

By ELIZABETH W. BELLANY. ("KANBA THORPE,") Author of "Four Oaks," "Little Joan-na," Etc.

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"Praise de kingdom!" Glory-Ann ejacu

Miss Thorne, or, more familiarly, Miss Elvira, a gentle, faded beauty, attired according to the height of the style in the year of grace eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, was going, this warm May morning, "up to town," as they said on the plantations around Tallahassee in the days before the war; and the entire domestic retinue of Thorne Hill were as-sembled to speed her departure. Her brother, the colonel, had preceded her on horseback, for he was a man of too many inches to endure a carriage in a drive of nine long miles. It may have been because of these extra inches that he was called colonel, but his world ac-

knowledged the title without inquiry. The colonel's only daughter, Miss Winifred, a motherless lass of eleven, was doomed this day to be left at home in charge of Glory-Ann, the old family nurse, whose name Miss Winifred had transformed into "Mom Bee."

"See that Winifred does not run in the sun," Miss Elvira said, as she sank back against the cushions and opened a little well worn volume of Bishon Ken's "Devotions." Miss Elvira spent her day, for the most part, reading this good book; she had formed the habit when she gave up Sir Walter Scott's novels, nobody kney how long ago-or nobody told. It was a practice that enabled her to forget little Miss Winifred, who was a young lady of

exasperating devices. "Wouldn' s'prise me ef Missy wuz in dishyer sun now dis minute," grumbled Glory-Ann as the carriage rolled away. "Yit she mought be a poutin' somewhers 'bout de house," she amended, as she be gan laboriously to climb the stairs.

The house at Thorne Hill had a third story under the roof, lighted by a window in each gable, and deep, high peaked dormers, back and front. The stair landing divided this story into two long rooms, which were used chiefly for stor ing odds and ends. In the cool north room was Winifred's chosen den, and here, in an old discarded arm chair be side the gable window, Glory-Ann found

A wild looking child she was, very small for her 11 years, with scant promise of beauty. She had large eves of a dark. uncertain color, a mouth for which her teeth seemed too many, and an insignificant nose. Streaks of sunburn vellow marred the beauty of her curling and abundant reddish brown hair; more over, her face was freckled. She wore a faded green gingham dress, which marked her growth by two bands of deeper color in the skirt, where the provi-

dent tucks had been let out. Her arms and shoulders were bare, but pantalettes of a piece with her dress hung nearly to her ankles, and obscured her white stockings. Her shoes, every way too large, laced up the front. "Praise de kingdom!" Glory-Ann ejaculated, pausing in the doorway, her arms akimbo. "You deh, Honey? "Go 'way! Lemme 'lone!" was Honey' response. But Glory-Ann subsided to the floor beside the arm chair, slowly and with a sigh, and there she crouched, her hands clasping her knees. She foresaw that the exhortation to duty she felt bound to deliver would occupy a portion of time distinctly appreciable by her stiff and elderly joints. "Whyn't you mind yo' book, missy?" she began. "I'm tired of this old plantation!" Missy declared, irrelevantly. "I want to go ever an' ever so far away!" This was the burden of the young lady's lament whenever her aunt went up to town with out her.

ed tet set in de gret house, MR de lady you wus bawn?

you wus bawn?" "I want to go wadin'," said Missy. "I sin't gwan ter no branch," said old Gilbert, with decision; and before the child could recover from the surprise of her disappoinment, he asked with pa-thetio eagerness, "Is mawster hearn fum Mawse Nick lately, es you knows on?"

"There, now!" cried Missy, angrily, "I was just forgettin' 'bout Brer Nicholas! I ain't come out here for you to talk to me 'bout Brer Nicholas; it makes me all-swelled-just here." And Missy, with her slender hands across her heart, began to sob.

"Now, now, Honey, doan you go cry," old Gilbert remonstrated. "Mawse Nicholas gwan come home one o' dese days." But the old man sighed. He was not so sure of his prophecy himself. "I want him today! I want him now!

sobbed Missy. "I do believe it'll be a whole everlastin' year befo' I see Brer Nicholas any mo'; and me with no broth er and no sister, 'ceptin' only him."

"Mawster drors de reins too tight, murmured old Gilbert, communing with himself. "Hukkom he kin be so hard on his own flesh en blood, en so easy wid dis po' no 'count ole nigger?"

