Edwin Hall

Entered Hall
in 1868

The Property of
Jacob Hall
Bought in 1828 by
Halls Pts 25

William S. Hall
1865
Ora Roylance
Dec. 26, 1910.

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

LIFE

OF

JAMES PEARSE,

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I,

CONTAINING A GENERAL ACCOUNT OF HIS EARLY LIFE; AND MORE PARTICULARLY OF FIVE YEARS RESIDENCE IN THE STATES OF MISSISSIPPI AND LOUISIANA, TOGETHER WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THAT COUNTRY, ITS INHABITANTS, CLIMATE AND PRODUCTIONS:—DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF MEN OF ORDINARY LIFE, WHO WISH TO EMIGRATE FROM THE NORTHERN AND WESTERN STATES.

PART II,

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF HIS UNFORTUNATE IMPRISONMENT AT PLATTSBURGH, IN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK. CERTIFIED BY A NUMBER OF GENTLEMEN WHO WERE ACQUAINTED WITH THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

—:o:—

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

—:o:—

RUTLAND:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM FAY, FOR THE AUTHOR.
1825.

DISTRICT OF VERMONT, }
TO WIT: }

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the seventh day of June, in the forty ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Timothy Pearse, of the said district, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"A Narrative of the life of James Pearse, in two parts. Part first, Containing a general account of his early life; and more particularly of five years residence in the States of Mississippi and Louisiana, together with some account of that country, its inhabitants, climate and productions. Designed for the use of men of ordinary life who wish to emigrate from the northern and western States. Part second, containing an account of his unfortunate imprisonment at Plattsburgh, in the State of New-York. Certified by a number of gentlemen who were acquainted with the circumstances of his imprisonment. Written by himself."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."

JESSE GOVE,
Clerk of the District of Vermont.

A true copy of record, examined and sealed by
JESSE GOVE, *Clerk.*

PREFACE.

—:o:—

IT is a common coustom with those who write books, any parts of which contain a narrative of their lives, and sufferings, to show, or attempt to show, the world, that their afflictions have been far greater than any other persons.

But this is by no means the design of the author. He does not write so much to convince the world that he has been greatly afflicted, as to teach them, how, by a history of his troubles, to avoid those to which they are liable, of a similar nature, and may be induced by similar indiscretion. Or that his sufferings, have such a connection with those who are disposed to emigrate to the same part of the country, in which he has resided; that he is persuaded, that a relation of them, will not fail to guard the unwary against danger, who have in their imaginations, converted the south western states into elysium fields, for northern emigrants.

The reader is therefore desired to reflect, that while he reads the following pages, he may not only save his own life, but the lives of his acquaintance, by the information which is hereby put into his possession.

For the writer is not about to give the bright or the dark side of the picture, by relating the disgusting tales of British tourists, respecting our southern country, nor the servile adulation of some northern people, who have been flattered by southern etiquette, while they have remained ignorant of facts; standing equally aloof, from the former and the latter,

he states bare-faced facts, which he has personally *seen*, and *heard*, and *felt*, in his own travels.

Whoso readeth, let him understand what the writer hath known, not by the noisy and stale stories of the bar-room; not by the consultation of romantic tours of those who write to gain applause, by drawing only the fair side of the picture, but by *actual experience*.

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I.

Introductory Remarks.

MANY people may think that this little work belongs to the number of useless books which are in the world. To such I reply, that I think otherwise, although I agree with them, that it would have been better, had it come from an abler pen; if my objectors could see that load of human misery which I have seen, in consequence of men emigrating to the south, who occupy ordinary stations in life, they would agree with me, that something ought to be done to give such men proper information.

I have the satisfaction of knowing, that I have pleased some men of understanding; and none who have examined the manuscript, have discouraged its publication. While on my journey from Mississippi to Vermont, I saw several parents, who rejoiced that I intended to publish this little work. They said, that had their children possessed the advice and information of one who knew by actual experience and observation, the evils of such a change of climate, they might probably have been

spared the anguish of mourning their early death. With this view I have written it, that it may prevent others from emigrating to their injury, and to raise a small fund to restore my afflicted family to a free state.

It has long been acknowledged in the free states, that children are the property, as well as the hope of the common wealth; under this view, public schools are established, that the poor may share in the general stock of information.

Society has received much good from so general a diffusion of knowledge: but as good often arises out of evil, so evil sometimes grows out of good. Young people possessing a good stock of information, having enterprizing minds, feeling their poverty, and hearing many pompous stories from the south, have ventured, without friends to assist them when they get there, and almost without money, to go to the south, where very many meet their disappointment. They have united with their ideas of southern advantages, their present notions of health, friends and society.

On arriving at the south, they find much that they have heard to be true; and could they have *health* and *enjoyment*, all would be well. But here the scene changes: health cannot be depended upon, and many die prematurely. Those who live find little enjoyment with which they have been acquainted in their native country. Common people, if they have any society at all, must adopt a system of thought and conduct, so entirely different from their own, or, from what they have been taught in a more enlightened land, that to enjoy it, they must undergo a kind of conversion, not for the better, but for the worse. To prevent this is one object of the work; and if I should in any measure accomplish it or induce some one to take up the subject, who shall have ability equal to the task, I shall gain one great end for which I have written the following pages.

I do not intend, by offering a general account of my early life, to assume that vanity which appears in some, by giving an account of an exalted pedigree, or splendid actions.

Every reader is naturally led to enquire the views and feelings of the writer, before he knows what judgment to form of his writings. For some readers, it is sufficient to know that the writer was not of their class, or party; and they exclaim at once, it is unworthy of our attention! Others have candour enough to make every proper allowance, and are willing to read any thing that elicits instruction.

As I design the following pages, principally, for men of ordinary life, I have chosen to put it in its present form, that such men may be assured that I possess many of their views and feelings, and judge of things as they would, had they been in similar circumstances; and claim on this account their attention, while I

relate briefly the early part of my life; and then proceed to the principle object I had in view, which is to shew the evil of emigrating from free, to slave states.

CHAPTER II.

Place of nativity—Opportunity for youthful instruction—Raised to agricultural life—Early thoughts on character—Providence—View of future life—First settled at Hopkinton—Society—Business— Misfortune—Afflictions—Invitation to go to Mississippi—Journey—Voyage—Arrival at New-Orleans—Passage up the river—Anecdote—On the way to Woodville—Arrival at brothers—His failure—Sickness—Attempt to settle—Commence overseeing—Sickness—Difficulty—Leave the place—Commence wood cutting—Loss—Sickness of himself—Wife—Overseeing—Difficulty—Remove to Pinkneyville—Resolve to leave the country—Arrival at Ohio—At Whitehall—Remarks.

I was born in the commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the year of our Lord, 1786. I enjoyed the prvileges of a common school instruction, until I was ten years old, when my father moved to the State of Vermont, after which, I was taught habits of industry, and enjoyed only a limited opportunity for instruction.

I was early taught to look on agriculture as my lot or sphere in life; and led to believe it to be as honorable as any calling, when united with a virtuous life. Virtue being the only proper ornament of any station, I have been led to pitty the imaginary superiority of some,

whose advantages might have rendered them conspicuous, had they been governed by better principles.

I was early led to believe, that our blessings, private, civil or religious, were the gift of the Father of mercies, and it depends much on our improvement of them, for the benefit we receive.

Ambitious desires, and worldly discontent, were soon found to be ruling pashions with me, and have often indulged them to my injury.

As I became acquainted with business, I felt my circumstances to be toolimited, and desired to emigrate to a new country; that I might, from the little which my father could bestow, have an opportunity to rise in the world by larger steps, than might be expected in an older settlement.

Relying principally on my labour, at the close of my minority, I left my father, and settled in the county of St. Lawrence, and State of New-York. This was then principally a wilderness, with small and scattered settlements. I located myself at Hopkinton, where I had better society than is common in new settlements, which are generally made up of emigrants from different places, bringing with them different manners and habits. In about two years after I had settled, a religious society was regularly formed in Hopkinton, and a minister of the gospel was soon after settled in that place. I had here, placed too high an es-

timate on property, and became impatient with my humble means; and resolved to employ a fictitious capital, to advance my interest, a policy which I have since thought unsuitable for agricultural men to pursue.

My object was to enter into the manufacturing of potash, and the culture of wheat, and in this way to advance my interest, by the wilderness which surrounded me. But this proved to me a source of misfortune, for before I had matured the scheme, the commercial restrictions, which preceeded the late war, by destroying our markets, proved the overthrow of many, and I was compelled to fail in business.

Although I had suffered my feelings to be entirely engrossed in the cares of life, yet I felt a solemn obligation to discharge my debts, in the most speedy manner in my power. In this I was employed five years before I could accomplish my object; at the end of which time, I felt little desire to enter on another speculation. Providence had now chosen another mode of chastisement. Sickness was sent into the family. Our oldest daughter was attacked with an illness, which, under different forms, continued for more than two years; during which time, an only son, a picture of health and sprightliness, was suddenly taken away by death. This was a trying scene, which I shall not attempt to describe. Parents can better conceive than describe the sensations

of such a time. My son died in the latter part of winter. My daughter remained afflicted, and appeared to have pulmonary symptoms.

Her physician advised me to travel to the south with her, to avoid the winter season.—Feeling myself unable to incur the expence, my parental feelings were severely tryed. We spent the summer very pleasantly excepting the anxiety we felt on her account. Here we felt the sweets of christian society. Our afflicted situation drew the attention of our neighbours and friends; nothing was wanting, which sympathy or friendship could bestow; privileges which we have since learned to prize.

In the month of October, 1818, I received a letter from a brother, then in Natchez, State of Mississippi. This letter was sent me in answer to one I wrote, to inform him of the death of my son, and the afflicted state of the family. It breathed christian sympathy and brotherly affection, and contained an invitation for me to remove to him, setting forth the advantages of the climate, on the health of our daughter; and promising me a handsome support,* and the education of my children, if I would remove to that country, and take the charge of a farm for him.

This offer appeared so flattering in a pecun-

*$600 and board and schooling, by brother.

tary view, and the hope of raising our sickly daughter, and handsomely educating all our children, induced us to listen to his proposals. I took the advice of several friends, shewing them the letter I had received. Our physician expressed himself as follows:—"If I were in your place, though it took all I had in the world I would go: you will probably never raise your daughter in this country: if you go you may raise her: and the advantage to your other children appears great." After consulting all my friends, I made the best arrangements in my power, to prepare for the journey. The near approach of winter rendered the greatest dispatch necessary.

On the 9th of November, I set out with my family from Hopkinton in a waggon.

The health of our daughter rendered our journey slow to Albany, and stopping occasionally with our friends, in the western part of Vermont. We arrived at the city of New-York on the 28th of November, where we waited five days for a passage to New-Orleans. We sailed on the 3d of December, in ship Remitance, Capt. Silas Holmes.

We had pleasant weather for two days.—On the third day after leaving port, being in the Gulph Stream, we were overtaken by a storm, memorable for the damage done in the harbour of New-York, and on the eastern coast. The storm increased, and the next day threatened destruction. We were thirty

six hours barred below; the sea breaking over us with tremendous force, often threatening to swallow us up. After three days we were permitted to go on deck. The captain told me he had been a sea fareing man fifteen years, and had never before rode out so severe a storm. Indeed, it appeared to me during our confinement, as the gate of death. This was followed by calm and fine weather, which made our voyage very slow. Off the Bahama banks we had another gale, which was considered dangerous, by our nearness to the banks: we, however, received no damage, and safely passed the Island of Cuba. We left sight of the Island in the dark of the evening, with a fine breeze. About one o'clock at night we were awakened by the cry of "all hands!" A severe squall had struck the ship ahead, backed her sails, carried away her gib-boom, racked the fore top mast, threw her on her side, and occasioned a cry from the man at helm, "God save us, the rudder is carried away!" This produced a general alarm for a few moments, when the ship righted, the rudder was found safe, and the sails were handed in, in the best manner possible. The weather became boisterous, and at day-light, we more fully saw the danger which we had passed. The rigging and sails were cut and torn, and the deck strewed with their ruins. We had no more pleasant weather for several days. We lay beating about the bay of Mexico for four

days after we had taken on board a pilot.— The weather becoming favorable on the thirty seventh day of our voyage, we arrived off the Balize in the afternoon, and crossed the bar at the mouth of the Mississippi, just before sun set. The weather becoming hazy, we apprehended another storm, and felt no small satisfaction at finding ourselves safely at anchor.— This place has nothing in it pleasant, to landsmen, being formed of the mud and logs that are washed down the river, and is too low to afford any considerable vegetation; yet it served to break the swells of the sea, so that we had a comfortable nights rest. In my journal I find the following stanzas made at the time:

How pleasant to behold our country's friendly shore;
Where we may safe at anchor ride, and hear the ocean roar.

Next morning the wind being favorable, we weighed anchor & sailed up the river to Ft. St. Phillips, without any interruption. The river turning here, so as to lose our wind, the passengers proposed uniting with the crew to warp the ship around the turn, to which they agreed In the same manner we passed the English Turn, and arrived at New-Orleans in four days. making in the whole forty-one days passage.

I here had the satisfaction to find the health of my daughter much improved by our long voyage, so much so, that she was able to walk with me and her younger sister to see the city.

Here our minds were first shocked with the idea of slavery. The city slaves in chains,* brought to my mind what I had read of Algiers. There is little in New-Orleans to please a pious or a *sober man*. Its vices are perhaps equalled by no city in the world. We lay here five days for a passage up the river; during which time I visited the Rev. Sylvester Learned, a Presbyterian minister from New-England, and attended with him an evening prayer meeting. I found some pious souls even in New-Orleans, who had emigrated from other states. I visited the foundation of the Presbyterian Church in that place. In conversation with Mr. Learned, on the subject of society, he observed, "we have imported our house materials, our workmen, and our society;" an omen that something yet remains for New-Orleans. In viewing the population of this city, I was struck with the propriety of Parish's remark on southern population;— "they are of all shades from white to black, an index of their morals." We passed up the river in a steam boat, to St. Francisville, or Boyou Sarah; from thence in a waggon to the springs near Woodville, where we arrived on the 22d of January, 1819.

*This has reference to such refractory slaves, as are sent there by their masters for punishment; who are obliged in the day time to wear chains, or strips of iron, fastened to their legs, while they do the city drudgery, and at night are confined in prison.

After landing at Bayou Sarah, I was struck with the unsocial habits of the people. In their mode of travelling, those who avoid splendour, carry their food, and sleep in their waggons. It was in one of these waggons, that I got a passage for my family—no other opportunity offering at that time. Being unprepared to travel in this style, we were obliged to halt for refreshments. We therefore, stopped, at what our driver called a tavern. I called for a meal of victuals for the family, but was refused; I pressed the call by the slender health of the family, it being too much to ride all day without eating; but I found humanity very little concerned for those who travel in large waggons. Stepping out to speak to the waggoner, the lady (for so she is called in this country) asked my wife who we were, and where we were going. She replied, that we were emigrants from New-York, and were going to a brothers, near Woodville. "Who is your brother," she asked. He is the Preceptor of the Female Academy in that place, was her answer. "I know him very well," said she, "you have had a very long journey." So saying, she called a servant, ordered the table set, brought on her decanter, a round of chit-chat ensued, and for a time she seemed to forget that we came in a cotton waggon. This is not a solitary instance of the unfriendly feelings of the inhabitants of this country towards strangers. Many respectable poor can attest

the truth of this; while others, who have had the good fortune to make a splendid appearance, have overlooked this mark of barbarism, and thought that they were to be highly praised for their hospitality.

On arriving at my brothers, I found him engaged in forming a new school establishment, having been advised to leave Natchez, and establish his school here. His object was to support a boarding school from a farm, which was to be under my charge, or management.—On becoming acquainted with his circumstances, I found he had ventured too much on the assistance of his friends, and was deeply in debt; and should any thing occur unfavourable to him, he would be in a precarious situation. Soon after, my fears were realized, for some who had been instrumental in his removal from Natchez, became disaffected, and soon became enemies, exerting all their influence to injure his school, in which they soon succeeded. He, however, endeavoured to do for me what he had promised: my children went to school, and we spent the summer in anxiety. His failure soon became inevitable. He lamented my unhappy situation, but was compelled to dismiss his school and business.—My family remained well till some time in the month of July, when my children were all sick, my two oldest were dangerous. I was able to assist the mother till the first day of September, when she had to be nurse to the whole

family. The children not being raised from their affliction, I was severely attacked with the prevailing fever, which soon assumed the Typhus form, and threatened to extinguish life. My wife did not put off her clothes to rest for twenty one days, when, worn out with fatigue, she became unable to take care of her suffering family. I was not yet out of danger from debility, and it was not till the forty first day that I left my house; and I verily believe, had I been deprived of my wife's assistance sooner, I should have sunk to the grave.—Through the blessing of God, we all survived this trying scene.

I felt severely the effects of this sickness, and never have gained my usual firmness of health.

The cool season coming on, and being disappointed in our hopes with my brother, we began to enquire, what we should do for future support. But two ways appeared practicable for us, which were, either to labour as we had formerly in the northern states, or to take a situation as overseer of a plantation—as I appeared qualified for no other but agricultural pursuits. The idea of slavery had not yet become familiar, or pleasing; and most of the plantations, which were large enough to support a family, were governed with such severity, that we thought it best to try to labour.—Accordingly we got indulgence for the expences, which our afflictions had incurred, and set-

tled about ten miles from Woodville—indulging the hope, that this productive clime would allow us a comfortable support from our labour. The warm season soon made us feel that the contrary was the fact. Our children were sickly early in the season, while my health gradually declined, my wife found the care of the family too much for her, while I was unable to obtain a servant for her assistance.

