

Frederic Journal.

Norfolk, Va., Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

We left Pier 35, North River, New York, last Saturday noon in the steamer "Hatteras" for this port. It was a beautiful October day. The sky was clear and darkly blue, the air soft and warm, and the ocean smooth as a summer lake. It was very animating to stand on deck as we ploughed our way down the Bay, and watch the ships, sail-boats and steam-tugs that were gliding in every direction. The green shores of New Jersey were thickly clothed with neat villages, betokening thrift and enterprise. The afternoon passed pleasantly by in reading and conversation, and gazing out over the blue-rolling Atlantic, watching the white sails towards the distant horizon as they came into view and faded from sight. Now and then a great steamer passed close alongside, and saluted us with its shrill whistle. Our passengers were quite various in their character; - missionary teachers for the Freedmen, rebel ladies from Richmond full of love for Gen. Lee and slavery, northern merchants bound South on speculating tours, naval officers in uniform, and many other classes that help form the tide of humanity which is ever surging over our lines of travel. The wind freshened at night, giving some of us a taste of sea-sickness; but Sunday morning dawned bright and calm. Much of the time we were out of sight of land, though occasionally a blue misty point, land-like in its aspect, could be seen to the westward. Large numbers of seals were in sight in every direction. Nothing could exceed the loveliness of this scene, - everything was so clear, calm, bright and beautiful; and as our noble steamer ploughed onward through the shining sea, our spirits were full of exhilaration. Still the day seemed long without any religious service, and memory occasionally wandered back to the dear ones worshipping in the quiet church at home. When darkness came on, the lights of Fortress Monroe were visible, and soon we rounded the Cape and entered Chesapeake Bay. Some thrilling memories rushed over our

2. minds as we sailed over those waters, rendered forever historic by the struggles that have occurred near by. It was after ten when we reached the Norfolk wharf, and as we walked down the plank from the steamer, the usual cries of omnibus-men greeted us, though this time they came from colored drivers. We entered a comfortable carriage, whose driver promised to take us to the Mission House on Green-mason Street; but after riding over the stone-paved streets of that rebel city for a half-hour, we began to think that we should be compelled to return to a hotel. No. 5 was not to be found, - by us at least. Our conductor kept running up the steps of different houses & with his lantern to read the numbers, and at length succeeded in discovering No. 6. Of course No. 5 must be opposite, we thought, but a wondrous pounding and bell-ringing around us, nor could any number be found over the door. In despair we drove some distance further, and our conductor roused two or three families and asked everybody he met in the street, but No. 5 was a mystery still. By and by a colored man was found who knew where the Mission House was, and we rattled back in our lumbering omnibus for a quarter of a mile, and succeeded in finding a resting place. We met with a kind reception from our friends from the North, and slept soundly on land again.

Gyler House, Fortress Monroe,  
Virginia, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

We found Norfolk far inferior to northern cities, and still bearing many marks of war. Its streets are comparatively silent and deserted, and grass grows between the pavement-stones. There seems to be a lack of Yankee thrift and energy. Many of the buildings look old and dilapidated. In short, the town, like most southern places, is many years behind the times.

Monday afternoon we left in a steamer for Fortress Monroe, as our temporary field of labor was to be in this vicinity. The distance is some twenty miles, and the time occupied in going about an hour. We passed over the waters where occurred the duel between the Monitor and Merrimac. Every point that our eyes rested upon

3. seemed historical ground. The Rip Rap, Newport News, Hampton, and the first battle-ground of the Peninsula campaign were all in sight. Our destination was the Gaylor House, formerly occupied by Ex-Bis. Gaylor's family, but now used as a home for northern missionaries who labor among the Freedmen. It is an imposing edifice near the village of Hampton, some two or three miles from Fort Monroe. The horse cars brought us from the Fort nearly to the door, where we were very cordially welcomed, and spent a pleasant evening in the society of congenial spirits. The days that have followed our arrival have been full of duties in the school-room and among the people. My situation is pleasant, and I love the work, for it reminds me of the dear mission-people in Africa. A colored soldier was hung this morning for murder. The scaffold was in sight from our school-room windows. Every day we pass the long hospital wards, and many a time as I catch a glimpse of some pale emaciated soldiers, my heart grows warm with sympathy.

