

The American Prejudice Against Color eBook

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Contents

The American Prejudice Against Color eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	5
Page 1.....	6
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	9
Page 4.....	11
Page 5.....	12
Page 6.....	14
Page 7.....	15
Page 8.....	16
Page 9.....	17
Page 10.....	18
Page 11.....	19
Page 12.....	20
Page 13.....	21
Page 14.....	22
Page 15.....	23
Page 16.....	25
Page 17.....	26
Page 18.....	27
Page 19.....	28
Page 20.....	29
Page 21.....	30
Page 22.....	32



[Page 23..... 33](#)

[Page 24..... 35](#)

[Page 25..... 37](#)

[Page 26..... 39](#)

[Page 27..... 41](#)

[Page 28..... 43](#)

[Page 29..... 45](#)

[Page 30..... 47](#)

[Page 31..... 49](#)

[Page 32..... 51](#)

[Page 33..... 53](#)

[Page 34..... 55](#)

[Page 35..... 57](#)

[Page 36..... 59](#)

[Page 37..... 60](#)

[Page 38..... 62](#)

[Page 39..... 63](#)

[Page 40..... 64](#)

[Page 41..... 65](#)

[Page 42..... 66](#)

[Page 43..... 68](#)

[Page 44..... 69](#)

[Page 45..... 71](#)

[Page 46..... 72](#)

[Page 47..... 74](#)

[Page 48..... 76](#)



Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
INTRODUCTION		1
CHAPTER II.		1
CHAPTER III.		5
CHAPTER IV.		9
CHAPTER V.		15
CHAPTER VI.		26
CHAPTER VII.		33
THE END.		34
BY		34
PREFACE.		34
A SHORT PERSONAL NARRATIVE.		35



Page 1

INTRODUCTION

Many persons having suggested that it would greatly subserve the Anti-slavery Cause in this country, to present to the public a concise narrative of my recent narrow escape from death, at the hands of an armed mob in America, a mob armed with tar, feathers, poles, and an empty barrel spiked with shingle nails, together with the reasons which induced that mob, I propose to give it. I cannot promise however, to write such a book as ought to be written to illustrate fully the bitterness, malignity, and cruelty, of American prejudice against color, and to show its terrible power in grinding into the dust of social and political bondage, the hundreds of thousands of so-called free men and women of color of the North. This bondage is, in many of its aspects, far more dreadful than that of the *bona fide* Southern Slavery, since its victims—many of them having emerged out of, and some of them never having been into, the darkness of personal slavery—have acquired a development of mind, heart, and character, not at all inferior to the foremost of their oppressors.

The book that ought to be written, I ought not to attempt; but if no one precedes me, I shall consider myself bound by necessity, and making the attempt, lay on, with all the strength I can possibly summon, to American Caste and skin-deep Democracy.

The mob occurred on Sabbath (!) evening, January the 30th, 1853, in the village of Phillipsville, near Fulton, Oswego County, New York. The cause,—the intention, on my part, of marrying a white young lady of Fulton,—at least so the public surmised.

CHAPTER II.

Personalities.

I am a quadroon, that is, I am of one-fourth African blood, and three-fourths Anglo-Saxon. I graduated at Oneida Institute, in Whitesboro', New York, in 1844; subsequently studied Law with Ellis Gray Loring, Esq., of Boston, Massachusetts; and was thence called to the Professorship of the Greek and German languages, and of Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres of New York Central College, situated in Mc. Grawville, Cortland County,—the only College in America that has ever called a colored man to a Professorship, and one of the very few that receive colored and white students on terms of perfect equality, if, indeed, they receive colored students at all.

In April, 1851, I was invited to Fulton, to deliver a course of Lectures. I gladly accepted the invitation, and none the less that Fulton had always maintained a high reputation for its love of impartial freedom, and that its citizens were highly respected for their professed devotion to the teachings of Christianity.

Page 2

I am glad to say, that on this occasion I was well received, and at the close of my first lecture was invited to spend the evening at the house of the Rev. Lyndon King. This gentleman having long been known as a devoted abolitionist,—a fervid preacher of the doctrine, that character is above color,—and as one of the ablest advocates of the social, political, and religious rights of the colored man, I, of course, had a pleasant visit with the family; and, remaining with them several days, conceived a deep interest in one of the Elder's daughters,—Miss Mary E. King, who was then preparing to enter the College in Mc. Grawville. I accompanied Miss King to Mc. Grawville, where she remained in college, a year and a half.

Boarding in tenements quite opposite each other, we frequently met in other than college halls, and as freely conversed,—Miss K. being of full age, and legally, as well as intellectually and morally, competent to discuss the subjects in which, it is generally supposed, young men and women feel an absorbing interest.

It is of no consequence what we said; and if it were, the reader, judging in the light of the results, will perhaps as correctly imagine that, as I can possibly describe it. I pass on at once, therefore, simply stating that at the close of the year and a half, my interest in the young lady had become fully reciprocated, and we occupied a relation to each other much more significant than that of teacher and pupil.

Miss King returned to her father's house in October, 1852. I visited the family in December following. Then and there we discussed the subject of marriage more fully between ourselves; and deeming it a duty obligatory upon us, by an intelligent regard for our future happiness, to survey, before consummating an engagement even, the whole field of difficulties, embarrassments, trials, insults and persecutions, which we should have to enter on account of our diversity of complexion, and to satisfy ourselves fully as to our ability to endure what we might expect to encounter; we concluded to separate unengaged, and, in due season, each to write to the other what might be the results of more mature deliberation. This may seem unromantic to the reader; nevertheless, it was prudent on our part.

After remaining in Fulton a week, I left for Boston. Several letters then passed between us, and in January last, our engagement was fixed. I will not speak of myself, but on the part of Miss King, this was certainly a bold step. It displayed a moral heroism which no one can comprehend who has not been in America, and who does not understand the diabolical workings of prejudice against color. Whatever a man may be in his own person,—though he should have the eloquence, talents, and character of Paul and Apollos, and the Angel Gabriel combined,—though he should be as wealthy as Croesus,—and though, in personal appearance, he should be as fair as the fairest Anglo-Saxon, yet, if he have but one drop of the blood of the African flowing in his veins, no white young lady can ally herself to him in matrimony, without bringing upon her the anathemas of the community, with scarcely an exception, and rendering herself an

almost total outcast, not only from the society in which she formerly moved, but from society in general.

Page 3

Such is American Caste,—the most cruel under the sun. And such it is, notwithstanding the claims set up by the American people, that they are Heaven’s Vicegerents, to teach to men, and to nations as well, the legitimate ideas of Christian Democracy.

To digress a moment. This Caste-spirit of America sometimes illustrates itself in rather ridiculous ways.

A beautiful young lady—a friend of mine—attended, about two years since, one of the most aristocratic Schools of one of the most aristocratic Villages of New York. She was warmly welcomed in the highest circles, and so amiable in temper was she, as well as agreeable in mind and person, that she soon became not only a favorite, but *the* favorite of the circle in which she moved. The *young gentlemen* of the village were especially interested in her, and what matrimonial offer might eventually have been made her, it is not for me to say. At the close of the second term, however, she left the school and the village; and then, for the first time, the fact became known (previously known only to her own room-mate) that she was slightly of African blood. Reader,—the consternation and horror which succeeded this “new development,” are, without exaggeration, perfectly indescribable. The people drew long breaths, as though they had escaped from the fangs of a boa constrictor; the old ladies charged their daughters, that should Miss — be seen in that village again, by no means to permit themselves to be seen in the street with her; and many other charges were delivered by said mothers, equally absurd, and equally foolish. And yet this same young lady, according to their own previous showing, was not only one of the most beautiful in person and manners who had ever graced their circle, but was also of fine education; and in complexion as white as the whitest in the village. Truly, this, our human nature, is extremely strange and vastly inconsistent!

Confessedly, as a class, the quadroon women of New Orleans are the most beautiful in America. Their personal attractions are not only irresistible, but they have, in general, the best blood of America in their veins. They are mostly white in complexion, and are, many of them, highly educated and accomplished; and yet, by the law of Louisiana, no man may marry a quadroon woman, unless he can prove that he, too, has African blood in his veins. A law involving a greater outrage on propriety, a more blasphemous trifling with the heart’s affections, and evincing a more contemptible tyranny, those who will look at the matter from the beginning to the end, will agree with me, could not possibly have been enacted.

Colonel Fuller, of the “*New York Mirror*,” writing from New Orleans, gives some melancholy descriptions—and some amusing ones too—of the operations of this most barbarous law.

One I especially remember. A planter, it seems, had fallen deeply in love with a charming quadroon girl. He desired to marry her; but the law forbade. What was he to do? To tarnish her honour was out of the question; he had too much himself to seek to

tarnish hers. Here was a dilemma. But he was not to be foiled. What true heart will be, if there be any virtue in expedients?



Page 4

“—In love,
His thoughts came down like a rushing stream.”

At last he got it. A capital thought, which could have crept out of no one's brain, save that of a most desperate lover. He hit upon the expedient of extracting a little African blood from the veins of one of his slaves, and injecting it into his own. The deed done, the letter of the law was answered. He made proposals, was accepted, and they were married,—he being willing to risk his caste in obedience to a love higher and holier than any conventionalism which men have ever contrived to establish.

O, Cupid, thou art a singular God! and a most amazing philosopher! Thou goest shooting about with thy electrically charged arrows, bringing to one common level human hearts, however diverse in clime, caste, or color.

Let not the reader suppose, however, that the white people of America are in the habit of exercising such honor towards the people of color, as is here ascribed to this planter. Far from it. The laws of the Southern States, on the one hand, (I allude not now to any particular law of Louisiana, but to the laws of the Slave States in general), have deliberately, and in cold blood, withheld their protection from every woman within their borders, in whose veins may flow but half a drop of African blood; while the prejudice against color of the Northern States, on the other hand, is so cruel and contemptuous of the rights and feelings of colored people, that no white man would lose his caste in debauching the best educated, most accomplished, virtuous and wealthy colored woman in the community, but would be mobbed from Maine to Delaware, should he with that same woman attempt honorable marriage. Henry Ward Beecher, (brother of Mrs. Stowe) in reference to prejudice against color, has truly said of the Northern people—and the truth in this case is startling and melancholy—that, “with them it is less sinful to break the whole decalogue towards the colored people, than to keep a single commandment in their favour.”

But to return to the narrative. Miss King, previously to the consummation of our engagement, consulted her father, who at once gave his consent. Her sister not only consented, but, thanks to her kind heart, warmly approved the match. Her brothers, of whom there were many, were bitterly opposed. Mrs. King—a step-mother only—was not only also bitterly opposed, but inveterately so. Bright fancies and love-bewildering conceptions were what, in her estimation, we ought not to be allowed to indulge.

In passing, it is proper to say, that this lady, though not lacking a certain benevolence,—especially that sort which can pity the fugitive, give him food and raiment, or permit him at her table even,—is, nevertheless, extremely aristocratic of heart and patronizing of temper. This statement is made upon quite a familiar acquaintance with Mrs. King, and out of no asperity of feeling. I cherish none, but only pity for those who nurture a prejudice, which, while it convicts them of the most ridiculous vanity, at the same time shrivels their own hearts and narrows their own souls.



Page 5

Mrs. King was at first mild in her opposition, but finally resorted to such violence of speech and act, as to indicate a state of feeling really deplorable, and a spirit diametrically opposed to all the teachings of the Christian religion—a religion which she loudly professed, and which assures us that “God is no respecter of persons.”

I judge not mortal man or woman, but leave Mrs. King, and all those who thought it no harm because of my complexion, to abuse the most sacred feelings of my heart, to their conscience and their God.

CHAPTER III.

Nobility and servility.

The reader will doubtless and also correctly imagine that situated as Miss King has now been shown to be, she could not have experienced many very pleasant hours either of night or day,—pleasant so far as the sympathy of her numerous relatives and friends could serve to make them such. Fortunately, however she was not of that class whose happiness depends upon the smiles or the approbation of others earned at any cost—but upon a steady obedience to what in her inmost soul, she regarded as demanded by the laws of rectitude and justice.

That a young lady could break away without a struggle from the counsellors, friends and companions of her youth, is not to be expected. Miss King had her struggles; and the letter written to me by her on the consummation of our engagement evinced their character, and also her grandeur and nobility of soul:—

“I have endeavoured to solve, honorably, conscientiously and judiciously, the greatest problem of human life; and God and the holy angels have assisted me in thus solving. Friends may forsake me, and the world prove false, but the sweet assurance that I have your most devoted love, and that that love will strengthen and increase in proportion as the regard of others may diminish, is the only return I ask.”

What vows I uttered in the secret chambers of my heart as I read the above and similar passages of that letter, let the reader imagine who may be disposed to credit me with the least aptitude of appreciating whatsoever in human nature is grand and noble, or in the human spirit, which is lovely, and true, and beautiful, and of good report.

Throughout the letter there was also a tone of gentle sadness—not that of regret for the course in contemplation,—but that which holily lingers around a loving heart, which, while it gives itself away, may not even lightly inflict the slightest pang upon other hearts to which it has long been bound by dearly-cherished ties.

But family opposition was not the only opposition which Miss King expected to, or did indeed encounter. Whoever sought to marry yet, and did the deed unblessed or

uncursed of public praise or wrath? And aside from extraordinary circumstances, it is so pleasant to dip one's finger into a pie matrimonial.



Page 6

The following paragraph of a letter written to me by Miss King a few days after I left her in December, amused me much,—it may possibly amuse the reader:—

“Professor,—You would smile if you only knew what an excitement your visit here caused among the good people of Fulton. Some would have it that we were married, and others said if we were not already married, they were sure that we would be; for they knew that you would not have spent a whole week with us if there had been no love existing between you and myself. Some of the villagers came to see me the day after you left, and begged of me, if *I were determined to marry you, to do so at once, and not to keep the public in so much suspense.*”

Friend, have you ever heard or read of anything which came nearer to clapping the climax of the ridiculous than this most singular appeal couched in the last clause of this quotation, to the benevolence of Miss King? Certainly, if anything could have come nearer, it would have been the act of a certain lady who, having heard during this selfsame visit that we were to be married on the morrow, actually had her sleigh drawn up to the door, and would have driven off to the Elder’s to “*stop the wedding*” had not her husband remonstrated. It is true, this lady opposed the marriage, not on the ground of an immorality, but of its inexpediency considering the existent state of American sentiment; but then it is curious to think of what amazing powers she must have imagined herself possessed.

