

Jan. 6 1910

— Dedicatory and Introductory. —

My dear Children:— For many years you have constantly reproached me for my neglect to tell you about myself. Now that I have had a full year of rest from the worries that seemed to be hastening the footsteps of time and making an old man of me, and that I stand like an Othello with occupation gone, I feel that the "Some day", with which I have hitherto blocked your importunity, has at last come. But where, and how, shall I begin? And, alas, how little there is to tell! So some long closed, dimmed garnet room which imagination and superstition have filled with all kinds of thrilling mysteries, will, when finally opened up, be found to contain only commonplace, worn out stuff all covered with dust; so will this memory garnet of mine displayed to view be found to contain only the everyday experiences of an ordinary human life covered, ^{every where} with dust, dust, dust. But how am I to begin? I can not imitate Caesar in his Commentaries and divide all my life, as he did all Gaul, into three parts.— say Childhood, Manhood, and Old Age; for he was able to fix the metes and bounds of each division, but I can not do the same. Although I have a sort of idea where my childhood began, I can not, for the life of me tell where it ended, or well end.

Like Saint Paul, when I was a child I did many things, doubtless, as a child; but I can not say with him that "when I became a man, I put away childish things". Your dear Mother, who knows me better than any person in the world is firmly convinced of this fact; for even, now, in my seventy-fifth year, whenever I sneeze, and she wants to dose me with some useless nostrum which I refuse to swallow, she tells me not to "be a baby", or to "act so childishly". My manhood, in my own estimation, must have begun in my teens; for I was barely nineteen when I became engaged to marry; and I still enjoy the sports and activities of forty or fifty years ago. As for Old Age, I have scarcely a speaking acquaintance with it. So, you see, the tripartite plan of Caesar is altogether inapplicable to the divisions of my life:

A better plan, I think, would be the United States Census plan of grouping things into ten-year periods. Even this plan, I feel sure, will be liable to some embarrassments, for it is easy to see that some relations in life did not ~~not~~ end, or culminate, precisely with the end of a decennial period, and, moreover, that the development of

character and work in my life ^{at any time} were but the fruitage ~~of~~
of the seeding and growth ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ previous decades.

Nevertheless, I can think of no better plan, and I shall therefore, attempt to follow it.

Besides the faint memories of cuddlings, and cooings and croonings, I have the very distinct ^{recollection} idea of the taste of aloes. Some six or seven years ^{later} when I saw my half-brother undergoing the same process for giving him a distaste for

"Those globes of rich delight" as Gerald Massie calls them, I expressed the fact that I knew the taste of Aloes, I was much divided for my precocious memory. When I agreed to taste the cause of my baby brother's agonizing cries, I found the taste of the stuff as familiar to me as the taste of sugar. So I am still obsessed with the idea that I do, and do still, remember the cruel ordeal through which my helpless infancy passed. The memories of my infancy contains many little things that spring up in many ways - chiefly by association linking them together. First, and never dimmed, is the memory of the sweet face, the soft voice, the tender caressing arms that often smuggled me to her bosom and divided out to me a portion of the nourishment Nature had provided her with for the use of her own daughter, Susan, who was about my own age. This lovely woman I soon learned was ^{my} Aunt Mrs. Sarah Jane Lyne, my mother's Sister.

I soon learned, however, that my steady source of com-
 mercial supply came from a black Mammy named
 Elsy, ^{whose friend} a little black kid named Charley, ~~Chalgreen~~ failed
 to remind me that he was my "faska brudder". Every
 time I would see Charley after my experience with Alves
 he would insist on seeing the bottom of my pockets
 and claim anything I had. When I would throw him
 down, or spank him, for he was very small, he would in-
 variably say "Wha' melle you kin lick me is cog you
 tek all my bettle, and I aint grow". Elsy and Charley
 belonged to the minor estate of Mr. John Coming Ball,
 and not to my father, and I lost sight of them
 after my first decade. I have learned that both
 of them died before I became a man. My father
 who was managing the Hyde Park plantation dur-
 ing the minority of Mr. Ball never allowed me
 to go to that plantation without carrying something
 as a present for these two. — I suppose I learned
 during this decade more new things than in any other;
 for, of course, everything I saw or heard day by day, — I
 might say, hour by hour, — was new. * I learned that my name
 was "Sonny" or "Burry" among the white people around me,
 and "Mass Burry" among the servants. That my mother
 died when I was about three months old and that next page