Gaylor House, Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>.

A violent north-east storm is now raging, and the windows of this old mansion-house chatter loudly. The sheets of mist go diving along the plume, half-hiding the rude cabins of the Freedmen. Now and then a traveler winds his way over the long bridge to Hampton, but the usual throngs are not to be seen. It is just the day to send our thoughts back to our dear northern homes, and doubtless many a sweet picture of other days rises before the minds of the teachers in the Gaylor House on this gloomy, stormy October day.

I know not how long I may be stationed here, but for the present my work will be mostly teaching. Three schools were opened on Monday, and we have already numbered about eight hundred scholars. Miss Sandford has been at the Fort, Miss Guild and Wilkins at the Baptist Church, and Mr. Paine, Miss Campbell and myself at the Butler School, a "College" as the people call it. The latter house was built by Gen. Butler at government expense, and is very inconvenient, though large. It is in the shape of a cross, each part being one hundred and eighty feet long, and will seat over a thousand. The centre platform commands a view of the whole building, and at the further

4. end of each wing is another platform intended for the teachers of those sections. Two doors at the end of each wing, eight in all, form the entrances. The seats are comfortable, and the room well ventilated; but its immense size, and the large number of pupils congregated together, renders it impossible to maintain very good order, - especially as the scholars are unaccustomed to school discipline. Yesterday we had some four hundreds present, and only three teachers; with some assistance from colored persons. Oh! it seems impossible to keep good order with four hundred restless, fidgety forms in one immense room. If each teacher could have sixty or seventy, or even a hundred, in a separate room, it would be far easier to govern them, and the progress would doubtless be greater. Still we love the work, and rejoice to do what we can, even under unfavorable circumstances.

Thursday afternoon, in company with Mr. Payne, I visited Clabtown, a village of some fifteen hundred Freedmen two miles distant from the Tyler House. Our path led us over a plain, and had it not been for the dust and heat the walk would have been extremely pleasant. The village consists almost entirely of rude cabins, mostly built of slabs, - hence its name. We found Miss Clark and Dixon, two teachers from Pennsylvania, doing an excellent work there. Miss D. was at work in a humble school-room, which reminded me very vividly of my African experience. It was built of slabs, with rough seats, a rude desk, and an abundance of crevices. But the children looked bright, and seemed to be making good progress. Miss Clark was teaching in a small basement room, well packed with children, - indeed she told us that she was often compelled to put them on the floor for lack of seats. An hour passed in conversation at the mission house, and then we returned. The house struck me as being very appropriate for a missionary residence from its plainness, and simple furniture.

Gyles House, Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Sunday was cold, chilly and wet, and in going to church we had a little experience in Virginia mud. After morning prayers I went over to the Butler School House to visit in the Sabbath School. Mr. Duggan who was once a slave but has been at Oberlin two years had gathered a number of children and young men, and we had an interesting time. As I sat with my class gathered round me, telling them about the work that we read, memory wandered back to Africa, and I could almost fancy myself once more in the familiar Barré at Bonthe. After ~~the~~<sup>school</sup> there was a recess, and then I preached to a small audience from Acts 26: 28, - "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." More would have been present had it not been for the rain. The congregation gave good attention, and if we could judge from outward appearance drank in the word with eagerness. At the close of the services many clasped my hand with a low murmured "thank you," and of course I felt more than repaid for the fatigue of speaking after a week in school. Oh! how my heart yearns over this dear people. At 3 P.M. I preached again in the same place to a much larger audience. Quite a number of soldiers were present, and I trust the Holy Spirit pressed home the truth to some hearts. In the evening, notwithstanding the rain, Bro. Duggan and myself went over to Hampton, hoping to hear the colored pastor preach, but the church doors were locked. We stopped at one of the log cabins of the Freedmen during a shower, and sitting by the blazing fire of huge logs, had a pleasant talk with the inmates. They were much afraid of their old master, who lives near City Point, and dare not go back to that vicinity. The man is earning thirty dollars a month, and we encouraged him to try and lay by enough to purchase him a little farm. It is said that there are seventeen thousand Freedmen in this neighborhood, and among them all I have seen none who manifest any desire to return to their old masters. They had rather have freedom

