

A NORTH-SIDE VIEW OF SLAVERY.

THE REFUGEE:

OR THE

NARRATIVES OF FUGITIVE SLAVES IN CANADA.

RELATED BY THEMSELVES,

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORY AND CONDITION OF THE
COLORED POPULATION OF UPPER CANADA.

BY

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WINDSOR.

WINDSOR, at the terminus of the Great Western Railway, is in the township of Sandwich. It was incorporated January 1, 1854, with a population of 1000 souls. It is now estimated to contain one thousand four hundred inhabitants. There are settled in various parts of the village fifty families of colored people, some of whom entertain as boarders a number of fugitives from bondage. Assuming an average of five in a family, the colored population may be set down at two hundred and fifty. The general appearance of these is very much in their favor. There are many good mechanics among them: nearly all have comfortable homes, and some occupy very neat and handsome houses of their own.

Appearances indicate that the inhabitants of Windsor will unite in supporting good schools for the rising generation, without distinction of color. Where separate schools exist, the advantage in respect to buildings and teachers is for the most part on the side of the whites; and unless the separate schools are abolished, there is reason to fear that the progress of the colored people in education will be very much retarded in the greater part of the province. Mrs. Mary E. Bibb,

widow of the late lamented Henry Bibb, Esq., has devoted herself to teaching a private school in Windsor, and with good success. During the last spring term, she had an attendance of forty-six pupils, seven of whom were white children.

A gentleman of Windsor who has long taken a deep interest in the welfare of the African race, is of opinion that immigrants who have been engaged in agricultural pursuits in Pennsylvania and other free States are more industrious and "more to be depended upon than those who come into Canada directly from a state of slavery." The same gentleman assured me that the best and most dexterous blacksmith he had ever known was a refugee: he had not such tools as he wanted, nor would take good ones on credit, for fear he might not be able to pay: yet he would make or mend various utensils, while other smiths could not. He is now at Buxton.

While in Windsor, I was repeatedly informed by those who have the best means of knowing, that "there is no need of raising money to aid the colored people here, unless for a day or two when a fugitive family first comes in. Women get half a dollar for washing, and it is difficult to hire them at that."

A circumstance which fell under my notice in this township of Sandwich,* reminds me of what I might with propriety have said in referring to other parts of the province, that it is fortunate for some conscience-stricken slaveholders, that Canada affords a refuge for a certain class of their household victims—their slave-wives, or slave-children, or both. If it be a crime to assist slaves in reaching a land of freedom, it is not a crime of which those terrible fellows, the northern abo-

* See the narrative of J. C. Brown, Chatham.

litionists, alone are guilty. Slaveholders may pour contempt on the names and the deeds of northern philanthropists: but these have no slanderous epithets to hurl back upon the southerner, who snatches his children and the mother of his children from the threatening hammer of the auctioneer, and hurriedly and tearfully starts them for the North with the parting injunction, "Stop not short of Canada!" We rejoice with him that England offers a place of refuge where his wife and his offspring may be free. Yet, of any head of such a family, a northern fanatic might be prompted to ask, Is this course honorable and manly? Do not these children need *both* parents to look after their interests? and does not this slave-wife, ignorant and among strangers in a strange land, need your presence, your counsel, your direction? He that provideth not for his own household is worse than an infidel, and almost as bad as an abolitionist: but your family are in arrears for board, and are quartered upon the charity of persons who are themselves poor refugees.

Mr. David Cooper, who lives on the lands of the Industrial Institution, has furnished a statement which will be found below, showing the position of affairs where he resides.

REFUGEES' HOME.

At about nine miles from Windsor, in the townships of Sandwich and Madison, the Refugees' Home Society have made a purchase of nearly two thousand acres of land, on which reside some twenty families, each on a farm of twenty-five acres. Forty 25 acre lots have been taken up. A school is maintained there three fourths of the year.

