to bend and labor over the cotton plant, the sugar cane and the rice stalks of the South. Families were torn asunder, and every human feeling violently dealt with in men and women born in the image of God, that silver and gold might be extracted through their blood and tears from the cotton fields, from the sugar plantations, and from the rice swamps of the Sunny South. With such crimes as these and a thousand nameless ones besides that high heaven had to avenge, was it any

wonder that the coming tempest was heralded by rising winds, by darkening skies, by colder weather, and violent flurries of snow, hail and sleet?

It was one of the curses of slavery that the slave-holder often had a colored wife in the kitchen, and a white one in the parlor. This was very bad, indeed. It was just Hagar and Sarah over again, and not only did the iniquitous system bring the two women into conflict, but the poor, guileless children were brought into conflict also. It was a shame and a disgrace all the way through. If white American parents had never taught their innocent babes that the color of the skin made a difference, "American prejudice" would never have been known in the world.

My own beloved and charming mother was the first in the field. If my father had done the right thing by her, he would have married her out and out, and made her his wife de jure, as she certainly was de facto. Thus it always was in those days of slavery.

The grand, chivalric white planter had a splendid octaroon or quadroon for his "house keeper," a woman whom he loved supremely till Southern pride took alarm, and he took unto himself a white wife – to be like his neighbor! Alas! Alas! Such a crooked, dual system as that never worked, and it never will! Sarah and Hagar could not get along; neither could Rachel and Leah, and so on to the end of the chapter. Turkish women in the same harem fight among themselves like dogs and cats, and the poor miserable Turk sometimes has to provide a separate

establishment for every wife.

At last my father brought Mrs. Jackson to the house, and my mother, Harriet Jackson, as she was called, was pushed to the wall. I am glad that I was my father's only child by his first wife, for had there been more of us, the mischief would have been the greater. As the reader already knows, a day came when I was up the river at Louisville, when, in some way only known to the devil and herself, Mrs. Jackson caused my beloved mamma to be spirited away, and as we all subsequently learned, to be sold down the river to New Orleans. Mr. Jackson seemed very sorry, indeed, but he said nothing about it at the time, as he knew that he himself was to blame for the whole matter. But I made up my mind at once to endeavor to find out her exact place of abode, and to trust in God to bring us together again.

Alas! my dear reader, how shall I ever make you understand the dreadful gap that was now created in my sensitive heart, when dear mother and I were torn apart? You can imagine how grieved I was, but how much worse must mother have felt? It was a shame to separate us, but Mrs. Jackson was fond of making grand, ostentatious shows, and she determined to keep me to grace her grand festal occasions. Still, I missed my dear mother for many a day. Clouds and thick darkness would gather round my heart. I was in great heaviness every now and then, and often would I retire to my bed-room, where I used to get into bed, cover myself up, and there lie and weep, and pray to God to bring mother and me together once more.

Now, one would imagine that this feeling would have worn off in the course of time, but it never did. Two whole years had passed away before I made my escape. I must admit the truth, that my newly-found freedom, marriage and acquaintance with the glorious people of the North brought me immense relief all the summer, but one day, about the beginning of the fall, I was once more completely overshadowed by grief. It was the self-same "old trouble" – a trouble that no doctor could cure. I locked up the house, and went to bed as I used to do at Riverside Hall, and wept and prayed until I fell asleep. The first thing I knew I was awakened by a very loud knocking at the door; Tom had come for his tea, so I arose and let him in, and he was greatly surprised to find me all in tears, and in such a bad way generally.

"Why, Beulah," said he, "what is the matter with you to-day? You have been crying, and you seem as though you have lost your reason altogether."

"Well, Tom, I have had such a heavy day on account of my mother. It is one of those 'spells' come back again, the same as I used to have at Riverside Hall. I declare I hate to feel in this uncomfortable way, but it just came on me, and I could not help it."

"I am afraid, Beulah," replied Tom, "there are bad times in store for us both if you are going to be subject to those spells of crying and sorrow as came over you now and then before we left Riverside. I wonder if anything can be done to put an end to this state of affairs once for all? I would give a good deal to put an

end to such a very mournful state of affairs. Can you suggest no remedy, my own dear Beulah?"

"I am not aware, Tom," said I, "that there can be any remedy in the world, unless it be to bring my mother and me together again. I think one of the greatest horrors of slavery is to tear a family in pieces. I firmly believe that Almighty God is driving the South into a terrible war that she may receive her well-merited punishment for her blood-red crimes like these. Even one of her preachers once preached a sermon in defence of slavery, and he took for his text these words of Holy Writ, 'These are the Lord's doings, and they are wondrous in our eyes!' Indeed, Tom, they are truly wondrous!"

On the morning after this conversation, I went to work at an early hour and packed my trunk. It was now the fall of the year, and glorious weather for me to travel. All nature's face was gay, and I myself was blessed with health and strength and vigorous life. At all events, I felt a hundred times better than I had twenty-four hours before! The sun of righteousness had risen upon me with healing in his wings. "Arise, shine forth, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee."

Once more I found myself at one of the railway stations, and took my departure for Cincinnati, by way of Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio. It was most delightful traveling to speed over the rails along the shore of Lake Erie, to see once more the lovely foliage of the forests of the beautiful state of Ohio, and then at last to skim away, and away down the smooth and level banks

of the Little Miami river, where I could hardly hear or feel the train in motion at all. At last the "beautiful river," as the French called the Ohio, hove in sight once more, with the delightful hills of Kentucky and Ohio, on opposite sides, running up from the water's edge, all clad with forest trees.

I next came to Cincinnati, and the "Public Landing" was crowded with passengers and traffic going up and down the river, and as neither Tom nor myself were millionaires, and I was desirous of cheapening things as much as I could, I went aboard one of these floating palaces of the Mississippi, and engaged myself as a waitress for the voyage down the Mississippi. The "Natchez" was to leave at 4 P. M. the same day, so I got my trunk on board, and reported myself for duty.

I gave a shout for joy as we left the Public Landing and floated out on the mighty and splendid Ohio. Owing to the recent heavy rains all along the head branches of this beautiful river, the stream was swollen from bank to bank, and presented a grand appearance as we plunged into the high-rolling waves and surges in the centre of the river. The glorious sun danced upon the silvery tide, and covered all the forests, the hills and dales on each side of the great and rushing flood. Huge barges were floating down from Pittsburg, and the far North, and large and small craft of every description were dancing and whirling away, whistling and screaming and advancing towards us, or retreating around the bends.

So far as my duties on the boat permitted, my eyes were never

off the river, the hills, woods and forests, and the wild, fast-flowing traffic that was going up and down, and which seemed to have no end. The red and fiery sun went down in the wild waters of the beautiful river that looked like heaving, molten gold; then up came the silver moon, and turned all things visible into silver sheen.

The great Creator, indeed, was on the waves, and the Natchez drove on at a rapid rate. We had now the Indiana shore on our right hand, having passed the Ohio state line at Lawrenceburg, Indiana. In the early morning we came to Louisville, Ky., where we remained for a few hours. Here we passed through the Portland canal, and soon went by Riverside Hall, and the little cabin on the opposite side of the river. It stands two or three miles below New Albany, and I could see some of our dear friends standing before the door. It was here that Tom and I had crossed the Ohio.

The "beautiful river" still continued to increase and to swell, and we plunged along at a glorious rate. All on board seemed to be in a laughing mood, for the weather was superb, and that floating palace, "The Natchez," swept along at a furious speed. You can talk as much as you please about a light heart, but during this most delightful voyage mine did seem "as light as any feather." I had such joyful dreams every night, and hailed each coming morning with delight. Indeed I dressed myself every morning while my mouth was full of laughter.

"What are you laughing at?" "I think you must be in love."

"You always appear in such tip-top humor." Such remarks were addressed to me by my companions in the waiting department, as we made our toilets before the looking-glass. To which I would reply, "I am laughing for the self-same reason that the bird sings in the forest, because the sun shines. As the children say, I am laughing at nothing!"

By this time the beautiful hills on both sides of the Ohio had fallen away. We had the state of Illinois in front of us at last, when we passed the mouth of the Wabash; and lower down on our left, the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers poured all their flood into the Ohio, after they had drained the mountain lands of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and Kentucky. "The beautiful river" was beautiful no more, but on both sides the lands were flat and fertile.

Ho for the Mississippi! What a rush there was among our passengers to behold the great "Father of Waters" absorbing our smaller Ohio at Cairo, in the state of Illinois. The city of Cairo lies right in the fork of these two rivers – the Mississippi and the Ohio. "Whew! What a river! Why, to be sure, this is, indeed, something like a river! It is more like a flowing sea of fresh waters than a river," were the remarks of a gentleman on board, and the sight was one that I am sure I never shall or can forget, either.

Our arrival upon the Mississippi seemed to add to my good humor, and then I was drawing nearer and nearer to my devoted and beloved mother every hour, and I seemed to have a firm

presentiment from high heaven that my adventurous mission would turn out a success.

On, on, on, we rushed night and day, passing the mouths of the St. Francis, the White, the Arkansas and Red rivers on our right hand, and the Yazoo and other smaller ones on our left. It grew much warmer as we advanced farther south. We were now coming into the lands famed for the cultivation of the sugar cane, the cotton plant, and the rice. The only thing that dampened my spirits was to behold from the deck of the swift-flying Natchez, hundreds and thousands of oppressed colored people toiling and sweating in the sun, whilst their overbearing overseers stood over them, whip in hand, to make them work on, or receive the lash on their backs. How even Southern people could look upon such barbarity as that, and call themselves Christians, I could not understand. But as sure as there is a God in heaven, there is a terrible "judgment day" in store for all this, and I firmly believe that we shall all see it very soon.

What was to hinder Mrs. Jackson from selling me down South here, and forcing me to work till I died, in these very fields that I can see from the deck of the Natchez? Wherein am I better than these full-blooded Africans before my eyes, who were murderously torn away from their beautiful homes in Africa, brought over in "floating hells," and sold like cattle in the markets of the South? Shall not these who criminally carry on the slave-trade, and slavery, soon atone for all this? As surely as God lives, the "judgment day," even in this world, cannot be far off!

The Southern people, like the doomed inhabitants of wicked Jerusalem, know not the approaching day of their visitation.

Musing in this way, we passed the cities of Memphis, Helena, Vicksburg, Natchez, Baton-Rouge and Donaldsonville, and, at last, amidst a great deal of noise and excitement, came to the wharf at New Orleans.

During all this glorious and enchanting travel from Buffalo by rail and steamboat, like a good and faithful wife, I never forgot to write every second day to my brave and beloved Tom, and I knew well that he would be greatly interested in hearing of my progress down the Ohio and the Mississippi. He afterwards told me that he used to read these letters of mine over, and over, and over again, and sometimes before he went to sleep, he would again light the lamp and read the last "arrival" from end to end once more.

