2393

Dodimus Potestatem Smythe –

Master of Nimbus, owner of 1000 slaves
Cotton – Tobacco plantations and
Turpentine workings –
Son of Bildad Smith – overseer –
speculator – and millionaire –
Marries Miss Blanche Bellamy, the daughter of Patrick Henry Marshall Bellamy – of Belleville – Va – an F.F.V. of exquisite manners, faultless mien, endless pedigree and a decayed estate –
– A hard-headed, practical, well educated son of a miserly hard hearted sire, with a good education, a vein of humor and a smart touch of his daddy,

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

Water and air were alike to them
Mountain and billows crest
The deep recesses and the seething flood

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Nimbus

Son of Laura, slave of S.P. Smythe - father unknown or unnoted at least.

Strong, black, serious, plodding. Accounted dull and sometimes sullen as a slave but capable tireless and faithful. Becomes a noted tobacco curer - as a slave -

Companion of ——— (cripple) when boys

Meeting with Master and conversation

Whipping -

Surrender - Registered as husband - Nimbus Smythe

" " voter Nimbus Ware

Takes bond for title as George Nimbus.

Gets horse from Govt corral

Makes tobacco

School house -

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Currie Talbot (?)

N.T. at Red Wing — Yankee girl — Bright accomplished, neither rich nor poor, mother a widow — Companion-teacher Mollie Ainslie. —

Rides with Lt. Westcott of 11th Mich. Cav. who proposes to her and is rejected — tenderly — presents her a horse.

Riding is overtaken by thunderstorm — Stops at house of —

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Ch. I - Tri-nominate

II - [Christening] The Font

III - I [Marriage] The Junonian Rite

IV - [Confirmation] (The Toga Virilis.

V - In Fee Simple.] An Estate in Fee.

VI - Retrospect. A Backward Glance.

VII "Come over into Macedonia."

100 - VIII - The Cadmean Mystery.

IX - Lost and Midnight.

X - A Lean Lank Jonah.

XI - Storm and Simoom

XII - Tongues of Flame.

XIII - Out of Weakness Power.

XIV - A Soul in Chase.

XV - Duty Danger and Doom.

XVI - "Away, Away!

XVII - [redacted] [redacted] Richards.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

State of Colorado, } Cost of some of the Characters and first chapter of "Bricks without Straw"

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, } ss.

I, NORMAN H. MELDRUM, ~~Secretary of~~ State of the State of Colorado, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and complete transcript of the certificate of incorporation of Written in Denver Colorado in the Spring of 1880

which was filed in this office the ..... day of ..... A.D. 18.... at ..... o'clock ..... M., and admitted to record.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State, at the City of Denver, this ..... day of ..... A.D. 18....

.....

Secretary of State.

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Ch. VIII. Hesden Le Moyne

As they went from the place of registration to their dinner at the hotel, the Sheriff ~~[illegible]~~ walking beside the Chairman said:

"I spoke to Le Moyne ~~[illegible]~~ about that negro fellow Eliab Hill and he says his very willing to tell you all he knows about him, but as there are some private matters connected with it he prefers to come to your room after dinner rather than speak of it more publicly."

"I am sure I shall be much obliged to him if he will do so," said Pardee, "~~I shall be [illegible] to meet him~~."

You will find him one of the very finest men you ever met. I'm thinking, continued ~~[illegible]~~ Gleason

Cusanton Le Moyne

His father was very much of a gentleman. He came from Virginia and was akin to the Le Moyne's of South Carolina, one of the ~~oldest~~ best of those old French families that boys so much of their Huguenot blood. I never believed in it myself but they are a fine elegant family; no doubt of that. I've got the notion that they were not as well off as they might be. Perhaps the family got too big for the estate. That would happen with these old families you know; but they were high-toned and honorable as if their forebears had been kings. Not proud, I don't mean — not a bit of that — but high spirited

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and hot-tempered.

His Mother was a Richards, Hester Richards, the daughter of old man Jim Richards. The family was a mighty rich one, used to own all up and down the river on both sides, from Red Wing to Mulberry Hill where Headen now lives. He had a big family of boys and only one gal who was the youngest. The boys was all rather rough, hard customers, I've heard say, taking after their father who was about as hard a man to get along with as was ever in this country. He came from up North some where about 1790, when everybody

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thought this pea-vine country was a sort of new garden of Eden. He was a well educated and capable man but had a terrible temper. He let the boys go to the devil their own way & just selling off a piece of land now and then and paying their debts. He had so much that it was a good thing for him to get rid of it. But he doted on the gal and sent her off to school and travelled with her and give her every sort of advantage. She was a beauty and as sweet and good as she was pretty. How she come to marry Casaubon Le Moyne nobody ever knew

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but it's just my opinion that it was because they loved each other and nothing else. They certainly were the best matched couple that I ever saw.

