

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY MARRIED LIFE, 1836-1840.

PROFESSOR STOWE'S INTEREST IN POPULAR EDUCATION.--HIS DEPARTURE FOR

EUROPE.--SLAVERY RIOTS IN CINCINNATI.--BIRTH OF TWIN DAUGHTERS.--

PROFESSOR STOWE'S RETURN AND VISIT TO COLUMBUS.--DOMESTIC TRIALS.--

AIDING A FUGITIVE SLAVE.--AUTHORSHIP UNDER DIFFICULTIES.--A BEECHER

ROUND ROBIN.

The letter to her friend Georgiana May, begun half an hour before her wedding, was not completed until nearly two months after that event.

Taking it from her portfolio, she adds:--

"Three weeks have passed since writing the above, and my husband and self are now quietly seated by our own fireside, as domestic as any pair of tame fowl you ever saw; he writing to his mother, and I to you. Two days after our marriage we took a wedding excursion, so called, though we would most gladly have been excused this conformity to ordinary custom had not necessity required Mr. Stowe to visit Columbus, and I had too much adhesiveness not to go too. Ohio roads at this season are no joke, I can tell you, though we were, on the whole, wonderfully taken care of, and our expedition included as many

pleasures as an expedition at this time of the year ever could.

"And now, my dear, perhaps the wonder to you, as to me, is how this momentous crisis in the life of such a wisp of nerve as myself has been transacted so quietly. My dear, it is a wonder to myself. I am tranquil, quiet, and happy. I look only on the present, and leave the future with Him who has hitherto been so kind to me. 'Take no thought for the morrow' is my motto, and my comfort is to rest on Him in whose house there are many mansions provided when these fleeting earthly ones pass away.

"Dear Georgy, naughty girl that I am, it is a month that I have let the above lie by, because I got into a strain of emotion in it that I dreaded to return to. Well, so it shall be no longer. In about five weeks Mr. Stowe and myself start for New England. He sails the first of May. I am going with him to Boston, New York, and other places, and shall stop finally at Hartford, whence, as soon as he is gone, it is my intention to return westward."

This reference to her husband as about to leave her relates to his sailing for Europe to purchase books for Lane Seminary, and also as a commissioner appointed by the State of Ohio to investigate the public school systems of the old world. He had long been convinced that higher education was impossible in the West without a higher grade of public schools, and had in 1833 been one of the founders in Cincinnati of "The College of Teachers," an institution that existed for ten

years, and exerted a widespread influence. Its objects were to popularize the common schools, raise the standard of teachers, and create a demand for education among the people. Professor Stowe was associated in this movement with many of the leading intellects of Ohio at that time, and among them were Albert Pickett, Dr. Drake, Smith Grimke, Archbishop Purcell, President A. H. McGuffey, Dr. Beecher, Lydia Sigourney, Caroline Lee Hentz, and others. Their influence finally extended to the state legislature, and it was concluded to authorize Professor Stowe, when abroad, to investigate and report upon the common school systems of Europe, especially Prussia.

He sailed from New York for London in the ship Montreal, Captain Champlin, on June 8, 1836, and carried with him, to be opened only after he was at sea, a letter from his wife, from which the following extract is made:--

"Now, my dear, that you are gone where you are out of the reach of my care, advice, and good management, it is fitting that you should have something under my hand and seal for your comfort and furtherance in the new world you are going to. Firstly, I must caution you to set your face as a flint against the 'cultivation of indigo,' as Elisabeth calls it, in any way or shape. Keep yourself from it most scrupulously, and though you are unprovided with that precious and savory treatise entitled 'Kemper's Consolations,' [Footnote: A ridiculous book from which Mr. Stowe derived endless amusement.] yet

you can exercise yourself to recall and set in order such parts thereof as would more particularly suit your case, particularly those portions wherewith you so much consoled Kate, Aunt Esther, and your unworthy handmaid, while you yet tarried at Walnut Hills. But seriously, dear one, you must give more way to hope than to memory. You are going to a new scene now, and one that I hope will be full of enjoyment to you. I want you to take the good of it.