Here, then, at last, the good boat Natchez has brought us all safe and sound to New Orleans, in the Sunny South. There is no snow here, and fruits and flowers are to be found all the year round. The climate is almost tropical, and everything out of doors breathes of orange blossoms and all those exotics found in the warm climates. The whole scene had an irresistible charm for me, and I felt a pleasure in being in the state of Louisiana that I felt quite unable to describe.

But even the charms of nature and the strange French air of the people did not produce the greatest impression on me here. That which produced the greatest impression of all, was the mighty river Mississippi itself, and the immense traffic carried

over its irresistible waters. It is true that its banks are quite plain and homely when compared with the beautiful Ohio in its upper and middle courses. But then the Mississippi is so big, that it is always majestic, solemn and grand. You are never tired of looking at the immense and gigantic "creature," and especially where it has constructed for itself a high embankment, cast up by the silt and overflow of its muddy waters, in the lofty bosom of which the mighty river flows as in an elevated canal.

And thus the Natchez was high up above the level of the plains on our right and left hand, and we could look down on the valley of the Mississippi from the deck of our palatial steamboat. Oh, the Mississippi is a glorious sight to behold, always immense, solemn and grand!

The next thing that attracted me so much was the immense traffic that came rolling down from the North, and that ascended the stream. When I came off its mighty waters, I felt as if I was coming up from a wild, riotous and troubled sea. And though forty-six years have now fled and gone, the tremendous impression made upon my heart and soul by the Father of Waters remains. I therefore cried, Ho for the Mississippi! as I walked the gang-plank into the city.

My dear and beloved mother, Harriet Jackson, was one of those religious women who would go to church if she went nowhere else. She went to the A. M. E. Church whenever she could get there, and I had ascertained before I left Riverside Hall, that she attended the services of that congregation that lay nearest

the mansion of the family to whom she had been sold. I cannot say that she belonged to that family, for slavery was nothing but a system of robbery in its best estate. She had been sold down the river to an ancient French family – Roman Catholics – but, in their indifferent, careless way, they allowed mother to go to her own A. M. E. Church. She was so steady and devoted in her ways, and so very remote from Kentucky, that they regarded it as an impossibility that she would ever even dream of making her escape; and never, never, that any one would ever come after her in this far-away part of the great world.

First and foremost, then, I made inquiries from those who could speak English, for the name of the pastor, and found it with no great difficulty. (As my complexion was so light and fair, I passed for one of the whites of the city. There are many thousands of "whites" in the South like me). I informed the reverend gentleman, when I first met him, that I wished to have a private, confidential talk with him. I felt that I was indeed conversing with a father, and there was not the slightest fear. He informed me at once that my dear mother attended his church, and was a warm-hearted and enthusiastic member of the same. He said she would be at the prayer-meeting that very night, and named the hour when it began; but while he should be glad to see her obtain her freedom, it was the part of prudence that it should not even be known that he knew anything about it, as they might murder him outright for even holding his tongue! To this I replied that no doubt I could manage very well myself, and that

mother would perhaps have some amendments to put to my own schemes after we met. In the meantime, I engaged a room with a nice family, being fully resolved to stay there till such time as mother could make her escape. I depended upon a well-laid plan, and to carry out that plan with boldness. When I got myself settled in my temporary home, and had written another letter to Tom, I walked out to see the far-famed city of New Orleans, and indeed I obtained a pretty good idea of it before my return in the evening. New Orleans is indeed a wonderful place. But I need not take up the reader's time in describing this quaint French city in America. The kind reader knows all about it already. What I am most of all interested in at this time is the meeting with my beloved mother, and getting her away from slavery into a land where she shall be free to come and go, and do as she pleases, just as I am doing!

Many thousands of slaves obtained their freedom by running away from their owners; some of them encountered great difficulties on the way, while others seemed to meet with no difficulties at all. I am also safe in saying that many a hundred more might have gained their liberty, but they were simply afraid to venture – they were too timid to take the first step, or they were deterred from going by being unable to make up their minds to leave parents, wives and children behind them. The latter step was proven over and over again by their running away, obtaining their freedom, but afterwards becoming so homesick that they actually returned and surrendered themselves again to slavery,

being unable to stay away from those they loved most upon earth.

The African is both pleased and cursed by being possessed of a very warm heart, and tender and loving affections. This is indeed a blessing and a curse at one and the same time. We need not go far for the proof, for I myself am a living witness to the same, and here I was at New Orleans after my dearly-beloved and tender-hearted mother, whom I was unable to live without; and then behold what I have suffered for the want of her for more than two years – wrenched from me by the diabolical ways of slavery, and the malice and spite of Mrs. Jackson! If my pinings and regrets have been so great, longing day and night after my dear mother, how much worse must that dear mother have felt for the loss of me? I dare not even look at the picture! But our prayers have been heard by the Lord; for He always hears those who love Him, and the hour for the prayer-meeting is drawing nigh; the shades of night are at last falling upon the long autumn day, and I find myself in the dusk in the neighborhood of the A. M. E. Church, watching for the approach of my mother, as maiden never waited for the coming of her lover advancing among the trees to the well-known trysting-place.

All things come to those who wait, and here she comes at last! She is as sweet and graceful as ever, and her step as light as the greyhound's! I advanced to meet her, first looking cautiously around into the increasing darkness, that no other was too near. The over-hanging trees favored our meeting as I came up to her, and whispered softly in her ear, "Mother!" We took each other

by the hand, and kissed one another, when she hurriedly drew me round into a side entrance to the basement and rear of the church, where, entering a small classroom which would not be used for the night, we sat down together, had one very long and close embrace, and the happiness of that blessed and speechless half hour seemed to me to equal all that which might be called out of an ordinary lifetime. "Sweet the moments, rich in blessing, which within thy courts I spend!" The remaining hour was passed in conversation, during which we gave and received a complete history of the time that had elapsed since the time mother was sold down the river.

"There will be no difficulty whatever about my getting away. They are old people, and have not the remotest idea that I would ever make the attempt. The best time for us to leave will be at this hour a week to-night, and, my dear daughter, there is a big leather trunk that is called mine, and which stands in my little bed-room upstairs, in an out-of-the-way wing of the house, which I will manage to send empty to your lodgings, whither I will send or bring my entire wardrobe myself. I must not go without clothes, as they will be both necessary and useful for me for years to come, if God my life shall spare. In the meantime write Tom and give him all my love, and tell him when he may expect us at home."

To all of this I most heartily agreed, and I was more happy and lightsome than a butterfly. We came out before the congregation, and another warm kiss and embrace under the trees, then mother

steered away homewards for the old French mansion, and I took my way to my lodgings, where the people received me with great affection. I had told them that I was married, and wore a gold ring to that effect, because without giving them that needful piece of information, young beaux are bad for coming around seventeen-year-old girls, and I did not wish any of the kind New Orleans flunkeys to be coming around me with any of their sweet kind of foolishness. When I got into my bed-room, I found the flowers of the Sunny South perfuming the whole place like cologne, and I slept like the angels there. Seven days and nights came and went. Mother and I met one another as often as it was discreet and prudent for us to do. There was not the remotest suspicion of her approaching departure – much less of the direction which we meant to take. Like Tom and myself leaving Riverside Hall, our plans were well-laid and matured, our hearts were stout and brave within us, and we carried things out with a bold front.

As the New York passenger boat Columbia lay at her pier with steam up in readiness for her departure on the following Wednesday night, while the streets were full of horses, wagons, porters, passengers, and all the rest of it; while late passengers were hurrying into the office to get their tickets for New York, and boys were shouting the latest edition of the city papers, two ladies in half mourning and heavily veiled, drove up in a carriage, alighted in haste, had a heavy leather trunk carried on board, and the elder of the two (a lady seemingly about thirty-six or thirty-seven years of age) made for the ticket office and procured

tickets for two, and a corresponding cabin for New York. These two ladies, the reader will understand, were my own dear mother and myself. No notice was taken of us in any way. All was noise, bustle and confusion about the Columbia. We were shown to our cabin like the rest, and felt at home at once. It was growing dusk, the last bell was rung, and with anxious hearts and high-beating hopes we cut loose from the shore, and plunged out into the great river. The night being warm and balmy, as is usual in the Sunny South, mother and I went on deck to see our own departure, and to watch the passing vessels coming to and going from the port of New Orleans. Here, in taking leave of the "Queen City of the South," as the metropolis of Louisiana is called, I must say that I was most delightfully impressed. I had been so very kindly treated on all hands, and there was so much to charm the senses about this famous French city. As for mother, the depth of the ocean was as nothing compared with the depth of her contentment at getting away with her beloved Beulah, the separation from whom had given her so much sorrow.

We were only sorry that we could not see the usual sights along the Mississippi river to the same extent, as if we had left in the morning. But that was impossible, and I think mother and I had great reason to thank God that all things fitted in so well at the hour of our departure. It was the night and hour for the prayer-meeting at the A. M. E. Church – Wednesday night – with the good boat Columbia leaving at the same hour. In this crooked world it is a difficult thing to make all things work

together just as we want them. We did indeed want to see our poor, oppressed race at work among the sugar-canes, the cotton and the rice, and the orange and fig-trees, and all the rest, which could only be done rightly by day. We did indeed see plenty of their humble quarters and cabins along the shores, and some little way back into the country, and knew them well by the lights in the windows. Alas, alas! for these poor, dear, miserable creatures! There they lay, no doubt, sound asleep – sleeping in the sleep of the oppressed – poor old men and women, laboring and toiling their lives away under a Southern sun, that oppressors may feast and riot at their expense. But there is a God in heaven, and we snuffled both war and freedom in the wind. Even a child could foresee all that.

We retired early to bed. When were two women ever so happy on a New York boat on the Lower Mississippi? It was enough to make the angels laugh for joy, to think of it! Our departure was another installment in swelling the volume of Southern wrath to break up the Union, as the Fugitive Slave Bill would not work in their favor. Mother and I – murmuring our thanks to Almighty God – soon fell into a happy sleep, while the Columbia was ploughing her way down the Mississippi, and moving out at the mouth of one of the passes, as they are called, into the Gulf of Mexico. When we came back on deck next morning, the weather was most delightful. The water was intensely clear – indeed it was as clear as crystal! All things smacked of the Southern seas – of Southern people, and all things Southern. In due course of

time the west end of the Isle of Cuba hove in sight, and soon the Columbia tied up in the harbor of Havana.