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~~His father was very much of a gentleman and married a Sel Mayne, one of the finest families of~~ and came ~~South Carolina~~. They ~~[illegible]~~ had but one child, this young man. Hesden ~~[illegible]~~ Mayne, his mother, was always an invalid after his birth, in fact has it walked a step since that time. She was a very remarkable woman, though, and in spite of her sickness took charge of her son's education and fitted him for college all by herself. ~~His father's family wasn't much given to education, but were very active, thriving people, and his father in particular was a man of very high character~~. The boy grew up sorter quiet like, probably on account of being in his mother's sick room so much; but there wasn't anything soft about him, after all. His father

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY MYHISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

was a Union man, the strongest kind. Mighty few of them in this county, which was one of the largest slaveholding counties in the state, and had never had anything but a big democratic majority in it, in the old times. I think the old man Casaubon ~~Richards~~ Le Moyne ran for the legislature here some seven times before he was elected, and then it was only on his personal popularity; and that was the only time the county ever had a Whig representative even. When the war came on the old man was right down sick. I do believe he saw the end from the beginning. I've heard him tell things almost to a fraction ~~just~~ jest as they came out afterwards. Well, the young man ~~Le Moyne~~ Hesden he had his father's notions of course, but he was pluck. He couldn't have been a Le

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Moyne ~~or a Richards either~~ or a Richards either without that. I re=
member, not long after the war begun, perhaps in the second year, before ~~he came~~
~~the~~ conscription ~~begun~~ came on anyhow ~~into~~ he came into town rid=
ing of a black colt that he had raised. I don't
think it had been backed more than a few times
and it was just as fine as a fiddle. I've had
some fine horses myself and believe I know
what ~~makes~~ goes to make up a good nag, but
I've never seen one that suited my notion
as well as that black, Le Moyne had taken a heap of pains with him. ~~I~~ ~~A heap~~ A lot of folks gathered
round and was admiring the beast and asking
questions about ~~it~~ his pedigree and the like, when
all at once a big, lubberly fellow named
Timlow, Jay Timlow, said it war a great
pity that such a fine nag should belong to a

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Union man an' a traitor to his country. You know, Captain, that's what we called Union men in them days. He hadn't more'n got the words out of his mouth 'afore Hesden Richards hit him. I'd no idea he could strike such a blow. Tinlow was forty pounds heavier than he, but it staggered him back four or five steps and Lethorpe followed him up, hitting him just about as fast as he could straiten his arm, till he dropped. The queerest thing about it was that the horse followed Richards right along and when Tinlow come down with his face all battered up and Lt Morpe Richards wheeled about and started over to the Court House, the horse keeping following him up to the very steps. Lethorpe

he went into the Court House and stood about
ten minutes. Then he come out and walked
straight across the square to where the crowd
was around Tinlow, who had been washing
the blood off his face at the pump. LeRoyne
was as white as a sheet and Tinlow was a
cussing jest his level best about what he
would do when he set eyes on him again.
I thought there might be more trouble and I
told Tinlow to hush his mouth — I was a
deputy then — and then I told LeRoyne he
mustn't come any nearer. He was jest a
few yards away with a pepper in his hand
and that horse still jest behind him. He
stopped when I called him and said:

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"You needn't fear of my coming for any further difficulty, gentlemen. I merely want to say — and he held up the paper — that I have enlisted in the army of the Confederate States and taken this horse to ride — given him to the government. Now, all I want to say is that if ~~Jay~~ Jay Timlow wants to do any fighting and will go and enlist I'll furnish him a horse too."

"He jumped on his horse and rode away followed by a big cheer, while Jay Timlow stood on the pump platform sopping his head with his handkerchief, ~~and with~~ his eyes as big as saucers, as they say, from surprise. We were all surprised, for that matter. As soon as he

got over that a little we all began to Bully Timlow over the outcome of his little fracas. There was'nt no such timber in him as in young LaWayne, of course, a big stiff beefy fellow, but he could'nt stand that and almost before we had got well started he put on his hat, looked round at the crowd a minute and said.

"Damned if I don't do it!"

"He marched straight over to the courthouse and did it too LaWayne stood up to his bargain and they both went out in the same company a few days afterwards. They became great friends and they do say the Confederacy had mighty few

better soldiers than those two boys. LaMoyne was offered promotion time and again but he wouldn't take it. He decid he didn't like war, didn't believe in it and didn't want no responsibility only for himself. Just about the last fighting they had over about Appomattox, perhaps the very day before the surrender, he lost that horse and his right arm a fighting over that time Jay Tinkum, who had got a ball in the leg and LaMoyne was trying to keep him out of the hands of you Yanks. (*)

They had reached the hotel when this account was concluded, and after dinner the sheriff came to the Captain's room and

BEAUMAUQUE COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

(#) "He got back after a while and has been living with his mother on the old plantation ever since. He married a cousin just before he went into the service, — more to have somebody to leave with his ma, folks ~~said~~ than because he wanted a wife ~~folks~~ said. The old man, Col. Cusanbon died during the war. He never seemed like himself after the boy went into the war. I saw any thing once or twice and I never did see such a change in any man. ~~[illegible]~~ Le Moyne's wife, died too. She left a little boy who with Le Moyne and his Ma are all that's left. I dont reckon there ever was a man thought more of his mother or had a mother more worth setting store by than Hesden Le Moyne ~~Richards~~"

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

introduced a slender young man in neatly fitting jeans, with blue eyes, and a dark brown beard and an empty coat-sleeve, as Mr. Hepden
de Wayne ~~Richards~~.

