

glad—I especially—when mamma invited us to take a peep at the outside world. What did I see? I will tell you. Our gourd house on the top of a pole, some twelve feet high, was placed in front of a row of huts, one storey affairs, inhabited by the blackest, merriest, noisiest, happiest lot of men and women and children I ever saw. We were black just then, and our father was as noisy, and merry, and our mother seemed as happy as they, and it struck me then, as it has often since, that our mirth and happiness, and noise, arose from very similar causes. We all had plenty to eat. But I lived long enough to find out a difference between these people and mine. We could get away: they couldn't. And, therefore, our happiness was more enduring, and I believe that we were the better off of the two. Away off from these huts, was a large white house, with bright green verandahs, and treesplanted around and a smooth lawn in front, with a winding road, and abundant offices and outhouses, and neighing horses in a fine field. Around this white house, far as eye could reach, were other large fields, with nothing particular in them just now, but teeming in later months with silvery rice, and the yellow sugar cane. I didn't know this just then, but I found it out afterwards at another stage of my life. Far in front of us, and north and south of us, spread the father of waters, the Mississippi, bearing upon its brown surface steamboats and flats, and the thousand craft which ever float downwards to its mouth, laden with cotton bales and tobacco, and the multitudinous products of the south and west. Immediately behind our gourd house was one particular hut, cleaner and with greater show of comfort. At evening when the day's work was done, its occupants would cluster round the door, and

with a fire before them to drive off the swarm of mosquitoes which I liked so much to see, would sit and sing, banjo on knee, until the big moon reached overhead. I can sing as you probably know, but I liked old Sambo's music for all that. I wasn't jealous of him at all, and could have listened from moonrise until daybreak, had he cared to troll forth his merry staves so long. But down in the country, fogs rise at night, and Sambo was forced to creep in, even if he hadn't been tired enough by his day's work. Sambo had a wife Dinah—and more children than I had brothers and sisters. You should have seen the merry lot, as they rolled over in the sand before their hut, and played with Bob, their black dog, as black and curly as his playmates. It was a pleasant scene, I can tell you, and it does me good when I get back every year to see how the young Sambos and Dinahs get bigger and more numerous. Up at the big white house, where Massa lived, the gentlefolk were white, fairer than rice stems, and as tall and graceful. My mother is comely, but Miss Paulina as much surpassed her. Though she was white, as I surpass that ridiculous Mr. Top Knot, who robs orchards, and is constantly engaged rushing into strawberry patches and currant trees. That fellow is a thief and an impudent thief too, and deserves shooting. I am happy to say that he has no connection with my family. If he had, I wouldn't own him. Down south, he robs grape vines, and pecks peaches in Jersey, and is altogether a nuisance wherever he goes. As I was saying just now, Miss Paulina as far surpassed my mother in beauty, as I surpass Top Knot in honesty. And that is saying very much for Miss Paulina, I can assure you. She had brothers and sisters, and a father and mother, but she