Public opposition however, soon began to assume a more decided form. Neighbours far and near, began to visit the house of Elder King, and to adopt such remonstrance and expostulation as, in their view the state of the case demanded. Some thought our marriage would be dreadful, a most inconceivably horrid outrage. Some declared it would be vulgar, and had rather see every child of theirs dead and buried, than take the course which, they were shocked to find, Miss King seemed bent to do. Some sillier than all the rest, avowed that should the marriage be permitted to take place, it would be a sin against Almighty God; and it may be, they thought it would call down thunderbolts from the chamber of heaven’s wrath, to smite us from the earth.

“There is no peace,” saith my God, “to the wicked.”—And surely, clearer exemplifications of this saying of Holy Writ were never had, than in the brain-teasings, mind-torturings and heart-rackings of these precious people, out of deference to our welfare. May they be mercifully remembered and gloriously rewarded.

It is proper to introduce to the reader at this point, our cherished friends,—Mr. and Mrs. Porter,—and to say at once, that words are not expressive enough to describe the gratitude we owe them, nor in what remembrance we hold them in the deepest depths of our hearts. They stood by us throughout that season of intended bloody persecution, turning neither to the right nor the left, nor counting their own interests or lives as aught in comparison to the friendship they bore us, or to their love of the principles of truth, justice and humanity. Amid the raging billows, they stood as a rock to which to cling.

Page 7

We had known these friends for months, nay, for years. They had also been students in Mc. Grawville, but had subsequently married, and at the time of my December visit to Fulton were teachers of a School in Phillippsville,—where, it may be proper here to say, was located the depot of the Fulton trains of cars.

Not only belonging to that class of persons, (rare in America, even among those who claim to be Abolitionists and Christians), persons who do not *profess* to believe merely, but really *do* believe in the doctrine of the “unity, equality, and brotherhood of the human race;” and who are willing to accord to others the exercise of rights which they claim for themselves; but, having also great purity of heart and purpose, Mr. and Mrs. Porter did not, as they could not, sympathise with those whose ideas of marriage, as evinced in their conversation respecting Miss King and myself, never ascended beyond the region of the material into that of the high, the holy and the spiritual. Of all the families of Fulton and Phillippsville, this was the only one which *publicly* spoke approval of our course. So that, therefore it will be expected, that while those true hearts were friendly to us, they were equally with ourselves targets at which our enemies might shoot.

I have introduced Mr. and Mrs. Porter at this point, because, at this point, their services to us commenced. But for these faithful friends, Miss King would not have known whither to have fled when she found as she did, her own home becoming any other than a desirable habitation, owing to the growing opposition and bitter revilings of her step-mother, and the impertinent intermeddlings of others.

Thus far the opposition which Miss King had experienced, though disagreeable, had not become too much for the “utmost limit of human patience.” Soon, however, a crisis occurred, in the arrival in Fulton, of the Rev. John B. King. This gentleman’s visit was unexpected, and it is due to him to say, that he did not come on any errand connected with this subject; for until he arrived in Fulton, he did not know of the correspondence which had existed between his sister and myself. Though unexpected, his visit as already intimated, was fraught with results, which in their immediate influence, were extremely sad and woeful.

Mr. King was a Reform preacher, and had even come from Washington, District of Columbia, where he had been residing for the last two years, to collect money to build a church which should exclude from membership those who held their fellow-men in bondage, and who would not admit the doctrines of the human brotherhood. Just the man to assist us, one would have thought. But it is easy to preach and to talk. Who cannot do that? It is easier still to *feel*—this is humanity’s instinct—for the wrongs and outrages inflicted upon our kind. But to plant one’s feet rough-shod upon the neck and heels of a corrupt and controlling public sentiment, to cherish living faith in God, and, above all to crush the demon in one’s own soul,—ah! this it is which only the *great* can do, who, only of men, can help the world onward up to heaven.



Page 8

Mr. King had scarcely entered the house, and been told the story of our engagement, when he manifested the most unworthy and unchristian opposition. Unworthy and unchristian, since he frankly averred, that had I the remaining fourth Anglo-Saxon blood, he would be proud of me as a brother. He was bitter, not as wormwood only, but as wormwood and gall combined. He would not tolerate me as a visitor at his house, in company with his sister, unless I came in the capacity of driver or servant. A precious brother this, and a most glorious Christian teacher.

I have said that the arrival of this gentleman marked a crisis in the history of our troubles; and it did so in the fact that by the powerful influence which he exerted over his father, adverse to our marriage, and by the aid, strength and comfort which he gave to his step-mother; the Elder was at last brought to a reconsideration of his views, and to abandon the ground which he had hitherto maintained with so much heroism and valour.

I shall say no hard things of Elder King; now that the storm is over, I prefer to leave him to his own reflections, and especially to this one, which may be embodied in the following question,—*What is the true relation which a Christian Reformer sustains to public opinion?*

Had the Elder, supposing it to have been possible, assumed towards us a position more adverse than the one he did in this singular and unexpected change, the results could not, for the time being at least, have been sadder or more disastrous. How it affected the feelings of his daughter, the reader can well imagine, who will remember, that upon her father she had hitherto relied as upon a pillar of strength, and especially as her rock of refuge from the storms which beat upon her from without. Stricken thus, a weak spirit would have given up in despair; but not so with this heroic and noble-minded lady, upon whom misfortune seemed to have no other effect than to increase her faith in God.

Elder King now, not as hitherto out of his deference to the feelings of his wife, but of his own accord, averred that I should on no consideration whatever, be permitted to enter his house, to hold a conference with his daughter, providing said conference was to be promotive of our marriage. Miss King was compelled, therefore, to make an arrangement with Mr. Porter, by which our interviews should be held in his house when I should arrive, as I was expected to do so in a few days, from Boston. Strange to say, however, and paradoxical as it may seem, on the day on which I was expected to arrive in Fulton, the Elder himself took his daughter from Fulton to Phillipsville to meet me. I reached Phillipsville, on Saturday afternoon, January 29th, and, of course, was not advised of this altered state of things, until my arrival there—the Elder's change having taken place within a very few days previous.



Page 9

The method which Elder King took to evince his hostility—his exclusion of me from his house—was extremely injudicious; and I have no doubt that he, himself, now sincerely regrets it. It excited to action the mob spirit which had all along existed in the hearts of the people, and was only awaiting the pretext which the Elder gave—the placing of me before the community, as a marauder upon the peace of his family. The mob, also, gave to the matter what the King family, evidently afterwards, greatly deplored—extraordinary notoriety. Elder King would certainly have displayed more worldly sagacity, to say nothing of Christian propriety, to have admitted me into his house as usual, where we could, all together, have reasoned the matter; and if prejudices could not have been conciliated, the Elder, at all events, by his previous acquaintance with my character, had every reason to suppose that I should have conducted myself as became a gentleman and a Christian. But so it is,—prejudice thus bewilders the faculties, and defeats the objects which it aims most to accomplish.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOB.

Hardly unlooked for by myself was this mob, especially after I had learned of the direction which “the subject” had taken in the family of Mr. King.

On Sabbath afternoon, January 30th, while Mr. and Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Porter’s sister, Miss King, and myself, were enjoying ourselves in social conversation, a gentleman from the village of Fulton called at the residence of Mr. Porter, to give an account of events as they were transpiring in the village. This gentleman was decidedly opposed to “amalgamation,” expressed the utmost surprise that Mr. Porter should for a moment suppose that God ever designed the inter-marriage of white and colored persons,—but he was, nevertheless, a man of friendly disposition,—and as a friend he came to Mr. Porter. *We were to be mobbed*,—so this gentleman informed us. He advised escape on the part of Mr. Porter and myself, otherwise the house would be demolished! All Fulton, since Saturday night, he informed us, had been in arms. Crowds of men could be seen in the streets, at every point, discussing the subject of our marriage, and with feelings of the most extraordinary excitement; and similar discussions, he added, had been held during the live-long night preceding, in all the grog shops and taverns of the village.

All sorts of oaths had been uttered, and execrations vented. Tar, feathers, poles, and an empty barrel spiked with shingle nails had been prepared for my especial benefit; and, so far as I was concerned, it must be escape or death. Mr. Porter was to be mobbed, he said, for offering me entertainment, and for being supposed friendly to our union. This friend did not understand the whole plan of the onslaught, but he gave sufficient information to justify us in surmising that no harm was intended to be inflicted upon Miss King, or any lady of the house.

Page 10

Knowing the brutal character of prejudice against color, and knowing also that I was supposed to be about to commit the unpardonable sin, I confess, that though surprised to learn that the mob intended murder, yet I was not surprised to learn many of the details which this friend so kindly gave us.

Mr. Porter suggested that after supper, he and I should retire to a neighbour's house, he supposing that if the mob should be foiled in their attempt to get us into their hands, they would, after all, pass away, and thus the matter blow quietly over. The suggestion, however, was not carried into effect; for we had scarcely finished tea ere they (the mob) were down upon us like wild beasts out of a den.

We first observed some twenty men turning a corner in the direction of the house; then about thirty or forty more, and soon the streets were filled with men—some four or five hundred. In the rear of this multitude there was driven a sleigh in which, we rightly conjectured, Miss King was to be taken home.

From the statements of the leader of the mob—statements afterwards given to the public—it seems that a Committee, composed of members of the mob, and constituted by the mob, suggested before reaching the house that if we were still unmarried there should be no violence done, as they intended to carry off the lady. A portion of this Committee also made it their duty to gain access to the apartment where our company were sitting, and to inform us of the intentions of the assembled multitude below, while the remainder of the Committee endeavoured by speeches and reasoning to quiet the mob spirit, which soon after the assembling, began to reach its climax.

This Committee was composed of some of the most “respectable” men of Fulton—lawyers, merchants, and others of like position. The reader will doubtless think it strange that such men should be members of a mob; and so it would be, if prejudice against color were not the saddest of all comments upon the meanness of human depravity. In this, more than in anything else did the malignant character of this American feeling evince itself—that to drive me off or kill me, if need be, the “respectable” and the base were commingled, like—

“Kindred elements into one.”

Men who, under other circumstances, would have been regarded as beneath contempt, the vulgar minded and vulgar hearted—with these, even Christians (so called) did not hesitate to affiliate themselves in order to crush a man who was guilty of no crime save that, having a colored skin, he was supposed to be about to marry a lady a few shades lighter than himself. O, the length and breadth, the height and depth, the cruelty and the irony of a prejudice which can so belittle human nature.

Page 11

But to the Committee again. This Committee declared themselves to us to be a self-constituted body. But whether self-constituted or otherwise, it matters not, since they were to all intents and purposes members of the mob—if not in *deed*, still in spirit and in heart. They meant no more than to save the honor of their village by preventing, if possible, bloodshed and death. They were not men of better principles than the rabble—they were only men of better breeding. I do them no injustice. The tenor of their discourse to us at the house of Mr. Porter, the spirit of an article published by one of their number a few days after in the "*Oswego Daily Times*," and the statements of the mob-leader, clearly satisfy me that had we been married, they (the Committee) deeming that our marriage would have been a greater disgrace to their village than even bloodshed or death, would have left us to our fate—Miss King to be carried off, or perchance grossly insulted, and myself left, as the spiked barrel especially evinced, to torture and to death. That this Committee saved my life, I have no doubt; and I have publicly thanked them for the act. So I would be grateful even to the man who took deadly aim at me with his revolver, and only missed his mark.

Previous to the death which I was to suffer in the spiked barrel, I was to undergo various torturings and mutilations of person, aside from the tarring and feathering—some of these mutilations too shocking to be named in the pages of this book.

Mr. Porter, as I have already said, was also to be mobbed; but, as we afterwards ascertained, only to be coated with tar and feathers and ridden on a rail.

The leader of the mob subsequently averred that so decided was the feeling in Fulton, that in addition to the hundreds who, in person, made the onslaught, there were hundreds more in waiting in the village, who, it was understood between the two companies, were ready to join the slaughtering party at but a moment's warning. Indeed, Mrs. Allen now assures me that on her way home that evening, conducted by a portion of the Committee, she twice met crowds of men still coming on to join the multitudes already congregated at Mr. Porter's. One of the Committee, fearing that if all Fulton should get together, excited as the people were, there would be bloodshed in spite of all that could be said or done, entreated one of these crowds to go back. But, heeding him not; on the villains went, some of them uttering oaths and imprecations, some of them hurraing, and many of them proceeding with great solemnity of step—these last doubtless being church-members; for the mob was not only on Sabbath evening, but it is a notorious fact which came out early afterwards, that the churches on that evening were, every one of them, quite deserted.

Page 12

Reader, the life of a colored man in America, save as a slave, is regarded as far less sacred than that of a dog. There is no exaggeration in this statement—I am not writing of exceptions. It is true there are white people in America who, while the colored man will keep in what they call “his place,” will treat him with a show of respect even. But even this kind of people have their offset in the multitudes and majorities—the populace at large who would go out of their way to inflict the most demon-like outrages upon those whose skins are not colored like their own!

I have before me at this moment recent American papers which contain accounts of the throttling of respectably-dressed colored men and women for venturing no further even than into the cabins of ferry boats plying between opposite cities; of colored ladies made to get out of the cars in which they had found seats—in cars in which the vilest loafer, provided his skin be white might sit unmolested; of respectable clergymen having their clothes torn from their backs, because they presumed to ask in a quiet manner that they might have berths in the cabins of steamers on which they were travelling, and not be compelled to lodge on deck; and lastly, of a colored man who was not long since picked up and thrown over-board from a steam boat, on one of the Western rivers, because of some affray with a white man—while all the bye-standers stood looking on, regarding the drowning of the man with less consideration than they would have done the drowning of a brute.

