

MAHSR JOHN.

I heahs a heap o' people talkin', ebrywhar I goes,
'Bout Washintum an' Franklum, an' sech genuses as does ;
I s'pose dey's mighty fine, but heah's de p'int I's bettin' on—
Der wuzn't nar a one ob 'em come up to Mahsr John.

He shorely wuz de grates' man, de country ebber growed—
You better had git out de way when *he* come 'long the road !
He hel' his head up dis way, lik' he 'spised to see the groun' ;
An' niggers had to toe de mark, when Mahsr John was 'roun' ;

I only has to shet my eyes, an' den it seems to me
I sees him right afore me now, jes' like he use' to be.
A-settin' on de gal'ry lookin' awful big an' wise,
Wid little niggers fannin' him, to keep away de flies.

He alluz wore de berry bes' ob planter's linen suits,
An' kep' a nigger busy jus' a-blackin ob his boots ;
De buckles on his galluses was made of solid gol',
An' diamon's !—dey wuz in his shu't as thick as it would hol'.

You heered me ! 'twas a caution, when he went to take a ride,
To see him in the kerridge, wid ol' Mistis by his side—
Mulatter Bill a-dribin', an a nigger on behin' ;
An' two Kaintucky hosses tuck 'em tearin' whar dey gwine.

Ol' Mahsr John wuz pow'ful rich—he owned a heap o' lan' ;
Fibe cotton places, 'sides a sugar place in Loozyan ;
He had a thousan' nigger—an' he worked 'em shore's you born !
De obarseahs ud start 'em at the breakin' ob de morn.

Sometimes he'd gib a frolic—dat's de time you seed the fun ;
De 'ristocratic fam'lies, dey ud be dar, ebry one,
Dey'd hab a band from New Orleans to play for 'em to dance,
An' tell you what, de supper wuz a 'tickler sarcumstance.

Well, times is changed ! De war it come an' sot de niggers free,
An' now ol' Mahsr John ain't hardly wuf as much as me ;
He had to pay his debts, an' so his lan' is mos'ly gone—
An' I declar' I's sorry for pore ol' Mahsr John.

But when I heah 'em talkin' 'bout some sullybrated man,
I listens to 'em quiet, till de done said all de can,
An' den I 'lows dot in dem days, 'at I remembers on,
Dat gemmen warn't a patchin' onto my ol' Mahsr John.

—IRWIN RUSSELL.

