

THE ESCAPE OF A CHILD FOURTEEN MONTHS OLD

There is found the following brief memorandum on the Records of the Underground Rail Road Book, dated July, 1857:

"A little child of fourteen months old was conveyed to its mother, who had been compelled to flee without it nearly nine months ago."

While the circumstances connected with the coming of this slave child were deeply interesting, no further particulars than the simple notice above were at that time recorded. Fortunately, however, letters from the good friends, who plucked this infant from the jaws of Slavery, have been preserved to throw light on this little one, and to show how true-hearted sympathizers with the Slave labored amid dangers and difficulties to save the helpless bondman from oppression. It will be observed, that both these friends wrote from Washington, D. C., the seat of Government, where, if Slavery was not seen in its worst aspects, the Government in its support of Slavery appeared in a most revolting light.

LETTER FROM "J. B."

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 12, 1857

DEAR SIR:-Some of our citizens, I am told, lately left here for Philadelphia, three of whom were arrested and brought back.

I beg you will inform me whether two others- (I., whose wife is in Philadelphia, was one of them), ever reached your city.

Tomorrow morning Mrs. Weem's, with her baby, will start for Philadelphia and see you probably over night. Yours Truly, J. B.

"J. B." was not only a trusty and capable conductor of the Under-ground Rail Road in Washington, but was also a practical lawyer, at the same time. His lawyer-like letter, in view of the critical nature of the case, contained but few words, and those few naturally enough were susceptible of more than one construction.

Doubtless those styled "our citizens,"-"three of whom were arrested and brought back,"-were causing great anxiety to this correspondent, not

knowing how soon he might find himself implicated in the "running off," etc. So, while he felt it to be his duty, to still aid the child, he was deter-mined, if the enemy intercepted his letter, he should not find much comfort or information. The cause was safe in such careful hands. The following letters, bearing on the same case, are also from another good conductor, who was then living in Washington.

LETTERS FROM E. L. STEVENS

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 8, 1857

MY DEAR SIR:-I write you now to let you know that the children of E. are yet well, and that Mrs. Arrah Weems will start with one of them for Philadelphia to-morrow or next day. She will be with you probably in the day train. She goes for the purpose of making an effort to redeem her last child, now in Slavery. The whole amount necessary is raised, except about \$300. She will take her credentials with her, and you can place the most implicit reliance on her statements. The story in regard to the Weems' family was published in Frederick Douglass' paper two years ago. Since then the two middle boys have been redeemed and there is only one left in Slavery, and he is in Alabama. The master has agreed to take for him just what he gave, \$1100. Mr. Lewis Tappan has his letter and the money, except the amount specified. There were about \$5000 raised in England to redeem this family, and they are now all free except this one. And there never was a more excellent and worthy family than the Weems' family. I do hope, that Mrs. W. will find friends who can advance the amount required.

Truly Yours, E. L. STEVENS

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 13th, 1857

MY FRIEND:-Your kind letter in reply to mine about Arrah was duly received. As she is doubtless with you before this, she will explain all. I propose that a second jour-ney be made by her or some one else, in order to take the other. They have been a great burden to the good folks here and should have been at home long ere this. Arrah will explain everything. I want, however, to say a word in her behalf. If there is a person in the world, that deserves the hearty co-operation of every friend of humanity, that person is Arrah Weems, who now, after a long series of self-sacrificing labor to aid others in their struggle for their God-given rights, solicits a small amount to redeem the last one of her own children in Slavery. Never have I had my sympathies so aroused in behalf of any object as in behalf of this most worthy family. She can tell you what I have done. And I do hope, that our friends in Philadelphia and New York will assist her to make up the full amount required for the purchase of the boy.

After she does what she can in P., will you give her the proper direction about getting to New York and to Mr. Tappan's? Inform him of what she has done, &c.

Please write me as soon as you can as to whether she arrived, safely, &c. Give me your opinion, also, as to the proposal about the other. Had you not better keep the little one in P. till the other is taken there? Inform me also where E. is, how she is getting along, &c., who living with, &c. Yours Truly, E. L. S.