Knowing all these things, and knowing also the peculiarity of the circumstances which surrounded me on that Sabbath evening, the reader will not be surprised, that when I saw the dense multitude surrounding the house of Mr. Porter, I at once came to the conclusion that I should not be permitted to live an hour longer. I was not frightened—was never calmer—prepared for the worst, disposed of my watch and such other articles of value as I had about my person.

Mr. Porter was below stairs at the time the mob approached. Soon he came running up, introducing the Committee to whom reference has already been made. They at once addressed us. I do not remember their words,—the purport of the whole, however, was that death was intended for me, provided we had been married; and as it was, I could only escape it, by Miss King consenting to go with them, and by myself consenting to leave the village; and further, that there must be no delay by either party.

One of the Committee, in order to assure me of the terrible danger by which I was surrounded, drew back the window curtains and bade me look out. I did not do so, however, since it was not necessary that I should look out in order to feel fully convinced that there were men below, who had determined to degrade themselves below the level of the brutes that perish. Such cursings, such imprecations, such cries of “nigger,” “bring him out,” “d——n him,” “kill him,” “down with the house,” were never heard before, I hardly think, even in America.

Page 13

Of course, to have attempted to resist this armed mob of hundreds of men would have been preposterous. It would have been, so far as I was concerned, at least, to have committed myself to instant death. Compelled, therefore, to make the best of our unfortunate situation, Miss King consented to go with the Committee, and I to leave the village—she, however, taking care to assure me in a whisper, that she would meet me on the following day in Syracuse. The lady was now conducted by the Committee through the mob to the sleigh. Not a word was spoken by a single ruffian in the crowd. All were silent until the driver put whip to his horse, when a general shout was sent up, as of complete and perfect triumph.

“Mistaken souls!”

Having reached her father’s house, one of the Committee addressed a speech to her, hoped that for the sake of her family, and the community, Miss King would relinquish all partiality for Professor Allen, advised her also to go around among the ladies of the village, and consult with them, and assured her that he would be glad to see her at his house; and at any time when she felt disposed to come, he would send a sleigh to bring her.

Nothing remarkable about this speech. But the tone in which it was delivered!—that cannot be put upon paper. The speaker evidently thought the young lady would receive it all as a mark of gracious favor, and as assuring her that though she had been “hand and glove” with a coloured man, he would nevertheless condescend to overlook it. He was dealing with the wrong woman, however; and he received such a reply to his harangue as only a virtuous indignation could have prompted.

The reader must also be informed that a double-sleigh load of able-bodied men followed close behind the one in which Miss King was taken home. What this movement meant, I am not able very satisfactorily to conjecture. I venture the opinion, however, that the good folks supposed their victim would jump out of the sleigh in which she was riding, if a good opportunity should offer, and run back to the Professor; and so this last load, no doubt, was put on as the rear-guard of the posse.

Now for myself. Miss King having left, and the mob having been informed that I was about to leave, they were somewhat quieted, but were far from being appeased. That portion of the Committee that remained with me, thought there was danger yet; and so, indeed, there was, judging hideous noises, bitter curses and ruffianly demonstrations, to be any proper criterion. They still cried, “bring him out” and “kill him.” The Committee thought the safety of the house required that I should be removed at once; so I having gotten together my hat, valise and other effects, they took me under their protection and conducted me to the village hotel.



Page 14

While I was being conducted out of the door, all manner of speech was hurled at me—a bountiful supply of that sort of dialectics which America can beat all the world at handling. However, the main desire of the mob at this point seemed to have been to get a sight of me; so they arraigned themselves in a double file, while I was conducted through the centre thereof, somewhat after the fashion of a military hero—a committee man at each side, one in front and another behind. Having passed completely through the file, the scoundrels then closed in upon me; some of them kicking me, some striking me in the side, once on the head, some pulling at my clothes and bruising my hat, and all of them hooting and hallooing after a manner similar to that which they practised when they first surrounded the house of Mr. Porter.

At length we reached the hotel—a quarter of a mile distant. The Committee were about to conduct me into the front parlour, when one fellow patriotically cried out, “God d——n it, don’t carry that nigger into the front door.” A true Yankee that! I have a penny laid up for that fellow, if I should ever chance to meet him.

I was conducted into the back parlour of the hotel, as being the most secure. Still the mob were not appeased, and besides, their numbers had increased. They hung around the house. Some of them opened the windows half-way and tried to clamber through them into the parlour where I was; and at last they way-laid the outer doors.

The sort of curses they indulged in meanwhile, I need not describe again. They were essentially the same as they had hitherto vented, save that one or two of them growing a little humorous, cried out occasionally “a speech from Professor Allen”—putting a peculiar emphasis on the professor.

The Committee busied themselves in furnishing two sleighs in which I was to be conveyed away, and also in appeasing the more ruffianly part of the multitude with cigars and such other articles as they choose to call for at the bar of the hotel. One of the sleighs was stationed at the back door of the hotel, and the other about two miles from Fulton. The plan was that I should get into the former and be driven to the latter, in which I was to be taken post haste to Syracuse—a distance of about twenty-five miles. The mob, however, suspected some of the details of the plan, and consequently every time I appeared at the back door, they made a rush at me seeking to wreak their vengeance. I escaped their violence, however, by stepping adroitly out of the way. And, as the tavern keeper had assured them that if they attempted violence upon me while I was under his roof, they would do it at their peril, many of them left, and I, at last, succeeded in reaching the sleigh at the back door and was driven off in safety. The mob unable to overtake me, still shouted a last imprecation.

For this said Sleigh ride, I paid Six dollars, about L1. 4s.; so I was robbed, if not murdered.



Page 15

I will now describe the leader of the mob—Henry C. Hibbard. I will do it in short. This man is a clumsy-fisted, double jointed, burly-headed personage, about six feet in height, with a countenance commingling in expression the utmost ferocity and cunning. Hibbard is not a fool—but a knave. He is essentially a low bred man, and vulgar to the heart's core.

Some idea of the calibre of the man may be had in the fact that in his published Article in defense of the mob, he makes use of such expressions as “g’hals,” “g’halhood” and the like.

He has great perseverance of character as is evinced in the fact that though I was several days behind the time at which I was expected to arrive in Fulton, he or his deputies never failed to be daily at the Cars so as to watch my arrival, and thus be in season with the onslaught.

This man set himself up, and was indeed so received by the Elder and Mrs. King as their friend, counsellor, and adviser. A confirmation this, of what I have already said about the commingling of the “respectable” and the base. His mobocratic movements, however, it is but just to say, were unknown to the Elder and his wife until after the onslaught had been made. Mrs. King however did not deprecate the mob until its history had become somewhat unpopular, by reason of many of the “respectable” men becoming ashamed at last that they had been found in such company as Hibbard’s. And even the Elder himself, though he deprecated the mob, still characterized it as the “just indignation of the public.”

Hibbard, I have already said, published a written defence of the mob. The article was headed “*The Mary Rescue*.”—and a most remarkable document it was—remarkable, however, only for its intense vulgarity, its absurd contradictions, and its ridiculous attempts at piety and poetry.

Me, he describes as the “Professor of Charms” and “Charming Professor,” once—the “tawney charmer.”

Hibbard’s article is not by me; and, if it were, its defilement is such that I could not be tempted to give it at length. Laughable and lamentable as the article is in the main, I still thank Hibbard for some portions of it, and especially for that one which substantiates the charge which I have brought against the “respectable men of Fulton.” Thus ends the mob.

CHAPTER V.

DARK DAYS.



Reader, I am now to describe the events of the two weeks which followed the Fulton onslaught; and I can assure you that language has yet to be invented in which to write in its fullness what, when the children of certain parents shall look back fifty years hence, they will regard as the darkest deeds recorded in the history of their ancestors.

Diabolical as was the mob, yet the shameful and outrageous persecution to which Miss King was subjected during those memorable weeks, at the hands of her relatives and the Fulton Community, sinks it (the mob) into utter significance. How the human beings who so outraged an inoffensive young lady can dare call themselves christians, is to me a mystery which I, at least, shall never be able wholly to explain.



Page 16

I have already said that Miss King assured me on parting on Sabbath evening that she would meet me in Syracuse on the morrow. Accordingly I awaited at the depot, on Monday afternoon, the arrival of the Fulton train of cars. But she did not appear, and, for the first time, the thought occurred to me that the Fulton people were determined to leave nothing undone by which to fill out their measure of meanness.

On Tuesday morning next, February 1st, the following article appeared in the "*Syracuse Star*"—one of the organs of the Fillmore Administration. It needs no comment of mine to instruct the reader as to the character of the paper which could publish such complete diabolism:—

"ANOTHER RESCUE."

"A gentleman from Fulton informs us that that village was the theatre of quite an exciting time, to say the least, on Sunday evening last. The story is as follows:—Rev. Mr. King, Pastor of a regular Wesleyan Methodist, Abolition, Amalgamation Church at Fulton, has an interesting and quite pretty daughter, whom, for some three or four years past, he has kept at School at that pink of a 'nigger' Institution, called the Mc. Grawville College, located South of us, in Cortland County. While there, it seems that a certain genuine negro connected with the Institution, called Professor Allen, (Professor Allen! bah!!) and herself became enamoured of each other, and thereupon entered into the requisite stipulation and agreements to constitute what is known to those interested in such matters, as an 'engagement' to be married. A little time since, the damsel went home to her Amalgamation-preaching parents, and made known the arrangements whereby their lovely daughter expected soon to be folded in the hymenean arms of anti-alabaster Sambo. The parents remonstrated and begged, and got the brothers and sisters to interpose, but all to no effect. The blooming damsel was determined to partake of the 'bed and board,' and inhale the rich odours, refreshing perfumes, and reviving fragrance which Mc. Grawville College teaching had pictured to her in life-like eloquence; and more than this, she would not remain in membership with the denomination that preaches but declines to practice, and sent in her resignation in due form of law. Whereupon, down from Mc. Grawville comes the blushing Allen, all decked in wedding garb, and on Sunday morn he half woke from ponderous sleep, and thought he heard playing on the air such sweet music,—

"As are those dulcet sounds in break of day,
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
And summons him to marriage!"



Page 17

“But evening came, and as the anxious couple could not have the nuptial rites celebrated under the Rev. father’s roof, they withdrew to Phillips’ tavern, on the West side of the river, and made preparations for the ceremonies. In the meantime the affair got whispered about the town, and the incensed populace to some five hundred strong made ready to ‘disturb the meeting.’ Several of the prominent citizens, fearing lest a serious row should follow, repaired to the marriage-home, and while some kept the riot down by speeches and persuasions, others gained admittance to the colors. Allen, on being asked if he was married, replied ‘no,’ but that he would be in a few minutes. He was remonstrated with, and told the consequences that would ensue—that he would be mobbed, and must leave town immediately. He responded that he knew what he was about, was a free man, in a free country, and should do as he pleased. By this time the outsiders could be held still no longer, and the window curtains being drawn, our hero ‘saw and trembled,’ and cried for mercy. The damsel didn’t faint, but at once consented to go home, and was hurried into a sleigh and driven off, while Sambo under disguise and surrounded by Abolitionists, was hustled out of the crowd over to the Fulton house. The multitude soon followed, eager and raving to grab the ‘nigger,’ but after a little, he was got away from the house, by some sly comer, and hurried off to Syracuse in a sleigh, at the top of two-horse speed. Thus the black cloud avoided the whirlwind, and thus ended ‘Another Rescue.’”

This article, abominable as it is, was copied either in whole or in part by nearly every pro-slavery organ throughout America in a few days after the mob—with glorifications at what they supposed to be my defeat; and some of the papers copied the article with regrets that I had not been killed outright. And, indeed, this same “*Syracuse Star*” in a few days after the publication of the above article did what it could to inflame the populace of Syracuse to inflict upon me violence and death.

Nor were the pro-slaveryites the only persons who gloated with delight over the Article published by the “*Star*.” Hundreds, and I think I am within the bounds of truth, when I say that thousands of men and women calling themselves Abolitionists and Christians, were especially rejoiced at my “defeat;” and expressed themselves to that effect, though using more guarded language than those who made no pretensions to a love of truth, justice, and humanity.

The article abounds in falsehood, though to serve its purpose it is certainly adroitly written. We had not intended to be married on the evening of the mob, so that not only is the speech which the Editor puts in my mouth false, but so also is his statement that we repaired to Phillips’ Tavern to have the nuptial rites celebrated. The story of my seeing, and trembling and crying for mercy, is also equally false.



Page 18

It is also worthy of note that every paper which copied the article, varied the details, in order to suit its specific locality. Some of the versions of the affair were extremely amusing.

One of the papers described the mob as having taken place at Syracuse, and the onslaught as having been made upon us while the ceremony was about being performed, whereat Miss King fled in one direction, and I in another.

One Editor in furnishing his readers with the details thought it necessary to a completion of the picture to describe my personal appearance. He had never seen me—but no matter for that. He had seen the “*Star’s*” report, and what that did not give him, his imagination could supply. So he at it; and the next morning I appeared in print as “a stout, lusty, fellow, six feet and three inches tall, and as black as a pot of charcoal.” Reader, you would laugh to see me after such a description—of my height, at least.

The telegraphic wires were also put in demand, and in less than forty-eight hours after the occurrence of the mob, the terrific news had spread throughout the country that a “Colored man had attempted to marry a White woman!” And incredible as it may seem to Britons, this “horrid marriage” was for weeks, not only discoursed of in the papers but was the staple of conversation and debate in the grog shops, in the parlors, at the corners of the streets, and wherever men and women are accustomed to assemble; and during this time also my life was in danger whenever I ventured in the streets. The reader will get some idea of the state of things when I assure him that about a week after the mob, I had occasion to call at the Globe Hotel, Syracuse; and had not been in the house more than ten minutes before the landlord came to me and requested me to retire, as he feared the destruction of his house—the multitude having seen me enter, he said, and were now assembling about the building. I walked quietly out in company with a gentleman in a counter direction to the mob, and so escaped their wrath.