Mr. Henry Bibb, who was himself a fugitive from the house of bondage, originated the idea of establishing a society which should "aim to purchase thirty thousand acres of government land somewhere in the most suitable sections of Canada where it can be obtained for the homeless refugees from American slavery to settle upon." This was soon after the passage of the fugitive slave bill.

The society was organized and a constitution adopted in August, 1852. The object of the society is declared to be "to assist the refugees from American slavery to obtain permanent homes, and to promote their social, moral, physical, and intellectual elevation." The society propose to purchase of the Canadian government, fifty thousand acres of land, at a cost of one hundred thousand dollars. Money for the purchase is obtained in part by contributions; and one half the moneys received for the sale of lands is devoted to the purchase of other lands. The other moiety of moneys received is to be devoted to the support of schools.

By the constitution adopted in 1852, it appears that each family of actual settlers receives twenty-five acres of land, five of which they receive free of cost, provided they shall, within three years from the time of occupancy, clear and cultivate the same. "For the remaining twenty acres, they shall pay the primary cost in nine equal annual payments, free of use, for which they shall receive deeds." This article may be varied to favor the aged, etc. "This Society shall give deeds to none but landless refugees from American slavery." "No person receiving land by gift or purchase from the Society shall have power to transfer the same under fifteen years from the time of the purchase or gift." "All lands becoming vacated by the removal or extinc-

tion of families, shall revert to the Executive Committee."

Here, too, as in Buxton, the claims of temperance are kept fully in view. A by-law provides that "No house shall be used for manufacturing or vending intoxicating liquors on any lot received from this Society."

The Refugees' Home Society, its officers and agents, possess the entire confidence of the American public: at least of that portion which sympathizes with the wandering outcasts from the United States. It will be seen by some of the testimonials which follow, that some dissatisfaction exists among the settlers: having its origin doubtless, in some misapprehension or mistake. Still, I have not felt at liberty to depart from my original plan — that so far as the limits of a single volume may extend, the colored people of Canada might express their own opinions, and tell their own story of their slavery in the past, their present condition, and their future prospects.

The second report of the Canada Anti-Slavery Society (for 1853), remarks: "There is doubtless a better state of things amongst the fugitives, than existed at the time when such a plan was proposed. The panic produced by the fugitive law, having subsided, the poor refugees have had more time allowed them to prepare for the change, and in consequence, their wants have been diminished. The true principle is now to assume that every man, unless disabled by sickness, can support himself and his family after he has obtained steady employment. All that able-bodied men and women require, is a fair chance, friendly advice, and a little encouragement, perhaps a little assistance at first. Those who are really willing to work, can procure employment in a short time after their arrival, so that

what is specially needed, is such associations of friends at the different places where fugitives land, as will interest themselves in the colored man, put him in the way of finding employment, and extend to him such encouragement in the way of grants of land or otherwise, as his altered circumstances may require. In some places, fully to accomplish this, aid from abroad may be necessary, though in most places local charity will, we think, prove sufficient."

A True Band has been organized by the residents of the Home, and other persons in the vicinity.

THOMAS JONES.

I was a slave in Kentucky, and made my escape five years ago, at the age of thirty. The usage in Kentucky on the front part of the State is pretty good,—back, it is rather tight.

I came here without any thing. I had no money or aid of any kind. I went right into the bush chopping wood. I brought my lady with me, and we were married on the way at Bloomingsburg in Fayette Co. I have one child. With what I earned by hard licks, I bought land and have built me a frame-house. I now follow plastering and any thing I can find to do. I am worth three or four thousand dollars, and pay about thirty dollars a year tax.

If a man have aid furnished him, he does not have so much satisfaction in what he has,—he feels dependent and beholden, and does not make out so well. I have seen this, ever since I have been here,—the bad effects of this giving. I have seen men waiting, doing

nothing, expecting something to come over to them. Besides, it makes a division among the colored people. The industrious are against it, the other class favor it; and so they fall out. My opinion is, that the fugitive on the road, should be assisted, but not after he gets here. If people have money to give, they had better give it to those who suffer in trying to help them here. For those who come sick, or actually stand in need, there is a society here among ourselves to take care of them.