* I learned through all my natural senses, sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching - and ^{from an} ~~and~~ ~~inner~~ something that prompted love and hate, joy and sorrow, hope and disappointment, curiosity and aversion, - in fact, a lot of contrary and complex impulses which I did not try analyze.

I had been committed to the care of my Aunt, Mrs. Lynes. Under her motherly care and with the substantial assistance of the aforesaid Elsey, like Topsy and other children, I "jist growed". As time wore on a few facts about my people came gradually to my knowledge. It appears that by the death of their parents named Du-Bois, three children, Sarah Jane, Keziah Anne, and John were left orphans and were cared for by their maternal relatives. Sarah became the wife of Rev. Samuel Lynes, and at or about the same time, Anne became the wife of my father Mr. Jesse Coward. ~~Many years after this John who had learned the trade of ornamental plasterer, mason, and ^{carpenter} ~~carpenter~~ having two daughters and a son.~~ — My father was born and reared to early manhood in what was formerly the north end portion of Williamsburg District, but now a part of Florence county. Coward's station, near the little town of Effingham, ~~was~~ is on a part of the land of the old homeplace. He had four brothers, Solomon, James, Arick and Isaiah, and one sister. Solomon and James were twins, and the oldest of the family. After the death of the father, Mr. John Coward, James finding things too straitened at the homestead, obtained a situation

as manager of the rice plantations of Mrs. Elias Ball of Cooper river. Pleased with his success, he induced my father, Jesse, to come to Cooper river also, and to accept a similar position under Mrs. Isaac Ball. His charge covered the Lumbly and the Hyde Park plantations belonging to Mrs. Ball and the Cedar Hill plantation belonging to her brother, Mr. James Poyas. Our winter home was at Lumbly, and our summer home, (that is, from the middle of May to November) was on a sandy ridge among the pines, belonging to the Hyde Park plantation.

When I was about three years old my sister and I were taken on a visit to Uncle James Coward then living on the Coming I plantation. After a few days my father's vehicle came for us. I remember very distinctly that as we were about to start for home Uncle James with a face full of fun brought out a bottle of wine wrapped in white paper and told me it was my present for my new Ma. My plump, roly-poly sister, some three years my senior in age, explained to me the New Ma business and with matronly airs coached me as to my behavior towards this new institution. I kept

^{bottle}
 they tightly clasped in my arms the whole way, and
 steadily practised the utterance of the new word - Ma.
 On arrival at home my father lifted me, bottle and
 all, from the vehicle and placed me in the open
 arms of the new Ma. I can recall how she squeezed
 me when I got off - "Ma, here's my present for you".
 - and we became friends for life. — She received
 both ^{of us} most lovingly, and throughout her ^{subsequent} life
 time, evinced the liveliest interest in our welfare.
 She taught us the elements of education, taught us
 to say our prayers, read instructing stories to us,
 and instilled a taste for whatever was clean and
 nice in, ^{personal habits and in} all the affairs of life. Both of us soon learned
 to love and obey her. I learned by degrees that
 she had been the childless widow of a Mr. Stephen
 Miller in the Wassamasaw section of Berkeley
 Parish, and that her Mother, Mrs. Bonneau, and
 a brother, Mr. John Elias Bonneau, a young man
 of about twenty, were her only near relatives,
 and that they would come to live with us.

Just across the road from this summer home
 there was another quite similar to it, occupied
 by a Mr. Hargrove and his wife. They were
 a childless pair and the wife soon evinced

a great partiality for me. She was always having me over to see her and giving me nice things to eat.

