

pleasure from his weekly visits to the village or town where he does his marketing. The mule or the ox-team is then harnessed to a ramshackle old waggon capable of carrying the family, and a day is given up to the excursion. The negro is exceedingly sociable, and when he has any time on his hands, likes to go to the store, or the mill, or the railway station, or anywhere else where he can meet his fellows. Negroes who live in the small towns on the railways, spend hours

before, and their habits are a heritage from slavery days. Yet they are steadily improving. At Montgomery, Ala., a coloured man told me that his people paid taxes on \$500,000 worth of property, and that he himself paid taxes on \$20,000. Yet he had begun, he said, "without a nickel." The blacks are docile and eager to learn. Even where schools are provided throughout the "black belt," it is only at intervals between the pressing field-work of the suc-



A FAMILY PARTY IN THE BLACK BELT.

on Sundays at the stations to see the trains arrive and depart. There will be two or three hundred people lounging about the station when the train comes in. Its arrival is the event of the day, and the excitement attending it is shared almost equally by the white and coloured population.

The condition of the negroes in the new South is to the Northern tourist a problem of special interest. Since emancipation, it is true they are often thriftless and unprogressive; but so they were

cessive crops—corn, cotton, tobacco—that the young folks can go to school—about four months in the year I was told. That they have improved so much is greatly to their credit, and is an augury of still greater improvement in the future. The Sunday-school, moreover, is supplementing the deficiencies of the day-school to a considerable extent. The printed lesson leaves are a valuable means of instruction even in the hands of inexperienced teachers. I have heard coloured children in the