6. and a crust, than slavery and abundance. Of course some are idle, and look to government for help instead of trying to help themselves: but this is to be expected of those who have not hitherto known what freedom is. It will take years to overcome the effects of slavery. The long, dark, weary night will not in an instant be succeeded by the blazing glories of noon-day. Step by step the people will rise, and it is a blessed work to aid them.

Sat., Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>.

I have just come in from a visit to one of the wards of the hospital at Camp Hamilton near us. There are still quite a number (some eight hundred) in these wards, though many have just been transferred to other places or sent home. The wards looked quite neat and comfortable, but my heart ached for the poor sufferers. As I paced from bench to couch, dropping a word of exhortation or sympathy, I felt as I have seldom done before what this terrible war has cost us. The poor fellows seemed cheerful and contented, and I heard no murmuring words. Nearly all with whom I talked, expressed a hope in Christ, and some told how sweetly they had been supported in hours of pain and loneliness. Several were looking anxiously forward to the time when they could rejoin the loved ones at home, and if God spare them, oh, how joyous will be the meeting. One poor man was groaning in great distress, and I fear can not live long. As I left these rooms of sickness and pain, and stepped out into the sunshine again, and saw the beautiful earth, and heard its sounds of life and joy, my soul was thrilled by thoughts of those rich blessings which our Heavenly Father gives us from day to day, and which we so often forget to thank him for.

I find some time to call among the people, and these visits are sources of much enjoyment to me, and I hope are not without profit to others. My heart has ached again and again, as I have listened to the sad tales of slavery which they tell. The other day in my walk I found a christian soldier reading the Testament in one of the cabins. An old colored woman

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7. sat near him, sewing, and seeming to drink in every word. She had been a slave all her life, and was overjoyed that freedom had come to her people before she went down to her grave. I conversed with her for some time, and found that she had a childlike confidence in Jesus, and had learned to look to Him for help in every time of need. Two of her children were retained in slavery after she had gained her freedom, and for them her prayers were sincerely offered. "Heart like," said she, "there was nothing but a veil between them and me, when I prayed to God, and I allers asked Him to remove it, and let them come. And bye and bye he lifted the veil, and they jet come over." The poor mother's voice trembled, and her eyes filled, as she spoke. Oh! the agony, the pain, the awe of the dark valley from which these wonderful people have emerged into the sunshine of liberty!

Sat. Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>.

Last Sabbath was one of the most lovely days that autumn ever affords. The sky was beautifully blue, the air soft and warm, and that beautiful rippled the creek that lies between us and Hampton. Soon after breakfast we started for the Sabbath School at the Baptist church in Hampton. The walk over the long bridge on the quiet Sunday morning was delightful, and all the way my heart welled up in a song of praise to God for His unnumbered blessings. We found a large school of some three hundred in that humble chapel. As I sat there looking at those rows of neatly-dressed, intelligent-looking children and youth, and listening to the sweet songs which they sung, my soul was full of joy. I am almost daily surprised at the attainments which these people have made. God has taught them wonderfully. By request I spoke to them for a while about my experience in Africa, and they listened with eager attention, seeming anxious to learn all they could of their father-land. At the hour for morning service, the church was closely packed, and as I spoke on the subject of missions, taking for a text Christ's last command as recorded in the last verses of Matthew, all listened with seeming attention. I strove especially to convince them that they had a work to do in

8. Christianizing Africa, and expressed a hope that some who heard me might one day go forth as messengers of mercy to that dark land. In the afternoon Bro. Davis, a freedman, spoke earnestly of the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

On Sabbath evening six of us went down to Fortus Monroe in an ambulance to hold a meeting. We had a pleasant ride, and an interesting meeting. I was particularly struck with the genuineness of one brother's prayer. He said "O, Lord, the Red Sea is before us, high mountains are on both sides of us, and all the host of hell are pressing down upon us,"—and prayed earnestly for deliverance. He remembered "the teachers" who had come to instruct them, and brought in many quaint expressions.

