CHAPTER XVII.

FLORIDA, 1865-1869.

LETTER TO DUCHESS OF ARGYLL.--MRS. STOWE DESIRES TO HAVE A HOME AT THE

SOUTH.--FLORIDA THE BEST FIELD FOR DOING GOOD.--SHE BUYS A PLACE AT

MANDARIN.--A CHARMING WINTER RESIDENCE.--"PALMETTO LEAVES."--EASTER

SUNDAY AT MANDARIN.--CORRESPONDENCE WITH DR. HOLMES.--"POGANUC

PEOPLE."--RECEPTIONS IN NEW ORLEANS AND TALLAHASSEE.--LAST WINTER AT

MANDARIN.

In 1866, the terrible conflict between the North and South having ended, Mrs. Stowe wrote the following letter to the Duchess of Argyll:--

HARTFORD, February 19, 1866.

MY DEAR FRIEND,--Your letter was a real spring of comfort to me, bringing refreshingly the pleasant library at Inverary and the lovely days I spent there.

I am grieved at what you say of your dear mother's health. I showed your letter to Mrs. Perkins, and we both agreed in saying that

we should like for a time to fill the place of maid to her, as doubtless you all feel, too. I should so love to be with her, to read to her, and talk to her! and oh, there is so much that would cheer and comfort a noble heart like hers that we could talk about. Oh, my friend, when I think of what has been done these last few years, and of what is now doing, I am lost in amazement. I have just, by way of realizing it to myself, been reading "Uncle Tom's Cabin" again, and when I read that book, scarred and seared and burned into with the memories of an anguish and horror that can never be forgotten, and think it is all over now, all past, and that now the questions debated are simply of more or less time before granting legal suffrage to those who so lately were held only as articles of merchandise,--when this comes over me I think no private or individual sorrow can ever make me wholly without comfort. If my faith in God's presence and real, living power in the affairs of men ever grows dim, this makes it impossible to doubt.

I have just had a sweet and lovely Christian letter from Garrison, whose beautiful composure and thankfulness in his hour of victory are as remarkable as his wonderful courage in the day of moral battle. His note ends with the words, "And who but God is to be glorified?" Garrison's attitude is far more exalted than that of Wendell Phillips. He acknowledges the great deed done. He suspends his "Liberator" with words of devout thanksgiving, and devotes himself unobtrusively to the work yet to be accomplished for the freedmen; while Phillips seems resolved to ignore the mighty work that has been done, because of the

inevitable shortcomings and imperfections that beset it still. We have a Congress of splendid men,--men of stalwart principle and determination. We have a President [Footnote: Andrew Johnson] honestly seeking to do right; and if he fails in knowing just what right is, it is because he is a man born and reared in a slave State, and acted on by many influences which we cannot rightly estimate unless we were in his place. My brother Henry has talked with him earnestly and confidentially, and has faith in him as an earnest, good man seeking to do right. Henry takes the ground that it is unwise and impolitic to endeavor to force negro suffrage on the South at the point of the bayonet. His policy would be, to hold over the negro the protection of our Freedman's Bureau until the great laws of free labor shall begin to draw the master and servant together; to endeavor to soothe and conciliate, and win to act with us, a party composed of the really good men at the South.

For this reason he has always advocated lenity of measures towards them. He wants to get them into a state in which the moral influence of the North can act upon them beneficially, and to get such a state of things that there will be a party at the South to protect the negro.

Charles Sumner is looking simply at the abstract right of the thing. Henry looks at actual probabilities. We all know that the state of society at the South is such that laws are a very inadequate protection even to white men. Southern elections always have been

scenes of mob violence when only white men voted.

Multitudes of lives have been lost at the polls in this way, and if against their will negro suffrage was forced upon them, I do not see how any one in their senses can expect anything less than an immediate war of races.

If negro suffrage were required as a condition of acquiring political position, there is no doubt the slave States would grant it; grant it nominally, because they would know that the grant never could or would become an actual realization. And what would then be gained for the negro?

I am sorry that people cannot differ on such great and perplexing public questions without impugning each other's motives. Henry has been called a backslider because of the lenity of his counsels, but I cannot but think it is the Spirit of Christ that influences him. Garrison has been in the same way spoken of as a deserter, because he says that a work that is done shall be called done, and because he would not keep up an anti-slavery society when slavery is abolished; and I think our President is much injured by the abuse that is heaped on him, and the selfish and unworthy motives that are ascribed to him by those who seem determined to allow to nobody an honest, unselfish difference in judgment from their own.