In regard to aid from societies on the other side, there are many who know that money is raised for the poor travelling fugitive, and they take advantage of it: free people of color from the States come over pretending to be fugitives, who never were fugitives. They come in a miserable condition, often drinking men, worthless, to get the money that is raised. I have known six or seven such cases.

The colored people are doing very well. They are poor, some of them, but are all able to have enough to eat and wear, and they have comfortable homes, with few exceptions,—and some of these are in a way to have them. Some few don't seem to care whether they have good houses or not, as is the case among all people.

In the Refugees' Home they are not doing very well. Land was to be sold to the refugees at cost, giving them five acres, and they to buy twenty. Some dissatisfaction exists because there has been an advance made of four shillings an acre for surveying, although the land had been surveyed once. The refugees all refused to pay it. They were to clear up the five acres in three years. They have altered the constitution bringing it down to two years. Some had not been on

three years, but went with that understanding. Alterations were made, too, enlarging the size of the houses. One of them has left the lands in consequence, and more talk of doing so. They doubt about getting deeds, and they begin to think 't is a humbug. The restrictions in regard to liquor, and not selling under so many years, nor the power to will his property to his friends, only to his children, if he have any, make them dissatisfied. They want to do as they please. If they want to exchange and get a bigger place, they want to do it without being cramped.

In addition, the men who have settled there, have been a bother to the society. As they were dependent, smart men would not go, and it has been occupied by men who expected aid from the other side.

The colored men must rely on their own two hands, or they'll never be any thing.

The colored people are temperate and moral.

WILLIAM S. EDWARDS.

I was born in Springfield, Ohio. My mother was, to the best of my belief, a free-woman. While I was a little child, a man claimed my mother as a slave woman whom he had lost seven years before, and took both her and me into Kentucky, — as I have been told to Burlington. He took us to Louisville to sell us, and there 't was proved that she was not his, but another man's slave; that other man took us back to Burlington. Here was another dispute, and another man examined, and found more marks than the other, and proved that she belonged to him. After passing through several

hands she was sold, and I have not seen her since, nor do I know where she is. I have heard that when she was sold, it was left her, to take me with her into slavery, or remain there and be free. She chose to let me remain. I stayed with the family until, at thirteen, I was put to the trade of a tobacconist: remained until twenty-one. Then I did not dare to talk about freedom. I dared not name it, — I still stayed working at the business. After a while, hearing some talking about my rights, I questioned as closely as I could, but not to awaken distrust.

When I was about twenty-five, we had a dispute about a holiday, and then I first claimed my rights to his teeth, telling him that I was free. He said I must stay two years more. A man offered to lend me two hundred dollars, to buy my time: he refused. I then hired to another man, paying my claimant twenty dollars a month, for a year and five months.

I kept on inquiring, until I found the man who first carried me into Kentucky. He told me a very straight story, — that he had found the woman whom he had lost in New Orleans — she having *been absent from him fifteen years and six months, having been in New Orleans all that time. I searched the records at the Recorder's office, but there was nothing on the books, — the whole being a rascally scheme, therefore they took no account of it on the books. The clerk said there surely was no trial or transaction in the court; if there had been, it would have been on record. But the man who brought me said there was a trial; he acknowledged that neither me nor my mother ever belonged to him; that it was a mistake.

Another man went with me to search, but found no scratch of a pen from ten years back to forty. I then

got a white man to go to the persons who pretended to own me, and he told me, in their presence, that if a man were half white and born free, he ought to be free; and you are all of that. My boss said that I would be free after a time—that he never meant to keep me over time. He probably meant my time as long as I lived,—as a master told his slave once, “When you die, I’ll give you your papers.” He said I could n’t pass without papers: he went with me, saying to get papers, and then he would not, but said I must stay a while longer before I could get them; that he could not give them to me just yet. Things went on in this way two or three months, until I was nearly twenty-seven years old. At length my mistress’s son, by her consent, gave me free papers. I went to Ohio: then came into Canada, and settled down in Chatham.

