THE OLD NEGRO IN HIS CABIN.

A Southern Woman's View of the Colored Man's Destiny.

(From the New York Sun.)

Being a subscriber to the Sun, I have been reading the many articles published in your valuable paper on the negro and his needs, and it is very plain to see that the average Northern man, with all his cultivation and superior advantages, is altogether ignorant as to the darky and the South generally, and a total want of knowledge of these matters renders such a one totally incapable of forming a correct opinion. I think it but fair that these questions should be left to us of the South, who know the darkey and his wants so well.

Only yesterday a great burly, black negro came to my door, with hat in hand, respectfully soliciting the job of repairing a house about which I had spoken to him previously. After speaking to him about the work he wanted to do he drifted to the subject of the colored people, and stated that any colored man who would keep sober and attend to his business could make a living, as he was doing; that the trouble with the negro race was that they drank too much liquor and were too idle to prosper. He then went on to say:

"What would become of us negroes but for the white people? They are our friends. We have been brought up with them, and know and love them. Why do these Northern people bother over us so much? We don't want office; it don't suit us. We want to labor and be happy here in the South. We can't trust our own race, and I've got no use for the Northern man, either, if they who come down here putting in machinery are a sample. He treats the negro mean and cheats him out of his money, too. Our white people don't do that way. No, ma'am, I want to stay on right here." This man is only one of thousands whose ideas run in the same channel.

We of the South know how to treat the negroes. We know their requirements. The have their own schools and their own churches and we help them to get them, and then support them largely by taxation on our own property. Some of them own their farms and stock, while not a few own houses and lots in our towns and cities. Others are shiftless and indolent and never will have anything, but the same is also true of some of the other race.

It is sadly true that the negro as a moral proposition is far from perfect, and here lies much of the trouble. Education does not improve him in that respect, for many negroes who have the best school training are often immoral. They have a natural trait of lying and deceiving in their make-up, but we people of the South know how to make allowances for that. We may cultivate and improve them in many ways, but we can't make them over or change their original inheritance any more than you can change their color. So why push them on to occupy places that they are not fitted for and do not care for? Let them alone; we are their real friends and they are happy here.

We have a charming country home a few miles from our thriving little city, surrounded by several acres of forest trees, many acres of good farming lands adjoining. In the midst of this forest is a beautiful spring from which flows a pure stream of water that runs off like a thread of silver. The spring flows at the rate of sixty gallons per minute and supplies all on the farm with an abundance of pure water. Just in a stone's throw from the dwelling house, and in the cool and shady woods, dwells, in a comfortable cabin, an old, old negro. His step is slow, and his once strong form is bent and feeble; his eye is now dim and his hair and beard are snow white. He lives here content, at peace with God and man. In his cabin is a big old-fashioned fireplace, with its blazing logs. He has a good bed, with plenty to eat and to wear, with nothing to do but sit in his chimney corner and dream of the "happy days in Dixie, now gone by."

When this old man was young and strong, and happy and secure in his master's care, he knew and cared nothing for the ups and downs of life, nor did he realize any of the hardships of life. He had his duties only, his good master did all the rest. But after freedom came he must go, he must assume his cares and duties, he must look after and raise his family. He took up the burden as best he could, and after thirty-five years of toil and struggle in his changed capacity, with his children all grown up and married, his faithful old wife departed, then he turns with a yearning for his old home and the life on the old farm, and his own white folks. He wants to go back home, and when death claims him he wants to be buried in the old family graveyard, not with his own color, but with the loved forms of his old white friends. He hears of his young mater, who, when he left home after the war was sitting on the front porch of the old farm cottage with his blue-back speller on her knee, now a middle-aged man of affairs, and achieving such success as comes in the South only by those who work hard, and this is the message the old negro sent: "I toted you when you was young, now you tote me till I die."

The message was heeded. The old man was sent for and installed in his cabin and told to stay there and sit in the sunshine and enjoy himself the remainder of his days. Everything is furnished to him that is necessary to make this possible and he does his part to perfection.

There is a strange coincidence in connection with this story. The logs that the cabin is built of were cut and hewn by the same old man in his younger days. The cabin was removed from its original place and rebuilt to give a bit of picturesqueness to the forest, with little thought at the time that the old negro would ever occupy it again.