As the Columbia was to remain a few hours at Havana, we were permitted to go ashore to see the most famous city in the West Indies. The tropical vegetation was all that the heart could wish, but what interested mother and me the most was the quaint old city of the Spaniards, and the different races of people who inhabited the "Ever Faithful Isle," as it is called. Here we found Spaniards from old Spain, Spanish creoles, free colored people and slaves. I hated the very sight of slavery here in the Spanish island, though I have always understood that slavery was less cruel here than in the Southern States. But all the same it is slavery, and not freedom. Almighty God certainly never meant that one man should own another. Besides, these odious Spaniards, a lying, thieving nation, have promised the civilized nations of the world a hundred times to abolish slavery, but they have always broken their promises, and they will continue to break them until they are compelled to give their slaves up by force. Spain is a dark, suspicious nation, reduced to the last stages of poverty, but swollen with ignorance and pride. But this present time of writing is 1897. We may next take a retrospect, as it is forty-two years since mother and I were at Havana. Poor Spain has already lost all her slaves, because she could keep them no longer; and the Cuban war has now lasted for over two years, during which the patriots have gained possession of the whole island, except a few fortified towns like Havana. I will not

here narrate the sights, sounds and scenes that came under our observation in the metropolitan city of Cuba. I will just mention that I was infinitely amused at the system of courtship that was in vogue in their parts. The young men went to see their fair lovers, and conversed with them through grated windows, the young ladies being inside the bars, and the young gentlemen standing outside on the street. I never think of these funny scenes without laughter!

The Columbia got up steam once more, and we got out of the harbor of Havana, passed through the Florida Straight, and in a few days were off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. All these places were new to us, and as the fall weather was of the most delightful description, my dear mother and I spent a great deal of time on deck. At last Sandy Hook was passed, and we shortly after landed in New York.

## CHAPTER III

*Mrs. Lincoln Brings Her Mother to Buffalo – Warm Welcome Home – Harriet Jackson married to Mr. J. B. Sutherland – Letter From Mrs. Sarah Jackson and Beulah's Answer – Beulah, Mrs. Sutherland and Tom at a Great Abolition Meeting – A Famous Gathering of the Clans.*

Our delight at being once more on shore in our own country, and so near home, and for the first time in the full possession of our own freedom, filled our hearts and souls with the wildest enthusiasm, and from the very bottom of our hearts we blessed and praised the Lord for His mercy endureth forever.

We had intended to send a telegram to my own dear Tom at Buffalo, but we changed our minds, and determined to take him by surprise. Besides, when we had reconsidered the matter, we did not deem it altogether prudent to send a telegram, because there were many wealthy families in New York, who owned thousands of slaves in the South, and in some respects this great city was even more dangerous than Georgia and Louisiana. So we left on the first train for Buffalo, where we arrived in due time, and hired a cab that took us home. Tom had left the key with a good neighbor, so we opened the door, went in, and prepared tea for him by the time he came home. It is very true that we had more need of going to bed than to thus attend to the work of the house; but we were so excited with our freedom, our successful

journey from New Orleans, and the exciting times right ahead, that we never thought of fatigue, but only the present enjoyment.

At last we saw Tom coming up the street, when such a scene ensued as it would take the very angels of heaven to tell. We sat up to a late hour that night, and seemed quite unwilling to break up and retire for the night. The pastor of the church, his good lady, and all the friends came flocking round to see us, and the rejoicing over our mother's safe arrival from the land of slavery was both loud and deep. When we next went to church, the interest there was most unbounded, and the enthusiasm ran higher than the waves of the sea. We made no secret of anything. Abolition was now under full swing; the "Border Ruffians" were now in Kansas, and the temper of the whole North was up, that slavery should come no further. Therefore our white and colored friends came on in droves to church to see mother, and welcome her to Buffalo, and prayer, praise and hymns of rejoicing were kept up till a late hour. Praise ye the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever!

It is sometimes a very difficult thing for a young person like myself at this time to know what to do for the best, lest I should be doing wrong. It has often been said that a woman cannot keep a secret, and I am bound to confess that I had hard work to hold myself back at this time from writing to my father and telling him the good news of mother's escape from slavery. In the secret of his heart I knew well that he would rejoice to hear it; but Mrs. Jackson might get hold of the letter, and that

was where the trouble came in. In fact, so far as unruffling her feelings was concerned, I did not care whether she saw my letter or not! I certainly intended to pen no falsehoods, and saw no good reason why any one should object to the simple truth. Thus openly to publish our whereabouts might have endangered mother, Tom and myself, because the Fugitive Slave Bill was on the National Statute books. It is true that some of the Southerners had been up to the far North after their fugitives, and tried hard to carry them back to slavery; but though the public officers were vigorously called on to do their duty, according to the letter of the law, the general public arose against such arrests, and the slave hunters had to go home again to the South without their prey, avowing and swearing that this would never be a country anyhow till slavery extended from the Lakes to the Gulf. There was, therefore, no real cause for fear on account of either mother, Tom or myself. I had promised my father to write again, and besides he had sent me a present of fifty dollars, which I was bound to acknowledge, and then my description of our first visit to Niagara had been broken off in the middle. There was another thing that would deter Mrs. Jackson from sending any expedition after us, and that was the fact that we were right on the Canadian border, there being nothing between us and the British dominions but the Niagara river. Indeed this was the true reason why my own dear Tom and I never came to a halt till we reached the beautiful city of Buffalo. Upon the least hint of man-hunters being on our trail, we had nothing to do but steer across the river,

where we could have a glorious holiday among our friends, and come back again to Buffalo as soon as ever our pursuers had returned home.

One thing was certain – if I were going to write at all, I must write soon, or let it slide altogether. Of course, I could never make up my mind to follow the latter alternative, so I took my pen in hand and sat down and penned the following epistle:

*"BUFFALO, N. Y., October, 1855.*

"To Lemuel Jackson, Esquire,

"My Dear Father: – I am sure it shows very bad manners in me to be so very slow in answering your thrice-welcomed letter. I am under a thousand obligations to you for your present to my own dear Tom and me on the occasion of our happy wedding. We consider that you have indeed been most mindful of us, and we return you our warmest thanks. We are both well, and Tom has a good situation on Delaware avenue, the principal residence street in Buffalo.

"The last time I wrote you, I was giving you a description of our first visit to Niagara Falls, and was interrupted in the middle of it by Tom's coming home to tea, in company with our pastor and his wife. I am now desirous of finishing the narrative, but before I do so, I will tell you something that will indeed surprise you.

"You will remember the fits of sadness and depression I was subject to every now and then after dear mother was sent down the river to New Orleans. My happy marriage had suspended

these attacks altogether for a time; but one day in the beginning of the fall, they returned in great force. That was the first attack, and after Tom and I had discussed the matter over, it was at last fully decided that I must not have a second. If you wish to hear all the particulars of what followed, I am quite willing to give you them; but in the meantime – after your own style of writing – I will be brief. I proceeded to New Orleans, rescued mother from slavery, and brought her safe and sound home to Buffalo on the steamer "Columbia," by way of Havana and New York City. This successful and happy event has caused the liveliest satisfaction to dear mother, to Tom and myself, and to the entire population of Buffalo, so far as they have become acquainted with it. Tom is quite pleased to have such a delightful mother-in-law in the house, and all three work most harmoniously together.

"In my letter, dearest papa, I promised to give you the rest of the account of our first visit to Niagara Falls. As, however, I have so very much to say, and as I think it may please you better, instead of giving you the rest of that most delightful narration and description in my own words, I will – on Tom's recommendation – send you a most capital 'Guide to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, with Numerous Illustrations.'

"I beg leave now to draw these few lines to a close. Mother and Tom write in lots of love to you, and I am sure I shall be delighted to receive even half a dozen lines from you at any time that you can make it convenient, or feel disposed to write your dear daughter. And I am yours in all affection,

*"BEULAH JACKSON."*

Having written the above letter, I posted it at once, and no doubt but it was received in a couple of days and read with great interest by my own dear father, and also by Mrs. Jackson, though with very different feelings from his. I was perfectly well aware that there was an abundance of pent-up wrath in her imperious temper, and that it would explode one of these fine days!

As my mother, Harriet Jackson, was a woman of great handsomeness, beauty and a thousand graces, and still comparatively young, being only thirty-seven, her hand was sought by a settled and most honorable man named Mr. John B. Sutherland, a resident of Buffalo, and a member of the A. M. E. Church. They had a nice wedding at the church on Vine street, in the presence of an applauding and highly-respectable company. It was a perfect union of hearts, like Jacob and Rachel's over again. As we had plenty of room, and were unwilling to have mother set up a different establishment, Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland took up their residence with us, and all things went on most harmoniously together. The Almighty seemed to pour His richest blessings upon us all, and we tried to honor and glorify His holy name in all that we did. Our experience in slavery had been light, and we were now only too thankful to be free.

One day in the month of November, Tom received the following letter from Mrs. Jackson at Riverside Hall, though it was intended for all three of us:

*"RIVERSIDE HALL, Near Louisville, November, 1855.*

"Mr. Thomas Lincoln,

"Dear Tom: – We duly received all your letters, and also the Buffalo newspaper with an account of the marriage of Harriet to Mr. John B. Sutherland. That would all be right enough if you were white people, or even free people of color, but the whole three of you are neither one nor the other. You are our goods and chattels, and our runaway slaves, and we have decided to bring you back, or else you must pay us the reduced sum of one thousand dollars apiece; that is, two thousand dollars, when we will give you your free papers, and a full discharge. As your master and mistress, we are herein doing you a great favor, for we could easily get two thousand dollars apiece for each of you, Tom and Beulah, in the public market. I suppose you are aware that the Fugitive Slave Bill is the law of the land, and in case you do not give us satisfaction immediately, we will proceed to put the law in force, and either bring you back to Riverside Hall, or sell you down the river. Now, Tom, a word to the wise is sufficient. We shall look for a letter from you soon.

"I am yours respectfully,

*"SARAH JACKSON."*

When the above letter arrived at our house, the whole four of us were seated at the tea table in the evening, and laughing first over one thing and then another, as people will do at eventide when the work of the day is done. We read the letter aloud in

the midst of great sport and laughter, which went on, grew and increased the more we examined it. It was the work of Mrs. Jackson and hers alone. None of us believed that father knew anything about it at all, and I am sure he did not. Mrs. Sarah Jackson evidently was unable to keep down her temper and spite after all our grand escapades, marriages and other things.

"Why," said Mr. Sutherland, "I suppose she will be coming on us with bloodhounds themselves! She would look grand in hunting costume on the streets of Buffalo with bloodhounds!"

"What makes me laugh," remarked Tom, "would be to see the boys and young lads pelting those dogs with stones, and belaboring their sides with big sticks!"

This was followed by another shout of loud laughter, when mother exclaimed,

"She would indeed be a sight well worthy of a first-class painter in the midst of an infuriated crowd who were bent upon our protection and rescue."

As it was now my turn to put in a word, I remarked,

"She had better send nobody after us. It is now five years since the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill, which no man can enforce, because the Christian spirit of the North will not have it, and the North is right to resist it."