Every morning a tiny, ornamented pat of fresh butter was sent over to be placed at my plate, and whenever she made cake a tempting sample ^{was} set aside for me. Some months after our coming home, probably a year or more I made my first acquaintance with death. A baby had come to my parents during the night but had decided not to stay. I can never forget the strange sensations I experienced when I touched the little fingers and kissed the forehead of the cold, fair white little body laid out upon a table. A sob from my step-mother's breast carried me with a gush tears to her side. She could ^{not} lean over to kiss me, but she gently patted my head until I ^{was} carried from the room.

My sister being now over eight years old and I over five it was deemed time for us to be put to school. But where? The only school nearer than Charleston thirty-five miles distant, was the school established by the Beauford Fund near the Church of the parish of St. Thomas and St. Dennis, on the public road to Clement's Ferry. The teacher at that time was a Mr. Isaac Dutart, whose

mother kept house for him, and looked after the few boarding pupils of the school. The school house was on one side of the public road, and the dwelling house on the other, and not more than sixty yards apart. The arrangement was for us to be carried there over a nine mile drive every Monday morning and brought back home every Friday afternoon. By crossing Cooper river at Bonneau's Ferry, the distance from the summer place to the school was about the same as from Quinby. The rides from school were always full of pleasurable anticipations; those towards the school were always in keeping with the proverbial "black Monday". It so happened that I was the smallest and the youngest of all the pupils of the school, and was rather a tolerated nuisance than a petting. I had the insane ambition to do whatever the big boys could do and, was, therefore, too often obtrusively in their way; then too, thanks to my stepmother's painstaking teaching, I could read, say the multiplication tables and make "pot-locks" in writing better than most of the boys.

Except my sister and I, and the two beneficiaries of the Bourcoford funds, ~~and~~ the other children were

of the Dutart, Hamlin, Boyas ^{Rombertoy} and Carusody families living near enough to walk or ride in to school every day. - The only one of them all to make any deep impressions on my mind and whom my ambition did not incline me to imitate was the male beneficiary, Thos. Dickson. Tom was not an idiot, but was clearly a case of arrested development. He could never ~~read~~ say the two column backwards or any higher column forward in the multiplication tables without counting up on his fingers. At daylight every morning he would reach for his jacket, extract from ^{it} a chunk of very black tobacco, bite off a piece and set his jaws to work while putting on his scanty clothing, in order ^{he said} to "raise his appetite". At breakfast call he would carefully deposit his well chewed quid on the piazza railing at a spot he could keep his eye on from his seat at table. As soon as he had bolted his breakfast he would rush for his quid, wad ^{it} in his cheek, ^{I presume to promote his digestion.} and "bless the Lord for all his mercies". This performance went on with the regularity of clock-work, day by day. About six years after we left the school, I had occasion to visit my brother, then a pupil there, and I found Tom

still a member of the institution, but being too old to be a beneficiary, he had risen to the dignity of janitor and assistant teacher in Arithmetic. He had advanced to Rule of Three which he considered the universal solvent of all mathematical problems, and he had acquired about a dozen big sounding words which, although he could not spell them, he would inject them into every conversation, ^{with} oracular unctious. As soon as he had delivered himself of all of them, he ^{would} shut up his mouth like a clam, look wise as an owl and then suck away on his black tobacco. I have often thought of him since Doctor Stiles has been investigating Uncinariasis. Tom would have been a shining subject for his study.

Late in the Spring on our Friday return from school to the Summer home we found that ^{the} Shock had left there during our absence a great big, loud voiced brother whom it was determined to name Jesse James. He was a sturdy, exacting little ^{that} but like myself he had to rely for ^{sustenance} upon a black Mammy, named Cleopatra,

but called "Patra", for short. Poor fellow, the following winter his dear mother died in Charleston where she had been taken for better medical attention than could be secured on the plantation, and he had no Aunt Sarah, ^{like mine} to care for him in his helpless infancy. His grandmother, Mrs. Bonneau, died about two months later, and thus my father's home was for a time broken up. My Sister and the baby, J. J., were sent to stay with Uncle James's family, then living on the Silk Hope plantation, and I was allowed to remain with my father, to watch the house during his absence while superintending the several plantations under his care.