But to return to the narrative. On Tuesday afternoon (two days after the mob) I awaited again at the Syracuse depot, the arrival of the Fulton train of cars; supposing it possible that I might meet Miss King. She did not make her appearance, and there was now not a doubt left on my mind as to the character of what was going on in Fulton. Just as I was on the point of turning away from the depot, a gentleman came up behind me, tapped me on the shoulder, and bade me get out of the way as quickly as possible; for the Fulton mobocrats, he informed me, had sent up word by telegraph to certain persons in Syracuse to mob me, if I should be seen about the car house. This gentleman also added that some of these persons were about the car house, wishing to have me pointed out.

It seems, the Committee that visited us on the evening of the mob, had overheard Miss King assure me that she would meet me on the following day in Syracuse; and they, or others of our keepers, had not only determined that no such meeting should be held, but that the mobbing should be repeated if I attempted again to see her.



Page 19

Just as I was about to enter my lodging house on my return from the depot, whom should I espy but my friend Porter turning the corner and approaching me. Of course I was glad to see him; and our conversation, at once, turned upon Fulton and the events of the two preceeding days. He informed me, much to my surprise, for I had hardly supposed that tyranny would have gone so far, that on the night following the mob, the people of the village had risen up *en masse*, and in solemn meeting dismissed him from his school. Glorious America! Land of the Free!

Mr. Porter had committed no crime—nothing was charged against him, save that he had entertained us, and was known to be favorable to our union, or rather unfavorable to any interference in a matter which was of sacred right our own.

Mr. P. gave me no information with regard to Miss King, except that she was at home, and that in consequence of the extraordinary excitement she would probably be unable to get out of Fulton for several days to come.

He returned to Fulton the next morning, and three or four days after, I received from him the following letter. It is significant:—

“Gilberts’ Mills, February 4th, 1853.

“Professor Allen,—

“Dear Friend:—

“I write you under very extraordinary circumstances. I have been obliged to leave the vicinity of Fulton, for a while at least. I am now stopping at A. Gilbert’s. How long I shall stay here, I cannot tell.

“Mary (Miss King) I have not seen or heard from, for two days. All communications between her and Julia, (her sister—who was favorable to our union) and our family has been broken off—strictly prohibited; and Hibbard’s house, on the hill, is the watch tower to guard Elder King’s house against such dangerous invaders as ourselves.

“When I came from Syracuse that morning, Hibbard was at the depot on the watch. In the afternoon I went up to the Elder’s, and was met on the door-step and told not to deliver any messages or letters to Mary. Of course, I had none with me to deliver, and so I told Elder King. But I saw Mary in the presence of the family and Hibbard, and Mrs. Case and Mrs. Sherman, and such like—for Elder King’s folks have a great many such sympathisers now.

“I wanted to say some things to her not in the presence of these strangers—so to speak—in the family; *but she told me that she was permitted to say no word to any one but in the presence of such companions as were appointed for her. I went away sad, for Mrs. King is trying to torment her soul out of her, by constant upbraidings and railings.*



Page 20

“Yesterday morning Sarah (Mrs. Porter) started to go up to see her, not having seen her since the affair of the mob; but a cutter from Phillippsville whipped by her, and when she had got near the house, the cutter came back bringing Elder King, who told her that they thought it advisable to request her not to go to his house—that, in a word, *they were determined to prevent all communication between our family and Mary*. Sarah came back. In the meantime, a man came to see me—Mr. Case—to tell me that I must not go to Elder King’s—that *I could not go there without getting hurt*. In fact, I had been that morning to Fulton early, to see the Editor of ‘*The Patriot*,’ while I was going through the street, a lot of rowdies gathered together and yelled after me. The explanation is easy. When I came from Syracuse, the story went that I was plotting to get Mary off. And I can hardly forgive Elder King for putting the sanction upon this falsity, by excluding us from his house. That act of Elder King gave the multitude full swing. They have now full liberty to mob me; *and last night I came very near getting into their hands*. *About sunset they came over headed by Hibbard*, and while stopping at the tavern on the way—this side of the bridge—a man whipped up to Watson’s on horseback, and gave me the wink. George Gilbert was at our room, (a lucky chance) and so I got under the buffalo, and Sarah sat on the seat, and so we rode down straight by them, and thus foiled them again. To-day I went back—packed up, and put my trunks in a neighbor’s house, and then came down here with Sarah and Libbie. Thus it is. *Mary—God help her—is in prison,—that is, she is guarded*. Elder King has consented to just such arrangements as Mrs. King and Hibbard and some of the heartless, officious aristocrats of the village saw fit to propose. It cannot be helped. Mary will doubtless be used well, corporally—but oh, the torment of being confined with such despicable companions. I trust she will be brave; though I did hear yesterday morning that she was somewhat indisposed and was abed. Her eyes are inflamed.

“I left the vicinity not altogether out of personal fear, but because I knew that my presence kept up the excitement. Allen, *it is impossible for you to conceive what a convulsion this village of Fulton has been thrown into*. A regular siege and cannonading could hardly have raised a greater muss.

“Write to me soon. Enclose to G. Gilbert on the *outside* wrapper. I dared not send from Phillippsville yesterday.

“Keep cool; and do not blame Elder King more than you can help, for I expect he is forced into some things. How much he is to be forgiven on account of the dilemma into which he has got himself, let time decide. I do not wish to make his case worse.

“Yours in friendship,
“JOHN C. PORTER.”

[The italics and parentheses of the above letter are mine. I shall add no comment.]



Page 21

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On Saturday afternoon, Feb. 5th,—still in Syracuse,—I received a visit from Wm. S. King, Esq. This gentleman is also a brother of Miss King. His visit seemed to have about it at the outset somewhat of a stealthy character, and I confess I did not receive him with any great degree of cordiality. He came on an errand, he said. His sister desired to have an interview with me, and to that end she would meet me at the house of a friend about four miles from the village of Fulton. The journey to this friend's—hers of four miles and mine of twenty or more—he assured me must be conducted with the greatest possible secrecy; for should the Fulton people hear of it, the most disastrous results would follow. His sister was very ill, he said—was suffering intense anguish of mind—had been confined to her chamber with bodily ailings—had an eye also in a dreadful condition, the sight of which was in danger of being lost—still, her anxiety to see me was so great that she had entreated to be taken even in this condition to the place aforesaid mentioned.

I understood this brother at once. I was not to be trapped. I had read human nature (so I think the result will justify me in saying) to a much better purpose than he. I declined holding the interview at the time, on account, as I urged, of his sister's feeble health and excited state of mind—but would have no objection, I added, to such an interview some two or three weeks to come. He then urged me to write, assuring me that he would take the letter willingly. This also, I refused to do. So at last he left me with the understanding that upon the recovery of his sister's health, we should have an “interview.”

Mr. King returned immediately to Fulton, and on the Monday following, I received by post a letter from Miss King. It was not in her own hand-writing—she was too ill to write, but it was dictated to her sister. Just as I expected, Miss King had found it necessary considering the influences against her, and that her relatives and the community would have left no means untried, however illegal or disgraceful to thwart her in her designs, —nay, would have sworn her into a lunatic asylum rather than to have permitted her to marry me—to consent that our engagement should be broken. This letter was to announce the fact, while at the same time, it gave as the reason—deference to the feelings of father and brothers.

Of course, I did not reply to the letter. As the “*Star*” says—I knew what I was about.

On Tuesday morning, February 8th, I published in the “*Syracuse Standard*” the following card:—

“TO THE PUBLIC.—FROM PROFESSOR ALLEN.”

“So much has been said and written on the subject of the late affair at Fulton, that the Public by this time must have had nearly *quantum sufficit*; yet I deem it not improper on

my own behalf to add a remark or two. I shall not undertake to describe in detail, the murderous outrage intended to be inflicted on a quiet and unoffending man—that is not of much consequence now.

Page 22

“I wish now simply to show the public, that those who made the onslaught upon me on Sabbath evening, a week ago, acted no less like a pack of fools than a pack of devils; and this can be shown almost in a single word, by stating that the whole story of my intention of being married on the evening in question, or that I went to Fulton intending to consummate an affair of the kind at any period of my recent visit there, is a fabrication from the beginning to the end. The wretch who ‘fixed up’ just such a story as he thought would inflame the rabble to take my life, will yet, I trust, meet with deserved scorn and contempt from a community who, whatever may be their prejudice against my color, have, nevertheless, a high sense of what belongs to their own honor and dignity, and to the character and reputation of their village.

“I make this statement with regard to this matter of marriage, not because I regard myself as amenable to the public to state to them *whom* or *when* I shall marry, but that since so much has been said upon the subject, I am quite willing they should know the truth as it is. They are tyrants, and very little-hearted, and exceedingly muddy-headed ones at that, who will presume to take a matter of this kind out of the hands of the parties to whom it specifically belongs, and who are acting law-abidingly and honorably in the premises.

“Here then is the story. Read it. A band of several hundred armed men—armed, as I have been told, with an empty barrel spiked with shingle nails, tar, feathers and a pole, came down upon a certain house in Phillippsville, opposite Fulton, on Sabbath evening, a week ago, to kill or drive out a single individual, conducting himself in a quiet, peaceable manner, and that individual, too, in physical stature, one of the smallest of men,—and in physical strength, proportionably inferior! If this is not cowardice as well as villainy—and both of them double-refined—then, I ask, what is cowardice, or what is villainy? The malignity of the whole matter also is set in a clearer light, when it is remembered that this same individual has never injured one of his assailants, nor has it been charged upon him that in his life-time he has ever inflicted the slightest wrong upon mortal man, but who has striven to maintain an upright character through life, and to fight his way for long years through scorn and contempt, to an honorable position among men. Truly, this is a precious country! However, it is some consolation to know that ‘God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep for ever.’

“A gentleman of Fulton writes an article on this subject, to the ‘*Oswego Daily Times*,’ of February the 3rd. The spirit of this gentleman’s article dishonors his heart. So filled is he with a prejudice which an eminent Christian of this country has rightly characterized, as a ‘blasphemy against God,’ and a ‘quarrel with Jehovah,’ that he will not even deign to call me by name, to



Page 23

say nothing of the title which has been legitimately accorded me, but designates me as a 'colored man, &c.' The object of this writer in thus refusing to accord to me so cheap and common a courtesy is apparent, and as contemptible as apparent. Let him have the glory of it,—I pity him. Had I been a white man, he would not have so violated what he is such a stickler for—"the laws and usages of society."

"In another place in his article, he describes me as the 'negro.' This is preposterous and ridiculous. Were I a negro, I should regard it as no dishonor, since men are not responsible for their physical peculiarities, and since they are neither better nor worse on account of them. It happens in this case, however, that so far from being a negro, three-fourths of the blood which flows in my veins is as good Anglo-Saxon as that which flows in the veins of this writer in the '*Times*,'—better, I will not say, of course.

"Something also is said in this article from Fulton about the 'course we' (the young lady and myself) 'were pursuing.' Now, as the several hundred armed men strong who came down upon me on Sunday night, and some newspaper Editors, and this gentleman in particular, and the public very nearly in general, have taken the matter of judging what this 'course we were pursuing' was, out of our own hands, I propose to leave it still further with them. They can guess at it, and fight it out to their heart's content.

"Something also is said by this gentleman about 'wholesome advice being given me'—but I did not hear it, that's all. Besides, I never take advice from those who can not tell the difference between a man and his skin.

"One gentleman—a true man—came to me, and expressed his deep sympathy for me, and his sorrow that I had been so wrongfully treated and shamefully outraged, and entreated me to regard with pity, and not with anger, the murderous wretches outside. This is the speech that I remember, and remember it to thank the friend for his manifestation of kind and generous emotions.

"This Fulton 'Committee man' also says that 'the colored man asked if he was to be left to be torn to pieces.' Beyond a doubt, I asked that question. It was certainly, under the circumstances, the most natural question in the world; for I had really begun to think that the fellows outside had the genuine teeth and tail.

"I close this Article. To the Committee who so kindly lent me their protection on that memorable night, I offer my thanks and lasting gratitude.

"To the poor wretches who sought to take my life, I extend my pity and forgiveness.

"As to myself—having in my veins, though but in a slight degree, the blood of a despised, crushed, and persecuted people, I ask no favors of the people of this country,



and get none save from those whose Christianity is not hypocrisy, and who are willing to 'do unto others as they would that others should do unto them'—and who regard *all* human beings who are equal in character as equal to one another.



Page 24

“Respectfully
“WILLIAM G. ALLEN”

Simultaneously with the above card, there appeared in the “*Syracuse Journal*,” the following Article. It is from the pen of Wm. S. King—the brother aforesaid mentioned. It is in spirit a most dastardly performance, more so, considering that the gentleman really *did* know the circumstances, than anything which had hitherto been sent to the press. As a history of the “affair,” it is almost a falsity throughout—and especially is it so in that part of it which describes Miss King as repulsing me with her abhorrence of the idea of amalgamation. I do not propose, however, to be hard on Mr. King. His untruthful and cowardly spirit has been sufficiently rebuked by the marriage which took place in less than two months after the publication of his article:—

“THE FULTON RESCUE CASE.”

“Since the occurrence of the circumstances which induced the mob and consequent excitement at Fulton, on the 30th of last month, we have made considerable effort to procure a full and precise statement of the facts in the case. This we have finally succeeded in doing from a gentleman of standing, who is well acquainted with all the circumstances. They are as follows:—

“For some years past, Miss King has been attending the School at Mc. Grawville, known as the ‘New York Central College,’ in which Allen, the colored Professor alluded to, is one of the teachers.

“During that time, Allen became deeply interested in the lady, and proposed marriage to her. This she at once rejected, declaring that the thought of such a connection was repulsive to her.

“For some time after this, the Professor said no more upon the subject; but in the course of a year or so, *again* proposed marriage, and was *again* rejected.

“Thus matters stood until some time since, when Miss King left the School, and returned to her home in Fulton. Shortly after, Allen went to that place and called on her, and, after a short interview, again, for the third time, proposed marriage. She *again rejected him*, and told him *that such was her firm and fixed decision*. Her manner towards him, however, during all this period, had been kind and friendly, but she had always expressed her abhorrence of the idea of ‘amalgamation.’

