

NOTES OF A TOUR IN THE SOUTH.

BY A CORRESPONDENT OF THE EMANCIPATOR.

In January last, on my way down the Mississippi, I landed at Vicksburg, a place famous throughout Christendom for hanging gamblers, and shooting editors. This is a small, sideling, slavery-accursed town, on the steep bank of the Mississippi, the first in the State in point of business, and contains a population of 3 or 4000. Upon arriving here from the free and thriving towns of the North, one is struck with the marks of dilapidation and ruin which seemed stamped upon every thing. Some of the buildings stripped of their covering, others tumbling down, and others standing in such a position as strongly to indicate a disposition to take passage down the river, to Texas or some other place. Vicksburg, however, is not alone in this particular.

From V. went to Jackson by Railroad, fifty miles, crossing Big Black river, by a narrow wooden bridge, between the heavens and the earth, some sixty feet from the latter. At J. I had the honor to be present at the inauguration of Gov. Brown. His address had more *brass* in its composition than any thing that I had ever heard. For example, he boasted in the most extravagant terms, of the *moral courage* of the people of Mississippi in *reputing*.

In Mississippi no free colored person is allowed to remain in the State, except by common consent, or a special act of the Legislature. I was surprised at the large number of memorials which was sent in to the Legislature asking the privilege of giving slaves their freedom, with permission to remain in the State. Among others a memorial was sent in requesting the passage of an act, to make a woman who had a little African blood in her veins, a *white woman*! That is, to invest her with all the rights and privileges of a white person. This petition was made, as I was informed, at the instance of an overseer who wished her for a wife.

The laws of Mississippi prohibit the introduction of slaves from other States, except by their masters coming to reside in the State; but they are less regarded than was the "fifteen gallon law," in Massachusetts. Slaves are brought here in large numbers from Kentucky and other northern slaveholding States, and sold with impunity. In Vicksburg and Natchez they are offered for sale continually. Men women and children, collected in groups, waiting for purchasers; and sometimes labelled—"For sale." At Vicksburg, my attention being arrested by the cries of the auctioneer, I went to witness the sale of men. Among others, a mother and her two children,—one a babe and the other a little bright-eyed girl some four or five years old,—were to be sold. First the mother and babe were sold—the auctioneer throwing in the recommendations; "perfectly honest"—"good field hand"—"sold for no fault"—"title warranted (?)"—"the small child sold with her, and good for another in a few months,"—first rate chance for a man that wants to raise a fine family of niggers,"—how much is bid" &c. &c. Next the little girl was placed upon the block and subjected to the scrutiny of the soul-buyers. She was bid off by *another man*, and the mother, stung by agony such as I have never witnessed except in similar cases, was driven from the scene, the little innocent still looking inquiringly about not knowing what it all meant.

It is a mistake to suppose that all the people of the slaveholding States are callous and indifferent to scenes like this. There are many who will make considerable "sacrifices" to prevent the separation of husband and wife, parents and children, but as a general thing it can't be helped—it is a part of the system. At Natchez, at the public house, where I was boarding, I saw an old woman of fifty kicked by her young master because she did not build a fire quick enough, and heard her flogged by him in an adjoining room—she all the while begging for mercy. But enough of this. Such are the legitimate fruits of a system which is pronounced by some grave divines to be "not in itself sinful." I could fill up my sheet in giving you incidents of the black-hearted cruelties of slavery, but it is too sickening; besides, perhaps there is nothing gained by it. For if the people of the North are not aroused to duty with all the knowledge they possess upon this subject, neither would they be moved though they should hear the black man calling to them from the dark regions of despair.