My father's great solicitude was to have us educated, and therefore Sister and I were sent to Charleston where we were boarded at the home of Mr. F. C. Patterson, whose mother, still living, had been a friend of the Bonneaus. We found our Cousins, Samuel William Lykes, about the same age as my Sister, and his Sister Susan about my age, also boarding in Charleston and attending a school kept by Father O'Neal. For company sake we were placed in the same school for a few

months. Dear, jolly, old Father O'Neal! He was the biggest specimen of humanity I had ever seen, and he was as full of fun and kindness as a rising balloon is of gas. The only reason for our being sent there to school was, ^{because} our cousins had been sent there as the nearest school to their boarding place and it was thought best to have us together for a while. A terror to the small boy was a Miss McCormick who had charge of the girls:—a red-headed saw-boned Irishman, named Casey, was the dreaded tyrant over the big boys. To us who belonged to neither class fell the good fortune of enjoying the attention of the good Father himself and one of the older girls. About two weeks after we joined, Sam and I presented ourselves at the school door and met the Father coming out. "And wham are yez spalpeens going, the day?" roared out the old man. "Coming to school, Sir?" we replied. "Did ever one hear the loike?" To school on St. Patrick's Day! Never heard of St. Patrick, eh! Well, you come with me, and I'll take you to know him." Frightened at the suspicion that we were criminally ignorant and had to be punished, we tremblingly followed him to St. Patrick's Church and were delivered into the hands of fierce, ^{looking}

Sixton. The Father enjoined him to put ^{us} where he could keep an eye on us, and tap us if we smiled or nodded. We were placed in the gallery, and there we sat, like two frightened mice under the eye of a cat. The service being finally over, our fierce custodian took ^{us} ground to the vestry-room where the jolly Father saluted ^{us} with, "Ah my good boys, ye behaved finely. Here's seven-pence a piece for ye to have a good time with St. Patrick". Well, we did; for Candy, apples and raisins were the joy of our heart. He found out afterwards that the two girls knew there was to be a holiday; but let us go to school to have a joke on us. Of course, they got their laugh, but none of our Candy, raisins, or apples. Later on when the days grew hot our little class studied and recited in the shady yard. One afternoon nobody could answer the questions the Father put to us from the book. He grew as near angry as was possible for him and threatened us with all sorts of dreadful things. Finally he called the assistant and began blaming her for our short comings and told her some of the simple questions he had given us and we could not answer.

"But, Father, that is not the lesson for today; those

questions are a week ahead". Looking at the pages, the old man collapsed upon a bench saying: "Pon me Sawl, she's right. Childer, what will ye do one?"

"Will I give ye a trate and make it right?" "Yes, yes", was the unanimous answer. He went into the house and returned with a towel in one hand and a glass goblet in the other. The goblet seemed to be nearly full of wine. "Now" said he, "each one ~~must~~ must take only three swallows so's it'll go all round, and be sure to wipe your mouth afterward with this towel. To show you how good it is, watch me". He raised the goblet to his mouth, made three noisy swallows and wiped his smacking lips, the while his red jovial face was almost ready to crack from suppressed laughter. The countenances of the children as one by one they made the swallows and tried to make out what had happened, could have been caught only ~~by~~ ^{by} the ~~traces~~ ^{traces} of the snap that varicity.

One little ~~shaver~~ ^{shaver} Shaver exclaimed "That tastes like nothing 't all". After recovering from his convulsions of laughter, ~~they~~ ^{the father} explained that the goblet had hollow walls and that the liquid was poured into the wall through a hole in the bottom and the hole then corked. He then carried us into

his parlor and set a large music-box to playing
tunes as the real treat he had in store for me.

