previous to my being admitted as a partner in the firm over which he
presided.

On my arrival at Antigua, I took up my abode at the plantation-house
of an old friend and correspondent of my father. He was a widower;
his only daughter had for some years been sent to England for her ed-
ucation. I had seen her but once, and that was a few days previous to
my departure, when my father had directed me to call, and offer my
services in taking charge of anything which she might wish to send out
to Antigua. I was then in all the haste of a young man embarking in
life, and on board of a ship at the same time, and my subsequent
recollection of her was merely that she was rather a pretty and elegant
young person.

I had been about four months on the island, and had gained a very tol-
erable insight into the habits and peculiarities of the negroes, when the
circumstances occurred which I am now about to relate: but I must
first describe the plantation and its inhabitants. The plantation house
was situated at the end of a ravine, in the hollow of which were the cane
plantations, extending from the house to within a hundred yards of the
sea. On one side, on the rising ground, and about a quarter of a mile
from the plantation house, stood the cottages of the negroes, with their
provision grounds, running back towards the hill as far as the industry of
the possessors induced them to put the land into the village. The mills
and sugar-works were down by the sea-side, where there was a small bay
with a wooden pier run out into deep water, for the droghers to come
along-side and receive the casks of sugar which were, in these vessels,
carried round to St. John's, and transferred to West India ships waiting
for their cargoes. It was an isolated beautiful spot. The negroes were
contented and happy; I was constantly with them, and have, therefore,
no hesitation in making the assertion. Sunday was their day of rest, or
rather of pleasure, for they took no advantage of the former privilege.
Before the sun had time to evaporate the dew-drops which glittered on
the prickly pear-bushes, you would see them dressed in their smartest
attire, loaded with the produce of their labor, gaily start off in a crowd
to the market at St. John's, which is invariably held on the early part of
that day. It was not only to sell their produce, but to meet their friends
and supply their little wants, that they went to town. In the afternoon,
most of them returned and attended the chapel, which was about two
miles from the estate on the road to St. John's; the service being per-
formed in the evening that it might be attended by the negroes after they
had disposed of their produce.

Before I had been three months on the estate, I was acquainted with
every negro upon the property, and many were the ruses employed by
them to obtain from me some indulgence in the shape of rum, &c., when
I went down in the evening to their cluster of cottages to witness their
merriment—for seldom, if ever, did an evening pass away without their
favorite amusement of dancing. There was one slave girl, about seven-
teen years old, who was considered the beauty of the plantation. I never
could myself admire anything so decidedly black, but still I could not
deny the extreme beauty of her teeth, the happy smile upon her face,
and the neatness, as well as cleanliness, of her person and dress; her
figure was perfection, and compared with her own race, she certainly was
a beauty.

This girl was usually the delegate from the other slaves, when they
would coax me out of an order for two or three bottles of rum, to enliven