In this instance, also, as in the case of "J. B.," the care and anxiety of other souls, besides this child, crying for deliverance, weighed heavily on the mind of Mr. Stevens, as may be inferred from certain references in his letters. Mr. Stevens' love of humanity, and impartial freedom, even in those dark days of Slavery, when it was both unpopular and unsafe to allow the cries of the bondman to awaken the feeling of humanity to assist the suffering, was constantly leading him to take sides with the oppressed, and as he appears in this correspondence, so it was his wont daily to aid the helpless, who were all around him. Arrah Weems, who had the care of the child, alluded to so touchingly by Mr. Stevens, had known, to her heart's sorrow, how intensely painful it was to a mother's feelings to have her children torn from her by a cruel master and sold. For Arrah had had a number of children sold, and was at that very time striving diligently to raise money to redeem the last one of them. And through such kind-hearted friends as Mr. Stevens, the peculiar hardships of this interesting family of Weems' were brought to the knowledge of thousands of philanthropists in this country and England, and liberal contributions had already been made by friends of the Slave on both sides of the ocean. It may now be seen, that while this child had not been a conscious sufferer from the wicked system of Slavery, it had been the object of very great anxiety and suffering to several persons, who had individually periled their own freedom for its redemption. This child, however, was safely brought to the Vigilance Committee, in Philadelphia, and was duly forwarded, via friends in New York, to its mother, in Syracuse, where she had stopped to work and wait for her little one, left behind at the time she escaped.

"FLEEING GIRL OF FIFTEEN," IN MALE ATTIRE

PROFESSORS H. AND T. OFFER THEIR SERVICES-CAPTAINS B. ALSO ARE ENLISTED -SLAVE-TRADER GRASPING TIGHTLY HIS PREY, BUT SHE IS RESCUED- LONG CONFLICT, BUT GREAT TRIUMPH-ARRIVAL ON THANKSGIVING DAY, NOV. 25, 1855.

It was the business of the Vigilance Committee, as it was clearly understood by the friends of the Slave, to assist all needy fugitives, who might in any way manage to reach Philadelphia, but, for various reasons, not to send agents South to incite slaves to run away, or to assist them in so doing. Sometimes, however, this rule could not altogether be conformed to. Cases, in some instances, would appeal so loudly and forcibly to humanity, civilization, and Christianity, that it would really seem as if the very stones would cry out, unless something was done. As an illustration of this point, the story of the young girl, which is now to be related, will afford the most striking proof. At the same time it may be seen how much anxiety, care, hazard, delay and material aid, were required in order to effect the deliverance of some who were in close places, and difficult of access. It will be necessary to present a considerable amount of correspondence in this case, to bring to light the hidden mysteries of this narrative. The first letter, in explanation, is the following:

LETTER FROM J. BIGELOW, ESQ.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 27, 1854

MR. WM. STILL-Dear Sir:-I have to thank you for the prompt answer you had the kindness to give to my note of 22d inst. Having found a correspondence so quick and easy, and withal so very flattering, I address you again more fully.

The liberal appropriation for transportation has been made chiefly on account of a female child of ten or eleven years old, for whose purchase I have been authorized to offer \$700 (refused), and for whose sister I have paid \$1,600, and some \$1,000 for their mother, &c.

This child sleeps in the same apartment with its master and mistress, which adds to the difficulty of removal. She is some ten or twelve miles from the city, so that really the chief hazard will be in bringing her safely to town, and in secreting her until a few days of storm shall have abated. All this, I think, is now provided for with entire safety.

The child has two cousins in the immediate vicinity; a young man of some twenty-two years of age, and his sister, of perhaps seventeen--both Slaves, but bright and clear-headed as anybody. The young man I have seen often--the services of both seem indispensable to the main object suggested; but having once rendered the service, they cannot, and ought not return to Slavery. They look for freedom as the reward of what they shall now do.

Out of the \$300, cheerfully offered for the whole enterprise, I must pay some reasonable sum for transportation to the city and sustenance while here. It cannot be much; for the balance, I shall give a draft, which will be promptly paid on their arrival in New York.

If I have been understood to offer the whole \$300, it shall be paid, though I have meant as above stated. Among the various ways that have been suggested, has been that of fating all of them into the ears here; that, I think, will be found impracticable. I find so

much vigilance at the depot, that I would not deem it safe, though in any kind of carriage they might leave in safety at any time. All the rest I leave to the experience and sagacity of the gentleman who maps out the enterprise.