Henry has often spoken of you and your duke as pleasant memories in a

scene of almost superhuman labor and excitement. He often said to me: "When this is all over,--when we have won the victory,--then I will write to the duchess." But when it was over and the flag raised again at Sumter his arm was smitten down with the news of our President's death! We all appreciate your noble and true sympathy through the dark hour of our national trial. You and yours are almost the only friends we now have left in England. You cannot know what it was, unless you could imagine your own country to be in danger of death, extinction of nationality. That, dear friend, is an experience which shows us what we are and what we can feel. I am glad to hear that we may hope to see your son in this country. I fear so many pleasant calls will beset his path that we cannot hope for a moment, but it would give us all the greatest pleasure to see him here. Our dull, prosy, commonplace, though good old Hartford could offer few attractions compared with Boston or New York, and yet I hope he will not leave us out altogether if he comes among us. God bless him! You are very happy indeed in being permitted to keep all your dear ones and see them growing up.

I want to ask a favor. Do you have, as we do, cartes de visite? If you have, and could send me one of yourself and the duke and of Lady Edith and your eldest son, I should be so very glad to see how you are looking now; and the dear mother, too, I should so like to see how she looks. It seems almost like a dream to look back to those pleasant days. I am glad to see you still keep some memories of our goings on. Georgie's marriage is a very happy one to us. They live in

Stockbridge, the loveliest part of Massachusetts, and her husband is a most devoted pastor, and gives all his time and property to the great work which he has embraced, purely for the love of it. My other daughters are with me, and my son, Captain Stowe, who has come with weakened health through our struggle, suffering constantly from the effects of a wound in his head received at Gettysburg, which makes his returning to his studies a hard struggle. My husband is in better health since he resigned his professorship, and desires his most sincere regards to yourself and the duke, and his profound veneration to your mother. Sister Mary also desires to be remembered to you, as do also my daughters. Please tell me a little in your next of Lady Edith; she must be very lovely now.

I am, with sincerest affection, ever yours,

H. B. STOWE.

Soon after the close of the war Mrs. Stowe conceived the idea of making for herself and her family a winter home in the South, where she might escape the rigors of Northern winters, and where her afflicted son Frederick might enjoy an out-of-door life throughout the year. She was also most anxious to do her share towards educating and leading to a higher life those colored people whom she had helped so largely to set free, and who were still in the state of profound ignorance imposed by slavery. In writing of her hopes and plans to her brother Charles Beecher, in 1866, she says:--

"My plan of going to Florida, as it lies in my mind, is not in any sense a mere worldly enterprise. I have for many years had a longing to be more immediately doing Christ's work on earth. My heart is with that poor people whose cause in words I have tried to plead, and who now, ignorant and docile, are just in that formative stage in which whoever seizes has them.

"Corrupt politicians are already beginning to speculate on them as possible capital for their schemes, and to fill their poor heads with all sorts of vagaries. Florida is the State into which they have, more than anywhere else, been pouring. Emigration is positively and decidedly setting that way; but as yet it is mere worldly emigration, with the hope of making money, nothing more.

"The Episcopal Church is, however, undertaking, under direction of the future Bishop of Florida, a wide-embracing scheme of Christian activity for the whole State. In this work I desire to be associated, and my plan is to locate at some salient point on the St. John's River, where I can form the nucleus of a Christian neighborhood, whose influence shall be felt far beyond its own limits."

During this year Mrs. Stowe partially carried her plan into execution by hiring an old plantation called "Laurel Grove," on the west side of the St. John's River, near the present village of Orange Park. Here she established her son Frederick as a cotton planter, and here he

remained for two years. This location did not, however, prove entirely satisfactory, nor did the raising of cotton prove to be, under the circumstances, a profitable business. After visiting Florida during the winter of 1866-67, at which time her attention was drawn to the beauties and superior advantages of Mandarin on the east side of the river, Mrs. Stowe writes from Hartford, May 29, 1867, to Rev. Charles Beecher:--

My dear Brother,--We are now thinking seriously of a place in Mandarin much more beautiful than any other in the vicinity. It has on it five large date palms, an olive tree in full bearing, besides a fine orange grove which this year will yield about seventy-five thousand oranges. If we get that, then I want you to consider the expediency of buying the one next to it. It contains about two hundred acres of land, on which is a fine orange grove, the fruit from which last year brought in two thousand dollars as sold at the wharf. It is right on the river, and four steamboats pass it each week, on their way to Savannah and Charleston. There is on the place a very comfortable cottage, as houses go out there, where they do not need to be built as substantially as with us.