On the 6th of July, I was again taken with a bilious fever, in a country place, distant from neighbours; my wife now becoming the physician, nurse, and servant of the family. With a fortitude and skill, rarely united in a female, she bore the unequal task, and would often cheer my desponding hours, with words of comfort, and affection. But, how could I be comforted under such trials! Property, health, friends, and society were gone; and in addition to the gloom, I saw her health, and strength declining. I now beheld her as the saviour of the family. In less than two years, she had apparently rescued every member of the family, more than once, from death. It would have given me pleasure to have had it in my power to relieve her. But alas! we were situated in a slave country, without a servant. I often thought of our situation at the death of our son, in Hopkinton. In a free country, where society is refined, even afflictions have their blessings; but here, no one to relieve her care, by day or night. In August, I so far

gained my health as to get out from home; and the crop being nearly completed, I obtained a servant for a short time. But now my wife had another severe trial. Her youngest child being attacked with a malignant fever, engrossed her whole attention for about six weeks. Most sincerely did we long to return, but in vain; the little I had, was wasted, and I had not been able to mature my crop. To live so was impossible. In addition to this, I had rendered myself accountable for upwards of $200 for my brother the year before. No alternative now remained but to take business as an overseer. I had an offer to go on to the bank of the Mississippi, which I accepted, and removed there the first of October, 1820; my employer agreeing to become responsible for my debts, and those of my brother, for which I was holden, and taking at the same time the property which my brother gave as security for his debt. Thus I felt at liberty, in some measure, from my late thraldom, and began again to feel cheerful. We were, at this time, all in comfortable health; but our joy was short; for soon after our arrival on the plantation, our three oldest children were taken dangerously sick. The second daughter, whose symptoms at first appeared most favorable, soon changed to a malignant state, and medicine proved ineffectual for her relief. The resemblance and name of my mother, after being worn out, received a little revival, and fell a-

sleep, from which she never awoke. She fell asleep early in the evening, and breathed her last in the latter part of the night. All exertions to awake her proved ineffectual. Here again we felt the want of our former friends: in comparing her death with the death of our son, no white female near to assist, or console the unhappy mother. To prepare our child for the grave, was now the work of a fond mother, assisted only by a female servant. In addition to her affliction she saw her children sick around her. Her time and care were now divided between the dead and the living. The next day a few people assembled, and she was carried to the grave, with as little solemnity as would be thought possible for man to bestow upon his fellow clay. Our other children again recovered, and we spent the winter agreeably, until towards spring, when the influenza made its appearance, and went through the family, white and black, myself only excepted. It appeared contagious and destroyed numbers in the country that year. We had no physician, and had the good fortune to lose none with that disorder, though several were very low. At the close of the sickness, our employer paid us a visit, and informed us of the death of some on his home plantation, with the same disorder; inquired our management of the sick; expressed his satisfaction; and gave my wife a formal

charge of the sick, and told me he would pay her for it.

We had a favorable time for health after this, until June, 1821, when the dysentary made its appearence among the negroes.

From that time, till November, we had little rest or comfort on account of the dysentary and fevers. On the 26th of June, I was taken with a severe fever. From a kind operation of medicine I broke the fever in a few days, but was reduced so as to be unable to walk to the quarters. During this time, my wife had to take the care of myself, and twenty negroes, who had daily medicine from her hands, besides a number who had been sick, who yet needed the eye of a master. In about a week I got on my horse and rode to the field.—When I examined the sick out of thirty working hands, I found only five grown persons, and two children, able to be in the field; nor was it much better for some time after. My exposure was so injurious to me, that I soon relapsed again and again, until I had five attacks of fever—most of the time I could ride to the field in the cool of the day. I believe it was September before I could walk across the field, and was slender until December. Our crop, however, was very forward, and was secured in autumn to the satisfaction of the owner.—Its forwardness in the spring and early attention bestowed, prevented its untimely ruin by the weeds.

My situation was the more unhappy, not only by being secluded from society, but by living among a quarrelsome few that surrounded me. Several hair-breadth escapes from murder were the consequences of their repeated qarrels. One died on the third day after a fight. Some time in the fall, I was one morning called upon for some boards to to make a coffin. I enquired for whom, and was told that Robert Scott had been killed by Thomas Phipps. I asked if they would bury him without an inquest, and told the person it was illegal, and that an inquest ought to be called, or innocent persons might be charged with being accessary to his death. An inquest was therefore called, and I was one of the jurors, who sat to examine the body of Scott.—It appeared that they were collected for a drinking frolick, and that Phipps became angry without cause, and commenced an attack on Scott, and that they were parted by the company. In the affray, Thomas Roddy received a kife through his hand, in attempting to shield it from another person. The affray was stopped here, but Phipps swore he would kill Scott. Scott was therefore, advised to go home, and he soon left the company. Phipps finding him gone, said he would follow him, and beat him to death with a club. He was seen on full speed, about eighty rods distant from the place where the body of Scott was found; the body was beaten in a shocking

manner, (evidently with a club) so as to raise a puff between the skin and flesh, in almost every part of his body. After all this I could not obtain a verdict of willful murder. I however obtained a verdict in this form, "Robert Scott came to his death by abuse, or violence," and sent the testimony, with the verdict, to the parish judge. Here I not only found the jurors cold and indifferent, but no exertions were made on the part of the judge, to bring him to justice.

In the winter after, I happened to be crossing the ferry, from Concorda to Natchez, in company with judges Broughton and Dunlap; after the usual enquiries, common among travellers, finding I was from Bayou Cutoff, they turned their conversation on the inhabitants of that neighborhood, and the death of Scott was mentioned. I told them I was foreman on the jury of inquest, and I lamented the depravity of both people and rulers; that it disgraced our country to have a thing of that kind pass apparently unnoticed. The judge replied that Phipps was gone, and that nothing could be done to the purpose. I told him he ought to manifest a disposition to execute the laws, by offering a reward for his apprehension. He said this was the business of the Governor.—I answered, then it is your business to acquaint him of it—and where are the documents?—He said they were in his office. I then asked him if he would send them to the Governor?—

Perhaps, said I, he may be taken some years hence; if not it will serve to prevent other cases, by manifesting a proper spirit to execute the laws. He said he would send them, and kept his word, for soon after a proclamation was issued, offering a reward for Phipps, but to no purpose. He has since secretly visited his friends, and no one has disturbed him.—Soon after this affair took place, I became a subject of their rage, and many attempts were made to get me out to their parties, but I always refused, and kept as much as possible at peace with them. At length they found what they thought an excuse for an outrage on my peace. Some hogs had broke into the enclosure, two were injured considerably by the dogs in getting out, and I was charged with killing pigs, of which I had no knowledge, nor do I think any were killed in the field. Without giving me notice, a number met at a neighbour's mill, on the day I usually ground; providentially, I was called another way, and an old negro was sent to mill. He came home much alarmed, and told what had been said, and remonstrated against my going to the mill; for said he, they will kill you, as they did poor Scott. I well knew, that to betray my trust in business would not do, and the least symptom of fear, would be a signal for them to advance in their designs against me. I accordingly armed myself for the first time, against my fellow man, and sent them word,

that I had not intended them any injury, and if I had done them any damage in getting the hogs out of the field, I would either buy the wounded hogs, or pay the damage; but I would not suffer my own, or any other person's hogs in my field; and if they would come peaceably, we would try to settle it; if we could not agree, we would wait the arrival of my employer, and it should be honorably settled; but if they should attack me, I would try to defend myself.

This stayed the affair, until I could see my employer, who approved of my conduct, and settled the business. After their passion abated, we lived on terms of neighbourly friendship, until I left the place. It has been my lot to experience trouble in swift succession; and now began a struggle with my employer. I have before stated, that I was involved, when I was employed, and now the day of settlement arrived, when to my surprise I was charged with my brother's debt, of $220, which I supposed, I had paid, with the property before mentioned, for which he allowed me nothing, except what I had in actual possession, at the time of contract and the amount of which, was only eighty dollars. This made some difference which displeased him, and he allowed my wife* nothing for her extraordinary trouble with the sick. This brought about

*More than a year afterwards he allowed her ten dollars.

a separation, at which he expressed his disappointment, and showed himself to be a magnanimous enemy. He walked out with me, and expressed himself much as follows:—"I wish you to stay, this has been an unfortunate place to me; you have done well, and your neighbors have done with you; they respect you, and will give you no more trouble; if I get another man they will try him also; you know you cannot labour to support you in this climate; I will give you seven hundred dollars a year, and find your family, and you shall have the privilege of whatever help you need in sickness." Perhaps I ought to have stayed, but I felt a wish to live where no broils might disturb our peace, or suspicion of my employer's honesty. I, however, told him I would stay for eight hundred dollars, intending to get some restitution for the past. He objected, and I answered, perhaps I might accept, when I saw him again, I would look out and see.—He went home, and I went in pursuit of business; but it was too late in the year, for all good business was taken. He hired a young man, conditionally, if I should go away, for five hundred dollars a year, an apprentices wages on the river. My next disappointment was, that he would not accept me when I offered, and said that he was holden to the other person, but if he would recant, he would employ me; and we appointed a place and time to

meet, when he was to give me an answer.— He did not meet me at the time, and I passed on to attend to some business at my late residence. One of my old neighbors in the mean time, told me he had talked with my employer, the day after we parted, and that he told him he was fully satisfied, and should employ me another year. This showed me his design.— I went to his house, but he was not at home. I left word, that if he intended to send the other man, he had better do it soon, for under the circumstances, then existing, I should do no more for him. In a few days, his agent came with the young man, and told me he had orders to deliver the business to him. I asked if he had brought me any money? He said no. What shall I do, without business, or money? He answered, he was sorry to have me go away, but it was his orders.

I shall ever think that the business would have been done at once, had I offered to take the place of the young man for his wages.

My circumstances at that time, and want of my wages, which he withheld, led them to think I would make any concession. I detested the intrigue, gave up the place, and left home again to find employment. Finding none, I got liberty to cut wood eight miles down the river. While I was gone, the young man offered to give up the place, if I wanted it, adding he had no family, and could better shift for himself. This was what I expected;

that could my former employer get me again, under the false glare of friendship, he would be pleased to accept me. I felt governed by other motives, and would not again acknowledge a false friend.

I hailed a flat boat, and put my family and goods on board, and descended the river, called at the house nearest to the land on which I was to cut wood, and borrowed some provisions till I could supply myself, we not having at that time one dollar, after paying for our passage. This was the first time I ever saw myself without one dollar, or one mouthful of provision, or a house to cover me. We were received, and accommodated with an outhouse, until I could build.

I went to work and made the best exertions I was able, soon sold some wood, got a sum on the credit of my late employer, and began to live comfortably.

I hired some help, and cut a quantity of wood; but failing to sell, it not being in demand fast enough to pay my hands, I was induced to boat some to New-Orleans, to pay for labour. In this I was not prosperous, for being too late, the market was glutted with that article. I however, paid my hands, with a loss of one humdred dollars on the value of the wood at home, loosing my time. While in New-Orleans, I had a fresh picture of human misery, and again witnessed the folly of many who leave their homes, pursuing the dreams

of fancy, till their money is wasted, and among strangers, they fall into need, and know not what to do. If sickness should then set in, their wretchedness would be complete. How many have fallen in this way, victims to their folly, God only knows. I have seen and heard enough to make memory weep. I was particularly affected, with the condition of two sprightly boys, who had left their homes (Ohio) to come down the river in a boat, for common wages. They landed at Natchez, and the novelty of the town soon wasted their earnings, when they hired again for New-Orleans, where I found them in a needy condition, unable to go home; and they now began to be alarmed at the danger of the climate. They wished me to pay their passage up the river, and they would cut wood for me. Numbers made the same request, but I could not relieve many. The young boys attracted my attention, and I paid their passage to my house, and set them to work. I soon found they could not endure the climate, and were unprofitable to me. I obtained a passage for them to Louisville, Ken. settled, and parted with them, with the satisfaction of sending two sons home to their parents. Hundreds, for the want of some little assistance, have died forgotten; or if they survive, they become sickly, discouraged, and corrupted, till they are ashamed to return to their friends. Of this class, I have known several, who, had they stayed at home,

or among those of like manners, might probably have made useful citizens.

I now began to feel the effects of the climate on my health; and on parting with my help, I closed the business of the season. I was taken sick as usual, and was unable to earn my bread, until November. In October, preceeding I saw my wife, for the first time, dangerously ill. I was scarcely able to set up ten minutes, at a time, when she and my oldest daughter, were severely attacked with a malignant fever. We now saw the danger of retirement, in this sickly climate. We could get no help, and had it not been for a young Pennsylvanian, at work in the neighborhood, we might have died—not one of us being able to go to the river for water. He used his best endeavours to get a servant for us, but in vain. He came every day to bring us wood and water, till my health would permit me to take care of the more afflicted. My eldest daughter soon obtained relief from medicine; but all medicine proved in vain with my wife. She had a most obstinate run of fever—and when we began to indulge some hopes of her recovery, she relapsed, and appeared for some time almost hopeless. My health now being somewhat improved, I was able to give her every attention, in my power, which was small indeed. For some time she was not moved from her bed, we not being able to do it, being feeble, and our neighbors, who were well,

thought us poor folks, (which will justify any neglect in that country.)

Here, I formed a resolution, if we were once more spared, I would never again live retired in this country, without servants, for life may be lost for the want of a little timely assistance; and if I should be again out of business, I would be among settlements more compact, where some at least would have feelings of humanity.

Towards the latter part of November, my family appeared to be gaining health; my wife was so reduced, that she required a length of time, to be able to do any thing of consequence, which so broke my time, that I could do no business without obtaining help in the house. I thought it best to take business on a plantation, where I could have a house servent. As soon as I could leave home a few days, I went out to look for the business of overseeing. I was advised to go to Capt. —— ——, as a proper person to give me business, who was recommended to me to be a fine man. I called and delivered an introduction. He said he had employed his overseer for the next year, but would assist me to get business of his Nephew, Mr. —— —— ——, who had just arrived from Philadelphia, to inherit an estate. I thanked him for his kindness, and wished to be introduced to the young gentleman, which he accordingly did. We did not agree at that time, but deferred it a few days for decision.—

The old Captain, after we had retired, address-me as follows:—"If you undertake for —— you must do as for yourself, for he is a youngster just out of school, and knows nothing of business." A few days after I saw him and took charge of his plantation. I moved my family, and saw them once more comfortably situated, with a good house servant—and I began to devote my time to my business. For a while I hoped I was comfortably settled; but I soon found that the presence of the master added nothing to the peace of the plantation.—The negroes well knew his inexperience, and he was simple enough to hold long talks with them, loving their compliments, and hearing their complaints——He would question me on what had passed, by which I saw he was getting jealous of my conduct—thought some things were wrong—passed coldly by—enquired for other men to take the business—thought me too severe, and the like; so that I found my hopes of staying through the season were small. I found he put confidence in some negroes, on whom I could not depend, having found them unfaithful. The master* being seldom there, they played their arts on him to advantage. My duties now became embarrassing; he had purchased a gang of twenty six in number, what we call

*On his visiting the plantation, they reported me in the most unfavorable manner, which his simplicity led him to believe.

here, new negroes, that is, just brought from the eastern slave states. Many of them were unacquainted with that dicipline, which is needful, when so many are put together. His whole number now amounted to about sixty—fifty of which could be useful in the field.—This number, gathered from different places, and accustomed to different treatment was calculated to give a manager much trouble and perplexity.

In correcting a young lad one day for misdemeanor, he assumed an air of consequence, said I should not whip him, if I did, he would tell his master. To pass it at this time, would be to lay down government at once, although I was well aware, that their young master had listened, too frequently to their complaints.—I advanced, he put himself in a posture of defence, I made a blow at him, he seized my whip and drew it from me. I began to think time was not to be lost, sprang forward, seized him by the throat, recovered my whip, and with the but end knocked him down. By this time a well disciplined negro came to my assistance, held the offenders head to the ground, and I turned the lash, which soon made him cry out for mercy. I permitted him to get up, but found him still rebelious. I told him his duty as a slave, and mine, as one bound to keep order; then drew a pistol,* and told him before

*This severity I thought proper at this time, as I suspected he was set on by others to try the effects of resistance.

all present, that I had no disposition to tyrannise over them, but I had found by experience, that my rules were necessary for good order, and should be obeyed—that the lash was necessary for certain crimes, and if they resisted I could take the but end, and if that was not sufficient, I would take the pistol: and told him he had nothing to do but obey. He did not appear humble, and I put him under guard of some that would keep him from absconding, and set him at work, and at night put him in chains; the next morning gave him fifty lashes and set him under a guard, and so continued him three days before he appeared humble.—This convinced the new negroes, that I was not to be trifled with; and had not an unhappy affair happened with the master soon after, I should have thought I had done with difficulty. He, being a man of dissolute principles, had surrounded me on different points of moral conduct; among the rest, on the observance of the Sabbath. He had shown a total disregard for the Sabbath, and told me he would as soon work on Sunday as any other day. He named several pieces of work, he wished me to have done on Sunday. I contended that it was unlawful, and improper for several reasons; that I had never done needless labour on that day, and I felt unwilling to begin. He said I was bound to superintend his negroes, as much on that day as any other.