Now I will thank you to reply to this and let me know that it reaches you in safety, and is not put in a careless place, whereby I may be endangered; and state also, whether all my propositions are understood and acceptable, and whether, (pretty quickly after I shall inform you that all things are ready), the gentleman will make his appearance?

I live alone. My office and bedroom, &c., are at the corner of E. and 7th streets, opposite the east end of the General Post Office, where any one may call upon me.

It would, of course, be imprudent, that this letter, or any other written particulars, be in his pockets for fear of accident. Yours very respectfully, J. BIGELOW.

*While this letter clearly brought to light the situation of things, its author, however, had scarcely begun to conceive of the numberless difficulties which stood in the way of before the work could be accomplished. The information which Mr. Bigelow's letter contained of the painful situation of this young girl was submitted to different parties who could be trusted, with a view of finding a person who might possess sufficient courage to undertake to bring her away. Amongst those consulted were two or three captains who had, on former occasions done good service in the cause. One of these captains was known in Underground Rail-Road circles as the "powder boy." * He was willing to undertake the work, and immediately concluded to make a visit to Washington, to see how the "land lay." Accordingly in company with another Underground Rail Road captain, he reported himself one day to Mr. Bigelow with as much assurance as if he were on an errand for an office under the government. The impression made on Mr. Bigelow's mind may be from the following letter; it may also be seen that he was folly alive to the necessity of precautionary measures.*

LETTER FROM LAWYER BIGELOW

WASHINGTON, D. C., September 9th, 1855.

MR. WM. STILL, DEAR SIR:-I strongly hope the little matter of business so long pending and about which I have written you so many times, will take a move now. I have the promise that the merchandize shall be delivered in this city tonight. Like so many other promises, this also may prove a failure, though I have reason to believe that it will not, I shall, however, know before I mail this note. In case the goods arrive here I shall hope to see your long-talked of "Professional gentleman" in Washington, as soon as possible. He will find me by the enclosed card, which, shall be a satisfactory

introduction for him. You have never given me his name, nor am I anxious to know it. But on a pleasant visit made last fall to friend Wm. Wright, in Adams Co., I suppose I accidentally teamed it to be a certain Dr. H-, Well, let him come.

I had an interesting call a week ago from two gentlemen, masters of vessels, and brothers, one of whom, I understand, you know as the "powder boy." I had a little light freight for them; but not finding enough other freight to ballast their craft, they went down the river looking for wheat, and promising to return soon. I hope to see them often.

I hope this may find you returned from your northern trip,* as your time proposed was out two or three days ago.

I hope if the whole particulars of Jane Johnson's case+ are printed, you will send me the copy as proposed.

I forwarded some of her things to Boston a few days ago, and had I known its importance in court, I could have sent you one or two witnesses who would prove that her freedom was intended by her before she left Washington, and that a man was engaged here to go on to Philadelphia the same day with her to give notice there of her case, though I think he failed to do so. It was beyond all question her purpose, before leaving Washington and provable too, that if Wheeler should make her a free woman by taking her to a free state " to use it rather."

**He had been engaged at different times in carrying powder in his boat from a powder magazine, and from this circumstance, was familiarly called the "Powder Boy."*

**Mr. Bigelow's correspondent had been on a visit to the fugitives to Canada.*

+ Jane Johnson of the Passmore Williamson Slave Case.

Tuesday, 11th September. The attempt was made on Sunday to forward the merchandize, but failed through no fault of any of the parties that I now know of. It will be repeated soon, and you shall know the result.

"Whorra for Judge Kane." I feel so indignant at the man, that it is not easy to write the foregoing sentence, and yet who is helping our cause like Kane and Douglas, not forgetting Stringfellow. I hope soon to know that this reaches you in safety. It often happens that light freight would be offered to Captain B., but the owners cannot by possibility advance the amount of freight. I wish it were possible in some such extreme cases, that after advancing all they have, some public fund should be found to pay the balance or at least lend it.

[I wish here to caution you against the supposition that I would do any act, or say a word towards helping servants to escape. Although I hate slavery so much, I keep my hands clear of any such wicked or illegal act.] Yours, very truly, J. B.