We were next sent to Mrs. Hahnbaum's school for
girls and small boys, at the corner of Beaufain and
Archdale. ^{Street} After the first year, Sister was taken as
a boarding pupil by Mrs. Hahnbaum, and I re-
mained at the Pattison's, but continued to at-
tend the school as a day pupil for another
year. This brought me to about the end of
my first decade and it was decided that I
ought be put to an all-boy school. Just be-
fore the change was made, however, a new sensa-
tion was provided in the acquisition of another
step-mother. My father married the widow
Hargrove, nee Ville Pontreux, the same who used
to send me the ^{fancy} flats of butter, and, once more
our household was properly re-established.

This lady had changed somewhat in appearance
during the five or six years that had elapsed since
I had last seen her. She was paler, more delicate
looking, and more sedate in manners. She was then,
and to the end of her life, a great sufferer from
dyspepsia. This probably accounted for the changes
I noted. She still ~~was~~ ^{showed} evinced some kindness towards

me; but towards my sister she seemed to show indifference, and towards my half-brother, James, a positive aversion. She left him almost entirely to the care of the servants. She seemed to be almost monomaniac on the subject of cleanliness. Although our cook and house-servants were well trained, she gave them a busy time in polishing mahogany and brasses, scouring floors, dusting carpets and rugs, sunning beds and bed-clothing whenever the weather permitted, sweeping the yards so that the very leaves seemed to be ashamed to fall on them, - in fact, the least speck of dust anywhere was sufficient to start a household commotion. She invariably made the coffee and the tea with her own hands; - none but her own hands could work up the butter, or polish the glasses and silver ware, or slice the bread and cake. She seldom ate meat of any kind, mainly, I think, because she had not cooked it herself. Of course, Sister and I being at home only during the April and December holidays did not have more than we could bear of all this particularity; but poor James, who had a most inveterate habit of getting his face, hands and pinafore smudged the moment after they were cleaned.

must have had an awful time standing it all the year round. No wonder that the little chap contracted the habit of running away every day, to be found hiding out ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ 'Patro's house at the Negro quarters. But, he survived.

— Second Decade —

One of the two most memorable events of the first year in this decade was my enrolment in a real boy-school, taught by a Mr. McDougal, and under the auspices of the Episcopal Church. Here I met boys older than myself, and from them I learned rapidly all the games and tricks of half-grown boys. I made rapid progress in all games with marbles, in spinning tops, in building and flying kites, playing Shingaree* and Shinney — ~~in subliming and peaking~~; ~~in wrestling and boxing~~ and in talking boy-slang. The last three accomplishments distressed my sister very much and were the general topic of her "sage advice" as well as "money ^{money} counsels sweet" when I made my weekly visits to her. As nearly every wrestling or boxing bout would end in a rough-and-tumble fight, she knew at a glance what a "swelled nose, or blackened eye, or scratched face" recorded. She never lost her relaxed her mature, motherlike solicitude about me; but would often with her tears and sweet persuasive ways melt me into moods of good resolutions.

The other great event was the gift from my father of a small, single-barrel shot gun during the

* The precursor of the modern Base Ball.

Christmas holiday following my tenth birthday anniversary. For a time, earth seemed to hold no joys beyond. After a few days, under the tutelage of Nelson, the negro factotum of the household, I became a terror to the partridges, the doves, the bluejays, robins, rabbits and squirrels. As my stepmother anticipated drew the line on bluejays and rabbits, I traded these victims with the plantation negroes for Eggs, and thus contributed much to the family larder. Two wild ducks and a deer having also fallen victims of my skill, I went back to school feeling that the average city school boy was no longer in my class.

My almost inordinate taste for field sports was a direct inheritance from my father who was generally reputed to be one of the best shots on Cooper's ^{Pond}. I had also kept the table supplied with bream, perch and trout during the Spring, or Easter holidays.

