

de wust yet! Yaas, sah, dishyer war's er master han' at eatin' men! No, sah, dar ain't no white man, but dar's a white woman —"

Then Edward looked and saw Désirée Gaillard. She was standing high, beneath her heaped logs, behind her the night. She had clasped around her throat a soldier's cloak. The wind raised it, blew it outward, the crimson lining gleaming in the torchlight. All the red light beat upon her, upon the blowing hair, upon the deep eyes and parted lips, the outstretched arm and pointing hand, the dress of some bronze and clinging stuff, the bent knee, the foot resting upon a log end higher than its fellows. The out-flung and lifted cloak had the seeming of the floating drapery in some great canvas, billowing mantle of heroine, saint, or genius.

"Saintly," however, was certainly not the word, and Désirée would not have called herself heroine or genius. She was simply fearless and intent, and since, to keep the negroes in courage and energy, it was needful to keep them in good spirits, she was, also, to-night, cheerful, humorous, abounding in praise. Her voice rang out, deep and sweet. "Good man, Mingo! Mingo's carrying two to everybody else's one! Lawrence is doing well, though! So is Hannah's Tom! —

'Levee! levee! lock your hands hard!
Levee, levee! keep the river from my home! —'

Par ici, François! Christopher, Harper, Sambo, Haiti, Mingo Second, make a line! Big Corinth, throw them the sacks! Work hard — work hard! You shall have rest to-morrow, and at night a feast! Look at Mingo, how he works! He is n't going to let the river cover Cape Jessamine! When the Colonel comes home he is going to say, 'Good boy, Mingo!' To-morrow night all the banjos playing, and good things to eat, and the house-servants down at the quarters, and a dance like Christmas! — Mingo, Mingo, put ten sacks just there —"

When she saw the soldier beside her her eyes opened wide in a moment's query, after which she accepted him as an item of the storm and the night. All the land was in storm, and the stream of events rapid. From every quarter and from distant forests the wind blew the leaves. Sometimes one knew the tree from which they came, sometimes not. On presumption, though, if the leaf were grey, the tree was a proper tree, humble, perhaps, in its region and