This is a true statement of facts, and it shows the feeling of the original owners of the negroes toward them. Now, if you do not believe this statement just come down and see for yourself, and that is just what you should do, and others, before expressing an opinion on the subject.

Mrs. J. J. Fretwell.

Anderson, S. C., February 20.

Poll Parrot Talk.

"It's all nonsense this continual josh about parrots swearing," remarked Frank Edwards, the Michigan avenue bird man, as he playfully chucked his aged cockatoo under the chin—or rather the bill.

"Most of the parrot stories, anyway, are myths," he continued, as the vicious bird crawled around his shoulder. "In all my experiences with parrots I have run across but three that swore, and one of these was a female with the worst kind of a vocabulary.

"But talking about birds swearing this cockatoo has a little history along that line. She used to belong to a saloon keeper, who had a very tough joint. The bird learned a heap of bad talk and had a vocabulary that would put a pirate to shame. The saloonist brought her to me to dispose of. I knew nothing of her history and sold her at once to a man who was looking for a Christmas present for his daughters. He took the bird home and the girls were delighted—for a while. But it wasn't long before the fond father brought the cockatoo back post haste and said I could sell it for a plugged nickel for all he cared. It was not only contaminating the whole household but was driving away all his friends and neighbors.

"Imagine the consternation of the two daughters, showing off the bird to their friends, when the dear old she-devil ripped out a string of oaths. It seems she has a peculiar habit of swearing every time she sees a woman, and you can't break her of it.

"Parrots are taught to speak simply by repeating words and simple sentences to them over and over. They don't know what they mean. They are just imitating sounds. Most every one teaches his bird to say, 'Polly wants a cracker;' it seems to be the foundation of all parrot learning. I once had a bird that I tried to keep from that one sentence, but somehow he heard it and sprung it on me one day.

"The more things a bird can say the more valuable he is. I have one I value at $50, which has a vocabulary of about 50 words. Parrots learn to speak because their tongues are more like those of human beings than any other bird. The cockatoo is the same, and the magpie and minor will also talk a bit."

Mr. Edwards has many other pets besides the parrots and cockatoos. He handles rabbits, birds of all kinds and goldfish in great numbers.—Detroit Journal.

One Idea of Happiness.

Along the upper Potomac, between Great Falls and Harper's Ferry, says the Saturday Evening Post, Grover Cleveland, when he was President, found great delight in fishing. Among the canal men and fishermen of the vicinity many interesting incidents of the eminent visitor's outings are repeated.

At the place on the Potomac known as Point of Rocks the President was fishing one day and, with democratic simplicity, chatting with some canal boatmen. One of the latter remarked that the people in that vicinity were very glad to see the President enjoying himself.

"Yes," said the President, "there are two ideal states of happiness in this world, and one of them is to fish and catch something," and he pointed to his string of bass.

"What's the other happy state?" ventured one of his auditors.

"The other great felicity," replied the President, pointing to one of the members of his party who had been casting his line diligently and with great enjoyment, but without other visible results, "is to fish and not catch anything."

— The average woman would rather be made love to in the poorest sort of fashion than to make love herself as it was never done before.

HIGH ENGLISH.

Correct Pronunciation, as a Rule, Obtains in the West.

The west has fewer mannerisms, fewer provincialisms, than any other section of the country. The westerner, making no pretensions to great culture, can visit any section of the land and cause little remark for divagations from the standard set by the most cultivated people of the section he visits. That which the rest of the country accepts as the standard of correct pronunciation, though seldom attaining it, characterizes the speech of the majority of the people of the west.

The west is the only section that does not badly misuse R. It is perhaps incorrect to say that the east and south misuse R; they hardly use it at all. In the east and many parts of the south R is, in effect, an auxiliary vowel except at the beginning of words. It merely lengthens the preceding vowel. Occasionally it receives a distinct vowel sound, that of Italian A. In many parts of the south it is not heard at all. While the Georgian says, "befoah," his Alabama neighbors say "befo'," deposing R from its position as a vowel or vowel modifier. In the west R is sounded with an approximation of correctness. Yet even the westerners do not give it its full value, as do the Irish and Scotch. Their strong enunciation of the letter sounds harsh to us, yet the letter is intended to be pronounced, and its use differentiates words liable to be confused by the ear.