I am now in correspondence with the Bishop of Florida, with a view to establishing a line of churches along the St. John's River, and if I settle at Mandarin, it will be one of my stations. Will you consent to enter the Episcopal Church and be our clergyman? You are just the man we want. If my tasks and feelings did not incline me toward the

Church, I should still choose it as the best system for training immature minds such as those of our negroes. The system was composed with reference to the wants of the laboring class of England, at a time when they were as ignorant as our negroes now are.

I long to be at this work, and cannot think of it without my heart burning within me. Still I leave all with my God, and only hope He will open the way for me to do all that I want to for this poor people.

Affectionately yours,

H. B. STOWE.

Mrs. Stowe had some years before this joined the Episcopal Church, for the sake of attending the same communion as her daughters, who were Episcopalians. Her brother Charles did not, however, see fit to change his creed, and though he went to Florida he settled a hundred and sixty miles west from the St. John's River, at Newport, near St. Marks, on the Gulf coast, and about twenty miles from Tallahassee. Here he lived every winter and several summers for fifteen years, and here he left the impress of his own remarkably sweet and lovely character upon the scattered population of the entire region.

Mrs. Stowe in the mean time purchased the property, with its orange grove and comfortable cottage, that she had recommended to him, and

thus Mandarin became her winter home. No one who has ever seen it can forget the peaceful beauty of this Florida home and its surroundings. The house, a story and a half cottage of many gables, stands on a bluff overlooking the broad St. John's, which is five miles wide at this point. It nestles in the shade of a grove of superb, moss-hung live-oaks, around one of which the front piazza is built. Several fine old orange trees also stand near the cottage, scenting the air with the sweet perfume of their blossoms in the early spring, and offering their golden fruit to whoever may choose to pluck it during the winter months. Back of the house stretches the well-tended orange grove in which Mrs. Stowe took such genuine pride and pleasure. Everywhere about the dwelling and within it were flowers and singing birds, while the rose garden in front, at the foot of the bluff, was the admiration of all who saw it.

Here, on the front piazza, beneath the grand oaks, looking out on the calm sunlit river, Professor Stowe enjoyed that absolute peace and restful quiet for which his scholarly nature had always longed, but which had been forbidden to the greater part of his active life. At almost any hour of the day the well-known figure, with snow-white, patriarchal beard and kindly face, might be seen sitting there, with a basket of books, many of them in dead and nearly forgotten languages, close at hand. An amusing incident of family life was as follows: Some Northern visitors seemed to think that the family had no rights which were worthy of a moment's consideration. They would land at the wharf, roam about the place, pick flowers, peer into the house through the

windows and doors, and act with that disregard of all the proprieties of life which characterizes ill-bred people when on a journey. The professor had been driven well-nigh distracted by these migratory bipeds. One day, when one of them broke a branch from an orange tree directly before his eyes, and was bearing it off in triumph with all its load of golden fruit, he leaped from his chair, and addressed the astonished individual on those fundamental principles of common honesty, which he deemed outraged by this act. The address was vigorous and truthful, but of a kind which will not bear repeating, "Why," said the horror-stricken culprit, "I thought that this was Mrs. Stowe's place!" "You thought it was Mrs. Stowe's place!" Then, in a voice of thunder, "I would have you understand, sir, that I am the proprietor and protector of Mrs. Stowe and of this place, and if you commit any more such shameful depredations I will have you punished as you deserve!" Thus this predatory Yankee was taught to realize that there is a God in Israel.

In April, 1869, Mrs. Stowe was obliged to hurry North in order to visit Canada in time to protect her English rights in "Oldtown Folks," which she had just finished.

About this time she secured a plot of land, and made arrangements for the erection on it of a building that should be used as a schoolhouse through the week, and as a church on Sunday. For several years Professor Stowe preached during the winter in this little schoolhouse, and Mrs. Stowe conducted Sunday-school, sewing classes, singing

classes, and various other gatherings for instruction and amusement, all of which were well attended and highly appreciated by both the white and colored residents of the neighborhood.