While at Vicksburg, the house of a planter living some few miles from town, caught fire, and after considerable exertion in

vain to extinguish it, it was given up at last, when suddenly a new thought struck the despairing owner, and he cried out to a powerful negro man, that he would give him his *freedom* if he would save it. Instantly he leaped through the smoke and flames and at the *risk of his life succeeded in saving the house*. He of course claimed his freedom, but his master told him that he *couldn't free him in this country*, but he could go to *Liberia* if he chose to. The poor man was sorely disappointed to be thus cheated by his master, and declared that he preferred to remain where he was rather than go to Liberia. My informant, himself a slaveholder and neighbour to the man whose house caught fire, said he had endeavoured to compromise with him, by giving him a *fidelle*, but he still remained as dissatisfied as ever. He blamed his neighbour for not giving the man his freedom, after he had promised it to him, and he had so *richly earned it*.

Some seventy miles up the river above New Orleans, we landed at a sugar plantation, and took on two hundred and fifty hogsheads of sugar. There are some Planters here who have fifteen hundred and two thousand slaves. While the boat was loading we went on shore and took a look at the premises. The land here is cultivated only some three miles from the river, the back country being mostly swamp, still a wilderness. The branches of the Mississippi here, carry the water *from* the river instead of *to* it. The negroes were engaged in planting the cane. The *old stalk* of the sugar cane is planted, which sprouts up after the fashion of the potato. This plantation consisted of twenty-seven hundred acres—nine hundred of which were under cultivation. The dwelling, like many others along the banks of the Mississippi in Louisiana, was a large pompous looking building with pillars all around. Attached were fancy yards and gardens on a grand scale; and in the rear two long rows of small negro houses. We walked through the spacious avenues, admiring the orange trees, and the infinite variety of shrubbery of strange and southern growth. Here the reublican despot lives lazily and luxuriantly; and here too our brother, the simple and submissive black man, is kicked, whipped, and despised; toils, suffers, and dies; and with some strange glimmerings of another world, goes to be judged by a just and merciful God!

At New Orleans, the extent of the *American slave trade* is enormous. In portions of the City in pleasant weather, whole squares are lined with human beings, standing in rows, in perfect order, waiting for purchasers. When thus exhibited they are usually neatly dressed.

A HORRIBLE SCENE.—The following description of one of the recent "great and glorious" battles in India gives a faint idea of the horrors that attend the trade of war:—As our men advanced, Englishman and Hindoo side by side, the Sikhs appeared to redouble their fire, and to use the expression of an eye-witness, "a storm of iron hail descended on our ranks." No force or fire, however, could repress their valour. They pushed forward with irresistible enthusiasm, and, after the most tremendous efforts, succeeded in their attempt. The cavalry entered the entrenchments in single file, through openings made for them by the sappers and miners, and in a short time, the rout of the Sikhs became general. As they had shown no mercy to numerous wounded men who had fallen into their hands, so no mercy was shown to them. They were driven in confusion toward the bridge and river, which, having risen during the night, rendered their retreat almost impossible. The bridge of boats, densely thronged by the fugitives, broke down in several places, while our guns, incessantly playing on their closely wedged mass, produced the most fearful havoc. The scene presented by the face of the Sutlej defies description—covered with horses and men, upon whom the most dreadful fire was kept up with grape and canister—IT LITERALLY RAN RED WITH BLOOD!!!—Under these circumstances, we can by no means imagine the number of the slain to be over-estimated at twelve thousand. The battle had begun about six o'clock, and did not terminate till eleven. The combatants had met hand to hand. Our artillery and musketry had never for a moment ceased their fire. Our cavalry, charging impetuously through their ranks, had speared or sabred all who fell in their way. But the river was their greatest enemy, and when they flung themselves pell-mell into its waters, which were wholly unfordable, the artillery scattered death unsparingly among them, till there was not a man left visible within range.

ANTARCTIC CONTINENT.—It is stated in Silliman's Journal that the expedition sent out from England to explore the Antarctic regions, between the meridian of Greenwich and 120 degrees east, has found proof throughout of the existence of the Antarctic Continent, which they call Victoria's Land. The magnetic observations commenced by the Erebus and Terror have been completed, and the position of the magnetic pole exactly ascertained.