At that time the hooping-cough, pleurasy & influenza, were making great distresses on the plantation, and my family were among the sufferers. I was myself severely afflicted with the influenza, and my two youngest children were very sick with the hooping-cough. The youngest was now within one week of a crisis of the disorder, and might with propriety, be called dangerous. In this condition, on Sunday morning, he ordered me to move my family to a damp new house, built after the manner of this country, with a mud chimney, which had been finished the day before. He no doubt now thought to put me to the test, and open a door for much work on Sunday. Parental feelings, now combined with principle, to oppose his command. I remonstrated, first on the impropriety of the thing itself, from a principle, which he well knew before, was contrary to my feelings. He began to use profane language, and insist on my complyance with his wishes, saying the sickness on the place, had thrown the work behindhand, and that he wanted the team the next day on the plantation. I told him it was true, we had suffered much by sickness, and if business was his object, he might order his teams at plantation work, and I would not oppose him; but to disturb my family, I would not, for a second reason, which was, that my family were not in a condition to be exposed to a damp house, and that the house must be dry

before I could consent to move, as I might otherwise endanger the life of my youngest child, and injure the health of the family, which was then very feeble. His answer surprised me, as I had not till then found out the master. He swore I should comply, or leave the place. The health of my family now tryed me, to know what answer to give him.— To move I feared would destroy my child, and to comply would destroy the happiness of myself and family, by making Sunday a common job day. I resolved to plead my contract with him, and if I could not reconcile him, to gain a little time for my afflicted family. I replied that our contract was, that if I should not please him, he was to give me thirty days notice, and discharge me; that in that time, my family would probably be in better condition to move, and perhaps he might think best to retain me. I turned from so disagreeable a contest, ordered my horse, and rode to a quarter of negroes, a mile from the house, and to which he wished me to move. Here I attended to the sick, and such other cares, as are unavoidable on Sunday. Here I had full time for reflection, and I resolved to live as near to my duty as I could and preserve peace, perhaps it might pass as a pet; but if he insisted on my working Sabbath day, I would leave him at the end of thirty days, as stipulated in our agreement. The day passed. On Monday morning I arose to my business as usual; af-

ter breakfast he resumed the difference, ordered the cart to take the stores out of the house, and told me that my power ceased from that moment, and I must be off immediately. I remonstrated, again plead the contract, and the distressed state of my family, which only increased his rage. He swore he would not bear such language—that he did not care for the obligation—that he was wrong in giving it—and had rather lose one hundred dollars than have me stay one day after I had opposed him. I then demanded my pay. He said he would pay me when he got ready. I then told him a discharge was necessary, or I should be liable to pay damage for leaving him; this he refused. I now saw the case was difficult indeed, and was satisfied his object was to get me off without a settlement, and then charge the blame to me, and by that means throw me out of my wages. I went to Fort Adams for advice, and to see if I could get a house for my sick family. I was advised by two gentlemen, to present him with a notice in writing, certifying a discharge, and agreeing to settle, and that he would, at some convenient time settle with me, agreeable to contract; but could not get them to go with me as mediators. I took their advice, presented the notice, which he refused to sign. His object could no longer be doubted. I felt sensibly my distress.

Providence now cast in my way a witness that the violence was on the the part of the mas-

ter. I called to a neighbour, who was passing by, to assist me in obtaining an acknowledgement from the master, that he had caused the separation; made known my fears, that he intended to cheat me out of my wages. We passed on, and soon came in company with the master. After a round of idle chat, the master asked him if he knew of a man he could get for an overseer. The neighbour appeared surprised, and said, "You are jokeing sir, you have one who is doing very well." "No," replied the master, "I have none; I have put off Mr. Pearse, and want one." I then observed it was a fact, and that too in violation of his own contract. The master saw he was caught, and rode off. I now was compelled to move, for I had not a supply of provisions for many days, and the master had refused to give me medicine for my sick children, although I had made use of my own medicine for his negroes, before he obtained a supply. He had removed the medicine out of my reach, and Mrs. Pearse had sent a servant to him three times for medicine, to remove the phlegm from the youngest child, as she feared its severe strangling might cause convulsions and death. With a heart of stone, he refused all medical relief. I then resolved to hasten away, and soon went in search of a boat to Fort Adams. I was again disappointed of a place for my helpless family. The dread of taking the dis-

order, had caused the man, of whom I had hired a house, to forbid my taking possession.— I saw nothing but that my family must be landed on the shore, without any shelter; for I had obtained a cart of the master to bring my things to the river, and I had no idea he would permit them to return. I knew not what to do! Every feeling of parental affection, which this occasion could call forth, was awakened at this time.

I was offered (after I had been refused by all others,) a privilege of a wood camp, till I could find some place for my suffering family. I there lodged my family, and set out to find a house in the country, back from the river.— I was gone four days, and found a comfortable house in the village of Pinkneyville, eight miles from Fort Adams. My former employer sent his cart to move my effects, and Major S. M. Lewis furnished me with horses to move my family. I ought not to omit the generosity of Mr. Abraham, and Mr. Scott, near Woodville, who gave me five dollars, with which I paid the boatman, for moving me to and from the wood camp. And Major Noland told me to call on him, when I had moved, and get some provisions till I could turn myself. We arrived at at Pinkneyville on the 28th of March, one week after the affray with the master; during which time the family had suffered so much from their exposed situation, that they were scarcely able to help themselves; and

we despaired of the youngest child for some days after. But the kindness of George F. Randolph, Jr. afforded every medical aid which we stood in need of, at that time: and through the season. In this place, I was treated with more kindness, than had ever been shown me in this country. But we obtained no business for a support, except a little boarding, and a little needle work, not sufficient to support our family; we were therefore obliged to incur some debts.

During the season my wife was again severely attacked with a fever, caused most probably, by too great exposure, which has never failed to afflict us, when we have laboured in this climate. I obtained a servant for her, and during the latter part of the season, we all enjoyed the best health we had experienced for five years. It is just, to say of the inhabitants of Pinkneyville, that they are kind in sickness —though our circumstances at other times, were unfavorable for the enjoyment of society: though in a village, we lived in a solitary manner.

No business was offered to us, nor could I obtain any this year.

My last employer not being satisfied with persecuting my family to the gates of death, still only 5 miles distant, united to the distress he had caused me, that of female slander; representing my wife, as a person injurious to me, and likely to make mischief in my business.—

This, I have been informed, has deterred some from employing me. Thus he was not satisfied with withholding my wages, but must (to act his nature more fully,) descend below the character of a gentleman, and commit the crime of the most wanton and cruel detraction upon female innocence.

Towards the close of the year, (the time for making contracts in this country,) I again set out in search of business for my support. Being now completely satisfied, that we could not support ourselves in this sickly climate by labour. I soon found that the number who were in search of business, was so great, and the price of the staple so low, that but small wages could be obtained on the best plantations; and I was resolved not to engage in business, which would not allow me to school my children.

Although I had long wished to go into the free states, I had hoped that some other time would enable me to do it to better advantage. But now my way in this country appeared hedged up—wages had become too low to do justice to my family—and to get a support by labour in this climate, I found was impossible. To add to the gloom, I found my spirits sinking under repeated strokes of adversity. I had often comforted myself with the hope, that more prosperous days would come; and would often muster resolution, by reflecting, that it was weakness in man to sink beneath adversity. But there is, I believe, a point beyond which few can pass with unshaken resolution. To see my family in want of a comfortable support, my children growing up in ignorance, unprepared to enter upon the stage of action, with any hope of usefulness, was to me the most gloomy period I ever experienced. For a time I felt neither able to work, or to attend to any thing. But I concluded, though I cared little for myself, that I ought to make some exertions for my wife and children.

I resolved to make one struggle more to place my family in a country where I could labour for their support, and where I might give them, at least, a common education; where the virtuous are on a level, whether rich or poor. To accomplish this, I resolved to visit my friends in the north—publish this little sketch of my sufferings—that if possible I might prevent men of common grade,* from emigrating from free to slave states—and in this way, raise a small sum for my afflicted family, before their ruin was completed.—Humble indeed, as the attempt may appear, I feel satisfied there are but few parents, who are unwilling to join with me, in thinking that this method is more honourable to an affectionate husband, and father, than to suffer his wife

*Few men of ordinary life go at once from the northern or western states to this country. They commonly go westward and descend the western waters, and many in this way complete their ruin.

and children to languish out a useless life in sickness, and poverty, in a slave country, where the common blessings of the poor are denied.

Soon after I formed this resolution, I received a letter from my brother, Doctor R. M. Pearse, of New-Orleans, informing me that he was about obtaining an agency of a large tract of land, in the Territory of Arkansas, and wished me to hold myself in readiness to move there with my family—offering me a handsome settlement for myself and family, if I would go. This caused me to wave my resolution, till I could know the result.

A few days brought me the information, that he wished me to go immediately. Having completed his bargain, he wished me to go in time to commence a crop. Accordingly on the 18th of March, I set out to see the land in Arkansas, leaving my family at Pinkneyville, until I could make further arrangements. On arriving at the mouth of White River, we received a passenger on board who told me he knew the original claimant of the land, which I was going to see, and that I would be disappointed to find the land had been all sold by him before. He told me the Recorder, at the post, would give me full satisfaction on the point. I therefore, made it my first business to examine the records, and found him correct as I supposed in his information.

This brought me to a stand at once. To return was discouraging, as I had no business

for this year, nor should I be likely to get any, if I went home; and to live without business another year, would reduce me to a state of perfect want. This would blast all my hopes of redeeming my family, which had been my intention, ever since my disappointment with my brother. I felt that if I should give up the idea of placing my family in a free country, I was in danger of mental derangement. This I thought it my duty to avoid if possible. I took up my former resolution, and sailed for the falls of the Ohio. Here I took another passage in the steam-boat Velocipede, Capt. Rogers. Here I began to see the difference between the southern and northern manners. I found some who appeared like kindred and friends. I landed at Little Yellow Creek, about fifty miles below Pittsburg, and pursued my way by land to Newburgh, adjoining Cleveland, on Lake Erie.

After leaving the steam-boat, I thought of stopping a short time to work, to get some money for expenses, for I was now destitute. I found no one that would pay money for labour, and on making my case known, I found that instead of being slighted, as I had often been in the south, I was treated with more particular attention. The hospitality of a free people, is directed to the object of doing good —but in slave countries, it is more commonly bestowed on the affluent and gay. I arrived at my brothers in Newburgh, and spent a day

or two with him before I led him to a knowledge of my design, or revealed my destitute circumstances. He went to borrow some money of a neighbour for me, when he made known my former standing in society, and lamented my misfortunes. His neighbour, Peter Robinson, Esq. replied, "You ought not to be holden for the money, we will see to that—tell him to call on me." I accordingly called on Esq. Robinson, and after some conversation, presented him my papers. He desired to keep them a few dsys, saying he had friends he wished might see them. A short time after, he handed me my papers, accompanied with an invitation from the Worshipful Master of Concord Lodge, No. 15, to meet with them at Cleveland in a few days, at their regular communication. I attended and never was more agreeably received in better days. They voted me fifteen dollars, and encouraged the publication of this work, for the relief of my family.

I was much encouraged by the friendly feelings of all, with whom I became acquainted, and needed only my wife and children, to have taken all the satisfaction, which a friendly society could afford. I pursued my journey down the Lake, and was delayed by winds for for some days. I landed at Buffalo, and walked to Brockport, on the Erie Canal. Here, I took water and passed down the canal to Schenectady. I then took the road to Troy

—passed up the Champlain Canal to Whitehall.*

In closing my narrative, I shall only state, that my plan has been approved by several clergymen, in Ohio, and has met the approbation of an Ecclesiastical Council, convened in the town of Whitehall, for other purposes.—No person, who has attended to this work, has disapproved of its object. For style, beauty or enlargement, it might have appeared better from an abler hand; but I am sure that something ought to be done to prevent men of ordinary lives from going to the slave holding states; and if I can be useful in this way, perhaps I may see the reward of my sufferings.

CHAPTER III.

Some account of the country—Unhealthy—Soil—Productions—Description of the people—Influence of the climate on emigrants—On labourer Nathan Melven—Poor labourer not respected—Depression ruins many—people of the free, should not emigrate to slave states—Further observations on the climate—Further accounts of productions.

As I have expressed a wish to prevent those of agricultural pursuits, from emigrating to slave holding states, it may be proper to say

*Here I would acknowledge the favour of Col. John Moss, with whom I travelled, and at his expence.

something of the country, and population of Louisiana and Mississippi.

Any person, of judgment, need only to see the country, to know that it is, and that it must be unhealthy. The valley of Mississippi, (as it is called) or the country between the high lands on each side, commencing at the mouth of Red River and extending up the river, computed to be about forty miles wide, is annually overflowed, except a strip on each bank, sufficient only for one plantation. And these banks are sometimes inundated, when the whole flat country becomes covered with water, except that part of it lying near enough to the ocean, to be defended by a dike or bank, called in this country a levee. Nor would this be any safe-guard, were it not for numerous Bayous, as they are called, or streams making out of the river, and finding their way through the low lands, to the Gulph of Mexico.

These streams are like the river, fit for cultivation only on their banks. This land has all been made by periodical overflowings, and is of the best quality. The inhabitants use rain water, or water from the streams. The springs, making from these alluvial lands, are extremely unhealthy. From this vast body of swamp lands, fogs are frequent and very heavy, which add much to the unhealthiness of the climate. Billious complaints begin soon after the fall of the river, and towards autumn. Typhus, and remittant fevers are common. At

the commencement of cool weather, health begins to return, and in winter and spring, when the influenza and pleurisy does not prevail, it may be said to be healthy. But I have seen cold wet winters, accompanied with extreme sickness; while other seasons, are very pleasant. The higher parts of Mississippi are very little favoured above the swamps: the whole atmosphere appears poisoned with the affluvia arising from the swamps; and the high lands seldom afford as good water as the river. The river water when properly purified, I have thought was equal to any in the world.

The soil on the high lands, is a composition of sand and clay. In the thick woods, there is a fine rich muck soil on the top, which produces abundantly until washed off, which happens where the land is hilly, in a few years. The back country of Mississippi, now so renowned for luxury, will become a poor and sickly country, having little to invite the stranger to pass through it, or settle. The soil, on that part of the river lands which is high enough for cultivation, is inexhaustible, and produces almost any thing, but wheat, in great abundance. Cotton, corn, and a little rice, are the principle articles cultivated. In no country that ever I have seen, is so little attention paid to comfortable living, as among the common people of Louisiana and Mississippi. I have seen some who were so ignorant of culinary skill, that with an abundance, and varie-

ty, they could not live well. The men are, generally, idle, devoted to hunting, and the attention of their numerous herds, while their slaves till the ground. The poorer sort work some, are fond of drinking, gambling and horse raceing. From these sports, quarrels often arise, which are sometimes ended by the dirk* or pistol. The rich are fond of the same sports, and frequently when their imaginary honour is insulted, a duel ends the strife.

In this country, those feelings which ornament the character of man, are confined to a few. Disinterested generosity, piety and humanity, are to be found; but deplorable is the state of society generally in this country.—Unfeeling for the miseries of the stranger, and the sick, they are hospitable where hospitality is not wanted; that is, to those who stand in least need of kindness; while many destitute of friends, have no doubt gone to their graves, for want of what would have been freely given them in a free country. Slavery tends to harden the heart of man. Few, who are raised to affluence, have any feelings for those below their rank: and few, who claim a title to character, when viewed by the ideas of a character formed in a free country, can have any just pretentions to it. They are, generally, unchaste† and profane. In this respect, master

*The most common mode of fighting is gouging and dirking.

†The great number of Molattoes and mixed bloods is a melancholy proof of this.

and slave might often be put in the scale together, and one rule would measure the virtues of both. But in other respects, they differ much. The master is proud and overbearing on all below his imaginary greatness, whether white or black; often cruel, and pleased with a display of needless power. The slaves in general, spend lives of wretchedness and woe; often poorly fed and clothed. I have been witness to the sufferings of those unhappy creatures. I have seen some, who could not, from their scanty allowance, make more than two meals a day; and others, confined to corn bread alone, not tasting meat for months together.—Yet many gentlemen have travelled through this country, and said they were an hospitable and friendly people. The reason is, they travelled in the character of gentlemen, and saw few of its abominations.

It takes time to become acquainted with different people and countries; and those who are in adversity have the best opportunity to know the real character of the people of Louisiana and Mississippi—because *restraint* among equals or inferiors is no longer felt.—*Cruelty* is another trait in their character.—They often inflict needless punishment on their slaves, and are savage in their quarrels with one another. In short, a person who has formed just sentiments, sees little to please him among the people of this country. The

sound of southern wealth, has called many to this country, from the northern and western states. Among those, there are a few, who have succeeded in their desires of wealth. Of those few, the greater part have been professional or mercantile men. But few mechanics or farmers have done so well, unless they have possessed real capital.