Upon one occasion, having just arrived at her Mandarin home, Mrs. Stowe writes:--

"At last, after waiting a day and a half in Charleston, we arrived here about ten o'clock Saturday morning, just a week from the day we sailed. The house looked so pretty, and quiet, and restful, the day was so calm and lovely, it seemed as though I had passed away from all trouble, and was looking back upon you all from a secure resting-place. Mr. Stowe is very happy here, and is constantly saying how pleasant it is, and how glad he is that he is here. He is so much improved in health that already he is able to take a considerable walk every day.

"We are all well, contented, and happy, and we have six birds, two dogs, and a pony. Do write more and oftener. Tell me all the little nothings and nowheres. You can't imagine how they are magnified by the time they have reached into this remote corner."

In 1872 she wrote a series of Florida sketches, which were published in book form, the following year, by J. E. Osgood & Co., under the title of "Palmetto Leaves." May 19, 1873, she writes to her brother Charles at Newport, Fla.:--

"Although you have not answered my last letter, I cannot leave Florida without saying good-by. I send you the 'Palmetto Leaves' and my parting love. If I could either have brought or left my husband, I should have come to see you this winter. The account of your roses fills me with envy.

"We leave on the San Jacinto next Saturday, and I am making the most of the few charming hours yet left; for never did we have so delicious a spring. I never knew such altogether perfect weather. It is enough to make a saint out of the toughest old Calvinist that ever set his face as a flint. How do you think New England theology would have fared if our fathers had been landed here instead of on Plymouth Rock?

"The next you hear of me will be at the North, where our address is Forest Street, Hartford. We have bought a pretty cottage there, near to Belle, and shall spend the summer there."

In a letter written in May of the following year to her son Charles, at Harvard, Mrs. Stowe says: "I can hardly realize that this long, flowery summer, with its procession of blooms and fruit, has been running on at the same time with the snowbanks and sleet storms of the North. But so it is. It is now the first of May. Strawberries and blackberries are over with us; oranges are in a waning condition, few and far between. Now we are going North to begin another summer, and have roses, strawberries, blackberries, and green peas come again.

"I am glad to hear of your reading. The effect produced on you by Jonathan Edwards is very similar to that produced on me when I took the same mental bath. His was a mind whose grasp and intensity you cannot help feeling. He was a poet in the intensity of his conceptions, and some of his sermons are more terrible than Dante's 'Inferno.'"

In November, 1874, upon their return to Mandarin, she writes: "We have had heavenly weather, and we needed it: for our house was a cave of spider-webs, cockroaches, dirt, and all abominations, but less than a week has brought it into beautiful order. It now begins to put on that quaint, lively, pretty air that so fascinates me. Our weather is, as I said, heavenly, neither hot nor cold; cool, calm, bright, serene, and so tranquillizing. There is something indescribable about the best weather we have down here. It does not debilitate me like the soft October air in Hartford."

During the following February, she writes in reply to an invitation to visit a Northern watering place later in the season: "I shall be most happy to come, and know of nothing to prevent. I have, thank goodness, no serial story on hand for this summer, to hang like an Old Man of the Sea about my neck, and hope to enjoy a little season of being like other folks. It is a most lovely day to-day, most unfallen Eden-like."

In a letter written later in the same season, March 28, 1875, Mrs.

Stowe gives us a pleasant glimpse at their preparations for the proper observance of Easter Sunday in the little Mandarin schoolhouse. She says:--

"It was the week before Easter, and we had on our minds the dressing of the church. There my two Gothic fireboards were to be turned into a pulpit for the occasion. I went to Jacksonville and got a fiveinch moulding for a base, and then had one fireboard sawed in two, so that there was an arched panel for each end. Then came a rummage for something for a top, and to make a desk of, until it suddenly occurred to me that our old black walnut extension table had a set of leaves. They were exactly the thing. The whole was trimmed with a beading of yellow pine, and rubbed, and pumice-stoned, and oiled, and I got out my tubes of paint and painted the nail-holes with Vandyke brown. By Saturday morning it was a lovely little Gothic pulpit, and Anthony carried it over to the schoolhouse and took away the old desk which I gave him for his meeting-house. That afternoon we drove out into the woods and gathered a quantity of superb Easter lilies, papaw, sparkleberry, great fern-leaves, and cedar. In the evening the girls went over to the Meads to practice Easter hymns; but I sat at home and made a cross, eighteen inches long, of cedar and white lilies. This Southern cedar is the most exquisite thing; it is so feathery and delicate.

