

Afric-American Picture Gallery.¹

BY ETHIOP.²

¹ Text prepared by Leif Eckstrom and Britt Rusert. “Afric-American Picture Gallery” was a seven-part, serial sketch published in 1859 over nine months of the *Anglo-African Magazine*’s fifteen-month run. Minor typographic and grammatical inconsistencies have been corrected silently for the sake of readability; a few additional edits and spelling corrections appear in brackets. Reading the Picture Gallery in an isolated, continuous, word-processed format represents a dramatic excision of innumerable details that do not transcribe to the word-processed page—from the lively context of the articles printed alongside the Picture Gallery to the experience of reading this text as a monthly serial, printed in the magazine’s double-column format. For this reason, we encourage readers to consult the digital page images provided on the *JTO: EEAP* website: they are a rich resource that complicate and further enliven Wilson’s Picture Gallery. We gratefully acknowledge EBSCO for providing the *Anglo-African* page images that were used in creating this document and which are accessible through the *JTO: EAAP* website. EBSCO also provided the XML for the TEI-encoding of the document, which was done by Elizabeth Hopwood. We also gratefully acknowledge Molly O’Hagan Hardy for her work on the digitization of the Picture Gallery, as well as Paul Erickson, Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, Eric Gardner, Duncan Faherty, Nicole Aljoe, Lois Brown, John Ernest, P. Gabrielle Foreman, James Casey, Radiclani Clytus, and Joycelyn Moody for their support and guidance with this project.

² “Ethiop” was the pen name of black activist, educator and Brooklynite, William J. Wilson. Wilson contributed to other African American periodicals under this name.

I always had a *penchant* for pictures. From a chit of a boy till now, my love for beautiful, or quaint old pictures has been unquenched.

If an ever abiding love for any branch of *Art* is indicative of a fitness to pursue it, then I should have been a painter. Even when so small as to be almost imperceptible, I used to climb up, by the aid of a stool, to my mother’s mantle piece, take down the old family almanac and study its pictures with a greater relish than ever a fat alderman partook of a good dinner including a bountiful supply of the choicest wines. All this however, never made me a painter. Fate marked out a rougher, sterner destiny for me. But the habit of rambling in search of, and hunting up curious, old, or rare and beautiful pictures, is as strong as ever.

It was in one of these rambles, that I stumbled over the Afric-American Picture Gallery, which has since become one of my dearest retreats wherein to spend many an otherwise weary hour, with profit and pleasure[.]

The collection is quite numerous, having been sought from every quarter of the American continent, and some from abroad; and though as a *Gallery of Art*, if not highly meritorious, still from its wide range of subjects and the ingenuity with which many of them are presented, it must, to the lover and curious in such matters, afford much for amusement, and to the careful observer and the thinker much that is valuable and interesting.

In style and excellence these pictures vary according to the fancy or skill of the artist. Some are finely executed, while others are mere rough sketches. Some are in oil, some in water colors, and India Ink shadings, a few statues, statuettes, and a few Crayons and Pencillings possessing a high degree of merit; others are mere charcoal sketches and of little worth beyond the subjects they portray.

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But without pursuing this general outline further, let the reader, with me enter into this almost unknown Gallery. Well, here we are, and looking about us.

The first thing noticeable, is the unstudied arrangement of these pictures. They seem rather to have been put up out of the way, many of them, than hung for any effect.

The walls are spacious, and contain ample room for more, and, in many instances, better paintings; and many niches yet vacant for busts and statues; and just here, let me make an humble petition in behalf of this our newly discovered Gallery.—It is that generous artists, will, at their convenience, have the goodness to paint an occasional picture, or chisel a statue or bust, and we will be sure to assign it to its appropriate place. But let us take a survey, and speak only of what strikes us most forcibly in our present mood.

PICTURE NUMBER 1.—THE SLAVE SHIP.

This picture hangs near the entrance, on the south side of the Gallery, and in rather an unfavorable light.

The view is of course Jamestown harbor, Virginia, in 1609, and has all the wild surroundings of that portion of our country at that period; the artist having been faithful even to every shrub, crag and nook. Off in the mooring lays the *slave ship*, Dutch-modeled and ugly, even hideous to look upon, as a slave-ship ought to be. On the shore is a group of emaciated *Africans*, heavily manacled, the first slaves that ever trod the American continent; while in the fierce and angry waters of the bay, which seem to meet the black and dismal and storm-clad sky, is seen a small boat containing another lot of these human beings, just nearing the shore.

If the artist's general conception of this picture maybe regarded a success, in its details, beyond all question, this is its crowning point. The small boat struck by, and contending with a

huge breaker, is so near the shore that you can behold, and startle as you behold, the emaciated and death-like faces of the unfortunate victims, and the hideous countenances of their captors; and high and above all, perched upon the stern, with foot, tail and horns, and the chief insignias of his office, is his Satanic Majesty, gloating over the whole scene.

What is more truthful than that the devil is ever the firm friend and companion of the slave ship?

PICTURE NUMBER 2.—THE FIRST AND THE LAST COLORED EDITOR.

This small, but neat picture hangs on the north side of the gallery; and though simple in its details, is so well executed that it has much attracted me.

The Last Colored Editor,³ quite a young man, with a finely formed head and ample brow—thoughtful, earnest, resolute—sits in chair editorial, with the first number of the Freedom's Journal, the first journal ever edited by, and devoted to the cause of the colored man in America, held in one hand and outspread before him, while the other, as though expressive of his resolve, is firmly clenched.

Surrounding him are piles of all the journals edited by colored men from the commencement up till the present, among which the Freedom's Journal, Colored American, People's Press, North Star, and Frederick Douglas[s]'s paper⁴ are the more

³ "The Last Colored Editor" refers to Thomas Hamilton, bookseller, printer, and editor of the *Anglo-African Magazine*.

⁴ All early African American newspapers. *Freedom's Journal* (1827-29); *Colored American* (1836-42); two of Frederick Douglass's newspapers, *North Star* (1847-51) and its successor, *Frederick Douglass's Paper* (1851-60); *People's Press* was Thomas Hamilton's short-lived weekly (1841).

prominent. The First Editor⁵ is represented as a venerable old man, with whitened locks and placid face, leaning on a staff, and unperceived by the Last Editor, is looking intently over his shoulder on the outspread journal.

It is his own first editorial, and the first ever penned and published by a colored man in America. The scene is the linking together of our once scarcely hopeful past with the now bright present.

PICTURE NO. 3—THE FIRST MARTYR OF THE REVOLUTION.

This is a head of Attucks. It may not be generally known, and it may not be particularly desirable that the public should know, that the First Martyr of the American Revolution was a colored man; that the first bosom that was bared to the blast of war was black; the first blood that drenched the path-way which led up to American liberty, was from the veins of a colored man.⁶

And yet such is the fact; and the artist has done a service in the execution of this head. It hangs at the north east end of the Gallery, and is a fine likeness of a bold, vigorous man,—just such, as would be likely to head a revolution to throw off

⁵ The “First Editor” refers to Samuel Cornish, co-founder and editor, with John B. Russwurm, of *Freedom’s Journal*. *Freedom’s Journal* (1827-29) was the first black newspaper published in the United States.

⁶ Crispus Attucks had been recently commemorated in William Cooper Nell’s *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution* (1855), a text widely read and cited by black intellectuals in the 1850s. In 1858, Nell and Lewis Hayden organized a commemorative festival that recognized and memorialized Attucks’s role in the Boston massacre; he also collaborated with other black activists to have a “Crispus Attucks Day” designated in Boston.

oppression. May the name of Attucks and the facts connected therewith never perish.

PICTURE NO. 4. SUNSET IN ABBEOKUTA.

This is a fine painting. The landscape is rich, varied, beautiful. The sky has all the warmth of hue and softness of tint, and all that gorgeousness (changing seemingly with every instant,) for which an African sky is so much noted. No rainbow with us, in its full splendor, is so variegated or so wide in its range of colors.

The last touches of the artist’s pencil has made the glow of the coming evening to softly spread itself over here and there a dusky inhabitant reclining upon the banks of an unrippled lake. The effect is fine, and the whole scene is so charming that one could almost wish to be there.

PICTURES 5 AND 6.—THE UNDER GROUND RAILROAD.

In these two pictures the artist is certainly quite up to our idea. They are of large size and represent both the Southern and Northern portions of that mysterious road. They hang beside each other on the south side of the Gallery and are marked A and B. I would suggest, that B be changed over to the north wall, as a more appropriate place. Picture A, or the south view represents a dark road leading through a darker forest, along which is seen merely some twenty pairs of fine stalwart human feet and leg—male and female—of all sizes, hurrying northward. Every muscle and limb indicates firmness and resolution.

The scene is night-time, and far distant through the forest is faintly seen the north star—small but bright and unfailing, and to the fugitive, unerring.

Picture B on the north view consists of some twenty bold heads and fine robust faces, each of which is lit up with a joy no pen can portray, and nothing but the pencil of the master could have reached. The exclamation of each must be ‘we have found it !!!’

In the foreground is a lake and the back ground is a Canadian forest, through which here and there you can perceive a small rustic cottage. Both of these pictures sustain well that air of mystery which envelopes the Under Ground Rail Road.

In the first view we have but the feet and legs; indicating the mysterious manner in which those feet and legs move bodies towards freedom, or pass along that undefined and undefinable Road that leads to liberty.

There is another thought. The head, the recognized seat of the mind, is useless to the slave, or, if of service to him, this thinking apparatus is not his own; it belongs to his owner; hence he makes use of his feet and legs, or the physical machinery; while in the second view, at the northern end of this undefinable Road, where liberty is, the head or mental part is presented to view. The slave,—the chattel,—the thing is a *man*.

(To be Continued.)

**Afric/American Picture Gallery. —
Second Paper.**

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BY ETHIOP.
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PICTURE VII.—TOUISSANT L’OVERTURE.⁷

Pictures are teachings by example. From them we often derive our best lessons. A picture of a once beloved mother, an almost forgotten grandfather whose image perhaps we bear, or a long lost child, once the centre of our affections; such a picture occasionally taken down from its hiding-place, and looked at, calls up associations and emotions, and produces troops of thought that paint the memory afresh with hues the most beautiful, touching, beneficial and lasting. A picture of a great man with whose acts we are familiar, calls up the whole history of his times. Our minds thus become reimpresed with the events and we arrive at the philosophy of them.

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A picture of Washington recalls to mind the American Revolution, and the early history of the Republic. A picture of

⁷ Toussaint L’Ouverture, the former slave turned military leader who led the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), the first and only slave revolt to result in the founding of a black state in the Western hemisphere. Toussaint also appears as “Touissaint” in a series on Haiti by J. Theodore Holly that appeared in the *Anglo-African*. See “Thoughts on Hayti,” *Anglo-African Magazine*, 186.