"Only think of all you expect to see: the great libraries and beautiful paintings, fine churches, and, above all, think of seeing Tholuck, your great Apollo. My dear, I wish I were a man in your place; if I wouldn't have a grand time!"

During her husband's absence abroad Mrs. Stowe lived quietly in Cincinnati with her father and brothers. She wrote occasionally short stories, articles, and essays for publication in the "Western Monthly Magazine" or the "New York Evangelist," and maintained a constant correspondence with her husband by means of a daily journal, which was forwarded to him once a month. She also assisted her brother, Henry Ward, who had accepted a temporary position as editor of the "Journal," a small daily paper published in the city.

At this time the question of slavery was an exciting one in Cincinnati, and Lane Seminary had become a hotbed of abolition. The anti-slavery movement among the students was headed by Theodore D. Weld, one of their number, who had procured funds to complete his

education by lecturing through the South. While thus engaged he had been so impressed with the evils and horrors of slavery that he had become a radical abolitionist, and had succeeded in converting several Southerners to his views of the subject. Among them was Mr. J. G. Birney of Huntsville, Alabama, who not only liberated his slaves, but in connection with Dr. Gamaliel Bailey of Cincinnati founded in that city an anti-slavery paper called "The Philanthropist." This paper was finally suppressed, and its office wrecked by a mob instigated by Kentucky slaveholders, and it is of this event that Mrs. Stowe writes to her husband as follows:--

"Yesterday evening I spent scribbling for Henry's newspaper (the 'Journal') in this wise: 'Birney's printing-press has been mobbed, and many of the respectable citizens are disposed to wink at the outrage in consideration of its moving in the line of their prejudices.'

"I wrote a conversational sketch, in which I rather satirized this inconsistent spirit, and brought out the effects of patronizing any violation of private rights. It was in a light, sketchy style, designed to draw attention to a long editorial of Henry's in which he considers the subject fully and seriously. His piece is, I think, a powerful one; indeed, he does write very strongly. I am quite proud of his editorials; they are well studied, earnest, and dignified. I think he will make a first-rate writer. Both our pieces have gone to press to-day, with Charles's article on music, and we have had not a little diversion about our family newspaper.

"I thought, when I was writing last night, that I was, like a good wife, defending one of your principles in your absence, and wanted you to see how manfully I talked about it. Henry has also taken up and examined the question of the Seminole Indians, and done it very nobly."

Again:--

"The excitement about Birney continues to increase. The keeper of the Franklin Hotel was assailed by a document subscribed to by many of his boarders demanding that Birney should be turned out of doors. He chose to negative the demand, and twelve of his boarders immediately left, Dr. F. among the number. A meeting has been convoked by means of a handbill, in which some of the most respectable men of the city are invited by name to come together and consider the question whether they will allow Mr. Birney to continue his paper in the city. Mr. Greene says that, to his utter surprise, many of the most respectable and influential citizens gave out that they should go.

"He was one of the number they invited, but he told those who came to him that he would have nothing to do with disorderly public meetings or mobs in any shape, and that he was entirely opposed to the whole thing.

"I presume they will have a hot meeting, if they have any at all.

"I wish father were at home to preach a sermon to his church, for many of its members do not frown on these things as they ought."

"Later: The meeting was held, and was headed by Morgan, Neville, Judge Burke, and I know not who else. Judge Burnet was present and consented to their acts. The mob madness is certainly upon this city when men of sense and standing will pass resolutions approving in so many words of things done contrary to law, as one of the resolutions of this meeting did. It quoted the demolition of the tea in Boston harbor as being authority and precedent.

"A large body, perhaps the majority of citizens, disapprove, but I fear there will not be public disavowal. Even N. Wright but faintly opposes, and Dr. Fore has been exceedingly violent. Mr. Hammond (editor of the 'Gazette') in a very dignified and judicious manner has condemned the whole thing, and Henry has opposed, but otherwise the papers have either been silent or in favor of mobs. We shall see what the result will be in a few days.