I have five children. One goes to school; we are not able to send all on account of the price partly, as we have to pay fifty cents a quarter for each child, at the public school. I went into Chatham with nothing, and I want the children some in the family.

I have seen many things practised in slavery which are too horrible to name.

MRS. COLMAN FREEMAN.

I am a native of North Carolina. I was born free, and lived with my father and mother. My father was a quadroon—my mother a mulatto. My father fought the British in the Revolution. His brother was drafted, but being sick, my father volunteered to take his place,

and was in the army seven years. When he returned his brother was dead. He did not get a pension until three years before he died, not knowing that he was entitled to one, until, on some abuse from white men, he went into court, and the lawyer said, “Will you suffer injustice to be done to this white-headed old man, who has faced the cannon’s mouth, fighting for our liberties; who has maintained himself and family without drawing a penny from the government?”

When colored persons had their meetings in the groves, white men would stand with their whips where they were coming out, to examine for passes, and those who had passes would go free,—the others would break and run, like cattle with hornets after them. I have seen them run into the river. I remember one time, I was going with my brother, and saw them at the meeting, trying to get away from the patrollers. I could not help shedding tears to see the distress they were in. They ran into the river, and tried to get away. Said I to my brother, “What are they running so into the river for?” He hunched me, and said, “Do n’t you see the patrollers?” This was because they wanted to hear preaching, and learn a little about Almighty God that made them. They were not allowed to meet without patrollers.

I knew a slave named Adam who experienced religion, and wanted to be baptized. Saturday night the overseer told him he should not be baptized. He went to his mistress, and she gave him a pass for the purpose. Next day, I went down to the shore of the mill-pond to see the baptizing. Just as Adam was ready to go into the water, the overseer rode up, and cried out, “Adam! Adam! if you get baptized, I will give you a hundred lashes to-morrow morning!” Adam said, “I

have but two masters to serve, my earthly and my heavenly master, and I can mind nobody else." I know that overseer very well; — his name was: I was standing right by him. Then he forbade Mr. L. — from baptizing him. Mr. L.: "If there is a God I will baptize Adam; if not, I will not baptize him." The overseer stood up in his stirrups, and cursed so that he frightened all the people on the beach: his eyes glowed like two lighted candles. As soon as Adam came out of the water, he ran for home to get protection from his mistress. She prevented the overseer from punishing him.

I came away from North Carolina in consequence of persecution. There was a rebellion among the slaves in Virginia, under Nat Turner, near where I was. A doctor near me had his mother and brothers and sisters, except two, killed in that rebellion. The white people that had no slaves would have killed the colored, but their masters put them in jail to protect them from the white people, and from fears they had themselves of being killed. They came to my mother's, and threatened us — they searched for guns and ammunition: that was the first time I was ever silenced by a white man. One of them put his pistol to my breast, and said, "If you open your head, I'll kill you in a minute!" I had told my mother to hush, as she was inquiring what their conduct meant. We were as ignorant of the rebellion as they had been. Then I made up my mind not to remain in that country. We had to stay a while to sell our crop: but I would not go to church there any more.

I lived in Ohio ten years, as I was married there, — but I would about as lief live in the slave States as in Ohio. In the slave States I had protection sometimes,

from people that knew me — none in Ohio. I understand the laws are better in Ohio now than they were then. In the slave States I had no part in the laws: the laws were all against the colored men: they allowed us no schools nor learning. If we got learning, we stole it.

We live here honestly and comfortably. We entertain many poor strangers.

BEN BLACKBURN.

I was born in Maysville, Ky. I got here last Tuesday evening, and spent the Fourth of July in Canada. I felt as big and free as any man could feel, and I worked part of the day for my own benefit: I guess my master's time is out. Seventeen came away in the same gang that I did.