Thomas Jefferson brings before the mind in all its scope and strength that inimitable document, the Declaration of Independence; and in addition, carries us forward to the times, when its broad and eternal principles, will be fully recognised by, and applied to the entire American people. I had these conclusions forced upon me by looking not upon either the picture of Washington or Jefferson in the gallery. Far from it; but by a most beautiful portrait of one of the greatest men the world ever saw—TOUISSANT L'OUVERTURE. This painting hangs in the south east corner of the Gallery in a favourable position and in good light as it ought; as it portrays the features of one of God's and Earth's noblemen long since retired.

Far be it from me to venture to a description of either the picture or the man. I have no pencil and no pen with which I can do it. Some future historian in other times, will yet write the name of Touissant L' Overture higher and in purer light than that of any man that has lived up to to-day. But the special point to which I wish to call attention, and upon which I may venture a remark, is the long and interesting train of historical facts in relation to Hayti, that gem of the sea, this portrait associates in the mind of the intelligent beholder. To say nothing of him who led the breathings of this people after liberty; the breaking in pieces the yoke that galled them their heroic struggles, the routing finally and utterly from the soil their oppressors; their almost superhuman efforts thereafter, to rise from the low state in which the degradation of slavery and chains had placed them and their final triumph over every obstacle; in fine the whole history from first to last of this Island and this people is so vividly brought before the mind, by merely this likeness of the inimitable Touissant L'Overture, that it is reimpresed with the extraordinary, *useful and touching lesson it teaches.*

PICTURE VIII.—SOLOUQUE⁸ AND HIS COURT.

If any thing else was needed to carry the mind over the field of Haytian events, and complete our history; or in leading us for the first time to study that history, this additional picture ought to be sufficient. It is of largest size, consisting of portraits of the sable Emperor and the magnates that move round his Imperial person; and hangs beside that of L'Overture. The various descriptions given me of these persons lead me to believe, that these likenesses, unlike many that have been gotten up for the *American prejudice Market*, are genuine and up to the originals. That of the Emperor's is superior as he is known to be a superior looking man.

PICTURE IX.—MOUNT VERNON.

Our artist must have taken time by the forelock in the execution of this picture; as MOUNT VERNON has become of late the great popular theme of the American people. Mount Vernon just now enters into everything. It has something to do with every spring of the machinery of American society; social, political, and religious. It is Mount Vernon in the pulpit, Mount Vernon on the rostrum, Mount Vernon from the Press, Mount Vernon from every lip.

The boys in the streets busily cry out Mount Vernon; the fashionable young belle simpers Mount Vernon.

Mount Vernon exclaims the breast-laden patriot; Mount Vernon echoes the good old ladies, Mount Vernon is piped,

⁸ Faustin Soulouque ruled Haiti from 1847 to 1859. In 1849, he declared absolute control of the country and named himself "Emperor Faustin I." He was overthrown by a coup in 1859. In J. Theodore Holly's "Thoughts on Hayti," Soulouque is referred to as the "Louis Napoleon of Hayti." See *Anglo-African Magazine*, 220.

Mount Vernon is harped; Mount Vernon is danced; Mount Vernon is sung. Even men walk by the aid of Mount Vernon canes, manufactured from some of its decaying relics. And what is Mount Vernon?

MOUNT VERNON as the readers must know is a spot of earth somewhere in Virginia, and once the Home of the Father of his Country. How careful ought we to be, then, in word or deed about Mount Vernon.

I must plead in excuse, therefore, that in the conception of this picture, the Artist has simply failed; if not in faithfulness to the original, certainly in gratifying the popular American feeling. The Picture hangs on the south side of the Gallery, and in excellent light.

It is of largest size, exhibiting the grounds, the mansion, out-house, slave huts and all; once planned, laid out, and erected with so much care by *Washington*; but now alas, all in a state of dilapidation and decay. Decay is written by the Artist's pencil more legibly than in letters, on everything—On the house top, on the door sill is written decay. On the chimney, on the gables, on the eaves, is written decay. The consuming fingers of decay and dilapidation mark each and every out house.—Every old slave hut, like so many spectres shadows forth decay.—Decay stands staring in the gate-ways, staring in the porches, staring in the cellars.—The very wind which bends the here and there scattering tree-tops, (land marks of the past) seem to creak through the many visible crevices of the Old Mansion and sigh decay, decay ! decay ! !

I never saw Mount Vernon; and as I gaze upon this Picture I ask myself is it true? Is this the home of the *Father of his Country*? Is it, that, every thing *Washington* possessed should so perish? Or, so perish the all, that we should have left to us, but his name; and yet with a tendency to forget names however great, I am at a loss to know how we shall preserve even the name of *Washington* many years longer.

But there is another feature in this Picture besides the stern solemn passing away, that I desire to direct attention to. The Artist has located, and I suppose correctly enough, on the banks, where sluggishly glides the Potomac's waters, the *Tomb of Washington*.

The first thing that here arrests the eye is the recently dug up coffin of *Washington*; just behind which stands the ghost of his faithful old slave and body servant; while in front, a living slave of to-day stands, with the bones of *Washington* gathered up in his arms, and labelled 'For Sale' 'Price \$200,000; this negro included.' 'Money wanted.'—A number of other slaves, men, women, and children, are placed in a row along the bank just beyond, bearing about the neck of each the following inscription: *These negroes for sale. Money wanted.'*

Proceeding from the Old Mansion to the *Tomb*, are two elderly, portly, aristocratic looking gentlemen, bearing unmistakable evidences of being the present proprietors of the Mount Vernon estate, and celebrated relatives of the great Virginian, and Father of his Country; and a noted son of Massachusetts. These gentlemen are followed towards the tomb by a few pious looking old ladies. [6]

Such is but a faint description of this picture of Mount Vernon; and as obscurely as it is hung in our midst, *Edward Everett* the distinguished limner of *Washington* should see it, and if any, point out its defects.

Our Gallery begins to draw. Numerous have been the inquiries about it, and two individuals who after sundry searchings and prying have found out our *secret*.—Our pleasant hiding-place, where we have so often and so long shut up ourselves from the blast and chill of the world, is no longer our own. The luxury of solitude is even gone, gone forever !

Just as I had finished the sketch of the last picture, (luckily for me) and pointed my pencil for another, the little brown-faced boy in attendance, bowed in, to my great surprise, a

very respectable appearing gentleman—a little seedy, though very genteel with all notwithstanding—and not Anglo-African, but Anglo-Saxon, or Anglo-American or something of that sort; botheration, I never could get the hang of these Angles! but no matter, he was genteel in manner and intellectual in appearance.

‘I read your Picture Sketches in the last number of the Anglo-African Magazine, and have sought out your Gallery,’ said he. ‘Well, what do you think of it?’ said I. ‘Your Gallery? well, I must examine it, but your Magazine !!’ ‘Magazine,’ rejoined I, ‘yes, that is the question.’ ‘Your magazine,’ said he (not regarding the interruption), ‘is uncalled for.’ I started up. ‘I am a well-known friend to your race.’ I started a little more up-right, and said, ‘my dear sir, if you mean Anglo-Africans, well; but do not say “your race.”’ [H]ere I brought my fist down on the table, added—‘there is but one *race of men on the face of the earth, sir!!!*’ Our visitor colored a little. ‘I was about to remark,’ he said, ‘that if your men had capacity they might write for our anti-slavery journals and other ably conducted magazines in the country, such as Harpers’ or the Atlantic Monthly. It would be more creditable. You don’t want a separate magazine and pen up your thoughts there.’ ‘The “Anglo-African” is not such as you designate it,’ said I, ‘it is simply headed by colored men, but excludes no man on account of his color from its pages, and it were unfortunate,’ I said this with emphasis, ‘that since colored men are the oppressed, it were unfortunate that every *anti-slavery* journal in the country is not edited by colored men.’ This was a little too sharp, and our new friend colored more deeply than before. ‘What do you think of that statue of Ira Aldridge,⁹ just over on the other

⁹ Ira Aldridge, the African American actor and playwright. He emigrated to England in the 1820s, where he became a popular stage actor, especially well known for his performances as Othello and in other Shakespearean roles. In the 1850s and 1860s, Aldridge lived, travelled and performed across Continental Europe.

side of the Gallery, there?’ said I, as anxious to turn the conversation as he was. He examined it a few moments and said, ‘It is quite a clever attempt for—’ he was about to add something more, but suddenly turning asked who modelled it. ‘All I know,’ said I, ‘is, Mr. Aldridge went from this country to Europe when quite a young man, took to the stage, his color being no bar to eminence there, and step by step he has ascended until now he stands on the very highest round of the actor’s ladder. He stands to day, as an actor, the most renowned in the world. The statue before us I believe was modelled in Europe.’ Our visitor hastily glanced at it again, and pronounced it excellent, adding a few criticisms about its breadth of forehead and a few doubts about its want of faithfulness to the original, he passed around the Gallery. I sat down again to make a sketch of this plaster statue of Aldridge, the world-renowned actor (by the way, an excellent model of him as Othello), when our little brown-faced boy bowed his head in the doorway, and announced this time a lady—a colored lady. I laid down my pencil, and though much confused, tried my hand at politeness. The lady, plainly, but neatly attired and rather stiff, was all politeness, but it was of that kind that first chills, and then freezes you. Eye-glass up, and with sarcastic smile, she hurriedly scanned several of the pictures. Her air was a dissatisfied one in the outset; she had come to find fault and quarrel with our poor Gallery from the first. I felt this, and determined on revenge. ‘What nonsense is all this!’ she exclaimed, and proceeded to criticise quite freely. I caught up my pencil, and wrote: ‘An old maid; a little dimmed in sight; somewhat faded, but a few good traces of beauty yet left: face a little too sharp, and eye too restless and a little prudish with all: quite ready in speech, but rather too second-hand in opinion.’ I stopped. A kind of nervous feeling came over me, and I began to fumble for my knife, to scratch the words *old, dimmed*, and all the other unpleasant adjectives I had thrown into my sentences, for in truth she was not old, though I learned afterwards she was a

maid. My lady friend perceiving my embarrassed manner, laid it to her own superciliousness, and her eye dilated at the supposed effect and proceeded freely with her criticisms. My old revenge came back upon me: 'Madam, or mam,' said I at last, 'these pictures, as a whole, make no claim to the high artistic merit you look for in them, though I think some of them rather clever as works of *art*; but they serve as simple reminders of what the people of color were, now are, and will yet be. What they have gone through, are going through, and have yet to go through.' This last speech of mine had the desired effect. With glass still to her eye, she passed on in her strictures, and on, too, in the Gallery. I adjusted myself again to make the sketch of *Aldridge*, and taking position, looked up for the purpose. Lo, and behold! my visitors were both gone. I was alone. My paper for my intended sketch was scribbled out, and my pencil whittled away. Bothered and puzzled, I snatched up my hat and started for the door, bidding the boy at the same time to bar it against all further intruders, I rushed into the street.

Afric/American Picture Gallery. —
Third Paper.

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BY ETHIOP.
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PICTURE NO. X.—A NEW PICTURE.