"Sunday morning was cool and bright, a most perfect Easter. Our little church was full, and everybody seemed delighted with the decorations.

Mr. Stowe preached a sermon to show that Christ is going to put everything right at last, which is comforting. So the day was one of real pleasure, and also I trust of real benefit, to the poor souls who learned from it that Christ is indeed risen for them"

During this winter the following characteristic letters passed between Mrs. Stowe and her valued friend, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, called forth by the sending to the latter of a volume of Mrs. Stowe's latest stories:--

Boston, January 8, 1876.

My dear Mrs. Stowe,--I would not write to thank you for your most welcome "Christmas Box,"

"A box whose sweets compacted lie,"

before I had read it, and every word of it. I have been very much taken up with antics of one kind and another, and have only finished it this afternoon. The last of the papers was of less comparative value to me than to a great fraction of your immense parish of readers, because I am so familiar with every movement of the Pilgrims in their own chronicles.

"Deacon Pitkin's Farm" is full of those thoroughly truthful touches of New England in which, if you are not unrivaled, I do not know who your

rival may be. I wiped the tears from one eye in reading "Deacon Pitkin's Farm."

I wiped the tears, and plenty of them, from both eyes, in reading "Betty's Bright Idea." It is a most charming and touching story, and nobody can read who has not a heart like a pebble, without being melted into tenderness.

How much you have done and are doing to make our New England life wholesome and happy! If there is any one who can look back over a literary life which has pictured our old and helped our new civilization, it is yourself. Of course your later books have harder work cut out for them than those of any other writer. They have had "Uncle Tom's Cabin" for a rival. The brightest torch casts a shadow in the blaze of a light, and any transcendent success affords the easiest handle for that class of critics whose method is the one that Dogberry held to be "odious."

I think it grows pleasanter to us to be remembered by the friends we still have, as with each year they grow fewer. We have lost Agassiz and Sumner from our circle, and I found Motley stricken with threatening illness (which I hope is gradually yielding to treatment), in the profoundest grief at the loss of his wife, another old and dear friend of mine. So you may be assured that I feel most sensibly your kind attention, and send you my heartfelt thanks for remembering me.

Always, dear Mrs. Stowe, faithfully yours,

O. W. HOLMES.

To this letter Mrs. Stowe replied as follows:--

MANDARIN, February 23, 1876.

DEAR DOCTOR,--How kind it was of you to write me that very beautiful note! and how I wish you were just where I am, to see the trees laden at the same time with golden oranges and white blossoms! I should so like to cut off a golden cluster, leaves and all, for you. Well, Boston seems very far away and dreamy, like some previous state of existence, as I sit on the veranda and gaze on the receding shores of the St. John's, which at this point is five miles wide.

Dear doctor, how time slips by! I remember when Sumner seemed to me a young man, and now he has gone. And Wilson has gone, and Chase, whom I knew as a young man in society in Cincinnati, has gone, and Stanton has gone, and Seward has gone, and yet how lively the world races on! A few air-bubbles of praise or lamentation, and away sails the great ship of life, no matter over whose grave!

Well, one cannot but feel it! To me, also, a whole generation of friends has gone from the other side of the water since I was there and broke kindly bread with them. The Duchess of Sutherland, the good

old duke, Lansdowne, Ellesmere, Lady Byron, Lord and Lady Amberly, Charles Kingsley, the good Quaker, Joseph Sturge, all are with the shadowy train that has moved on. Among them were as dear and true friends as I ever had, and as pure and noble specimens of human beings as God ever made. They are living somewhere in intense vitality, I must believe, and you, dear doctor, must not doubt.

I think about your writings a great deal, and one element in them always attracts me. It is their pitiful and sympathetic vein, the pity for poor, struggling human nature. In this I feel that you must be very near and dear to Him whose name is Love.

You wrote some verses once that have got into the hymn-books, and have often occurred to me in my most sacred hours as descriptive of the feelings with which I bear the sorrows and carry the cares of life. They begin,--

"Love Divine, that stooped to share."

