

## CHAPTER XI.

HOME AGAIN, 1853-1856.

ANTI-SLAVERY WORK.--STIRRING TIMES IN THE UNITED STATES.--ADDRESS  
TO

THE LADIES OF GLASGOW.--APPEAL TO THE WOMEN OF AMERICA.--

CORRESPONDENCE WITH WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.--THE WRITING OF  
"DRED."--

FAREWELL LETTER FROM GEORGIANA MAY.--SECOND VOYAGE TO  
ENGLAND.

After her return in the autumn of 1853 from her European tour, Mrs. Stowe threw herself heart and soul into the great struggle with slavery. Much of her time was occupied in distributing over a wide area of country the English gold with which she had been intrusted for the advancement of the cause. With this money she assisted in the redemption of slaves whose cases were those of peculiar hardship, and helped establish them as free men. She supported anti-slavery lectures wherever they were most needed, aided in establishing and maintaining anti-slavery publications, founded and assisted in supporting schools in which colored people might be taught how to avail themselves of the blessings of freedom. She arranged public meetings, and prepared many of the addresses that should be delivered at them. She maintained such an extensive correspondence with persons of all shades of opinion in all parts of the world, that the letters received and answered by her

between 1853 and 1856 would fill volumes. With all these multifarious interests, her children received a full share of her attention, nor were her literary activities relaxed.

Immediately upon the completion of her European tour, her experiences were published in the form of a journal, both in this country and England, under the title of "Sunny Memories." She also revised and elaborated the collection of sketches which had been published by the Harpers in 1843, under title of "The Mayflower," and having purchased the plates caused them to be republished in 1855 by Phillips & Sampson, the successors of John P. Jewett & Co., in this country, and by Sampson Low & Co. in London.

Soon after her return to America, feeling that she owed a debt of gratitude to her friends in Scotland, which her feeble health had not permitted her adequately to express while with them, Mrs. Stowe wrote the following open letter:--

TO THE LADIES' ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY OF GLASGOW:

Dear Friends,--I have had many things in my mind to say to you, which it was my hope to have said personally, but which I am now obliged to say by letter.

I have had many fears that you must have thought our intercourse, during the short time that I was in Glasgow, quite unsatisfactory.

At the time that I accepted your very kind invitation, I was in tolerable health, and supposed that I should be in a situation to enjoy society, and mingle as much in your social circles as you might desire.

When the time came for me to fulfil my engagement with you, I was, as you know, confined to my bed with a sickness brought on by the exertion of getting the "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin" through the press during the winter.

In every part of the world the story of "Uncle Tom" had awakened sympathy for the American slave, and consequently in every part of the world the story of his wrongs had been denied; it had been asserted to be a mere work of romance, and I was charged with being the slanderer of the institutions of my own country. I knew that if I shrank from supporting my position, the sympathy which the work had excited would gradually die out, and the whole thing would be looked upon as a mere romantic excitement of the passions.

When I came abroad, I had not the slightest idea of the kind of reception which was to meet me in England and Scotland. I had thought of something involving considerable warmth, perhaps, and a good deal of cordiality and feeling on the part of friends; but of the general extent of feeling through society, and of the degree to which it would be publicly expressed, I had, I may say, no conception.

As through your society I was invited to your country, it may seem proper that what communication I have to make to friends in England and Scotland should be made through you.

In the first place, then, the question will probably arise in your minds, Have the recent demonstrations in Great Britain done good to the anti-slavery cause in America?

The first result of those demonstrations, as might have been expected, was an intense reaction. Every kind of false, evil, and malignant report has been circulated by malicious and partisan papers; and if there is any blessing in having all manner of evil said against us falsely, we have seemed to be in a fair way to come in possession of it.

The sanction which was given in this matter to the voice of the people, by the nobility of England and Scotland, has been regarded and treated with special rancor; and yet, in its place, it has been particularly important. Without it great advantages would have been taken to depreciate the value of the national testimony. The value of this testimony in particular will appear from the fact that the anti-slavery cause has been treated with especial contempt by the leaders of society in this country, and every attempt made to brand it with ridicule.