He put his felt hat under the stump of his right arm and extended his left hand as he said simply,

"The Sheriff says you wished to see me about Elijah Hill."

"I did," was the response "but after what he has told me, desired to see you much more for yourself."

The sheriff withdrew, leaving them alone together and they fell to talking of army life at once, as old soldiers always will, each trying to outdo the other in the strife which they had

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

passed Through
~~Hand~~ on opposite sides. ~~The sheriff with~~
~~drew and left them alone.~~

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Ch IX ——— 42 ~~43~~

A Curious Bit of Biography.

"Eliab Hill," said Richards, when they came at length to the subject ~~in view of~~ in relation to which the interview had been solicited, "was born the slave of Potem Desmit on his plantation Knapp-of-Reeds, in the lower part of the county. His mother was a very likely woman, considerable darker than he but still not more than a quadroon, I should say. She was brought from Colonel Desmit's home plantation, to Knapp-of-Reeds, some little time before her child was born. It was her first child, I believe, and her last one. She was a very slender woman and though not especially unhealthy yet never strong, being inclined to consumption of which she finally ~~[illegible]~~ died. Of course,

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2010

his paternity is unknown though rumor has not been silent in regard to it. It is said that a stubborn refusal on his mother's part to reveal it ~~was the cause of~~ led Col. Desmit's ~~go~~ in one of his whimsical moods to give him the name he did. However, he was as bright a boy as ever frolicked about a plantation till he was some five or six years old. His mother had been a house-servant before she was sent to Knapp-of-Reeds, and being really a supernumerary there my father hired her a year or two afterwards as a nurse for my mother, who has long been an invalid, as you may be aware."

His listener nodded assent and he went on "Her child was left at Knapp-of-Reeds, only Saturday nights it was brought over to stay the Sunday with her, usually by this boy Nim-

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bus who was two or three years older than he. The first I remember ~~of hearing~~ of his misfortune was one Saturday when Simbus brought him over in a gunny sack, on his back. It was not a great way, hardly half a mile, but I remember thinking that it was a pretty errand boy for the little black rascal. I was not more than a year or two older than he and not nearly so strong.

"It seems that something had happened to the boy, I never knew exactly what, — seems to me it was a cold resulting from some exposure, which settled in his legs, as they say, ~~in~~ producing rheumatism or something of that kind, so that he could not walk or even climb up. The boy Simbus had almost the sole charge of ~~him~~ him during the

week
and of course he lacked for intelligent treatment. In fact, I doubt if Desmit's overseer knew anything about it until it was too late to do any good. He was a bright cheerful child and Nimbus was the same dogged quiet thing he is now. So it went on until presently his mother, Monilae, found that he had lost all use of his limbs. They were curled up at one side, as you saw them, ~~now~~, and while his body has developed well they have grown but little in comparison.

"Monilae made a great outcry over the child, to ~~which~~ whom she was greatly attached, and finally wrought upon my father and mother to buy her and her cripple boy. Col. and Desmit

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2018

on whom the burden of his maintenance would fall and who saw no method of making him self sup= porting; was willing to sell the mother on very moderate terms if my father would take the child and guarantee his support. This was done and they both became my father's property. Neither forgot to be grateful. The woman was my mother's faithful nurse until after the war and I have never been able to fill her place completely since. I think Eliab learned his letters and perhaps to read a little from me. He was almost always in my mother's room being brought in and set down upon a sheepskin on one side the fire= place in the morning by his mammy. My mother had great sympathy with his misfortune, the

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015

more, I suppose, because of her own very similar affliction. She used to teach him to sew and knit and finally, despite the law, began to encourage him to read. The neighbors coming in and finding him with a book in his hands, began to complain of it and my father, in order to silence all such murmurs, committed him regularly out and gave bond for his support, as the law required. ~~As he grew older~~

"As he grew older, he remained more and more in his mother's cabin, in one corner of which she had a little elevated platform made for him. He could control around the room by means of his hands and had great skill in clambering about by their aid. When he

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was about fifteen a shoemaker came to the ~~plantation~~ house to do our plantation work. Eliab watched him closely all the first day; on the second desired to help, and before the month was over was as good a shoe-maker as his teacher. From that time he worked steadily at the trade and managed very greatly to reduce the cost of his support. ~~thereby~~.

He was ~~always~~ a strange boy, and he and this ~~boy~~ fellow Nimbus were always together except when prevented by ~~their tasks~~ the latter's tasks. A thousand times I have known Nimbus to come over long after dark and leave before daylight, in order to stay with his friend ~~over~~ night. Not unfrequently he would carry him home

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

upon his back and keep him for several days at Knapp of Reeds, where both were prime favorites, as they were with us also. As they grew older this attachment grew stronger. Many's the time I have passed there and found Windbus working in the tobacco and Eliab with his hammers and last pounding away under a tree near by. Having learned to read the man was anxious to know more. For a time he was indulged but as the hot times just preceding of the war came on it became indiscreet for him to be seen with a book.