Will you recollect, hereafter, that in any of my future letters, in which I may use [] whatever words may be within the brackets are intended to have no signification

whatever to you, only to blind the eyes of the uninitiated. You will find an example at the close of my letter.

Up to this time the chances seemed favorable of procuring the ready services of either of the above mentioned captains who visited Lawyer Bigelow for the removal of the merchandize to Philadelphia, providing the shipping master could have it in readiness to suit their convenience. But as these captains had a number of engagements at Richmond, Petersburg, &c., it was not deemed altogether safe to rely upon either of them, consequently in order to be prepared in case of an emergency, the matter was laid before two professional gentlemen who were each occupying chairs in one of the medical colleges of Philadelphia. They were known to be true friends of the slave, and had possessed withal some experience in Underground Rail Road matters. Either of these professors was willing to undertake the operation, provided arrangements could be completed in time to be carried out during the vacation. In this hopeful, although painfully indefinite position the matter remained for more than a year; but the correspondence and anxiety increased, and with them disappointments and difficulties multiplied. The hope of Freedom, however, buoyed up the heart of the young slave girl during the long months of anxious waiting and daily expectation for the hour of deliverance to come. Equally true and faithful also did Mr. Bigelow prove to the last; but at times he had some painfully dark seasons to encounter, as may be seen from the subjoined letter:

WASHINGTON, D. C., October 6th, 1855.

MR. STILL, DEAR SIR:-I regret exceedingly to learn by your favor of 4th instant, that all things are not ready. Although I cannot speak of any immediate and positive danger. [Yet it, is well known that the city is full of incendiaries.]

Perhaps you are aware that any colored citizen is liable at any hour of day or night without any show of authority to have his house ransacked by constables, and if others do it and commit the most outrageous depredations none but white witnesses can convict them. Such outrages are always common here, and no kind of property exposed to colored protection only, can be considered safe. [I don't say that much liberty should not be given to constables on account of numerous runaways, but it don't always work for good.] Before advertising they go round and offer rewards to sharp colored men of per-haps one or two hundred dollars, to betray runaways, and having discovered their hiding-place, seize them and then cheat their informers out of the money.

[Although a law-abiding man,] I am anxious in this case of innocence to raise no conflict or suspicion. [Be sure that the manumission is full and legal.] And as I am

powerless without your aid, I pray you don't lose a moment in giving me relief. The idea of waiting yet for weeks seems dreadful; do reduce it to days if possible, and give me notice of the earliest possible time.

The property is not yet advertised, but will be, [and if we delay too long, may be sold and lost.]

It was a great misunderstanding, though not your fault, that so much delay would be necessary. [I repeat again that I must have the thing done legally, therefore, please get a good lawyer to draw up the deed of manumission.] Yours Truly, J. BIGELOW.

Great was the anxiety felt in Washington. It is certainly not too much to say, that an equal amount of anxiety existed in Philadelphia respecting the safety of the merchandise. At this juncture Mr. Bigelow had come to the conclusion that it was no longer safe to write over his own name, but that he would do well to henceforth adopt the name of the renowned Quaker, Wm. Penn, (he was worthy of it) as in the case of the following letter:

WASHINGTON, D. C., November 10th, 1855.

DEAR SIR: ---Doctor T. presented my card last night about half past eight which I instantly recognized. I, however, soon became suspicious, and afterwards confounded, to find the doctor using your name and the well known names of Mr. McK. and Mr. W. and yet, neither he nor I could conjecture the object of his visit.

The doctor is agreeable and sensible, and doubtless a true-hearted man. He seemed to seethe the whole matter as I did, and was embarrassed. He had nothing to propose, no information to give of the "P. Boy," or of any substitute, and seemed to want no particular information from me concerning my anxieties and perils, though I stated them to him, but found him as powerless as myself to give me relief. I had an agreeable interview with the doctor till after ten, when he left, intending to take the cars at six, as I suppose he did do, this morning.