I have not all your books down here, and am haunted by gaps in the verses that memory cannot make good; but it is that "Love Divine" which is my stay and comfort and hope, as one friend after another passes beyond sight and hearing. Please let me have it in your handwriting.

I remember a remark you once made on spiritualism. I cannot recall the

words, but you spoke of it as modifying the sharp angles of Calvinistic belief, as a fog does those of a landscape. I would like to talk with you some time on spiritualism, and show you a collection of very curious facts that I have acquired through mediums not professional. Mr. Stowe has just been wading through eight volumes of "La Mystique," by Goerres, professor for forty years past in the University of Munich, first of physiology and latterly of philosophy. He examines the whole cycle of abnormal psychic, spiritual facts, trances, ecstasy, clairvoyance, witchcraft, spiritualism, etc., etc., as shown in the Romish miracles and the history of Europe.

I have long since come to the conclusion that the marvels of spiritualism are natural, and not supernatural, phenomena,--an uncommon working of natural laws. I believe that the door between those in the body and those out has never in any age been entirely closed, and that occasional perceptions within the veil are a part of the course of nature, and therefore not miraculous. Of course such a phase of human experience is very substantial ground for every kind of imposture and superstition, and I have no faith whatever in mediums who practice for money. In their case I think the law of Moses, that forbade consulting those who dealt with "familiar spirits," a very wise one.

Do write some more, dear doctor. You are too well off in your palace down there on the new land. Your Centennial Ballad was a charming little peep; now give us a full-fledged story. Mr. Stowe sends his

best regards, and wishes you would read "Goerres." [Footnote: Die Christliche Mystik, by Johann Joseph Gorres, Regensburg, 1836-42.] It is in French also, and he thinks the French translation better than the German.

Yours ever truly,

H. B. STOWE.

Writing in the autumn of 1876 to her son Charles, who was at that time abroad, studying at Bonn, Mrs. Stowe describes a most tempestuous passage between New York and Charleston, during which she and her husband and daughters suffered so much that they were ready to forswear the sea forever. The great waves as they rushed, boiling and seething, past would peer in at the little bull's-eye window of the state-room, as if eager to swallow up ship and passengers. From Charleston, however, they had a most delightful run to their journey's end. She writes:--"We had a triumphal entrance into the St. John's, and a glorious sail up the river. Arriving at Mandarin, at four o'clock, we found all the neighbors, black as well as white, on the wharf to receive us. There was a great waving of handkerchiefs and flags, clapping of hands and cheering, as we drew near. The house was open and all ready for us, and we are delighted to be once more in our beautiful Florida home."

In the following December she writes to her son: "I am again entangled

in writing a serial, a thing I never mean to do again, but the story, begun for a mere Christmas brochure, grew so under my hands that I thought I might as well fill it out and make a book of it. It is the last thing of the kind I ever expect to do. In it I condense my recollections of a bygone era, that in which I was brought up, the ways and manners of which are now as nearly obsolete as the Old England of Dickens's stories is.

"I am so hampered by the necessity of writing this story, that I am obliged to give up company and visiting of all kinds and keep my strength for it. I hope I may be able to finish it, as I greatly desire to do so, but I begin to feel that I am not so strong as I used to be. Your mother is an old woman, Charley mine, and it is best she should give up writing before people are tired of reading her.

"I would much rather have written another such a book as 'Footsteps of the Master,' but all, even the religious papers, are gone mad on serials. Serials they demand and will have, and I thought, since this generation will listen to nothing but stories, why not tell them?"

The book thus referred to was "Poganuc People," that series of delightful reminiscences of the New England life of nearly a century ago, that has proved so fascinating to many thousands of readers. It was published in 1878, and, as Mrs. Stowe foresaw, was her last literary undertaking of any length, though for several years afterwards she wrote occasional short stories and articles.

In January, 1879, she wrote from Mandarin to Dr. Holmes:--

DEAR DOCTOR,--I wish I could give to you and Mrs. Holmes the exquisite charm of this morning. My window is wide open; it is a lovely, fresh, sunny day, and a great orange tree hung with golden balls closes the prospect from my window. The tree is about thirty feet high, and its leaves fairly glisten in the sunshine.

