

officers foremost in promoting this general and unusual gaiety was captain Johnston, who had been frequently heard to declare his aversion to marriage, though he was known to respect and honor the sex with the homage of true chivalry. John Lightenstone, who was duly informed of the captain's views in this respect, had noticed, with feelings of parental uneasiness, the somewhat marked attention which he had recently shown to his only and darling daughter, Elizabeth, then not quite sixteen years of age, and who was endowed by nature with a gay and impressible disposition, for he feared her affections might become interested in a man who could neither return nor reward them. He, therefore, determined to place her with her maiden or widowed aunt, at Ogechee, about ten miles from the city, and accordingly informed her that on the following morning she must be ready to leave for that place, but without assigning any reason for his conduct. At a ball on the evening of the same day, captain Johnston having ascertained that Miss Lightenstone was to leave Savannah in the morning, sought her out, and finding opportunity made proposals of marriage to her which ended then and there in a formal engagement. The young lady returned from the eventful ball and retired to her room to weep for the remainder of the night.* In the morning she took her departure from the city, leaving her father unacquainted with the event of the previous evening. Her lover, who soon became unhappy in her absence, resolved to have an interview; and in order to achieve his purpose, he took horse and rode to the house of a lady friend, which was situated about three miles from that in which the object of his newly awakened affections was domiciled. On his arrival he prevailed on his hostess to drive over and endeavor to obtain the consent of her aunt to permit Elizabeth to visit her for a few days in order to meet some friends who were then stopping at her house, among whom she was told she might name captain Johnston, of the Rangers; but her aunt declined the invitation, lest it should be thought her niece was desirous to meet the captain, and thus give rise to censorious remark. No persuasion on the part of her friend could reverse the

* See Mrs. Johnston's MS.