The question next arose as to who should answer the letter. Tom and Mrs. Sutherland absolutely refused to answer it in any shape or form, so I took pity on the great lady of Riverside Hall, and said that I would answer her one of these fine days, which

would be both sport and pleasure for me, and then perhaps she would let us all have a rest. So in a few days after the receipt of her wonderful letter, I took up my pen and wrote as follows:

*"BUFFALO, N. Y., November, 1855.*

"Mrs. Sarah Jackson,

"Madam: – As both Tom and Mrs. Sutherland have absolutely refused to take the slightest notice of your letter, it has fallen to me to answer it. It would not suit the convenience of any of us to come to Riverside Hall at this time, or, indeed, to go anywhere else. Even if we had all the opportunities in the world, we would not come to Riverside unless we came as specially invited guests; a visit, in short, that would be a mutual gratification to us all. But at this time, Tom has got a most excellent situation on Delaware avenue, the grand residence avenue of Buffalo; besides, he has married a wife, and therefore he cannot come. (Such is the language of Holy Writ).

"As for myself, the grand committee on abolition have engaged me to give a number of lectures, and to sing at their meetings in the interest of the freedom of all those who are held in the South in enforced and involuntary bondage. The committee on freedom think that the presence of a young woman like me would help on the good cause, draw the crowds, and drive another nail into the coffin of slavery in Kentucky, and wherever the hated institution exists.

"It will not be a very hard thing for me to make out a clear case against slavery, and in favor of freedom. Now, just look

at myself, and all those graces and qualifications that I possess and inherit from both father and mother, and how our gracious Lord has cut me out to be something, and to do something in the world! Suppose that I had chosen to remain at Riverside Hall! What was to hinder you spiriting me away to the cotton fields of the Sunny South to wear my life away as if I were a mere animal, instead of being a human being like yourself, and one for whom Christ died? I therefore rejoice at dear mother's freedom; for slavery is nothing but a revolting crime – a system of robbery and murder! Now, here I am, and in a short time intend to appear on the public stage in the capacity of a lecturer, a singer and a player on the piano. Just fancy the idea of a handsome young woman of seventeen, like myself, being sold away to Louisiana or Georgia to wear my life away among the rice fields, the cotton and the cane, when nature has qualified me with gifts and graces, the admiration of my gallant and clever Tom, and the 'pick' of the general public to serve against slavery in the Northern States! I only hope that I shall be able to do my full share to help on the great conflagration that is now raging all over the free states, and which I hope will never cease burning until it has burnt the whole 'institution' down to the ground. Here in the North I shall be seen and heard by legions of people. But who would ever see or hear me in the cotton fields, or the sugar plantations, and in the rice swamps of Louisiana or Georgia?

"I have failed to answer your letter in the way intended. What impression you intended to make on my mind is more than I

know. Your statements were nothing but the old parrot cries of the South, that have been heard for many years. Of course, you cannot compel us to come back so long as we ourselves object. If you write us any more, and expect your letters to be read, you will have to make them of a readable character. We will tolerate no less respect than if you were writing to the Bishop or his wife. I know you don't wish your letters to be returned to you unread. 'A word to the wise is sufficient.'

"I am yours very respectfully,

*"BEULAH JACKSON."*

The country continued to ring with abolitionism. Orators and agitators continued to traverse it in all directions. Men and women mounted the rostrum, and held forth hour after hour before greatly-interested gatherings of both sexes and all ages. Fugitive slaves who had made their escape over the lines were introduced upon the platform, and gave their wonderful experiences of slavery in the South, and how they managed to get away. It was thrilling to hear some of them tell of all the dangers they encountered upon the road; how they were pursued for hundreds of miles by men, horses and even bloodhounds; how they were assisted by free people of color, and even by those in bondage and white people; and thus helped along week after week, and month after month, till they felt that they were at last both safe and free. When we consider how the slave States passed one law after another, and all pulled, and hauled, and banded together to protect and perpetuate their hold upon their human

property, it was most wonderful how very many slaves effected their escape. The nearer the awful storm came to breaking over our heads, the more numerous grew the successful escapes that were made. The frantic South still kept tying the strings tighter and tighter; but instead of producing the effect she desired, the more daring grew the soul of the intrepid slave, who seemed encouraged by the very God of battles himself to strike for liberty and flee to the North.

Thus the grand storm went on, increased and grew. Fred. Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, and many other famous writers continued to issue their papers week by week, or month by month. The agitation was kept at fever heat by all sorts and conditions of men and women. Still the Abolitionists did not have the entire field to themselves, for there were thousands and thousands of people in the Northern states who believed in slavery for the colored man as much as the Southern slaveholder himself, away down in Louisiana and Georgia. But Henry Ward Beecher, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and others without number continued to lay on with hard licks and steady blows; the public conscience of the free States became more and more educated, and the people in general came to take a sympathetic interest in the oppressed African they had never done before. The presence of the poor, oppressed fugitive slaves in their meetings, and seen streaming along the North towards the Great Lakes and Canada, with the marks of the "peculiar institution" stamped for life upon their backs, were proof positive that none could deny.

The furious quarrel was carried into the halls of Congress at Washington, and the South was unable to keep it out, though they made the most determined efforts to do so. The Quakers and all the friends of the slaves were forever at it, ding-dong, hammer and tongs, and thus the family quarrel went on. John Brown and free-soil men were in Kansas, and so were the "Border Ruffians" who came pouring in from Missouri and the South, being determined to carry Kansas and all other new States and territories into slavery like the rest of the slave States in their rear. And still the great American family quarrel went on, increased and grew, and the Christian voice of the North declared, "Thus far shalt thou come and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." The far-away Christian nations of the world watched the gathering of the coming tempest from over the seas, and it was apparent to their unobscured vision that a fearful judgment was coming upon America, and that it would not be long in coming, either.

The escape of mother and Tom and myself from slavery caused no small sensation in and around Buffalo. An endless tide of visitors came on to see us, and they had a thousand questions to ask us about our early life and experiences in Kentucky and Louisiana. As Lemuel Jackson had caused us to be duly educated, so that we could even play the piano well, we were rather more fortunate in the line of education than most of our fugitive brothers and sisters. In those days, great anti-slavery demonstrations were all the go. The announcement

that some great national abolitionist was to be on hand at the Hall, to address the general public on the wrongs and crimes of slavery, would pack the whole place, and sometimes the crowds that came could not find even standing room. Then music was added at times, songs were sung, even brass and stringed bands were brought into play, and everything was done to draw the prohibition hosts of the great North, then to keep them there, and finally to make them come again.

The Abolitionists took advantage of our presence in Buffalo to help one grand meeting in the city for the purpose of making a demonstration in force, to prove that colored people were just the very same as white people when they were educated and polished, as we three had been. Because the lie had been repeated ten thousand times in the South, and reechoed by their abetting friends in the North, that we were unfitted for civilization, and that the African was formed by God himself for slavery, and for slavery alone, and was never intended by nature to be the equal and companion of white men and women! It was considered that our presence in a highly intelligent audience would knock that argument completely on the head, and kill the abominable falsehood once for all. Therefore they made a demonstration in force, and we ourselves were on hand.

When the night and hour arrived, Tom, mother and myself proceeded to the hall, which was already half full, though we were there early. We saw that great things were expected of us all, and we braced ourselves up for the occasion, determined

that nobody should go away disappointed. The music discoursed sweet tunes as the people were gathering, and in due course of time the Rev. Doctor Henderson called the meeting to order, and took the chair for the evening. He called on our pastor to offer up prayer to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The glee club then sang "The Negro's Complaint," which was written by Mr. William Cowper, of England. Then the chairman exclaimed,

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, the slave-holders tell us that the children of African descent in these United States are unfitted for civilization, and that they are nothing but goods and chattels. I will now call upon one specimen of these goods and chattels to give us a rattling tune on the grand piano, and to sing us 'The Mocking Bird,' and put some life in it." (Great display of approbation, mingled with shouts of loud laughter).

Then said the reverend speaker, turning to myself,

"Mrs. Lincoln, will you be so kind as to favor us with some of your warm Southern music?"

Now, of course, the indulgent reader will readily understand that upon this august occasion I was arrayed like a bride adorned for her husband. So I arose, bowed to the audience, and put on one of my sweetest smiles, and proceeded to play and sing with unusual vigor. When I came to the chorus the whole audience joined in, and I thought they would have brought down the roof of the hall on our heads. Nor was that the best part of it, because they not only sang at the end of each verse, but when I got through the entire audience arose upon their feet and shouted

their applause, calling for an encore, and would not be refused.

I gave them a Southern song with music, for which they gave me another sounding cheer, when Dr. Henderson introduced my honored mother, Mrs. Sutherland, in the following happy terms:

"Dear Friends: We are assembled here to-night, in our accustomed place of meeting, to give the grand chariot of progress another push towards the bottom of the hill. (Loud applause). The lesson we wish to teach upon this special and most exceptional occasion is to show what the colored race are capable of doing and becoming if they had simply an open field and fair play. It is our desire to see them get an open field and fair play! (More applause). But I will not detain this large and splendid audience any longer, but at once introduce to you Mrs. John B. Sutherland, formerly of Kentucky, but now of Buffalo, who will entertain us for a time and address the house."

Loud applause followed the Doctor's remarks, when my honored mother came to the front of the platform, and spoke as follows:

"My good friends, I consider myself most especially honored this night to be permitted to come before you, to assist in driving another nail into the coffin of the 'peculiar institution' from whose clutches I have just been rescued by the kindness and daring of my own daughter. (Loud cheers). The South has told you ten thousand times that we of the colored race are only fit for hewers of wood and drawers of water, like the Gibeonites. These drawers of water of our poor, oppressed

race, that they themselves may live in mansions more palatial than the lords, and barons, and dukes of Continental Europe and the British Isles. Who ever heard of such unmanliness and cowardice? Men who ape the aristocracy of Europe, and even surpass them in brilliant, grand displays, wringing their wealth from the oppressed African!

"I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that Almighty God is getting tired of such refined badness, and that the day is coming, and will soon be here when such a storm of wrath will be upon the South as will wipe out the blood-red crime of slavery from Mason and Dixon's line to the Rio Grande. The sooner that day of judgment comes the better!