WILLIAM L. HUMBERT.

I am from the city of Charleston, S. C., and have been in various parts of South Carolina and Georgia. I used to run in a steamboat from Savannah to Charleston.

I left Charleston in September, 1853. I lived in the free States some months, but finally left on account of the Fugitive Slave Bill. This was a law of tyranny, and I had to come to Canada to avoid the ten dollar commissioner. I would rather die than go back, — that's a settled point with me — not on account of ill-

treatment of the person; but I could not stand the idea of being held by another man as a chattel. Slavery itself is cruel enough, without regard to the hardships which slaves in general have to undergo.

I do not believe that any slaveholder under the canopy of heaven can see God's face; that is, if I read the Bible right. Slaveholding is against all reason. All men are from the same mother dust, and one can have no right to hold another as a chattel. I know three or four preachers of the gospel who hold slaves. As the minister goes, the congregation goes. The ministers preach to please the people, and not in the fear of God. I never knew but one exception there. I have seen a minister hand the sacrament to the deacons to give the slaves, and, before the slaves had time to get home, living a great distance from church, have seen one of the same deacons, acting as patrol, flog one of the brother members within two hours of his administering the sacrament to him, because he met the slave in the road without a passport, beyond the time allowed him to go home. My opinion of slavery is not a bit different now from what it was then: I always hated it from childhood. I looked on the conduct of the deacon with a feeling of revenge. I thought that a man who would administer the sacrament to a brother church-member, and flog him before he got home, ought not to live.

DAVID COOPER.

There was an institution started here in Sandwich about six years ago, called the Industrial Institution.

The land was bought by Rev. Mr. Willis, colored Methodist preacher, with money raised in the United States. It comprised two hundred acres, and was divided into ten-acre lots, and sold to any colored men who were disposed to buy, at three dollars on taking possession, and then six dollars the two subsequent years — then they were to have a deed. The land has never been wholly occupied. Some bought the land, but never went on it. There are now eight families on this land, who have forty acres cleared. A part of them can principally support themselves on what they have cleared, but they have to work out to keep their families supplied.* The roads there are very bad, — being wet and muddy. We have had a school there, but it is not kept up. We attend here at church — [at the Refugees' Home.]

I was from Virginia originally, but was brought up in Pennsylvania. My wife was a slave.

JOHN MARTIN.

I was born in Virginia, raised up in Tennessee, ran into Ohio, and emigrated to Canada, in order to avoid the oppressive laws of the States.

* The same evil hinders to some extent the advance of the Elgin Settlement at Buxton: the Directors of which, in 1854, report as follows:—

“Could it be so arranged that all the settlers could work on their own farms during the whole year, the improvement in clearing and cropping would be very easily doubled. We do hope, before another year, that some arrangement will be made by which the settlers will be enabled to spend more time on their own farms, and with their families.”

The Refugees' Home in Sandwich was commenced in 1851. It comprises between sixteen and seventeen hundred acres of land,—I do not know how many families reside on it. I commenced here in the bush three years ago, and have gone over about eight acres—I think the biggest clearing there is. Those near round me are well satisfied with their homes, excepting the oppression they have tried to raise on us as to the price. They were to have it at the original price, but they bought more land at a higher rate, and wanted to average it on all alike. The old settlers are dissatisfied and will probably leave, if this is enforced.

We have a school here. I cannot tell whether it is good or not, as it has just commenced under a new teacher: the former one did well.

The prospect is, that if the new arrangements about the price are given up, the settlers will go on clearing, and progress in the best way we can: I believe the lands will be taken up, and that the colored people will have good farms here.

Slavery is a dreadful thing. Slaveholders—I know not what will become of them. Some of them I love,—but I know they deserve punishment, and leave them in the hands of God.

