

Mr. Buckingham's tour was a very extensive one. Having some intention of making it a source of profit, as well as a means for learning the character of the country and the people, he visited wherever he deemed it probable that his lectures on Egypt or Palestine would bring an audience together. Making Charleston his starting point, he went, by an irregular and circuitous route, to New Orleans, and thence proceeded to the celebrated town of Natchez, on the Mississippi. This was the limit of his researches in that direction, prudential considerations and the counsel of his friends having deterred him from going farther and perhaps faring worse. He returned by the Upland Districts of the Alleghany Range of Mountains, to the Northern States, having made the tour of Georgia and Virginia, and visited the most important places, as well as the spas and springs to which the votaries of fashion resort in the pursuit of health and pleasure.

While lodging at an inn at Augusta, in "Georgia State," the even tenor of his life was broken in upon by the destruction of the hotel, which was consumed by fire. He lost by the conflagration a sum of money amounting to something like "a thousand dollars," and what he felt to be a greater misfortune still, a large assortment of curiosities picked up on his way, and some herbs and drawings which could not be replaced by money. The hotel was the property of a Judge named Hale, and was set on fire by the slaves attached to it, who took that method of being revenged for the ungentle treatment to which they were subjected by the overseers, the Judge himself, a kind and excellent man, not being resident among them. It appears from Mr. Buckingham's remarks that this is the usual mode adopted by the slaves for the purpose of avenging themselves upon masters who are unusually severe. The motive to do so is not, however, all revenge. They anticipate, and frequently their anticipations prove correct, the breaking up of the establishment, and the sale of the remaining *chattels*, themselves included—by which the chances are that they obtain more indulgent masters; particularly, as the injured owner dare not make it known that his slaves are vicious lest he should not then be able to find any one to purchase them. The same cause operates upon the owners to prevent them from punishing petty crimes severely. Stealing is consequently very unpleasantly common, and yet the thieves, who are almost always slaves, are seldom punished as they would be were they not the personal property of the master, and often his sole dependence. No one will buy a slave who is known to be addicted to thievery, and consequently these propensities when they do appear, are rather connived at and concealed than exposed and punished.

Taking the whole system into consideration—the power of the slaves to destroy their masters' wealth by fire—the propensity to stealing—the expense of keeping them, and the high price at which slaves are valued—the chances of death or sickness, and the insurance of their lives, Mr. Buckingham is not quite clear whether the masters or the slaves have the better bargain. Some of the owners themselves are doubtful upon the point; or, at least, it would seem so from the following, which is taken from Mr. Buckingham's book:—

In the course of the protracted conversation to which these topics led, a gentleman from Kentucky, engaged in the growing of corn and grazing of cattle, himself a slaveholder to a considerable extent, and joining in all the denunciations of the Abolitionists, undertook to show, that after all, slavery was a much greater curse to the owners than it was to the slaves, as it absorbed their capital, ate up their profits, and proved a perpetual obstacle to their progressive prosperity. He said he had not only made the calculation, but actually tried the experiment of comparing the labour of the free White man and the Negro slave; and he found the latter always the dearest of the two. It took, for instance, 2,000 dollars to purchase a good male slave. The interest of money in Kentucky being ten per cent, here was 200 dollars a year of actual cost; but to insure his life it would require at least five per cent more, which would make 300 dollars a year. Add to this the necessary expenses of maintenance while healthy, and medical attendance while sick, with wages of White overseers to every gang of men to see that they do their duty, and other incidental charges, and he did not think that a slave could cost less, in interest, insurance, subsistence, and watching, than 500 dollars, or 100*l.* sterling a year: yet, after all, he would not do more than half the work of a White man, who could be hired at the same sum, without the outlay of any capital or the incumbrance of maintenance while sick, and was therefore by far the cheapest labourer of the two.

The same gentleman told us of two instances that had happened on his own estate, of ingenious evasions of labour. One man took medicine which he stole from the dispensary, purposely to make himself sick to avoid work; and when examined by the doctor, he was detected in having spread powdered mustard on his tongue to give it a foul appearance. A female slave to avoid working for her master, produced such swellings in her arms as to excite the compassion of those who thought it to be some dreadful disease; but the same person, who lay a-bed groaning with agony all day, being detected in the act of