Tuesday, Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>.

I was so hoarse last Sabbath that I felt it would be impudent to preach in the morning, yet I found other work in the vineyard to do. At nine, in company with Bro. Denny, I went over to the Methodist Sabbath School in Hampton. The morning was clear, bright and bracing, and our walk was delightful. We found but a few children present compared with the usual number at the Baptist School, but we had the advantage of a more quiet house, and could do better justice to our cause. The hour passed by very pleasantly; and at its close, in company with Mrs. Shaw and Miss Benton, two of our teachers, I visited the old English church-yard. The church stands on the spot where was built the second church in America, the first having been erected at Jamestown. It was burned by Gen. McCord during the early part of the war, but the old brick walls are still partly standing. A line of earth-works bounds the yard on two sides, and broken tomb-stones and ruins give evidence of wars



9. devastations. We spent a half-hour in walking about those grass-grown, bushy paths, and reading the inscriptions on the old tomb-stones. In one corner of the yard, under the graceful branches of a large tree, is the grave of Rev. Mr. Shaw, one of our missionaries who died last winter. It was a pleasant place to spend a quiet Sabbath hour, in that old church-yard among the ruins. Overhead was the softest of autumnal skies, and all around us the long green plumes of the weeping willow were waving against the blue heavens that lay beyond. Our thoughts naturally turned to the mansions above, whither have gone the loved ones for whom our hearts are aching, - and we could almost believe as we gazed upward through the blue ether, that we saw the battlements of that glorious city where death shall never enter.

"Death can not come untimely  
To him who is prepared to die;  
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven,  
The brief life, the earlier immortality."

Sabbath afternoon we attended the Baptist church, and listened to a discourse from Father Taylor, a colored preacher, once a slave. Some of his illustrations were very forcible, and occasionally he rose to eloquence in his appeals. We felt well repaid for going to hear one who, though not learned in worldly wisdom, was taught of God. There was some noise and shouting during the services, and one woman went off in a trance, so as to require several to hold her. But the order was good considering the habits of this people, and the large number, some five hundred, crowded in the rude chapel.

Sabbath eve was beautifully clear, and the moon shone brightly. At half-past six the ambulance came to our door, and six of the ladies and myself started for our meeting at the Fort. We rode over the smooth road, and along the narrow bridges toward Old Point Comfort, in the quiet

10 moonlit eve, was extremely pleasant. We stopped for a moment at the guard-house on the bridge to obtain permission to pass the sentinel on our return. A goodly number were gathered, and listened with attention as I spoke from Heb. 13:8. - "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." We reached home in good season, praying that the seed sown in weakness might spring up and bear fruit.

Yesterday our schools went on much as usual, and in the eve we had a pleasant missionary prayer-meeting in our parlor from eight to nine. Ah! how sweet to bow with brethren and sisters at the mercy-seat. Oh! how frequently and earnestly do missionaries need to repair to the throne of grace.

Saturday afternoon, Mrs. Shaw, Miss Benton, Mr. Dungey, and myself, enjoyed a short boat-ride on Hampton Creek. Our rowers were inexperienced boys, so that we made crooked paths on the water; but as we glided out in the stream the scenery was very lovely. A soft blue sky, sparkling water, a gentle breeze, and green shores, villages, and russet-clad forests in the distance, all conspired to produce a pleasing effect on the mind. We stopped at New Town for a while, and called on Aunt Fanny, an aged christian just freed from slavery. Miss Benton had once taught school there, and it was affecting to see the joy with which the good old woman welcomed her. She spoke of her trials, and of the comfort she found in leaning on Jesus, as we sat together in her humble room; - and then we read a chapter, and prayed with her. I was deeply impressed with her simple faith in Christ, - and almost surprised to find one in such circumstances, who seemed to have made so much progress in the divine life. Truly, the teachings of the Holy Spirit are worth more than all earthly wisdom.

