

[Miss Sedgwick]

## THE SLAVE AND SLAVE-OWNER.

"I would rather be anything than a slave, — except a slave-owner!" said a wise and good man. The slave-owner inflicts wrongs, — the slave but suffers it. He has friends and champions by thousands. Some men live only to defend and save him. Many are willing to fight for him. Some even to die for him.

The most effective romance of our times has been written for slaves. The genius of more than one of our best poets has been consecrated to them. They divide the hearts and councils of our great nation. They are daily remembered in the prayers of the faithful. They are the most earnest topic of the christian world.

But the slave-owner! who weeps, who prays, who lives, who dies for him! True, he is of the boasted Saxon race, or descended from the brilliant Gaul, or gifted Celt. He is enriched by the transmitted civilization of all ages. He has been nurtured by christian institutions. To him have been opened the fountains of Divine truth. But

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from this elevation he is to be dragged down by the mill-stone of slavery.

If he be a rural landlord, he looks around: upon, his ancestral possessions, and sees the curse of slave-ownership upon them, — he knows the time must come when "the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall." To him the onward! tendencies of the age are reversed. His movement is steadily backward.

To the slave are held out the rewards of fortitude, of long suffering, of meekness, of patience in tribulation. What and where are the promises to the slave-owner?

Thousands among them are in a false position. They are the involuntary maintainers of wrong, and transmitters of evil. Hundreds among them have scrupulous consciences and tender feelings. They use power gently. They feed their servants bountifully. They nurse the sick kindly,—and devote weary days to their instruction. But alas! they live under the laws of slave-owners. They are forbidden to teach the slave to read, write, or cipher, to give them the means of independent progress and increasing light. Their teaching; is as bootless as the labor of Sisyphus! most wearisome and disheartening.

The great eras of domestic life, bright to the thoughtless slave, are dark with forecasting shadows to the slave-owner. The mother cannot for-

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get her sorrows, because a man-child is born. If she dare contemplate his future, she sees that the activities of his nature must be repressed, his faculties but half developed, his passions stimulated by irresponsible power, inflamed by temptation, and solicited by convenient opportunity. She knows that his path in life must be more and more entangled as he goes onward, — darker and darker with the ever-deepening misery of this cruel institution.

Is it a “merry marriage-bell” that rings in the ear of a slave-owning mother for the bridal of her daughter? Does not her soul recoil from the possible (probable?) evils before her child; to be placed, perchance, on an isolated plantation, environed by

natural enemies to; see, it may be, the brothers and sisters of her own children follow their slave-mother to the field, or severed from her to be sold at the slave-market ?

Compared with these miseries of the slave-owner, what are the toils and stripes of the slave? what his labor without stimulus or requital? what his degradation to a chattel? what the deprivation of security to the ties of kindred, and the annulling of that relation which is their source and chiefest blessing ?

The slave looks forward with ever-growing hope to the struggle that must come. He joyfully "smells the battle afar off." The slave-owner folds his arms, and shuts his eyes in paralyzing

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despair. He hears the fearful threatenings of the gathering storm. He knows it must come, — to him fatally. It is only a question of time!

Who would not " rather be a slave than a slave-owner ? "

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "C. M. Sedgwick". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned at the bottom of the page.