"For my part, I can easily see how such proceedings may make converts to abolitionism, for already my sympathies are strongly enlisted for Mr. Birney, and I hope that he will stand his ground and assert his rights. The office is fire-proof, and inclosed by high walls. I wish he would man it with armed men and see what can be done. If I were a man I would go, for one, and take good care of at least one window.

Henry sits opposite me writing a most valiant editorial, and tells me to tell you he is waxing mighty in battle."

In another letter she writes:--

"I told you in my last that the mob broke into Birney's press, where, however, the mischief done was but slight. The object appeared to be principally to terrify. Immediately there followed a general excitement in which even good men in their panic and prejudice about abolitionism forgot that mobs were worse evils than these, talked against Birney, and winked at the outrage; N. Wright and Judge Burnet, for example. Meanwhile the turbulent spirits went beyond this and talked of revolution and of righting things without law that could not be righted by it. At the head of these were Morgan, Neville, Longworth, Joseph Graham, and Judge Burke. A meeting was convoked at Lower Market Street to decide whether they would permit the publishing of an abolition paper, and to this meeting able citizens were by name summoned.

"There were four classes in the city then: Those who meant to go as revolutionists and support the mob; those who meant to put down Birney, but rather hoped to do it without a mob; those who felt ashamed to go, foreseeing the probable consequence, and yet did not decidedly frown upon it; and those who sternly and decidedly reprehended it.

"The first class was headed by Neville, Longworth, Graham, etc.; the second class, though of some numbers, was less conspicuous; of the third, Judge Burnet, Dr. Fore, and N. Wright were specimens; and in the last such men as Hammond, Mansfield, S. P. Chase, [Footnote: Salmon P. Chase.] and Chester were prominent. The meeting in so many words voted a mob, nevertheless a committee was appointed to wait on Mr. Birney and ascertain what he proposed to do; and, strange to tell, men as sensible as Uncle John and Judge Burnet were so short-sighted as to act on that committee.

"All the newspapers in the city, except Hammond's ('Gazette') and Henry's (the 'Journal'), were either silent or openly 'mobocratic.' As might have been expected, Birney refused to leave, and that night the mob tore down his press, scattered the types, dragged the whole to the river, threw it in, and then came back to demolish the office.

"They then went to the houses of Dr. Bailey, Mr. Donaldson, and Mr. Birney; but the persons they sought were not at home, having been aware of what was intended. The mayor was a silent spectator of these proceedings, and was heard to say, 'Well, lads, you have done well, so far; go home now before you disgrace yourselves;' but the 'lads' spent the rest of the night and a greater part of the next day (Sunday) in pulling down the houses of inoffensive and respectable blacks. The 'Gazette' office was threatened, the 'Journal' office was to go next; Lane Seminary and the water-works also were mentioned as probable points to be attacked by the mob.

"By Tuesday morning the city was pretty well alarmed. A regular corps of volunteers was organized, who for three nights patrolled the streets with firearms and with legal warrant from the mayor, who by this time was glad to give it, to put down the mob even by bloodshed.

"For a day or two we did not know but there would actually be war to the knife, as was threatened by the mob, and we really saw Henry depart with his pistols with daily alarm, only we were all too full of patriotism not to have sent every brother we had rather than not have had the principles of freedom and order defended.

"But here the tide turned. The mob, unsupported by a now frightened community, slunk into their dens and were still; and then Hammond, who, during the few days of its prevalence, had made no comments, but published simply the Sermon on the Mount, the Constitution of Ohio, and the Declaration of Independence, without any comment, now came out and gave a simple, concise history of the mob, tracing it to the market-house meeting, telling the whole history of the meeting, with the names of those who got it up, throwing on them and on those who had acted on the committee the whole responsibility of the following mob. It makes a terrible sensation, but it 'cuts its way,' and all who took other stand than that of steady opposition from the first are beginning to feel the reaction of public sentiment, while newspapers from abroad are pouring in their reprehensions of the disgraceful conduct of Cincinnati. Another time, I suspect, such men as Judge

Burnet, Mr. Greene, and Uncle John will keep their fingers out of such a trap, and people will all learn better than to wink at a mob that happens to please them at the outset, or in any way to give it their countenance. Mr. Greene and Uncle John were full of wrath against mobs, and would not go to the meeting, and yet were cajoled into acting on that committee in the vain hope of getting Birney to go away and thus preventing the outrage.