“By this time Madam Gossip had set the rumor afloat, that Allen and Miss K. were engaged to be married. Such a report was, of course calculated to produce a great excitement wherever it went.



“Allen, however, was not to be baffled by his former ill success, and was determined, if possible, to make the report good. He, therefore, a few days after his last rejection, wrote to a gentleman residing in Phillipsville, opposite Fulton—who had formerly been a student in Mc. Grawville—that he intended making him a visit. As all the parties had been friends and acquaintances at School, Miss K. was invited to be present for the purpose of having a friendly visit. She accordingly called upon them on Saturday afternoon, and at their earnest solicitations consented to spend the Sabbath with them.



Page 25

“In the meantime, it was whispered about that the Professor and Miss K. were there for the purpose of being married. This, the people of Fulton determined at once, should not be done in that town. They, therefore, assembled several hundred strong, and appointed a Committee to wait upon the party, which they accordingly did, and informed the Professor that he must leave town, and the young lady that she must go home, to which request they both acceded without hesitation.

“The above is, as we have been informed, a full and true statement of the affair which has created such an excitement throughout the country.”

* * * * *

The reader will see that the article appears as an editorial—another evidence that it is “conscience that doth make cowards of us all.”

Should Mr. King ever see this little book, and wonder how I found him out, I will simply inform him that I chanced to be in the neighborhood of the Journal Office, when he went in with his piece; and further, I have the guarantee of the Editor.

I now subjoin an extract of a note which I received from Miss King, on the afternoon of February the 12th:—

“Fulton, Friday Morning, Feb. 11th.

“Professor Allen,—

“Dearest and best-loved Friend:—

“I am much better this morning; and if I could only see you for a few hours, I am sure I should be quite well again. I have been trying to persuade father to let me go to Syracuse this morning and see you, but he thinks my health is not in a state to admit of it now, but has promised me faithfully that I may meet you at Loguens, on Tuesday of next week.

* * * * *

“Professor—When I saw that article in the ‘*Syracuse Journal*,’ holding you up in such a ridiculous light, and laboring to make such false impressions upon the mind of the public, my soul was on fire with indignation.

* * * * *

“I need not tell you again that I love you, for you know that I do; yes, and I always shall until life’s troubled waters cease their flow.



“All communications that I receive from, or send to, you, *are read by father*; for I am a prisoner, yes, a prisoner; and when you write to me—if you should before I see you—you *must say nothing but what you are willing to have seen*. I shall manage to send this note without having it seen by any one.

* * * * *

“When I see you, I will tell you how much I have suffered since I saw you last, and how much I still suffer.

* * * * *

“Ever yours,
“Mary.”

[The italicising of the above is my own.]

* * * * *

This little note was the only communication which I had received from Fulton, containing any account of the doings of the King family, since the letter written to me by Miss King, announcing that our engagement must be broken. Though short, it was satisfactory. It assured me that Miss King,—though she could be persecuted—could not be crushed.



Page 26

About the same time that I received the above note from Miss King, I also received the following from Rev. Timothy Stowe, of Peterboro', New York. How much I valued this friendly epistle coming, as it did, from one of the most devoted Christians in America, it is not possible for me to say:—

“Peterboro', February 8th, 1853.

“Dear Brother Allen:—

“I see by the papers, that you have been shamefully mobbed at Fulton. I write to let you know that there are some in the world who will not join the multitude who are trying to overwhelm you with prejudice.

* * * * *

“Now do not be cast down. You, I trust, are not the man to cower at such a moment. Do not be afraid to stand up your whole length in defence of your own rights.

“Come and visit us without delay. Consider my house your home while here.

“Brother Smith sends you his love. Brother Remington wishes me to say that you have his confidence, and that he is your friend.

“Yours with kindest regards,
“TIMOTHY STOWE.”

CHAPTER VI.

BRIGHTENING UP.—GRAND RESULT.

According to the intimation in the note received from Miss King dated Feb. 11th, she met me—not however as she expected on Tuesday—but, on Wednesday of next week in Syracuse: and at the house of a friend whose memory we hold in the highest reverence.

The interview, as the parents and relatives of Miss King understood it, was to be held to the intent that Miss King might then and there in person, and by “word” more effectually than she could possibly do by writing, absolve herself from all engagement, obligation or intention whatsoever to marry me—now, hereafter, or evermore. This was their construction of the matter, and it was in the light of this construction that they essayed to grant the request—the granting of which Miss King made the condition on which she proposed to yield up her sacred right.



That the King family—determined as they were, law or no law, justice or no justice, Christianity or no Christianity; in short, at all events and all hazards, to prevent our union—should have granted this interview to Miss King convicts them of as great imbecility and folly as was their persecution of their victim. But so it is, the innocent shall not only not be cut down, but they who practice unrighteousness shall themselves be overtaken.

But to the interview. I should be glad to describe my feelings on first meeting Miss King after she had passed through that fiery furnace of affliction. But I desist. The “engagement,” I have already said, displayed a moral heroism which no one can comprehend who has not been in America, but the passage through was more than sublime.

Page 27

She related to me the events of the two preceding weeks as she had known them to transpire in her own family, and as she had heard of them as transpiring in the village. I cannot write the details. It chills my blood to think of them. The various letters published in this narrative will suffice to give the reader some idea of things as they were; while the hundreds of things which cannot be written and which, because of their littleness are the more faithful exponents of meanness, must be left to the reader to imagine as best he can. I say as best he can, since no Englishman can imagine the thing precisely as it was.

She was reviled, upbraided, ridiculed, tormented; and by some, efforts were made to bribe her into the selling of her conscience. What the vilest and most vulgar prejudices could suggest were hurled at both our devoted heads. Letters were not permitted to be received or sent without their being first inspected by the parents. And finally she was imprisoned after the manner set forth in the letter of Mr. Porter. So rigid was the surveillance that her sister was also put under the same "regimen," because her sympathies were with the persecuted and not the persecutors.

When we met, therefore, we were not long in determining what was our duty. And now, Reader, what would you have done? Just what we did—no doubt. Made up your mind to have sacrificed nothing upon the altar of a vulgar prejudice. Such was the nature of the demand—would it not have been base to have yielded?

We concluded that now, more than ever, we would obey our heart's convictions, though all the world should oppose us; that, come what would, we would stand by each other, looking to Heaven to bless us, and not to man, for either smiles or favor.

We were resolved, but there was a difficulty yet. Determined to exercise our God-given rights, we were still overpowered by the physical force of the whole community. An open declaration by either party of our resolve would have been not less than consummate madness. To exercise our rights, therefore, not as we *would* but as we *could*, was the only hope left us.

We resolved to marry and flee the Country. Miss King returned to Fulton; after remaining there a week or ten days she went to Pennsylvania *ostensibly* to teach in a school. We corresponded by means of a third person; and my arrangements being made, we met in New York City, on March 30th, according to appointment; were married immediately and left for Boston. In Boston, we remained ten days, keeping as quiet as possible, in the family of a beloved friend, and on the 9th of April, took passage for Liverpool.

Since our arrival in this Country, we have received several American papers. The following Article is from one of the Western New York papers, which is but a specimen of the articles published by all the pro-slavery papers throughout the land on the announcement of the marriage, shows that the flight to England completed the victory.

To have remained to be killed would have been fun to be relished. But public sentiment abroad—ah, that is another thing, and not so pleasant to be thought of:—

Page 28

“PROF. ALLEN IS MARRIED”

“MARRIED.—In New York city, March 30th, by Rev. Thomas Henson, Professor WILLIAM G. ALLEN, of Mc. Grawville, N. Y., and Miss MARY E. KING, of Fulton, N. Y., daughter of Rev. Lyndon King, of Fulton.

“We expected as much. We were liberally abused for our discountenance of this marriage, and charged with wilfully falsifying facts, because we insisted that this affair was in contemplation, and would yet go off. *Prof.* Allen denied it, and others thought that they had the most positive assurance from his statements that the amalgamation wedding was a fiction. But now, after he and his white brethren have liberally impugned our motives, charged falsehood upon us, and made solemn asseverations designed to make the public believe that no such thing was in contemplation, in two brief months, the thing is consummated, with all the formality of a religious observance, and this unholy amalgamation is perpetrated before high Heaven and asserted among men.

“*Prof.* ALLEN and his fair bride are now in Europe. It is well they should emigrate, to show admiring foreigners the beauties of American abolitionism. Let them attend the receptions of the Duchess of Sutherland, the soirees of English agitators, and the orgies of Exeter Hall. Let GEO. THOMPSON introduce them as the first fruits of his *philanthropic* labors in America. Let them travel among the starveling English operatives, who would gladly accept slavery if assured of a peck of corn each week; let them wander among European serfs, whose life, labor, and virtue are the sport of despots, compared to whom the crudest slave driver is an angel—and there proclaim their ‘holy alliance.’ If the victims of English and Continental tyranny do not turn their backs, disgusted with the foul connection, their degradation must be infinitely greater than we had supposed.”

* * * * *

But to return to the story: Soon after the “interview” between Miss King and myself, I received the following note from Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe—the renowned Authoress of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” A “divine-hearted woman,” this, as Horace Mann hath rightly called her, and more precious than rubies to me is her kind and Christian epistle:—

Andover, Massachusetts, February 21st, 1853.

“Professor Allen,—

“Dear Sir:—

“I have just read with indignation and sorrow your letter in the *Liberator* (copied from the *Syracuse Standard*). I had hoped that the day for such outrages had gone by. I trust that you will be enabled to preserve a patient and forgiving spirit under this exhibition of vulgar and unchristian prejudice. *Its day is short.*



“Please accept the accompanying volume as a mark of friendly remembrance from,—

“H. B. STOWE.”

* * * * *

Just before Miss K. left Fulton for Pennsylvania, she received the following letter from the Rev. Timothy Stowe—the gentleman to whom reference has already been made. He is not related to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, but is nevertheless of royal race:—



Page 29

“Peterboro’, New York, March 1st, 1853.

“Miss Mary E. King,—

“Dear Friend:—

“You will not be offended that I should address you by this title, though I never saw you, to my recollection, until last July at Mc. Grawville; I then felt an interest in your welfare—an interest which has been deepened by your recent insults and trials. I am not one of those who can censure you for your attachment and engagement to Professor Allen. He is a man—a noble man—a whole man; a man, in fine, of whom no woman need be ashamed. I am aware, you are aware, that the world will severely condemn you; so it did Luther, when he married a nun; it was then thought to be as great an outrage on decency, for a minister to marry a nun, as it now is for a white young lady to marry a colored gentleman. You have this consolation, that God does not look upon the countenance—the color of men; that in his eye, black and white are the same; and consequently, to marry a colored person of intelligence and worth is no immorality, and in his eye, no impropriety. It is probably the design of Providence in this case, to call the attention of the public to the fresh consideration of what is implied in the great doctrine of human brotherhood. Is it true or not, that a colored man has all the rights of a white man? Is this a question still mooted among Abolitionists? If so, then we may as well settle it now as at any other time, and though the controversy may be, and must be a very painful one to your feelings, yet, the result will be a better understanding of the great principles of our common nature and brotherhood. Professor Allen is with me in my study, and has detailed to me the whole of this outrage against yourself and him, and has also made me acquainted with your relations to each other. I extend to you my sympathy, I proffer to you my friendship. You have not fallen in my estimation, nor in the estimation of Mr. Smith and others in this place. Lay not this matter to heart, be not cast down; put your trust in God, and he will bring you out of this crucible seven times purified. He in mercy designs to promote your spiritual growth and consolation. Keep the Saviour in your heart. My good wife sympathises with you. We would be glad to see you at our humble home, either before or after your marriage. We would try to comfort you; we would bear your burdens, and so ‘fulfil the law of Christ.’

“Yours, with fraternal and Christian affection,

“TIMOTHY STOWE.”

On the day after Miss King left for Pennsylvania, I received the following note from a friend in Fulton. It is significant, and certainly corroborative of the opinion which I have expressed of the Fulton people—that they had determined to leave nothing undone by which to make their tyranny complete:—

“Fulton, March 5th, 1853.



“Dear Friend:—

“Yesterday I heard from you by a friend

* * * * *



Page 30

“Mary has gone to Pennsylvania.

* * * * *

“What we feared was, she would be again imprisoned, and hindered from going to Pa. If her relatives and other friends knew of your intentions, she would have been put under lock and key as sure as there are *mean men* in Fulton.

* * * * *

“Professor, they were as mad as wild asses here about that ‘resolution of Smith’s,’ especially King’s folks.

* * * * *

I want your miniature—*must have it*. I want to show it to my friends that they may see this man whose idle moments in the bower of love sets half the world crazy.

* * * * *

“In friendship, yours,

“* * ”

The Resolution to which reference has been made, is as follows. It was presented by the Hon. Gerrit Smith, Member of Congress, from New York, at a Convention of “Liberty Party Men,” held in Syracuse, about four weeks after the mob:—

“Resolved, That the recent outrage committed upon that accomplished and worthy man—Professor William G. Allen—and the general rejoicing throughout the country therein, evinces that the heart of the American people, on the subject of slavery is utterly corrupt, and almost past cure.”

Now for something spicy. The following letter was written to Elder King by a Slaveholder of Mississippi, about five weeks after the mob. The Elder re-mailed it to his daughter while she was in Pennsylvania. Having become the property of the daughter, and the daughter and I now being one, I shall take the liberty of giving this specimen of Southern chivalry to the public. The reader shall have it without alteration:—

“Warrenton, Mississippi,
“March 5th, 1853.

“Rev. Sir:—



“You cannot judge of my surprise and indignation, on reading an Editorial in one of my papers concerning an intending marriage of your lovely and accomplished daughter, with a negro man; which thanks to providence has been prevented by the excited and enraged populace of the enterprising citizens of the good town of Fulton.

“During my sojourn in the state of New York last year, I visited for mere curiosity the Mc. Grawville Institute in Cortland Co., which gave me an opportunity of seeing your daughter, then a pupil of that equality and amalgamated Institute; and I believe in all my travels north, I never saw one more interesting and polite to those of her acquaintances.