The effect of making a cause generally unfashionable is much greater in this world than it ought to be. It operates very powerfully with the young and impressible portion of the community; therefore Cassius M. Clay very well said with regard to the demonstration at Stafford House: "It will help our cause by rendering it fashionable."

With regard to the present state of the anti-slavery cause in America, I think, for many reasons, that it has never been more encouraging. It is encouraging in this respect, that the subject is now fairly up for inquiry before the public mind. And that systematic effort which has been made for years to prevent its being discussed is proving wholly ineffectual.

The "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin" has sold extensively at the South, following in the wake of "Uncle Tom." Not one fact or statement in it has been disproved as yet. I have yet to learn of even an attempt to disprove.

The "North American Review," a periodical which has never been favorable to the discussion of the slavery question, has come out with a review of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," in which, while rating the book very low as a work of art, they account for its great circulation and success by the fact of its being a true picture of slavery. They go on to say that the system is one so inherently abominable that, unless slaveholders shall rouse themselves and abolish the principle of chattel ownership, they can no longer sustain themselves under the

contempt and indignation of the whole civilized world. What are the slaveholders to do when this is the best their friends and supporters can say for them?

I regret to say that the movements of Christian denominations on this subject are yet greatly behind what they should be. Some movements have been made by religious bodies, of which I will not now speak; but as a general thing the professed Christian church is pushed up to its duty by the world, rather than the world urged on by the church.

The colored people in this country are rapidly rising in every respect. I shall request Frederick Douglass to send you the printed account of the recent colored convention. It would do credit to any set of men whatever, and I hope you will get some notice taken of it in the papers of the United Kingdom. It is time that the slanders against this unhappy race should be refuted, and it should be seen how, in spite of every social and political oppression, they are rising in the scale of humanity. In my opinion they advance quite as fast as any of the foreign races which have found an asylum among us.

May God so guide us in all things that our good be not evil spoken of, and that we be left to defend nothing which is opposed to his glory and the good of man!

Yours in all sympathy,

H. B. STOWE.

During the Kansas and Nebraska agitation (1853-54), Mrs. Stowe, in common with the abolitionists of the North, was deeply impressed with a solemn sense that it was a desperate crisis in the nation's history. She was in constant correspondence with Charles Sumner and other distinguished statesmen of the time, and kept herself informed as to the minutest details of the struggle. At this time she wrote and caused to be circulated broadcast the following appeal to the women of America:--

"The Providence of God has brought our nation to a crisis of most solemn interest.

"A question is now pending in our national legislature which is most vitally to affect the temporal and eternal interests, not only of ourselves, but of our children and our children's children for ages yet unborn. Through our nation it is to affect the interests of liberty and Christianity throughout the world.

"Of the woes, the injustice, and the misery of slavery it is not needful to speak. There is but one feeling and one opinion upon this subject among us all. I do not think there is a mother who clasps her child to her breast who would ever be made to feel it right that that child should be a slave, not a mother among us who would not rather lay that child in its grave.

"Nor can I believe that there is a woman so unchristian as to think it right to inflict upon her neighbor's child what she would consider worse than death were it inflicted upon her own. I do not believe there is a wife who would think it right that her husband should be sold to a trader to be worked all his life without wages or a recognition of rights. I do not believe there is a husband who would consider it right that his wife should be regarded by law the property of another man. I do not believe there is a father or mother who would consider it right were they forbidden by law to teach their children to read. I do not believe there is a brother who would think it right to have his sister held as property, with no legal defense for her personal honor, by any man living.

"All this is inherent in slavery. It is not the abuse of slavery, but its legal nature. And there is not a woman in the United States, where the question is fairly put to her, who thinks these things are right.

"But though our hearts have bled over this wrong, there have been many things tending to fetter our hands, to perplex our efforts, and to silence our voice. We have been told that to speak of it was an invasion of the rights of states. We have heard of promises and compacts, and the natural expression of feeling has in many cases been repressed by an appeal to those honorable sentiments which respect the keeping of engagements.