Tyler House, Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>

The weeks are gliding swiftly by, and the dear work goes steadily forward. Our faith and patience are often tried, but the joy we feel far outweighs the petty trials. I am becoming so used to the great school-room, with its five hundred pupils, that it seems quite home-like; yet we all long for smaller, more quiet rooms. The children are making good progress, and are as orderly as we could expect. Sometimes my class, in their eagerness to answer, unconsciously bound from their seats. My heart yearns over these dear children, and I long to see them Christ's little ones. Several are already members of the Baptist church.

Last Sabbath, as usual, was a busy day. In the morning I went over to the ~~Methodist~~ Baptist Sabbath School, and spent the hour-and-a-half pleasantly with a class of young men. After school I preached in the Methodist church, and again in the afternoon in the Baptist. The people listen with great attention. Sunday eve I conducted another meeting in the Baptist church, at which Bro. Dancy spoke.

I continue to visit from cabin to cabin as I have time and strength. The other afternoon, in company with Miss Russell, I walked over to Little England and Briar Hills, calling on some sick persons. We found opportunities of dropping a word of counsel in the ears of several impenitent families. One poor girl seemed very sick, yet had no hope in Christ. We conversed and prayed with her; and then, it being almost sunset, turned our steps across the large field homeward. It was the anniversary of my darling wife's death, and memory recrossed the Atlantic, and pictured the whole scene with agonising freshness to my mind. I almost felt that I was in Africa, as I walked homeward in the twilight, meditating. Yet I was comforted by the sweet thought that she whom I mourned was in glory, away from all the care and heart-ache of this lower life. Our evening schools commenced last Wednes-

12. day, and are intensely interesting. We hold them in the Baptist church at Hampton, and so have a half-mile to walk each night. It is a glad sight to behold those grey-headed men and full-grown women bending so eagerly over their books, anxious to learn what will fit them to perform the duties of freeman.

We had a marriage ceremony, the other morning before breakfast, in our parlor. The parties were freedmen from a farm near by. They came with three or four friends in an ambulance. I seated them on the sofa in the parlor, and soon united them in the desired manner, and sent them away rejoicing. The groom wore an old soldier's overcoat, and the bride was habited, and in a faded calico, - yet both seemed as happy as if arrayed in muslin and broad-cloth. Ex. Pres. Tyler little thought such a thing would ever take place in the parlor of his mansion-house. Time rolls on, and strange events are happening in the old region of slavery every day.

Tyler House, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>

Last Sunday was so pleasant that I decided to visit Slabtown, a village of some fifteen hundred freedmen, two miles distant. I found the walk very quiet and delightful. The road led over a wide plain, dotted here and there with humble cabins, and intersected with numerous paths. As I approached the village on that still, bright morning, I could easily have fancied myself in Africa, had it not been that the houses were built of slabs instead of mud. I was warmly welcomed by the teachers, who are from Pennsylvania. It was nearly the hour for Sabbath School, which is held in the Baptist Church, - a rough but commodious building near the beach. The seats were well filled with children and young people, and a few older persons.

13. I took charge of an interesting class of about forty, most of whom could read in the Testament. We read a chapter by turns, one verse each, stopping frequently to ask questions and make explanations. Several were prepared to recite verses from the Bible. The children of the school sang several beautiful songs, under the lead of Miss Clark, one of the teachers. Miss Dew and Dixon, the other teachers, are earnest, effective workers. After Sabbath school came a short vacation, and then by request of Bro. Thornton, the pastor, I preached to a crowded congregation of four hundred. As the exercises were to be the funeral services of an aged member of the church, who had died the week before, I chose a passage from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." As I spoke of the glorious change that death brings to the Christian, a deep emotion seemed to pervade the audience. And no wonder that such thoughts so peculiarly impress this people, for many of them have been so long oppressed and beaten that they have learned to look forward longingly to the final rest above. Bro. Thornton followed with some impressive remarks, giving some sketches of the cruelties which the departed sister had endured in slavery. Her back was scarred with scars received from cruel masters, and for years she had not been able to open the fingers of her hands on account of injuries received in floggings. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my disciples, ye have done it unto me,"—oh! what an awful condemnation of the cruel taskmaster of this southern land is this utterance of Christ. No wonder that Jesus' little ones longed for the heavenly resting-place, where no slave-driver's whip should ever mangle their aching bodies.