“I have thought much about your daughter since my return home, and do yet, notwithstanding the ignominious connection she has lately escaped from. Your daughter—innocent, as I must in charity presume—because deluded and deranged by the false teachings of the abolition Institute at Mc. Grawville.

“My object in writing to you this letter is to obtain your permission to correspond with your daughter if it should be agreeable with herself, for I do assure you that I have no other than an honorable intention in doing so.



Page 31

“I reside in Warren County near Warrenton—am the owner of Nine Young Negroes in agriculture, who would not exchange their bondage for a free residence in the north. I am happy to inform you Revd. Sir that my character is such that will bear the strictest investigation, and my relations respectable. I am yet young having not yet obtained my 25th year.

“Well sir, I am a stranger to both yourself and interesting family, and as a matter of course you may desire to know something about the humble individual who has thought proper to address you on a subject which depends on the future happiness of your daughter. For your Reverence’s gratification you are at liberty to refer to either or all of the following gentlemen, by letter or in person,—viz., Hon. J. E. Sharkey, State Senator, Warren Co., P. O., Warrenton, Miss.;—Hon. A. G. Brown, Ex-Gov., Miss., now Member of Congress, P. O., Gallatin, Miss.;—Samuel Edwards, High Sheriff, Warren Co., P. O., Vicksburg, Miss.;—E. B. Scarbrough Clerk, Probate Court, Warren Co., P. O., Vicksburg, Miss.;—M. Shannon, Editor, Vicksburg, Miss., Whig;—Geo. D. Prentice, Editor, Louisville, Ky., Journal;—and Reed, Brothers, and Co., 177, Market Street, Philadelphia.

“Again Rev. Sir, I assure you that in writing you this letter, I only do that which is the result of mature deliberation.

“I shall wait anxiously your reply,
“THOS. K. KNOWLAND.”

“P. S.—As Messrs. Reed, Brothers, and Co., are the nearest reference to whom I refer, I enclose you a letter from them.”

* * * * *

The two letters immediately following were received by Miss K. just before she left Pennsylvania for New York. Many other letters were also received by both of us, which are not given in this book, but we can assure the writers thereof that they have our hearts’ gratitude:—

“Fulton, March 27th, 1853.

“My dear and brave Sister:—

“For two weeks past we have been stopping with Mr. B. Yesterday we received four letters—two from my good brother B., and two from Pennsylvania, yours and Jane’s. Right glad were we to receive those welcome favors—those little *epistolary* angels, telling us of your safety, (for safety has of late become quite a consideration) of your affection, of your anxiety, and a hundred things more than what were written.



“Mary, I judge from your letters and notes—from the tone of them—that there are feelings and emotions in your heart utterly beyond the power of words to express. You are resolved, and you are happy in your resolve, and strong in the providential certainty of its success. Yet you tremble for probabilities, or rather for *possibilities*.

“What feelings, dear Mary, you must have in the hour of your departure from this country. Through the windows of imagination I can catch a glimpse of it all. Your flight is a flight for freedom, and I can almost call you *Eliza*. To you this land will become a land of memory. And, oh! what memories! But we will talk of this hereafter.



Page 32

“The remembrance of *friendship unbroken here*,—oh, Mary, let it not vanish as the blue hills of your father-land will dim away in the distance, while you glide eastward upon the ‘free waters.’ But let that bright remembrance be embodied in *spirit*-form, for ever attending you, and pointing back to those still here who hold you high in affection and in honor.

* * * * *

“Mary, I must close. Be firm—strong—brave—unflinching—*just like* Mary King.

“Yours in the bonds of love,
“JOHN C. PORTER.”

“Fulton, March 27th, 1853.

“My dear Sister Mary:—

“Almost hourly since you left has your image been before me. And as I seat myself to write, thoughts and emotions innumerable come crowding for utterance. Gladly would I express them to you, dear Sister, but the pen is far too feeble an instrument. Oh, that I could be with you in body as in spirit. You need encouragement and strength in this hour; and I know that you will receive them,—for you are surrounded by a few of the truest and dearest of friends. And you know and have felt, that a higher and stronger power than earth can uphold us in every endeavour for the right.

* * * * *

“Mary, do you remember the time when you told me that I must love you better than I had ever done before; for friends would forsake you, and there would be none left to love you but P., and myself, and your father, and Julia, and J. B., and D. S., and S. T.? Our arms were twined around each other in close embrace. Your heart was full to overflowing, and words gave place to tears. I shall not forget the intense anxiety I felt for you at that moment as I tried to penetrate the future, knowing, as I did, somewhat of the cruelty of prejudice. It seems we both had a foreboding of something that would follow. I do not know that I wept, but heaven witnessed and recorded the silent, sacred promise of my heart to draw nearer and cherish you with truer fidelity as others turned away. And so shall I always feel.

* * * * *

“Oh, Mary, how little can we imagine the sufferings of the oppressed, while we float along on the popular current. I thank God from the depths of my soul, that we have launched our barks upon the ocean. Frail they are, yet, having right for our beacon, and humanity for our compass, I know we shall not be wrecked or go down among the raging elements.



* * * * *

“Now, dear Sister, farewell, and as you depart from this boasted 'land of liberty and equal rights,' and go among strangers, that you may, indeed, enjoy liberty, be not despondent, but cheerful, ever remembering the message of your angel mother.

* * * * *

Again, dear sister, farewell,—you know how much we love you, and that our deepest sympathies are with you wherever you may be.



Page 33

"Affectionately yours,
"SARAH D. PORTER."

I subjoin an extract of a letter which I received from Miss K. a few days before our marriage:—

"Dolington, Pennsylvania
"March 21st, 1853.

"Professor Allen,—
"Dearest and best-loved Friend:—

"I have just received your letter of March 13th, and hasten to reply.

"You ask me if I can go with you in four weeks or thereabouts. In reply, I say yes; gladly and joyfully will I hasten with you to a land where unmolested, we can be happy in the consciousness of the love which we cherish for each other. While so far from you, I am sad, lonely, and unhappy; for I feel that I have no home but in the heart of him whom I love, and no country until I reach one where the cruel and crushing hand of Republican America can no longer tear me from you.

* * * * *

"Professor,—I sometimes tremble when I think of the strong effort that would be put forth to keep me from you, should my brothers know our arrangements. But my determination is taken and my decision fixed; and should the public or my friends ever see fit to lay their commands upon me again, they will find that although they have but a weak, defenceless woman to contend with, still, that woman is one who will never passively yield her rights. *They may mob me; yea, they may kill me; but they shall never crush me.*

"Heaven's blessings upon all who sympathised with us. I am not discouraged. God will guide us and protect us.

"Ever yours,

"MARY."

"Thou Friend, whose presence on my wintry heart
Fell like bright Spring upon some herbless plain;
How beautiful and calm and free thou wert
In thy young wisdom, when the mortal chain
Of Custom thou did'st burst and rend in twain,
And walked as free as night the clouds among."



Some idea of the spirit of persecution by which we were pursued may be gathered from the fact, that when the mobocrats of Fulton ascertained that Miss King and myself were having an interview in Syracuse, they threatened to come down and mob us, and were only deterred from so doing by the promise of Elder King, that he would go after his daughter if she did not return in the next train.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

Reader,—I have but a word or two more to say.

Insignificant as this marriage may seem to you, I can assure you that nothing else has ever occurred in the history of American prejudice against color, which so startled the nation from North to South and East to West. On the announcement of the probability of the case merely, men and women were panic-stricken, deserted their principles and fled in every direction.

Indignation meetings were held in and about Fulton immediately after the mob. The following Resolution was passed unanimously in one of them:—



Page 34

“Resolved,—That Amalgamation is no part of the Free Democracy of Granby.” (Town near F.)

The Editor of the Fulton newspaper, however, spoke of us with respect. Let him be honored. He condemned the mob, opposed amalgamation, but described the parties thus,—“Miss King, a young lady of talent, education, and unblemished character,” and myself, “a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian, and a citizen against whose character nothing whatever had been urged.”

I have said that some of the Papers regretted that I had not been killed outright. I give an extract from the “*Phoenix Democrat*,” published in the State of New York:—

“This Professor Allen may get down on his marrow bones, and thank God that we are not related to Mary King by the ties of consanguinity.”

To show that I have not exaggerated the spirit of persecution which beset us, I will state that in a few days after Mr. Porter was dismissed from his School, he called upon the pastor of the church of which he is a communicant; and though without means—the chivalrous people who turned him out of his School not having yet paid him up—and knowing not whither to go, the pastor assured him that he could not take him in, or render him any assistance, so severely did he feel that he would be censured by the public.

That Mr. Porter is still pursued by this fiendish spirit, the reader will see by the following paragraph of a letter received from him a few days since:—

“I have advertised for a School in S——. They would not tolerate me in O——, after they found out that I was the Phillippsville School-master. I was employed in O—— three months.”

Such, reader, is the character of prejudice against color,—bitter, cruel, relentless.

THE END.

* * * * *

A SHORT

PERSONAL NARRATIVE,

BY

WILLIAM G. ALLEN,



(Colored American,)

FORMERLY
PROFESSOR OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
IN NEW YORK CENTRAL COLLEGE

RESIDENT FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS IN DUBLIN.

* * * * *

DUBLIN:
SOLD BY THE AUTHOR,
AND BY
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PREFACE.

In preparing this little narrative, I have not sought to make a book, but simply to tell my own experiences both in the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States of America, in as few words as possible. The facts here detailed throw light upon many phases of American life, and add one more to the tens of thousands of illustrations of the terrible power with which slavery has spread its influences into the Northern States of the Union—penetrating even the inmost recesses of social life.



Page 35

W. G. A.

DONNYBROOK, DUBLIN,
January, 1860.

A SHORT PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

I was born in Virginia, but not in slavery. The early years of my life were spent partly in the small village of Urbanna, on the banks of the Rappahannock, partly in the city of Norfolk, near the mouth of the James' River, and partly in the fortress of Monroe, on the shores of the Chesapeake. I was eighteen years in Virginia. My father was a white man, my mother a mulattress, so that I am what is generally termed a quadroon. Both parents died when I was quite young, and I was then adopted by another family, whose name I bear. My parents by adoption were both coloured, and possessed a flourishing business in the fortress of Monroe.

I went to school a year and a half in Norfolk. The school was composed entirely of coloured children, and was kept by a man of color, a Baptist minister, who was highly esteemed, not only as a teacher, but as a preacher of rare eloquence and power. His color did not debar him from taking an equal part with his white brethren in matters pertaining to their church.

But the school was destined to be of short duration. In 1831, Nathaniel Turner, a slave, having incited a number of his brethren to avenge their wrongs in a summary manner, marched by night with his comrades upon the town of Southampton, Virginia, and in a few hours put to death about one hundred of the white inhabitants. This act of Turner and his associates struck such terror into the hearts of the whites throughout the State, that they immediately, as an act of retaliation or vengeance, abolished every colored school within their borders; and having dispersed the pupils, ordered the teachers to leave the State forthwith, and never more to return.

I now went to the fortress of Monroe, but soon found that I could not get into any school there. For, though being a military station, and therefore under the sole control of the Federal Government, it did not seem that this place was free from the influence of slavery, in the form of prejudice against color. But my parents had money, which always and everywhere has a magic charm. I was also of a persevering habit; and what therefore I could not get in the schools I sought among the soldiers in the garrison, and succeeded in obtaining. Many of the rank and file of the American army are highly educated foreigners; some of them political refugees, who have fled to America and become unfortunate, oftentimes from their own personal habits. I now learned something of several languages, and considerable music. My German teacher, a common soldier, was, by all who knew him, reputed to be both a splendid scholar and

musician. I also now and then bought the services of other teachers, which greatly helped to advance me.

Many of the slaveholders aided my efforts. This seems like a paradox; but, to the credit of humanity, be it said, that the bad are not always bad. One kind-hearted slaveholder, an army officer, gave me free access to his valuable library; and another slaveholder, a naval officer, who frequented the garrison, presented me, as a gift, with a small but well selected library, which formerly belonged to a deceased son.



Page 36

My experience, therefore, in the State of Virginia, is, in many respects, quite the opposite of that which others of my class have been called to undergo.

Could I forget how often I have stood at the foot of the market in the city of Norfolk, and heard the cry of the auctioneer—"What will you give for this man?"—"What for this woman?"—"What for this child?" Could I forget that I have again and again stood upon the shores of the Chesapeake, and, while looking out upon that splendid bay, beheld ships and brigs carrying into unutterable misery and woe men, women and children, victims of the most cruel slavery that ever saw the sun; could I forget the innumerable scenes of cruelty I have witnessed, and blot out the remembrance of the degradation, intellectual, moral and spiritual, which everywhere surrounded me—making the country like unto a den of dragons and pool of waters—my reminiscence of Virginia were indeed a joy and not a sorrow.

Some things I do think of with pleasure. A grand old State is Virginia. No where else, in America at least, has nature revealed herself on a more munificent scale. Lofty mountains, majestic hills, beautiful valleys, magnificent rivers cover her bosom. A genial climate warms her heart. Her resources are exhaustless. Why should she not move on? Execrated for ever be this wretched slavery—this disturbing force. It kills the white man—kills the black man—kills the master—kills the slave—kills everybody and everything. Liberty is, indeed, the first condition of human progress, and the especial hand-maiden of all that in human life is beautiful and true.

I attained my eighteenth year. About this time the Rev. W. H—— of New York city visited the fortress of Monroe, and opened a select school. He was a white man, and of a kind and benevolent nature. He could not admit me into his school, nevertheless he took a deep interest in my welfare. He aided my studies in such ways as he could, and, on his return to the State of New York (he remained but a short time in Virginia), acquainted the Honorable Gerrit Smith, of Peterboro, with my desires. Mr. Smith's sympathies were immediately touched on my behalf. He requested the Rev. W. H—— to write to me at once, and extend to me an invitation to visit the State of New York, enter college, and graduate at his expense—if need be.