"But a time has now come when the subject is arising under quite a different aspect.

"The question is not now, shall the wrongs of slavery exist as they have within their own territories, but shall we permit them to be extended all over the free territories of the United States? Shall the woes and the miseries of slavery be extended over a region of fair, free, unoccupied territory nearly equal in extent to the whole of the free States?

"Nor is this all! This is not the last thing that is expected or intended. Should this movement be submitted to in silence, should the North consent to this solemn breach of contract on the part of the South, there yet remains one more step to be apprehended, namely, the legalizing of slavery throughout the free States. By a decision of the supreme court in the Lemmon case, it may be declared lawful for slave property to be held in the Northern States. Should this come to pass, it is no more improbable that there may be four years hence slave depots in New York city than it was four years ago that the South would propose a repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

"Women of the free States! the question is not shall we remonstrate with slavery on its own soil, but are we willing to receive slavery into the free States and Territories of this Union? Shall the whole power of these United States go into the hands of slavery? Shall every State in the Union be thrown open to slavery? This is the possible

result and issue of the question now pending. This is the fearful crisis at which we stand.

"And now you ask, What can the women of a country do?

"O women of the free States! what did your brave mothers do in the days of our Revolution? Did not liberty in those days feel the strong impulse of woman's heart?

"There was never a great interest agitating a community where woman's influence was not felt for good or for evil. At the time when the abolition of the slave-trade was convulsing England, women contributed more than any other laborers to that great triumph of humanity. The women of England refused to receive into their houses the sugar raised by slaves. Seventy thousand families thus refused the use of sugar in testimony of their abhorrence of the manner in which it was produced. At that time women were unwearied in going from house to house distributing books and tracts upon the subject, and presenting it clearly and forcibly to thousands of families who would otherwise have disregarded it.

"The women all over England were associated in corresponding circles for prayer and labor. Petitions to the government were prepared and signed by women of every station in all parts of the kingdom.

"Women of America! we do not know with what thrilling earnestness the

hopes and the eyes of the world are fastened upon our country, and how intense is the desire that we should take a stand for universal liberty. When I was in England, although I distinctly stated that the raising of money was no part of my object there, it was actually forced upon me by those who could not resist the impulse to do something for this great cause. Nor did it come from the well-to-do alone; but hundreds of most affecting letters were received from poor working men and women, who inclosed small sums in postage-stamps to be devoted to freeing slaves.

"Nor is this deep feeling confined to England alone. I found it in France, Switzerland, and Germany. Why do foreign lands regard us with this intensity of interest? Is it not because the whole world looks hopefully toward America as a nation especially raised by God to advance the cause of human liberty and religion?

"There has been a universal expectation that the next step taken by America would surely be one that should have a tendency to right this great wrong. Those who are struggling for civil and religious liberty in Europe speak this word 'slavery' in sad whispers, as one names a fault of a revered friend. They can scarce believe the advertisements in American papers of slave sales of men, women, and children, traded like cattle. Scarcely can they trust their eyes when they read the laws of the slave States, and the decisions of their courts. The advocates of despotism hold these things up to them and say: 'See what comes of republican liberty!' Hitherto the answer has been, 'America

is more than half free, and she certainly will in time repudiate slavery altogether.'

"But what can they say now if, just as the great struggle for human rights is commencing throughout Europe, America opens all her Territories to the most unmitigated despotism?

"While all the nations of Europe are thus moved on the subject of American slavery, shall we alone remain unmoved? Shall we, the wives, mothers, and sisters of America, remain content with inaction in such a crisis as this?

"The first duty of every American woman at this time is to thoroughly understand the subject for herself, and to feel that she is bound to use her influence for the right. Then they can obtain signatures to petitions to our national legislature. They can spread information upon this vital topic throughout their neighborhoods. They can employ lecturers to lay the subject before the people. They can circulate the speeches of their members of Congress that bear upon the subject, and in many other ways they can secure to all a full understanding of the present position of our country.