The people have been told absolute falsehoods about our freezing and suffering, and money has been raised which does no good. It has been reported to us, that thousands of dollars have been raised for our benefit, of which we have never received the first red cent. I say so—I am fifty-five years old, and have ever tried to keep the truth on my side.

I was not sent to school in slave States, but have since learned to write, as witness my hand,

(Signed) JOHN MARTIN.

DANIEL HALL.

I escaped from the neighborhood of New Orleans, seventeen years ago; had some difficulty about getting through Illinois—there were many slaveholders in heart in Illinois—but I got through. I settled in Malden at Amherstburg. It was then a dense woods—with but little cleared land. There were very few colored people when I got there. If a man had half or three quarters of an acre of corn, he thought he had a large patch: now they have twenty-five or thirty acre lots. The clearing has been done by colored and white, mostly by colored men, as I know, for I cleared up a great deal myself. On the Lake Erie shore, the colored people have raised in past years, a great deal of tobacco, but now they raise corn, wheat, potatoes, and buckwheat.

I look at slavery as being heinous in the sight of God. And as for slaveholders, what is to become of people who take the husband from his wife, and the infant from its mother, and sell them where they can never see each other again?

What the colored people want is, land and education. With these, they will do well here.

By the blessing of God, I have been enabled to become possessor of fifty acres in Colchester, of which six or seven acres are cleared.

LYDIA ADAMS.

[Mrs. A. lives in a very comfortable log-house on the road from Windsor to the Refugees' Home.]

I am seventy or eighty years old. I was from Fairfax county, old Virginia. I was married and had three children when I left there for Wood county, where I lived twenty years: thence to Missouri, removing with my master's family. One by one they sent four of my children away from me, and sent them to the South: and four of my grandchildren all to the South but one. My oldest son, Daniel — then Sarah — all gone. "It's no use to cry about it," said one of the young women, "she's got to go." That's what she said when Esther went away. Esther's husband is here now, almost crazy about her: they took her and sold her away from him. They were all Methodist people — great Methodists — all belonged to the church. My master died — he left no testimony whether he was willing to go or not. . . I have been in Canada about one year, and like it as far as I have seen.

I've been wanting to be free ever since I was a little child. I said to them I did n't believe God ever meant me to be a slave, if my skin was black — at any rate not all my lifetime: why not have it as in old times, seven years' servants? Master would say, "No, you were made to wait on white people: what was niggers made for? — why, just to wait on us all."

I am afraid the slaveholders will go to a bad place — I am really afraid they will. I do n't think any slaveholder can get to the kingdom.

J. F. WHITE.

I have served twenty-five years as a slave; born in Virginia, and brought up, or rather whipped up, in Kentucky. I have lived in Canada two years — I have bought one hundred acres of land in Sandwich, suitable to raise any kind of grain.

I want you to tell the people of the United States, that as far as begging for fugitives is concerned, that we are amply able to take care of ourselves: we have done it, and can do it. We want none to beg for us; let them give to the fugitive on his way, and to those who are assisting him on his way. Money has been raised — an immense quantity of it too, but we do n't get it — indeed, we do n't want it. We have a society here to take care of our brothers when they get here, and we can do it without assistance. If people send things through pure motives to the suffering, we thank them for their intentions, — still, there is no need of their doing even that.

LEONARD HARROD.

I was born and bred in Georgetown, D. C., where I had a wife and two children. About six o'clock one morning, I was taken suddenly from my wife; she knew no more where I had gone than the hen knows where the hawk carries her chicken. Fifteen hundred miles I wore iron on my wrist, chained in a gang from

Georgetown to Port Gibson. There I was sold and put to receive and pack cotton, etc., for six years. Then I was sold to Nashville, Tenn., one year; then to New Orleans fifteen years; then I took up my bed and walked for Canada. I have been in Canada nearly two years. I was poor — as low down as a man could be who is not underground. It was in winter, — my wife was in a delicate situation, — and we had nothing for bedclothes at night but what we had worn through the day. We suffered all the winter for things we left on the way, which were never sent us. My wife is now under the doctor's care in consequence.