I sent "Poganuc People" to you and Mrs. Holmes as being among the few who know those old days. It is an extremely quiet story for these sensational days, when heaven and earth seem to be racked for a thrill; but as I get old I do love to think of those quiet, simple times when there was not a poor person in the parish, and the changing glories of the year were the only spectacle. We, that is the professor and myself, have been reading with much interest Motley's Memoir. That was a man to be proud of, a beauty, too (by your engraving), I never had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance.

I feel with you that we have come into the land of leave-taking. Hardly a paper but records the death of some of Mr. Stowe's associates. But the river is not so black as it seems, and there are clear days when the opposite shore is plainly visible, and now and then we catch a strain of music, perhaps even a gesture of recognition. They are thinking of us, without doubt, on the other side. My daughters and I have been reading "Elsie Venner" again. Elsie

is one of my especial friends,--poor, dear child!--and all your theology in that book I subscribe to with both hands.

Does not the Bible plainly tell us of a time when there shall be no more pain? That is to be the end and crown of the Messiah's mission, when God shall wipe all tears away. My face is set that way, and yours, too, I trust and believe.

Mr. Stowe sends hearty and affectionate remembrance both to you and Mrs. Holmes, and I am, as ever, truly yours,

H, B, STOWE.

About this time Mrs. Stowe paid a visit to her brother Charles, at Newport, Fla., and, continuing her journey to New Orleans, was made to feel how little of bitterness towards her was felt by the best class of Southerners, In both New Orleans and Tallahassee she was warmly welcomed, and tendered public receptions that gave equal pleasure to her and to the throngs of cultivated people who attended them. She was also greeted everywhere with intense enthusiasm by the colored people, who, whenever they knew of her coming, thronged the railway stations in order to obtain a glimpse of her whom they venerated above all women.

The return to her Mandarin home each succeeding winter was always a source of intense pleasure to this true lover of nature in its

brightest and tenderest moods. Each recurring season was filled with new delights. In December, 1879, she writes to her son, now married and settled as a minister in Saco, Me.:--

DEAR CHILDREN,--Well, we have stepped from December to June, and this morning is sunny and dewy, with a fresh sea-breeze giving life to the air. I have just been out to cut a great bunch of roses and lilies, though the garden is grown into such a jungle that I could hardly get about in it. The cannas, and dwarf bananas, and roses are all tangled together, so that I can hardly thread my way among them. I never in my life saw anything range and run rampant over the ground as cannas do. The ground is littered with fallen oranges, and the place looks shockingly untidy, but so beautiful that I am quite willing to forgive its disorder.

We got here Wednesday evening about nine o'clock, and found all the neighbors waiting to welcome us on the wharf. The Meads, and Cranes, and Webbs, and all the rest were there, while the black population was in a frenzy of joy. Your father is quite well. The sea had its usual exhilarating effect upon him. Before we left New York he was quite meek, and exhibited such signs of grace and submission that I had great hopes of him. He promised to do exactly as I told him, and stated that he had entire confidence in my guidance. What woman couldn't call such a spirit evidence of being prepared for speedy translation? I was almost afraid he could not be long for this world. But on the second day at sea his spirits rose, and his appetite

reasserted itself. He declared in loud tones how well he felt, and quite resented my efforts to take care of him. I reminded him of his gracious vows and promises in the days of his low spirits, but to no effect. The fact is, his self-will has not left him yet, and I have now no fear of his immediate translation. He is going to preach for us this morning.

The last winter passed in this well-loved Southern home was that of 1883-84, for the following season Professor Stowe's health was in too precarious a state to permit him to undertake the long journey from Hartford. By this time one of Mrs. Stowe's fondest hopes had been realized; and, largely through her efforts, Mandarin had been provided with a pretty little Episcopal church, to which was attached a comfortable rectory, and over which was installed a regular clergy-man.

In January, 1884, Mrs. Stowe writes:--

"Mandarin looks very gay and airy now with its new villas, and our new church and rectory. Our minister is perfect. I wish you could know him. He wants only physical strength. In everything else he is all one could ask.

"It is a bright, lovely morning, and four orange-pickers are busy gathering our fruit. Our trees on the bluff have done better than any in Florida.

"This winter I study nothing but Christ's life. First I read Farrar's account and went over it carefully. Now I am reading Geikie. It keeps my mind steady, and helps me to bear the languor and pain, of which I have more than usual this winter."