"Above all, it seems to be necessary and desirable that we should make this subject a matter of earnest prayer. A conflict is now begun between the forces of liberty and despotism throughout the whole world. We who are Christians, and believe in the sure word of

prophecy, know that fearful convulsions and over-turnings are predicted before the coming of Him who is to rule the earth in righteousness. How important, then, in this crisis, that all who believe in prayer should retreat beneath the shadow of the Almighty!

"It is a melancholy but unavoidable result of such great encounters of principle that they tend to degenerate into sectional and personal bitterness. It is this liability that forms one of the most solemn and affecting features of the crisis now presented. We are on the eve of a conflict which will try men's souls, and strain to the utmost the bonds of brotherly union that bind this nation together.

"Let us, then, pray that in the agitation of this question between the North and the South the war of principle may not become a mere sectional conflict, degenerating into the encounter of physical force. Let us raise our hearts to Him who has the power to restrain the wrath of men, that He will avert the consequences that our sins as a nation so justly deserve.

"There are many noble minds in the South who do not participate in the machinations of their political leaders, and whose sense of honor and justice is outraged by this proposition equally with our own. While, then, we seek to sustain the cause of freedom unwaveringly, let us also hold it to be our office as true women to moderate the acrimony of political contest, remembering that the slaveholder and the slave are alike our brethren, whom the law of God commands us to love as

ourselves.

"For the sake, then, of our dear children, for the sake of our common country, for the sake of outraged and struggling liberty throughout the world, let every woman of America now do her duty."

At this same time Mrs. Stowe found herself engaged in an active correspondence with William Lloyd Garrison, much of which appeared in the columns of his paper, the "Liberator." Late in 1853 she writes to him:--

"In regard to you, your paper, and in some measure your party, I am in an honest embarrassment. I sympathize with you fully in many of your positions. Others I consider erroneous, hurtful to liberty and the progress of humanity. Nevertheless, I believe you and those who support them to be honest and conscientious in your course and opinions. What I fear is that your paper will take from poor Uncle Tom his Bible, and give him nothing in its place."

To this Mr. Garrison answers: "I do not understand why the imputation is thrown upon the 'Liberator' as tending to rob Uncle Tom of his Bible. I know of no writer in its pages who wishes to deprive him of it, or of any comfort he may derive from it. It is for him to place whatever estimate he can upon it, and for you and me to do the same; but for neither of us to accept any more of it than we sincerely believe to be in accordance with reason, truth, and eternal right. How

much of it is true and obligatory, each one can determine only for himself; for on Protestant ground there is no room for papal infallibility. All Christendom professes to believe in the inspiration of the volume, and at the same time all Christendom is by the ears as to its real teachings. Surely you would not have me disloyal to my conscience. How do you prove that you are not trammelled by educational or traditional notions as to the entire sanctity of the book? Indeed, it seems to me very evident that you are not free in spirit, in view of the apprehension and sorrow you feel because you find your conceptions of the Bible controverted in the 'Liberator,' else why such disquietude of mind? 'Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just.'"

In answer to this Mrs. Stowe writes:--

I did not reply to your letter immediately, because I did not wish to speak on so important a subject unadvisedly, or without proper thought and reflection. The greater the interest involved in a truth the more careful, self-distrustful, and patient should be the inquiry.

I would not attack the faith of a heathen without being sure I had a better one to put in its place, because, such as it is, it is better than nothing. I notice in Mr. Parker's sermons a very eloquent passage on the uses and influences of the Bible. He considers it to embody absolute and perfect religion, and that no better mode for securing present and eternal happiness can be found than in the obedience to

certain religious precepts therein recorded. He would have it read and circulated, and considers it, as I infer, a Christian duty to send it to the heathen, the slave, etc. I presume you agree with him.

These things being supposed about the Bible would certainly make it appear that, if any man deems it his duty to lessen its standing in the eyes of the community, he ought at least to do so in a cautious and reverential spirit, with humility and prayer.