His "no 'countness" was a point much insisted upon by Daddy Gilbert, who cherished his alight lameness as a means of securing him as immunity from any

regular work. "I don't see as you're so no 'count," Missy objected. "Yo can do mo' work Tom Quash and Griffin Jim. They than couldn't make round bottomed baskets, not if they was to try." The old man chuckled with gratified

"And I am goin' with you-no matter

if you ain't goin' to the branch," she declared. "No, you doan go 'long o' me, Missy,'

said old Gilbert, uneasily. "Hit's too fur. You jes' tote yo'set back ter de gret house."

"I'm tired of the house," Missy said, beginning to cry afresh.

'Now ain' dat a pity!" exclaimed old Gilbert, impatiently. "I'm s'prised at Glory-Ann lettin' you run loose in dishyer sun. You jes' go 'long back, Missy, en' I'm gwan ketch you a Molly cotton tail, or mebbe a squirl." Missy paused, glowering from under

her puckered brows. The house had no attractions for her while the sun was shining warm and bright, and the wood were waving boughs of green. But sud-denly the frown relaxed; Missy was inspired by a brilliant purpose. She per-ceived that it might be possible to steal off to that dingy little dwelling in the midst of the plum thicket, on the other side of the road, beyond the cornfield, where she hoped to find Dosia Furnival, a girl eight years her senior, for whom she entertained an immense respect. It mattered nothing to this daughter of the blue blooded Thornes that Dosia's father was a carpenter, and that her mother made dresses for the ladies of Tallahas see; Missy found her altogether admira ble. For Dosia was gentle and patient she assumed none of those airs of superi ority that rendered Flora Thorne, the colonel's beautiful niece, so obnoxious to her little cousin. Missy had heard, a few days before, that Dosia was not in Talla hassee; it therefore occurred to her that she might be found with the carpenter' kinsfolk, who inhabited the sorry little house at the bend of the Thorne Hill road. With the colonel and Miss Elvira on the road to town, with Glory-Ann busy in the house, and Daddy Gilbert wending his

solitary way to the woods, Missy decided that she might venture to steal off for an hour or so, without risk of discovery. She turned her face towards home, but she had gone only a few yards, when she abruptly changed her course and began to walk rapidly across the field in the direction of the road. But just as she took this turn, old Gil-

bert was minded to look back, and he instantly detected her purpose. "Hi-yi!" he called out, sternly. "Go back ter de gret house, stret! You got no

to obey Gtory-Ann's b olf at re Missy offered no resistance: but as she did not choose to change her position, it was a work of some dexterity and no little time to put on the shoes and lace them up; at Thorne Hill, however "time was plenty," as old Gilbert used to say.

"I'm gwan on 62 year," pursued Mom Bee, boastfully, "en' I has allers b'longed in de Thorne fam'ly. I wuz bawn in de fam'ly, I wuz raized in de fam'ly, en', praise de Lawd, I 'spects ter die in de fam'ly. You is bound ter pay respec' ter my words, Missy, fur you en' Mawso Nick ain' de only ones I has fotch up. I

had a han'in Missle-virey's raisin', en dere ain' nobody kin fault her manners. En' Missel-virey, she knows what a Thorne doan blong long of a Furnival, en' a Furnival doan blong long a Thorne. Hukkom you ain' patternin' atter Misselvirey?" And Glory Ann looked at her charge over her spectacles with stern, rebuking eves.

Missy, freeing herself with a jerk from hands of Amity, wheeled over, and sat bolt upright, inspired by a sudden and comforting recollection.

"Mom Bee! whey is that ginger pone?" be demanded.

CHAPTER IL THE COLONEL'S SON 12.64 The M 1.50 12230

+22- 1 When he had fingered his wealth to his sat Old Gilbert climbed the high rail fence

surrounding the field, and, having crossed the beaten path that led down to the spring, plunged at once into the woods, where the trees grew tall and close, and where the wild grape vines and the sparkleberry bushes continually inter-cepted his advance; but with such obstacles he was accustomed to deal, and they did not deter him. He had a secret errand in this wood through which he made his way as if by instinct, for path there was none; but this ancient child of nature was at home in the wilderness; he knew all the trees that grew, and all plants that were for healing, and all noxious things to be avoided. He came at last to a little dell, shut in on every side by abruptly sloping ground, and almost impenetrable to the sunshine. Here, when he had rested awhile upon a lichen grown log, he knelt down, and, pushing aside a brush heap, laid bare a hole in the ground, wherein was set a wide and deep iron pot, protected by an iron lid, on top of which was a tin platter that covered a fracture large enough to admit old Gilbert's hand and arm This was the bank to which he confided the dimes he received for chickens and eggs and the skilled labor of his hands.