"They are justly punished, I think, for what was very irresolute and foolish conduct, to say the least."

The general tone of her letters at this tune would seem to show that, while Mrs. Stowe was anti-slavery in her sympathies, she was not a declared abolitionist. This is still further borne out in a letter written in 1837 from Putnam, Ohio, whither she had gone for a short visit to her brother William. In it she says:--

"The good people here, you know, are about half abolitionists. A lady who takes a leading part in the female society in this place yesterday called and brought Catherine the proceedings of the Female Anti-Slavery Convention.

"I should think them about as ultra as to measures as anything that has been attempted, though I am glad to see a better spirit than marks such proceedings generally.

"To-day I read some in Mr. Birney's 'Philanthropist.' Abolitionism being the fashion here, it is natural to look at its papers.

"It does seem to me that there needs to be an intermediate society. If not, as light increases, all the excesses of the abolition party will not prevent humane and conscientious men from joining it.

"Pray what is there in Cincinnati to satisfy one whose mind is awakened on this subject? No one can have the system of slavery brought before him without an irrepressible desire to do something, and what is there to be done?"

On September 29, 1836, while Professor Stowe was still absent in Europe, his wife gave birth to twin daughters, Eliza and Isabella, as she named them; but Eliza Tyler and Harriet Beecher, as her husband insisted they should be called, when, upon reaching New York, he was greeted by the joyful news. His trip from London in the ship *Gladiator* had been unusually long, even for those days of sailing vessels, and extended from November 19, 1836, to January 20, 1837.

During the summer of 1837 Mrs. Stowe suffered much from ill health, on which account, and to relieve her from domestic cares, she was sent to make a long visit at Putnam with her brother, Rev. William Beecher. While here she received a letter from her husband, in which he says:--

"We all of course feel proper indignation at the doings of last

General Assembly, and shall treat them with merited contempt. This alliance between the old school (Presbyterians) and slaveholders will make more abolitionists than anything that has been done yet."

In December Professor Stowe went to Columbus with the extended educational report that he had devoted the summer to preparing; and in writing from there to his wife he says:--

"To-day I have been visiting the governor and legislators. They received me with the utmost kindness, and are evidently anticipating much from my report. The governor communicated it to the legislature to-day, and it is concluded that I read it in Dr. Hodges' church on two evenings, to-morrow and the day after, before both houses of the legislature and the citizens. The governor (Vance) will preside at both meetings. I like him (the governor) much. He is just such a plain, simple-hearted, sturdy body as old Fritz (Kaiser Frederick), with more of natural talent than his predecessor in the gubernatorial chair. For my year's work in this matter I am to receive \$500."

On January 14, 1838, Mrs. Stowe's third child, Henry Ellis, was born.

It was about this time that the famous reunion of the Beecher family described in Lyman Beecher's "Autobiography" occurred. Edward made a visit to the East, and when he returned he brought Mary (Mrs. Thomas Perkins) from Hartford with him. William came down from Putnam, Ohio, and George from Batavia, New York, while Catherine, Harriet, Henry,

Charles, Isabella, Thomas, and James were already at home. It was the first time they had ever all met together. Mary had never seen James, and had seen Thomas but once. The old doctor was almost transported with joy as they all gathered about him, and his eup of happiness was filled to overflowing when, the next day, which was Sunday, his pulpit was filled by Edward in the morning, William in the after-noon, and George in the evening.