Sickness commonly overbalances all the advantages of this country; and not many labouring men from other states, live long enough to effect their purposes. But the common labourer is of all the most meserable.—Those who follow hard labour do not live long enough to become naturalized to the climate. I have known many of this class, who have died in a few years; others become broken in health and spirits, fall into dissipation, and become lost to themselves, and to the world—while in the northern and western states, many of this class rise to fill respectable seats in society. It is, therefore, a public loss, for poor young men to emigrate to the southern states. I have known many from almost every free state, who come here with fine health, and have thought themselves secure on that account, from the usual misfortunes, of northern emigrants, who have died of their first sickness, and others after repeated attacks, while some have lived just long enough to find their constitutions enfeebled, their time and health lost, and they at length compelled to make their

lamentation, "I wish I had been contented to have *borne* with hard times at *home*, where I was *healthy* and needed nothing but contentment, to have been happy." Of this number, I shall mention one by name. Nathan Melvin, (the young Pennsylvanian, before mentioned, as my supporter in that trying scene of 1822,) had come down the river, as he said, to get money; worked for me in the spring of that year; was industrious and honest, chargeable only, with that wildness so common to young men of his age. With this exception, he possessed a nobleness of soul, which to me appeared lovely, because it shone bright in adversity. During the sickly season, he hired to a Planter at common labour, and gave full satisfaction. He was taken sick, became delerious, and incapable of taking care of himself. He was put into a small room, without medical aid, and with very little attention paid him. In this condition, nature in a great measure appeared his physician. He became uneasy, got up, come into the setting room of the family, and was taken back to his own room without knowing any thing of his conduct. After he was taken back to his room, he was seized with billious vomiting which gave relief to his head, when he was told of his behaviour in the other room. He then solicited a cathartic, which with his extreme vomiting, broke his fever. As soon as he could walk, he come to my house, and first informed

us of his distress. He had a happy and speedy recovery just in time, to all human appearances to save my afflicted family. Humane souls are always generous. He would not receive any pay for the important services he rendered my family. But to return to his history; he was defrauded out of his wages, which compelled him to stay another year.—He was again sickly, and did not recover so favorably; his health became broken. I saw him in 1824, emaciated, and ghastly. He told me if he could pay his debts, he would leave the country this spring, having lost two years time and his health, also; but if he could work till May, he hoped to be able to go home. I have heard nothing more of him!—Thus fares it, with the labouring poor in this climate. Is there a benevolent heart, who has seen how often young men of this character have risen to fill respectable stations in the northern states, but will weep for the ruin of of this young man? Should he be compelled to stay another year, he might be cut off, and his friends weep for his early exit! Here he will be forgotten and unknown. Is not this a public calamity? Some, indeed, have such happy constitutions, as to enjoy almost any climate; and some have the good fortune to meet with honest men and prosper, but seldom the case with the poor labourer. This encourages many to try for the same good fortune. But I venture to say, that of all who

have come to my knowledge, of this class of men, but few, in comparison with the number, that usually rise in free states, to eminence or usefulness, have succeeded here.

Society (if it may bear the name) is here founded on the principle of master and slave, (or that power gives right.) Of course. there is nothing of that equality, which is to be found in the northern states. A person emigrating to this country from the north, would do well to think, that when he comes here, he must be a master, a gentleman, or, what he is unwilling to be, neglected by all classes of men.

I have heard it used almost as a proverb, that "a poor man is a mean man." Indeed, he is so in *public opinion*. And many who have been well raised suffer their spirits to sink under this odium, and in a few years, actually merit the character. Happy would it be, for the population of our rising country, if people in the northern and western states, would consider properly the dangers of the climate on northern constitutions, and suitably weigh the evil which rises, from leaving a country and people, to which they have become assimilated by education and habit. I would not here be understood to discourage emigration. I know well that our settlements must and will spread; but sure I am, that if our youth, and agricultural men, would cease to go southward, many lives would probably be prolonged, and the influence of slavery would be less

felt in our republican institutions. Vice is a dangerous foe to freedom. And who, that has a tolerable knowledge of these United States, but must admit that vice is more prevalent, and less controlled, in slave, than in free states, especially in the luxurious clime of Mississppi and Louisiana? In countries where children labour, and education is generally diffused through all classes, it is easy to see that there are less temptations to dissipation and vice of every kind. Men are more friendly, and feel more sensibly their social obligations.

Many have thought that this climate offers advantages above any other section of the United States. That the climate is pleasant to indulgent men, I shall not deny; it certainly is so to those who can enjoy good health; but to those who labour, or are much exposed, it is far otherwise.

To those who visit this country in the month of November, it is pleasant, indeed; and the winter is generally agreeable to a northern person—seldom colder than I have known it in Vermont in the month of October. The weather, however, is very changeable during the winter season, and attended with much rain. Snow is seldom seen, and usually disappears, on the first appearance of the sun. I have once known it lay in shaded places, three days; and only once, in the five winters I stayed in this country. The natives appear to be as sensibly affected, in such weather, as

a Vermonter would be, to drive his sleigh all day, when his horses are covered with frost.—If cold weather is accompanied with much rain, the Influenza and Pleurisy become common. In the latter part of January and first of February, Spring usually commences; and by the fifteenth of February, peach trees are in bloom. From this time, until the first of April, the season is changeable, when frosts usually disappear. From this time the weather becomes warm, and vegetation comes on with rapidity. By May, the heat often becomes severe; and by June, the sun appears nearly vertical. A northern person, who wishes to enjoy health, must now avoid the sun, during the heat of the day. He now finds his strength decrease until September, although in the house he is commonly comfortable. This accounts for the inhabitants being naturally disposed to idleness. The nights are commonly cool and comfortable. The summers are usually subject to extremes of wet and dry; and in very dry weather the heat is excessive. I have often been obliged to use an umbrella by ten o'clock, to avoid a pain in my head, occasioned by the heat of the sun. It rarely happens that a northern constitution passes the summer and autumn without a fever, and many have more than one. I have had five attacks of fever in one season; and southern people have what they call "a sick spell." They commonly recover sooner than northern people. A person

who wishes to enjoy health in preference to wealth, will soon leave this country, or seek some indulgent way of living. For my own part, I had rather cut hay for a common stock in the western states, than to raise pay for a doctor in this country. And who has the dullest time in business, he who feeds a stock during the snowy season, or he who is nursed himself, or is nursing a sick family.—The reader may determine. The dampness of the atmosphere, in this climate, is probably another cause of ill health. In the summer season, every thing hanging about a house gathers so much dampness as to have a musty scent. Leather becomes mouldy, without particular attention to keep it clean; and cloths in chests or trunks will soon damage in hot weather unless particular care is taken of them. Flour will not keep through the summer, without spoiling; and meat requires the strictest attention.

Living on bad provisions, is every where, a source of ill health: and it is sometimes difficult to procure as good a quality in this country as is to be had in the northern states. It is sometimes difficult to procure those varieties, which are needful for the comfort of the sick, especially, previous to the arrival of northern boats, in the fall season. Our gardens, before this time, become gleaned, and it is generally the leanest time in the year, for a variety of living. To give a full account of the productions of this climate, would exceed the bounds of this work. I only state that our common gardens are much like those of the north, with the addition of a few southern plants.—Northern vegetables are soon gone, nor will they keep through the season. I have thought the southern vegetables were not of as good a quality as the northern. The fruits of the field, are corn, cotton, sweet potatoes, rice, oats; and rye is sometimes raised for winter pasture, and reaped in June, when a crop of corn may be planted on the same land, and thus we obtain two crops in one year. Wheat is not raised in this country, and it is said will not grow to advantage. Corn does well when planted in season. It should be planted in March, and if well tended produces plentifully; yet many of the southern planters buy their corn from the upper states. I have thought a poor crop was occasioned by bad management. Where I have managed, I have raised a supply, and to spare, without neglecting the cotton. Cotton is the principle production of this country, and to this all other husbandry must yield. It is indeed a laborious crop. The ground is thrown into ridges, by plowing four or five furrows together, on the top of which the seed is sown thickly, and covered with a harrow. When it is up it is scraped with a hoe, and cut out, what is thought unnecessary. The next time it receives a light mould, and is hoed as

often as weedy, without any regard to the number of times. In wet seasons, there is no intermission between hoeing and picking, the weeds grow so fast. Picking commences between the fifteenth of August, and the first of September. After which, on new moist land, it is in constant bloom, and bearing till frost puts a period to vegetation. In good crop years, there remains enough to employ the slaves in gathering through the season, until time to clear the land to sow in spring. Thus it takes one whole year to raise and gather a crop of cotton. Cotton, at first, is a very tender plant; after it commences its stalk, it branches exceedingly on good land; and on the Mississippi, I have seen it grow so high, that a common negro would bend it to reach the top. But in general, it does not exceed a common man's head, and on poor land it is much inferior. Its pods or bowls, when ripe are burst open by the cotton they contain, when it is picked out; and in this way the negroes continue to gather it through the year.—Perhaps, there is no crop, which requires so much labour to secure it, as cotton; and could not be cultivated to advantage without the labour of the negroes.

The sweet potatoe, is another article peculiar to the southern states. It is raised on a ridge, made higher than for cotton, on the top of which the seed is planted. At first it grows so slow, that the ridge must be scraped with

the hoe before the vine has acquired a size for hoeing. This vine has some resemblance to a bean, and falls on the sides of the ridge as soon as it begins to run. It should now be hoed, covering the vine, in several places with earth, when the vine takes root, and bears a potatoe of a superior quality to those which grow from the main root. The sweet potatoe yields abundantly, and is both palatable and wholesome.

There is a kind of oat, called the Egyptian oat, which may be sown in the fall as soon as the corn is taken off, and like rye, may be fed in the winter, and reaped in June. This is valuable to the farmer for raising young calves, colts, and other stock, which require good attention during the cold season; and in spring, yields a valuable crop of feed for the teams.—Spring oats should be sown in February, and will not do well, unless they cover the ground before the hot season commences, because the land becomes dry and parched too much for new vegetables.

Rice is raised with ease, and is very productive. Rice is of two kinds the swamp and upland rice. The upland is the kind which I have cultivated. Upland rice requires strong moist land, and is planted in drills, or rows, as nigh as can be hoed between, and is wed like other crops. When it branches it should cover the ground and is reapt like wheat. The ground is not plowed after planting, and should

be left nearly level. The process of raising low land rice is different, requiring swamp land and to be occasionally flowed with water.—Rice is covered with a hull like barley; and where it is raised in great quantities, mills are used for hulling it. It is sometimes hulled in mortars when raised only for the use of individual families.

Indigo and tobacco were formerly raised to advantage, but are now neglected to attend to cotton.

The flat country near New-Orleans, is covered with large sugar plantations, where the sugar cane is cultivated to advantage. This, like cotton, requires the whole year to raise and fit the sugar for market. Sugar and cotton can never be cultivated to any considerable extent, without the labour of negroes, as the whites cannot endure hard labour in the summer season.

In short, the soil is productive, affording a variety of both northern and southern productions; and could health be enjoyed by the labouring white man, there would be sufficient encouragement for emigration. But when I consider the health and morals of this country, it has no enjoyments which northern people should envy.

The timber of this country, affords a great variety. Yellow pine, and oak are in great abundance on the highlands; and on the river, Spanish and water oak, are found in plenty.—

They are not as durable as northern timber of the same species. Locust and mulbury trees are plenty in some places, and are very durable timber. Cyprus is plenty in the river swamps, and is valuable for boards and timber. The forest in the winter reminds us of the season, which is full of variety. Here are to be found several species of the broad leaf timber arrayed in green, such are the magnolia, bay, holly, wild peach, &c.; and several kinds of herbage, which grow and blossom in winter.—The hot weed in the river swamps is remarkable for its greenness all winter. The orange tree is a handsome tree, and thrives well near New-Orleans. Its fruit is grateful to weak people in the fall season, and is pleasant to all. Figs do well in this country, and are pleasant fruit. There are but few kinds of grapes, natural to this country, but can be cultivated with ease. The china tree is one of the handsomest shade trees to be found in this region, and the bark of the root, is one of the best vermifuges in nature. Its berries are deleterious, often intoxicating birds that eat them.—Convulsions are said to be produced by them, but this effect I have not seen. I know from experience, that the root is the best worm medicine, with which I am acquainted. The spanish moss, is a curiosity to every stranger who examines it with attention. It grows to a great length, so that on falling a large tree, a

a person may gather from its branches in great plenty. It appears to have no connexion with the tree, yet hangs in large quantities on the branches; and if by winds it should be separated, and blown to another tree, still lives and grows. It makes good feed for cattle, and appears adapted by nature to the wants of this country in times of inundation. The dogwood tree, or as it is called in some of the western states, boxwood, is a common tree in the high lands of this part of the world. It is not large, but one of the most valuable trees of the forest. Its bark is equal, if not superior to the Peruvian bark. When I say superior, I mean that its properties are essentially the same, and its superior qualities are owing to its being used always fresh, and without any adulteration. On my own constitution, I have used it to the greatest advantage, and have seen its operation on the blacks, evidently superior to the imported bark. Its beautiful red berries are often used, with other ingredients, for bitters, as a preventative against fall complaints. Here is also to be found the Virginia snake root: its properties are well known, and need no comment.

Here is found the cuckold bur, or weed, different from that of the north. It produces a small bur very troublesome in the field, but the plant is valuable as a domestic medicine.—It is an antidote for animal poison. I have seen it used to cure the bite of a spider, which

is sometimes fatal in this country. A strong tea made of the leaves, and pounded leaves or expressed juice, applied immediately to the bite of a spider, no serious effects will be produced. This fact has come under my personal observation. It is also said to be a wholesome drink in fevers, to excite an action on the skin. The jimson, (stramonium) or James toun weed, is very common. Its properties have been set forth by Doct. James Ewell, in his "Family Physician, or Medical Companion." I have used it with great success in domestic practice, to mitigate the anguish of troublesome swellings, and assist in bringing on supuration. The leaves worn in the hat, or bound on the forehead and temples, often relieve common head-aches.

As it cannot be expected in so small a work that a complete account will be given of every production, I shall close this head by giving some account of the common cane, which is much admired by strangers. It grows spontaneously on all good land which is not annually overflowed, sometimes growing to the heighth of twenty feet, and so thick that cattle pass through it with difficulty. It grows from the size of a switch cane, to that of a large club. It is useful for making weaver's reeds. It grows with few or no branches, and has a large broad leaf growing on the side of the cane, and is green all winter. It makes a good support for the numerous stock of this country.—

As settlements increase the cane decreases, and in some parts of the country is nearly extinct.

CHAPTER IV.

Religious and moral state of the country—Of Pinkneyville—Rev. E. Estis—Methodists—Methodists have good preachers—Social habits unfriendly to religion—Dissipation at burials—Many enlightened people with corrupt moral taste.

THE religious reader will naturally enquire, what is the state of religion in this country ?—On this head I would be glad to give a more favourable account. My circumstances, while in this part of the land, have not been favourable for collecting religious information.

The first year I lived in Mississippi, I enjoyed the meetings of a small Baptist society, in the neighbourhood of Woodville. It was weak and languid ; and there appeared a great difference between them, and northern churches, although I had a favourable opinion of those with whom I became acquainted. They seemed to want the knowledge of the Gospel more perfectly. They sung in ancient style, lineing the Psalm, and uniting in every part of the house, both white and black, frequently making discordant sounds, grating to an ear accustomed to correct music. I had no disposition at ridicule those attempts at divine

and social worship, though I confess, I was sometimes not much edified. I found religious characters, generally, cold and lauguid, or wild and enthusiastic. After this I lived three years without hearing a sermon! Most of which time I was in the state of Louisiana.

On my moving to Pinkneyville, I again enjoyed religious meetings. Here, were two houses for worship ; one for the Methodists, and one for the Baptists ; the churches were small. The Baptist church was feeble, and almost sunk. The Rev. E. Estis preached in different parts of the neighbouring country, and once in each month at Pinkneyville. He is the only man, with whom I became acquainted, that deserves particular notice. I have sat under his ministry with satisfaction.—He is a sound orthodox Baptist ; and although I do not feel to sanction their distinguishing tenets, yet, would to God that all who preach the gospel, were as pious and sincere as I believe him to be. There are many who exceed him in oratory ; but if ministers are measured by the proper standard, he will be among the first of the Mississippi clergy. The Methodist church in Pinkneyville has some valuable members ; but it is the misfortune of this sect, that many of them injure their own cause, by a wild enthusiasm. This has always been offensive to me ; and my opposition to this, deprived me of that social intercourse, which is desirable between different religious sects.

On moving to Pinkneyville I found that the Methodists at sometimes were very noisy and wild; which had given offence to some whose feelings deserved some respect. One day I heard some young gentlemen observe, that if there was not better order in the Methodist meeting-house, they would be willing to see a certain exhorter led out and whipped; and if any would assist, they would have it done, if he did not cease to disturb the assembly. Although I disapproved of their manner of conducting their meetings, I felt sorry to see such a disposition manifested, and would be still more sorry to see an affray of this kind take place. At a convenient time I talked with the preacher on the subject, told him the feelings of the people, and advised him to moderation. He at first excused it as natural for some men. I asked, if it was not the business of religion, to counteract every excess of nature, and from scripture endeavored to convince him that all things should be done in order, to which he assented, and I hoped I had been useful. But the next time he preached, it happened to be on the day of the Baptist appointment. They were advised to preach together at the Methodist house, rather than to divide the assembly—to which they both consented. The Methodist spoke first, and tolerably well, when Mr. Estis delivered a short evangelical sermon. After closing he sat down, when the other arose to apply the sub-

ject: he soon became wild, disconnected, and furious, throwing his eyes expressively at me. I thought he displayed a contempt for my late advice, which I had given in a friendly manner. I arose to go out; but had not reached the door before a large part of the assembly were making for the door. On seeing the retireing audience, he exclaimed,

"When christians pray, the devil runs,
And leaves the field to Zion's sons."