for old Gilbert was master of many crafts by which money was to be earned and for all his jobs he was paid in good hard coin, an unconquerable prejudice leading him to refuse what he called "limber money." As he had the privilege of selling his

manufactures off the plantation? he commarket. Often he sent his wares up to town; sometimes even he condescended to dispose of a mat or a broom to the despised Furnivals across the road. What bu did with the money thus earned he told no one; what he meant to do with these accumulated small earnings of more than fifteen years-amounting now

to quite a respectable sum-he himself did not know; but having no wife nor child, nor any kindred whom he cared to honor with gifts, the greatest satisfaction

, year out, gwan on fo' you wus hawn.

I's sprised at ye!" "Wall," drawled the boy, measurably subdued by this reminder of a fact with which he was well acquainted, "I spicioned as ye're allers roun' these

"Me?" interrupted old Gilbert, with an uneasy thought of his buried treasure;

then, recovering himself, "I ain't offen ow lan'," he said, with significance. "Look a-here!" shouled the boy, ad-vancing menacingly, while the cur growl-ed and showed his teeth.

"En' I b'longs ter Kernel Jasper Thorne," continued old Gilbert, with Inflated superiority. "I'se a gemman's nigger, I is." "I doan know ez that's anythin' to

me," said Jesse Furnival, with sullen abatement of his wrath. "But, come, now ain't you seen nothin' of ow ole white sow in yo' comin's en' goin's? I ain't inquirin' what ye air up toe."

Old Gilbert had dropped on his kneer sgain and was tugging at the samafras roots. "I'se comin' en' going on my own proper arrants," he grumbled. "My owners deselves doan hol' me ter 'count 'bout dat. Howsomedever, I did see a lean ole white now ez I come along." "Whicherway?"

The eagerness of the inquiry was as fuel to the flame of old Gilbert's suspi-cions. "Side of de bridle path, followin' de woods," he said, avoiding all refer-ence to the route by which he had come. 'Spect she was gwan ter de branch. Whyn't you keep her penned? De ain' nothin' in de woods dis time o' year ter feed her."

"You 'ten' ter yo' business en' I'll 'ten' ter mine," retorted Jesse Furnival. "Prowlin' roun' these woods lak a free nigger. Ef the kernel ain't got nothin' better'n root diggin' fur you ter do, whyn't he send you ter keep track o' that racketing son o' his'n? Nick Thorne have been in a fix. I kin tell you, over yander ter Eden.

"Wha' dat?" old Gilbert asked, in quick alarm

"Ain't the kernel hearn how Nick Thorne wuz nigh en' about cut ter pieces in a row with Marcus White? Over game o' poker." This was about all that Jesse Furnival

knew of the affair, but he hoped to learn more from old Gilbert.

"De gret mawster!" exclaimed the old man. "When wuz dat?" "Oh, over en' above two months ago.

Ain't hearn nothin' 'bout hit?" "Look-a-here, boy," said old Gilbert,

"dere ain' dat knife made what kin cut Mawse Nicholas ter pieces. Doan you go tole no sech lie aroun'. Who done hit anyhow?"

"Much you know!" sneered Jesse Furnival. "I done tol' you hit wuz Marcus White done hit, what is sorter kin terus all, bein' he is second cousin ter Uncle Job's wife." And swelling with pride in the prowess of this family connection, the youth spread his feet wide apart, stuck his thumbs into his "galluses, and eyed old Gilbert defiantly.

"De law gwan hol' him 'countable," said old Gilbert.

"Ef the law kin git him!" retorted the boy, with exasperating laughter. "Marcus White is done put all Texis 'twixt him en the law." Then reverting suddenly to the object of his search, "I doan see no tracks," he said, inspecting the ground.

"No; she wuz travelin' the aidge of de woods," said old Gilbert; "in amongst de leaves."

The boy glanced towards the woods, called to his dog, and walked on.