Side by side with this charming picture we have another of domestic life outlined by Mrs. Stowe's own hand. It is contained in the following letter, written June 21, 1838, to Miss May, at New Haven, Conn.:--

MY DEAR, DEAR GEORGIANA,--Only think how long it is since I have written to you, and how changed I am since then--the mother of three children! Well, if I have not kept the reckoning of old times, let this last circumstance prove my apology, for I have been hand, heart, and head full since I saw you.

"Now, to-day, for example, I'll tell you what I had on my mind from dawn to dewy eve. In the first place I waked about half after four and thought, 'Bless me, how light it is! I must get out of bed and rap to wake up Mina, for breakfast must be had at six o'clock this morning.' So out of bed I jump and seize the tongs and pound, pound, pound over poor Mina's sleepy head, charitably allowing her about half an hour to get waked up in,--that being the quantum of time that it takes me,--or

used to. Well, then baby wakes--quâ, quâ, quâ, so I give him his breakfast, dozing meanwhile and soliloquizing as follows: "Now I must not forget to tell Mr. Stowe about the starch and dried apples"--doze--"ah, um, dear me! why doesn't Mina get up? I don't hear her," --doze--"a, um,--I wonder if Mina has soap enough! I think there were two bars left on Saturday"--doze again--I wake again. "Dear me, broad daylight! I must get up and go down and see if Mina is getting breakfast." Up I jump and up wakes baby. "Now, little boy, be good and let mother dress, because she is in a hurry." I get my frock half on and baby by that time has kicked himself down off his pillow, and is crying and fisting the bed-clothes in great order. I stop with one sleeve off and one on to settle matters with him. Having planted him bolt upright and gone all up and down the chamber barefoot to get pillows and blankets, to prop him up, I finish putting my frock on and hurry down to satisfy myself by actual observation that the breakfast is in progress. Then back I come into the nursery, where, remembering that it is washing day and that there is a great deal of work to be done, I apply myself vigorously to sweeping, dusting, and the setting to rights so necessary where there are three little mischiefs always pulling down as fast as one can put up.

"Then there are Miss H---- and Miss E----, concerning whom Mary will furnish you with all suitable particulars, who are chattering, hallooing, or singing at the tops of their voices, as may suit their various states of mind, while the nurse is getting their breakfast ready. This meal being cleared away, Mr. Stowe dispatched to market

with various memoranda of provisions, etc., and the baby being washed and dressed, I begin to think what next must be done. I start to cut out some little dresses, have just calculated the length and got one breadth torn off when Master Henry makes a doleful lip and falls to crying with might and main. I catch him up and turning round see one of his sisters flourishing the things out of my workbox in fine style. Moving it away and looking the other side I see the second little mischief seated by the hearth chewing coals and scraping up ashes with great apparent relish. Grandmother lays hold upon her and charitably offers to endeavor to quiet baby while I go on with my work. I set at it again, pick up a dozen pieces, measure them once more to see which is the right one, and proceed to cut out some others, when I see the twins on the point of quarreling with each other. Number one pushes number two over. Number two screams: that frightens the baby and he joins in. I call number one a naughty girl, take the persecuted one in my arms, and endeavor to comfort her by trotting to the old lyric:--

"So ride the gentlefolk,
And so do we, so do we."

Meanwhile number one makes her way to the slop jar and forthwith proceeds to wash her apron in it. Grandmother catches her by one shoulder, drags her away, and sets the jar up out of her reach. By and by the nurse comes up from her sweeping. I commit the children to her, and finish cutting out the frocks.

But let this suffice, for of such details as these are all my days made up. Indeed, my dear, I am but a mere drudge with few ideas beyond babies and housekeeping. As for thoughts, reflections, and sentiments, good lack! good lack!

I suppose I am a dolefully uninteresting person at present, but I hope I shall grow young again one of these days, for it seems to me that matters cannot always stand exactly as they do now.

Well, Georgy, this marriage is--yes, I will speak well of it, after all; for when I can stop and think long enough to discriminate my head from my heels, I must say that I think myself a fortunate woman both in husband and children. My children I would not change for all the ease, leisure, and pleasure that I could have without them. They are money on interest whose value will be constantly increasing.

