

Joel Chandler Harris.

(Uncle Remus.)

BY MABEL H. PARSONS.

The city of Atlanta is not noted for her modesty. Frequent skits in southern papers are to the effect that this fair city claims to be always ahead. Wits are never weary ringing the changes on this characteristic. Perhaps so cheerful a point of view accounts for the perpetual holiday happiness of the citizens. Light heartedness seems to be innate and laughter ripples with delicious ease and melody.

Of Joel Chandler Harris, "the matchless writer of the spoken story", Atlanta has a right to be proud. As the creator of "Uncle Remus" he is known in many lands. His wonderful stories of Bier Fox, Bier Rabbit and the Tar Baby have made him a valued friend not only of the little folks, but of many a weary mother and distracted nurse. Southern children especially are familiar with these fascinating folklore tales.

Mr. Harris was born in the little village of Eatonton, Georgia, in 1848. As the son of poor parents his schooling consisted of but a few terms in the village academy. He could read at the age of six and has always been inordinately fond of books. His first love was "The Vicar of Wakefield," which his mother read to him again and again until he could repeat entire pages; his ambition was to write a book like it. When twelve he had to face the world and earn a living and help support his mother. At this time he saw an advertisement for a boy to learn printing and answered it. He was accepted and began work with Colonel Joseph A. Turner, a wealthy planter, who was starting to prove a pet theory of his which was that a weekly newspaper could be carried on successfully, published miles from a postoffice. The "Countryman" modeled after Addison's "Spectator," was devoted to the discussions of literature, politics and religion. Owing to the rare genius and brilliant scholarship of the editor, this unusual enterprise was an immediate success and the "Countryman" published on a plantation nine miles from a post office, soon reached a circulation of two thousand subscribers. The lad Harris worked away faithfully; though extremely shy and reticent he was very observing and found much to attract him on this vast plantation. Delightful house parties, where mirth and revel reigned; negroes, enjoying their songs, dances and stories after the day in cane and cotton fields; beautiful horses and sagacious dogs; runaway slaves; gay hunting parties returning with fox and coon,—these formed southern country life at that time. Always a lover of nature, the woods called often to him and revealed many secrets of bird, beast and insect.

He had not been in the office very long, when Colonel Turner noticed articles in his paper which were not familiar. He suspected the young apprentice, but being wise said nothing; he invited the boy however to use his library which contained a collection of the best books in the world. The youthful author gained deep and lasting knowledge from these silent friends. Six years of such rich experience formed his real education.

It was from this plantation that he saw Sherman's army march on its victorious way to the sea; tragic scenes left the impression on heart and mind as devastation and want took possession of that magnificent estate. Finally the "Countryman" failed and the young printer went to Macon Georgia, where he was on the staff of the "Daily Telegraph." Later he was connected with the "Crescent Monthly" of New Orleans, the "Advertiser" of Forsyth, Georgia, and the "Daily News" of Savannah.

In 1875 the scourge of yellow fever along the coast drove him to Atlanta where he became a member of the editorial staff of the far famed "Constitution." Then it was that he gave to the world Brother Wolf, and the Brother Terrapin with their numerous friends and foes. Since that time over twenty volumes of prose and poetry have come from his pen and he is still writing with his usual verve. Mingo and other sketches picture the life of middle Georgia and of the mountains of North Georgia, but in point of merit they are not equal to the dialect stories of the ante bellum negro, so full of quaint humor, homely philosophy and gentle rebuke.

Mr. Harris loves his home, a delightful place on Gordon Avenue and he seldom leaves it. Amid trees and flowers and terraced lawns is his Queen Ann cottage with wide latticed verandahs and gable roof whose ten large rooms are all on one floor. Part of the surrounding five acres is devoted to a rose garden, containing many varieties of the queen of flowers and this is his particular joy. The children have all the pets they wish; ample provision is made for their grey donkeys, rabbits, guinea pigs, dogs, etc. Mr. Harris is also devoted to birds and encourages them to reside on his grounds. Early one morning he noticed two Carolina wrens building a nest in the letter box on the cedar tree at his gate. Half the forenoon was spent looking out for the postman to warn him not to disturb the tiny architects. They were unmolested all summer and tenderly watched until the nestlings flew away and the family separated. Since then, his friends have called the place "the Sign of the Wrens Nest."