While he was still very young he began to preach and his ministrations were peculiarly prudent and sensible. His in-

fluence with his people even before emancipa-
tion was very great and has ~~greatly~~ increased
by his ~~prudent~~ correct and manly ~~course~~ conduct since.
I regard him, sir, as the most useful man,
in the community. ~~For~~

"For some reason, I have never known
exactly what, he became anxious to
lease my house soon after Nimbus' return
from the army, though I had offered him the
free use of the little shop where he and
his mother had lived, as long as he desired.
He and Nimbus by some hook or crook man-
aged to buy the place at ~~[illegible]~~
Red Wing. It was a perfectly barren pine old-
field then and not thought of any account

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

except for the timber there was on it. It happened to be at the crossing of two roads and upon a high sandy ridge which was thought to be too poor to raise peas on. The man who sold it to them thought he was getting two or three prices for it; but it has turned out one of the best tobacco farms in the county. It is between two very rich sections and in a country having a very large colored population, perhaps the largest in the county, working the river plantations on one side and the creek bottoms on the other. This strip of country used to be called "Hubbin Ridge" and "Pea Ridge" sometimes, in derision, but there is not any part of the county worth

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

more to raise fine tobacco on than this very ridge. They have got a ~~school~~ Church, which they use for a school-house too, and it is by a great deal the best school-house in the county. Of course, they got some outside help from the Bureau Freedom, and perhaps some too from some private association. I should think the Church or school-house must have cost fifteen hundred or two thousand dollars.

"They have a splendid school there. Two ladies from the North are teaching there — real ladies, I should judge too."

The listener smiled at this endorsement.

"I see" said LeMoyne Nichols, "it amuses you

that I should qualify my words in that manner. It seems unnecessary to you."

"Entirely so."

"Well it may be, but I assure you, sir, we find it hard to believe that any one who will come down here and teach niggers, is of any real account at home."

"They are generally of the very cream of our northern ~~life~~ life" said the other. "I know at this very time the daughters of several prominent clergymen, of two college professors, of a wealthy merchant, of a leading manufacturer, and of several wealthy farmers, who are ~~now~~ teaching in these schools. It is missionary work

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you see, — just as much as going to Siam or China. I have never known a more accomplished, devoted, or thoroughly worthy ~~set~~ class of ladies, and do not doubt that these you speak of ~~could~~ ~~give~~ well deserve your praise, without qualification."

"Well, it may be" said the other dubiously," but it is hard for us to understand, you know. Now, they live in a little ~~Mission~~ old house, ~~a Mission House~~ ~~I believe they call it~~, which they have fixed up with flowers and one thing and another till it is very attractive on the outside, at least, I know nothing about the inside since their occupancy. It was a notable place in the old time but not quite sign down ~~before~~ they came. I dont suppose they see a white person

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once a month, to speak to them, ~~at least~~ unless indeed some of the officers come over from the post at Boylston, now and then. I am sure that no lady would think of visiting them ~~or~~ admitting them to her house. I know a few gentlemen who have visited the school just out of curiosity. Indeed, I have ridden over once myself and I must say it is ~~a curiosity~~ well worth seeing.

I should say there were three or four hundred scholars, of all ages, sizes, and colors, ~~black~~ black, brown, white apparently, and all shades of what we used to call "ginger-cake." These two ladies and the man Eliab teach them. It is perfectly

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wonderful how they do get on. You ought to see it."

"I certainly shall "said the other" as a special duty calls me there. How would it do for a polling place?"

"There ought to be one there, but I should be afraid [redacted] trouble" answered ~~the~~ LeMoyne ~~Richards~~ seriously.

"Name me one or two good men for poll-holders and I will risk any disorder?"

"Well, there is Eliab. He's a good man if there ever was one, and capable too."

"How about Nimbus?"

"He's a good man too, honest as the day

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

is long, hard-headed and determined, but he can't read or write."

"That is strange."

"It is strange, but one of the teachers was telling me so when I was there. I think he has got so that he can sign his first name — his only one, he insists; but that is all, and he cannot read a word."

"I should have thought he would have been one of the first to learn that much at least."

"So should I. He is the best man of affairs among them all, — has good judgment, and fine sense, and is always trying to do something to get on. He says he is

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

'too busy to get ~~a~~ larnin' ~~[illegible]~~, an' leaves that all to Brier Liah."

"Do they keep up ~~all~~ their former intimacy?"

"Keep it up? Liah lives in ~~his~~ Nimbus's lot, has his meals from his table, and is toted about by Nimbus just the same as if they were still boys. Nimbus seems to think more of him than he would of a brother — than he does of his brothers, for he has two whom he seems to care nothing about; ~~[illegible]~~ his wife and children are just as devoted to ~~him~~ the cripple as Nimbus, and Liah, on his part, seems to think as much of them as if they were his own. They get along first

cute and are prospering finely, but I am afraid they will have trouble yet."

"Why so?"

"Oh, I don't know; well, they are niggers, you see, and our people are not used to such things."

"I hope your apprehensions are groundless."