I have to remark just here that at the time of the visit of the Rev. W. H—— to the fortress of Monroe, my parents were in greatly reduced circumstances, owing to a destructive fire which had recently taken place, and burned to the ground a most valuable property. The fire was supposed to be the work of incendiaries—low whites of the neighbourhood, who had become envious of my parents' success. There was no insurance on the property. Under these circumstances I gladly accepted the kind offer of Mr. Smith. His generous nature then and there turned towards me in friendship; and, I am happy to be able to add, he has ever continued my friend from that day to this.



Page 37

Mr. Smith is one of the noblest men that America has ever produced; and is especially remarkable for his profound appreciation of that sublime command of our Saviour, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Where he treads no angel of sorrow follows.

He is a man of vast estates—a millionaire. He is also what in America is termed a land reformer. He believes that every man should possess an inviolable homestead. He himself possesses by inheritance millions of acres in the Northern and Eastern States of America; and shows his sincerity and consistency by parcelling off from time to time such portions of these lands as are available, in lots of forty or fifty acres each, and presenting the deeds thereof, free of charge, to the deserving landless men, white or black, in the region where the lands in question are located. He also long since vacated the splendid Peterboro' mansion, into possession of which he came on the death of his father; and now resides, himself and family, in a simple cottage near Peterboro', with only forty acres attached. His sympathies are not bounded by country or clime. He sent into Ireland, during the famine of 1847, the largest single donation that reached the country from abroad.

He was elected to the United States Congress a few years ago, as one of the members for New York, but resigned his seat after holding it only a year—probably feeling outraged by the manners and morals, not to say superlative wickedness, of so many of his associates. Whatever may have been the cause which induced him to resign, he did well to give up his post. Nature had evidently not set him to the work. Of great ability, winning eloquence, and undoubted moral courage, his heart and temper were too soft and apologetic to deal with the blustering tyrants who fill too many of the seats of both houses of Congress.

Mr. Smith is truly a great orator. He has in an eminent degree the first qualification thereof—a great heart. His voice is a magnificent bass, deep, full, sonorous; and, being as melodious as deep, it gives him enviable power over the hearts and sympathies of men.

In personal appearance he is extremely handsome. Large and noble in stature, with a face not only beautiful, but luminous with the reflection of every Christian grace.

He is now engaged in the care of his vast estates, and in his private enterprises, scarcely private, since they are all for the public good. He is sixty-two years of age. A true Christian in every exalted sense of the term, long may he live an honor and a blessing to his race.

Having accepted the invitation of this gentleman, I prepared to leave the South. On making arrangements for a passage from Norfolk to Baltimore, I found that the "Free Papers" which every man of color in a slave state must possess, in order to be able to prove, in case of his being apprehended at any time, that he is not an absconding slave,



were of very little avail. I must needs have a "Pass" as well, or I could not leave. However I obtained this document without much trouble, and as it is a curious specimen of American literature, I will give it. It does not equal, to be sure, the "charming pages" of Washington Irving, but it is certainly quite as illustrative in its way:—



Page 38

“Norfolk, Oct. 1839.

“The bearer of this, William G. Allen, is permitted to leave Norfolk by the Steam Boat Jewess, Capt. Sutton, for Baltimore.

“Signed, J. F. Hunter
“Agent, Baltimore Steam Packet Company.”

This document was also countersigned by one of the justices of the peace. Really, there is something preposterous about these slaveholders. They make all sorts of attempts to drive the free colored people out of their borders; but when a man of this class wishes to go of his own accord, he must that be *permitted!*

I reached Baltimore in safety, but now found that neither “Free Papers” nor “Pass” were of any further use. I desired to take the train to Philadelphia *en route* to New York. I must this time get a white man to testify to my freedom, or further I could not go. Or, worse still, if no such man could be found, I must be detained in Baltimore and lodged in jail! By no means a pleasant prospect. There was no time to be lost. My previous experience had taught me this truth—the more we trust, the more we are likely to find to trust. Acting upon this principle, and putting in practice my studies in physiognomy, I presently found a friend among the crowd; who, being satisfied with my statements and the documents I presented, kindly gave the desired testimony. The ticket seller then recorded my name, age, and personal appearance in his book, and delivered me my ticket. I now had no further trouble, and reached the college (in the State of New York) in safety.

Remaining at this college (Oneida Institute, Whitesboro’) five years, I graduated with some honor and little cost to my patron, Mr. Smith. I quite paid my way by private tuitions: during one vacation I taught a school in Canada.

I cannot leave Oneida Institute without paying the tribute of my heart’s warmest admiration and love to the President thereof—Reverend Beriah Green. America has few such men—men of that true greatness which comes from a combination of wisdom and virtue. Wherever found in that country, they are the “chosen few,” consecrating their energies to the cause of Humanity and Religion—nobly and earnestly seeking to rid their country of its dire disgrace and shame. President Green still lives. He is a profound scholar, an original thinker, and, better and greater than all these, a sincere and devoted Christian. To the strength and vigor of a man, he adds the gentleness and tenderness of a woman. He has never taken an active part in the world of stir and politics; but in the line of his proper profession has immeasurably advanced the cause of human progress. May such men be multiplied in America, and elsewhere, for surely there is need.

Page 39

Out now in the great world of America, my ambition was to secure a professorial chair. That any man having the slightest tinge of color, nay, without tinge of color, with only a drop of African blood in his veins, let his accomplishments be what they may, should aspire to such a position, I soon found was the very madness of madness. But something must be done. I repaired at once to the city of Boston, and entered the law office of E. G. L——, Esq. a distinguished barrister, who had already shown his regard for the colored race by having brought to the bar a colored young man—now practising with much success in Boston. Black men may practice law—at least in Massachusetts. I remained in the office of this gentleman two years, and was just entering my third and last year, when, unsolicited on my part and to my great surprise, I received the appointment of Professor of the Greek Language and Literature in New York Central College—a college of recent date, and situated in the town of M’Grawville, near the centre of the State of New York. This was the first college in America that ever had the moral courage to invite a man of color to occupy a professor’s chair; and, so far as I know, it is also the only one.

The college was founded by a few noble-minded men, whose object was to combat the vulgar American prejudice, which can see no difference between a man and his skin. They sought to illustrate the doctrine of Human Equality, or brotherhood of the races; to elevate the nation’s morals, and give it more exalted views of the aims and objects of Christianity. Such a college, in the midst of corrupt public sentiment, could not fail to meet with the greatest opposition. It was persecuted on all sides, and by all parties, showing how deep-seated and virulent is prejudice against color. The legislature countenanced the college so far as to grant it a charter, and empowered it to confer degrees, but would not, seemingly on no earthly consideration, give it the slightest pecuniary patronage. The debates which took place in the State House at Albany when the bill relating to the college came up for consideration, would, in vulgar flings at “negroes,” cries of “amalgamation,” and such like, have disgraced a very assemblage of pagans. However the college held on its way, and is still doing its work, though its efficiency is of course greatly marred. All the other professors were white; so also were the majority of the students.

* * * * *

I was four years in connexion with this college as professor, and in all probability would have been in M’Grawville still, but for the following circumstances.



Page 40

I bethought me now of marriage, having what might be termed good prospects in the world. Visiting the town of Fulton, County of Oswego, State of New York, about forty miles from New York Central College, on an occasion of public interest, I was made the guest of the Rev. L. K——, a highly esteemed minister of the gospel, and greatly distinguished for his earnest and zealous advocacy of the principles of abolition. He was a white man. This gentleman had a large family of sons and daughters. A feeling of friendship sprung up between one of his daughters and myself on the occasion of this visit, which feeling eventually ripened into emotions of a higher and more interesting character. The father welcomed me: the mother was long since deceased. The parties immediately concerned were satisfied—why should others demur? I knew something of prejudice against color, but I supposed that a sense of dignity, not to say decency, would deter the most bitterly opposed from interference with a matter wholly domestic and private, and which, in its relation to the public, was also wholly insignificant. I reckoned without my host however. The inhabitants of Fulton had received the impression that there was an union in contemplation between the lady and myself; and they determined that it should not take place, certainly not in their town, nor elsewhere if they could prevent it. They stirred the town in every direction, evoking all the elements of hostility, and organizing the same into a deadly mob, to act at convenient opportunity. I was ignorant of the great length to which this feeling had attained; so also were the parties immediately interested in my personal safety. I was therefore greatly surprised when, on the occasion of my last visit to Fulton, and while in company with the lady, both of us visiting at the house of a mutual friend, residing about two miles out of town, a party rushed into our presence in hot haste, bidding me, if I wished to escape with my life, to “fly with all possible speed!” The party who performed this kindly office had scarcely gone, when, on looking out of the window, I beheld a maddened multitude approaching—about six hundred white men, armed with tar, feathers, poles and an empty barrel spiked with shingle nails! In this barrel I was to be put, and rolled from the top to the bottom of a hill near by. They also brought a sleigh, in which the lady was to be taken back to her father’s house. They intended no harm to her.

Knowing the character of an American mob, and also knowing how little they value the life of a man of color, I expected, as I saw the multitude surrounding the house, to die—in fact, prepared for death.



Page 41

Having assembled about the premises, they began to cry out in the most uproarious manner, "Bring him out!" "Kill the Nigger!" "Hang him!" "Tear down the house!" Shouts, groans, maledictions of all sorts and degrees followed. No one who has not witnessed an American mob can have the slightest idea of the scene which presented itself at this point. Had six hundred beasts of the forest been loosed together, in one promiscuous assemblage, they could scarcely have sent up howls and yells and mad noises equal to those made by these infuriated men. There is no exaggeration in this statement. For the sake of humanity, I only wish there was. Nor were the members of the mob confined entirely to the rabble; far from it. Many of its members were also members of a Christian church. The mob occurred on a Sabbath evening, about six o'clock, so that these men absolutely deserted their pews on purpose to enjoy the fun of "hunting the nigger."

There came with this mob a self-constituted committee of gentlemen, lawyers, merchants, and leading men of the town, who, although partaking of the general feeling of prejudice against color, did not wish, for the sake of the reputation of their town, to see bloodshed; besides also many of them, I doubt not, entertained feelings of personal friendship for myself.

This committee divided itself. One half came up to the drawing-room, and advised that the young lady should consent to go home in the sleigh provided, and that I should consent to leave the town. Conceding so much to the mob, they thought my life might be spared. The other half of the committee remained below, to appease the maddened multitude, and deter them from carrying their threats into execution.

We agreed to the propositions of the committee. The young lady was taken home in the sleigh aforesaid, about one third of the mob following on foot, for what purpose I know not. I was then conducted by the committee through the mob, many members of which giving me, as I passed, sundry kicks and cuffs, but doing me no serious bodily harm. I was next taken by the committee to an hotel, where arrangements had been made for my reception. The mob followed, hooting and hallooing, the sight of their victim seeming to revive their hostile feelings. They would have broken into the hotel, had not the proprietor held them back by his threats. He was not a friend of mine, but he had agreed to shelter me, and he was, of course, determined to protect his property.

The committee then secured the use of two sleighs, one of which they placed at the back entrance of the hotel, and the other they caused to be driven about four miles out of the town. Into the first sleigh I was to get when I could find my opportunity, and be driven to the other sleigh, in which I was to be finally conveyed to the town of Syracuse, about twenty-five miles distant. I made several attempts to get into the sleigh at the back entrance of the hotel,

Page 42

but was driven back by the mob every time I made my appearance at the door. Meanwhile the committee furnished the mobocrats with spirits to drink, and cigars to smoke, for all of which I had to pay. Comment upon this extraordinary act of meanness would be entirely out of place. One would have thought that these mobocrats would have been content to have mobbed me free of expense, at least. Not so it seemed however.

But midnight drew on, and of course the multitude grew weary. Presently, seeing my opportunity, I jumped into the sleigh at the back entrance of the hotel, drove rapidly off to the second sleigh, and reached the town of Syracuse early next morning. Some of the mobocrats attempted chase, but soon gave it up.

Had this tumult ended here, I should probably have been in my chair at the college today; and the whole affair, so far as it related only to myself, would have been regarded by me as merely a bit of an episode in my life—of course a most exciting one. But the worst was to come, at least so far as it concerned the lady personally; and the very worst it would be better to say nothing about.

After we had been disposed of in the manner already described, the next step taken by the inhabitants of the town of Fulton was to place the lady under a most degraded surveillance. True, she was to continue in her father's house, but so overpowering had the mob-spirit become, that the mobocrats commanded (and were obeyed!) that no communications should be sent to her or from her, unless they had been previously perused and sanctioned by duly deputed parties. Nor would they permit any persons to call upon her, unless they too had been previously approved.

There was a line of railway between the towns of Fulton and Syracuse. Guards were placed by certain individuals at the various stations on the line, in order to prevent the possible escape of either party, or rather to prevent the possible meeting of the parties, *i.e.*, of the lady and myself. Meanwhile the telegraphic wires and newspapers spread the news throughout the length and breadth of the land; the consequence of all which was, I became so notorious that my life was placed in jeopardy wherever I went. On one occasion particularly I barely escaped with it.

On the day after the occurrence of the mob, and for several days after, the town of Fulton presented a scene of unparalleled excitement. Had the good people witnessed the approach of an invading army, but, by some lucky chance, succeeded in driving it back, they could not have been more extravagant in their demonstrations. Their countenances indicated the oddest possible mixture of consternation and joy. Seriously, if one can be serious over such details, never before did the contemplated marriage of two mortals create such a hubbub.



The inhabitants of Fulton immediately assembled *en masse*, and voted unanimously, in congress especially convened for the purpose, that Mr. and Mrs. P——, school teachers, our friends, at whose house we were being entertained at the time of the mob, “DO GIVE UP THEIR SCHOOL, AND LEAVE THE TOWN FORTHWITH.” For what crime? None, save that of showing us hospitality. Our friends had therefore not only to give up their business at an immense pecuniary sacrifice, but had absolutely to make off with their lives as best they could.

Page 43

During all this time the lady who had been thus rudely treated was true to her noble and heroic nature; but so much outward pressure, and of such an extraordinary character, produced its consequences upon her health. It failed, and it became necessary that she should be released from her thralldom. Once more at liberty she visited, incognito, the town of Syracuse, where I was still tarrying. The mobocrats would not have permitted her to have left Fulton in peace, if they had known whither she was going.