In the afternoon Bro. Thornton made a brief address, and then the sacrament was administered. The house was crowded, and at some periods in the exercises

14. there was considerable noise. A low humming sound filled the room, sometimes waxing quite loud, and broken by sudden ~~sharp~~ shrill screams and shouts. Occasionally the people swayed backward and forward, keeping time with foot-beats on the floor. The service did not close till sunset, and during the last singing there was a general hand-shaking among the brethren and sisters. Bro. Thornton tries to repress their outward demonstrations, and the congregation is much more quiet than formerly. Education and intelligence are the grand remedies for all the so-much-talked-of extravagances of this people.

An appointment was made for me to address the people in the evening on the subject of missions, and at the hour at the church was again crowded. The people were remarkably quiet during the whole service, but listened with deep attention, - and I hope some interest was awakened for Africa in their hearts. I walked home with Bro. Thornton in the still, starlight evening, conversing of holy things by the way.

Sat., Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>.

Our evening school last night was deeply interesting. Immediately after prayer we started on our walk over the long bridge to Hampton. It was still, bright and beautiful, and the stars were reflected brilliantly in the smooth waters of the creek. Reaching Hampton, we turned up a narrow street lined with humble cabins, and after a short walk arrived at the Baptist Church, the scene of our evening labor. The doors were not opened, but a crowd of men and women were waiting outside. We soon gained entrance, and were ready to commence our work. As usual we opened with a short prayer, and then the class were bidden with their lesson. It was deeply interesting to glance around the room during the exercises. The house is capacious, but the ceiling very low. Long rows of rough setts of-foed seats, and in the middle of one side stands a plain board pulpit. Standing by this pulpit, and looking

15. over the room, the heart of any lover of freedom would thrill at the sight which met his eyes. On the left two or three rows are filled with learners, varying in size from the grey-haired man to the youth of sixteen. A lady from Massachusetts is passing from one to another, teaching them to read easy lessons. Farther back, a lady from Maine, and another from Boston, are busy with large classes of a similar character. In other parts of the room, teachers from almost every New England state are engaged in the same good work. Ah! how earnestly those grey-headed men bend their wrinkled faces over the Goodwin's Primer, and how their countenances light up with joy as they read those simple sentences! You can see steady traces of agony in those weary-looking faces, and tears spring to your eye as you think of the long, toilsome year in the house of bondage. Yonder sits an white-haired old man, whose dimming eyes compel him to wear spectacles, and by his side is a gentle lady from the North, patiently teaching him to read. Now and then a strange light flashes over that black, care-worn face, as he masters sentence after sentence from the Primer that he grasps in those hard, muscular hands. God bless the earnest old man! Beyond, in the corner, are several aged women, just learning the alphabet. See how patiently they toil on, hoping yet ere they go down to the grave to read God's blessed Book for themselves. And so, glancing around the room, the eye continually falls on equally interesting scenes, and our hearts grow more glad and earnest in the work. We forget the trials of our faith and patience, we forget how sometimes we seem to sow seed on very barren ground, we forget the anxieties, and cares, and trials of our daily life, we forget the people's faults, and our souls are filled with a strange joy, and we love our work better day by day. The hours of the night-school glide swiftly by, and nine o'clock comes ere we are aware of it. We hurriedly close, so as to cross the bridge before the counter-sign is out, and all passing prohibited for the night. A good old man, with a heart full of kindness

16. Helps us down the church steps, and we hurry along the narrow, dark alleys of Hampton. Grump, tramp, tramp go our party over the long bridge. "Halt!" cries the guard as we approach the further end, "who comes there?" Silence. "Advance, and give the countersign!" greets our ears. We are too late, — the countersign is out, and we know nothing what it is. "Ghy-g-g!" exclaim one or two ladies, as visions of a night in the church float before them. But explanations are made, and the guard kindly waives military rule, and we are permitted to pass on, thankful for his courtesy.