"Well, I hope so too"

The officer looked at his watch and remarked that he must return to his duty and after thanking his companion for a pleasant hour and being invited to call at Mulberry Hill

CHATTANOOGA-HAMILTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015

he went his way

"whenever occasion might serve
the two men parted, each with pleasant
impressions of the other.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 201

Ch. X - An Express Trust. (12)

61

Fortunately for Nimbus, he had received scarcely anything of his pay while in the service, and none of the bounty-money due him, until some months after the surrender, when he was discharged at a post near his old home. On the next day it happened that there was a sale of some of the transportation at this post, and through the co-operation of one of his officers he was enabled to buy a good mule and saddle and bridle ~~[illegible]~~ for a song; and by these means reached home on the day after. He was so proud of his new acquisition that he could not be induced to remain a single day with his former comrades. He had Hardly ~~had he~~ more than assured himself of the safety of his wife and children, before he went to visit his old friend and

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[illegible]ate Elijah Hill. He found that worthy in a state of great depression.

"You see" he explained to his friend "Mister Le Moyne" (with a slight emphasis on the title) ~~(for to the intelligent freedman one of the most humiliating mementoes of slavery and the one soonest gotten rid of, was the old title of "Master".)~~ ~~Mr. Le Moyne~~ "very kindly offered me the use of this cabin so long as I might want it and has ~~[illegible]~~ furnished me with nearly all I have had since the surrender.

While my mother lived and ~~Mary Moyne Richards~~ he had her service and a well-stocked plantation and plenty of [illegible] I didn't have no fear of being a burden to him. I knew he would get good pay for my support, for I did his shoe-making for his ~~hands~~ people and made a good many clothes for them too. Thanks to Miss ~~Hester's~~ care I had learn-

ed to use my needle, as you know, and could do common tailoring as well as shoe-making. I ~~had never~~ got ~~anything~~ very little for my work but confederate money and provisions, which my mother always insisted that Mr. ~~Richards~~ Le Moyne should have the benefit of, as he (was under bond for my support) and (had given me my freedom).

¶ Since the surrender, though there's plenty of work nobody has any money. Mr. Le Moyne is just as bad off as any body, an' has to go in debt for his supplies. His slaves ~~are all free~~ were freed, his wife is dead, he has nobody to wait on Miss Hester only as he hires a mess, his little boy is to take keer on, an' he with only one arm an' jest a bare plantation with scarcely any stock left to him. It comes hard for me to

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eat his bread and owe him so much when I can't do nothin' for him in return. I know he don't mind it an' I blieve he would feel hurt if he knew how I feel about it, but I can't help it, Nimbus. I can't, no way."

"Oh you mustn't feel that er way, Brer Liab" said ~~his friend~~ Nimbus. "Co'se its hard fer you jes now, an' may be a little rough on Marse Moyne. But yer mus' member dat atter a little our folks'll have money. White folks got ter hev work done, nebber do hit theirselves. You know dat, an' ef we does hit now we's bound ter hev pay fer hit. An' when we gits money, you gits work. Jes let Marse Moyne wait til de crop comes off, an' den yer'll make hit all

squar said him. I tell yer what, Liab, it's
gwine ter be great times fer us niggers now
we's free. Yer sees dat mule out dar?"
he aked, pointing to a sleek bay animal which
he had tied to the rack in front of the
house when he rode up.

"Yes, of course, I do" said the other, with very
little interest in his voice.

"Likely critter, ain't it?" asked Nimbus
with a peculiar tone.

"Certain. Whose is it?"

"Wal, now, dat's 'jes edzackly de question I
wuz gwine ter ax ob you. Whose yer spose
'tis?"

"I'm sure I don't know. One of Mr. Ware's?"

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"I should think not, honey; not edgackly now. Dat ar' mule b'longs ter me! — Liab! Nimbus! D'yer h'yer dat?"

"No! Yer dont tell me! Bless de Lord Nimbus, yer's a fortunit man. Yer fortin's made, Nimbus. All yer's got ter do is ter wuk fer a livin' de rest of this year, an' then put in a crop of terbacker next year, an' keep gwine on a wukkin' an' savin's, an' yer fortin's made. Ther aint no reason why yer shouldn't be rich afore yer's fifty. Bless the Lord, Nimbus, I'se that glad for you dat I can't find no words for it."

& The cripple stretched out both hands to his stalwart friend, and the tears which ran

down his cheeks attested the sincerity of his words.

Nimbus took his outstretched hands, held them in his own a moment then went to the door, looked carefully about, came back again, and with some embarrassment said — "An' dat ain't all, Bre'er Siab. Jes' you look dar."

As he spoke, Nimbus took from the inside pocket of his soldier jacket an envelope ~~containing bills~~ and laid it on the bench where ~~the other~~ sat. Siab looked up in surprise, but in obedience to a ~~to~~ gesture from Nimbus ~~the other~~ opened it and counted the contents.

"Mos' fiv hundred dollars!" ~~He~~ said at length

in amazement. "Dis your's too ~~Bre~~ ~~Br~~ Brer Nimbus?"

"Co'se it is. Didn't I tell yer dar was a good time comin'?"