Our gallery Boy who barred its doors so firmly against intruders, has just entered the Gallery with his own likeness, and desires that it may be hung up; and, for more reasons than one he shall be gratified. The picture comes to us in mien pleasant, smiling, and as fresh as nature itself. [8]

This boy *Thomas Onward* (I call him *Tom* for shortness,) though he has seen all of life—yea more, is not an *Old Tom* by any means; nor an *Uncle Tom*, nor a *Saintly Tom*, nor even what is commonly deemed a good Tom; but a shrewd little rogue, a real live *Young Tom*, up to all conceivable mischief and equal to all emergencies. He is a perfect model of a little fellow in his way, and a fair representative of his class. Sound in limb, symmetrical in form and robust in health, jovial, frank, easy mannered and handsome—ininitely so compared with even the likeness I hold, one would scarcely conclude that this boy has come down to us through nearly three hundred years of hard trial.

And yet it is true. Such is his story. He was almost whipped into existence, whipped into childhood, whipped up to boyhood. He has been whipped up to manhood, whipped down to old age, whipped out of existence. He was toiled into life; he

has been toiled through life; toiled out of life. He has been robbed of his toil, robbed of his body, robbed of all but his soul.

He has been hated for what he was, hated for what he was not, and hated for what he ought to have been. He has been dreaded because of his ignorance, and dreaded because of his knowledge, dreaded for his weakness, dreaded for his strength.

Noble, innocent boy ! hadst thou been able to remember a tithe of the hard things done to thee; or hadst thou known a tithe of the hard things said of thee; or of the hard feelings entertained towards thee, it would be difficult to conjecture the result. But out of all these mountains of dust and ashes without one bit of sackcloth upon thee, hast thou come forth fresh, smiling and free. *Tom, Tom !!!* Who shall write a fitting apostrophe to thee and thy rising fortunes.

What sorry figures do the hard, grave, iron, half savage and half barbarous faces of Washington and Jefferson, of Clay, Webster and Calhoun, present beside the fine expressive likeness of this rising little fellow. The American Nation, if it can, may try its hardened hand yet a few centuries longer upon our live little Tom; but it will hardly mould him to their liking. Like gold ore he will lose but the alloy and become brighter and brighter in the oft passing through the furnace of their oppression.

PICTURE NO. XI.—THE BLACK FOREST.

Two days after I had hung up the picture of the Gallery boy Tom, I sat examining another marked the *Black Forest*, which from its grand and beautiful scenery, dark back ground shadows and the air of profound mystery which seemed to pervade it, so attracted me that I intended to make a sketch, but my mind turned towards the boy and my eyes towards the portrait, and I sat gazing upon its beauty, and meditating upon its superior excellence as a *Work of Art*, and the probable whereabouts of the

unknown Artist, and also upon the destiny of the Boy himself, when his shrill, merry, musical voice rung out: ‘a letter sir.’

Taking it from his hand, I instantly broke the seal, and by a single glance discovered it was from an unknown source, and on further perusal that it was from the *Black Forest*; a place and name then wholly unknown to me, except as the landscape painting just alluded to in the gallery. The purpose of the letter was an invitation to visit this inhabited or uninhabited part of the globe. Let me give the reader one paragraph of this curious epistle. It ran thus: ‘*Come over to the Black Forest and examine some of the Pictures and other curiosities there. Two days journey by stage and by foot for a man, and none others are asked !*’ As it is no part of my purpose to disclose the precise locality of the Black Forest, nor fully the manner of people dwelling there, nor yet wholly their doings, I shall reveal no more of the contents of this letter than to say it pointed out the route so minutely that no careful observer could mistake it; while without such a description, the keenest mind [9] could not by any process penetrate even the recesses of the Black Forest, much less the precise spot in question. ‘*Come over to the Black Forest and examine some of the Pictures and other curiosities there. Two days journey by stage and by foot for a man, and none others are asked !*’

This paragraph I read over a dozen times ere I laid down the letter, and then all my old love of adventure, of ramble and of picture hunting came back upon me.

Filled now with new thoughts and new projects, I repaired to my lodgings, wrote a few hasty lines to a friend, and retired for the night. But the sentences ‘*Come over to the Black Forest. Examine some pictures and other curiosities. Two days journey by stage and by foot for a man. None others are asked,*’ had fastened themselves in my mind and insisted so pertinaciously in remaining there, that it was with unusual effort sleep could take entire possession of me.

Early next morning I commenced preparations for my journey, and my arrangements completed, I started on what to many might have seemed [a] not only hazardous but profitless undertaking. But to him who bears perseverance about with him in his breast and determination in his face, and holds communion with all things around him, nothing is hazardous, nothing profitless.

PICTURE NO. XII—TWO PORTRAITS THAT OUGHT TO BE HUNG UP.

The forepart of my journey contained little of interest if I except the appearance and movements of two travellers whose portraits ought to be hung up in our Gallery for the benefit of both Afric and Anglo American.

One by one the stage emptied its passengers till these two individuals and myself only were left. Let me give a rough pencilling of each. One of them, and by far the most attractive of the pair, was a lean, sallow-faced, lantern-jawed, hyena-looking little man, standing about four and a half feet in his boots, with a long, narrow, retreating forehead, heavy brow and small piercing black eyes and long black hair. His nervous excitability rose and fell with every jolt of the stage coach, and with every whiff of the wind.

The other was an animal of yet a meaner cast. Though not a greyhound, nor a blood, still a kind of hound, a two legged one of a genuine American stock.

He was large in frame and bloated in flesh. His hands resembled a pair of oyster rakes, and his feet shovels, such as are used by ditchers. Upon his large bullet head, which was closely cropped of its coarse bristly hair, jauntingly sat a low slouched hat, from beneath which his blood-shot eyes, when they dared to look directly at you, seemed truly terrible. His coarse, vulgar mouth contained a quid of tobacco nearly as large as your fist—

genuine Virginian—the juice of which he squirted freely in all directions. His clothes were loose and slovenly, and his linen dirty. From his trousers' pocket obtruded a pair of shackles, from his vest a revolver, and from his inner shirt a dagger.

Reader, here surely was a pair of portraits for you. I would have given half of all I ever possessed to have had these two rare specimens of Anglo humanity for our *Afric-American Gallery*. I was certainly in a menagerie.

They eyed me and I eyed them. Incidentally I learned that they were a *Slave Holder* and a *Slave Catcher* in search of runaways, and mistook me for one. I prepared myself accordingly, and should have made summary work with them, had a hand to hand encounter taken place, just such as fugitives should make in a like case.

To assure themselves that their suspicions were correct, they struck up a conversation in good Old Virginia style, and I, willing to enliven or drive away I cared not which, the dull hours of the stage coach, readily joined in. [10]

They were not long in discovering not only their mistake but were soon routed. White men generally, and slave holders in particular, dislike nothing so much as to stumble over and wake up black men capable of a single thought, much less intellectually equal, and none laugh more heartily than common sense black men over the extreme folly of the continually assumed or imagined mental superiority of white men over them.

In this instance matters began to look quite serious, and I began to fear something more than a wordy encounter, as fingers began to twitch and pistols move from their places, but by dint of chewing and spitting and frothing and hard swearing and round ponderous oaths, affairs assumed their wonted state. But so chagrined were my companions at their sad discomfiture, that I verily believe had it been possible, they would have crawled into the harness of our horses and took their places if thus they could have passed from observation.

Thus ended my first day's journey towards the Black Forest. The second was to be mostly the pedestrian's task.

The stage coach sat me down by ten o'clock next morning, and my two companions eyed me so wistfully till the thick tangle wood separated us, that I was well satisfied that their desire to make me their prey was strong to the last.

PICTURE NO. XIII.—A PICTURE OUTSIDE OF THE GALLERY

Freed from this cage of wild beasts quite as miraculously as was Daniel from the lion's den, I sat out in good earnest, and for a time made fine headway; a cold drizzling rain however sat in late in the day and the travel became bad.

The afternoon wore away, and still I found myself wending towards a huge mountain forest, whose crest loomed up blacker and blacker as the clouds of coming evening rolled up from below the horizon. Here in all its grandeur and wild sublimity was the native landscape spread out before me, the same that I saw in beautiful miniature but a day before hanging on the walls of our Afric-American Gallery. Cold and wet, dark, gloomy night at last overtook me still plodding my weary way, now alas, through a dense and pathless forest in the direction of a solitary light. Dim at first, now brighter as I passed on and on.

Three hours more gone, and now dancing still more brightly through the trees this solitary light to my unspeakable joy, suddenly revealed itself fully in a small open space, but almost as suddenly disappeared.

A low growl of a mastiff told me that I was quite near the place of my search. Down, down sir! said a gruff voice to the dog, and all was silent and dark as the grave.

Used as I was to adventure and a stranger to fear, I confess a peculiar sensation now passed over me in this reign of deathlike stillness, and I for a moment hesitated. 'Men only are

asked over to the Black Forest,' whispered a still, small voice in my ear.

I boldly stepped forward, and in a few moments came directly upon the steps of a small and unpretending log *hut*. I lingered a moment on the landing; all was quiet within, but a gentle rap soon brought to the door a man who bade me enter.

A cheerful wood fire was blazing on the open hearth, while three vacant chairs quite rural in aspect surrounded it, and a small table and an old fashioned settee completed the furniture of the apartment.

PICTURE NO. XIV.—PORTRAIT OF A MAN.

Tall and erect, strong like a forest tree, this man of the Black Forest, for such he was, was a glory to look upon. The frost of at least ninety winters must have fallen upon his head, and yet had not chilled him, nor had their winds bowed him, nor their cold dimmed the fires of his eye. [11]

What a treasure, thought I, as I looked upon him, would this old man's portrait be in our Gallery.

'From G——?' said he, as he fixed his searching eyes upon me. I answered in the affirmative, and a brief but satisfactory conversation ensued. Mine host soon after set before me some cold meats, brown bread, an excellent dish of coffee and a bowl of delicious milk; thus with the aid of the cheerful fire, making me feel quite comfortable and at home, and the conversation was resumed. I shall not attempt even an outline of it. If I except my own part I could not if I would.

I have listened to many men. It has long been my privilege to converse with men of intelligence, and men of mind on all topics common to the day, but never before did I witness such a flood of knowledge poured forth from the lips of man. I am no *Paul*, but surely I sat at the feet of *Gamaliel*. Who was this *man*? How came he here? From whence did he come? What

hidden treasures are there in this place? What mysteries hang over it? These interrogatories irresist[i]bly came up in my mind as the *old man*, with lamp in hand, began to ascend a rude ladder to a single upper chamber, bidding me follow. Here on a clean bed of rushes, I laid down, wondering at first, but soon buried myself in sound beneficial sleep.

(To be Continued.)

VOL. I. JUNE, 1859. NO. 6.

**Afric/American Picture Gallery. —
Third Paper.¹⁰**

BY ETHIOP.

The reader will remember, that we parted company in the upper chamber of a lone Hut, in the midst of the Black Forest at the dead of night to take rest and repose. Ere the dawn of the next day, both eyes were wide open and I started on a tour of observation.