We met again: reviewed the past and discussed the future. As I am not detailing sentiment, but merely stating facts, suffice it to say, that we made up our minds that we would not be defeated by a mob.

But to the future. What was to be done? We came to the conclusion that I could no longer expect to hold my position in M'Grawville. The college had already received a terrible shock by reason of the cry of "amalgamation" which had been raised by the mob. And though the trustees were willing, at heart, to face the storm of prejudice, worldly wisdom, they considered, dictated that they should not incur the odium which they could not avoid bringing upon the college, if they persisted in retaining me longer as one of their professors. The trustees thought it would be better to be cautious, and save the college for the good it might do in the future. Such a union as ours was, in fact, but one of the logical results of the very principles on which the college was founded. I do not profess to sit in judgment, and therefore attempt no comment. They were now evidently anxious that I should resign, though, of course, they did not express so much to me in words.

I also came to the further conclusion that I could no longer, under the circumstances, whatever I might be able to do in future, hold my position in the country. For, however willing I might be to endure all things in my own person, I felt that I ought not to expose to any further danger one who already suffered so much and so heroically for my sake. I knew several of the lady's friends who were bitterly opposed to our union, solely on account of my color, and who were prepared, if the occasion should require it, to go to desperate lengths. They would not have hesitated to have sworn her into the lunatic asylum. I therefore decided not only to resign my professorship in the college, but also to leave the country.

Our plans being now quietly arranged, the lady returned to Fulton, and it was then supposed that all communication between us was for ever broken off. The mob had ordered that it should be so, and doubtless thought it was so. The most mistaken idea they ever entertained. The lady remained for a short time in Fulton, and then retired into the interior of the state of Pennsylvania. I continued to remain in the town of Syracuse.

Soon a favorable opportunity presented itself, and we met in the city of New York, on the 30th March, 1853, and then and there asserted our rights in due and legal form: after which we immediately took the train for Boston.

Page 44

Owing to the great publicity which the newspapers had given to our affairs and the consequent excitement thereon, we found it necessary to use the utmost caution, such as walking apart in the streets, and travelling in the trains as strangers to each other. It would have been fool-hardy to have provoked another mob.

We remained in Boston ten days, quietly visiting among our friends, and then set sail for England. Wishing to get out of the country without farther ado, we were compelled to submit to many sacrifices, pecuniary and otherwise, of which it is not necessary to speak. In England and Ireland, including a short trip to Scotland, we have been ever since, and have constantly received that generous and friendly consideration which, from the reputation of Great Britain and Ireland, we had been led to expect; and for which we are grateful.

To go back for a single moment to New York Central College. On receiving the appointment to the professorial chair, the pro-slavery newspaper press of the country opened a regular assault. The "*Washington Union*" thus wrote:

"What a pity that college could not have found white men in all America to fill its professors' chairs. What a burning shame that the trustees should have been mean enough to rob Mr. L—— of his law student, and the Boston bar of its ebony ornament." I was never at the Boston bar, and therefore could not have been its ebony ornament. The imagination of the editors supplied them with the fact, and that answered their purpose as well.

A reverend doctor of divinity writing in a Cincinnati newspaper, wondered "how a man of sense could enter that amalgamation college. If this professor would go to Liberia and display his eloquence at the bar there; or, if he has any of the grace of God in his heart, enter the pulpit, he would then be doing a becoming work."

From Augusta, Georgia (Slave State), I received the following document, signed by several parties, and containing the picture of a man hanging by the neck, under which was written, "Here hangs the Professor of Greek!"

"Augusta, Geo. Nov. 1850.

"Sir,—We perceive you have been appointed Professor of Greek in New York Central College. Very well. We also perceive that you have occasionally lectured in the North on the 'Probable Destiny of the African Race.' Now, Sir, if you will only have the kindness to come to Augusta, and visit our hemp yard, you may be sure that your destiny will not be *probable*, but certain.

"Signed,

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Of course I did not go to Augusta, Georgia.

Page 45

These assaults and attempts at ridicule served to bring me into general notice. I soon found that, by reason of them, and without merit or effort of my own, I had become known throughout the whole country as “the Colored Professor.” I had a status. The lady being the daughter of a highly respectable minister, she also had a status. To permit therefore the union of these parties would be to bring the principle of amalgamation into respectability. So reasoned those who attempted to reason on behalf, or rather in excuse, of the mob. “We are sorry,” they went on condescendingly to say, “for Professor Allen, for though a man of color, he is nevertheless a gentleman, a Christian and a scholar. But this union must not be; the ‘proprieties of society,’ must not be violated!” Here then was the secret of this extraordinary outbreak. Had we moved in what these good people would have been pleased to term a lower strata of society, they would have let us alone with infinite contempt.

The most lamentable feature of this Fulton mob was the fact, that we could not, if we had sought it, have secured any redress. No court of law in the State would have undertaken to bring to justice the perpetrators of this outrage. But on the contrary, such court would have been inclined to take sides with the mobocrats, and to justify them in the means which they employed wherewith to chastise a colored man who had presumed so grossly to violate the “proprieties of society.”

Before closing I cannot forebear a further word with regard to New York Central College. During the four years I was in connexion with that college as professor, I never experienced the slightest disrespect from trustees, professors or students. All treated me kindly, so kindly indeed that I can truly say that the period of my professorship forms one of the pleasantest remembrances of my life. Terrible as prejudice against color is, my experience has taught me that it is not invincible; though, as it is the offspring of slavery, it will never be fully vanquished until slavery has been abolished.

In illustration of the direct influences of slavery as they affect the free man of color, I again go back for a single moment. Having spent three years at Oneida Institute, I proposed to myself a visit to Virginia, to look once more into the faces of beloved parents, relatives and friends, to walk again upon the strand at Fortress Monroe, where I had so often in childhood beheld the sunbeams play upon the coves and inlets, and seen the surf beat upon the rocks. I, at first, had some difficulty in getting a passage to Virginia, most of the masters of the New York vessels to whom I applied seeming to be of a friendly nature, and not willing to expose me to the slave laws of Virginia. I, however, succeeded at last—the captain of a Philadelphia vessel consenting to land me at the fortress of Monroe. I remained in the home of my childhood and youth seven days in peace; but

Page 46

on the morning of the eighth day, while walking on the strand, I was rudely assaulted by a person who had known me from my infancy. I had always supposed him to be a gentleman, and was therefore greatly surprised and shocked. But slavery is relentless; it ruins both the morals and the manners. This individual, after belaboring me in a savage manner, gave me distinctly to understand that unless I left Virginia speedily, I might find myself in trouble. He afterwards remarked, as I understood, to his friends that "this Allen has been off to an abolition college and returned among us. Let us look out for him."

I took the hint; and on the next morning secured the services of a party who rowed me off in a small canoe to a vessel lying in the harbor, where I bargained with the captain, who, for a handsome sum, consented to take me quietly out of the state. I left Virginia at once, and have never returned to it since, though I would gladly have done so, as relatives and friends near and dear to me have since died, by the side of whose death beds I desired to stand. In conclusion I have only to say that were I in the United States of America to-morrow, it would be more than my life or liberty would be worth to put foot upon the soil of my native state. Is this freedom? If it be, then give me slavery indeed.

A word or two with regard to my course in this country. Hitherto my income has been derived solely from lectures, tuitions, and such other odds and ends of work in my line as my hands could find to do. I desire a more permanent settlement for myself and family, and hope that the sale of this little narrative may help to create means to that end.

I send it forth therefore, desiring that it may stand upon its own merits, at the same time earnestly hoping that it may interest all into whose hands it may fall.

From LORD SHAFTESBURY.

"Lord Shaftesbury sympathizes most heartily with Professor Allen and sincerely wishes him success in his undertaking. It will give Lord Shaftesbury great pleasure to assist, in any way that he can, a gentleman of the colored race, who is a hundred times wiser and better than his white oppressors.

"LONDON, *July, 1854.*"

From Rev. I. G. Abeltshauser, LL.D. Trinity College,
Dublin, and others;—

"DUBLIN, 14th April, 1856.



“The undersigned having made due enquiry from the most trustworthy sources relative to the character and attainments of Professor William G. Allen, have much pleasure in recommending him as a gentleman of high attainments and honorable character.

I. G. ABELTSHAUSER, Clk. LL.D. Trin. Col. Dub.

WM. URWICK, D. D. 40, Rathmines Road, Dublin.

JAMES HAUGHTON, 35 Eccles-street, Dublin.

RICHARD ALLEN, Sackville-street, Dublin.

JONATHAN PIM, 22, William-street, Dublin.

JOHN EVANS, M. D. 38, Richmond-street, Dublin.

R. D. WEBB, 176, Great Brunswick-street, Dublin.

JOHN R. WIGHAM, 36, Capel-street, Dublin.”



Page 47

From RICHARD D. WEBB, Esq. of Dublin.

“DUBLIN, 3rd November, 1858.

“DEAR MR. ALLEN,

“Your name was familiar to me long before I knew you personally. I had often heard of ‘Professor W. G. Allen,’ who, while connected with the Central College, in the State of New York, and respected there as a man and a teacher, was obliged to leave his native country for the offence of marrying a white lady of respectable family and great excellence of character, who is now much liked and esteemed by her numerous friends in this city. I became acquainted with you soon after your arrival in London; and particularly during your residence in Ireland I have had nearly as much opportunity of knowing you as any of your acquaintances here. I can truly say, that you have earned the hearty respect of all who know you (of whom I have any knowledge), by the industry, energy, and self-respect you have evinced in the course of a long and difficult battle with those adverse circumstances, with which a comparatively unknown and friendless stranger has to contend, in his efforts to effect a settlement in a strange country. Your conduct has been industrious, honorable and in every way deserving of esteem and sympathy. Some time since, in the columns of the ‘Anti-Slavery Advocate,’ without hint or solicitation on your part, I took the liberty to speak of your course as I do now; for amongst all the colored Americans with whom my interest in the Anti-Slavery cause has made me acquainted—and many of whom are my own personal friends—I have known none more deserving of respect and confidence than yourself.

“Yours truly,
“RICHARD D. WEBB.”

* * * * *

Having, in my avocation as lecturer on “The African Race” and “America and the Americans,” visited nearly the whole of Ireland, I respectfully submit the following letters and notices, the letters being from gentlemen who kindly presided at the meetings:—

From the Rev. DOCTOR FITZGERALD, Archdeacon of Kildare,
(now Lord Bishop of Cork).

“Professor Allen delivered some lectures on the African Race, in Kingstown, which seemed to have given general satisfaction. I regret that I was unable to attend more than one, but I can truly say that it bore evidence of a highly cultivated mind, and imparted valuable information in a pleasing form. From what I have seen and heard of Professor Allen, I should be glad to think that any testimony of mine could be of service to him.



“W. FITZGERALD, Archdeacon of Kildare,
(Now Lord Bishop of Cork.)

“Dublin, Nov. 1856”

From Rev. DOCTOR URWICK, Dublin.

“I have known Professor Allen since his first coming to Ireland, and believe him to be a gentleman of high character and attainments. His lecturings, more than one of which I have heard, display much power, and by the amount of information they contain, united with a clear and often eloquent style, and earnest manner, cannot fail, at once, to interest and instruct the audience. I cordially commend him to the confidence and kind attention of my friends.



Page 48

“W. URWICK.

“Dublin, Nov. 30, 1857.”

From CORK—see “Constitution,” “Examiner” and
“Reporter,” March 1858.

“Cork, Feb. 28, 1858.

“To WILLIAM G. ALLEN, Esq. late Professor of Greek in
New York Central College.

“DEAR SIR—We, the undersigned, having heard your lectures on ‘America’ and ‘Africa,’
and derived therefrom much instruction as well as gratification, do, on our own part and
that of many of our fellow citizens who are anxious to hear you, respectfully request that
you will give, at least, two lectures more upon these interesting subjects.

“(Signed)

HENRY MARTIN, Congregational Minister.

R. W. FORREST (Free Church).

RICHD. CORBETT, M. D.

J. D. CARNEGIE.

HENRY UNKLES.

GEORGE BAKER.

RICHARD DOWDEN, (Rd.)

WILLIAM MAGILL, (Scots’ Church).

JOSEPH R. GREENE, Professor, Queen’s Coll.

THOMAS JENNINGS.

N. JACKSON, C. E.

JOSEPH COLBECK.”

From “Belfast News-letter,” Dec. 10, 1858.

“REV. DOCTOR COOKE occupied the chair. Professor Allen then delivered a lecture
of great ability and interest. Dr. Cooke said he had listened to a remarkable oration. He
was glad he had heard it. He thanked Professor Allen, in the name of the meeting, for
his truly valuable and instructive lecture.”

From the DEAN OF WATERFORD.

“Professor W. G. Allen, an American gentleman of color, having visited Waterford,
delivered two lectures here, one on ‘America,’ and the other on ‘Africa and the African
Races.’ On each occasion I had the pleasure to occupy the chair at the meetings held
to hear Mr. Allen’s lectures, which proved most interesting and instructive. The



Professor is himself a witness that there is nothing in color or race to hinder a man from being distinguished for eloquence, good taste, and religious feeling.

“I have seldom heard public addresses which have interested me more, and I have no doubt that Mr. Allen’s lectures will prove useful, wherever they are delivered, in creating an interest on behalf of our fellow men, who have suffered so great wrongs from professing Christians, though happily no longer at the hands of British subjects.

“EDW. N. HOARE,
Dean of Waterford.

“Deanery, Waterford, Jan. 16, 1858.”

From Rev. DOCTOR BROWNE, Principal of Kilkenny College.

“Kilkenny College, Feb. 3, 1858.

“I have attended Professor Allen’s lectures on ‘America and the Americans,’ and on the ‘African Races,’ and have received much pleasure as well as information from the talent and power with which he has handled the subjects of which he treated.

“His knowledge, his ardent and impressive manner, and clear melodious voice, render him a most pleasing as well as instructive lecturer.

“JOHN BROWNE, CIk. LL.D.”