"Brer Nimbus," said Eliab solemnly, "you gib me your word you git all dis money honestly?"

"Co'se I did. Yer don't spose Nimbus am a-gwine ter turn thief at dis day, does yer?"

"How you get it?" asked Eliab sternly

"How I git it?" answered the other indignantly. "You see dem ~~close~~ do'es? Hain't I been a sojerin' nigh outer two year now? Hain't I had pay an' bounty, an' rations too one time when

I was cut off from de regiment, an' parti-
ed missin' nigh 'bout fo' months afo'
I managed ter git over ter Port Royal
an' 'part fer duty? An' dey git me rations
all dat time. Tell yer, Liak, hit all counts up
I've spent a heap sides dat."

¶ Still Eliab looked incredulous.

¶ "You see dat discharge?" said Nimbus,
pulling the document from his pocket. "You
jes' look at what de Pay master writ
on dat, if yer dont blive Nimbus
hed any luck. "Sides dat, I'se got de dockyments
hyer ter show jes whar an' how I got dat mule."

Fucan, his needs and wants, as no one
else could know them, and who have always proclaimed themselves his truest friends, [illegible] with especial care

*

¶ The care which had been exercised by his officer in providing him with the written evidence of his ownership of the mule, was by no means needless. According to the common law, the possession of ~~proof~~ personal property is prima facie evidence of its ownership; but in those early days, before the nation undertook to spread the aegis of equality over him, such was not the rule in the case of the freedman. Those first legislatures elected only by the high-minded landowners of the South, who knew the African, his needs and wants, as no one else could know them, and who have always proclaimed themselves his truest friends, guarded with especial care

that he should not "hold nor own nor have any rights of property in any horse, mule, hog, cow, steer, or other stock," unless ~~the transfer of~~ the same was attested by a bill of sale executed by some white man. It was well for Nimbus that he was armed with his "dockyments."

Elijah Hiss took the papers handed him by Nimbus and read, slowly and with evident difficulty but as he mastered line after line, the look of incredulity vanished, ~~from his face~~ and a glow of solemn joy

joy spread over his face. It was the first positive testimony of actual freedom — the first fruits of self-seeking, self helping manhood on the part of his race which had come into the secluded country region and ~~gladdened~~ gladdened the heart of the Christian prophet and adviser.

With a sudden jerk he threw himself off his low bench, and burying his head upon it poured forth a prayer of gratitude for this evidence of prayer fulfilled. His voice was full of tears, and often he said "Amen," and Nimbus rose from his knees and put forth his hand to help him as he assembled upon his bench,

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the cripple caught the hand and pressed it close, as he said:

"Bress God, Kimbus, I'se seen de time, often an' often* enuff when I'se had tuk ax de Lor' ter keep me from a envyin' an' grudgin' de white folks all de good chances dey had in dis world, but now I'se got ter fight agin' comtin' another nigga's luck. Bress de Lor', Kimbus, I'se gladder, I do believe, for whats come ter you dan ter be yerself. It'll do you a power of good — you an' yours — but what good would it do if a poor cripple feller like me had it? Not a bit. Jes' git him bread an' meat, Kimbus, dats all. Oh de Lord

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knows what He's 'bout Nimbus." Mind you dat. He didn't give you all dat money for nothing an' yer'll hev ter 'count for it. Dat you will, mighty close too, kase he keeps his books right. Yer must see ter dat, Brer Nimbus."

The exhortation was earnestly given and was enforced with tears and soft stroking of the dark strong hand which he still clasped in his soft and slender ones.

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"Now, don't you go ter saym' nuffin' dat kind, old fellow. I'se been a thinkin' ebber sence I got dat money dat it jes' ez much Liab's ez tis mine. Eef hit hadn't been fer you, I'd nebber ~~kind~~ knowed ef'nuff ter go obet to der Yanks, when ole Mars send me down ter week on de fortifications, an' so I neber git it at all. So now, yer see, Bu'r Liab, You's gaine ter keep dat 'ere money. I don't feel half safe wid it, no how, twill we find out jes what we wants ter do wid it. I 'llows dat we'd better buy a plantation somewhers. Den I kin wuk it, yer know, an' you kin hev a shop, an' so we kin go cahoots, an' git along

right smart. Yer see if we do dat we allers hez a livin' anyhow an' der ain't no such thing ez spendin' an' los=in' what we've got."

There was great demurrer on the part of the afflicted friend, but he finally con=sented to become his old crony's banker; but insisted on giving him a very for=mal and peculiarly worded receipt for the money and papers which he received from him.

Considering that they had to learn the very rudiments of business, Eliab Hill was al=together right in insisting upon a scru=pulous observance of what he deemed "the form of sound words."