Through a small window, so high, as to be beyond reach, the only aperture discernable to the outer world, came a grey streak of morning light to my pillow, and roused me from my bed. I up and hastily made my toilet such as it was, the best perhaps that could be made in a mountain fastness, and ascended by a ladder to the roof. I shall never forget the scene that burst upon my view. The peak of the Black Forest Mountain, for such it was upon which the solitary house stood, touched the very clouds, while the Ocean with here and there a massive ship upon its dark green bosom, though many miles distant, seemed to roll at its base. Crag on crag lay piled on every hand and vale outstretching vale; and beyond as it was early autumn, the sere and yellow leaf painted the otherwise vast green forest top with indescribable beauty. The morning breeze with a purity and

[12]

¹⁰ Although called the “THIRD PAPER” here, this is the fourth installment of the Picture Gallery. The next installment, which appeared in the July 1859 issue of the *Anglo-African*, is correctly titled as the “FIFTH PAPER.”

freshness known only to mountain regions, sighed forth its soft music, so sweetly, that the feathered tribe, and they were legion—were constrained to join in with their unerring notes; while the deer, the squirrel, and the rabbit danced and skipped o’er steppe, crag and glen with laughing joy. A few moments, and the sun, like a mighty angel came hastening up, as it were, from out of the Ocean; and with his strong presence gilded the whole scene in an instant. So, impressed with what I saw, ere I was aware, a reverie stole over me; and I know not how long it would have held me, but for a voice from below, calling me away. It was the old man of the Forest summoning me to the morning repast; which to be brief, was all the most fastidious taste could have desired, and far be yond any thing I could have imagined.

Breakfast over, the old man *Bernice*, for such was his name, retired; but returned after a few moments, garbed in a red flannel gown, blue cap and black sandals; giving a grotesque, yet a most commanding appearance. Holding in his hand a lighted lantern, he advanced and mildly said; now my son, if you like, you may accompany me. So saying he led the way through a narrow passage to what appeared from the house top, a mere adjacent outbuilding. A stranger might have passed through this passage a thousand times without so much as imagining that the huge rough stone laying almost in his pathway covered the mouth of a famous cave.

At a slight touch from the old man’s hand this stone rolled away as if by magic, and revealed a deep, dark *Cavern*. With a firm step he began to descend a ladder and I followed. Down, down, down we went. Down, down, down; and long was it ere we reached the bottom; and when we did so, we were brought directly upon a massive door which like the stone above, yielded to the touch of the old man’s magic hand. We entered a dark and spacious apartment through which old Bernice grouped to the centre and held the lighted lantern up to a large lamp which depended from the ceiling. What a transition !!! The dark and

sandless cavern now revealed all surroundings of the most studied and life long *Artist*. Bust, statues, statuettes; landscapes, portraits, fancy pieces; paints, pencils, pallets, mallets, chisels; half finished sketches, studies in plaster; all, all lay in profusion on every hand.

Prominent on a table near the lamp lay a fine duplicate portrait of our little *Tom*; our Gallery Boy, which I hung up just before I left for the *Black Forest*. The whole truth flashed upon my mind in an instant. Mine host was an *Artist*; and the executor of that beautiful likeness. “My son” said the old man as he perceived my astonishment, “though I have long since left the restless, busy crowd, I have not been unmindful of its jostlings. In this place, far from man’s baseness, and man’s vile injustice, have I labored; and it has been to me, a labor of love; a labor too, not without its reward. Much that I have done with both *pencil and chisel*—(I say it not in a boastful spirit,) will yet not only see the light, but command the just approbation of even the enemies [13] of my race. I shall be gone, but these,” said he, pointing to his works around him, “these shall live after me.”

He then seated himself before his *Easel*, stretched his canvass, and with brush and pallet commenced the labors of the day;—saying at the same time in a manner as bland as it was touching.—“Oblige me my son and amuse also yourself by an examination of some of these my much *cherished creations* trifles—many of them—still I regard them with the affection of children.

Some of them recall to mind some of the dearest spots of earth to me; spots, which, if not for them, would long since have faded from my memory.” I soon entered upon my survey; and for the hours,—and how swiftly did they fly,—that the old man plied at his *work* I reveled and feasted my mind upon the splendours about me.

Here I found a statue or there a bust that might have done credit to the conception of a *Canova* or the hand of an *Angelo*.

Here hung a landscape, or half concealed, there lay a portrait or a Scripture piece or fancy sketch, that might have excited the envy of a *Raphael*.

Among other things, my attention was arrested by a new curiosity. It was a *Tablet* of stone which mine host informed me was dug out of the mountain peak of the *Black Forest*, but disclaimed all further knowledge of it. It is of brown sand stone, thirty-six inches square, and three in thickness, engraved on one side only; and having when found the engraved side downward.

The words are curiously spelt by the aid of 41 singular, new and beautiful characters, or letters, each representing a distinct sound; and so many only are employed as are necessary to make up each word.

I have by dint of hard study, been enabled to make out its contents; but of its history or origin, or aught else of it, I leave for the learned in such matters. It certainly challenges the attention of the Historian, the Ethnologist, and the Antiquarian. Is it fiction, is it history, is it prophecy? Who can tell?

I herewith present a duplicate of the copy I made on the spot.

YEAR 4,000.

THE AMECANS, OR MILK WHITE RACE

1. Now hear oh ye who dwell in this age of pure light and perfect liberty; and marvel not when I tell you that there were once such things as slaves in the land; since even the *word slave* is no more mentioned among the children of men.

2. And these same slaves were human beings held in bondage—yea cruel bondage, against their will, and against the dictates of common humanity; and were subject to purchase and sale, like unto beast of burden and like unto merchandise.

3. Nor marvel not that these slaves were whipped with great gads, and were driven to and fro in gangs and in chains, as

we read of in our books, the beast of burden were in the *nineteenth and twentieth centuries*; yea they were whipped often without offense even unto death.

4. And be ye not puffed up nor proud in spirit, oh ye sons of noble fathers because ye now possess the land; and oh ye beautiful and refined daughters of virtuous mothers, be ye not vain overmuch because this land is now yours for an inheritance for ever.

5. Nor be ye enraged, none of you, because ye hereby learn that your *ancestors* were these slaves, and subject to this hard bondage.

6. And give ye heed now while from this Tablet of stone, which your fathers made; [and other tablets have they made also]¹¹ I speak to you, and tell you what manner of people possessed the land and bought and sold and held your ancestors and so despitefully used them.

7. And lo and behold, as one appeared, so appeared all of them. They had *milk white skins*, and their faces were like the chalk of foreign hills, yea like unto the evil spirit; and their hair was long and strait and uncomely; and in hue as the yellow or red clay of our fields. [14]

8. And their faces were long and narrow, and their noses sharp and angular, and their nostrils thin; so also were the lips of their sunken mouths,

9. They had sharp white teeth, like unto the teeth of the shark; and their eyes were blue as the cloudless sky, and sometimes leaden as when it is overcast; and their brows were large even unto the hiding of their eyes; and they were terrible to look upon, yea even fearful.

¹¹ These brackets appear in the original text.

10. And these people, long ruled in the land, and their hand was the hand of iron, and their hearts as the stones of our valleys.

11. And though they had great energy, and their wills were like unto the oaks of our forest, their unscrupulousness was great, yea as huge as our mountains; and their consciences were less than a span and harder than the diamond.

12. They built them large cities, and made great attainments in *science* and in *art*; and were cunning workmen, and wonderful tillers of the soil, making it yield its abundance.

13. And they made them great *ships* and many; so much so, that the seas were whitened with their sails; and they sent great burdens out of their land; and they got in return great riches.

14. And they builded also gorgeous *temples* in which they worshipped the *Gods* of their own making, while they professed to worship the true *God*; all of whose known laws they violated, and did but evil in his sight daily.

15. And your forefathers, they would not so much as permit them to enter the seats of their *temples* though they worshipped the true God, nor at their solemn feasts; but compelled them to stand afar off, because they had great hatred and prejudice against your forefathers.

16. And this people waxed fat and begat great pride, and clothed themselves in fine linen and black cloth every day; and their hearts became more and more filled with the world and the lust thereof.

17. And they said, who is like unto us? We are the great and the mighty ones of the Earth, and have a great mission to perform. We will level the hills and fill up the vallies; and will lay the mountains low, and make the path of the land straight, and they did so.

18. And we will lay on the path iron of our own workmanship and swift running vehicles will we put thereon, so

that when the warm breath of the water puffeth at them they will run with swiftnes and we will add to our cities and increase our comforts; and they did so.

19. And they wrapped themselves up in their ease and luxury in hopeful security; and their hand slackened; and great physical and mental weakness came over them; and many changes came in among them; so much so, that your forefathers looked upon them with much concern.

20. Yea their hair darkened, so also did their eyes and their skins; and they said unto your forefathers let us come in among you and be of you and partake of your substance les[t we die?] before our time.

21. And your forefathers did so; for they had increased much in substance and in numbers; and much in strength and in wisdom also; and had gained great possessions, yea all the land.

22. And these people dwindled at last to leanness; and their bones became small, and thin, and so did their statues; and their minds became feeble, so much so, that they wist not what they did; and finally they disappeared from among the children of men. [15]

23. They staid no longer than to accomplish their *work* and then vanished; yea as a cloud did they vanish from off the face of the whole land; yea the land which your fathers have since possessed and enjoyed.

24. And it is a great grief unto this day that so little, beyond these *tablets* of stone, your fathers have left unto you that so little is now known of these *Ameicans* or that a people once possessing so many peculiar traits, should have passed away without leaving to your fathers some greater memor[i]al of their existence.

25. But *no* was unto them; and their works with their evil deeds seem to have perished with them.'

Simultaneous with my finishing this transcript, old Bernice rose from his labors. He lighted his lantern and saying

‘come my son,’ stepped to a side door hitherto unperceived by me but which like the first instantly yielded to his touch. We now turned into a narrow passage and continued in its subterraneous windings some fifty yards to another massive door, which like others swung back at the old mans bidding. But what a change !! !

From the artistic, the beautiful and the curious, we had just quitted, an object the most appalling my eyes ever beheld stood before us. Was it a man, was it even human?—When we entered he stood crouched in one corner of his cell. His figure was gaunt and tall; his head large and covered with long snow white hair, which hung in disordered masses over his pale and shriveled face; and through which his glaring eyes kept up a most terrible rolling; while his mouth was white with foam. He soon commenced an incoherent muttering the only words distinguishable was *Bernice, Bernice !*

Suddenly he made a fearful lunge for me. I started back. It was a useless start. A chain was there. He could go no further. Then he raved, he shrieked, he tore his hair; then he pronounced the most awful imprecations upon his captor, upon all mankind, upon his *Maker*; then he subsided into the same low and unintelligent murmur again, *Bernice* being the only distinguishable word.