Tuesday, Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>.

Sunday is always a busy day to the missionary of the Cross, and the last one was emphatically so to me. I had made arrangements to visit Newport News, Capt. Wilder of the Freedmen's Bureau having kindly furnished me a team. The morning was dark and foggy, but at an early hour we started. Bro. Denny accompanied me. Our road led over the Hampton bridge, through the Main Street of the village, and then out into the country. On either side were extensive corn-fields, and occasionally we passed wide slab cabins or dilapidated farm-houses. We rode for two miles through a grand old pine forest, inhaling its fragrance, and enjoying the scenery. Massive tree-trunks towered all around, the shrubbery was tinted with autumnal colors, and long grey mosses hang from the bare branches of the sweet gum. The road was smooth and sandy most of the way, though varied with an occasional mud-hole or rough log bridge. A ride of eight miles brought us to Newport News, a little cluster of houses on the banks of the James river. Everything looked dilapidated and deserted. A road had been cut through the old rebel fortifications, and we drove inside. Three



17. a four horse were nibbling the grass, and several slab houses were scattered about the inclosure. We gave notice of our preaching, and were told that the church was a mile and a half in another direction. We drove down to the beach, and gazed over the waters, at the mouth of the James, where occurred the fight between the Monitor and Merrimac. We were but a few rods from where the Congress and Cumberland were destroyed, and the remnant of one was visible above the water. After looking for a few moments on the scene of that thrilling episode in our war, we turned our course towards our preaching-place. After an hour's ride, having missed our way once or twice, we reached the church, a plain slab building in the fields. A good brother met us at the road-side with a cordial greeting, and conducted us to the home of uncle Jerry, one of the chief men of the village. It was nearly time for service, and so we soon returned to the chapel, where prayer and singing had already commenced. The interior of the building was plainly finished, and the rough board seats were without backs. As is universally the custom here, the front seats were first crowded by the early-comers, and then the rear benches were gradually filled up by more tardy arrivals. The people were earnest and attentive during the services, though there were many responses and audible demonstrations. These extravagant outcries and contortions of the body, which so shock many sensitive persons from the North, are but the natural fruits of that ignorance and superstition which slavery has brought upon this people. Education and intelligence are the grand remedy for them, and as these advance they will gradually fade away. Meantime, we must cover many things with the mantle of charity, laboring on with love and patience. Even their faults must be very gently reproofed, or we shall lose our influence over them, without which we can accomplish nothing for Christ. We have abundant occasion to realize the truth and

18. importance of the injunction, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

During the singing of the last hymn, the people commenced swaying to and fro, and shaking hands in all parts of the room. As soon as the benediction was pronounced, a group gathered in front of the pulpit and began singing one of their old plantation songs. They stood in a circle, grasping each other's hands, their bodies rising and falling as the rude song went on, and their feet keeping time by stamp on the floor.

We paused a moment to listen to the quaint song, and shake hands with those who crowded around us, and then returned to Uncle Jerry's little cabin. We had brought our lunch, but did not feel at liberty to decline a pressing invitation to dinner, - especially as a dinner in a freedman's cabin would be quite a novelty. And we had such a meal as would have astonished some of the good folks at home. A whole boiled ham, beef, cabbage, sweet-potatoes, hominy, roast-goose, corn-bread, wheat-bread, butter, pickles, sweet-potatoes-pie, preserves, - there were some of the things that were set before us, and they were "right smart good" as southerners say. Our appetites were whetted by the morning's ride and lengthened service, and our hosts seemed pleased to see us do such ample justice to the carefully-prepared viands. A splendid bouquet of beautiful flowers, cut from one of the gardens, was presented me by a lady, - among them some rose-buds plucked in the open air, so you see we are not in a New England climate.