"Just look abroad over all these far-spreading Northern and Western States, and hear how they are ringing with the loud notes of freedom, and the sounds of coming conflict! I am free to say that upon this night, and at this very hour there are hundreds of meetings going on all along the Northern States for the purpose of enlightening the nation as to the real character, intentions and purposes of the South. The South is not ignorant of these things. They have got Argus eyes for all we do, both in Congress and out of it, and they will push things as fast and as far as they dare. They will give us no rest till we are either all slaves, or all free! (Loud applause). I look around me at the political skies, and I see them growing blacker and blacker as the great national storm is gathering. John Brown and the free-soil men are in Kansas; loud and angry words are being bandied forth between the occupants

of the two ends of the house – between the powerful North and the passionate South. From words they will most assuredly come to blows over that very 'peculiar institution,' and American slavery and all the evils that follow in its train, will pass away. But of one thing rest assured. The South will never consent to emancipate her slaves. They have been throwing it up in the face of the North these past fifty years that they can't get their own way; they will go out of the Union, and set up a slave empire of their own. Then they will attempt a dissolution of these glorious States. Then they will dare and defy you to force them back into the Union by the sword. The day is coming, and what will you do about it?" (Great cheering).

## CHAPTER IV

*Continuation and End of the Great Abolition Meeting at Buffalo.*

"The determination of the slave-holding oligarchy is to keep our persecuted race under a bushel – both soul and body – and to sit down on the top of that bushel for all coming time. They are stone blind to the fact that they are sitting on the top of a bushel of dynamite, which will blow them sky-high one of these days, with terrible effect. They have entirely forgotten that this world belongs to God; and they and the devil between them have made up their minds to do as they please. Between bloodhounds and cowhides they think they will do very well. My own firm belief is that a war is coming upon us that will carry mourning into every house in this great republic, both North and South. There are thousands and ten thousands of the very same opinion as myself. The South will never surrender their 'peculiar institution.' If it were dogs, cows or horses that they were called upon to give up, they would cheerfully give them up for a fair price. But the very 'Old Lad' himself is in the business when it comes to claim property in men and women, especially when those men and women happen to be better than themselves, which is usually the case. (Loud laughter and cheering all over the hall). When a dog, a horse or a cow runs away, they will let it go, but if it be a man or a woman, they will pursue the fugitive over mountains,

lakes and rivers, and even die in the attempt to bring them back to slavery. If this rising storm shall end in a war, the old lie that the black man will not fight will certainly be exploded, for every slave will go to the field, if necessary, and their strong arms will knock down the 'peculiar institution.' (Great applause).

"On my way down the Mississippi to New Orleans, they brought an old colored man on board, having sold him to a family resident in the Queen City of the South. I conversed much with that grand old hero, and it was wonderful to see what an intuitive knowledge he had of human nature, and what a vast amount of natural goodness there was still left in him, after so much hard experience, labor and toil among the cane brakes and cotton fields. Such a man as Judah – for that was his name – ought to have been a bishop in the Church of God, instead of being reckoned among the bales and bundles, and goods and chattels, of the Southern States. If that good man (who left such a deep impression on the hearts and minds of all Christian people who conversed with him) – if he had been free according to the will of God, and been educated like white men, instead of being robbed and plundered of his rights, he would have made a splendid bishop, for I am perfectly positive that he had every qualification for that office in the highest degree. That saintly man – that Judah – should this very day be the right reverend and honored bishop among his brethren in a nation where all are free, instead of being no more than a favored spaniel or ornament to grace the pride of some family in New Orleans. If that grand old man had only had

the same opportunities that the white bishops have had, he would at this hour be gracing the churches and halls of this nation, the very same as white men do. The day of judgment is at hand that will reverse all that!

"On the same voyage down the Mississippi to New Orleans, they brought on board a fair and beautiful creature of seventeen, who, like Judah, was also intended to grace a baronial hall in the Queen City of the South. A more attractive woman I have never seen anywhere. It was pitiable to think of her future. She was graceful in all her movements; most handsome; had a musical voice, and was withal a splendid singer. Where she was born I cannot tell, but they gave \$2,500 for her! The more I looked at poor Julia, the more mournful I became. What a glorious ornament for society she would have been had she been free! Almost any honorable man would have been proud to make her his wife. She could have led the choir in the house of God, and could have sung with the minstrels before Queen Victoria and all the crowned heads of Europe. She might have been a bright and shining light in some way or other, under the guiding hand of divine providence; her life and times might have been written by some famous author, and read by millions of people in this and other nations of the earth.

"In this way we can go on to the end of the chapter. Our traducers and slanderers say that we are unfit for this, that and the other thing, which is a deliberate and willful falsehood. We are well qualified for everything that any other race upon earth

is qualified to perform, and that is the very reason why our maligners say we are not; and they are even unwilling to give us the chance to try. It is true that a few of us are educated, but very few. We three, that is, myself and daughter and her husband, were taught a little because we were favorably situated under Mr. Jackson, but the slave-holders, as a general thing, make a specialty of keeping us in the most complete ignorance, and it is a crime for a slave to be taught to read, write and cast accounts, and it is also a crime for any man to be found teaching him.

"But there is a better day coming, and will soon be here; only we will have to pass through a time of the most tremendous affliction before the better times arrive. When, by the predetermined will of God, all men and women are free from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Lakes to the Gulf, then, indeed, shall we arise and shine forth, for our light will be come, and the glory of the Lord will be risen upon us. Then shall new schools and colleges be established all over the land, into which our sons and daughters will crowd, and they will also go to those which have been long established. Then shall our professional men and women go forth in their thousands and ten thousands, and spread to lands and islands beyond the seas. Then shall our senators and representatives enter the halls of Congress at Washington, and every state legislature. Our surgeons and physicians shall then ride forth precisely the same as their white brothers duly armed with the very same diplomas, authorizing them to heal the sick, and alleviate the ailments of those that are

afflicted, instead of wearing their lives away in the cane brakes, the cotton fields and the rice swamp of the South as slaves. They may labor all over the far-extended lands as freemen toiling for themselves and their families at useful trades, and laying up money against a rainy day. Then shall children go forth in their hundreds and thousands to be trained like others for the duties of life, and to become the ornaments of society. Then shall our afflicted sons and daughters sit no longer in the galleries of the churches of the land as so many 'goods and chattels' thrust away up into the corner, but walk forth in freedom to the house of the Lord on the Sabbath day – go forth in their thousands and tens of thousands to our most Holy Communion in all that liberty of soul and body wherein the Lord has made us all free. The time would fail for me to tell, and for you to listen to all the good things that will come with freedom, after every man, woman and child, now in slavery, are at liberty."

When Mrs. Sutherland had done speaking as above, she resumed her seat amidst a scene of great enthusiasm. Indeed the whole audience was worked up to a pitch of great excitement. The glee club now advanced to the front, and gave us one of their best songs, which was most heartily enjoyed by every person present.

The reverend chairman now rose to his feet, and thus addressed the immense assembly:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: – Just think upon the glorious speech to which we have listened, and the unanswerable arguments of

the beautiful and accomplished speaker! There are wonderful changes in store for this nation, and the end is not yet. I will now call upon Mrs. Thomas Lincoln, of Kentucky, to address the house. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Lincoln."

Although this was my first appearance in public, and though that mighty audience looked formidable enough to scare an African lion or royal Indian tiger, still my own mind was firmly made up to brook no failure, and I proceeded to speak as follows:

"My good Christian friends of the North: I bless and magnify the Lord this famous night, not only because I am permitted to address you, but because I am even free. It is very true that in yonder great slave land my lines fell to me in pleasant places; but after all, though I figured as 'The Flower-Girl of Riverside Hall,' I was no more in the eyes of the 'peculiar institution,' ridiculously so called, than a pampered and favored greyhound with a gold chain around his neck! (Loud laughter.) That golden chain marked me for a slave, although it was my privilege, upon grand occasions, to become an ornament to grace my owner's triumph among his visitors, just like any other fragile vase set upon a mantelpiece. (More laughter). Upon those grand occasions our masters used to bring out the finest wines, richest fruits and rarest delicacies of the whole earth. The land and the sea were ransacked to find dainties for the glorious lords and ladies of the South, to set before their guests far more than the lords and dukes and barons of Europe and Asia ever even attempted to display. At our grand banquets it was my duty to

pour out the wine, and assist in a general way in the dining-room, as the necessity of the moment might require. Then nature has endowed me with a voice for music, and as I am fond of singing, I had to obey, whenever I was bid, by giving them some of our Southern songs to the accompaniment of the grand piano, and even play for the company whenever they wanted to dance. (Loud applause from the young people). But I am bound to confess that often in the midst of these grand pastimes, when I deemed it prudent to look pleasant, and even to smile sweetly for the purpose of concealing my real thought, I was longing and praying for freedom, and regarded myself as no more than that aforementioned chained greyhound among other greyhounds that were free. (Cheers from the audience). I could not forget that at that very hour there were good men and women of color, down in the slave quarter, dressed in little more than sackcloth, stretching their weary limbs for the night upon their miserable beds, after a miserable meal of coarse cornbread, and a swallow of tea or coffee, perfect dish water, besides other stuff not fit for a horse or a dog to feed on! In the slave quarter there lay the best of men and women, of whom this world is not worthy, and here we were in the ball-room, abandoned to the dance as if there were no suffering in the world, much less not many yards away from the place where all our revelry was going on. Was it wonder, then, as my fingers flew over the piano, that I internally prayed, 'O my Good Lord, set me free! Set me free! and take me away from all this shallow and hollow mockery!' I had a tremendous

presentiment, which I could not keep down, that the Lord God Almighty would yet visit the South for all this, and give our great lords and masters, on some near future day, the field of battle whereon they could show off their talents, instead of robbing and murdering the oppressed African, and thus living at his expense. O my God, it was too much! (Great cheering).

"I was still very young. It was only spring when I was seventeen, when the Bishop and his wife were invited to our house. They were to be our guests during a great religious gathering at Louisville. I felt a sudden inspiration to make a rush for liberty, now or perhaps never. Besides, slavery is so uncertain, and as it is usually the unexpected thing that happens on their estates and plantations, if you don't take time by the forelock when you can, you may never have so good a chance again. I will leave it to my kind and gallant Tom to tell you how we got away; because I think that was the luckiest day in my whole life – unless, indeed, I consider also the day that my own dear mother and I sailed from New Orleans on the Columbia. There are great days in the lives of individuals as well as in the lives of nations, and I feel a heavenly presentiment in my own heart and soul that a great war is impending upon this nation, and that Almighty God will send it to set His people free. We are the Lord's own people, and we pray to Him every day. He has promised, many a time, in His holy word, to hear our prayers, and He does hear our prayers, and there are thousands and millions of prayers sent up to heaven every day to the throne of mercy that God would set

the captives free. The North and South between them, may pass 'Fugitive Slave Bills,' and plan and scheme to keep the curse of slavery going till the end of time, if they like; but at the same time this world belongs to the great Lord of heaven and earth, and He will hear all the prayers of the oppressed before much more time rolls over our heads, for He is sure to set our people free.