And after this he exclaimed, "It will be harder going in than going out."

I was stung with this method of satirising, went home, when my reflections on the first expression were as follows:—

When public teachers, have their time out stayed,
And from their subject, far and widely strayed,
Grow bold, insulting, and display wild fire,
They're most commended, that the first retire.
Priests should keep wisdom, and their language pure,
All railing, boasting, should at once outbar;
The sacred desk, should never be profaned,
By loudly ranting; or with slander stained.

The second expression being of an allusive kind, I wrote as follows:—

There's many shall come from the east and the west,
To sit at the right hand on high;
They all wish with ardour, to be ever blest,
And fancy their kingdom is nigh.

The oil is now wanting, by many so bold,
Who've taught in our streets they declare—

They cry, "Lord, open, we've taught days of old,
We long have been subject to fear."

The Saviour replies, lo! he rends earth and skies,
"They who love, before me shall stand;
They have kept my commands, for them is the prize,
Depart," now he utters command.

This mode of expression, hurt the feelings of some good people, while others thought it might be useful. There, however, was a coldness manifested in some towards me. Some respectable people, out of the church, said they would not go to hear the methodists again.— I however went, and whether the opposition served to restrain them or not, I have not heard so noisy a meeting since.

The Methodists have some good preachers, who appear to be candid men; and when they preach in a candid and convincing manner, it is not my business, or intention to oppose them. They certainly have done, and may yet do much good. It is my opinion, that different sectaries ought to exercise forbearance, where there can be good evidence of piety and sincerity, regulated, by a sober understanding.— There are a few scattered churches, and a few ministers of different denominations, in some parts of this country.

The social habits of these states opperate unfriendly to religion. The great distinction between the different classes, are unfriendly to the usefulness of a minister. It is difficult

for a minister to accommodate himself to all. I think I have observed some ministers, who have injured their usefulness, by too great a conformity to the fashionable circle: while others, no doubt, have erred on the other hand, by descending too low in their habits and manners, and thereby drawing an odium imprudently from the more enlightened part of community.

In short, when I consider the moral darkness of this people, the Saviour's words naturally occur; "Be ye therefore, wise as serpents and harmless as doves." There is a great want of religious teachers, as well as of christian practice. The usefulness of ministers, would probably, be in proportion to their numbers. Could they associate with each other, they would be likely to be mutual helpers to each other, and save some of those declensions, which happen when they are alone by themselves. There are some persons who have told me they never heard a sermon, in their lives. Strange as this may appear, in a land professedly christian, I have no doubt of the fact.

I once attended a funeral (or burial as it is called) of an aged mother, on the Mississippi. Some of the family appeared affected, and wished me to make a prayer, and read a sermon on the occasion. On asking the minds of the family, I thought best to indulge them.—

After prayer I asked for the sermon, when, to my surprise, I received a bible. I saw they did not know the difference. I suppressed my feelings, and read an appropriate chapter.—Some of them listened with attention, and thanked me kindly.

After burial, one of the sons went home with me in my boat. Before he left the house of his late mother, he drank so freely, that he was intoxicated; frequently swearing that in the death of his mother, he had lost his comfort. I have no doubt but many more might be found, like these wretched poor, who have been born and raised in the wilds of Mississippi and Louisiana.

Many have supposed that the southern people are, generally, ignorant. This is not generally the case. There are many enlightened minds, who need only moral improvement to make them respectable members of society.—Many people who have gone from the northern states, with the idea of superior knowledge, have here found themselves amongst a people of discernment, who have treated their vanity with contempt.

CHAPTER V.

Observations on Slavery—Slavery tends to corrupt the whites—Remarks by Jefferson and Darby—Slavery inexcusable—Jefferson—Inconsistent with the gospel—Manner of living—Dicipline—Conclusion.

SINCE my arrival at the north, much has

been said to me on the subject of negro slavery; and I have often had to reply to questions of enquiring people, how I could live with, or manage slaves? The reader will have learnt from the narrative, the cause of my going to that country. I was never an advocate for slavery, and on the disappointment I received from my brother, it was necessity that compelled me to undertake the business of managing slaves.

I have often found my feelings put to the test, to keep up a proper dicipline, without improper severity. A manager of slaves, must be always on the watch for their low cunning, and mischief, which always flow from vice and ignorance. He has little to cultivate, or encourage good feelings; hence the hardness of slave holders and overseers.

I shall here give the words of Mr. Jefferson on the subject.

"There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people, produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passion, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germe of all education in him.—From his cradle to his grave, he is learning to do what he sees others do. If a parent could

and no motive either in philanthropy or his self-love, for restraining the intemperance of his passion towards his slave, it should always be a sufficient one that his child is present.— But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives loose to his worst passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances. And with what execration should the statesman be loaded, who permitting one half of the citizens thus to trample on the rights of the other, transforming those into despots, and these into enemies; destroys the morals of the one part, and the *Armor patriæ* of the other.

For if a slave can have a country in this world, it must be any other in preference to that in which he is born to live and labour for another: in which he must lock up the faculties of his nature, contribute as far as depends on his individual endeavours to the evanishment of the human race, or entail his own miserable condition on the endless generations proceeding from him. With the morals of the people, their industry is also destroyed. For in a warm climate, no man will labour for himself who can make another labour for him.

This is so true, that of the proprietors of

slaves a very small proportion indeed is ever seen to labour.

And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever: that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events: that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take sides with us in such a contest. But it is impossible to be temperate and pursue this subject through the various considerations of policy, of morals, of history, natural and civil. We must be contented to hope they will force their way into every one's mind."

It is an invariable rule, that he who thirsts for power, is a tyrant. A tyrant never governs with moderation and justice; so that the sufferings of the slave, are not the only evil to be complained of. Slavery has a baneful influence on the white population, not only, by hardening the heart, but by promoting idleness, and pride in the young.

"Mr. Byran Edwards, in drawing the character of the West Indians, (inhabitants of the

West Indies) imputes their early propensity to licentiousness to the climate. We may wonder why so accurate an observer should impute to the climate, when the cause was so obvious. The real fact is, that the slavery of the negroes constitutes the demoralizeing principle, if it exists, that debauches the mind and body.

"Copying from Montesquieu and not from observation of nature, climate has been called upon to account for stains on the human character, imprinted by the hand of political mistake.

"No country where negro slavery is established, but must bear in part the wounds inflicted on nature and justice. Where the first lesson taught men is their own consequence, and the degraded state of beings born to administer to their passions, is every moment present to their eyes, men may be proudly jealous of their own freedom; may maintain it with vigour; but, in despite of the most virtuous precepts, seducing examples must weaken the moral principle in the hearts of too many."—DARBY.

Hence comes dissipation, gameing and a train of vices, more expensive than the gospel, with all its charitable societies in the northern states. This is the effect of slavery, on the white population. There are some planters who use their slaves with mildness; and feed, and clothe them, in a coarse, though com-

fortable manner. Some of those people, have fallen under my observation.

Were I to tell all that I have seen, my readers would exclaim, "tell it not at the north; publish it not amidst a free people." It certainly would disgrace humanity, and to relate it would be no entertainment to my readers.

The more I have attended to the subject, the more I am convinced, that it is a moral evil and cannot be defended, on any proper ground; and am unwilling that my family should settle in a slave state.

When I removed to that country, I own that I did not properly consider the subject of slavery, and have excused myself, on the ground of necessity, while there; but when I consider the chastening hand, of Providence towards me, I am inclined to think that no excuse can justify me, in again entering into that business; and I now heartily wish success to all the exertions of the christian world to meliorate the condition of slaves, and finally to bring about universal emancipation.

I feel confident, that when the spirit, of christianity, shall have its full influence, on the minds of men, slavery will cease to exist. The superior spread of the gospel, in states and countries, where slavery is not permitted, may be considered a striking proof of the assertion.

Future generations will, probably look back, on our days and view slavery with the

same religious abhorrence, that we now view the dark ages of persecution.*

Yet there are some, who no doubt think little on this subject and perhaps that little is on the side of slavery.

Some have thought that ancient precedent would justify the continuation of slavery. For this they have added the Jewish rite, Lev. 25, 44. I own this has had some weight on my mind, but let us examine the first. If precedent is an excuse, then idolatry, fraud, intemperance, whoredom, murder, theft and every vice known to man, have the same excuse.—For precedent is not wanting; but where interest is not concerned, men are ashamed of such arguments, and should be equally so in the cause of slavery.

The Jewish rite, Leviticus, 25, 44, "Both thy bond-men and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond men and bond-maids." If this proves any thing for us, we must first show that we belong to the Jewish economy. This I think none will admit; but rather that the Jews, with us, are

*The love of justice and the love of country plead equally the cause of this people, and it is a mortal reproach to us, that they should have pleaded it so long in vain. The hour of emancipation, is advancing in the march of time; it will come, whether brought on by the generous agency of our own minds, or by the bloody process of St. Domingo.—Jefferson.

brought under the command of the Saviour, Mat. 7, 12, and 19, 19, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men shonld do to you, do ye even so to them: and, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Now if the latter be in force, the former is done away, for God is not at war with himself. If this be true, then we have no scripture grant for slavery. For if permission or grant to the Jews were applicable to us, we might undertake wars of extermination. We might indulge in polygamy, we might borrow and not pay, as they did of the Egyptians; but enough; any candid mind can see that the gospel (that light to lighter the Gentiles) contains no such liberty: and its influence will one day expel slavery from the earth. God grant that that day may speedily arrive.

I had intended at first to have touched lightly on this subject, but having been solicited, by candid men to give an impartial account of the management of slaves. I give the following as what I have seen, and know to be true in Louisiana and Mississippi.

And first, their support or mode of living.—They are allowed a daily ration, according to the customs of their masters. Those who have large plantations, usually, give one peck of corn meal to each working hand, for each week, the children having half allowance.—This when properly ground is one bushel of corn to five hands per week, or nearly so, as

the swell of meal in grinding, is nearly one fifth where there is no toll taken.

This proportion is given sometimes daily, and sometimes weekly. Their meat is given daily, or weekly, at the rate of three pounds for each hand per week. The children often are allowed none. This is what is called *good living*. I have known some who give little, or no meat in the latter part of the season, when hoeing is done. When corn bread alone becomes their principle support. If they are allowed to raise any vegitables for themselves, this is commonly the labour of Sunday; and if permitted, they usually sell their own productions to purchase what they term Sunday clothes, or other comforts, such as tobacco and other small articles, not allowed by their masters.; but this fare is superior to others with whom I have been acquainted, and few do better than this, who allowance at all. There are others still, called small planters, who differ from this rate, for the better. But I have seen a scanty allowance given of meat, which was so damaged as to be offensive to deal out. When this happens the poor slaves eats this or goes without until the bad meat is distributed. The common saying is, it will do for negroes.

The dress given by their masters is, commonly, two suits a year. This consists of coarse linen or osenburgh shirt, and pantaloons in the spring, and in the fall, coarse woollen

pantaloons, a shirt, jacket (and some allow a blanket coat) and a pair of shoes, and a blanket. The dress of the women, is of a similar kind and in the same scanty manner.

They live in small huts, or houses near together, like soldiers barracks, and like them they are called quarters. Marriage is not known or practiced among them. The will of the master is the only law of marriage, or divorce, among negroes; and when his consent is obtained they commonly hut by themselves and raise their families. But if they disagree, and the master indulges a separation, their children experience all the wretchedness which flows from ignorance and vice. I have found a proper management of the quarter far more perplexing than all the duties of the field.

Their dicipline is of the strictest kind, and cannot be otherwise where numbers are together; yet cruelty might often be avoided.— Sunk as they are, in ignorance and vice, and labouring for nothing, they have nothing to raise their ambition, and fear must be their ruling passion. Of course the whip becomes the constant companion of a manager and driver. They are roused in the morning by the sound of a bell, or horn, and a suitable time given them to prepare for the field, when the order is given "turn out." Should any now loiter the driver passes with his whip and clears the huts of all who do not report themselves sick, and follows them to the field, and there exe-

cutes the orders of the manager. The manager after attending to the sick reports, rides to the field and sees that the driver has all in order, where his duties are various, having a general oversight of all plantation concerns. The slaves, commonly, carry (or have carried to them) their provisions and return not until night, (except women who nurse young children) and then they procure their wood and water for the night, after which, the bell or horn is sounded, and all must appear within the quarter limits. Should any be found absent, after this time, without permission, they are whiped as offenders; and if any again leave the quarters, and are found absent or caught on the nightly patrol, they are whiped severely. Every slave, who is found off the plantation, destitute of a written permit, is liable to be taken up as a runaway, and put in prison, at the expence of his master.—The law fixes in this case the reward and expence, which the poor slave pays on the bear back when found by his owner.

This may seem cruel to those who are acquainted with liberty. But it is an evil that grows out of slavery, and cannot be made much better where slavery exists. To remedy the evil, the slavery of negroes must be abolished.—For slavery and tyranny ever have and ever will continue to go together. Where there are but few slaves, indulgences may be given, with more safety; and often are indulgences given

to waiters and others, in a separate capacity, which would, if given to numbers together, render them unmanageable.

I would not here be thought to be pleading the cause of the master; for when I turn my mind over this subject and reflect on that divine command, Mat. 7, 12,) "Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." When I view this, I say, I lament that I have ever lifted the whip or seen a slave. I am sensible that the gospel and slavery are at varience, and feel, that my present misfortunes are the righteous chastnings of divine Providence upon me. Every person who has known what the true principle of liberty is, must feel an abhorrence of slavery, and to practice it must be guilt. And with this view for myself, I renounce the principle of slavery *forever*. My anxious care now is to recover my family that I may no tbe the means of entailing *curses* on my *posterity*.

I shall close with a few reflections on seeing an extract from Governor Troup's message to the Georgia Legislature, in which he says, "the negro has never found a sincere friend, but in his master."

I've seen the Slaves descending
On Mississippi's flood;
I've seen their masters vending
Their load of human blood.

I've seen them in the market,
Like beasts exposed for sale;
I've seen the horrid traffic;
Nor could their tears prevail.

I've seen their cries at parting;
Their masters bade them go!
Their hearts were full and smarting;
They keenly felt their woe!

I've seen a mother's anguish
At parting with her son;
Unpitied now they languish,
Neglected or alone.

I've seen a large plantation—
Where slaves in numbers were;
I've seen the scanty ration
Of coarse and humble fare.

I've seen them toil from day-light
Till dark returned again;
I've seen their sorry respite—
No bed to rest their frame.

I've seen them sick and languish;
I've seen their scanty board;
I've seen their pain and anguish—
Their sorry help bestow'd.

I've seen them when chastized
Raise loud and humble cries;
I've seen them cruelized
Till blood would meet my eyes.

I've seen—but why relate it?
I would not see again;

I need not speak or state it,
'Tis folly guilt and shame.

Is this the masters kindness,
The Georgia hero pleads?
What strange delusion, blindness!
Are all his kindest deeds?

Behold, ye tyrants, listen,
To one Supreme command;
Come all your crimes, and hasten,
In solemn order stand.

"As you would wish for kindness,
By others done to you,"
That righteous law commands us,
"Like kindness," to "pursue."

O when shall gospel glory,
In all her might arrise?
When will the proud be holy,
When will ye fools be wise?

Hail, bright celestial morning,
With all thy glorious train—
When none shall need a warning
To break the captives chain.

PART SECOND.

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PART II.

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CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER II.

NARRATIVE, &c

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CHAPTER I.

Introductory remarks—Falls in company with a traveller—Lodges in Essex, N. Y.—Leaves the house in dead of night—Speaks of the assault—Is arrested—Committed to prison—Favoured by the sheriff—Bail—Attempt to settle—Letters of recommendation procured—Thompson's certificate—Attempt to prosecute for the assault—Attorney's remarks—Failure—For what reasons—Pleads a commission to prove character.

The design of this second part, is to show some of the vicisitudes of human life; in which the smallest imprudence, may sometimes, lead us to the most serious evils; and to expose to public view, the vices of those, who presume on the advantages they may gain, by oppressing the poor and helpless. It is ever proper to set up way marks, that others may shun the danger to which we have been exposed.—And that the unwary may learn prudence, and vicious men take warning, I have written the following account of my misfortunes, in which one imprudent act, has led me to months of difficulty.

For had I lodged the information with a proper officer, before I spoke of it abroad, I should have done my duty as a citizen, and

saved the trouble which I have felt in consequence of this neglect.

I have kept a record of the following history, and placed every circumstance on paper, as it transpired ; which may account for some peculiarity in writing : by giving the whole in detail, the whole would be better understood.

After bringing my little work to a close, I set out from Vermont, to go to Hopkinton, in the state of New-York, to settle my business there, and to raise means to publish this book ; having my family in view, and hoping by Fall to be able to go to their relief. But it appears Providence had not finished the work of affliction.