This morning after eight, I got your letter of the 9th, but it gives me but little enlightenment or satisfaction. You simply say that the doctor is a true man, which I cannot doubt, that you thought it best we should have an interview, and that you supposed I would meet the expenses. You informed me also that the "P. Boy" left for Richmond, on Friday, the 2d, to be gone the length of time named in your last, I must infer that to be ten days though in your last you assured me that the "P. Boy" would certainly start for this place (not Richmond) in two or three days, though the difficulty about freight might cause delay, and the whole enterprise might not be accomplished under ten days, &c., &c. That time having elapsed and I having agreed to an extra fifty dollars to ensure prompt-ness. I have scarcely left my office since, except for my hasty meals, awaiting his arrival. You now inform me he has gone to Richmond, to be gone ten days, which will expire to-morrow, but you do not say he will return here or to

Phila., or where, at the expiration of that time, and Dr. T. could tell me nothing whatever about him. Had he been able to tell me that this best plan, which I have so long rested upon, would fail, or was abandoned, I could then understand it, but he says no such thing, and you say, as you have twice be-fore said, "ten days more."

Now, my dear sir, after this recapitulation, can you not see that I have reason for great embarrassment? I have given assurances, both here and in New York, founded on your assurances to me, and caused my friends in the latter place great anxiety, so much that I have had no way to explain my own letters but by sending your last two to Mr. Tappan. I cannot doubt, I do not, but that you wish to help me, and the cause too, for which both of us have made many and large sacrifices with no hope of reward in this world. If in this case I have been very urgent since September Dr. T. can give you some of my reasons, they have not been selfish.

The whole matter is in a nutshell. Can I, in your opinion, depend on the "P. Boy," and when ?

If he promises to come here next trip, will he come, or go to Richmond ? This I think is the best way. Can I depend on it?

Dr. T. promised to write me some explanation and give some advice, and at first I thought to await his letter, but on second thought concluded to tell you how I feel, as I have done.

Will you answer my questions with some explicitness, and without delay? I forgot to inquire of Dr. T. who is the head of your Vigilance Committee, whom I may address concerning other and further operations ? Yours very truly, WM. PENN.

P. S. I ought to say, that I have no doubt but there were good reasons for the P. Boy's going to Richmond instead of W.; but what can they be?

Whilst there are a score of other interesting letters, bearing on this case, the above must suffice, to give at least, an idea of the perplexities and dangers attending its early history. Having accomplished this end, a more encouraging and pleasant phase of the transaction may now be introduced. Here the difficulties, at least very many of them, vanish, yet in one respect, the danger became most imminent. The following letter shows that the girl had been successfully rescued from her master, and that a reward of five hundred dollars had been offered for her.

WASHINGTON, D. C., October 12, 1855. MR. WM. STILL:- AS YOU PICK UP ALL THE NEWS THAT IS STIRRING, I CONTRIBUTE A FEW SCRAPS TO YOUR STOCK, GOING TO SHOW THAT THE POOR SLAVE-HOLDEES HAVE THEIR TROUBLES AS WELL AS OTHER PEOPLE.

FOUR HEAVY LOSSES ON ONE SMALL SCRAP CUT FROM A SINGLE NUMBER OF THE " SUN!" HOW VEXATIOUS! HOW PROVOKING! ON THE

OTHER HAND, THINK OP THE POOR, TIMID, BREATHLESS, FLYING CHILD OF FIFTEEN! FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAES REWARD! OH, FOR SUCCOR! To WHOM IN ALL THIS WIDE LAND OF FREEDOM SHALL SHE FLEE AND FIND SAFETY? ALAS!-ALAS !-THE LAW POINTS TO NO ONE!

IS SHE STILL RUNNING WITH BLEEDING FEET?* OR HIDES SHE IN SOME COLD CAVE, TO REST AND STARVE? "\$500 REWARD." YOURS, FOR THE WEAK AND THE POOR. PERISH THE REWARD. J. B.