"I have been studying what I can to help on the good cause of emancipation, abolitionism, or by whatsoever name you may call it – I mean in this campaign that is now raging and at fever heat all along the Northern states, and from ocean to ocean. I am willing to do all I can to help the cause of the oppressed and terribly down-trodden slave. I am willing to place my services at the command of the managing committee in these parts, and to speak, to play, and to sing, and do my best in every way for the good cause. (Loud applause all over the hall). Fred. Douglass, and William Lloyd Garrison, and Henry Ward Beecher, and many others of the 'big guns' will be coming around; and perhaps even Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe herself. I think she, at least, ought to pay us a visit, for if any free colored person in the South is detected with her 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' in his possession, that person may be sent to prison for twelve months. Now I myself managed to read 'Uncle Tom,' even in slavery. So did my honored mother and husband – all here present before you – and Mr. Jackson, our owner, could have been fined so much apiece for us three, had the State of Kentucky been made aware of the fact! (Loud ironical cheers and great laughter by the whole house). In

a campaign like this, we must all put our shoulders to the wheel, and give a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together; and each and every one of us must do all we can to bring the abominations of slavery to an end. 'There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will.' Such are the words of Shakespeare. We also are rough-hewing the cause of freedom for the slave. The divinity of heaven will give the proper shape and finish to these ends of ours.

"As I have myself already drunk so deeply of the fountain of liberty, I think it is my bounden duty to do all I can to help on that good cause that lies so near all our hearts. And yet I do not see that I can do much more, when I have done my best, than to aid in heaping more fuel upon the top of the fire now raging, and thus assist in firing the Northern heart. Other weak women, besides me, have worked wonders in forwarding the cause of freedom and of God. Several of the greatest heroines of history are mentioned in both the Old and New Testament. One of the very first who was mentioned is Miriam, who led forth the women with timbrels and with dances at the Red Sea, for she commanded the people 'to praise the Lord, because He had done gloriously; the horse and the rider He had cast into the sea.' Then we come to the case of the brave and valiant Deborah, the most conspicuous of all the heroines of the Bible, for she led the Jewish nation to the war, and placed herself at the head of her volunteers on the mountains of Israel. So long as freedom and liberty are held sacred in this world, so long

shall the name of the victorious and intrepid Deborah be ever green. (Loud applause). Another famous heroine of history was Boadicea, the Queen of the Britons, who placed herself at the head of her army and fought with the Romans. Then we have the burning and shining example of Joan d'Arc, who led on the armies of France, and cleared that country of the English invaders. Nor must we forget the intrepidity and courage of Her Majesty Elizabeth, Queen of England, who placed herself at the head of her troops when her native isle was threatened with invasion by the Spanish Armada. Such women were – each one of them – worth a hundred thousand men, not so much for what they could do in themselves, but because they greatly assisted in firing the national heart, and urging on the hosts of men to war.

"Now, I am not saying that I myself will make a Deborah, a Joan of Arc, or an Elizabeth; but there are already in this campaign several heroic American women, who are doing yeoman service on behalf of the down-trodden and oppressed African, and if they can do something in this good cause, so can I. (Loud shouts of 'Yes, yes! so you can! Hurrah for Mrs. Lincoln!') I am at least willing to do my best in talking, in singing and in striking the dulcet chords of music, and wherein I may happen to fall short, others will atone for my deficiencies. Let the work go on! Let us lay the axe to the roots of this deadly and devilish upas tree! Let slavery be shaken to its lowest foundations, and be driven into the Gulf of Mexico! Forward, ye brave! And even if war itself must come, let it come, and even we women will go

to the field!"

With the last exhortation, I resumed my seat, when the audience rose to their feet and cheered, and almost made me blush at the results of my own small efforts. When the excitement had abated, and the audience was in readiness to hear the next speaker, the Rev. Dr. Henderson arose once more and said:

"Ladies and gentlemen: – After the eloquent and stirring address we have heard from the wife, we shall now look forward with much pleasure to an address from that noble and gallant husband who safely piloted both himself and her out of slavery, as we plainly see here before us to-night. I beg to introduce to you Mr. Thomas Lincoln!"

Tom arose at once, and as he advanced towards the footlights, he pulled down his vest and cleared his throat in the masculine fashion, the audience in the meanwhile cheering loudly, after which he proceeded to speak as follows:

"My right good Christian friends: – It is with no small pleasure that I appear before you to-night to give you some of my sentiments, views and opinions on the coming war in this country. (Sensation). I firmly believe that a war is impending over us, as I believe that there is a God of vengeance and of justice. Look at the millions and billions of money that the Southern chivalry have piled up, and they are piling it up still, at the expense of the poor, oppressed and enslaved African! And shall a sinful nation indeed escape from blood-red crimes like these? I am neither a prophet by profession, nor the son of a prophet, but even a

child can understand that the funeral bell of slavery will be tolled before long, and depend upon it, ye young men! both you and I will be called into the field, and we will all be needed to pull down that most abominable and 'peculiar institution!' (Loud applause).

"Though neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, I affirm that a day is coming, and is now on the home stretch, indeed, when you young men and I will not be permitted to stay at home and dally with the apron strings of our mothers and sweethearts, but we will have to march to the field. We will then make it manifest what we men of Africa can dare and can do. I shall be quite willing to go for one, when the South, in her frantic anger, will secede; I am willing to do all I can for my own country, and if those who are soldiers themselves never come home, we, at least, will clear the great national gangway for coming generations, and the glories that are to follow! (Loud cheers).

"I suppose that some of our friends on the other side of the fence will begin to tell us here that the colored man will not fight, and that there is neither pluck nor courage in him. We shall certainly be told a hundred thousand times that there is no fighting in him, and that he was never intended for anything but a docile slave! Such persons who say so have never read even the A B C of history; for colored men fought quite as well as white men on many a hard-fought field, both in the War of the Revolution, and in the War of 1812; and what we did once, and did well, we can do again, and do better, and with a better motive, too, because we will be fighting for our own complete emancipation,

and to put an end, once for all, to slavery in the United States, and purge the nation of a great crime. (Loud applause throughout the hall).

"I need not go back in history to prove the bravery of the African race, for this is a well-known fact, and the very school-books are full of it. The bravery of the slave is one of the main reasons why the slave-holders make such stringent laws in attempting to perpetuate their iniquitous system. They know our prowess, and the risks they would run in the case of a general rising, and therefore they exercise double caution in order to keep down even the slightest attempts at insurrection. But for all that, there is not the slightest doubt in my own mind that they will go out of the Union, as they have been promising us to do for the last fifty years, if they cannot get their own way! In all their plans, schemes and calculations, this slave-holding oligarchy have thrown the Almighty overboard, and every sacred right of the human race. They have treated the wronged and oppressed African as if he had neither rights nor feelings, and, indeed, as if he were not a human being at all. But there is a day coming, and it will soon be here, when the Great Creator of the entire human race will call an imperative halt to all this, and go into this war as we may, we will come out with four millions of people who will be redeemed from the yoke and curse of Southern bondage. (Loud cheers).

"I did not intend to make a lengthy address. I only wished to point out that we are drifting into war, and my own willingness

to lend a hand to liberate the oppressed slave."

Tom now resumed his seat amidst great applause. The audience, though taken by surprise by his speech, were greatly delighted, because of his willingness to go to the field.

The reverend chairman now called on the glee club to give us some more of their musical compositions and campaign songs. These were given with a hearty good will, so that the enthusiasm of the audience rose higher and higher. The newspaper reporters were also kept busy, and a good account of the proceedings of this very successful abolition meeting was found in several of the papers next morning, and very extensively read. Before we scattered for the night, the Rev. Doctor Henderson arose, and made the following closing remarks to the audience:

"Ladies and gentlemen: We have all listened to a rare treat this night. Just think of it! The South calls these two ladies and this gentleman their 'goods and chattels,' and for the very life of me I do not see how a war can be avoided, and then we shall know what their so-called goods and chattels will do when the storm shall burst upon us in all its fury. No, no! I do not see how a war is to be avoided, for the passions of both the North and the South are being worked up in precisely the same way as is usual in quarrels between individuals, and no doubt but it will all end by coming to blows in a terrible conflict.

"In the meantime it is our duty to keep agitating as never before. It is a perfect outrage on humanity to hold in bondage such refined persons as these three here present to-night. We

must agitate this great question, night and day, till the sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings. I now call for a vote of thanks to Mrs. John B. Sutherland, and to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lincoln. Let three rousing cheers be given for them!"

The audience rose to their feet, gave three cheers and a tiger, and the great demonstration came to an end.

# CHAPTER V

*The Negro's Complaint – John Brown's Raid – The Secession of the Southern States – Battle of Milliken's Bend – Battle at Fort Hudson – The Effect of the Emancipation Proclamation on this Nation and the Entire Christian World.*

As my indulgent readers would perhaps like to know the lines of "The Negro's Complaint," which were sung so beautifully by the campaign glee club that night at the great meeting at Buffalo, I will here insert them. They were written by the Honorable William Cowper, of England, and directed against British slavery in the West Indies, and the slave trade generally. They apply with such force and truth to that self-same blood-red crime as carried on by the United States that they are worthy of being committed to memory by every true lover of poetry in the English language throughout the world.

## THE NEGRO'S COMPLAINT

Forced from home and all its pleasures,  
Africa's coast I left forlorn,  
To increase a stranger's treasures  
O'er the raging billows borne.  
Men from England bought and sold me,

Paid my price in paltry gold;  
But, though theirs they have enrolled me,  
Minds are never to be sold.

Still in thought as free as ever,  
What are England's rights? I ask;  
Me from delights to sever,  
Me to torture, me to task?  
Fleecy locks and dark complexion  
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;  
Skins may differ, but affection  
Dwells in white and black the same.

Why did all-creating nature  
Make the plant for which we toil?  
Sighs must fan it – tears must water,  
Sweat of ours must dress the soil.  
Hark! Ye masters, iron-hearted,  
Lolling at your jovial boards —  
Think how many backs have smarted  
For the sweets your cane affords!

Hark! He answers. Wild tornadoes  
Strewing yonder seas with wrecks,  
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,  
Are the voice with which he speaks;  
He, foreseeing what vexations  
Afric's sons should undergo,  
Fixed their tyrant's habitations

Where his whirlwinds answer – No!

By our blood in Afric wasted,  
Ere our necks received the chain,  
By the miseries we have tasted  
Crossing in your barks the main;  
By our sufferings since ye brought us  
To the man-degrading mart —  
All, sustained by patience, taught us,  
Only by a broken heart.

Count our nation brutes no longer,  
Till some reason ye shall find  
Worthier of regard, and stronger  
Than the color of the kind;  
Slaves of gold, whose sordid dealings  
Tarnish all your boasted powers,  
Prove that ye have human feelings  
Ere ye proudly question ours!