Suddenly he knelt; then he prayed; then he sprang up, then he bounded the length of his chains, then he stamped them in the earth, then he gnawed at their links; then he begged, then he pled incoherently for something; I thought it was for deliverance and instinctively stepped forward as though to give it. *Stay !!* commanded *Old Bernice* in [a] voice that I shall never forget. A stout heart only saved me from immediate petrification on the spot; and when my eyes met his I confess I had some misgivings as to my own safety. And wherefore this man, said I.

‘This man ! he is a murderer’ said he; and the old man’s eyes kindled almost to a living flame. *‘He is a murderer !!’* exclaimed he’ again.

‘The wretch once had wealth and a[[l]] the influence it brings; he once ha[d] power and he exercised it like a fiend. The oppressed and helpless were the victims of his fiendish spirit. Many, too many of God’s poor have, alas, felt his diabolical hand. I was one of his victims, and dearly, dearly have I paid the cost. I had a wife and children.

‘He held them as his property. Would you ask the fiend where they now are; or shall the sigh of the winds as they come up from the rice swamps answer? I had a son, a son dear to me, though he held him too as property. Despite oppression he had grown to beautiful manhood. Would you ask him where that son now is? Shall I answer that? Listen ! That chained hand the wretch now lifts toward heaven and you for undeserved mercy, that chained hand struck down that son to the earth; and with that other hand withered as you see it, the wretch blew out the brains of my child without provocation and without warning; and would not so much as allow his body burial.’ The old man made a pause, and I took advantage of it and said something about the law, redress, justice &c. *‘Laws !’* exclaimed he almost frantic. *‘Laws !!* what laws, what justice is there for the oppressed of our *class*? What laws except to oppress them harder ? What laws except to pursue and rob them from the cradle to the grave, yea even beyond both. The wretch there,’ said he pointing more significantly than ever at the miserable object before us, ‘the wretch opulent in lands, opulent in human chattels, received the general approbation of his associate Tyrants for his *acts*.’

‘But no matter,’ continued he, ‘I made my resolve and came hither. An interval was permitted to pass—a short one. He was brought hither, by what means I need not say. He was placed in my power. We confronted each other. It was a sore trial to

him. We conversed much and freely. He spoke of the wrong done him; I spoke of mine. He spoke of his wife and children left behind. I reminded him of the sale and separation of mine. He spoke of his position in society and the wide difference between us. I told him that his superior advantage and position, so far from making him a wiser, and better man, had availed him little,—worse than little, since it had made him a robber of the helpless, an oppressor of the weak and a murderer of the innocent. He plead earnestly for his rights. I told him he had no rights that I was bound to respect.¹² He then begged hard for his liberty. It was a strange sight,' said he, 'to see a man begging for liberty from one of a class of whom he had his whole life long deprived of not only liberty but all that makes life worth having. He made large promises for that liberty. I told him that they were useless that he had now nothing to give; that he no longer possessed even himself; that his pleadings were now as useless as mine once were; that I was now the master and he the slave. I then assigned him his fate, and bid him prepare to meet it.

Long years have since gone by. I yet have him in my possession. I will not harm a hair of his head; but so long as he lives that gloomy cell shall be his prison-house, and these chains he is now bearing about with him in his sleeping moments and in last long waking hours, shall be his only earthly companions; and when he dies, as die he must, I will cast his carcass forth to gorge

¹² Bernice's statement echoes the language of Supreme Court Justice Roger B. Taney's decision in *Dred Scott vs. Sandford* (1857) that black people "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." The *Dred Scott* decision affirmed that neither enslaved nor free African Americans were citizens of the United States, and thus, they did not have standing before the federal law. William C. Nell's "Colored American Patriots" in the *Anglo-African* also begins with this quote from Taney's decision. See *Anglo-African Magazine*, 30.

the *Vultures* that sit upon the mountain peaks of the Black Forest.'

'Bernice, Bernice,' imploringly murmured this white trembling *Felix*; and his knees smote together with very fear, as he stood before his *sable master* and heard his words.

The huge drops of perspiration rolled down my face as I said to myself what a terrible fate for a once proud tyrannical, wealthy white man who regards the black man as but a poor imbecile ignorant feeble thing, not so much even as the beasts that perish.

As the wretched fiend, for such I too now, regarded him, commenced again his wild and loud imprecations, so loud that it seemed like a thousand voices, old Bernice drew himself up to his full height, and with a commanding gesture waved me to retire, and following said 'my son, thou hast as yet seen but little of this place;' and then turning round with one touch of his hand the heavy door sprang back to its place, and all sounds within that cell were hushed from the *world*.

(*To be Continued.*)

Afric-American Picture Gallery.

— —
FIFTH PAPER

— —
BY ETHIOP.
— —

—Home again, and in fine spirits.
“Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife;
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life.
Is worth an age without a name.”¹³

So felt I, after my visit to the Black Forest, which has been among the most remarkable of my meandering life. A faithful recital of what I heard and what I saw, lengthened out in a dozen carefully collated and closely written volumes, would scarcely do justice to my three days’ stay in that place of mysteries. But, as the pressure of other engagements called me from those never-to-be-forgotten scenes, so now, also, do the events of the passing hour require at my hands something else for my readers, reserving for another occasion a further chat about the famous Grotto Home of Old Bernice, one of Nature’s noblemen and one of her noblest artists.

¹³ Lines composed by Thomas Osbert Mordant, but popularized by (and often attributed to) Sir Walter Scott, who used these lines as an epigraph in his novel *Old Mortality* (1816).

Home again, and in the Afric-American Picture Gallery, and seated in my big arm chair. Dear old arm-chair ! seated in thee I survey with renewed and increasing satisfaction this extraordinary Gallery.

My feelings are fresh and my eye clear, so that I can, perhaps, better take in the beauties and excellencies of a picture than give out anything like an accurate description of one.

Notwithstanding this, I cannot resist the temptation of a sketch offered by a pair of pictures just beneath my eye, on the south side of the Gallery. They are marked

Pictures Nos. XIX and XX.

PREACHING AND AFTER PREACHING.

The first represents the interior of a church—a negro church. Locality—sunny South. The particular spot, I conclude from its surroundings, is among the best of the good old plantations.

The church is filled to overflowing with devout worshippers, and is being discoursed to, affectionately, of course, by a double-fisted, burly, white-faced old Southern Preacher—a genuine Hard Shell.¹⁴ [18]

The *artist* has caught him just in the nick of time.

The Preacher is just in the act of extorting his sable hearers to obey their masters—their kind, good masters. “He that knoweth his master’s will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes.”¹⁵ These are his words. In catching the artist’s conception, you feel them, you hear them—you put yourself in his audience, and then they are gracious words to you. They are unct[u]ous. On them your parson is feeling; he looks full of feeling; he looks unct[u]ous all over. Unction pours out of his mouth; it beams out of his eyes; it sticks out of his outspread

¹⁴ A slang term for fundamentalist Baptists.

¹⁵ Luke 12:47.

fingers; it runs down his broad face in greater profusion than did the oil down the venerable beard of Aaron.

Just at this unct[u]ous point is our good man taken, and I heartily thank the artist for having done him such justice. A fairer exhibit of a Southern preacher is certainly nowhere else on canvass.

Nor has the artist lost any of his inspiration in the other details of his picture. The preacher's sable hearers, with eyes dilated, mouths agape, nostrils distended and ears alert, are intently leaning forward, that they may lose no word of the good admonition, while here a moody brow, and there a skeptical face, or yonder a defiant look, combine to form an admirable back-ground.

The second of this pair of pictures, entitled *After Preaching*, represents the congregation standing about outside the church in groups around the faithful leaders, who, being men carefully selected by the white piety of the sunny South, are of course, all of the Uncle Tom school.

By another masterly stroke of the artist's conception, they are taken just at the point of the extreme of their e[cs]tacies about the great and good sermon they have just heard, while the leaders are in earnest exhortation on submission and willing obedience to masters as the height of Christian duty.

In the back-ground may also be seen a few young, determined-looking faces, on which are expressed disbelief in, and detestation of, the whole affair. They are the same noticed in the back-ground of the former piece.

These young spirit-faces possess such a strong look of meaning that none need mistake it. A look so strong, so bold, so towering, that, like Monadnoc among the granite hills, it peers far above the scrawny frowns, and puny smiles, and jeers, and gibes, and sneers, and hates of the vulgar, the mean, the base; a look that will go up through all time, and, as light before the coming sun, so as surely will it be the forerunner of the great deliverance

of long-'pressed humanity. The look and the meaning do actually exist, and the sooner the World knows it the better.

These faces, in contrast with the others of the congregation, give a most striking effect to the picture. They are the unholy, the skeptical, the worthless of the flock—the wicked ones, who would rather run the risk than be bound up in the religious love so feelingly and so faithfully proclaimed to them—the religious love of the land.

It is of this class comes our Nat Turners,¹⁶ who laid a scheme for redemption, and the *man* in Georgia who received nine hundred and ninety-nine lashes by way of gentle compulsion, and then would not so much as reveal one particle of the *plan* laid by and for the uprising of his oppressed brethren. It is of this class come the Margaret Garners,¹⁷ who rather than their babes even shall clank a chain, prefer to send them up to their God who gave them. It is of this class comes our Douglasses¹⁸ and our Browns,¹⁹ and a host of other spirits now

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¹⁶ Born into slavery on a Southhampton County plantation in Virginia in 1800, Nat Turner led a slave revolt on August 21, 1831 that extended to multiple plantations. The December issue of the *Anglo-African Magazine* reprinted the "Confession of Nat Turner" as a comparative touchstone to John Brown's attack on Harpers Ferry. See *Anglo-African*, 386-397.

¹⁷ In January of 1856, Margaret Garner killed her two-year-old daughter and wounded herself and her three other children in a final attempt to resist their forced return to slavery. The subsequent trial tested the contradictions and limits of the federal Fugitive Slave Act (1850), since Garner was charged not with murder, but the destruction of property.

¹⁸ Frederick Douglass, the former slave, anti-slavery lecturer, writer, and editor, who wrote the autobiographies, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845) and *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), among other books, and edited and published *The North Star* (1847-

cast upon the regions of the North, as a Southerner once expressed it, “to wail in the misery of their sins, and lament in the wretchedness of their misunderstood liberty.”

These are good views, and may be studied with profit by any Southern Preacher, master or monster who will take the trouble to visit the Afric-American Picture Gallery.

Picture No. XXI. is

A HEAD OF PHILLIS WHEATLY.²⁰

1851) and *Frederick Douglass' Paper* (1851-1860) from Rochester, New York.

¹⁹ William Wells Brown, the anti-slavery activist, writer, performer, and former slave who published an early work of African American fiction, *Clotel; or, The President's Daughter* (1853). In 1860-61, a revised version of *Clotel* was published serially as *Miralda; or, The Beautiful Quadroon* in the *Weekly Anglo-African*, the newspaper successor to Thomas Hamilton's monthly magazine. Brown also included an entry on William J. Wilson and his Picture Gallery in his 1863 history, *The Black Man, His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements*. The first edition of that text was published by Thomas Hamilton.