Having thus succeeded in getting possession of, and secreting this fleeing child of fifteen, as best they could, in Washington, all concerned were compelled to "possess their souls in patience," until the storm had passed. Meanwhile, the "child of fifteen" was christened "Joe Wright," and dressed in male attire to prepare for traveling as a lad. As no opportunity had hitherto presented itself, whereby to prepare, the "package" for shipment, from Washington, neither the "powder boy" nor Dr. T.,+ was prepared to attend to the removal, at this critical moment. The emergency of the case, however, cried loudly for aid. The other professional gentleman (Dr. EL), was now appealed to, but his engagements in the college forbade his absence before about Thanksgiving day, which was then six weeks off. This fact was communicated to Washington, and it being the only resource left, the time named was necessarily acquiesced in. In the interim, "Joe" was to perfect herself in the art of wearing pantaloons, and all other male rig. Soon the days and weeks slid by, although at first the time for waiting seemed long, when, according to promise, Dr. H. was in Washington, with his horse and buggy prepared for duty. The impressions made by Dr. H., on William Penn's mind, at his first interview, will doubtless be interesting to all concerned, as may be seen in the following letter:

WASHINGTON, D. C., November 26, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR:-A recent letter from my friend, probably has led you to expect this from me. He was delighted to receive yours of the 23d, stating that the boy was all right. He found the "Prof. gentleman" a perfect gentleman; cool, quiet, thoughtful, and perfectly competent to execute his undertaking. At the first three minutes of their inter-view, he felt assured that all would be right. He, and all concerned, give you and that gentleman sincere thanks for what you have done. May the blessings of Him, who cares for the poor, be on your heads.

The especial object of this, is to inform you that there is a half dozen or so of packages here, pressing for transportation; twice or thrice that number are also pressing, but less so than the others. Their aggregate means will average, say, \$10 each; besides these, we know of a few, say three or four, able and smart, but utterly destitute,

and kept so purposely by their oppressors. For all these, we feel deeply interested; \$10 each would not be enough for the "powder boy." Is there any fund from which a pittance could be spared to help these poor creatures? I don't doubt but that they would honestly repay a small loan as soon as they could earn it. I know full well, that if you begin with such cases, there is no boundary at which you can stop. For years, one half at least, of my friend's time here has been gratuitously given to cases of distress among this class. He never expects or desires to do less; he literally has the poor always with him. He knows that it is so with you also, therefore, he only states the case, being especially anxious for at least those to whom I have referred.

I think a small lot of hard coal might always be sold here from the vessel at a profit. Would not a like lot of Cumberland coal always sell in Philadelphia?

My friend would be very glad to see the powder boy here again, and if he brings coal, there are those here, who would try to help him sell.

Reply to your regular correspondent as usual.

WM. PENN

At the time this letter was written, she was then under Mr. B.'s protection in Washington, and had to be so kept for six weeks. His question, therefore, "is she still running with bleeding feet," etc., was simply a precautionary step to blind any who might perchance investigate the matter.

+ Dr. T. was one of the professional gentlemen alluded to above, who had expressed a willingness to act as an agent in the matter.

By the presence of the Dr., confidence having been reassured that all would be right, as well as by the "inner light," William Penn experienced a great sense of relief. Everything having been duly arranged, the doctor's horse and carriage stood waiting before the White House (William Penn preferred this place as a starting point, rather than before his own office door). It being understood that "Joe" was to act as coachman in passing out of Washington, at this moment he was called for, and in the most polite and natural manner, with the fleetness of a young deer, he jumped into the carriage, took the reins and whip, whilst the doctor and William Penn were cordially shaking hands and bidding adieu. This done, the order was given to Joe, "drive on." Joe bravely obeyed. The faithful horse trotted off willingly, and the doctor sat in his carriage as composed as though he had succeeded in procuring an honorable and lucrative office from the White House, and was returning home to tell his wife the good news. The doctor had some knowledge of the roads, also some acquaintances in Maryland, through which State he had to travel; therefore, after leaving the suburbs of Washington, the doctor took the reins in his own hands, as he felt that he was more experienced as a driver than his young coachman. He was also mindful of the fact, that, before reaching Pennsylvania, his faithful beast would need feeding several times,

and that they consequently would be obliged to pass one or two nights at least in Maryland, either at a tavern or farmhouse.