Time passed on, and Tom and I, and Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland, still continued to occupy the same house. The Lord blessed the entire household, and none of us had ever cause to regret the steps we had taken and carried out with such speed. We enlisted heart and soul in the grand anti-slavery movement, and blew the bellows with all our might to help on the good cause of liberty and perfect freedom. The border ruffians in Kansas had been beaten back into the South, which was the first open fight between the

two high contending parties. That put the angry South in no good humor. Like an ungovernable, high-strung virago, her temper was up, and she threatened secession, and dreamed of extending a new slave empire around the Gulf of Mexico. The abolitionists of the North were unyielding, and the two sections were drifting into war.

In the midst of so much combustion and heated temper, it would have been remarkable, indeed, if there had been no "flame" that burst out here or there. In all impending struggles and revolutions there is always someone who voices the pent-up feelings of one party or the other, and sometimes of both. On the impulse of the moment, as it were by an act of inspiration, somebody steps out of the ranks, and becomes the leader on his side. The man who led the way on the part of the anti-slavery party, was the famous John Brown, who figured so largely in Kansas, and in 1859 seized upon the United States Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, in Virginia, while he was leading on a handful of white and colored men for the purpose of effecting a general rising of the slaves throughout the South. But the Virginians came pouring down upon him and his little band. Some were killed and wounded; others were missing, and John Brown himself and a few of his followers were hung. Still, John Brown was in the right. He was simply an outgrowth of the times. He regarded the slaves as prisoners, whom it was the duty of any man to set at liberty. They or their forefathers, at least, had been taken captive in Africa, and it – that is, American slavery

– was the crying scandal of the entire Christian world. John Brown was one of the abolitionists of the North, and they were responsible for his actions. But the South was alarmed all over its dark domain. From Mason and Dixon's Line to the Rio Grande the news of John Brown's raid flew like wildfire, and the violent temper of the South grew to a white heat. And all the world – both at home and abroad – remarked,

"If one single spark like this can raise such a conflagration, what shall we have when the anti-slavery party shall set their foot into the whole 'business' on a grand scale? If one man at Harper's Ferry can effect such a disturbance, what will ensue when the great overshadowing North will arise in her might, and call for a settlement of the whole question in favor of the oppressed African?"

The war, indeed, was now nearer than before. The South would listen to no compromise nor reason of any kind. The haughty Southern lords would brook no interference. The Northern intruders who touched her "peculiar institution" touched "the apple of her eye." And now for war!

The war came at last, and South Carolina was the state that struck the first blow. Then one state seceded after another, and they set up the "Southern Confederacy," with slavery as its corner-stone. Then the wildest and most tremendous excitement spread over all the great North, and the interest reached even the ends of the earth. For the time being, so great was the national delirium that the great masses of the population seemed to

have completely forgotten the glorious cause of abolitionism, the grand doings of the underground railroad, and even the eternal decree of the Most High God that one man should not own property in another. But all the same the deep and thoughtful minds of all thorough-going Christians all over the world could see that this war should not close till every slave was set free. It was Pharaoh and the captive Israelites over again, "Let my people go, that they may serve me."

That which threw the great North into such a state of excitement and alarm was not the slave question at all. The people were concerned over the breaking up of this great united republic, because the establishment of the Southern Confederacy cut the nation in two, and took away from us the middle and lower Mississippi. If the hair is the glory of a woman, as Paul says, the Mississippi river is the glory of the United States. Uncle Sam, therefore, even yet did all he could to induce the seceded states to come home again, and assured them in every possible way that not a finger should be laid upon their slaves, but that they should keep them all! But the haughty South had made up her mind to set up house-keeping for herself, and she thought she could do so even if the worst came to the worst. She had been getting ready for secession for fifty years, and now the crisis had come.

There did not appear to be the slightest idea on either side that more than four years would elapse before the dreadful business would be settled. A call was made by President Lincoln for seventy-five thousand men to serve for three months, but a far

greater number offered themselves. There were thousands, if not millions, of people who believed that the small affair would be all over in a very little while, and nothing was talked of but marching to Richmond, and winding things up. Then the rebellious leaders would return to their duties, slavery would go on as before, and the Mississippi river would once more flow through our glorious republic – one and undivided, from the headwaters of the same to the Gulf of Mexico.

It never seemed to enter the minds of the great masses of the people then that the South was as terribly in earnest as she certainly was, nor how well-trained she was and ready for the fray. The skill of her leaders, the intrepidity of her sons, and fighting upon her own soil, were lost sight of to a very great extent in the wild delirium that seized on the great Northern heart over the breaking up of the Union. It did not seem to strike the national mind at the time that this was a war sent by God for the extirpation of slavery, and as an answer to the prayers of the oppressed millions in the South for freedom, and for the treatment of human beings. It did not then occur to the minds of the North that a day would come after nearly two years' indecisive fighting, when military necessity would compel the Federal government to free the slave by Act of Congress, and call upon him "to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty," and Shakespeare says, "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will." and so it was even now.

I shall never forget that morning at Buffalo – it was in the

month of June, 1863, when the letter-carrier brought me the first war letter from my gallant Tom. The date was not given, but it came from a place called Milliken's Bend, on the Lower Mississippi river, and a battle had been fought at that place, since called by the historians, "The Battle of Milliken's Bend." But I will here insert Tom's letter in its entirety, as there are some other things in it besides war and fighting.

*"MILLIKEN'S BEND, June, 1863.*

"My Dear Beulah: – No doubt but you have already received the letters I sent you from New Orleans, after that I myself and the rest of the Buffalonians had landed in the Crescent City. I send lots of warm love to the entire family, and be sure to keep our two daughters, Ella and Fannie, regularly at school. My best love to the church in a body. Tell them to pray for us.

"I have great pleasure in informing you that we have here completely settled the question whether colored men will not fight in America as well as their ancestors did in Africa. On the night of the 6th of June, about three thousand Texans came to our fortifications, and lay around our five hundred colored soldiers, besides a hundred white ones. Those three thousand rebels lay prowling around our men like so many cats, only waiting for the dawn of the 7th of June to gobble us up like so many poor, helpless mice. About three o'clock they came on with an awful rush, shouting, 'No quarter for niggers and their officers!' They got into our works, and the way that men fell on both sides was dreadful. It was really awful the way my poor comrades were

shot down, or killed with the bayonet, though at the same time we mowed them down like grass before the scythe. Those strong arms of ours that had made the South the rich land that it lately was, now laid its defenders even with the ground. There was hardly a single officer, either black or white, among us who was not either killed or wounded. How I escaped myself without a scratch is more than I can tell, where there were so very few who came out of the battle as they went in. To God be all the praise!

"The gunboats Choctow and Lexington assisted us very much, for they kept throwing shells into the enemy, and made them fly in all directions, and even up into the air! The white men on our side – one hundred of them – also fought like lions. One division of the rebels hesitated about coming out of a redoubt they had got into their possession. They were not willing. But our brave black soldiers went in with a rush, and assisted them in making up their minds by taking the bayonet to them, and thrashing them with the butt ends of their guns, precisely like thrashing wheat! They reminded me of a lot of guilty cats when the dogs are on them. Having suffered the loss of hundreds of men, and been completely vanquished in the bargain, the rebels were forced to retreat, and this they did with as good a grace as they were able.

"No doubt but the telegraph has already carried the news all over the Union how our six hundred intrepid soldiers beat three thousand rebels. This will settle, once for all, the insulting question, 'Will the black man fight?' It will also secure for us more civil treatment from white soldiers, both North and South,

and remind them that the Great Creator himself, and all foreign nations, make no difference whatsoever on account of the color of the skin. I would like to know what 'Old Massa' thinks of things now.

"I send my best love to all those who may enquire for me, and please write soon to your most affectionate husband,

"Tuesday night, 9 o'clock.

*"THOMAS LINCOLN."*

War surely is a terrible thing at its best estate. Nations have often waged war for mere conquest and ambition, which was the greatest crime that ever could have been committed. But here was a war for freedom – the freedom of millions of slaves. It was for this freedom that we had prayed for the assistance of the Most High God, and troubled the country, labored and toiled in all possible ways. It was for this freedom that all the chivalrous Christianity of the nation had put forth all its efforts; and now at times, many people began to doubt whether all these efforts had not been put forth in vain, because for the first two years of the war, our arms really made such small progress compared with what we had expected. And yet, for the very life of me, I am to this very day unable to see how we could have done much more than we did; for though the Northern troops were as brave as men could be, we had a foe to contend with who was quite as brave as ourselves – a foe manned by officers as good as our own, and fighting upon their own soil, where they knew every foot of the ground. Thus the war dragged slowly along, and the close of the

second year found us with very little progress made.

We were not in despair, but the South yet retained all her strength, and was proud and defiant. They were also determined to fight on, and did fight on with a valor worthy of a better cause. But how could we expect more success than we had under the circumstances? So great was the prejudice against color that white men were even unwilling to fight side by side with our own people; and then Lincoln and his cabinet were all afraid of affronting the tender and delicate susceptibilities of the South by putting even their little finger on the heinous institution called "Domestic slavery." Verily, they were carrying their squeamishness to a most tremendous length when lives had to be wasted in thousands, because white men were too proud even to fight side by side with colored men, and because we were so very timid about offending our "separate brethren," that the Northern officers even sent back the refugees from our armies – sent them back into slavery! And they even allowed their life-long oppressors to come into the camps, look around for their slaves, identify and claim their property, and carry them home again before our very eyes! Was it any wonder, then, that we had so little success in this war which God himself had sent, chiefly that the slaves should be freed?

But the spectacle of thousands and tens of thousands of men being mowed down like grass before the Southern scythes gradually changed all that. The South, indeed, had a comfortable time of it, sending all their sons to the war, whilst the

black population were taking care of their families, working their fields, and even throwing up intrenchments, and making themselves useful in a thousand ways by command of their owners, and against the forces of the North! Not that the slaves wished to work in these ways for the South, but because our very armies were helping their masters to keep them in their present position, even by returning them to bondage whenever they tried to gain their freedom. The Southern lords knew all about our "tender feelings" for their own "property" – falsely so called – and they took advantage of it.

We had nobody but ourselves to blame for this state of things. Our men were mown down in thousands because we had such tender regard for the feelings of the rebels, and there was not the slightest sign that things would ever get any better. We whipped the South to-day and they whipped us to-morrow. In the meantime the strong, able-bodied African tilled the fields of the South, when he might have been fighting for freedom and the Union.

But to return to the year 1863. Some changes had been made in the rapidly-shifting scenes of the war. Tom had been removed from Milliken's Bend, and gone to Port Hudson, where a most terrible assault had been made on the rebel defences about the 23rd of May. But I will here let Tom speak for himself, because he wrote to me often, and my greatest pleasure was to sit down and send him all our domestic news.