²⁰ Phillis Wheatley, the enslaved Boston poet whose book, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, was published in London in 1773. As with the variant spelling of Toussaint above, readers will note the spelling of Wheatley as “Wheatly” here and below. This spelling discrepancy raises fascinating questions about how Wheatley's name and legacy circulated in oral and written sources among African Americans in the antebellum period. Jefferson famously spelled Wheatley as “Whately” when he disparaged her poetry in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781; 1787), and enslaved poet Jupiter Hammon's 1778 poem dedicated to the poet was printed as “An Address to Miss Wheatly.” Wilson's spelling is consistent with William C. Nell's entry on Wheatley in *The Colored Patriots of the Revolution* (1855).

It hangs in the north-east corner of the Gallery, and in good light, and is so decidedly one of the finest in the collection, whether viewed in an artistic light or in point of fact, that it is both a constant charm and study for me. The features, though indicative of a delicate organization, are of the most pleasing cast. The facial angle contains full ninety degrees; the forehead is finely formed, and the brain large; the nose is long, and the nostrils thin, while the eyes, though not large, are well set. To this may be added a small mouth, with lips prettily turned, and a chin—that perfection of beauty in the female face—delicately tapered from a throat and neck that are of themselves perfection. The whole make-up of this face is an index of healthy intellectual powers, combined with an active temperament, over which has fallen a slight tinge of religious pensiveness. Thus hangs Phillis Wheatly before you in the Afric-American Picture Gallery, and if we scrutinize her more closely through her career and her *works*, we shall find her truly an extraordinary person. Stolen at the tender age of seven years from the fond embraces of a mother whose image never once faded from her memory, and ferried over in the *vile slave ship* from Afric's sunny clime to the cold shores of America, and sold under the hammer to a Boston merchant—a delicate child, a girl, alone, desolate; a chilly, dreary world before her, a chain on her feet and a thorn in her bosom, and an iron mask on her head, what chance, what opportunity was there for her to make physical, moral, or mental progress? In these respects, how get up to, or keep pace with, other and more favored people?—how get in the advance?—how ascend, at last, without a single competitor, the highest scale of human eminence? Phillis Wheatly did all and more than this. A sold thing, a bought chattel, at seven years she mastered, notwithstanding, the English language in sixteen months. She carried on with her friends and acquaintances an extensive and elegant epistolary correspondence at twelve years of age,

[20]

composed her first poem at *fourteen*, became a proficient Latin scholar at *seventeen*, and published in England her book of poems dedicated to the Countess of Huntington at *nineteen*; and with the mantle of just fame upon her shoulders, sailed from America to England to receive the meed due to her learning, her talents, and her virtues at twenty-two. What one of America's paler daughters cotemporary with her, with all the advant[a]ges that home, fortune, friends and favor bring—what one ascended so far up the hill of just fame at any age. I have searched in vain to find the name upon the literary page of our country's record.

Oh ! Wheatly !
What degrading hand, what slavish chain,
What earthly power could link thy nobler soul
To baser things, and check its eagle flight?
Angel of purity, child of beauteous song,
Thy harp still hangs within our sight
To cheer though thou art gone.

The lady visitors to the Gallery would do well to make the head of Phillis Wheatly a study.

— —

I have never read a *treatise* on the art of pleasing, nor have I otherwise acquired it, and hence my imperfection in so important a matter. I never could well please; a lady friend says I have never tried. Be this as it may, permit me to observe that since my three days' visit to the Black Forest and three weeks' barricading of the doors of the *Afric-American Picture Gallery* against its many friends who have sought it out,²¹ there has been

²¹ A sly nod to the interruption of the *Picture Gallery* serial in May. The third and fourth installments of the series were published in April and June, respectively.

brought upon me such a storm of choleric feeling as will serve for all of life to come. I had just finished the last sketch, and wrapped myself up in the happy consciousness of its justness, my old mood stealing over me, my mind traversing back to the days when Banneker²² lived and told of the stars and of the rising suns, and Wheatly sung their praise to listening worlds, when a loud rap at the door brought me to a sense of the present moment and to my feet. Wondering who the intruder might be that dared to thus disturb me, I bade him enter. It was *Tom*—yes, *Tom*, with a package of letters in his hand. The little rogue's smile was as fresh and sunny as ever, and it was a pleasure to see him; but, somehow or other, there was a wicked twinkle playing about the corners of his usually wicked little eyes, that told me something in my absence had gone amiss. I concealed this discovery, however, and merely said: "Well, *Tom*, my good fellow, what has turned up since my absence?" "Oh ! nothing much, only a plenty of calls, sir," said he. "Calls?" said I, rising, "I hope you have not permitted, sir, any one to enter the *Afric-American Gallery* during my absence?" "Why no, sir," said he, provokingly, "but then there has been such a knocking at the door !"

[21]

I perceived how it was in an instant. The little rogue had been operating on his own hook, and pointing out the *Gallery* to the various magnates around for his own special amusement.

"The doctor has been here," he added, without paying any heed to the embarrassment in which he had placed me; "and the Professor has been here, and the Philosopher with him; and a little lady in black, and a tall lady, and a fat lady, and a strange nice lady from abroad have been here; and a number of other ladies, and some queer ones, too, have been here; and a crusty old

²² Benjamin Banneker was an eighteenth-century free black mathematician, astronomer, farmer and almanac-maker who lived in Baltimore County, Maryland.

gentleman, (white,) with a cane, has been here, too; and two colored gentlemen, in white cravats and long black coats all buttoned down before.”

Tom’s odd description of so strange a group really put me in good humor. I took the package from his hand, and throwing it on the table, wheeled round before the stature of Benjamin Banneker, for the purpose of a few *notes* for the readers of the *Anglo-African Magazine*, when rather a loud and unusual noise in the outer hall interrupted me. In looking up, lo ! and behold, advancing and bowing, hats in hand, who should my eyes meet but the *Doctor*, the *Professor*, and the *Philosopher*, closely followed by the little lady in black, and the tall lady, and the fat lady, and the lady from abroad, and the two gentle men in white cravats and long black coats all buttoned down before, fetching up the rear. Dumbfounded at so many and such imposing visitors, I could only rise and make my best bow, which was awkward enough at best. Of course I was cheated out of my reflections on Banneker, and so are my readers.

The conversation of my visitors, which was free, characteristic, and remarkable, I must reserve for my next, reader.

(To be Continued.)

Afric-American Picture Gallery.

— —
SIXTH PAPER

— —
BY ETHIOP.
— —

It may not be forgotten by the reader, that I was last seen standing bolt-upright in the middle of the Afric-American Picture Gallery, surrounded by quite a number of the notables of our times, who had been attracted thither by the notoriety the Gallery [22] has recently assumed.

“What a singular picture,” exclaimed the “little lady” in black as she fixed her attention upon a small picture just opposite. This, to my own relief, drew the attention of the entire party. “It is singularly sad, even distressingly so,” said the “lady from abroad;” “and yet,” she added, “it is susceptible of improvement. Such a condition, though it tax our best energies, should be rendered better.” “I much doubt, if such a sorry subject as that could be improved in condition,” broke in the “tall [not fat] lady.” [Anglo-African Magazine must father that appellation.]²³ This last remark was backed up by the “stout lady,” who always seemed but a necessary prop to the tall one—seemed made stout and strong, and short and broad, for that very purpose.

²³ These two sets of brackets appear in the original text.

That the reader may better appreciate these remarks, I will here give a simple outline of the picture to which they had reference.

It is marked "*Picture 26*," hangs on the North wall of the Gallery, and is entitled "CONDITION." The subject is a *colored youth*, sitting upon the bank of a rapid river, beneath a huge tree much resembling the *upas*,²⁴ and surrounded by abject wretchedness. Rags and their concomitants cover his body; poverty and want stare him in the face—a face marked with ignorance and the indifference of stolid content.

All else is vacancy.—Pale and emaciated he sits; and at this vacancy alone he stares. What the amount of intelligence he has, or what he is capable of acquiring, is for the speculative, the philosophic and philanthropic to ascertain. On the opposite bank of this river however, are green pastures, lowing herds and waving corn; while down the swift-gliding stream, are miniature fleets of heavy laden little skiffs and beautiful pleasure-yachts. The artist may be forgiven for over-drawing occasionally, as in the case of the main subject of this picture; for I am sure, it would be difficult to find within the whole range of our knowledge anything reduced to a *condition* compared with it.

And yet the question put by the "tall lady" and backed up by the "stout lady," and oft repeated on the tongue of nearly all Anglo-Americans: "can such a subject be improved?" incidentally received a partial discussion, if not solution, in our Gallery. The Doctor, who is a piece of a philosopher and a larger bit of a wag, was intent on a fine large picture of the "*First Colored Convention*;" and, overhearing the conversation as above noted down, turned round to the company. "What do you think of that, Doctor," asked a dozen voices together; pointing to poor little "*Condition*"

²⁴ A tropical fruit tree found in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Rim; used for many purposes including, most notoriously, poison.

on the wall. The Doctor, after a few hurried glances at the picture through his *turtle shells*, said, "you may improve the condition, if you change the nature."

An opinion—though it meant nothing—from so high an authority, and so deliberately given, was not without its weight; and the "Skeptic" shook his head doubtingly; while the "Philosopher" with thumb and finger, and outstretched hand, launched out on hair-splitting subtleties, to prove the amount of labor necessary to make even the "Doctor's" proposition good. He also entered upon a learned dissertation, upon the nature of the world in general, and our *poor little "Condition" in particular*, and wound up by saying that "whatever is, is right." All this to me seemed so foreign from the point at issue, that, my impetuosity getting the better of my known modesty, with arm uplifted and fist clenched, I broke out with: "It is the youth's condition, not his nature, that demands a change. He has all the great essentials common to humanity; hence, he neither wants more of this, nor less of that, within his composition, before he can be rendered susceptible of improvement." "Will our Gallery-friend inform us then, how he would effect that change," enquired one of the "white cravats," who had all this time been balancing like a rope-dancer, first on this side, and then on that—of the rail of the conversation—to see which would best bear him. "How would you proceed in so great an under taking," said he, and concluded his own effort, by drawing himself up in an attempt to look dignified. "Put a lever in his hands, and he will proceed to raise himself from out of his own low Condition," said the "Philosopher."

This was not quite definite enough, and the "skeptic" added, "if the Philosopher will compose his *lever of means and intelligence*, I will agree with him. The youth wants first of all things, *means*, substantial *means—wealth*; such as the world values, and then intelligence enough to use it, and a fig for either his dull eye, his curly hair, or his *ebon face*.—The most repulsive of his

features may laugh in derision at their sternest foe; for they will appear charming to the surrounding crowd, their possessor's friends. Beauty's eyes are wealth and power."

"I now perceive the point of the argument," chimed in one of the long black coats; and he buttoned it all down before. "It is the youth's disabilities, and not his color, that bind him there;" and as he said this, he significantly pointed to the picture with his ram's-horn cane, strongly reminding one of ancient Jericho and its falling walls. "Precisely so," said I; "you have it at last." Notwithstanding I thought him very slow to perceive a plain point, and came near telling him so.