My objection to the mode in which these things are handled in the "Liberator" is that the general tone and spirit seem to me the reverse of this. If your paper circulated only among those of disciplined and cultivated minds, skilled to separate truth from falsehood, knowing where to go for evidence and how to satisfy the doubts you raise, I should feel less regret. But your name and benevolent labors have given your paper a circulation among the poor and lowly. They have no means of investigating, no habits of reasoning. The Bible, as they at present understand it, is doing them great good, and is a blessing to them and their families. The whole tendency of your mode of proceeding is to lessen their respect and reverence for the Bible, without giving them anything in its place.

I have no fear of discussion as to its final results on the Bible; my only regrets are for those human beings whose present and immortal interests I think compromised by this manner of discussion. Discussion of the evidence of the authenticity and inspiration of the Bible and



of all theology will come more and more, and I rejoice that they will. But I think they must come, as all successful inquiries into truth must, in a calm, thoughtful, and humble spirit; not with bold assertions, hasty generalizations, or passionate appeals.

I appreciate your good qualities none the less though you differ with me on this point. I believe you to be honest and sincere. In Mr. Parker's works I have found much to increase my respect and esteem for him as a man. He comes to results, it is true, to which it would be death and utter despair for me to arrive at. Did I believe as he does about the Bible and Jesus, I were of all creatures most miserable, because I could not love God. I could find no God to love. I would far rather never have been born.

As to you, my dear friend, you must own that my frankness to you is the best expression of my confidence in your honor and nobleness. Did I not believe that "an excellent spirit" is in you, I would not take the trouble to write all this. If in any points in this note I appear to have misapprehended or done you injustice, I hope you will candidly let me know where and how.

Truly your friend,

H. B. STOWE.

In addition to these letters the following extracts from a subsequent

letter to Mr. Garrison are given to show in what respect their fields of labor differed, and to present an idea of what Mrs. Stowe was doing for the cause of freedom besides writing against slavery:--

ANDOVER, MASS., February 18, 1854.

DEAR FRIEND,--I see and sincerely rejoice in the result of your lecture in New York. I am increasingly anxious that all who hate slavery be united, if not in form, at least in fact,--a unity in difference. Our field lies in the church, and as yet I differ from you as to what may be done and hoped there. Brother Edward (Beecher) has written a sermon that goes to the very root of the decline of moral feeling in the church. As soon as it can be got ready for the press I shall have it printed, and shall send a copy to every minister in the country.

Our lectures have been somewhat embarrassed by a pressure of new business brought upon us by the urgency of the Kansas-Nebraska question. Since we began, however, brother Edward has devoted his whole time to visiting, consultation, and efforts the result of which will shortly be given to the public. We are trying to secure a universal arousing of the pulpit.

Dr. Bacon's letter is noble. You must think so. It has been sent to every member of Congress. Dr. Kirk's sermon is an advance, and his congregation warmly seconded it. Now, my good friend, be willing to

see that the church is better than you have thought it. Be not unwilling to see some good symptoms, and hope that even those who see not at all at first will gain as they go on. I am acting on the conviction that you love the cause better than self. If anything can be done now advantageously by the aid of money, let me know. God has given me some power in this way, though I am too feeble to do much otherwise.

Yours for the cause,

H. B. STOWE.

Although the demand was very great upon Mrs. Stowe for magazine and newspaper articles, many of which she managed to write in 1854-55, she had in her mind at this time a new book which should be in many respects the complement of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." In preparing her Key to the latter work, she had collected much new material. In 1855, therefore, and during the spring of 1856, she found time to weave these hitherto unused facts into the story of "Dred." In her preface to the English edition of this book she writes:--

"The author's object in this book is to show the general effect of slavery on society; the various social disadvantages which it brings, even to its most favored advocates; the shiftlessness and misery and backward tendency of all the economical arrangements of slave States; the retrograding of good families into poverty; the deterioration of

land; the worse demoralization of all classes, from the aristocratic, tyrannical planter to the oppressed and poor white, which is the result of the introduction of slave labor.

"It is also an object to display the corruption of Christianity which arises from the same source; a corruption that has gradually lowered the standard of the church, North and South, and been productive of more infidelity than the works of all the encyclopaedists put together."