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~~This feeling was as~~

In speaking of the son of his former owner as "Mister," Eliab Hill meant to display nothing of arrogance of or disrespect. The titles "Master" and "Missus", were the badges of slavery and inferiority. Against their use the mind of the freedman rebelled as instinctively as the dominant race insisted on its continuance. The "Black Codes" of 1865, the only legislative acts of the South since the war, which ~~were~~ not affected in any way by sentimental power or Northern sentiment, made it incumbent on the freedmen, whom it sought to continue in serfdom,

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to use this form of address, and de=
nounced its neglect as disrespect to
the "Master" or "Mistress." When these laws
ceased to be operative, the custom of the
white race generally was still to demand the observance of the form;
and this demand tended to embitter
the dislike of the freedmen for it. At
first, almost the entire race refused. Af=
ter a while the habit of generations be=
gan to assert itself. While the more intel=
ligent and better educated of the original stock discarded
its use entirely, the others and the chil=
dren who have grown up since emanci=
pation, came to use it almost in=
terchangeably with the ordinary form

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of adulterers. Thus, Elijah Hill, always nervously alive to the fact of freedom, never allowed the words to pass his lips after the surrender, except when talking with Mrs. Sec Moyne, to whose kindness he owed so much in early years. On the other hand, Simbus, with an equal aversion to everything connected with slavery, ~~had~~ but without the same mental activity sometimes ~~used it~~ dropped into the old familiar habit. He would have died rather than use the word at another's dictation or as a badge of inferiority, but the habit was too strong for ~~him to~~ one of his grade of intellect to break away from at once.

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Since the success of the ~~South~~ old slave-holding element of the South in subverting the governments based on the equality of political right and power, this form of address has become again almost universal except in theatres and burlesques.

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Ch. XI Red Wing

~~6~~ 81

(13)

Situated on the sandy, undulating chain of low wooded hills which separated the waters of two tributaries of the Roanoke, at the point where the "big road" from the West crossed the country road which ran Northward along the crest of the ridge, as if in search of dry-footing between the rich valleys on either hand, was the place known as Red Wing. The "big road" had been a thoroughfare from the West, in the old days before steam diverted the ways of traffic from the trails which the wild beasts had marked out, which It led through the mountain gaps, by devious ways, but easy grades, along the banks of the watercourses and across

the easiest fords down to the rich lowlands of the East. It was said that the buffalo, in forgotten ages, had marked out this route to the ever verdant salt-pastures of the then-wooded East; that afterwards the Indians had followed his lead, and as the season served had fished upon the waters of Currituck or hunted amid the romantic ruggedness of the Blue Appalachians. It was known that the earlier settlers along the Smoky Range and on the Piedmont foot-hills had used this thoroughfare to take the stock and produce of their farms down to the great plantations of the East, where cotton was King, and to the turpentine orchards of the South Atlantic shore line.

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At the crossing of these roads, was situated a single house, which had been known for generations, far and near as the Red Wing Ordinary. In the old Colonial days it had no doubt been a house of entertainment for man and beast. Tradition, very well based and universally accepted, declared that along these roads had marched and countermarched the hostile forces of the revolutionary period. ~~Howe~~ Green and Cornwallis had dragged their weary columns over the tenacious clay of this region, past the very door of the low-eaved house, built up of heavy logs at first and covered afterwards with fair pine siding which had, itself, grown brown and dingy with age. It was said that the Brit-

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ish regulars had stacked their arms around the trunk of the Monster white oak ~~which~~ that stretched its great arms ~~now~~ out over the low dingy house which seemed to be creeping nearer and nearer to its mighty trunk for pro-until of late years the ~~far reaching~~ spreading branches tection. "Two decks and a passage" — two mod-had dropped their store of glossy acorns and embossed erate sized rooms with a wide open passway ~~hall~~ between cups even on the farther slope of its mossy roof, and a low dark porch running along the front — a good twenty yards away from the scarred and constituted ~~the~~ ~~[illegible]~~ all that was left of a once well known place of public refreshment. At each end a stone chimney, yellowish gray and of a massiveness now wonderful to behold, rose above the gable like a shattered tower a-bove the salient of some old fortress. The windows still retained the little square panes

and curious glazing of a century ago.

It was said that in the olden time there had been sheds and outbuildings and perhaps several tributary ~~log~~ houses for lodgers, all of which belonged to, and constituted a part of, the Ordinary. ~~But~~ Two things had deprived it of its former glory. The mart-way had changed even before the iron horse charged across the old routes, scorning their pretty curves and dashing in an almost straight line from mountain to sea. Increasing population had opened new routes, which diverted the traffic and ~~became~~ were preferred to the old way by travellers. Besides this, there had been a feud between the owner of the Ordinary and the rich proprietor whose outspread acres en=

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circled on every side the few thin roads which were attached to the hostel, and when the owner thereof died and the property, in the course of administration was put upon the market, the rich neighbor bought it, despoiled it of all its accessories, and left only the one building of two rooms below and two ~~dark~~ dim ~~lofts~~ above, a kitchen and a log-stable with crib attacked upon the site of the Ordinary which had vexed him so long. The others were all cleared away and even the little ~~upon the~~ opening around the Ordinary was turned out to grow up in pines and black-jacks, all but an acre or two of garden-plat behind the house. The sign was removed and the overseer of Col. Walter ~~Gur~~ Greer, the new owner, installed in the house which thenceforth lost entirely its char-

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acter of an inn. Below it, to the eastward fifty yards away, a bold spring burst out of the ~~white~~ granite rock ~~flowed~~ spread deep and still and cool over its white sandy bottom, in the stone-walled enclosure where it was confined (over half of which stood the ample milk house) and then gurgling along the stony outlet ran away over the ripple-marked sands of its own channel, to join the waters of the creek a mile away to the eastward.