For some reason unknown, or ~~unremembered~~ Mr. McDougall's school was transferred to the Rev. P. T. Babbitt, who domiciled ^{it} in the Church Rectory on Globe Street. The front yard then extended to Newborth Street, thus affording no good play

room. The already famous private school of Mr. Coates was next door, and as recess and play time were generally about the same hours, ^{for the two schools} many appointments suggested by jealousy and school loyalty were made ^(through the deciding fence) to be met at convenient trysting places remote from school bounds. The victor in these engagements alternated pretty fairly between the two schools. It was ^{my} good fortune to escape a burn in these engagements. This was probably on account of my ^{small} size, - there being no fair match for me in the other school. The boys of both schools were quite scrupulous in regard to size, weight, and age in arranging these affairs. - Ah! we little dreamed then that we were unconsciously preparing ^{for} the pluck and endurance our manhood would be called on to display for our country's sake a few years later.

At this school I began to learn how to study. Mr. Babbitt was an exacting teacher and interested in his work. He insisted on superintended study hours, and systematic exercises. His wife was a beautiful, patient, lovable woman who soon acquired a great influence for good over me. He was a nervous,

sufferer from Asthma, and it was her task to neutralize the harm which his irritability often provoked. I realized this fully after I was placed as a boarding pupil the year after I joined the school; for I then had a more intimate knowledge of the family life. - To have whooping cough, sunnups, and the measles, and to learn how to swim were a necessary part of a City boy's education. The first two diseases I had passed through while boarding at the Patterson's, but at this school the measles epidemic struck the four boarding pupils and Mr. Babbitt's two sons, Floyd and Seth. For convenience of attention we were all quarantined in the large room used by Mr. Babbitt as his library and study. After the four stage passed, we had a continuous pic-nic of two weeks at least in the practical investigation of his electrical apparatus, his Orrery, globes and scientific pictures. I discovered an illustrated edition of Froissart's Chronicles, into which I plunged with enthusiasm, but unwisely; for the only light we had was a streak that came through a crack in the old-time solid ^{hindoo} shutters. I say unwisely, because

as a consequence, I had to wear coloured glasses for two months after we were discharged from the quarantine, and it was necessary for me to have some ^{one} read my lessons over to ~~me~~ so that I might after a fashion keep up with my class. Upon the whole, the year and a half I spent as a boarding pupil at this school was the most profitable of all my school days. During that period my sister was attending the Methodist Conference school at Cokesbury S. C., and we, therefore, saw but little of each other.

At the end of this year and a half, Mr. Babbitt closed the school, and with his family returned to New York. My father came to the city and arranged for my transfer to the Charleston High School of which Dr. Henry M. Bonus was principal, and for my boarding with Mr. W. W. Leman. Mr. Leman was an affable person and the most popular salesman in the well known establishment of C. & E. L. Kerrison, with whom my father had been dealing for years.

Mr. Leman's wife was a Rembert of the Cim Key section and many of her kindred ^{had been} pupils with us in the Bennetts school. This fact

somewhat relieved the strangeness of new acquaintances. There were three children, all girls, in successive steps from six years ^{down} to about one year. I soon felt at home in this family; but anything like regular studying was a matter of my own volition. — Of course I suffered the usual disadvantages of changing school in mid-term. In history and mathematics, I could have gone with the class in Mr. Cochran's room, the second; in Greek and French, I might have found a place in ^{Mr.} Thos. V. Simons' room, the fourth; but the average was hit upon by my assignment to Mr. Pincotney's room, the third. I had been pretty well advanced in English studies and mathematics; but had begun Latin only some four or five months before. Nevertheless I was here assigned lessons in the middle of Viri Romae, and Adams' Latin Grammar, and Levisac's French Grammar, with Exercises to write. Of course I could only blunder and stumble along like a barefoot boy on a pebbly beach. I could not get any interest in the Latin course until I reached the chapter in Caesar's Gallic War, in which he described the bridge he built. Having some little

