The Obeah Woman.

How I know, Massa Edward,' replied she, coloring up, and shortly afterwards she quittd the room.

Mr. L—— had often told me that the negroes were acquainted with poisons of a most subtle nature, but that the Obeah people only know how to manufacture them. The surgeon who attended the estate, with whom I was on intimate terms, happened to call in a little while after this conversation, which I related to him. He confirmed the account, and told me many curious particulars relative to Obeah practices.

For many weeks the power of Mr. Saul over the negroes appeared to increase; they daily grew more discontented, and declared they were entitled to their freedom. All happiness had fled from the plantation. Mr. L—— was gloomy, the overseer alarmed, and the drivers had great difficulty in making the gangs perform their allotted tasks. One day I was sitting behind a row of prickly-pear hushes, which bordered the cane grounds, when the main gang, who were at work with their hoes, following each other in two lines, approached me, and I overheard the following conversation.

'Dat not de true faite,' cried one.

'Well, nebber mind, next Kissmas, see what cane knife do. Recollect what Massa Saul say.' Here the negro sung in a low tone,

Kissmass come, then white man see,

Hal-le—lu—gar.

Ebery slave be then made free,

Hal-le—lu—gar.

'How many week fore Kissmas come?' said a voice which I knew to be that of John Pepper.

'Suppose 'stead you look ater Kissmass, you look ater you own d—— a little wife, Sally,' cried one of the women. This remark occasioned a loud laugh through the whole gang.

'Massa Saul teach Sally de true faite;' observed another and a general laugh again succeeded.

By this time they had hoed up to the end of the row, within a few feet of where I remained concealed. A loud crack from the whip of the driver, who stood at some distance, and out of hearing, announced to the gang that their day's work was over. The negroes threw down their hoes, and sauntered back to their huts.

I now clearly perceived how matters stood; that the missionary was evidently exciting the slaves to rebellion, and in all probability had also encouraged the pretty Sally to incontinence. In the evening I walked down to the hut of John Pepper. He was sitting at the door, apparently in no pleasant humor. As I afterwards found out, he had for some time been taunted with his wife's infidelity, which latterly she had been careless of concealing. There was, perhaps, some extenuation to be offered for her, when it is considered, that she had married John Pepper more from fear of the Obeah woman than from any regard for him. She now had become strongly attached to the missionary, and very often remained with him until a late hour in the morning, regardless of the anger and jealousy of her husband.

'Well, John,' said I, 'how is your wife, Sally—is she at home?'