I have hired a place to work on, and have bought two acres of land.

A man can get more information in Canada about slavery, than he can in the South. There I would have told you to ask master, because I would have been afraid to trust a white man: I would have been afraid that you would tell my master. Many a time my master has told me things to try me. Among others, he said he thought of moving up to Cincinnati, and asked me if I did not want to go. I would tell him, "No! I don't want to go to none of your *free* countries!" Then he'd laugh, — but I did want to come — surely I did. A colored man tells the truth here, — there he is afraid to.

SANDWICH.

THIS beautiful and quiet town, two miles from Windsor, has a population of about fifteen hundred, including twenty-one colored families, which number, perhaps, one hundred persons.

The colored population have the right to send their children when qualified, into the grammar school. None have hitherto availed themselves of this right. Here, as in many other parts of the province, the colored people by accepting of that provision of law, which *allows* them separate schools, fail of securing the best education for their children. The colored teachers who present themselves are examined with a great deal of "lenity," — and some who cannot even spell, are placed in charge of the young.

The prejudice against the African race is here very strongly marked. It had not been customary to levy school taxes on the colored people. Some three or four years since, a trustee assessed a school tax on some of the wealthier citizens of that class. They sent their children at once into the public school. As these sat down, the white children near them deserted the benches: and in a day or two, the white children were wholly withdrawn, leaving the school-house to the teacher and his colored pupils. The matter was at last — "compro-

mised:" a notice — "Select School" — was put up on the school-house: the white children were selected *in*, and the black were selected *out*.

Still, the prejudice here is not deeply seated: it is only skin-deep. Some slight affairs on the border prove that if a slaveholder were to set his foot in the township with any sinister intention, the true sentiments and feelings of the people would manifest themselves in the most decided and unmistakable manner. The people of Sandwich, as one of them jocosely remarked to me, are "awful independent:" and such is their strong old-fashioned English hatred of oppression, that the population would rally, almost to a man, to defend the rights of the humblest negro in their midst, — even of "crazy Jack," the butt of the village boys.

It is to be observed, moreover, that the law allows separate schools not only to colored people, but to Catholic and Protestant sects, when these are in a minority.

The colored people have also their separate churches here. The Methodists contemplate erecting a building for public worship, and a member of that society remarked to me that he for one, would like to have aid for that purpose, as he did not see how it could be done without; but that the sentiment of his brethren generally was against begging. I asked him why they did not attend the churches of the whites of the same denomination. His reply indicated that they thought they would not be welcomed there with a single exception: "One church," said he, "has thrown open its doors to us; and that is the English Church — Mr. Dewey's — they have invited us all in, and they say if it is not big enough, they will make it bigger." Whether I advised him to comply with an invitation so truly

Christian in character, the reader, if he is a Yankee, and cares to take the trouble, can readily guess.

There is a school now open here registering thirty colored children, and having an average attendance of twenty-four. It is under the charge of an able and accomplished lady teacher — Miss Gifford — who informed me that the school was established by the Refugees' Home Society.

GEORGE WILLIAMS.

I was from Maysville, Ky., but belonged in Fairfax county at first. Left Virginia at fourteen years old, — am now fifty-three; have lived in Sandwich about fourteen years. When we removed from Virginia, my mother left her husband and two sisters behind. She was much grieved at leaving her husband: the children were taken from her before. This separation of families is an awful thing. At ten or twelve years old, the thought grew in me, that slavery was wrong. I felt mad every day when I thought of being kept a slave. I calculated on buying myself, and offered my master two hundred and fifty dollars. He wanted me to work a year first, going with me to another town. I did not want to go, and came off peaceably.

I remained about six years in the free States. In some respects, I suffered in them on account of my color. Many looked on me with contempt because I was a colored man. My oath was not taken as a white man's. I had a farm in Ohio, and was doing well, but a law was then passed requiring security for good be-

havior. A white man represented it worse than it was, so as to take advantage, as myself and two others had a heavy crop standing. I lost by coming off before harvest: all I got was a few bushels of wheat. It was a great damage breaking us up at that time.