The Anglo-Saxon seems to be doing his best to depose R. Were it not for the influence of the Irish and Scotch (and the influence of these Celts speaking an alien tongue is pretty powerful, though you do not often realize it), R would now be little more than a written letter, as silent as initial H in Spanish.—Leslie's Weekly.

Malice of Old Sarah Churchill.

An electioneering squib written in the reign of William III. describes the scenes of the hustings in Guildhall when the platform was crowded by "all the folks in furs, from sables, ermines and the skins of curs." Swift has mentioned a "Ballad Full of Puns," which was produced during the Westminster election of 1710. But we have more precise records of the deeply designed stroke of electioneering policy ascribed to old Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, who, wishing to annoy George Grimstone, who was opposing the success of her nominees, had a fresh edition printed of a very stupid comedy called "Love In a Hollow Tree," which had been written by Lord Grimstone and which, being heartily ashamed of it, he had suppressed. The implacable Sarah reprinted the silly play and affixed to it an engraving representing an elephant dancing on a tight rope.—London Telegraph.

Exonerated.

The judgment that was pronounced on the manuscript which a playwright had in his possession during the time of King William III. could be applied with equal propriety to the works of some modern writers which find presentation on the stage. Having been arrested and brought before the Earl of Nottingham on the charge of owning treasonable papers, he denied at great length all knowledge of the affair, saying that he was a poet and that the papers in question were only a roughly sketched play. The earl, however, examined them carefully, and finally, having settled the thing in his own mind, turned to the prisoner and said:

"I have heard your statement and read your manuscript, and as I fail to see any traces of a plot in either you may go."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Collecting Dog Tax With a gun.

Levi C. Devore, the assessor of Londondery Township, has found more dogs than any inhabitant ever dreamed could belong there.

Since the close of the hunting season Mr. Devore has been studying the last assessment relative to the owners of dogs, and concluded that many persons evaded the dog tax. In making his visits, he carries with him a pocket rifle. After assessing real estate and horses and cattle, he asks: "Do you own a dog?"

"No, sir," was the usual answer.

"Whose dog is that outside the door?"

"I don't know."

"Do you want him assessed?"

"No, sir."

"Then I will kill him," remarks the assessor.

He produces the rifle, but before he has time to go out to shoot the dog the owner says, "Don't kill him. I will pay the tax."

The assessor has killed but four dogs, while a very large number have been added to the tax list.—Philadelphia Press.

— By the record of the Cincinnati Express Gazette, it appears that there were twenty-two robberies in the United States in 1902. In the past thirteen years, according to the same authority, 328 railroad trains have been "held up" in the country and ninety-eight persons have been killed and 107 injured, mostly by gunshot wounds in the perpetration of the crimes.

Nancy Came Back.

The Colonel and I were riding along a Kansas highway when we came to a river in flood and a man sitting on a log holding a horse by the bridle. When asked about our chances for fording the stream the man replied:

"I wouldn't try it. Nancy and me was headed for Blissfield when this river stopped us. I said we couldn't go on. She said we could. I said I wouldn't try. She said she would."

"And did she make the crossing?" asked the Colonel.

"Noap. I told her she couldn't, and she didn't."

"You don't mean she was swept away?"

"That's what she was. The hoss didn't keep his feet a minit. I stood right here a lookin' when he turned over and over, and I jest got one glimpse of the ole woman as she throwed up her arms and went out of sight."

"And you are almost smiling about it," exclaimed the Colonel, in great indignation.

"I can't help it," replied the old man. "She was determined to hev her way if it killed her. I told her and told her, but she——."

He stopped short and his smile faded away. We heard a movement in the bushes close at hand, and as we turned the old man started off at his best speed. Five seconds later a bare-headed, bare-footed woman, with her wet garments clinging to her like a plaster mold, sprang out of the scrub with a club in her hand and took out after him. As they disappeared over a ridge half a mile away, she was almost near enough to hit him on the back.

A Miracle of Irrigation.

