

by the masters as far as possible. He defended the custom of bringing up the children of the same estate in common, as it was far more humane not to cherish domestic ties among slaves. On the same farm I talked with several slaves who had been set to fell timber by task-work, and had finished by the middle of the day. They never appeared to be overworked; and the rapidity with which they increase beyond the whites in the United States shows that they are not in a state of discomfort, oppression, and misery. Doubtless, in the same manner as in Ireland and parts of Great Britain, the want of education, mental culture, and respect for themselves, favours improvident marriages among the poor; so the state of mere animal existence of the slave, and his low moral and intellectual condition, coupled with kind treatment and all freedom from care, promote their multiplication. The effect of the institution on the progress of the whites is most injurious, and, after travelling in the northern States, and admiring their rapid advance, it is most depressing to the spirits. There appears to be no place in society for poor whites. If they are rich, their slaves multiply, and from motives of kindly feeling towards retainers, and often from false pride, they are very unwilling to sell them. Hence they are constantly tempted to maintain a larger establishment than is warranted by the amount of their capital, and they often become involved in their circumstances, and finally bankrupt. The prudence, temper, and decision of character required to manage a plantation successfully is very great. It is notorious that the hardest taskmasters to the slaves are those who come from the northern free States.

I often asked myself, when in the midst of a large