I work at whitewashing, etc. I rent a house and own a small piece of land. The colored men here get a living. The greater part of them have no learning, — almost all of them have been slaves. Some of them have homes of their own; but most of them hire. Most of them send their children to school. But we have to rent a house, and although the rent is low, yet we get behind on the rent, till some of us make a sacrifice and pay up. The school is not kept up through the year. We have not had regular schooling, — we do not send to the same school as the whites. There were too few of us to raise money for a separate school. We received £18 from government, but could not carry it on, and gave it up. There is one school now supported by abolitionists in the United States.

I do not go so strong as some against receiving assistance. I have seen many cases of destitute suffering people, who needed aid, and our people could scarcely help them. But the best way would be to manage by means of societies corresponding with those of the States. In some places, the colored people can manage without aid, — but here not.

HENRY BRANT.

I was from Millwood, Frederic Co., Virginia. I was brought up by Col. N——'s widow. I remained in

bondage until twenty-three, hired out at different places. I had very little chance to get money, — perhaps two or three dollars a year. Usage was, compared with farming usage, good, as when I was hired out, there were restrictions, that I should be well used.

It always appeared to me that I wanted to be free, and could be free. No person ever taught me so, — it came naturally in my mind. Finally I saw that my case was pretty bad, if I was to live all my lifetime subject to be driven about at the will of another. When I thought of it, I felt wrathful at the white men. At length, I said — this will not do — if I stay here I shall kill somebody — I'd better go.

In 1834, my mistress being old, I feared that in event of her death, I might be placed on some farm, and be cruelly used. I sought out a chance to get off. I found friends among those who were in the interests of the slaveholders, and by their instructions reached Canada without trouble, and had the satisfaction of having a friend come too by my persuasion. He is in Canada, but I have not seen him since. I settled in Sandwich.

I received on coming into the country neither victuals, clothes, nor money, — I received only a welcome, — that was all I wanted, and I was thankful to get it. I did just what work I could find to be done. I managed to save up what little I got pretty well. I invested in a home. I got me a house and lot. I own ten acres in the bush.

Comparing the condition of the colored population here with an equal number of families of white laborers, I think they are about equal in means.

Slavery is abominable, — I think slaveholders know it is wrong: they are an intelligent people and they know it. They ought to have done their duty, — given

me my freedom and something to live on for what myself and forefathers had earned. I do n't see how a man can obtain heaven, and continue to do as the slaveholders do. A man may do wrong a long time and repent, — but if he continues it, as they do, I think it a hard case for him.

MRS. HENRY BRANT.

I am from Maryland. I suffered the worst kind of usage: that of being held as a slave.

I was fortunately among those who did not beat and bruise me. I was gambled off to a trader by my owner. I made such a fuss, (and the people told him 't was a shame to let me go to a trader, — that I was too good a girl for that, having taken care of him in sickness, — that I ought to have had a chance to find some one to buy me,) that he felt ashamed of what he had done, and bought me back. Then he gave me a chance to buy myself, — gave me one year to pay \$270: before the year was out, I offered him \$150 in part payment, — he would n't take that unless I'd pay all. I then asked him, would he take that, and security for \$120, payable six months after, and give me my papers down. He refused. Then I said to myself, "If you won't take that, you shan't take any." I started for Canada, and travelled in style, — he could n't take me.

My sister was a free-woman. She was to buy me, and pay \$270, and I was to be the security. But he overreached himself: for he drew the paper in such a way, that he could not get the money of my sister. Had I overstayed the year, I would never have seen

Canada; for then I would have been carried back to the eastern shore.

One thing which makes it bad about getting our children into school here is, we are so near Detroit. The people here would feel ashamed to have the Detroit people know that they sent the white into the same school with the colored. I have heard this from a white woman.