In 1839 Mrs. Stowe received into her family as a servant a colored girl from Kentucky. By the laws of Ohio she was free, having been brought into the State and left there by her mistress. In spite of this, Professor Stowe received word, after she had lived with them some months, that the girl's master was in the city looking for her, and that if she were not careful she would be seized and conveyed back into slavery. Finding that this could be accomplished by boldness, perjury, and the connivance of some unscrupulous justice, Professor Stowe determined to remove the girl to some place of security where she might remain until the search for her should be given up.

Accordingly he and his brother-in-law, Henry Ward Beecher, both armed, drove the fugitive, in a covered wagon, at night, by unfrequented roads, twelve miles back into the country, and left her in safety with the family of old John Van Zandt, the fugitive's friend.

It is from this incident of real life and personal experience that Mrs. Stowe conceived the thrilling episode of the fugitives' escape from Tom Loker and Marks in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

An amusing and at the same time most interesting account of her struggles to accomplish literary work amid her distracting domestic duties at this time is furnished by the letter of one of her intimate friends, who writes:--

"It was my good fortune to number Mrs. Stowe among my friends, and during a visit to her I had an opportunity one day of witnessing the combined exercise of her literary and domestic genius in a style that to me was quite amusing.

"'Come Harriet,' said I, as I found her tending one baby and watching two others just able to walk, 'where is that piece for the "Souvenir" which I promised the editor I would get from you and send on next week? You have only this one day left to finish it, and have it I must.'

"'And how will you get it, friend of mine?' said Harriet. 'You will at

least have to wait till I get house-cleaning over and baby's teeth through.'

"As to house-cleaning, you can defer it one day longer; and as to baby's teeth, there is to be no end to them, as I can see. No, no; to-day that story must be ended. There Frederick has been sitting by Ellen and saying all those pretty things for more than a month now, and she has been turning and blushing till I am sure it is time to go to her relief. Come, it would not take you three hours at the rate you can write to finish the courtship, marriage, catastrophe, éclaircissement, and all; and this three hours' labor of your brains will earn enough to pay for all the sewing your fingers could do for a year to come. Two dollars a page, my dear, and you can write a page in fifteen minutes! Come, then, my lady housekeeper, economy is a cardinal virtue; consider the economy of the thing.'

"But, my dear, here is a baby in my arms and two little pussies by my side, and there is a great baking down in the kitchen, and there is a "new girl" for "help," besides preparations to be made for house-cleaning next week. It is really out of the question, you see.'

"I see no such thing. I do not know what genius is given for, if it is not to help a woman out of a scrape. Come, set your wits to work, let me have my way, and you shall have all the work done and finish the story too.'

"Well, but kitchen affairs?"

"We can manage them too. You know you can write anywhere and anyhow. Just take your seat at the kitchen table with your writing weapons, and while you superintend Mina fill up the odd snatches of time with the labors of your pen."

"I carried my point. In ten minutes she was seated; a table with flour, rolling-pin, ginger, and lard on one side, a dresser with eggs, pork, and beans and various cooking utensils on the other, near her an oven heating, and beside her a dark-skinned nymph, waiting orders.

"Here, Harriet," said I, "you can write on this atlas in your lap; no matter how the writing looks, I will copy it."

"Well, well," said she, with a resigned sort of amused look. "Mina, you may do what I told you, while I write a few minutes, till it is time to mould up the bread. Where is the inkstand?"

"Here it is, close by, on the top of the tea-kettle," said I.

"At this Mina giggled, and we both laughed to see her merriment at our literary proceedings.

"I began to overhaul the portfolio to find the right sheet.

"Here it is,' said I. 'Here is Frederick sitting by Ellen, glancing at her brilliant face, and saying something about "guardian angel," and all that--you remember?'

"Yes, yes,' said she, falling into a muse, as she attempted to recover the thread of her story.

"Ma'am, shall I put the pork on the top of the beans?' asked Mina.

"Come, come,' said Harriet, laughing. 'You see how it is. Mina is a new hand and cannot do anything without me to direct her. We must give up the writing for to-day.'