At this point the "lady from abroad" mildly interposed, and said: "take that youth, forlorn and wretched even, as you there behold him; and let but the light of culture beam in upon him, change not his physical, but his moral, mental and religious state; and then possess him with *means—with wealth*; and you place beneath him a power, and put in his hands a force, that will be felt throughout the entire ramifications of human society."

This lady had such a neat way of putting her propositions, that it was not an easy task to disturb them without risk; and so the "Doctor," the "Philosopher" and the "white Cravats and long black Coats" deemed it best to keep quiet; but an old lady, who had hitherto been a quiet spectator to the whole scene, now threw up her *spectacles*, and sharply remarked; "you young folks' talk is altogether too metaphorical for me, as my good brother—a Philosopher,— yes, a Philosopher of the old school—a real Philosopher—used to say, when he overheard folks (he did not wish to offend), who did not know exactly what they were talking about. He always said to them, 'you speak too metaphorically for me,' and so say I to you, my young friends." "You are not understood[,]" ejaculated the old lady quite out of breath. She then drew her shawl a little closer, tossed back her hat, adjusted her *specs*, and began an examination of the picture in question, as

she thought; but which was in fact one entitled "FARM LIFE IN WESTERN AMERICA."

The whole Party, which for the moment was put to silence, at this unexpected sally, stood a picture of suppressed mirth and hilarity, as they observed the "old lady's" careful scrutiny of what she believed to be the subject of their conversation. "Bless me," said she at length; "what is this? Colored folks farming !! Ah now, that is it. This puts the question in a clear light; and if you young folks could only throw up your metaphorical veils, you could see it."

No one ventured to interrupt, and she proceeded:

"Now here are colored folks farming for themselves; and don't their grain grow as well as if they were white; and don't it sell as well?"

"Is not this a change only of condition? Talk of changing nature !!!"

"But where is the boy, that I hear you say so much about," inquired the "old lady," evidently puzzled.—"The Village?" said she. "Yes, yes; and here is its colored village blacksmith, shoeing his white neighbor's horse."—"What can't change our condition?" "Fiddle-sticks and nonsense," exclaimed she again. "Talk of changing appearances !!"

"And look here," cried she out again; "here is a colored man tending his own mill; and is not the flour as white as any other ? and are not all the town, white and colored, running to procure it?"

"Welladay, welladay," said the "old lady," and shook her head disapprovingly.

Peering over the picture, she spied a splendid carriage, drawn by a span of spanking bays, driven by a boy, and containing the owner, a colored gentleman and his family, just entering the village.

"The Lord be praised," fairly screamed out the "old lady" this time; and she put up both hands, threw up her *specs*, and

wheeled square round to the company, exclaiming: “and you would have them change the color of their faces, would you, before you would have them ride thus? This is your methaphysics, is it?” and “welladay, welladay,” muttered she again.

A little farther on, and she espied a large mansion, in process of erection by colored, and white mechanics conjointly.

“The Lord be praised,” ejaculated she again. “Now if this is not, what I call truly practical. For it is truly a practical operation where color is no bar,” said the old lady. — “Away with your methaphorical, methaphysical nonsense, and give them plenty of the wherewith to do with, and they may wear their color without let [fret?] or hindrance.” And as if doubly to assure herself and the company of the correctness of her opinion, she re-affirmed it, by saying, “possess them, all round, with money and all its pertainances; and no station is there so high and no power so great, but will, at their pleasure, be handed down to them.” The “Doctor,” whom the “old lady” eyed with a keenness evidently provoking retort, dared venture no reply, and only bit his lips. One of the “White Cravats” buttoned down his coat, elongated his face, and poised himself on both sides of the argument, manifestly anxious—since the “Doctor” said nothing—to jump down on the “old lady’s” side of the argument; while the other “long black Coat” pulled up his cravat, and enjoyed vastly his friend’s vacillating but uneasy position. The “little woman in black seemed” quite self-satisfied, that she had called attention to so grave a subject; for gravity and weight were her themes, her elements, her life, her all. In them she lived, moved and had her being.

The “tall lady” failed to see any convincing proofs; and so did the “stout lady,” her friend and necessary prop.

The “Philosopher” archly enquired if the ladies saw at all?—

At this the “tall lady” grew taller, and the “stout lady” stouter; so much so, that I began to get anxious for the unfortunate “philosopher,” and midly suggested that the ladies would find some interesting views on the other side of the Gallery. The company, some satisfied, some self-satisfied and some dissatisfied, each in his own mood, passed over to where hung a series of small pictures labeled “CITY-LIFE.” One of these, a *beautiful colored girl*, with a hideous monster of a white-faced doll in her arms, caught the “old lady’s” eye; and she at once exclaimed, “That is more of your metaphorical nonsense—putting such prejudicial stuff into little children’s heads—even before they know they have heads! Set your little boys and girls in the right way of thinking in the outset: that’s what *I* say;” and the “old lady” threw herself back into our good old Gallery arm-chair, muttering to herself, “what stuff and nonsense these new-fangled colored folks are putting into the heads of our people. They are worse than white folks.”

[25]

The “tall lady” and the “stout lady” and one of the “white cravats” were quite indignant, that such a picture was allowed a place on the walls of the Afric-American Picture Gallery. “It is a life-picture,” provokingly chimed in the “Philosopher,” forgetting his former risk.

“It is an insult to the children,” sarcastically exclaimed the “tall lady.” “It is an insult to the children,” scre[e]ched out the “stout lady.” “It is an insult to the children,” blandly bawled out one of the “white cravats;” and he buttoned down his coat, and tried to look very dignified indeed; and then they all three looked daggers at the gaunt “Philosopher.”

Turning round to the “lady from abroad,” the “tall lady,” with a leer said, “what would you have for our children, Madam? Yes, what would you have?” smirked out the “stout lady.”

“Just so, what would you have,” defferentially cold drawled out the “white cravat,” and he again buttoned down his coat. The “lady from abroad” with some warmth answered:

“Educate first of all things, and above all things, your children to have *true self-respect*: yes, I repeat it,” said she with an energy that startled her auditors, “*true self-respect*; and then, upon this basis, and this alone, place all their future acquisitions. In the matter before us, I leave you to draw your own conclusions.”

This fine proposition caused the “skeptic” to rub his hands with glee, while the wily “Philosopher” made a vain attempt to split it by one of his philosophical hair-splitters.

The “Doctor” and one of the “long black coats” by this time had got quite interested and rather warm over *Picture No. 27*, THE FIRST CONVENTION, the “Doctor” maintaining with much pith, that the leading minds of that time, who did most to advance the cause of Afric-America, were outside of the clergy; and pointed out the leading heads in this fine picture in evidence.²⁵ It was with a glow of delight, that—with stick in hand,—moving from the commanding form and strong head of

²⁵ “THE FIRST CONVENTION” refers to the first “Colored Convention,” held in Philadelphia in 1830. The Colored Conventions Movement took shape around state and national conventions organized by free and formerly enslaved blacks across the country over decades. The people listed in this and the subsequent paragraphs were participants in the black convention movement, and many of them also appear in “The First Colored Convention” in the October 1859 issue of the *Anglo-African Magazine*, even if some of them didn’t appear in the convention records themselves until later meetings. They include William Hamilton, Henry Sipkins, James Forten, Frederick A. Hinton, Hezekiah Grice, James Bird, John Bowers, John Emery Burr, Samuel Van Brakle, and John B. Vashon. The clergy mentioned by Wilson include the founder of the AME Church, Bishop Richard Allen and ministers William J. Watkins, Samuel Cornish, Hosea Easton, Joseph M. Corr, Christopher Rush, and Peter Williams.

Hamilton to the calm²⁶ brow and ponderous intellect of Sipkins; from the keen phiz and business-like air of Forten to the massive head and eagle eye of the fiery Grice, or the eloquent, yea almost now speaking lips of Hinton, the cool and determined Bird, the polished Burr, the vigorous and clear-sighted Bowers, the strong-minded Van Brackle, and the unswerving Vashon—all, all—and discarded upon their excellencies.

The “long black coat,” cool, cautious, wily and earnest, with equal pertinacity pointed out the talented clergy, who led on the host of that day. He pointed to the far-seeing Bishop Allen, the able Watkins, the eloquent Corr, the learned and talented Cornish, the far-seeing Easton and the faithful Rush; all of whom stood to their posts in the dark hour of our trial.

Turning from these, he pointed to the mild and gentle face of Peter Williams, who so long led an intelligent people onward and upward to a higher state. This called up reminiscences of the past to the “Doctor’s” mind; and if it did not convince, it certainly touched him, and he was silent. The “wily long black coat” then turned to the portrait of the lamented Theodore S. Wright, and set forth in strong light his vast labors and their results. He also pointed out others, who were prominent in that clay, and finally exclaimed: “The good they have done, no man can estimate !!! Its influence will vibrate through time, and will continue up into eternity. There hang their portraits,” said he, and he pointed round the gallery. Let no man take them down. Let no ruthless hand disturb them; no polluted finger dare to touch them !!! There they hang, and there may they hang forever !!!”

[26]

²⁶ In the text, the “m” of “calm” has been set sideways. See *Anglo-African Magazine*, 246, and the image of this typographic anomaly on the *JTO: EEAP* site.

This little patriotic conclusion elicited from the whole company, the “Doctor” included, a round of hearty applause.

“There is no metaphorical nonsense about that!” exclaimed the “old lady;” and she rose, put up her specs, gathered up the folds of her dress, and walked dignifiedly out.

“No metaphorical nonsense about that,” echoed the other of the “white cravats,” as the “old lady’s” last foot-fall sounded down the gallery, and he felt again for his dignity, and buttoned down his coat.

The “Philosopher” pulled out his watch, and began to measure time. The “Doctor,” suddenly jumping up of a deep brown study, started for the door; and the “skeptic” took a stroll down the gallery. The “tall lady” turning up what nose she had, and the “stout lady” endeavoring to turn up what nose she had not, at the possibility of “colored folks” ever being improved, at least by their own efforts, they both indignantly strode out of the gallery, shaking the very dust off the soles of their feet.—

The “lady from abroad” proceeded to examine some pieces of statuary at the upper end of the gallery, and made some just criticisms; thereon, while the “little lady in black,” self-satisfied and prime, sat a model of patience. The “white cravats” and “long black coats” adjusted their neckties, buttoned their coats down before, put on their hats, drew on their gloves (black ones of course), and quietly departed, wiser I trust for their visit; while I, unable to draw any thing but this imperfect sketch, hurriedly sent Tom off with it to the *Anglo African Magazine*. (*To be Continued.*)

Afric-American Picture Gallery.

—
SEVENTH PAPER

—
BY ETHIOP.
—

The Early Days of the Underground Railroad.

—

Bill came in one day in a towering rage. It was in the earlier days of the Afric-American Picture Gallery, when its quiet was seldom disturbed by visitors of any kind. [27]

I started from my old arm-chair in much alarm, and somewhat hastily inquired what the matter was.

