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Faithful Lydia.

In the spring of 1886, when a freshet in the Alabama river caused the country on each side to be overflowed by water for many miles, the negroes on the river plantations were the greatest sufferers. Their cabins would be under water almost before they knew that danger threatened them, and hundreds of them were sometimes found huddled together on some knoll sufficiently elevated to be above the water. There they often remained two or three days and nights without food, and exposed to a soaking rain. Fortunately the weather was not cold.

Many relief expeditions were sent out from the neighboring towns to rescue them:

But we did not appreciate their extreme peril until the boat struck against the frail log building which was in the water to the edges of the roof and visibly shook and tottered. The poor creatures commenced to clamber hurriedly down to the boat.

'Stop!' I cried. 'The women and children first.'

The men obediently resumed their seats. We took in first the children and then the women, and were about to push off, telling the men we would hurry back for them as quickly as possible or send the first boat we met, when a very old woman—I noticed she was the last to get into the boat and had done so reluctantly—seized the corner of the

yer, en I pray de good Lawd to fetch you all safe home; but I am gwine to stay wid my ole man. Ef Simon got to git drowned, Lyddy gwine git drowneded too. We dun bin togedder too long to part now.' And we had to leave her, after throwing some blankets and a lot of provisions to them.

As we rowed off in the rain and night a high falsetto voice, tremulous with age, came across the waters from the crib, where we left the almost certainly doomed group in the blackness of darkness. They dared not have a light for fear of setting fire to their frail support. We stopped our oars to listen to the song. It came clear and distinct. First Lyddy's trembling voice and then a chorus of a dozen or more of the deep bass voices of the men:

'We're a clingin' to de ark,
Take us in, take us in,
Fur de watah's deep en dark,
Take us in, take us in;
Do' de flesh is po' en weak,
Take us in, take us in,
'Tis de Lawd we gwinter seek,
Take us in, take us in;
Den, Lawd, hole out dy han',
Take us in, take us in,
Draw de sinnahs to de lan',
Take us in, take us in.'

We could wait and listen no longer to the weird sounds, but struck our oars in the water and hurried away.

Most fortunately we came across a boat bent upon the same errand as ourselves, which went immediately to the barn and saved all of its living freight. The building had been apparently held down by their weight, for as the last one left, it turned over and floated away to the gulf.

Their rescuers told us afterwards that as they neared it the first sound they heard was an old woman's voice singing:

'De Lawd is hyah'd our cry,'

Answered by the men:—

'Take us in, take us in,
En He'll save us by en by,
Take us in, take us in.'
—'Our Dumb Animals.'

The Measuring Rod.

