

Henry Box Brown.

One of the most thrilling events of the week was the appearance of the heroic man who so recently escaped from slavery in a box, marked and forwarded as Merchandise, from Richmond to Philadelphia. The warmest sympathies of the people were enlisted in his behalf. His story is one of thrilling interest. Every generous heart will be touched by its recital, whenever and wherever that story is told it will arouse the sympathies of mankind, not only for Henry Box Brown, but for his oppressed race. Shame on Virginia, that one of her sons should thus be compelled to act and suffer to gain the rights which belong to our common humanity. She proudly claims to be the mother of statesmen and heroes, but no son of hers ever gave greater evidence of heroism than this poor despised son of hers. And this act of heroism was not made in her defence, but it was made in escaping from her bosom.

We copy from the *Chronotype* the story as told by himself, at the anti-slavery meeting on Wednesday night. Let each of us, as we read it, remember that three millions of our race are held in bondage, by the same laws which this poor man risked so much to escape from. Let each one of us, then, firmly resolve to exert all the political and moral influence we possess, to free the country from the curse and shame of slavery. Let us vow, that come what may, we will never cease our efforts until every slave in our country can stand up in the dignity of manhood and say, "I too am a man and a brother."

THRILLING NARRATIVE.—At the meeting on Wednesday evening, a fugitive slave, newly named *Henry Box Brown*, came on to the platform, by invitation, and related his adventures, while escaping from the house of bondage.

Henry was a slave in Virginia. He has, or had, a wife and three children, for whom their master asked \$600. The husband and father made incredible exertions to purchase them, and succeeded in raising \$600. The remaining \$50 were advanced by his own master, who had a lien upon the wife and children. After buying his family, Henry rented a house for them, but he soon became involved as his master claimed the largest portion of his earnings. One morning he went off to his work, but on returning found that his wife and children had been seized, sold upon the auction block to the slave traders, and were to be transported out of the State. They were sold for \$1,000. After this sad event, his master seized upon the furniture provided for the slave wife, sold it and pocketed the proceeds.

Henry remarked, with the deepest pathos, that after his wife and children were stolen, his heart was broken. He had learned to sing, to lighten the tedium of his labor, and for the gratification of his fellow-captives, but now he could not sing. His thoughts were far away in the rice-swamps of Carolina or the cotton plantations of Georgia. His wife was not and his children were not, and he refused to be comforted. When the master, noticing his despondency, told him he could get another wife (southern morality) Brown shook his head,—the wife of his affections and the children of his love, or none at all.

Thoughts of liberty now began to spring up in his bosom. He had heard of the abolitionists, and determined to escape to them if it was possible. He became frugal, saved with more than a miser's eagerness every cent he could lay claim to, until he had amassed a sufficient sum for his purpose. The means used for escape were of the most unprecedented character. With the assistance of a friend, arrangements were made for him to escape in a box, which was to be forwarded to friends of the slave in Philadelphia, carefully marked as a valuable package.

The friend who assisted him in this plot, took all his money, about \$80 and his clothes. Brown could offer no objections, though it left him penniless. Yet with a Roman heart, he was true to the fixed purpose of his soul, he was on his way to liberty. The box used for this extraordinary flight was only three feet, one inch long, two feet wide, and two feet six inches deep. In this diminutive box he was transported from Richmond to Philadelphia by railroad and steamboat, a distance of 300 miles and perils so great that the mind shudders when they are contemplated.

On board of the steamboat while going up the Potomac, the box was set on end, which placed Brown head downward. How long he remained in this fearful position, he does not know, but he mentally resolved to die, if die he must, without making a sign, which might involve those who had been assisting him.

The next great peril which he encountered was at the Baltimore depot at Washington. The box was roughly tumbled out of the transportation wagon, and it rolled over two or three times. This the unhappy fugitive thought was bad enough, but he was horror-stricken when it was proposed not to forward the box until the next day. In that event he would die. But he bethought him to pray, and while yet praying a superior officer ordered it to be forwarded. When put into the baggage car he was again placed on his head, in which position he remained for the space of half an hour. His eyes became swollen nearly out of his head; his veins were filled to bursting, and he must have died, had not the position been providentially changed.

The box arrived safely in Philadelphia to its destination. The friends who were anxiously waiting for it were assembled in a room with the door locked. They were afraid to move. They feared that the inmate was dead, as he made no noise. Finally one, more firm than the rest, rapped on the box, "Is all right here?" in a friendly tone. "All right," was the brief response from within. The friends were overcome by their emotions, and one of them, finding speech, exclaimed, "You are the greatest man in America."

As for Brown, he was joyful, his fatigues were nothing, his sufferings were forgotten. He was free, he breathed the air of Liberty. That one thought swallowed up all others. After stretching himself for a moment, he breathed forth the feelings of his soul in a song of solemn praise for his deliverance. Without premeditation he burst out

in a singularly melodious voice this appropriate anthem:—

“I waited patiently, and the Lord my God delivered me.”

What heroism, what self-denial, what energy of purpose are here manifested. The sincerity and strength of faith in the Providence of God we must admire and respect. Such is the man who has been added to the freemen of the North. Let him be received as a brother beloved. When our columns are less crowded we shall give the interesting narrative of Ellen and William Craft, fugitive slaves from Georgia.