Bill’s eyes (and I watched him closely) had all the seeming of a fiery demon. His large athletic frame seemed to expand with his increased emotion. His broad breast heaved to-and-fro like the surges of the ocean lashed with the fury of a storm; while his clenched fist continued its hold on a double-barrelled pistol (Colt’s revolvers where not then in fashion) which lay hid in, his left breast-pocket.

His countenance, hitherto of dark hue, was now pale, even to ashiness; and his teeth gnashed like one of the furies just let loose from the bottomless pit.

“What is the matter,” said I, with increased alarm, “for heaven’s sake, say what is the matter?”

“*I have seen him!*” said he, with an emphasis that made me shudder all over. “I have seen him!” exclaimed he again, still more emphatically, “and should he cross my path again, by the” — The balance of this terrible utterance, happily, was lost on my ear; and without abating anything either in appearance or manner, and without another word, he rapidly strode the floor, leaving me to supply with my imagination what I could not ascertain by inquiry.

Bill was a product of that famous plateau bounded by Pennsylvania, Delaware, the Atlantic, North Carolina, and the Alleghany Mountains; and which gives out to the country and the world men.

He was a large, strapping young fellow, just twenty-five, with the proportions of an ox, his chest alone having the breadth of two ordinary men. His head was large, his face round, his mouth wide, as were his nostrils, and his forehead broad. A real bull of Bashan; and yet the general aspect of his countenance was mild, and even pleasant, when not under excitement.

He had formerly been one of a large plantation of ill-used, badly-fed, overworked, and ignorant slaves. I say ignorant, because they knew nothing of the world beyond their plantation home, and Bill, at the time we now speak of, had never seen beyond his native hills. But he had a pair of quick eyes, two open ears, two strong legs, and a will of his own.

These, young as he was at that time, he determined to use for his own benefit; and if denied him where he was, to seek out some other spot where he could exercise this most natural intention.

How small a circumstance sometimes will turn the point, the vital point in a man’s destiny, and so it was with our hero. White young Northern adventurers, in those days, were in the habit of finding their way, summers, down South, seeking employments which paid better than in their own sterile New England, or among the cold blue hills of Northern New York.

One of these fellows, a carpenter, who found his way to the plantation on which Bill belonged, now and then, to the slave boys who chanced to be about him, would make occasional remarks about the North and New England, and especially his own native state, Maine. Bill, dull and indifferent, seemed always in the way. His seeming indifference to anything said in his hearing by the white help about the plantation gave him excellent advantages, and well did he improve them; for he kept up a most wonderful thinking and a strict reckoning, and in due time was fully prepared to step out and ascertain for himself if all the long yarns and handsome stories he had heard and overheard about the North were really true. Why should he not, like other boys, gratify a natural curiosity, even if he was only Bill and lived on a plantation; and though, too, it was said that he belonged to it? This latter saying, just here, we may remark, he never could, some how or other, fully make up his mind to believe; he never could lead his mind fully to believe that he belonged to the plantation or the master thereof. Reasoning thus, one Sunday morning, having made previously all due preparation, he obtained permission to go a distance in a southward direction, but like a naughty boy turned his face northward, not, however, till he had turned himself into a bale of tobacco, and took passage in the underground railroad. The road, then, not as now, had but one track, and it would have been a novel sight, methinks, to have seen this tobacco, alias our Bill, traveling, wheelbarrow fashion, upon the primitive underground railroad.

But such sights are, as a general thing, denied to mortal eyes, and our hero proceeded under the strict privacy of a gentle man incog; and arrived in due time North, and like a self-unwrapping mummy laid his tobacco, one night, quietly down upon the steps of a New England factory, and stepped forth to see the country.

Thus he got North; and staid North, till early one bright November morning he was suddenly roused from his slumbers

by a heavy hand; and on rubbing out his eyes and looking up who should stand before him but his young master and a posse of officers.

The place where he was so unceremoniously woke up was in a humble but respectable lodging in Calais, Maine; the very place he had so often heard of in scraps of story and snatches of song, by the young white employee on the old plantation, and had pictured to himself in his dreams of liberty.

Alas, poor fellow ! little did he think that a betrayer almost invariably lurks under a white skin; and that the same who seemed more civil than the ferocious Southerner, would be the one to send him back to his chains and to the prison-house of bondage for a little more than a mess of pottage.

Jakes, the carpenter, in his wanderings returned to Calais, his native town, and one day discovering Bill, conceived the idea of replenishing his nearly empty purse by the betrayal of a poor fugitive youth, in which he out-Judased Judas Iscariot; for he (Judas) covenanted for thirty pieces of silver, while Jakes got only twenty-five.

Poor modern Judas! Just as the last of his twenty-five pieces was expended, he blew out his own brains with a horse-pistol, and his body falling into a stream it swiftly drifted out to sea and was made food for the fishes.

“Come, Bill ! don’t you know me ? What are you doing here ? Get up you rascal, instantly, and come along ! Get up, I tell you, or by” — —

“Massa,” said Bill, “I is so glad you come ! for I is so sick and tired of this ere place.”

“I is been most starved since I run’d away, and is been most naked, too. ’Tain’t no use to try to get along without Marsar.”

So saying he made ready and proceeded with all possible haste with his young master to a place of safety.

However unsound our hero’s admissions and reasonings may have seemed to his real friends, they were perfectly philosophic to him, and so insured the confidence of his master that he dismissed his Northern menials, save one, who acted as a sort of lacquey, and forthwith repaired to the South with his man.

“Such complete disgust of this negro of the North will have a most salutary effect upon the rest of the negroes,” said he. “He will be most valuable to the plantations round generally.” Thus reasoned the master, as he sat the first morning after his arrival home, in his dining room, after perusing the morning paper.

Whoever will take the trouble to examine so far back as our story dates, will find this paragraph going the rounds of ~~the~~ Calais, Portland, and other New England and many other Northern journals of that day:

“The beauties of Negro freedom.”

“A negro, the property of J. D., Esq., of Maryland, who had, either through the machination of some of the enemies to humanity, or his own thick-pated folly, strayed away to the North—where the rigors of the climate and the pinchings of hunger had well nigh used him up. [29]

His master, happily, however, arrived just in time to take his too-willing slave where, ere this, doubtless, he has been restored to his wonted comfort and happiness; and can brood at his leisure over the beauties of Northern freedom, we mean negro freedom.

When will the negro learn his simple mission, and his pretended or misguided friends learn wisdom.”

Bill’s arrival was hailed as a great triumph by the surrounding slave-owners, especially so when they were made acquainted with his sentiments of Northern negro freedom, and its horrors generally.

Never did poor plantations ring out so many doleful cha[r]ges on the horrors of the North, with Bill, poor Bill, for a

standing example; and very soon he was exalted to a kind of exhorter or lay preacher among his colored brethren.

But while the masters were thus teaching over Bill's back the horrors of Northern freedom and the North generally, Bill, wide awake, and adroit in manner, was instructing far more effectively in quite the opposite direction.

Such an unusual number of slaves decamped that summer, that a convention of the neighboring masters was held to enquire into the cause, and, if possible, provide an immediate remedy.

No one, of course, suspected Bill. His notions of Northern negro freedom, and earnestness in the interest of the master, continually and publicly expressed, placed him too high in general estimation for that. Still decade after decade of the "Boys" foolishly forsook their kind masters for the unknown regions of the hated North.

In course of time Bill was also again missing. Yes, Bill, the faithful, penitent Bill, the negro exhorter.

Nothing could exceed the consternation, chagrin and rage among the plantation owners generally, and Bill's especially, when it became fully established that Bill, the least suspected, had, for the second time, betook to his heels for parts to them unknown.

Pursuit, hot pursuit, was the cry that ran along the line of the plantations, and two of the most celebrated, wreckless and daring of the negro catchers quickly volunteered to overtake and return, dead or alive, this daring and dangerous negro.

Without a moment's loss of time these fellows set out and pushed forward.

For a correct account of what followed from this point of our story we must extract from Bill's own narrative of the affair. He says, "Time and experience had taught me many things, and I was this time fully prepared for any and every emergency. I started under cover of a stormy winter's night and proceeded many miles ere the sun of another day broke the darkness. I then

refreshed and rested myself in a well-retired place, resuming my journey soon after the next night-fall. After some three hours' travel, [I] came to a cross-bridge overhung by large beechen trees, with thick underbrush lining the sides of the deep chasm beneath.

"Just as I had got about midway of this bridge, I descried through the thick darkness two men stealthily approaching from an opposite direction, and so close upon me that retreat was useless.

"Stand!" demanded the well-known voice of a most dreaded negro catcher, and quickly made for me, while I, with the rapidity of lightning almost, leveled my pistol at the other and remoter man, who in an instant rolled heavily over on the bridge without a groan.

"The first was now so near that there was nothing left for either of us but to close in the deadly hand-to-hand struggle. He, though a powerful man and used to conflict, finding his inability to overpower me, endeavored to draw his pistol on me, which I, either by tact or superiority of strength, averted, and it harmlessly exploded in the air. [30]

"It was now my turn. Liberty or death with me, and life or death with him. The struggle was a fearful one. It was up, it was down; it was down, it was up.

"Not a word was spoken; not a murmur, not a whisper escaped either of us. He got me round the waist, I him by the throat. It was dark; but yet through that darkness so livid and changed became his countenance, and so glaring his eyes (I can see him even now), that, though knowing him well, it seemed it was the very devil with which I was dealing.

"But I held my grasp, increasing it only in tightness. I neither could, nor cared, to do otherwise.

"There seemed to be a charm upon me as I gazed into his livid face; a spell that worked upon my fingers as I held him.

"His limbs, which, for a moment, assumed the rigidity of iron, suddenly relaxed; his eyes, like an exploded lamp, suddenly

flared out; his vice-like arms which bound me fell down. A strange emotion came over me. I knew nothing but one convulsive effort.

“I then listened: I heard a loud splash some thirty or forty feet below, which told me all I wished to know.

“Seized with the same spirit, I ran to the other lifeless carcase and gave it one heave, and with another splash it followed its mate to where no tales are told, and where earthly quiet reigns supreme.”

“I had decided the question of my own liberty,” says he, “this time, before I left the plantation; and because God had implanted the principles of liberty in my bosom, both in seeking and maintaining that liberty, I had determined to remove every obstacle that obtruded itself between me and it.

“I did, therefore, nothing more than my duty to myself, to my manhood, and to my God.”

“After the incident of the bridge which I have narrated,” says he, “no further impediments came in my way, and I soon found myself North, where I had determined, come what would, to take up my abode.”

It was on the morning on which our story commences, when Bill entered our Gallery under the excitement we have described, and exclaiming, “I have seen him, have seen him!” that the man who claimed to be his owner passed him in the street, and fortunate for that man that he did not see Bill; fortunate for the community that they passed and did not meet.

The portrait of our sable hero, in all the flush of manhood, hangs on the north side of the Gallery, for the inspection of the curious.