

have lost his usual strength and coolness. He was frightened, and stood puffing and blowing, seemingly unable to command words or blows. When he saw that poor Hughes was standing half bent with pain—his courage quite gone—the cowardly tyrant asked if I “meant to persist in my resistance.” I told him “*I did mean to resist, come what might* ;” that I had been by him treated like a *brute*, during the last six months ; and that I should stand it *no longer*. With that, he gave me a shake, and attempted to drag me toward a stick of wood, that was lying just outside the stable door. He meant to knock me down with it ; but, just as he leaned over to get the stick, I seized him with both hands by the collar, and, with a vigorous and sudden snatch, I brought my assailant harmlessly, his full length, on the *not over* clean ground—for we were now in the cow yard. He had selected the place for the fight, and it was but right that he should have all the advantages of his own selection.

By this time, Bill, the hired man, came home. He had been to Mr. Hemsley’s, to spend the Sunday with his nominal wife, and was coming home on Monday morning, to go to work. Covey and I had been skirmishing from before daybreak, till now, that the sun was almost shooting his beams over the eastern woods, and we were still at it. I could not see where the matter was to terminate. He evidently was afraid to let me go, lest I should again make off to the woods ; otherwise, he would probably have obtained arms from the house, to frighten me. Holding me, Covey called upon Bill for assistance. The scene here, had something comic about it. “Bill,” who knew *precisely*

what Covey wished him to do, affected ignorance, and pretended he did not know what to do. “What shall I do, Mr. Covey,” said Bill. “Take hold of him—take hold of him!” said Covey. With a toss of his head, peculiar to Bill, he said, “indeed, Mr. Covey, I want to go to work.” “*This is your work*,” said Covey ; “take hold of him.” Bill replied, with spirit, “My master hired me here, to work, and *not* to help you whip Frederick.” It was now my turn to speak. “Bill,” said I, “don’t put your hands on me.” To which he replied, “My God! Frederick, I aint goin’ to tech ye,” and Bill walked off, leaving Covey and myself to settle our matters as best we might.

But, my present advantage was threatened when I saw Caroline (the slave-woman of Covey) coming to the cow yard to milk, for she was a powerful woman, and could have mastered me very easily, exhausted as I now was. As soon as she came into the yard, Covey attempted to rally her to his aid. Strangely—and, I may add, fortunately—Caroline was in no humor to take a hand in any such sport. We were all in open rebellion, that morning. Caroline answered the command of her master to “*take hold of me*,” precisely as Bill had answered, but in *her*, it was at greater peril so to answer ; she was the slave of Covey, and he could do what he pleased with her. It was *not* so with Bill, and Bill knew it. Samuel Harris, to whom Bill belonged, did not allow his slaves to be beaten, unless they were guilty of some crime which the law would punish. But, poor Caroline, like myself, was at the mercy of the merciless Covey ; nor