In reflecting upon the matter, it occurred to the doctor, that in earlier days, he had been quite intimately acquainted with a farmer and his family (who were slave-holders), in Maryland, and that he would about reach their house at the end of the first day's journey. He concluded that he could do no better than to renew his acquaintance with his old friends on this occasion. After a very successful day's travel, night came on, and the doctor was safely at the farmer's door with his carriage and waiter boy; the doctor was readily recognized by the farmer and his family, who seemed glad to see him; indeed, they made quite a "fuss" over him. As a matter of strategy, the doctor made quite a "fuss" over them in return; nevertheless, he did not fail to assume airs of importance, which were calculated to lead them to think that he had grown older and wiser than when they knew him in his younger days. In casually referring to the manner of his traveling, he alluded to the fact, that he was not very well, and as it had been a considerable length of time since he had been through that part of the country, he thought that the drive would do him good, and especially the sight of did familiar places and people. The farmer and his family felt themselves exceedingly honored by the visit from the distinguished doctor, and manifested a marked willingness to spare no pains to render his night's lodging in every way comfortable.

The Dr. being an educated and intelligent gentleman, well posted on other questions besides medicine, could freely talk about farming in all its branches, and "niggers" too, in an emergency, so the evening passed off pleasantly with the Dr. in the parlor, and "Joe" in the kitchen. The Dr., however, had given "Joe" precept upon precept, "here a little, and there a little," as to how he should act in the presence of master white people, or slave colored people, and thus he was prepared to act his part with due exactness. Before the evening grew late, the Dr., fearing some accident, intimated, that he was feeling a "little languid," and therefore thought that he had better "retire." Furthermore he added, that he was "liable to vertigo," when not quite well, and for this reason he must have his boy "Joe" sleep in the room with him. "Simply give him a bed quilt and he will fare well enough in one corner of the room," said the Dr. The proposal was readily acceded to, and carried into effect by the accommodating host. The Dr. was soon in bed, sleeping soundly, and "Joe," in his new coat and pants, wrapped up in the bed quilt, in a corner of the room quite comfortably.

The next morning the Dr. arose at as early an hour as was prudent for a gentleman of his position, and feeling refreshed, partook of a good breakfast, and was ready, with his boy, "Joe," to prosecute their journey. Face, eyes, hope, and steps, were set as flint, Pennsylvania-ward. What time

the following day or night they crossed Mason and Dixon's line is not recorded on the Underground Rail Road books, but at four o'clock on Thanksgiving Day, the Dr. safely landed the "fleeing girl of fifteen" at the residence of the writer in Philadelphia. On delivering up his charge, the Dr. simply remarked to the writer's wife, "I wish to leave this young lad with you a short while, and I will call and see further about him." Without further explanation, he stepped into his carriage and hurried away, evidently anxious to report himself to his wife, in order to relieve her mind of a great weight of anxiety on his account. The writer, who happened to be absent from home when the Dr. called, returned soon afterwards. "The Dr. has been here" (he was the family physician), "and left this 'young lad,' and said, that he would call again and see about him," said Mrs. S. The "young lad" was sitting quite composedly in the dining room, with his cap on. The writer turned to him and inquired, "I suppose you are the person that the Dr. went to Washington after, are you not?" "No," said "Joe." "Where are you from then?" was the next question. "From York, sir." "From York? Why then did the Dr. bring you here?" was the next query, "the Dr. went expressly to Washington after a young girl, who was to be brought away dressed up as a boy, and I took you to be the person." Without replying "the lad" arose and walked out of the house. The querist, somewhat mystified, followed him, and then when the two were alone, "the lad" said, "I am the one the Dr. went after." After congratulating her, the writer asked why she had said, that she was not from Washington, but from York. She explained, that the Dr. had strictly charged her not to own to any person, except the writer, that she was from Washington, but from York. As there were persons present (wife, hired girl, and a fugitive woman), when the questions were put to her, she felt that it would be a violation of her pledge to answer in the affirmative. Before this examination, neither of the individuals present for a moment entertained the slightest doubt but that she was a "lad," so well had she acted her part in every particular. She was dressed in a new suit, which fitted her quite nicely, and with her unusual amount of common sense, she appeared to be in no respect lacking. To send off a prize so rare and remarkable, as she was, without affording some of the stockholders and managers of the Road the pleasure of seeing her, was not to be thought of. In addition to the Vigilance Committee, quite a number of persons were invited to see her, and were greatly astonished. Indeed

it was difficult to realize, that she was not a boy, even after becoming acquainted with the facts in the case.

