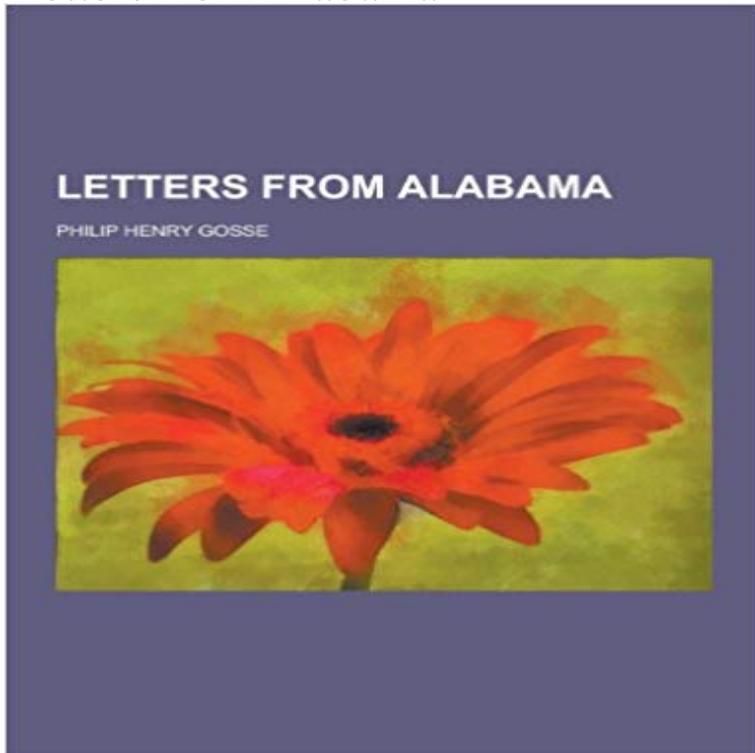


Letters from Alabama



This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1859 edition. Excerpt: ... LETTER III. Dallas, June 1, 18--. You are aware that my intention in coming south was to open a school. Schools here generally are not private enterprises, as in the old country, but the ordinary mode of procedure is as follows. Some half-dozen planters of influence meet and agree to have their children educated together, each stipulating the number of pupils to be sent, and the proportion of expense to be borne, by himself. These form a board of trustees, who employ a master at a fixed salary, and, though they allow others to send their children at a certain rate, are yet personally responsible for the whole amount in the respective proportions of their stipulated subscriptions. I found no difficulty in obtaining an engagement of this kind, and have undertaken, at a liberal remuneration, the charge of about a dozen young ideas. My schoolroom is a funny little place, built wholly of round, unhewn logs, notched at the ends to receive each other, and the interstices filled with clay; there is not a window, but, as the clay has become dry, it has dropped or been punched out of many of these crevices, so that there is no want of light and air, and the door, hung on wooden hinges, and furnished with a wooden latch, scarce needs the latter, for it remains open by night as well as day. The desks are merely boards, split, not sawn, out of pine logs, unhewn and unplaned, which slope from the walls, and are supported by brackets. The forms are split logs, with four diverging legs from the round side, the upper side being made tolerably straight with the axe. Some wooden pegs, driven into auger holes in the logs, receive hats, &c. A neat little desk, at which I write, and a chair on which I sit, are the only

exceptions to the primitive rudeness...

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