*"PORT HUDSON, on the Mississippi, July, 1863.*

"My Dear Beulah: – I arrived at this place a few days ago, and have been out to see signs and marks of the recent siege. Everything seems to interest me, and war is indeed a terrible game. I have heard great and full accounts of the awful fighting down in this place, much of which I must reserve for your patient ears when I come, if God my life shall spare.

"You could not find a white man in all the Mississippi Valley to-day who will tell you that colored men wont fight. I don't know where such an idea ever arose, because it was the strong arm and perseverance of the slave in raising crops all over Dixie that created most of the wealth we found in the South, and I look upon it as a wilful and malicious falsehood in white soldiers, North and South alike, affirming over and over again that colored men would not fight. General Grant and every high officer in the Union army have given us most unstinted praise, and have affirmed that we fight nobly.

"The accounts of the terrible fighting done here almost surpass human belief. About the 23rd of May, the Northern armies invested this place, and made a most tremendous effort to carry it by storm. The rebels had a naturally strong position, and all the appliances of war at their command. They had batteries and masked batteries, mortars, and, in short, almost everything known for destruction and modern warfare. They had even felled trees in our path, and their very cannon balls mowed down trees three feet thick. The noise of their guns made more din and uproar than the loudest thunderstorm. Against those brave

and terrible rebels white soldiers from the North and colored soldiers from Louisiana advanced again and again, but all of them failed, and they were mown down like grass before the scythe. O terrible, sanguinary war! It was horrible! The balls and other missiles flew through the air thicker than hailstones. Once more we terribly underrated the prowess of the South. All of us were shipped alike, though we fought like gods! Oh, my dear Beulah! This is the price the American nation is now paying for the crime of slavery! The South carried out the villainy, and the North winked at the whole devilish business, thus, in fact, helping the rebels to keep on our claims! Shall a guilty nation indeed escape for deeds like these? At all events, we proved one thing during that terrible assault in May, and the subsequent siege of Port Hudson, and that was that colored men are as much men as white men, red, brown, yellow or any other race that can be named. These things were all well known before by every man, woman and child, but then, 'None are so blind as those who don't want to see.' The cry now is, 'Yes, yes! Colored men will fight well.' It is some comfort to know all this, for now we can get a rest.

"I send a deal of love to yourself, the children, to Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland, to the entire church on Vine street, and to all others. I get all your letters.

"I am, my dear Beulah, your most loving

*"THOMAS LINCOLN."*

From the accounts contained in the two foregoing letters that I received from my dear husband, my kind readers will see

that it was a public revelation made to the whole nation that the colored race not only made first-rate soldiers, but that they were sorely needed by Uncle Sam in the day of his distress. Lincoln's Proclamation on the first of January, 1863, completely broke down the dam from one end of the country to the other and throughout the whole land. Now the patriotic governors and many others bestirred themselves in raising colored regiments, getting them drilled, and pushed to the front with rapidity, so that the tide of war everywhere began to turn in favor of the Northern arms, and things began to look as if the very God of Liberty Himself was smiling upon the nation. Up to the end of 1862 the North had been fighting for nothing more than the restoration of the Union, and surely this was a noble thing to fight for, and especially for the possession of the glorious Mississippi, flowing all the way from its remotest springs at its farthest away branches in Montana, some 4,400 miles from the ocean. It was indeed something to keep the great river and all the States one and undivided. But what about slavery? Was it not, if possible, a ten times greater sin to carry on slavery than for the Southern States to secede? And yet there were thousands and tens of thousands of soldiers, officers and citizens all over the land who made the most strenuous objections to striking one blow for freedom – the very cause for which the war had been sent! Who need wonder, indeed, that our arms had such small success for almost two years after the rebels seceded? The only thing that surprises me is that we had as much success as we did, but we were taught a lesson,

and we learned it well at last.

It was not long before the fame of the colored soldiers of America was wafted over the whole world, and was everywhere received by all lovers of freedom with most hearty applause. All, excepting those who believed in keeping other people down, heard the news with the greatest of pleasure. Many of the aristocrats of England, France and elsewhere, who had made investments in Confederate bonds, and sympathized with the South from the beginning, had no joy when they learned how Uncle Sam had turned a new element of strength into the field; but the common people everywhere all the world over, who had read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in all the principal languages of the earth, and opposed the recognition of the Southern Confederacy from the first on account of slavery, rejoiced to hear that the Great North had at last turned over a new leaf, and brought the heroic sons of Africa into the field. It was a military necessity, of course; the nation was forced to do it; but all the same it was a matter of justice, and the right thing to do. Now the entire Christian world took ten times more interest in the war than before. They had been praying and often working in the interest of the American slave; and now they were delighted to hear of the self-same slave marching bravely to the field, and assisting white men in knocking the fetters off the whole race. Now, indeed, the scales began to turn in favor of the North, along the whole line. Before the first of January, 1863, it was as if there were eight pounds in the Northern scale, and eight pounds in the Southern

scale, but now we throw in 200,000 colored men or more into the Northern scale, when the Southern end of the beam flies up as the lighter weight, and it becomes clear to the obtusest mind that the South is doomed, and domestic slavery with it also.

## CHAPTER VI

*Great Service of the Colored Race – Heroic Colored Women – Attack on Fort Wagner, 18th July, 1863 – The ex-Slaves go to School – The Freedman's Bureau – The Jubilee Minstrels – A Long Letter From Mr. Thomas Lincoln, Describing His Life in a New Orleans Hospital – The Mississippi River, and the Fight at Pleasant Grove in the Red River Expedition.*

As I stated in the last chapter, recruiting went merrily on, and colored men came up "to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." The heavens now smiled upon the Northern arms, and "the sun of righteousness arose upon them with healing in his wings." It is glorious to think how willingly our people threw down the shovel and the hoe, and advanced to meet the Northern troops as they came within easy striking distance. Thousands and tens of thousands crossed the mountains, threaded the mountain passes, kept on their way day and night up the rivers and down the rivers till they beheld the Union armies encamped away in the valleys, and a few more willing, enthusiastic bounds, and they were free! It was most refreshing to read the letters from the white soldiers at the time, commending these colored men in every possible way. They took a perfect delight in relating the thousand and one acts of kindness and sympathy that colored men and women performed towards countless Union men in times of distress, disaster and danger;

how they secreted them; how they fed them, gave them rest and shelter, and how faithfully and skilfully they guided the armies on their way, and even piloted the Union boats in safety up and down the rivers of the South. Never were fidelity and devotion more marked since the world began, and it was downright pleasant to read the letters from "the seat of war," and see how these good deeds of the African were appreciated by the Anglo-Saxons. "Skins may differ, but affection dwells in white and black the same," and although "Old Massa" and "Old Missus" did their best to keep Lincoln's proclamation from the knowledge of the slaves, somehow or other the truth became known; in fact, it seemed to be carried on the wings of the wind, and now all prayed more and more fervently that the Lord would send freedom.

It would be a pleasure for me to relate the deeds of devotion recorded of our people in behalf of the cause of God and liberty. There are two acts, those of heroic women, that I must not omit. We have all heard of General John Morgan, the Kentucky guerilla chief, who led a raid into Ohio, and worked so much wanton mischief on Union people and the Union in the Southern cause. We caught and imprisoned him in Ohio, but he escaped, and took to his tricks again, and was more fleet, and harder to catch than a long-legged greyhound. At last he was located one night in a far-away town or village of the South, and the nearest Union troops lay about twenty miles away. This devoted colored woman lost not a moment of time, but steered for the distant camp, gave them the most particular information, so that they

rose at once, and upon arriving at John Morgan's rendezvous, they woke him up, and once for all put an end to his dreadful raidings on the Unionists.

I must next mention the case of a colored woman in Georgia, when General Sherman came riding through the woods on his famous march from Atlanta to the Sea. This woman was a regular heroine – "a mother in Israel" – and one who would have made a second Deborah, with a host of men, women and children at her back, all of whom the war had set free. This woman advanced upon the path of the troops, and having introduced herself to General Sherman and his men, gave glory to God and to the Union armies, whom the God of Hosts had there and then sent forth. Her language was worthy of a Shakespeare. On that day when Deborah, and Miriam, and Joan of Arc, and all the other heroines of history shall be gathered together in the Palace of God, I feel certain that this colored Deborah, this "mother in Israel," will be among them when the Lord of Heaven and Earth makes up His jewels.

Where all did so well, it would be in vain to single out any one regiment that distinguished itself more than another. At the same time, there were certain regiments that attracted a great deal of attention to themselves because they were the first ones to break the spell as to whether colored men would fight like white men, and thus render effective service in the war. And such men were the colored troops that had been well drilled and sent down from Massachusetts to South Carolina, and who lent a

hand in the investment of Charleston. It was on the 18th of July, 1863, when a general bombardment of both land and sea forces at once made a high-handed attempt to carry Fort Wagner – a rebel fort which lay on the narrowest part of a mere strip of sandy land called Morris Island, washed by the ocean on one side, and approachable by low, swampy marshes in the rear. The entire morning and middle of the day had been spent in bombarding the place till at last the extemporized fort, composed of timber, and stone, and sand, seemed to have crumbled away; for, as the day wore away, the rebels ceased entirely to reply to the land and sea forces, and the Federal troops were under the impression that the place was abandoned altogether, or at least destroyed past all hope of remedy for the present. The Union forces clamored loudly for an advance upon the fort, and to occupy the place once for all. After some hesitation the commanders assented to their wishes, and it was decided to advance just as the darkness of the night was setting in on that long July day. Alas, alas! It was a fatal resolution, for the rebels had been busy all the afternoon and early night making swift preparations to give our men a terrible reception. By the time that darkness had fully set in, Fort Wagner was almost as good as ever, although it had such a terrible knocking about all the early hours of the day. The Southern engineers were so clever, and their men had wrought with such a will, that it needed the bravest of the brave to fight with them; but as far as that was concerned we were all about even-handed when we had a fair field. Four thousand men, therefore, advanced

along the sands of Morris Island with the intention of investing and clearing out the fort of its defenders, if there were any of them there. The colored Massachusetts troops led the way, and so they all advanced along the sands – the white sands that had but lately been washed by the ocean. Everything was as still as a stone till they came to a ditch, when a fearful tempest of shot from the cannon and musket assailed them, and the assailants were mowed down like grass before the scythe. Still our troops bravely advanced across the ditch, climbed up the bank, and pushed forward right into the fort, slaughtering the gunners and clearing a path before them. But all this time our brave men were being mowed down in rows. Many jumped into the fort and had to surrender there, because, indeed, they could neither advance nor retreat, being caught in a perfect trap. Thus we lost about half our men in killed, wounded and prisoners, and had to retreat in the best way we were able. It was a dreadful defeat that the Union forces sustained; but the colored troops had the honor of leading all the rest, and the foolish idea that colored men would not fight received another complete quietus, and their bravery was published in all the papers from one end of the Union to the other.

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