The following is an exact account of this case, as taken from the Underground Rail Road records.

" THANKSGIVING DAY," Nov., 1855

Arrived, Ann Maria Weems, alias 'Joe Wright,' alias 'Ellen Capron,' from Washington, through the aid of Dr. H. She is about fifteen years of age, bright mulatto, well grown, smart and good-looking. For the last three years, or about that length of time, she has been owned by Charles M. Price, a negro trader, of Rockville, Maryland. Mr. P. was given to 'intemperance,' to a very great extent, and gross 'profanity.' He buys and sells many slaves in the course of the year. 'His wife is cross and peevish.' She used to take great pleasure in 'torturing' one 'little slave boy.' He was the son of his master (and was owned by him); this was the chief cause of the mistress' spite."

Ann Maria had always desired her freedom from childhood, and although not thirteen, when first advised to escape, she received the suggestion without hesitation, and ever after that time waited almost daily, for more than two years, the chance to flee. Her friends were, of course, to aid her, and make arrangements for her escape. Her owner, fearing that she might escape, for a long time compelled her to sleep in the chamber with "her master and mistress;" indeed she was so kept until about three weeks before she fled. She left her parents living in Washington. Three of her brothers had been sold South from their parents. Her mother had been purchased for \$1,000, and one of her sisters for \$1,600 for freedom. Before Ann Maria was thirteen years of age \$700 was offered for her by a friend, who desired to procure her freedom, but the offer was promptly refused, as were succeeding ones repeatedly made. The only chance of procuring her freedom, depended upon getting her away on the Underground Rail Road. She was neatly attired in male habiliments, and in that manner came all the way from Washington. After passing two or three days with her new friends in Philadelphia, she was sent on (in male attire) to Lewis Tappan, of New York, who had likewise been deeply interested in her case from the be-ginning, and who held himself ready, as was understood, to cash a draft for three hundred dollars to compensate the man who might risk his own liberty in bringing her on from Washington. After having arrived safely in New York, she found a home and kind friends in the family of the Rev. A. N. Freeman, and received quite an ovation characteristic of an Underground Rail Road.

After having received many tokens of esteem and kindness from the friends of the slave in New York and Brooklyn, she was carefully forwarded on to Canada, to be educated at the "Buxton Settlement."

An interesting letter, however, from the mother of Ann Maria, conveying the intelligence of her late great struggle and anxiety in laboring to free her last child from Slavery is too important to be omitted, and hence is inserted in connection with this narrative.

LETTER FROM THE MOTHER

WASHINGTON, D. C., September 19th, 1857

WM. STILL, ESQ., Philadelphia, Pa. SIR:-I have just sent for my son Augustus, in Alabama. I have sent eleven hundred dollars which pays for his body and some thirty dollars to pay his fare to Washington. I borrowed one hundred and eighty dollars to make out the eleven hundred dollars. I was not very successful in Syracuse. I collected only twelve dollars, and in Rochester only two dollars. I did not know that the season was so unpropitious. The wealthy had all gone to the springs. They must have returned by this time. I hope you will exert yourself and help me get a part of the money I owe, at least. I am obliged to pay it by the 12th of next month. I was unwell when I returned through Philadelphia, or I should have called. I had been from home five weeks.

My son Augustus is the last of the family in Slavery. I feel rejoiced that he is soon to be free and with me, and of course feel the greatest solicitude about raising the one hundred and eighty dollars I have borrowed of a kind friend, or who has borrowed it for me at bank. I hope and pray you will help me as far as possible. Tell Mr. Douglass to remember me, and if he can, to interest his friends for me.

You will recollect that five hundred dollars of our money was taken to buy the sister of Henry H. Garnett's wife. Had I been able to command this I should not be necessitated to ask the favors and indulgences I do. I am expecting daily the return of Augustus, and may Heaven grant him a safe deliverance and smile propitiously upon you and all kind friends who have aided in his return to me.

Be pleased to remember me to friends, and accept yourself the blessing and prayers of your dear friend,

EARRO WEEMS.

P. S. Direct your letter to E. L. Stevens, in Duff Green's Row, Capitol Hill, Washington, D. C.

E. W.