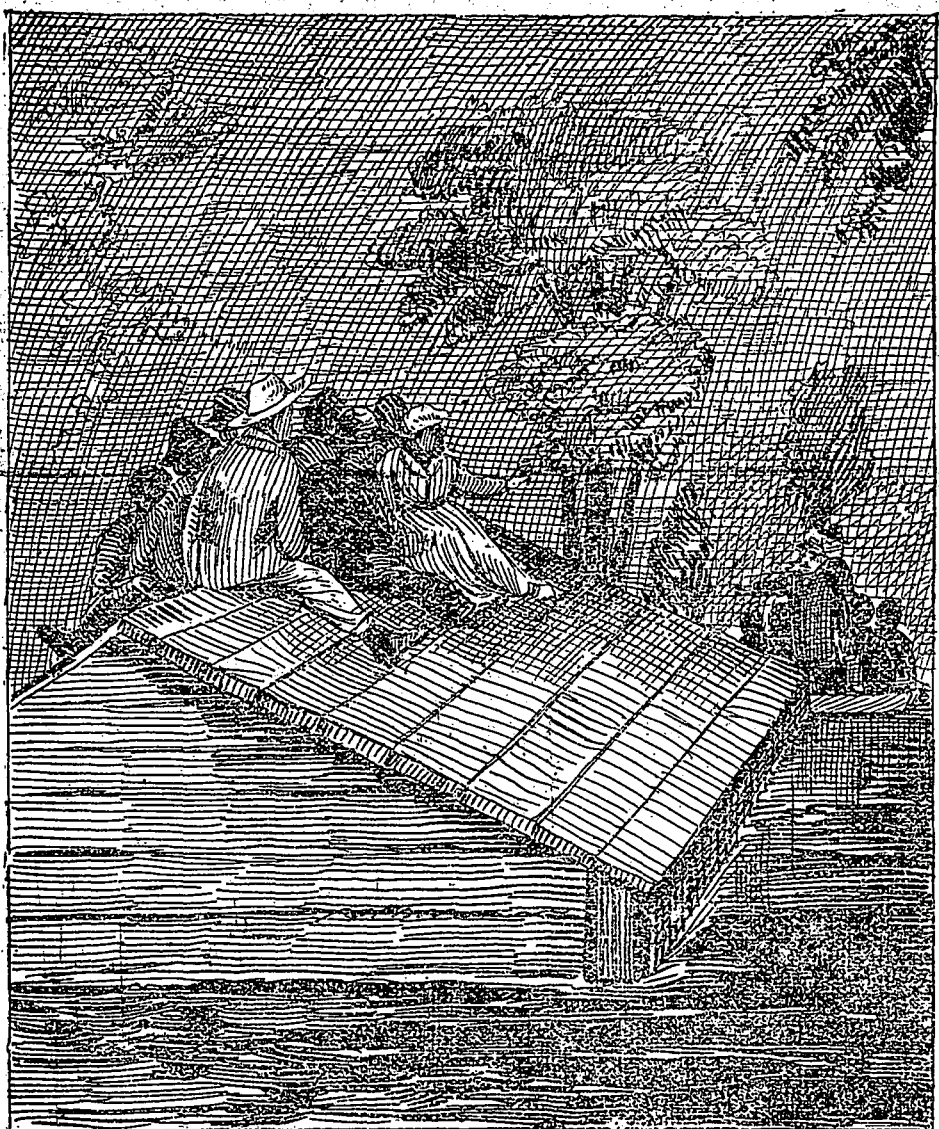
(Delia Lyman Porter.)

I dreamed that I was on my way to school, when suddenly I noticed a great crowd upon the green. People were hurrying to and fro, and when I asked what all this commotion was about, a girl said:—

'Why, don't you know? It's Measuring Day, and the Lord's angel has come to see how much our souls have grown since last Measuring Day!'

'Measuring Day!' said I, 'measuring souls! I never heard of such a thing,' and began to ask questions; but the girl hurried on, and after a little I let myself be pressed along with the crowd to the green.

There in the centre, on a kind of a throne under the great elm, was the most glorious and beautiful being I ever saw. He had white wings; his clothes were a strange, shining sort of white, and he had the kindest, and yet most serious face I had ever beheld. By his side there was a tall, golden rod fastened upright in the ground, with



THE NEGROES HAD SOUGHT REFUGE UPON A CORN BARN.

These consisted of one or more boats, manned by expert oarsmen and swimmers, and filled with cooked provisions, blankets, etc. One day the news came that the negroes on a certain plantation had sought refuge upon a corn barn, around which the water was rapidly rising, and so rendering their condition exceedingly precarious. Two boats started out at once to their assistance. In one of these I went, accompanied by another white man and a negro. Just before dark we sighted the corn barn, upon which a mass of black humanity clustered like a swarm of bees. A heavy rain was now falling, and daylight beginning to fade away. Their condition became almost distressing as they sat in perfect silence waiting our approach.

house, and looking anxiously into my face, said:

'Marster, ain't you gwine to take my old man?'

'No, auntie,' I answered, 'the boat is too full now. He must wait till we come back.'

The words were hardly out of my mouth, when with a sudden spring, she was up and on the roof again. It shook as she scrambled on it, and took her seat by a little, withered old black man whose hand she seized and held as if she was afraid we would tear her away from him.

'Come, auntie,' I cried, 'this won't do. We can't leave you here, and we can't wait any longer on you.'

'Go on, marster,' she answered. 'I thanks