

fragments upon his basket in the mud. Ben resisted, and threw down the white boy, proving to be the stronger of the two. Tom Myers, a young lawyer of Wilmington, saw the contest, and immediately rushing out, seized little Ben, and dragged him into the store opposite the place of battle. He sent out to a saddler's shop, procured a cow-hide, and gave the little fellow a tremendous flogging, for the daring crime of resisting a white boy who had wantonly invaded his rights. Is it any wonder that the spirit of self-respect of the poor, ignorant slave is broken down by such treatment of unsparing and persevering cruelty?

I was now repulsed by James, so that I could hope for no assistance from him in learning to read. But I could not go on alone. I must get some one to aid me in starting, or give up the effort to learn. This I could not bear to do. I longed to be able to read, and so I cast about me to see what I should do next. I thought of a kind boy at the bake-house, near my own age. I thought he would help me, and so I went to him, showed my book, and asked him to teach me the letters. He told their names, and went over the whole alphabet with me three times. By this assistance, I learned a few more of the letters, so that I could remember them afterwards when I sat down alone and tried to call them over. I could now pick out and name five or six of the letters in any part of the book. I felt then that I was getting along, and the consciousness that I was making progress, though slow and painful, was joy and hope to my sorrowing heart, such as I had never felt before. I could not with safety go to the bake-house, as there I was exposed to detection by the sudden entrance of customers or idlers. I wanted to get a teacher who would give me a little aid each day, and now I set about securing this object. As kind Providence would have it, I easily succeeded, and on this wise: A little boy, Hiram Bricket, ten years old, or about that age, came along by the store one day, on his way home from school, while my master was gone home to dinner, and James was in the front part of the store. I beckoned to Hiram to come round