The story of "Dred" was suggested by the famous negro insurrection, led by Nat Turner, in Eastern Virginia in 1831. In this affair one of the principal participators was named "Dred." An interesting incident connected with the writing of "Dred" is vividly remembered by Mrs. Stowe's daughters.

One sultry summer night there arose a terrific thunder-storm, with continuous flashes of lightning and incessant rumbling and muttering of thunder, every now and then breaking out into sharp, crashing reports followed by torrents of rain.

The two young girls, trembling with fear, groped their way down-stairs to their mother's room, and on entering found her lying quietly in bed awake, and calmly watching the storm from the windows, the shades being up. She expressed no surprise on seeing them, but said that she had not been herself in the least frightened, though intensely

interested in watching the storm. "I have been writing a description of a thunder-storm for my book, and I am watching to see if I need to correct it in any particular." Our readers will be interested to know that she had so well described a storm from memory that even this vivid object-lesson brought with it no new suggestions. This scene is to be found in the twenty-fourth chapter of "Dred,"--"Life in the Swamps."

"The day had been sultry and it was now an hour or two past midnight, when a thunder-storm, which had long been gathering and muttering in the distant sky, began to develop its forces. A low, shivering sigh crept through the woods, and swayed in weird whistlings the tops of the pines; and sharp arrows of lightning came glittering down among the branches, as if sent from the bow of some warlike angel. An army of heavy clouds swept in a moment across the moon; then came a broad, dazzling, blinding sheet of flame."

What particularly impressed Mrs. Stowe's daughters at the time was their mother's perfect calmness, and the minute study of the storm. She was on the alert to detect anything which might lead her to correct her description.

Of this new story Charles Sumner wrote from the senate chamber:--

MY DEAR MRS. STOWE,--I am rejoiced to learn, from your excellent sister here, that you are occupied with another tale exposing slavery.

I feel that it will act directly upon pending questions, and help us in our struggle for Kansas, and also to overthrow the slave-oligarchy in the coming Presidential election. We need your help at once in our struggle.

Ever sincerely yours,

CHARLES SUMNER.

Having finished this second great story of slavery, in the early summer of 1856 Mrs. Stowe decided to visit Europe again, in search of a much-needed rest. She also found it necessary to do so in order to secure the English right to her book, which she had failed to do on "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Just before sailing she received the following touching letter from her life-long friend, Georgiana May. It is the last one of a series that extended without interruption over a period of thirty years, and as such has been carefully cherished:--

OCEAN HOUSE, GROTON POINT, July 26, 1856.

DEAR HATTIE,--Very likely it is too late for me to come with my modest knock to your study door, and ask to be taken in for a moment, but I do so want to bless you before you go, and I have not been well enough to write until to-day. It seems just as if I could not

let you go till I have seen once more your face in the flesh, for great uncertainties hang over my future. One thing, however, is certain: whichever of us two gets first to the farther shore of the great ocean between us and the unseen will be pretty sure to be at hand to welcome the other. It is not poetry, but solemn verity between us that we shall meet again.

But there is nothing morbid or morbific going into these few lines. I have made "Old Tiff's" acquaintance. He is a verity,--will stand up with Uncle Tom and Topsy, pieces of negro property you will be guilty of holding after you are dead. Very likely your children may be selling them.

Hattie, I rejoice over this completed work. Another work for God and your generation. I am glad that you have come out of it alive, that you have pleasure in prospect, that you "walk at liberty" and have done with "fits of languishing." Perhaps some day I shall be set free, but the prospect does not look promising, except as I have full faith that "the Good Man above is looking on, and will bring it all round right." Still "heart and flesh" both "fail me." He will be the "strength of my heart," and I never seem to doubt "my portion forever."

If I never speak to you again, this is the farewell utterance.

Yours truly,

GEORGIANA.

Mrs. Stowe was accompanied on this second trip to Europe by her husband, her two eldest daughters, her son Henry, and her sister Mary (Mrs. Perkins). It was a pleasant summer voyage, and was safely accomplished without special incident.