

(ORIGINAL.)

THE CAMP MEETING—A TALE OF THE SOUTH.

BY M. W. B.

It was the middle of a day in August—the sultry, unnerving August of southern climes: the sun seemed to roll his burning car almost perpendicularly over the heads of the languid inhabitants of Georgia; the earth was parched with heat; the herbage crackled under foot, as if exposed to the action of fire; the birds ceased their songs, and uttered no other sound than that low monotonous chirp which with them indicates the approach of slumber: the fowls retired to their perch, and only the lazy crowing of the cock broke the deep and universal stillness, that reigned throughout the streets of Augusta. What wonder, then, that Emily Winthrop should yield to the common impulse, and retire to her chamber to indulge the lassitude that oppressed her? There, reclined upon a sofa before a window, which opened upon a fine garden, she watched, in all the luxury of southern indolence, the little humming-bird darting in giddy mazes through every avenue, or hovering, apparently motionless, before every flower, as if lulling himself to sleep, with the hum of his own tiny wings—and she would have wished herself a humming bird, that she might go in quest of a cooling breeze, only that the exertion would have been too overpowering: her eyes then turned languidly towards the fragrant China-tree which spread its foliage before her window, affording a delightful shade, and filling the air with its rich perfume. The striking similarity of its blossoms, to those of the lilac of her native land, brought that land in all its loveliness to her remembrance, and she fell into a sort of dreamy comparison between her present and former home, too vivid for slumber, yet too imperfect for complete wakefulness: hills and mountains contrasted strangely with barren sand-flats; the limped waters of the Hudson mingled with the muddy stream of the Savannah; flowers exchanged countries—the snowy Cherokee-rose and the beautiful *Multiflora* adorned the porticoes of New-England, while the less luxuriant blossoms of the north, filled the southern land with their exquisite odour.

A gentle breeze and a low voice, scarcely aroused her from this pleasant vision.

"Will Miss Emily please to read the letter?" The voice issued from the lips of a little round-faced negro girl, Emily's particular attendant:—the breeze was caused by a long plume of Peacock's feathers with which she had been fanning her mistress. A slight touch of the plume on her cheek, again awakened the dreamer sufficiently to hear the repeated question, and to inquire: "What letter?"

"A letter from the up-country," said the girl, delighted that she had at last obtained a hearing."

"Very well;" I will read it by and bye, Tilly."

"Please Miss Emmy, Ccesar's waiting for an answer—he says Miss Frances told him to hurry home."

The name aroused the torpid faculties of the dreaming girl—mountains and sand-flats, rivers and roses, all returned to their proper position, and Emily Winthrop was herself again. "From Frances? then give it me," and she quickly read the following letter:

Dear Emm,—I have but five minutes in which to tell you five hundred things, but the most important first. Next week a camp-meeting is to be held about four miles from G——, which I wish you to attend. Now do not turn up that pretty nose of yours in contempt, and talk with Yankee prejudice of impropriety and all that stuff, but come and judge for yourself. I assure you that the most respectable people in the country will be there, and I shall take no denial from you; therefore, yield a willing assent, and prepare to accompany my brother, who will be at Augusta with the carriage, soon after you receive this, and will be most happy to attend you. Only one of my five hundred things said and the mighty Cæsar waits. How provoking! But when you arrive, I shall have plenty of time to give them verbally. Yours,

FRANCES HARGRAVE.

N. B. Pray bring some fashionable silks for dresses, as we must be smart on the grand occasion.

F. H.

N. B. If you find the weather too cold, you can travel in the middle of the day.

F. H.

"A camp meeting! Yankee prejudices! well, my saucy friend, I think you will prevail, if it is only to convince you that my prejudices are not so strong as you imagine—but then what am I to do there?" Again the letter was read. "Respectable people will be there,—of course they cannot laugh at me—yes, I'll go for once." Thus mused the fair Emily, and then a few hastily penned lines announcing her determination to her friend, were sealed and delivered to the sable hero, who, like his illustrious namesake, might have boasted that "he came—and conquered."

The following day enabled Miss Winthrop to arrange her wardrobe for Tilly to pack, and the day after, she was summoned to receive the brother of her friend.