

SKETCHES

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SOUTHERN LIFE.

BY

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PHILADELPHIA:

FERGUSON BROS. & CO., Printers No. 15 North Seventh Street.

1891.

PS/1799/H7/554/1891a

And this buying up each other  
Is something worse than mean,  
Though I think a heap of voting,  
I go for voting clean.

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### LEARNING TO READ.

Very soon the Yankee teachers  
Came down and set up school;  
But, oh! how the Rebs did hate it,—  
It was agin' their rule.

Our masters always tried to hide  
Book learning from our eyes;  
Knowledge did'nt agree with slavery—  
'Twould make us all too wise.

But some of us would try to steal  
A little from the book,  
And put the words together,  
And learn by hook or crook.

I remember Uncle Caldwell,  
Who took pot-liquor fat  
And greased the pages of his book,  
And hid it in his hat.

And had his master ever seen  
The leaves upon his head,  
He'd have thought them greasy papers,  
But nothing to be read.

And there was Mr. Turner's Ben,  
Who heard the children spell,  
And picked the words right up by heart,  
And learned to read 'em well.

Well, the Northern folks kept sending  
The Yankee teachers down;  
And they stood right up and helped us,  
Though Rebs did sneer and frown.

And, I longed to read my Bible,  
For precious words it said;  
But when I begun to learn it,  
Folks just shook their heads,

And said there is no use trying,  
Oh! Chloe, you're too late;  
But as I was rising sixty,  
I had no time to wait.

So I got a pair of glasses,  
And straight to work I went,  
And never stopped till I could read  
The hymns and Testament.

Then I got a little cabin  
 A place to call my own—  
 And I felt as independent  
 As the queen upon her throne.

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## CHURCH BUILDING.

Uncle Jacob often told us,  
 Since freedom blessed our race  
 We ought all to come together  
 And build a meeting place.

So we pinched, and scraped, and spared,  
 A little here and there:  
 Though our wages was but scanty,  
 The church did get a share.

And, when the house was finished,  
 Uncle Jacob came to pray;  
 He was looking mighty feeble,  
 And his head was awful gray.

But his voice rang like a trumpet;  
 His eyes looked bright and young;  
 And it seemed a mighty power  
 Was resting on his tongue.

And he gave us all his blessing—  
 'Twas parting words he said,  
 For soon we got the message  
 The dear old man was dead.

But I believe he's in the kingdom,  
 For when we shook his hand  
 He said, "Children, you must meet me  
 Right in the promised land;

"For when I'm done a moiling  
 And toiling here below,  
 Through the gate into the city  
 Straightway I hope to go."

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## THE REUNION.

Well, one morning real early  
 I was going down the street,  
 And I heard a stranger asking  
 For Missis Chloe Fleet.

There was a something in his voice  
 That made me feel quite shaky,  
 And when I looked right in his face,  
 Who should it be but Jakey!