taste for mechanics. I spent many ^{lamp fat} hours, turning my lexicon and grammar, to make out the names of the parts and their adjustments; and then to test my knowledge thus obtained, I whittled ^{out} the parts with pocket-knife and patience, and ^{with} straws from the house-brush for wythes, I constructed three or four spans of the celebrated bridge. I learned more Latin from that performance than from all the other books I had to take up in succession. The Eclogues of Virgil struck me as the veriest rot, but his *Æneid* became interesting after I caught the threads of the story. Sallust, Cicero and Horace, I dived through only because they were needed to enter the South Carolina College where my father expected send me. In Greek I had studied Valpy's grammar and read the greater part of Anthon's Greek Reader. This Reader contained a lot of aphorisms and proverbs of celebrated characters, - a large part of Xenophon's Anabasis, some pages of Herodotus, some extracts from the Iliad, and some of ^{the} poetry of Anacreon. I had not quite gone over as much of this as was required when my school days ended.

The first summer of my stay with the the Lemans was spent on ~~the~~ Sullivan's island.

where I found ample opportunity to expand my piscatorial, natatorial and nautical knowledge. Of course, I went to school in the city every morning; but had the afternoons and Saturdays for island experiences. After the first year was out, another school change took place. The Rev. Ferdinand Jacobs opened a school in the city under the encouragement of the Presbyterian churches, and the Lemans, being members of Dr. Smyth's church, it was thought best to put me under him. He was a dear, good man, of gentle manners, - just the kind of man to get good work out of me.

I was always inclined to be obstinate or stubborn under coercion; but kindness and encouragement would always make me almost burst my heart trying.

About this time James was sent to Charleston to board with me at the Lemans', and to attend a school kept by a Miss Armes. ^{*} Sister had completed her course at Cotterbury, and had returned home a finished young lady. Rather below the medium in stature, but delicately rounded and symmetrical in shape and graceful in all her movements; her features regular and beautiful.

* At this time I was doing a considerable amount of ~~writing~~ outside reading. My father had arranged with Mr. John Russell, the accomplished book-seller of that day, to let me have such improving books as I might desire to read. Mr. Russell did kindly advise me and made the sole condition that I must not get a new book until I could assure him that I had read the last one bought. Among the books I got from ^{him} were Ruxton's Life in the Far West, - Lewis and Clark's Expedition; - Some of the works of Irving, of Poe, of Cooper, of Sims, Ruschenberger's series of Nat. History, &c. This last named, in several volumes, each devoted to a special 'ology, took up much time, because the terminology required very many references to the Greek and Latin Lexicons; but gave me in return some facility in the understanding and use of words. The novels I found ^{at} Mr. Leman's house, such as "Ten thousand a year", "Valentine Vox the Ventriloquist", &c. I devoured wholly at the expense of my lessons.

and her manners soft and winning, it is no wonder that my father idolized her. Doubtless he saw in her the spiritual re-incarnation of the sweet young woman who had absorbed and enjoyed the love of his young manhood. She had a delicious, fluty soprano voice. She sang only Scotch, English and Irish ballads; but she sang them with a sympathetic interpretation I have never heard equaled. Every body loved her, except, perhaps, the stepmother, whose attention was so completely absorbed by her own ailments that she could sympathize with nothing else. As my father was necessarily absent from the house the greater part of every day, time must have moved with leaden feet for this bright young creature. It is not surprising that in February 1850 she yielded to Uncle James urgent request that she go with his younger daughter, Feronia, to the Female Institute at Bradford Springs, Sumter County. Feronia was about thirteen years old, ^{and} was to enter the institution as a regular pupil; but ^{sister} ~~was~~ to be what was called "a parlor boarder."

and to take up fancy work and music. She had taken a very severe cold about a week before leaving home and was coughing much when she started for Bradford Springs. My father let her go with great reluctance; but she insisted that she would soon be well. Alas, the cough continued all through the Spring; and my father's anxiety increased daily, as shown by his weekly letters to me. Towards the last of May a hemorrhage occurred, and she was promptly brought home. She was in the City just long enough for Dr. Giddings to examine and prescribe for her. On reaching the summer home among the pines she seemed to rally in a way; but my father was not deceived, and his despondency seemed rather to increase as the summer wore on.