Though the soul of genial hospitality himself, this much loved man is strenuously averse to being entertained or

lionized in any way. When in New York a few years ago some friends planned a dinner in his honor of which he was to be told nothing; the scheme was simply to take him to the banquet hall after the arrival of the guests. Late that afternoon he was talking on the street with an admirer who inadvertently let fall a word revealing all. Mr. Harris wished only for the seven leagued boots to transport him to his dear native state. He lost no time, however, wishing for magic means of conveyance but hailing a cab; hurried to the depot, and was soon on a southern bound train without trunk or scripen route for Atlanta. No amount of persuasion can induce him to speak in public, or read selections from his own writings. When asked what he would do if Joel Chandler Harris reading clubs were formed in the city he replied, "Leave Atlanta." This would be a serious sacrifice for he thinks Georgia the finest state in the Union, and Atlanta its choicest spot. He started North a while ago but as he neared the border line of North Carolina he says it came over him that he was leaving all the best things of life behind, so he got off and took the next train back to Atlanta and here is content to live forever.

Last spring an article appeared in the "Atlanta Journal" written from Vermont, denouncing the blue-jay as "wanton wicked and vicious." An editorial in the "Constitution" by Mr. Harris was a vindication of the maligned bird. The following quotation from it gives his opinion of a northern climate.

"It is easy to imagine that a blue jay, suffering from its bleak environment, the victim of climatic conditions that are sufficient to exasperate human beings and give a twist to their moral machinery, is ripe for anything that promises a relief from the desolation of winter and early spring. . . . A climate that will not allow the profitable raising of watermelons is no place for a jay or any other kind of a bird."

Mr. Harris is abnormally bashful and dreads strangers as he does reporters. Only a few choice spirits ever have the rare pleasure of hearing him tell his stories. His imitation of the wimical dialect and droll manner of the negro is excellent. He is a man of very few words; southern volubility cannot be attributed to him. Like his Tar Baby he keeps on saying nothing. I count myself fortunate as having been one of a northern party at his home to whom he did not deny himself. His reply to my inquiry as to his family was, "I have six children, four grandchildren and a big wife." Mrs. Harris is charming and makes an ideal hostess. In a gown of silver grey, which matched her hair, she reminded me of Lady Laurier. As Miss Essie La Rose the daughter of a Canadian sea captain, Mr. Harris met her in Savannah where they were married in 1873. She is a fine linguist and teaches the children French. Because of her superior executive ability, her husband calls her his business manager. The oldest son Julian is now managing editor of the "Constitution," while the third son Evelyn is city editor.

On the walls of the west parlor of this interesting home, hangs a large life-like picture of Mr. Harris and his own familiar friend James Whitcomb Riley standing side by side. It is said of Mr. Riley that he is "plumb foolish" over Mr. Harris and when these two genial souls are visiting together, they generate enough happiness to make the entire world brighter. In appearance "Uncle Remus", as he is frequently called, is of medium height and inclined to rotundity, and like Santa Claus he shakes when he laughs like a bowl full of jolly. He has chestnut hair, blue eyes and a receding chin; even by his most fascinated admirers he is not called handsome. The humorous and ridiculous appeal to him readily and the numerous tiny wrinkles tell how pronounced has been his enjoyment of life. His has a sunny disposition, dust never alights on his rose colored spectacles. He says he has not been cross in twenty years—where is another?

Aff that he has written is cheerful, hopeful, bright and joyous. The best part of every character in his works is brought out. A "gentle reader" once queried thus regarding the favorite personage of his literary world,—"Truly, Mr. Harris, wouldn't Uncle Remus steal chickens if he got a chance?" The laughing reply was so characteristic, "If I follow the old man all day, you can't expect me to know what he does all night too." Though he has written much about the time of war and civil discord, no bitterness nor cynicism is ever displayed but every thing tends to promote kindly sentiment between the North and South.

In the Carnegie Library of this city is an attractive department for children. In their reading room is a spacious fireplace, the thirteen tiles of which in white and blue depict the adventures of the various animals as they occurred in the stories by Mr. Harris. One scene is of the aged negro Uncle Remus, in his humble cabin and before him sits "Miss Sally's" little golden haired boy, his bright eyes and tense attitude manifesting his interest. The inscription over this uniquely tiled fireplace is from Robert Louis Stevenson,—and reads,

"The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

And this is the conviction also of the delightful, irresistible humorist—Joel Chandler Harris.
Atlanta, Georgia, May 1905.

Among the Savaras.

Parlakimedi, Madras Presidency,
India, April, 26th, 1905.

Dear Friends:—For some years you have been familiar with the title, "Among the Telugus," which is borne by the annual report of your Missionaries in this land. I am appropriating the form of the title for the subject of a short letter concerning the Savara work. The title is somewhat misleading, however, for I am as yet not among the Savaras at all, being only on the edge of their territory, and of the work. For a year and a half after coming to the country, I studied Telugu, which language I have since been using in the acquisition of Savara. In the latter study some progress has been made so that with the help of a sympathetic Savara who appreciates the limitations of your missionary's vocabulary, I can carry on quite a conversation. In some regards the Savara is easier than the Telugu. The latter flows on so smoothly, and is so run together, that one finds it very difficult to distinguish the words when spoken by the average native. On the other hand, the Savara is a guttural language, and in its pronunciation must be more clearly articulated than Telugu, and so is more easily caught by the ear. Then again the vocabulary is very limited which makes it easier now when learning the language, but will make it very difficult to express the ideas of religion.