On the 24th of June, I fell in company with a gentleman, belonging to Plattsburgh. I rode with him, and at night crossed Lake Champlain, and put up at a house in Essex village. It was nearly dark when we paid the ferryman, and my companion fearing he had paid a wrong bill, had the imprudence to count his money in the bar. We went to bed together, and I soon fell asleep. But before the other man had got asleep, some person came into the room without a light, proceeded to the foot of the bed, and surprised my companion, by taking up his coat, which lay at the foot of the bed. At that time, a light passed in the hall adjoining our bed room, so that he distinctly saw and knew the landlord to be the person concerned in this business. At the same time,

he saw another person, with his head through the door-way, but did not certainly know who the second person was. He saw the first person feel his side pocket, where he had been seen to put his pocket-book in, the evening before he went to bed. My companion was much alarmed, but said nothing ; knowing his pocket-book was under his head, he lay until Wooster, (for that was the name of the landlord) not finding what it was supposed, he wanted, laid the coat on the bed, when my companion feigned to be awaking, at which, both Wooster and the man at the door left the room. On their leaving the room, I was awaked by my bed fellow, who told me what had happened, appeared much frightened, and wished me to get up with him and leave the house. I wished to stay and see what would follow, and told him that if they intended to rob or steal, they would come again, as soon as they thought we had got asleep. He consented to lay awake with me, and in a short time, some person was heard to come up stairs, and proceed to our door, when my companion (who had not got over his fright) whispered to me, which I suppose was heard at the door, as he was heard to go away without entering our room. Soon after another stepping was heard on the stairs, and some person came to the door at the foot of our bed, and partly opened it. I spoke and demanded who was there, and what was wanting ? A voice repli-

ed, "I want Peter." This I suppose was a feint to pass off without giving us surprise. I answered there is no Peter here, and I wish you to keep away from our room. The person immediately went down stairs. Soon after another visit was paid us at the door from the hall. I rose in bed and spoke with some earnestness, and demanded what it meant, that so much noise should be about our room, when Wooster stepped boldly in with a light, and said he wished to know if we lay comfortably, and made an apology that he had business in the other part of the house. But I reflected, that he had paid us one visit, without a candle, and had been seen feeling the coat pocket, and that those different visits had been at suitable intervals, for a man to go to sleep. I readily consented to leave the house and go to Anson's, across the street. On calling for lodging at Ansons, and being lighted to bed, I felt apprehensive that we might be followed, if the two houses were on terms of intimacy. I express my fears to Anson, and claimed his protection, but gave no reason, only that we had discovered something wrong. Anson discovered the alarm of my companion, and promised safety. He had scarcely got down stairs, when three men came in and enquired for us, which excited his suspicions, and he evaded their enquiries. Soon Wooster followed them, and some questions being asked and no answer given, they all went away. When they were gone,

Anson came and informed us that they had enquired for us, and had gone away. He appeared indirectly to wish to know the cause, which I promised to tell him in the morning. In the morning I enquired for Anson, who was not up. My companion being ready to go, I paid the bill, and went to Wooster's with him. No questions were asked why we left the house, and we said nothing. I felt somewhat disturbed at what had passed, but thought it would detain me to attend to it, and this laid a foundation for the difficulty which soon followed. We searched our things to see if any thing was missing, when I found I had lost a lancet, rolled in a piece of paper, and might have been taken for bills. I ought with my companion, to have gone before a magistrate, and to have sworn to the whole affair; but did not.

We stopped at Willsborough for breakfast, and finding a kinsman, (Mr. George Troup) I mentioned the circumstances, which were confirmed by my companion. Some person informed them, at Essex, when, as I am informed, the owners of the house made a stir about the report. The fact being denied by Wooster, we were charged with a slanderous report, and were followed all night, and the morning after, I was taken about ten miles west of Plattsburgh, and brought back to goal. I was treated politely by Mr. S. Mead, Deputy

Sheriff, but was somewhat abused by Mr. Dean Delance, who accompanied him. He charged me with saying things which I had not said.—The thought occurred to me immediately that he intended to enrage me, that I might say what he wished. This put me on my guard, and I told them both the story as it took place; and informed them, that it was useless to take me to goal, as I could not say otherwise, and I had no money for them, if it should be in their power to make a jury believe me guilty. The sheriff seemed inclined to have me discharged, but Delance insisted that I should be committed.

While in the street at Plattsburgh, I saw my companion, who had parted with me the day before. He had not been taken, and was surprised to see me in the custody of the sheriff, and asked what we should do? I told him not to be alarmed, if I had told the truth and it offended, I must tell it again and swear to it, and I expected he would do the the same. In a short time he was taken, and being among his friends, was admitted to bail.

I was committed on Saturday, and on the Sabbath was permitted to eat with the family of Mr. S. Mead, and accompany him to church. After supper, I again entered my dreary room. I knew no person in Plattsburgh, and told the sheriff (Mr. Edward Springer, Dep. Sheriff) I should not ask for bail. He told me if I wished, in the morning he would assist me to bail.

I told him, I was a stranger in the place, had no property to indemnify any person, who should assist me, and if my word would not release me, I had no more to say, but to declare my innocence.

Thompson my companion, brought me an attorney to assist me. I told him, I knew not much about law, and was unable to pay for advice. He kindly offered to assist me without any stipulated compensation, saying, that if I got clear, he should get something of Wooster, and if not, I might do as I pleased, for I ought not to lay there.

On Monday morning I was liberated by the sheriff,* on giving my word that I would not leave the place without his consent. I called on Mr. H. K. Averill, Esq., who had before offered his assistance as an attorney, who advised me to make affidavit of the facts, and he would apply for an order for Wooster to show cause of action, hoping thereby to get the arrest set aside. I accordingly went before Judge Nichols, one of the judges of the county court, and swore to the facts, to the best of my knowledge and belief. My attorney applied or an order, but was refused, as he stated to me, on account of the weight of the charges, the judge saying that they were worthy of trial, and I must be held to bail.

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*Mr. Edward Springer, Deputy and Goaler. This was a masonic pledge.

Thus I was denied the only privilege, a stranger can have in the state of New-York, to get rid of a vexatious law suit. This was thought by many, as well as myself, a reflection on the character of Judge Nichols, in departing from that generous humanity which is thought by good men to be the stranger due, and which shone so conspicuous in the sheriff and Esq. Averill. I still remained on the credit of my word, with the sheriff, and made no attempts for bail.

My prosecutors, finding they had made a mistaken figure, in trying to frighten me to complyance, and that I was still confirming the report, offered me a discharge, if I would sign an acknowledgment, that Thompson was the principle one in the report. This offer was prefaced with much pity for me, as I was on a journey, and so far from my family; they would bestow this as a favour, as I was so unhappily situated. I was not long in discovering the intrigue contained in this pretended politeness. Could they now get rid of one, they knew not what to do with, and get a kind of acknowledgment in their favor, this would put Thompson in their power, without any hopes of defence.

As I felt punished for not doing my duty in the first affair, I thought I would not be guilty of so base an act, as to leave an innocent man in their power. I found on enquiring, that Thompson was a reputable young man, of

respectable connexions, with a wife and two children to provide for; and should he be left without defence they would ruin him. I felt resolved to abide the issue, whatever might be the consequences. Nor was the impulse of reasoning a greater stimulous, than a sense of *justice*. I remained here four weeks, when my health failed me, and I was unable to labour. I expressed a wish to the sheriff (Mr. E. Springer) to get bail and go on my journey, as I was injuring myself by trying to work; and I knew not how to live on expense without work. Bail* was immediately procured, and I left Plattsburgh for Hopkinton.

On arriving at Hopkinton, my old friends and acquaintance were surprised to hear of my difficulty; and I had often to tell the account to answer their repeated enquiries. Much excitement appeared, and all were willing to do what they could for my relief. The Hon. Roswell Hopkins informed me, that he had been acquainted with old Mr. Delance, Esq. and thought he could assist me in making a settlement on my return. He accordingly wrote to him as follows:—

Hopkinton, Aug. 7th, 1824.

Mr. Delance, Esq.—

Dear Sir—The bearer, Mr. James Pearse, informs me, he has had some difficulty in

*Mr. Springer, Major Azariah Flagg, Doughlass Fouquett, Timothy F. Cook.

Plattsburgh, in which you or one of your sons, are somewhat interested. He wishes me to state to you his character while he resided in this town; as he thinks if you or your son, knew his reputation, a settlement might be brought about, so that he could return to his family. I can assure you that Mr. Pearse lived in this town upwards of eleven years, previous to his remove to the Mississippi, in 1818; and you may be assured, he supported the character of a very honest, judicious and industrious man, whose word might be relied upon for truth and veracity. If it is in your power to give him any aid in making a settlement, so that he can return to his famiy, you will do an honest man a great kindness,

and oblige your old friend,
and humble servant,
ROSWELL HOPKINS.

The judge then drew a letter, which was signed by most of the old inhabitants who had known me from my youth, as follows:—

We, the subscribers, inhabitants of the town of Hopkinton, St. Lawrence county, do hereby certify, that Mr. James Pearse lived in this town, upwards of eleven years previous to his remove to the Mississippi, in the year 1818;—that we were well acquainted with him during his residence in this town; that he was an honest and industrious citizen; and a man of truth and integrity, and we never, in any instance, have heard of his character, as an honest man, being impeached in any degree.

Signed by *Roswell Hopkins*, *Eli Roberts*,
Jonah Sanford, *Gaius Sheldon*,
Eliphalet Brush, *Elias Post*,
Gideon Sprague, *Joseph Durphey*,
Joseph Brush, *A. Blanchard*,
Thad's Laughlin, *Abijah Chandler*
Aaron Warner, *James Trussell*,
Isaac R. Hopkins.

Hopkinton, Aug. 7, 1824.

Several other letters were procured, from other men, who had been acquainted with me, calculated to assist in giving me influence to settle, or procure special bail.

On my return, I delivered the letter from Judge Hopkins to Mr. Delance, who seemed willing to settle, and advised me to go alone with Mr. Wooster, and try for a settlement; but seemed unwilling to believe that Wooster was guilty, and would rather ascribe it to some intrigue, that I was not acquainted with. I had assembled a few gentlemen to witness our settlement, but consented to try alone by ourselves. I could do nothing towards an honourable acquittal,* and offered to submit it to hon-

*Both Delance and Wooster, had endeavored to charge the blame on Anson and Thompson, by trying to lead me to suppose that Anson had employed Thompson to alarm me, by making an appearance of being robbed, to injure Wooster; but circumstances so plainly contradicted and exposed them, that I was not disposed to listen to their suggestions.

ourable, disinterested men. Delance consented; but Wooster would not, unless I would leave out Thompson's testimony; which I refused.

Thompson's testimomy is as follows :—

Plattsburgh, Aug. 14, 1824.

I, Lyman Thompson, do hereby certify, that I did, on the night of the 24th of June last, put up at a house in Essex, occupied by Lyman Wooster; that said Wooster, put me and one other person, by the name of James Pearse, in bed together; and after said Pearse had gotten asleep, some person came into the room without a candle, and came to the bed; and I looked and saw the said person take my surtout coat, and while he had it, a light passed in the hall adjoining our room, so that I distinctly saw, and knew the person to be the landlord, that is to say Lyman Wooster; and I saw him feel the side pocket, and heard the rattling of my knife and comb, which were in the pocket. And I further saw another person, with his head through the door way, his body back in the other room. In this position he stood while Wooster was feeling the pockets; after which, Wooster threw the surtout on the bed, when I feigned to be waking, at which they both left the room. I felt somewhat alarmed and waked Mr. Pearse, and wished him to go with me to Anson's tavern, across the street. Mr. Pearse said, he wished

to stay and see what would follow; and said if they were intent on robing or stealing, they would come again, as soon as they thought we had gotten asleep. We agreed to lay awake; and in a short time, some person came up stairs, and proceeded directly to our door.— We were whispering, and the footseps were heard to go away, without entering our room. In a short time after, we heard a stepping up the stairs, and proceeded to our door, and some one partly opened it, when Mr. Pearse spoke and demanded who was there and what was wanting; at which a person answered, that he wanted Peter. Mr. Pearse answered and said there was no Peter here, and wished they would keep away from our room; and the person went down stairs immediately. Again, in a short time, we heard some one stepping towards the door of our room. As he came to the door, Mr. Pearse rose in bed and with some earnestness enquired the cause of so much noise about our room; on which Wooster entered the room, with a candle, and said he wished to know if we lay comfortably, stepped to the bed, and placed the clothes at the head of the bed, bid us good night, and went out. After this we both agreed to leave the house and call for lodgings at Ansons. We went, accordingly, and spent the rest of the night at Ansons, acros the street. Next morning, we searched our things, to see if any thing was missing. Mr. Pearse declared he had lost a

lancet, which was in his vest pocket, rolled in a piece of newspaper; and said, he supposed they thought they had taken bills. I believe there was nothing else missed. To all the above, I will make oath before any proper officer, at any time, when called upon in a proper manner.

LYMAN THOMPSON.

Mr. George Troup, who had been attending to the different statements, and had observed some contradictions, advised me to complain in behalf of the state. This agreed with a resolution which I had taken, that if I could not settle it honourably, I would do what I ought to have done in the first place.

I accordingly accompanied Mr. Troup to the district attorney, who gave me the necessary advice to institute a suit in behalf of the state. After this I returned to my friends in Vermont, to await the issue of a trial.

In October, I again appeared in Essex, to be a witness in behalf of the state, before the grand jury of that county, for the purpose of indicting Wooster. I found that Mr. Akin, attorney for the people, had done all on his part to punish my antagonist. The witnesses were all present, and I indulged the hope, that my innocence would soon appear; and by bringing Wooster to trial, I might make him feel his condition so sensibly, as to be willing to discharge me unconditionally. Mr. Aikin

informed me that he would endeavour to bring him to trial at that court, if a bill was found against him.

But what was our surprise, to learn that our complaint was rejected? Although, Mr. Thompson swore positively that he saw Wooster feel the side pocket! I asked one of the jury what were the principle arguments against a bill? He said that as I had no positive proof of his taking the lancet, the jury thought he had a right to go where he pleased in his own house. I stated this to Mr. Aikin, who appeared to be equally surprised with myself.—"What," said he, "has a man a right to search pockets in his own house? The jury may have been worked by a side wind." This small figure implied much, which I had reason afterwards more fully to believe. He, however, told me that he would have an interview with the jury, and try to have it again under consideration. I took my leave of him and set off for Willsborough, intending to stay at Mr. Troups until the court should rise, to learn the event of the second hearing before the jury.* On my arrival, at Mr. Troups he said "well sir, you have not obtained a bill I think, have you?" I replied, I had not, and asked him what made him think so. He said, he had drawn the conclusion from what he saw in

*Strange as it may appear, it was again rejected.

collecting the grand* jury; and doubted not, that intrigue had been used to prejudice the jury, by making them believe, that it was the effect of ill-will, beetween Wooster and Anson, which I found to be true to my satisfaction.

When I arrived at the ferry, I found that there had been new differences between them. Wooster had accused Anson of going before the jury, to enter complaint. This was the effect of *jealousy*, for Anson was as innocent of this, as the former charge against him, viz. that he had employed Thompson to alarm me, by making false appearances of being robbed, that he might injure his rival. This story had gained credit among many, and no doubt some of the jury were prejudiced with this opinion, and rejected the whole as a quarrelsome affair.—This shows how inconsistant men will act, when under the influence of prejudice: but with me it could have no weight. There are many little incidents, as things transpire, which prove to the observer their truth, or fallacy, better than volumes of arguments used afterwards. Under this conviction, I have treated

*This is not intended to reflect on the sheriff or jury.—The grand jury of the state of New-York, are summoned by the sheriff, at his own pleasure. He takes who he pleases, until he has obtained his number; and persons may be taken who have preconceived opinions without his knowing it, and those opinions may grow from unfavorable circumstances.—This note is inserted at the request of Mr. Troup.

all that has been said to me on the subject of criminating Anson or Thompson, as a wicked fraud, or blinded prejudice; believing them both innocent in this affair. I have rejected my proffered discharge from this vexatious suit, feeling that if I yielded to their insinuations, I should be accessary to their guilt.

I would not here intimate, that Mr. Delance, Esq. and sons are knowing to the crime of Wooster, and thereby merit the blame of thieves or robbers; but wishing him innocent because they were interested in the house, they have presumed hewas so; and have used all their influence in his favour, notwithstanding the respectable mediations of Judge Hopkins, and others in my favour. I would not use the names of so many respectable men, to aid a plot so wicked as they charge Anson with; nor would I be detained from my family so long, to please the feelings of any man, did I not think that truth and justice demanded it. Mr. Delance, Esq. holds a considerable influence among many, and will no doubt involve me in serious difficulty. But my opinion can not be altered by him in this affair, as I think him under wrong feelings. The part, he at first took, was natural, for one interested in the house; and knowing nothing of me, might be pardoned for thinking me a vagabond. But when Judge Hopkins, and so many other respectable men interested themselves in my be-

half, he certainly ought to have changed his ground, or become neuter. He confessed to me, that he thought me innocent; but yet, he was united in the views of Wooster to make Anson and Thompson guilty of a wicked intrigue, of which he had no evidence; and therefore must be ascribed to jealousy, or oth-motives dishonorable. It may be held as a maxim, that men who indulge much jealousy lack honesty; and my being held a prisoner, after they had acknowledged my innocence, appears a proof of the assertion. But lest they should think proper to deny their acknowledgment, I give a letter from David Thayer, esq. of Willsborough, who accompanied Mr. George Troup, with me, when I offered an honorable settlement.

The letter is as follows:

Mr. James Pearse, sir—

Agreeable to your request, I will give you the substance of a conversation which I had with D. Delance, esq. relating to the affair between yourself, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Worcester. Mr. Delance showed me a letter from judge Hopkins, of Hopkinton, which he had just received. The judge stated, that he had long been acquainted with you, and ever believed you to be a man of truth, and a peaceable, good citizen. Mr. D. further remarked, that from the letter and other sources of information, he was fully convinced that you was

well entitled to the character given you by judge H.