"No, no; let us have another trial. You can dictate as easily as you can write. Come, I can set the baby in this clothes-basket and give him some mischief or other to keep him quiet; you shall dictate and I will write. Now, this is the place where you left off: you were describing the scene between Ellen and her lover; the last sentence was, "Borne down by the tide of agony, she leaned her head on her hands, the tears streamed through her fingers, and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs." What shall I write next?'

"Mina, pour a little milk into this pearlash,' said Harriet.

"Come,' said I. "'The tears streamed through her fingers and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs." What next?'

"Harriet paused and looked musingly out of the window, as she turned her mind to her story. 'You may write now,' said she, and she dictated as follows:

""Her lover wept with her, nor dared he again to touch the point so sacredly guarded"--Mina, roll that crust a little thinner. "He spoke in soothing tones"--Mina, poke the coals in the oven.'

"'Here,' said I, 'let me direct Mina about these matters, and write a while yourself.'

"Harriet took the pen and patiently set herself to the work. For a while my culinary knowledge and skill were proof to all Mina's investigating inquiries, and they did not fail till I saw two pages completed.

"'You have done bravely,' said I, as I read over the manuscript; 'now you must direct Mina a while. Meanwhile dictate and I will write.'

"'Never was there a more docile literary lady than my friend. Without a word of objection she followed my request.

"'I am ready to write,' said I. 'The last sentence was: "What is this life to one who has suffered as I have?" What next?'

"Shall I put in the brown or the white bread first?' said Mina.

"The brown first,' said Harriet.

""What is this life to one who has suffered as I have?" said I.

"Harriet brushed the flour off her apron and sat down for a moment in a muse. Then she dictated as follows:--

""Under the breaking of my heart I have borne up. I have borne up under all that tries a woman,--but this thought,--oh, Henry!"

"Ma'am, shall I put ginger into this pumpkin?' queried Mina.

"No, you may let that alone just now,' replied Harriet. She then proceeded:--

""I know my duty to my children. I see the hour must come. You must take them, Henry; they are my last earthly comfort."

"Ma'am, what shall I do with these egg-shells and all this truck here?' interrupted Mina.

"Put them in the pail by you,' answered Harriet. ""They are my last earthly comfort," said I. 'What next?'

"She continued to dictate,--

""You must take them away. It may be---perhaps it must be--- that I shall soon follow, but the breaking heart of a wife still pleads, 'a little longer, a little longer.'""

""How much longer must the gingerbread stay in?' inquired Mina.

""Five minutes,' said Harriet.

""A little longer, a little longer,"" I repeated in a dolorous tone, and we burst into a laugh.

""Thus we went on, cooking, writing, nursing, and laughing, till I finally accomplished my object. The piece was finished, copied, and the next day sent to the editor.""

The widely scattered members of the Beecher family had a fashion of communicating with each other by means of circular letters. These, begun on great sheets of paper, at either end of the line, were passed along from one to another, each one adding his or her budget of news to the general stock. When the filled sheet reached the last person for whom it was intended, it was finally remailed to its point of departure. Except in the cases of Mrs. Stowe and Mrs. Perkins, the simple address "Rev. Mr. Beecher" was sufficient to insure its safe delivery in any town to which it was sent.

One of these great, closely-written sheets, bearing in faded ink the names of all the Beechers, lies outspread before us as we write. It is postmarked Hartford, Conn., Batavia, N. Y., Chillicothe, Ohio, Zanesville, Ohio, Walnut Hills, Ohio, Indianapolis, Ind., Jacksonville, Ill., and New Orleans, La. In it Mrs. Stowe occupies her allotted space with--

WALNUT HILLS, 27, 1839.

DEAR FRIENDS,---I am going to Hartford myself, and therefore shall not write, but hurry along the preparations for my forward journey. Belle, father says you may go to the White Mountains with Mr. Stowe and me this summer. George, we may look in on you coming back. Good-by. Affectionately to all, H. E. STOWE.