There was an epidemic of Yellow Fever in Charleston that summer. About the first of September the Cook, a young Irish woman, was taken down with it and was very ill, her case running to the black vomit stage. In a day or two after James was taken sick; and when his fever slackened my turn came. Together he and I spent about

ten days in bed and room. The cook also sur-
 vived but had to give up her situation and go
 to her friends to recuperate. They called her case
 yellow fever; they called ours, Dengue, or Stranger's
Fever. After we had resumed our school attendance
 but not yet strong enough enjoy our usual after-
 noon sports of Shimmy, or ball, James and I were
 sitting on the front steps when a negro from the planta-
 tion mounted on one of my father's horses stopped and
 handed ~~to~~ me two letters, one addressed to me and
 the other to Mr. Lannon. I opened mine with a
 foreboding sense of calamity. It was written by
 Mr. Benj. Ville Pontreux, my step-mother's brother,
 informing ^{me} that my father had died of a con-
 gestive chill before daylight that morning, and
 that I must take the train to Ladson's Station
 where a vehicle would meet me the next morning.
 I cannot now describe the sensation that overpowered me
 upon reading this letter, - further than by saying that
 the whole world seemed to have dropped from under my
 feet. Had it contained bad news about my sister, or
 my step-mother, I should ^{not} have been so stunned for I knew
 the precarious condition of both. But my father! - the
 strong, active, self-reliant man whom I had never

known to be sick; - the man who had so often prescribed for other sick people both white and black; in the very prime of his masterful manhood, for he was only forty-three years old; - that he could die from disease of any kind was a thought that had never come to me.

I reached home by two o'clock the next afternoon; saw his pale, care-marked face, saw the coffin lid screwed down and in decayed condition, turned to receive ^{the} heart-breaking embrace of my grief-wracked Sister. The funeral cortege, which had ~~been~~ ^{been delayed} only for my arrival started at once for the burial place, some five miles distant. I will not dwell further on the gloom and anguish of the next few days. - I returned to the city to await the coming of a frost sufficiently severe ^{to make it safe to} return to the plantation and, in the meantime, to continue my school work. I could not study or take interest in anything; this image of that frost, without flower, my grief-wracked Sister, was constantly in my mind; and I longed for the frost to come. It did come early in November and I hastened home to find that Sister had steadily withered under her grief, and my step-mother, ^{was} scarcely able to keep out of bed. Uncle James and the country doctor, ^{thinking} that a change of environment might be beneficial and that Dr. Geddings might

be able to help her, prevailed on Sister to visit Cousin Eugenia (Mrs. Octavius F. Feltus) in Charleston. She consented to go, and, therefore, a few days after my arrival we carried her to ^{the} Steamboat for Charleston and my painful parting with her there was the last I saw of her in life. After three or four days of apparent improvement, a severe hemorrhage came on and her sweet spirit took its flight to the longed for Spirit home. We laid her by her mother's side, near by her father's still fresh grave.

My uncle kept me busy gathering up my father's cattle, and attending to plantation matters, for there was no under overseer on Limby plantation, as on the others under my father's Superintendence, because it was his place of winter residence, and, therefore, immediately under his personal oversight. About the first of December, Uncle Solomon came to visit Uncle James, and it was suggested that I ^{wish him} go back to Williamsburg to visit my Grandmother and other kindred around the old home place.

My thoughtful Uncle no doubt saw that the household gloom was pressing heavily upon me and that this was ^a good way to give my spirit a chance to react, or at least to recover some of its normal tone.

You can readily understand, my dears, that every thing animate and inanimate about the house and