Your humble servant,

DAVID THAYER.

Wooster made me a similar acknowledgment in a private interview. But they all appeared determined to hold me prisoner, unless I would assent to their terms—which I could not do, and feel innocent. They no doubt intended to wrest a confession from me, against my will, or try to acriminate me at trial, after they had confessed my innocence. They little thought that the world would read this, after they had done all they could to ruin an innocent man, and by this act have reduced a helpless family to want.

I again returned to Vermont, after obtaining Mr. George Troup for special bail. When I arrived at Sudbury, the Rev. Mason Knapen informed me that he had been acquainted with Wooster, and that he had been guilty of conduct but little better than that with which I had charged him. In December, the time drawing nigh when I expected a trial, the Rev. Mr. Knapen gave me an introduction to a number of the most respectable gentlemen in Charlotte, requesting them to give me their aid in obtaining the character of Wooster. I delivered the letter and the following was the result.

Charlotte, 28th Dec. 1824

We, the subscribers, whose names are hereunto annexed, having been solicited by the Rev. Mason Knapen, to declare our opinion of the character of Lyman Wooster, of Essex, for the benefit of James Pearse, in a suit now pending at Plattsburgh: do hereby certify, that we have been acquainted with said Wooster, and we do not think him entitled to the character of a reputable man—and should we be called on in a legal manner, we would state, that it would not be difficult to prove that he is not entitled to fair character.

Signed by the following gentlemen.

David Hubbell, esq.
Samnel Hurlbut,
Nath'l Newell, esq.
David Cook,
Maj. Jon'n Breakenridg,
Charles M'Neil, esq.

I was requested by some of the above named gentlemen, to present the above to Wooster and Delance; and propose a settlement. If this failed, I was at liberty to make use of their names to plead a commission to take testimony. I accordingly crossed the ferry, put up at Anson's, and notified them that I had such a letter; and proposed a settlement.

Wooster called in, and I shewed him the letter. Some observations passed on the subject and Wooster appointed next morning to meet

me. I told him to call before breakfast, and if he would make me an offer that I considered honorable, I would settle the affair; if not, after breakfast, I would pursue my journey to Plattsburgh.

The next morning I waited until after breakfast, and saw nothing of Wooster or Delance; and left Essex for Plattsburgh.

Wooster informed me that he was prepared for the trial, at our interview in the evening; yet that he felt disposed for pacific measures. My not seeing him in the morning, led me to doubt it, and I took no further trouble to bring about a reconciliation.

On my arriving at Plattsburgh, I found that he had not made the declaration required by law; and my attorney thought he might intend to let it pass by default; but, the day before the sitting of the court, his attorney served the declaration.

CHAPTER II.

Declaration—Delay of trial—Lynd's invidiuous remarks—Surrender as prisoner—Favour of the sheriff—Trial—Closing remarks.

Clinton Common Pleas, of the Term of October, year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-four.

CLINTON COUNTY, SS.

Lyman Wooster, plaintiff in this suit, complains of James Pearse, defendant in this suit in cus-

tody, &c, of a plea of trespass on the case—For that, whereas, the said plaintiff, now is a good, true, honest and faithful citizen of this state, and as such hath always behaved and conducted himself, and at the time and place hereafter mentioned was and is an Inn or tavern keeper by profession & occupation, and until the committing of the sev'l grievances by the said defendant, hereafter mentioned, was always reputed, esteemed and accepted by and amongst all his neighbors and customers, and other good and worthy citizens of this state, to whom he was in any wise known to be a person of good name, fame and credit, at Essex—to wit: at Plattsburgh, in the county of Clinton, and within the jurisdiction of this court.

And whereas the said plaintiff hath not ever been guilty, nor until the time of committing the said several grievances, been suspected to have been guilty of robbing or stealing, or of an attempt to rob or steal from any of his customers or lodgers, in his Inn or Tavern, or any other person or persons, whomsoever;—or of any offences or misconduct, herein after mentioned, to have been charged upon or imputed to the said plaintiff—or of any other such offences or misconduct, by means of which premises, he, the said plaintiff, before the committing of the said several grievances, by the said defendant, as herein after mentioned, had deservedly obtained and acquired, both as an inn-keeper and otherwise, the good opinion

and credit of all his neighbors, and other good and worthy citizens of this state, to whom he was in any wise known.

And his said occupation of inn-keeper had become lucrative and profitable, at Essex—to wit: at Plattsburgh, and within the jurisdiction aforesaid.

Yet the said defendant well knowing the premises, but greatly envying the prosperous and happy state and condition of the plaintiff, and contriving and wickedly intending to injure the said plaintiff, in his said occupation, and in his said good name, fame and credit, and to bring him into public scandal, infamy, and disgrace, with and against all his neighbours, and other good and worthy citizens of this state.

And to cause it to be suspected and believed by those neighbeurs and citizens, that the said plaintiff had been guilty of stealing, and of an assault with the intent to rob him, and one Lyman Thompson, while lodgers in the said inn or tavern of the said plaintiff.

And to subject the said plaintiff to the pains and penalties of the laws of this state, made and provided and inflicted upon persons guilty thereof—and thereby to injure the said plaintiff in his said occupation and business, and to vex, harrass, oppress and impoverish, and ruin him, the said plaintiff, heretofore, to wit: on the twenty-fifth day of June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and

twenty-four, at Essex, to wit: at Plattsburgh in the county and within the jurisdiction aforesaid,

Then and there did, in the presence and hearing of one Beverly Gager, and of divers good and worthy citizens of this state. He, the said defendant, contriving and intending as aforesaid, then and there, in the presence of the said last mentioned citizens, falsely and maliciously spoke and published of and concerning the said plaintiff, of and concerning his said occupation and business as an inn or tavern keeper, these false, malicious, scandalous and defamatory words following, viz.

We (the said defendant and one Lyman Thompson, meaning) put up at Woosters last night; (meaning that they, the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson stopped to lodge at the said inn or tavern of the said plaintiff the night preceding,) and after we (the said defendant and the said Lyman, meaning) had gone to bed, he (the said plaintiff, meaning) came into the room where we (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson, meaning) were in bed, and attempted to rob us (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson, meaning) I (the said defendant meaning) have lost a knife, and I (the said defendant, meaning) believe that he (the said plaintiff, meaning) stole it, (the said knife, meaning) while we (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson, meaning) were in bed at his house

(meaning the said inn or tavern of the said plaintiff) I (the said defendant, meaning) have lost a lancet, and I (the said defendant meaning) believe that he (the said plaintiff, meaning) stole it, (the said lancet, meaning) while we (the s'd defendant & the s'd Lyman Thompson, meaning) were in bed at his house (meaning the said inn or tavern of the said plaintiff.)—And afterwards, to wit, on the day and year aforesaid, at Willsboro', to wit, at Plattsburgh in the county and within the jurisdiction aforesaid, in a certain other discourse, which the said defendant then and there had, in the presence and hearing of one Edward Cuyler, and of divers other good and worthy citizens of this state, he, the said defendant, further contriving and intending as aforesaid, then and there, in the presence and hearing of the said last mentioned citizens, falsely and maliciously spoke and published of and concerning the said plaintiff, and of and concerning his said occupation and business, as inn or tavern keeper, these other false, scandalous, malicious and defamatory words, following—that is to say, we (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson meaning) put up at Woosters last night, (meaning that they, the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson stopped to lodge the night preceding at the inn or tavern of the said plaintiff, aforesaid,) and after we (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson meaning) had gone to bed, he (the said plaintiff,

meaning) came into the room where we (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson meaning) were in bed, several times, and put his (the said Plaintiff's, meaning) hands into the pockets of our clothes, (meaning the pockets of the clothes of the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson) with the intent, as I (the said defendant meaning) believe, to take his (the said Lyman Thompson meaning) money—intending as I (the said defendant meaning) believe, to take our (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson meaning) money—intending, as I (the said defendant meaning) believe, to rob us (the said defendant and the said Lyman Thompson meaning,) I (the said defendant meaning) have lost a lancet, while I (the said defendant meaning) was in bed, and I believe that he (the said plaintiff, meaning stole it (the said lancet meaning) out of my pocket, while I (the said defendant meaning) was in bed at his house (the said plaintiff's meaning the said inn or tavern. By reason of the committing of which said several grievances by the said defendant, as aforesaid, the said plaintiff hath been greatly injured in his aforesaid good name, fame, and credit, and business or occupation; and brought into public scandal, infamy and disgrace with and amongst all his neighbors and other good and worthy citizens of this state. Insomuch that divers of those citizens and neighbors, to whom the innocence and integrity of the said plaintiff, in the premises, were unknown, have, on occasion of the committing of the said grievances, by the said defendant as aforesaid, from thence hitherto suspected and believed, and still do suspect and believe the said plaintiff to have been guilty of stealing. And to have been guilty of an attempt to rob, and of stealing from his lodgers and customers, in his said Inn or Tavern. And by reason of the committing of said grievances, by the said defendant, have from thence hitherto wholly refused, and still do refuse to have any transaction, acquaintance, discourse or business with him, or to call or do any business, or lodge at his said Inn or Tavern, as they were before accustomed to have and to do, and would have had and done again, had not the said grievances been committed. And the said plaintiff hath been and is, by means of the premises, otherwise greatly injured—to wit, at Plattsburgh, in the county aforesaid, to the damage of five hundred dollars and therefore he brings suit, &c.

J. LYNDE, *Att'y. for Plaintiff.*

Pledges to prosecute John Doe and Richard Roe, *Clinton County, ss.* Lyman Wooster, puts in his place John Lynde, his attorney against James Pearse, in a plea of trespass on the case.

This declaration, coming too late to join issue and notify for trial, it passed January term, and proved the assertion of Wooster (to

be ready for trial) untrue. I made affidavit of knowledge of further testimony, to prove the character of Wooster, and applied for a commission to take further testimony out of the State. (The testimony alluded to, were his neighbours in Charlotte, Vt. he having lately moved to Essex.) The motion was strongly opposed by the plaintiff's council, and a debate ensued, between the two councils; but the court decided in my favor.

It now appeared, that my opposers had changed their tone. They at first appeared like the fierce Vulture, intent to devour: but now they stand aloof from the contest, and must be drove inch by inch, seeking every legal refuge for delay. At this term, (January 1825) I showed my narrative to those, who had assisted, or befriended me, and obtained their acknowledgment to its authenticity as follows:

We whose names are under written, having seen the account of the unfortunate imprisonment of James Pearse, at Plattsburgh, in the State of New-York, do certify, that as far as our names are connected with the said facts, we consider them fairly and truly stated, and from what has come under our own knowledge as there related, we have no doubt of the truth of the whole.

Signed by SMITH MEAD, } *D. Sheriffs.*
E. SPRINGER, }
H. K. AVIRILL, *Attorney.*

January, 1825.

I again solicited Lyman Thompson, to go with me to Essex county, to make another attempt to indict Wooster; but he fearing another vexatious suit, declined going, unless he could be under the protection of the court.—Delance had menaced him, if he could catch him out of the county. And he thought best to finish his difficulty at home first, but said, he would go if the court would grant him their protection.

On my return through Essex county, I called at the house of Mr. Akin, for further advice. Not finding him at home, I left word with a son of Mr. Troup, (which he promised to deliver to the attorney) informing him of the reason of our not appearing as state witnesses, and requesting a protection for Thompson. When I arrived at Charlotte, in Vermont, I notified two of the commissioners, that they were appointed by the court to take testimony on my behalf. They accepted the appointment,* and I soon after received a notice, that they would attend on the 18th of February, with a desire that I should come a day or two previous to their setting. Esq. Barton, one of the com-

*I would here acknowledge the favour of the acting commissioners and several of the witnesses, who were called on this case, and especially Charles McNeal, Esq. who served three days gratuitously. And those who made any charge were of the most reasonable kind, as all expense out of the state devolved on me.

missioners, had expressed a strong desire for a settlement, and on receiving his letter, I felt a hope, that the advice of Wooster's old neighbors in Charlotte, would dispose him to come to a settlement.

He did not appear, and they proceeded to take testimony. The witnesses were not all present, and an adjournment became necessary. In the evening after, Col. Stone called on me, in company with another gentleman, to try for peace between the parties; having previously seen Wooster and Delance. The Col. informed me that a settlement was desired, if I would make a slight acknowledgment, that possibly, I might be mistaken. By doing this, he thought the suit might be discharged immediately. I informed him that I had felt a strong desire to be discharged, and had made an offer to submit the whole to honourable men; that the circumstances at the time, I considered justly suspicious; and the whole transaction since, had only tended to strengthen my opinion. Add to this, Thompson had sworn to the facts positively; which put the whole affair beyond dispute. I considered that I had only to defend, and Wooster had now no other way, but to drop the suit unconditionally or proceed to trial.

I felt to respect the mediation of Col. Stone, and must do him the justice to say, that he appeared friendly.

I, however, thought that the business had

gone too far, to be settled honourably for both parties. I felt myself innocent of slander, and thought my sufferings were too much to pass lightly over, without exposing the infamous conduct of Wooster.

In the latter end of April, I again set out for Plattsburgh, hoping to have a trial at May term. I called at Charlotte, to close the testimony and return the commission. Here I learnt that their object was again to worry me by delay. One of the owners of the house (which Wooster occupied) had been there, and had said, "that I had good bail, and if they should hold me a little longer I should clear out; as I was so far from my family." I now had faint hopes of a trial, until I could compel them to come by rule of court.

On arriving at Plattsburgh, I found no notice given, and their time had nearly expired. On the last day for noticing, I was in company with two gentlemen, who had entered common bail for me; we were conversing on the subject oft he suit, when Esq. Lynde, attorney for the plaintiff came, and fell into conversation with us. After some remarks, he replied in the following spirited manner: "I am determined that that case shall not be bull'd to the ground—I will keep it off as long as I can, and then take it (or appeal) to the supreme court." This I thought was not the proper spirit of counsel, and I insert it to show the spirit of the plantiff's counsel in this case.—

Finding that nothing could be done, at this time, I waited until noticing time had expired, and ordered my attorney to rule him to come to trial at October term, and left him to feast his depraved appetite with the idea of detaining me a few months longer, resolving to stay and see the end of this affair, and not expose my bail. The plaintiff's counsel had complained of unfair treatment on my part, in getting testimony out of the state. I thought I would gratify him with the character of his client, as it appeared in N. York, and for this purpose, in September, I subpœned Amos Anson, of Essex, and Mr. George Troup, David Thayer, Esq. and Sawyer Carter, of Willsborough, and Elisha Button, esq. of Peru, to prove Woosters general character.

Mr. George Troup being my bail, it became necessary to surrender myself to the sheriff and discharge my bail before trial.

On the 17th of September, I surrendered myself to the sheriff, (Mr. Smith Mead, who was goaler this year) and again become prisoner.

Mr. Mead gave me the liberty of going where I pleased, until the day of trial, and did not confine me to the village or any place whatever—a privilege peculiar gratifying to me, and one which, a confidence of innocence could only have gained from him.

On the 6th of October, the cause was called up by the court, and the following is an account of the trial taken by St. J. B. L. Skinner, one of my counsel.

Clinton Common Pleas.

Lyman Wooster
vs.
James Pearse.

This was an action of slander, brought by the plaintiff who was an inn-keeper, in the town of Essex, to recover damages against the defendant, for having (as was alledged) spoken certain slanderous and defamatory words. (The words may be taken from the declaration. See page 113.)

This cause came on to be tried at the October term of the court, 1825—when Mr. Lynde, attorney for the plaintiff opened the cause, to the jury, and endeavored to convince the court and jury that the plaintiff was an honest and industrious man, that had been grossly and maliciously slandered, by the defendant without any cause or provocation.

He then called the following witnesses:—

Edward Cuyler being sworn, says, he saw defendant in June, 1824, at Willsborough, in company with Lyman Thompson, at which time he heard defendant say that he and Lyman Thomson stopped the preceding night at plaintiff's house, and were put to bed together. Soon after which they were alarmed by the plaintiff or his bar-keeper coming into the

room (or through the room.) Afterwards Thompson jogged him, and he saw some person at the door, and rose up in bed and asked what the noise was, when plaintiff came into the room, and asked if they lay comfortably (or slept well.) That he (defendant) lost a lancet, and he had no doubt but plaintiff or his bar keeper had taken it.

Cross examined by Mr. Gross.

[Some of the questions and answers here given were omitted by Mr. Skinner, and I have inserted them, as I believe, correct.]

Question. Did you hear the whole conversation?

Answer. I did not—I was passing through the room as he was talking with Mr. George Troup; hearing a part, I asked him some questions.

Q. Did you, or did you not, hear the first of the story?

A. I did not.

Q. Where was this conversation?

A. At Gager's.

Other questions not material.

Heman Garlick, sworn—Says defendant was at his house on the 25th June, 1824, and said that he and Lyman Thompson put up at plaintiff's the night preceding, and after they had gone to bed, some person came into the room, and after he had been asleep, Thompson awaked him, and he saw Wooster withdraw from

the door; he then came in and asked if they slept well—after which they got up and went over to Anson's.

Mr. Gross then asked the witness if any thing was mentioned as leading to the discourse: or was there any mention made about money?