Returning to the chapel, we had another interesting meeting. A company of brethren and sisters from a distance spent the intermission in prayer and singing, and as I entered my heart was touched by the earnest petition that was ascending for the "stranger" who had come to preach to them that day. I prized that broken, trembling prayer more than I should earth's costliest gifts; and as a strange joy welled up in my heart, I said to myself for the thousandth time, "What a joyful thing it is to be a missionary of the Cross!" During the first part of the sermon the people were very quiet, but towards the close that monotonous hum in which they so often indulge waxed louder and louder till it rose in one vast volume of sound from those crowded benches.

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19. Suddenly some one jumped up with a piercing  
scream, and for a moment the tempest of cries was deafening.  
Soon it grew calmer, but the interest was as great. Tears  
streamed down those patient, weary, looking faces, and I could  
but feel that the Holy Spirit was present. After the benediction,  
a group again gathered in front of the pulpit, and com-  
menced singing much as they had done in the morning.  
As I passed down the crowded aisle, shaking hands with  
my wrist ached, many a fervent "God bless you" fell  
on my ears.

We had a beautiful afternoon for our homeward  
ride. The sun was far to the west, and the sky bright  
and soft. Glazy white clouds, like banners of light, sailed  
up from the south, and all Nature seemed to sing a song  
of praise to its Maker.

We reached the Tyler House soon after dark,  
and changing horse, I rode down to the Fort, two miles  
farther, and preached again. It was a beautiful, starlit  
evening, and as we rode along the narrow Point and over  
the long bridge, we listened to low murmur of the sea,  
and watched the bright lights of the shipping that lay at an-  
chor in the harbor. A quiet audience heard with attention  
the sermon, and we left praying that the Spirit would  
bless our words. A good brother led our horse to the door,  
and as we drove away sent after us a fervent "God bless  
you!"

Wed., Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>.

Yesterday I visited several families, reading  
and praying with each. They seemed very thankful for the  
opportunity of hearing God's Word. In one cabin I found an  
old man sitting by the chimney-corner, quite unwell. As  
I took the Bible to read, I asked him what he wanted me to  
read about. He replied, "Read about Daniel." So I selected the  
chapter giving an account of Daniel's being cast into the den  
of lions and coming out unharmed. He appeared to drink in  
every word, feeling that he had been almost as miraculously  
delivered from slavery as was Daniel from the lion's den. And  
when, after kneeling in prayer, I rose to leave, he clasped my  
hand so warmly, and <sup>gave</sup> such expression to his thanks, that I felt  
it was indeed a privilege to visit him.

In the next cabin I found two elderly women,  
a young man and his wife, and a boy, all professed  
followers of Jesus. They were gathered round a blazing log fire,  
and had been conversing of heavenly things before I entered.

20. They spoke of their sufferings in slavery, and were very grateful to the Lord who had delivered them. My heart was thrilled as I listened to Mrs. Moody's story of her life in slavery. It can not be transcribed on paper without losing much of its power. In order to realize its thrilling interest, one needs to hear it himself. You need to sit in that humble cabin, by the blazing fire, and see those care-worn faces. You need to hear the varying tones of voice, as with broken language but powerful imagery picture after picture of agony is painted. You need to see the tear chase each other down wrinkled faces. And then if your heart does not melt, and your eyes grow dim, it will be strange indeed.

Speaking of her love of prayer, Mrs. Moody said, "Jesu was my only hope. I had nobody else to look to, and I knew he would take care of his little child. One day I felt sad, and went alone into the bush to pray. But the overseer found me, and he broke up a bunch of sticks, and wore them out on my poor back. I went back to my work, but my heart ached, and I stole away again to the same spot to pray. I had just knelt down, when I heard something in the bush crack, crack, - and I knew the overseer had come again to whip me. But though I was whipped again and again, I couldn't stop praying, for Jesu was my all." And so she went on, relating incident after incident, till my blood boiled at <sup>the</sup> thought that man-kind could be guilty of such atrocities.

"One day," said the woman sitting in the corner opposite, "as I was lying in my bed sick, I heard a sweet voice saying, 'Fear not, little one, I will open to you a door,' - and he has opened the door wide now, and I have come out into freedom." Who shall say that the Spirit of God did not teach this people many things in ways that would seem strange to us?