

anger spent, would willingly have retained me with him, on condition, of course, that I should renounce, and that Alice should forget, what he was pleased to style my absurd pretensions.

"The girl is only a child—not twenty yet," he said, twisting the heavy links of his watch-chain; "and she has plenty of time before her. She will get over this nonsensical fancy (and indeed it was no more, though I admit that you acted honorably, Alfred, in coming so frankly to me to make the avowal of this—folly), and marry—hem! hem! some suitable person—no hurry, though; and if you will give me your word to think no more of this—Ah, well, if you refuse to be reasonable, part we must, and I am sorry for it, Mainwaring, for as a clerk and friend, you pleased me very well—but as a son-in-law, never!"

I believe the old man did really like me. I was useful to him in his affairs, and he had a high opinion of my business capacity, while out of office-hours we had many a pleasant conversation together; but till the announcement that Alice and I were lovers, I had only seen the smooth side of my employer's nature. That he was a very proud man, I partly knew, but I had underrated, it would seem, the strength of those prejudices which planters and merchants, the purse-proud aristocracy of a slave-holding community, entertain with reference to the "poor" or "mean" whites around them.

All over America the man with dollars is prone to regard the man without dollars as a being inferior to himself; and this feeling, strong even in speculative New York, where fortunes can be built up or overthrown like so many card-castles, is doubly powerful in the territorial families who share among them the lands of the fertile South. The Harman's were not only merchants, but extensive land-owners as well, although their estates, injured by war and by the withdrawal of enforced black labor, were not in a flourishing state. Under these circumstances, old Mr. Anthony, when he heard that a subordinate of his own aspired to the hand of Miss Harman, was nearly as indignant at my presumption as a feudal baron could have been, had some suitor of humble origin presented himself, with empty hands, to ask for a noble bride.

All this had taken place three months previously, and I had left Memphis with a heavy heart and scanty hopes to cheer me in the future. The memory of Alice's tearful adieu haunted me none the less sadly because I had so little reason to deem that the course of our true love would ever falsify the proverb by running smoothly. I was poor, and had no particular prospects of bettering my position. Some pittance almost too small to be thought worthy the attention of a Chancellor of the Exchequer levying income-tax, I had over and above my earnings, but that was all, for I was one of the several cadets of a numerous family sent out to push our fortunes, as best we might; while the old hall of weather-stained red brick, and the old trees in what was called the park, and the mortgaged acres, had passed to our elder brother, who had sundry olive branches of his own to provide for. I had industrious habits and a robust constitution, and was not ore to bewail that circumstances debarred me from eating the bread of idleness. Work honestly done and fairly paid for is, after all, a healthy tonic for mind and body, and I should never have grumbled at my condition in life, had it not been made the pretext for my being separated from Alice.

I paced to and fro, looking out from time to time for the smoke of the coming steamer; and my reflections were none of the pleasantest. Would Alice learn to forget me? Would time and absence gradually