In the old days before the use of artificial heat in the curing of tobacco, the heavy, coarse fiber which grew upon rich, loamy bottomlands or on dark clayey hillsides was chiefly

prized by the grower and purchaser of that staple. The light sandy uplands, thin and gray, where only clustered pines or a light growth of chestnut and clustering chinquapins, interspersed with sour-wood, while here and there a dog-wood and a white-oaked, white-heart hickory grew, stubbornly and lone, were not at all prized as tobacco lands. The light silky variety of that staple was entirely unknown and even after being discovered was for a long time unprized and its habitat and peculiar characteristics not understood. It is only since the war of rebellion that its excellence has been fully appreciated and its superiority established.

The timber on this land was of no value except as wood and for hewlogs. Of the

standard timber tree of the region, the rock, there was barely enough to fence it decently should that be desirable. Corn, - the great staple of the region, next to tobacco, could hardly be hired to grow upon the "droughthy" soil of the ridge and its yield of the smaller grains, though much better was not sufficient to tempt the owner of the rich lands adjacent to undertake its cultivation.

To the westward of the road running North and South, there had once been an open field of some thirty or forty acres, where the waggoners were wont to camp and the drovers to picket their stock in the halcyon days of the old bobtailed. It had been the muster ground of the militia too, and

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there were men yet alive at the time of which we write whose fathers had mustered with the county forces on that ground. When it was turned out, however, and the Ordinary ceased to be a place of entertainment, the pines had shot up almost as thick as grass-blades in a meadow, over its whole expanse. It is strange how they came there. Only black-jacks and the lighter decidua which cover such sandy ridges had grown there before, but after these were shoved away by the hand of man and the plow for a few years had tickled the thin soil, when nature again resumed her sway, she sent a countless army of evergreens, of mysterious origin to take and hold this desecrated portion of her domain. They sprang up between

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the corn-cows before the stalks had disappeared ~~through the~~ from sight; they shot through the charred embers of the deserted camp-fire: every where, under the shade of each deciduous bush, protected by the shadow of the rank weeds which grew (sprang up) where the stock had fed, the young pines grew, and protected others, and shot slowly up, until their dense growth shut out the sunlight and choked the lately protecting shrubbery deciduous. Then they grew larger, and the weaker ones were entangled by the stronger and shut out from the sunlight and stunted to death, and their smouldering fragments mingled with the carpet of cones and needles which (became) thicker and thicker under their shade, until at the time of our story a solid, dark mass of

pines fit for house logs and ~~some~~ many even larger stood upon ~~this~~ & the old muster-field and constituted the chief value of the tract of two hundred acres which the successor of Col. Walter ~~Gr~~ Greer was constrained to sell, both because he needed money to relieve his other land from encumbrance and because he considered it of no value beyond the old house, and the ~~the~~ thrifty growth of pine upon it. The land itself he thought was only good to hold the world together or make a wet weather road between the rich tracts on either hand ~~upon~~. Indeed it was a common saying in that region ~~that it~~ was too poor even to raise a disturbance ~~[illegible]~~ upon. Col. Desmit bought the title of Walter Greer jr, the nephew of the former owner during the ~~[illegible]~~ third year of the war, not because

Mss

Bricks
without
Straw

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1787

1 De black man's gettin' awful rich,
De people's seezin to fear,
although he seems to get in dibt
a leetle every year.
Of course he gets the biggest kind
Of wages every day,
But when he comes to settle up,
It crumbles all away.—
Dem jis fork up de little tax,
Dats laid upon the poll,
It's jis' a tax the state exacts
For hobbin of a soul.

2 You got no land, you got no cash,
You only got some debts,
You couldn't take de bankrup't law,
'cos you hain't got no "setts";
De children dey mus' have der bread,
De mudder's gettin' ole, herself,
So darkey you mus' starve yourself
To pay upon yer poll.
Dem jis fork up de little tax, the

3 You know you's worked dis many a year
To buy de land for massa;
And now you orter pay de tax,
So he kin hold it faster;
He works one acre'n every ten,
De oithers idly stand,
So pay de tax upon yer poll,
An' take it off de land.
Den jis fork up de little tax, etc

4 Oh dat's de song dat some folks sing,
Say, how dye like the coun'?
Dey say de poor man orter pay,
For walkin' on de groun'.
When colored men was slaves ye know,
T'was dreadful hard to tax 'em;
But jis de minute they is free,
God save us how dey wax 'em!
Den jis fork up de little tax.

5 Now, haint we got a'most enuff,
Of taxin' on de poor,
When poor men hab to scrabble hard,
To keep alive dey soul?
Den let de poor man use his vote, —over

An' use it for himself,
An' lay de little poll tax up
Upon de corner shelf.
Den let's throw off de little tax,
Dat's laid upon de poll,
Its jis a tax de state exacts,
Ter habbin of a soul!

Poem in
Buttons & Straw

1880?

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