

That all the kindness he had shown
Was so much kindness thrown away,
That her ingratitude was known
While she was flirting day by day,
And false in every part she'd play.

A jealous man is often moved
To credit what may be untrue,
And hate the one he once beloved,
As if no constancy she knew.

Cleopa's patron might be told
Some act of hers to rouse his ire,
Making his anger fierce and bold—
Revenge would then be his desire,
And then to be within his power,
Might subject her to such disgrace,
And bring destruction in an hour,
And every sign of hope efface.

All this did Mara represent,
His energetic words were few,
"The overseer on mischief bent
Would bring a curse on me and you,
I know the villain's bad intent,
I've long suspected his dislike,
He's ready now a blow to strike.
And you especially he'd bring
Down to degraded suffering.
No safety now for us but flight,
We must leave here this very night."

As planters seldom favored school's,
But wished their negroes still to be
Brought up as ignorant as fools,
Scarce knowing even A B C,
If by rare chance one learned to read
He would be held a dangerous man,
Particularly if he made speed
To learn much when he once began,
He might infect the colored race,
Knowledge would ignorance replace,
Slaves, though in bonds to men more wise,
Might come to think such bonds disgrace,
And might against their owners rise.

But planters, mostly pious men,
At least called holy in a way,
For they could either swear or pray
Be the occasion what it may,
Would have slaves taught by pious rule,
And packed to church instead of school.

Preachers, no doubt with best intent,
Would tell them all to be content
With their low station, and obey
Their masters' rule from day to day,
This was the scriptural right way.
If even chastised without being wrong
In heaven they'd sing their triumph song,
But here 'twas plainly God's decree

That some should in subjection be.*

A local preacher at that time,
Well known to all as "Noble Ben,"
Whose grey head fostered thoughts
sublime.

Who warned quite fearlessly all men,
Masters and servants, both alike,
For freedom evermore to strike,
Freedom of thought, the mind to charm,
Freedom to act, but not to harm,
For freedom boldly speak the truth,
Though cowards would this point dispute,
Freedom to doubt and then to see
Truth bursting from each mystery.
He was a negro, black as night,
With spectacles to aid his sight,
And sentiments supremely bright.

A favorite great save with a few
Who knew not half of what he knew.
Such thought him traitor in disguise,
Who rule and law would both despise;
His independence did surprise.
He was a preacher and had won
His freedom by a daring act,
He saved his master's only son
From being drowned—a well-known fact
The boy sailed out, his boat upset
One stormy day when waves were high,
To shore he never more could get
If Noble Ben had not been nigh,
He heard the boy's repeated cry,
And though some others stood around,
To risk great danger none were found,
But Preacher Ben, by nature brave,
Rushed in to battle with each wave
And a poor fellow creature save.
Then soon he clutched the drowning boy,
And brought him out mid shouts of joy.
Ben's master saw the noble deed—
His son was saved, and Ben was freed,
Among Ben's friends he took the lead.

This brave old man would brook no
wrong
From rich or poor, from weak or strong,
And slavery he'd boldly tell
Was first derived and hatched in hell,
White preachers came with serious look

* The Rev. Bishop Meade in addressing a congregation of slaves said:

(1) "Now when correction is given you you either deserve it or you do not deserve it. But whether you really deserve it or not it is your duty, and Almighty God requires that you bear it patiently.

(2) "Your masters and your mistresses are God's overseers, and if you are faulty towards them God Himself will punish you for it in the next world."