Answer. It was mentioned that Thompson had counted his money the evening before they went to bed.

Q, Did you say the defendant lost money?

A. I have been under the impression that he said he lost money—I think, a dollar and a half—but I think I was mistaken, as he valued his lancet at a dollar & a half—and what makes me think so, is, that he said he was surprised they had not taken his change from the pocket.

Other questions and answers not material.

Delavan Delance, sworn—

Challenged as interested.

Oath ordered by the court.

Question by Mr. Gross.—Are you not interested in this suit?

Answer. Not to my knowledge.

Q. Are you not back bail (that is security) to Silas Cockran, who is bail for costs in this suit?

A. I have no recollection of it.

Q. Are you not interested, either by sign-

ing or by sending word, by which you are holden in this suit?

A. I do not think I am.

Court ordered him to proceed.

He then described the house and circumstances of the family very properly.—He was then asked if he knew the reputation of Wooster?

A. I know nothing against him as an honest man.

*** See remarks on witness hereafter.

Thomas Gear, sworn. This witness may be found among my private papers. I forbear to publish it, as it relates, chiefly, to circumstances, and might be differently construed. I therefore make no remarks.

Mr. Averill, the attorney of record, being, necessarily, absent, the defence was conducted by Mr. Gross, Mr. Marsh and Mr. Skinner, counsel for the defendant.

After the witnesses on the part of the plaintiff had been gone through with, and Mr. Lynde had rested his cause, Mr. Gross moved the court for a non-suit, and in a very pertinent address to the court, shewed his reasons for granting the motion, that the plaintiff had not proved the words as laid in the declaration.—Mr. Marsh followed in a very able manner.

Mr. Lynd, in opposing this motion, remarked that it was not his wish to recover a heavy judgment against the defendant, but only wish-

ed to shield his client from a most "*desolating and damning*" slander, which had been circulated against him by the defendant. The court then made some remarks on the case, as it then stood before them.

Judge Nichols, in a very handsome manner, explained the law on this case, and said that malice must be proved to support an action of slander. Judge Platt stated, that, as the case then stood, he conceived there must be a mistake—that in his opinion malice had not been proved, and the words alledged had arisen from peculiar circumstances—that the declaration had not been supported—and that he was in favor of a non-suit. Mr. Lynde endeavored to sustain his action, and said he considered it slander, and that the defendant had pursued it with as much inveteracy as the "*Tyger pursues his prey.*" The court, however ruled that no slander had been proved by the plaintiff, and accordingly non-suited him.*

Thus closed this trial and my imprisonment† after my prosecutor had spent his fury against me, he must sit down in shame, while I must feel the smart of a sixteen months imprisonment—and for what? Why because I would not criminate a man whom I considered inno-

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*Thompson's case was then given up by consent, and thus they were both dashed off together.

†Although I had bail a large part of the time, yet it had the nature of imprisonment, as I could not return home.

cent, and that, too, after I had been acknowledged to be innocent of a design to slander.

Some unhappy circumstances took place before and after the trial, which induced me to believe Delavan Delance, esq. to be interested in the suit, which was the cause of his being objected to on trial, and of my complaining against him afterwards. But it is the duty of every honest man to do justice to others, as well as to obtain it from them. This duty is mine to perform at the close of this melancholy affair.

On the 24th of November, I received a letter* from a friend in Essex county, informing me that Delavan Delance, esq. had been tried in the Masonic Lodge at Willsborough, and acquitted by showing that his son was bail.—If this be true, (of which I cannot doubt, from the respectable character of the person who wrote to me) Delavan Delance has been wronged by misrepresentations and complaints founded on misunderstanding, or wrong information.

And so far as I have been misled or misin-

*On receiving this letter I wrote to Essex and Plattsburgh, for further particulars, being as I supposed credibly informed of the interest of Esq. Delance in this suit. I was surprised to hear the result of my complaint, and if I had received the particulars in his favour, I should have published both sides of the story. I have kept the whole as far as it has come to my knowledge and if he wishes any further explanation, I can give the information on which I founded the complaint.

formed, I cheerfully restore to his reputation all that justice or truth requires. I have never intended wilful misrepresentations against him or any other man, and where I have done it by misconception, on being convinced, I cheerfully retract.

And while I perform an act of justice to my opposers, I would not appear insensible of *gratitude* to my friends—but would gratefully acknowledge every favour I have received, both of a pecuniary and sympathetic kind, which has enabled me to support this expensive and vexatious struggle.

Hoping they may receive the divine benediction, of "Come ye blessed of my Father, &c.

"I was a stranger, and ye took me in.

"Sick and in prison, and ye visited me."

APPENDIX.

—:o:—

THE subject of the following has so often been called for by enquirers, that I have tho't proper to insert it in an appendix, as it could not be brought in at the trial.

The copying was not done by myself, and should any, who may take the pains to examine the original find errors, I do not hold myself accountable for their remarks. I however think, that there is no material errors.

James Pearse
ad.
Lyman Wooster.

Interrogatories to be administered to Mason Knapen, Nathaniel Newell, David Hubbell, David Cook and Jonathan Brackenridge, witnesses to be produced, sworn and examined, on the part and behalf of James Pearse, defendant, in a certain case now depending in the court of common pleas, in the county of Clinton, and the State of New-York, at the suit of Lyman Wooster, before Hezekiah Barnes, Jeremiah Barton and Charles M'Niel, in the State of Vermont; gentlemen, under and by virtue of

a commission, issuing out of the said court, and under the seal thereof, pursuant to a rule of the said court, made the 7th day of January, 1825.

Interrogatory 1st. Do you know the parties, plaintiff and defendant, in the title of these interrogatories named, or either, and which of them, and how long have you known them or or either and which of them?—declare.

2d. Does Lyman Wooster now reside in Essex, in the state of New-York? how long has he resided there? from whence did he remove to Essex? what was his occupation before he removed to Essex? did he keep a public house or tavern, in Charlotte, previous to his removal, or when or where?—declare.

3d. What is Lyman Wooster's general character; is it good or bad?—declare.

4th. What is Lyman Wooster's character as an inn keeper; good or bad?—declare.

5th. What is the common opinion of his former or present neighbours, as to his general character?—declare.

6th. What is the common opinion of his former or present neighbours, as to his general character as an inn keeper?—declare.

7th. What was Lyman Wooster's general character previous to his removal to Essex?—declare.

8th. What was Lyman Wooster's general character as an inn keeper previous to his removal to Essex?—declare.

Lastly. Do you know of any other matter or thing, or have you heard or can you say any thing touching the matters of the question in this case, that may tend to the benefit or advantage of the said defendant, beyond what you have been interrogated into—declare the same fully and at large as if you had been particularly interrogated thereto.

Signed HENRY K. AVERILL,
Attorney and Counsel for defendant.

Deposition of witnesses produced and examined on oath, on the 18th day of February, 1825, at the house of Jeremiah Barton, of Charlotte, in the county of Chittenden, and State of Vermont, by us signed,

JEREMIAH BARTON,
CHARLES M'NIEL.

By virtue of a commission, issuing out of the court of common pleas, of the county of Clinton, in the State of New-York, to us directed, for the examination of witnesses in a case of the said court, depending between Lyman Wooster, plaintiff, and James Pearse, defendant,—We the acting commissioners under the said commission, having first duly taken the oath annexed to the said commission according to the tenor and effect thereof, in behalf of the defendant, James Pearse.

Jonathan Brackenridge, of Charlotte, in the State of Vermont, aged 58 years, a witness produced and sworn, on the part and behalf

of James Pearse, defendant, and saith as follows :—

Answer to the first and second interrogatories.

This deponent saith, that he has known Lyman Wooster for more than 30 years past, that he removed from Charlotte to Essex some time last spring, and that previous to his removing to Essex, say 7 or 8 years, that he kept a public house, in the checkered house, and in the general Barnes house, and at the corners after that, until he removed to Essex, in the State of New-York, and followed the farming business. (*See interrogatories, page* 134.)

Answer to the 3d interrogatory—not good.

Answer to the 4th do. I have no recollection against him on that part.

Answer to the 5th do. Not good.

Answer to the 6th do. I don't know.

Answer to the 7th do. Not respectable.

Answer to the 8th do. I don't know.

Further the deponent saith not.

Signed JONA. BRACKENRIDGE.

JEREMIAH BARTON, } *Com.*
CHARLES M'NIEL, }

Nathaniel Newell, of Charlotte, in the State of Vermont, aged 66 years, witness produced, sworn and examined on the part of James Pearse, defendant, and saith as follows :—

Answer to the first and second interrogatories.

I have known him (Wooster) between 20

and 30 years past, that some time last spring he removed to Essex, in the State of New-York, and that previous to his removing to Essex, he followed farming some time, say 5 or 6 years. He kept a tavern in Charlotte, in different places, to wit :—at the checkered house, at the Barnes stand, and at the four corners.

Answer to the 3d interrogatory. Not good.

Answer to the 4th do. I do not know.

Answer to the 5th do. Not good.

Answer to the 6th do. No complaint of travellers that I have heard.

Answer to the 7th do. More favorable some years ago than of late.

The deponent further saith not.

Signed NATHANIEL NEWELL.

JEREMIAH BARTON, } *Com.*
CHARLES M'NEIL, }

The commissioners then adjourned, and on the 28th day of April, 1825, met at the house of David Cook, in Charlotte, aforesaid, and proceeded to take the deposition of David Cook. At 2 o'clock, the said day adjourned to the house of David Hubbell, then and there took the deposition of David Hubbell.

JEREMIAH BARTON, } *Com.*
CHARLES M'NEIL, }

David Cook, of Charlotte, in the State of Vermont, aged 43 years, produced, sworn and

examined, on the part and behalf of James Pearse, defendant, and saith as follows :—

Answer to the 1st interrogatory.

This deponent saith that he has known Lyman Wooster for 18 years past—as to the said Pearse, never saw him till now—has no particular acquaintance with him.

Answer to the 2d interrogatory.

Something like a year ago he removed to Essex: he previous to his removal, attended farming business: something like 6 years he kept a tavern in said Charlotte, in the checkered house and at the tavern stand of general Barnes, and at the corner, all at the said Charlotte.

Answer to the 3d interrogatory. Not good.

Answer to the 4th do. Not so good as many inn keepers.

Answer to the 5th do. To his former neighbours, not very good.

Answer to the 6th do. I don't know.

Answer to the 7th do. Not so good as the generality.

Further this deponent saith not.

Signed DAVID COOK.

JEREMIAH BARTON, } *Com.*
CHARLES M'NIEL, }

David Hubbell, of Vermont, aged 70 years, a witness produced, sworn and examined, on the part of James Pearse, defendant, and saith as follows :—

Answer to the 1st interrogatory.

The deponent saith that he has known Lyman Wooster, 30 years or more—and as to James Pearse, I have had no particular acquaintance with him.

Answer to the 2d interrogatory.

He has resided in Essex, in the State of New-York. He removed in April or May last—He kept a public house or tavern five or six years in Charlotte, previous to his removal to Essex, some time since, say five or six years at three different places, namely: at the Chequered house—at the Barnes stand, and at the four corners.

Answer to the 3d interrogatory—not good.
Answer to the 4th do. Not good.
Answer to the 5th do. Not good.
Answer to the 6th do. Not good.
7th do. ———
Answer to the 8th do. Not very good.

Further the deponent saith not.

Signed DAVID HUBBELL.

JEREMIAH BARTON, } *Com.*
CHARLES M'NIEL, }

The Rev. Mason Knapen being prevented by ill health, did not appear before the commissioners.

The following was taken by Joseph Warner esq. and is added as an affidavit:

Sudbury, April 20, 1825.

Answer to interrogatory 1st.—I have known Lyman Wooster about twenty years. I have been a number of years acquainted with the

family of James Pearse—and have known him by general report, and more particularly, for nearly one year past. I have known him, the said Pearse, to sustain the character of an honest and upright man.

Answer 2d. I have frequently heard that he (Wooster) has removed to Essex, in the state of N. Y. I do not know the particular time of his going there; he went from Charlotte in Vermont, where he had formerly lived.

His occupations were various, during his stay in Charlotte, namely, farming, sailing a boat, speculating in horses and keeping tavern.

Answer 3d. It is bad.

Answer 4th. I know little of his character in particular, as an inn keeper, in distinction from his general character.

Answer 5th. It was the opinion of many of his most upright and respectable neighbours, that he deserved not the character of truth or honesty.

Answer 6th. As I was in Charlotte much less while he kept a tavern, than during a few years previous to that time, I know less of his character as an *inn keeper*, than of his general character.

Answer 7th. His general character has been always doubtful until generally pronounced bad.

Answer 8th. I would answer this in the same language as I have the 6th interrogatory.

Lastly. I know Mr. Wooster to be an un-

principled speculator, by common report a smuggler, and by experience one of the most dishonest men* I ever knew. And by common report, quarrelsome in his family and intemperate.

MASON KNAPEN.

STATE OF VERMONT, }
Rutland County. }

Sudbury, April 20, 1825.

Personally appeared, Mason Knapen, signer of the foregoing interrogatories, and made solemn oath, that they contain the whole truth and nothing but the truth, before me.

JOSEPH WARNER, *Justice Peace.*

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*It is frequently the case that families are injured for the faults of one. This is not correct conduct, and I wish to be understood to say nothing unfavorable of the family of Wooster. Mrs. Wooster supports the character of an amiable, and virtuous woman; and her name should be mentioned only with respect.

ERRATA.

Page 9th, 7th line from the bottom, for pages read work.
Page 16th, 12th line from the bottom, for Ft. St. Phillips, read Ft. St. Phillip.
Page 42d, for Mr. Abraham and Mr. Scott, read Mr. Abraham M. Scott.
Page 68, last line, for at ridicule read to ridicule.

Reflections on my long confinement and delay of trial, July 5th, 1825.

How slowly moves times tedi'us wings,
A pris'ner views thy slow retreat;
How vain are all those airy things
To me, which please the gay or great.
Long bound to appear before the bar
Of legal justice; there to hear,
I wait, I wait, my trial there;
How long I wait with conscience clear.
How long shall sons of Belial boast,
Their power to wield my country's laws;
And raise themselves a mighty host,
Against the poor with greedy jaws.
Cruel are all their ways to me,
From wife and children doom'd to stay;
They will not try or set me free,
Unless I will the apostate play.
My conscience yet I must maintain,
Though wife and children shed a tear;
Though long I wait and yet in vain—
The final sentence must appear.
I hear a voice from Sina's mount,
"Thou shalt not falsely" speak or "swear;"
Then I, his* deeds at once recount,
I for my neighbour must declare.
I'm bound by laws, of God and man;
My happiness must yield awhile,
Guide Lord, O guide me, yet thou can,
Make darkness yield a peaceful smile.
Thy ways, are oft mysterious shown,
Before the guilty sons of men;

*Thompson.

I see thy pow'r, thy justice own,
O grant me Lord, to say amen.
Yes, I'll submit, thy chast'ning take—
The wicked shall not always reign;
"They are thy sword;" for mercy's sake,
They often cut thy children down.
These strokes of thine, though painful now,
Shall work the good Thou hast in store;
When Thou return, the wicked bow:
They fall, they fall to rise no more.
Happy the man, who always sees,
In all his ways, his Makers care;
When storms invade, he quickly flees,
And finds a rest, when God is there.
O let these long afflictions prove,
A kind rebuke for folies past,
Then shall I own thy chast'ning love,
And smile, when all the storm is past.
O let me yet, enjoy the smiles
Of wife and children, near and dear
Dispel these clouds, destroy these wiles,
That oft has caus'd the falling tear.
Turn backward all their counsel Lord,
Nor let them once the just devour;
When Thou hast try'd me by thy word,
Display thy love, reveal thy power.
Then shall I own thy ways are just,
And all who love thy truth rejoice;
And men shall learn to put their trust
In thee, and raise their thankful voice.

Written on seeing a piece in the Plattsburgh Republican, of Oct. 8, 1825.

Sound the loud trump o'er Plattsburgh's proud plain !
The truth it is mighty, yes mighty its reign !
Sing of the place once so splendid in story,
The pride of our arms, and the bed of the brave,
Rekindle the fire of her far sounding glory !
A prisoner exults o'er tyranny's grave.
Sound the loud trump o'er Plattsburgh's proud plain !
The truth it is mighty, yes mighty its reign !
Rous'd by the spirit that gallantly shone,
When the Tyrant's proud host was in battle o'er thrown—
Wake the bold harp that for days long has slumber'd,
The deeds of her lawyers a prisoner can tell;
In virtues bright cause there are some may be number'd,
Immortal as those who in arms there have fell.
Sound the loud trump o'er Plattsburgh's proud plain !
The truth it is mighty, yes mighty its reign !
Plattsburgh the place, where my soul was oppress'd ;
The monster of Essex appeared there so brave !
His rage and his fury there made me distress'd—
There I exulted o'er tyranny's grave.
Sound the loud trump o'er Plattsburgh's proud plain !
The truth is so mighty, the monster is slain !
Praise to Jehovah, our Saviour and Lord !
Our zeal is his spirit, our light is his word ;
He the strong fetters of tyrants has broken,
His banner of light to a pris'ner unfurl'd ;
The mandate of mercy Jehovah has spoken,
Freedom and peace shall illumine the world !
Sound the loud trump o'er Plattsburgh's proud plain !
The truth is so mighty a monster is slain.

Contrary
Minded
Sandeth
Greeting

Allan P. Hall
2013