From Roy Stannard Baker's paper on irrigation in his series in the Century on "The Great Southwest": If ever men worked miracles, they have worked them here in these western valleys. If ever something was created from nothing these men have done it. Thirty-five years ago, the Salt River valley, into which we had driven, was all a parched desert, uninhabited save by a few lean Indians and two or three hardy traders, whom the sand and cactus crowded down close to the water of the river. It was a thousand miles to the nearest railroad—an unknown, desolated, forbidding land a part of the great Great American desert, which travelers said would never support human life. Today the Salt River valley, contains a population of over twenty-five thousand. It has three cities, one Phenix, the capital of Arizona, having electric lights, an electric car line, good hotels churches, and other buildings, residences surrounded by trees, lawns, and a wilderness of flowers. More than 125,000 acres of land round about are laid out in farms, highly cultivated, with orchards of oranges, almonds, olives, and figs, and grain and hay fields. Thousands of cattle feed in the rich meadows, and there are bees, chickens ducks, and ostriches unnumbered. Richer soil than this once desert valley does not exist anywhere in the world except in other once desert valleys. Here one may behold the startling spectacle of orange groves in bearing worth $1,000 an acre on one side of a fence, and bare cactus desert on the other, both having the same soil the same opportunities, but only one having water. Here, when a man builds his fence of cottonwood posts, such is the soil and such the water that the post stake root and grow into trees, so that the wire of many old fences is seen running through the center of large trees. Here a farmer rarely needs to use fertilizer, for the river comes in bearing rich silt and spreads it over his fields; and he may sometimes cut two or three or more crops a year from his alfalfa fields, and then pasture them during the winter—winter which is in reality a continual spring.

— A Pennsylvania father withdrew his objections to his daughter's marriage at the last moment and thus took all the fun out of it.

As to Signing Names.

Large firms which have a great deal of correspondence with women are often very much put to it to discover whether or not the writers of the letters they receive should be addressed as "Miss" or as "Mrs." Almost invariably there is nothing in the epistle to indicate. Lucy Smith signs her name Lucy Smith, apparently with the supremest confidence that the head of the firm will know she married John Smith in 1900, and has been happy ever since; and also that her name before she was married was Lucy Jones.

Then comes the by no means easily solved problem to the business people of how they shall address their letter to her. If they make the envelope read "Mrs. Lucy Smith," and that lady is a spinster, she is apt to become offended, and transfer her custom to some other house. If she is addressed as "Miss Lucy Smith," and is a matron, she's sure to get furious, and she remarks to whoever is nearby that if Boots, Shoes & Co. think she's an old maid she'll show them. So the astute manager of the mailing department is fain to write her down plain "Lucy Smith" and let it go at that.

The postman must decide whether she's maid, wife or widow.

The rules that women should follow in signing their letters, business and social, are expounded every now and then in the inquiry department of newspapers, while whole pages in books of deportment are devoted to the subject, and still nine out of every ten letters received by an editor who handles a large correspondence are subscribed as before explained, without nary handle at all, or else written out flatly, "Mrs. Mary Jones," just as if Mary had been baptized "Mrs." and that word was a legitimate part of her.

There are also still a few ladies who complacently sign themselves "Mrs. Dr. Brown" or "Mrs. Capt. Green," just because their husbands have a right to those titles, and "what's his is hers." This is the worst mistake of all, of course, and, luckily, has at last disappeared from country newspapers.—Baltimore News.

A Trap for Moses.

They were trying a colored man before an Alabama Justice for stealing a hog, but the prosecution had a weak case until the prosecutor blandly observed:

"Now, Moses, you say you never stole the hog; but won't you kindly tell the jury why you threw the entrails into the river instead of burying them?"

"'Deed, sah," promptly replied Moses, "but yo' am mistooken. I did dun bury 'em right at de back end of de ga'den, sah, an' dey must be dar yit."

Love is Blind.

"Do you think you will like me just as well," she asked, "when I tell you my hair is dyed?"

"Yes, dear," answered her elderly lover. "I have known it all the time. Will you think any the less of me when I confess that my hair is a wig?"

"Not at all. I knew it was the first time I ever saw you."

After which the billing and cooing went on with greater tenderness than before.—Chicago Tribune.

— A Rhode Island feminine pedagogue began to punish the 180-pound captain of the school football team; his friends rushed to assist him; but she knocked one down with a straight shoulder blow, and then blacked another's eye by an upper cut. The muscular woman has her uses on occasion.

— Edyth—"If you were in my place would you accept Tom's proposal?" Mayme—"Sure. Why, if I had been in your place I would have accepted him last week when he proposed to me."

— Let your boy know that you think he will never amount to anything and he will not disappoint you.