One marked difference between the Telugu and the Savara people is noticeable in their manner towards the learner who is trying to talk to them in their own language. The Telugus are polite—extremely polite. They will listen with the utmost gravity, and seem entirely unconscious of the fact that the speaker is performing some of the most astonishing and amusing gymnastic feats with their language. Not so the Savaras. The delighted grin with which they listen is not wholly due to their appreciation of the honor the gentleman does their language in trying to learn it. They are simple as children, and take no pains to hide their amusement at the frequent mistakes into which the speaker falls. At first when I attempted to speak to the Savaras, they would make no reply, and move away as quickly as possible. They are becoming more friendly of late however and on a recent tour among the hills I noticed a great difference in the attitude of the people when I came into the region from which the people are in the habit of attending the Parlakimedi Market. When they saw me they came running to greet me and seemed to take great pleasure in reminding me that they had seen me in Parlakimedi. At another point a little further on they brought a present of oranges.

It has been decided in our Conference to make Parlakimedi the center for the Savara work. In the rainy season, from July to October it will be impossible to tour among the hills. Even now, in the dry season, I am prevented from going to the hills, because I can get no cook among the Telugu servants who will go to the hills, and risk the fever. Those who were with me on a tour last December, have suffered very much with fever since then. From Parlakimedi as a center, however, it is possible on different days of the week to reach several market places, to each of which hundreds of Savaras come from the hills. In these markets a good work can be done in preparing the people for the visit of the missionary in the dry season. In Parlakimedi itself there is a large market every Saturday attended by hundreds of Savaras, and nearly every day there are many of them in town. If we can procure the land for which we are now negotiating we will be near the market, and on the main highway from the hills.

As I come to be more acquainted with the Savara work, I see that it is likely for some time to be a work of considerable difficulty. But the more I see of the Savara people the more I am impressed with the possibilities of the mission among them, and the more I am interested in them. Many of us think that the conditions of work among the Savaras are very much like those among the Karens of Burmah. If you are acquainted with the recent history of the Karen work, you will know that a remarkable movement has been spreading among them for a year or two past, under the leadership of Ko San Ye, and thousands are being converted. In the last year on one field alone there were two thousand converts baptized. It is our hope that the similarity between the two peoples may be continued into the spiritual realm and that the power of God may be manifested in the Savara work as it has been among the Karens. For this we bespeak the prayers of all who are interested in the extension of God's kingdom.

J. A. GLENDINNING.

Parlakimedi, April 25, 1905.

Some Beautiful Houses and what Becomes of Them.

BY A. H. GARDNER.

In 1865, Dr. (afterwards Sir) William Dawson, of Montreal, discovered in the Laurentian hills the remain of an animal which he named the Eozoon or dawn animal, because it was from the place in which it was found, evidently one of the life forms which appeared at the period when God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." It was a representative of the

oldest life upon earth and disappeared. and become extinct. ing only the style of the first chapter of Dr. Dawson's discarded old-fashioned house. We find them today almost infinite variety and shape. fer you to your p. Leidy's work on R all microscopic.

The salt water what are known a work is an author really but rhizopods the ocean they but minute sand-grain ocean's water. T but the most beau ation. By just w of such marvelous and intricate, is w abundant family are found wherever during a voyage t ged through the w less numbers. Und of minute globule sion from the cen though always r spheroid. These ed, which mark t with its first abo quarter too limite its body through sion. As it conti ber, each larger th The general plan are rarely more th cess of body matte form a new organ the globigerina in bottom. There lved on the bed of death of the rhizo the ocean mud, seven percent of dredging in the tiny shells. Of th we cannot even g Another very in ily is the Nummu found in our day, remains may be s with an irregular of 1,800 miles and larger than the gl general complexi velous of all the sixteenth of an in of rare occurrence age being one-ha in form, with mor curved arrangement general partitio central cell, other one at a time, t of gradually incre than the one prec attempt a descrip of the nummulite with which to pic the lines of their tions of the succes of canals which p nutrient is supp cells. Many of the roscoe cannot w

Of the countless that have lived a the human mind becomes of them what is now dry Deeper excavatio Atlantic show the composition, hav chalk as to warra Europe are but de small percentage subjecting the ch amination. It is is but the result o structures. Some posed shell-forms nummulites. Th Paris is built cons the Miliolida. Th pyramids of Egypt