

THE
UNDERGROUND RAIL ROAD.

A RECORD

OF

FACTS, AUTHENTIC NARRATIVES, LETTERS, &c.,

Narrating the Hardships Hair-breadth Escapes and Death Struggles

OF THE

Slaves in their efforts for Freedom,

AS RELATED

BY THEMSELVES AND OTHERS, OR WITNESSED BY THE AUTHOR;

TOGETHER WITH

SKETCHES OF SOME OF THE LARGEST STOCKHOLDERS, AND

MOST LIBERAL AIDERS AND ADVISERS,

OF THE ROAD.

BY

WILLIAM STILL,

For many years connected with the Anti-Slavery Office in Philadelphia, and Chairman
of the Acting Vigilant Committee of the Philadelphia Branch of
the Underground Rail Road.

Illustrated with 70 fine Engravings by Bensell, Schell and others, and
Portraits from Photographs from Life.

Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant that has escaped from his master unto thee.—*Deut.* xxiii. 15.

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volunteered timely aid and sympathy to the Vigilance Committee of Philadelphia. Not to mention any of this class would be to fail to bestow honor where honor is due. We have only to allow the friends to whom we allude, to speak for themselves through their correspondence when their hearts were stirred in the interest of the escaping slave, and they were practically doing unto others as they would have others do unto them.

Here, truly, is pure philanthropy, that vital Christianity, that True and Undeiled Religion before God and the Father, which is to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to undo the heavy burden, and let the oppressed go free. The posterity of the oppressed at least, will need such evidences of tender regard and love as here evinced. In those days, such expressions of Christian benevolence were cheering in the extreme. From his able contribution to Anti-slavery papers, and his fearless and eloquent advocacy of the cause of the down-trodden slave in the pulpit, on the platform, and in the social circle, the name of Rev. N. R. Johnston, Reformed Presbyterian (of the old Covenanter faith), will be familiar to many. But we think it safe to say that his fidelity and devotion to the slave are nowhere more fully portrayed than in the appended Underground Rail Road letters.

TOPSHAM, VT., September 1st, 1855.

WM. STILL, MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have the heart, but not the time, to write you a long letter. It is Saturday evening, and I am preparing to preach to-morrow afternoon from Heb. xiii. 3, "Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them." This will be my second sermon from this text. Sabbath before last I preached from it, arguing and illustrating the proposition, deduced from it, that "the great work to which we are now called is the abolition of Slavery, or the emancipation of the slave," showing our duty as *philanthropists*. To-morrow I intend to point out our duty as *citizens*. Some to whom I minister, I know, will call it a political speech; but I have long since determined to speak for the dumb what is in my heart and in my Bible, let men hear or forbear. I am accountable to the God of the oppressed, not to man. If I have his favor, why need I regard man's disfavor. Many besides the members of my own church come out regularly to hear me. Some of them are pro-slavery politicians. The consequence is, I preach much on the subject of Slavery. And while I have a tongue to speak, and lips to pray, they shall never be sealed or silent so long as millions of dumb have so few to speak for them.

But poor Passmore Williamson is in bonds. Let us also remember him, as bound with him. He has many sympathizers. I am glad you did not share the same fate. For some reasons I am sorry you have fallen into the hands of thieves. For some others I am glad. It will make you more devoted to your good work. Persecution always brightens the Christian,

and gives more zeal to the true philanthropist. I hope you will come off victorious. I pray for you and your co-laborers and co-sufferers.

My good brother, I am greatly indebted to you for your continued kindness. The Lord reward you.

I have a scholarship in an Ohio College, Geneva Hall, which will entitle me—any one I may send—to six years tuition. It is an Anti-slavery institution, and wholly under Anti-slavery control and influence. They want colored students to prepare them for the great field of labor open to men of talent and piety of that class. When I last saw you I purposed talking to you about this matter, but was disappointed very much in not getting to take tea with you, as I partly promised. Have you a son ready for college? or for the grammar school? Do you know any promising young man who would accept my scholarship? Or would your brother's son, Peter or Levin, like to have the benefit of it? If so, you are at liberty to promise it to any one whom you think I would be willing to educate. Write me at your earliest convenience, about this matter.

* * * * *

I presume the Standard will contain full accounts of the Norristown meeting, the Williamson case, and your own and those connected. If it does not, I will thank you to write me fully.

* * * * *

What causes the delay of that book, the History of Peter Still's Family, etc.? I long to see it.

The Lord bless you in your labors for the slave.

Yours, etc., N. R. JOHNSTON.

TOPSHAM, VT., December 26th, 1855.

WM. STILL, MY DEAR FRIEND:—I wrote to you some two or three weeks ago, enclosing the letter to the care of a friend in Philadelphia, whom I wished to introduce to you. I have had no answer to that letter, and I am afraid you have not received it, or that you have written me, and I have not received yours. In that letter I wished to receive information respecting the best way to expend money for the aid of fugitives. Lest you may not have received it, I write you again, though briefly.

A few of the Anti-slavery friends, mostly ladies, in our village have formed an Anti-slavery Society and sewing circle, the proceeds of which are to go to aid needy or destitute fugitive slaves. They have appointed me corresponding secretary. In obedience to my instructions, and that I may fulfill my promises, I want to find out from you the desired information. We want to give the little money raised, in such a way that fugitives who are really needy will be benefited by it. Write me as soon as possible, where and to whom we should send the funds when raised. I have thought that you of the Vigilance Committee, in Philadelphia had need of it. Or, if not,