"Po' white trash ain' got no manners, nohow; sassyin' of a gemman's nigger,' muttered old Gilbert, glowering after him. "Quality doan nuver talk to niggers dat-a-way. S'pose I is prowlin' 'bout dese woods? Hit's ow woods! Lawd! Lawd! I won'er is ever he seed me down in de holler? I'se tol' a monst'ous lie; l ain't seed naire old sow. But I wuz jes 'bleedged ter sesso. Drat her! I pintly doan bullieve she's got meat 'nuff onter her bones ter feed de buzzards, dat ole Furnival sow, but I'm mightly skeered she'll have the stren'th ter go nosin roun' dat speshul bresh heap. En' I'm 'sturbed in my min' 'bout Mawse Nick. Dat boy sin't stiddy ez he mought be, bless Gawd!" The thoughts of all hearts at Thorne Hill were revolving around Nicholas Thorne at this time. On account of some irregularities at college he had been banished to "Suprise," his father's most distant plantation, partly by way of pun-ishment, partly by way of keeping him out of temptation. The friends of the family did not think this the wisest course to pursue with a young man of Nicholas Thorne's temperament, but the colonel was not a man to be advised, and Nicholas had been at Sunrise plantation since early in January. No hint of the quarrel with Marcus White had reached Thorne Hill as yet, but the colonel was secretly fretted that his son, in all this time, had never once sued to be recalled, and Miss Elvira's deepest anxlety had been aroused by a note received a few days before, which had been mailed at Eden, the nearest postoffice to Sun rise, and was worded as follows: 'Miss Thorne.

usined, said atisty, promptly. This was Mrs. Herry's advice also-Mrs. Herry, who reasoned from a sound judgment, and her own deep experience in a like case. But to advocate Cousin Myrtilla's opinion openly was more than this student of Bishop Ken could venture upon. Her strongest hope was that Nicho-las might be tamed by a marriage with his pretty cousin Flora Thorne, who had the merit of pleasing the colonel. That the colonel should be pleased was the all important point, in view of which Miss Elvira ignored the fact that she herself "Drat dat crittur!" the old negro mut had not found Flora flawless. But this was not a subject to be discussed with Missy, and she felt relieved when Glorrtered, in fear and anger, as he stooped with haste to pull off his left shoe. "Hit' sich a bad sign ter hear a screech owl; but de do say, ef you put off yo' left shoe, yo' put off de bad luck. Lawd, sen' no bad luck ain' gwan fall ter Mawse Nick, Ann interrupted with the announcement "Missle-virey, here's ole man Gilbert.

Dunno 'm what he want. He mek gret parade o' secrecy 'bout what he got wrapped in a piece o' cloth; but nose kin smell sassyfac anywheres." "Fumme!" shouted Missy, and darted

from the room.

"Jes' hear dat!" grumbled Glory-Ann, in jealous resentment, as she followed her to the back plazza. "Hukkom she goes after ole man Gilbert, stidder remin'in' me 'bout sassyfac."

"Howd'ye, Missel-virey; huh you do?" said old Gilbert, rising to bow and scrape, as she came out on the plaza. "Thank you; pretty well, Gilbert. How

do you do?" "I'm ter say toliable, bless Gawd; Missle-virey, I 'lowed ter bring a dozen

aiggs fur a 'membrance, but de ain't all laid yit; an I knowed Missy wuz gwan be glad o' some sassyfac, so I jes come

long so." "I've plenty of eggs just now, I'm much obliged, Gilbert."

chuckled, as he clambered down from "Tubbe sho!" said the old man, and the cart, while the same voice was heard Nicholas was standing on the piazza dimly outlined in the uncertain light of paused and scratched his head. Then with a desperate abruptness, "Missel-virey," said he, "when you hear fum Mawse Nicholas?"

"About-a week ago," said Miss Elvira,

hesitatingly. "She ain't heerd 'bout dat cuttin' scrape bleedged ter let on ef she had," old Gilbert argued to himself; then aloud, "Hit do 'pear lak Mawse Nicholas orter b'long ter Thorne Hill, Missle-virey."

"Yes, he orter!" Missy declared,

"He's gwan on 21, Mawse Nick is, come some day de las' o' dis month. He orter be gitten' married."

"No, he orten't!" Missy objected with violence.

Old Gilbert was doubled up with silent laughter when the colonel came out on the piazza. The colonel was a handsome man, though past fifty, tall, crect, with clear cut features of a somewhat stern and melancholy cast. He was formal and precise in bearing, perhaps even a trifle pompous, but he could unbend occasionally, and with this favorite old slave he was always disposed to be jocular.

dis ole nigger! I come a-puppose to see you. 'Pears lak hit's so lonesome ter de Hill, douten you; en' Missle-virey, she "Hello, Gilbert!" he said. "Any baskets to sell? You must be getting rich?"

"Dullaw, mawster! Dis po' ole no 'count nigger gittin' rich? I ain't sellin' naire baskit ter-night, suh; I come ter 'quire 'bout Mawse Nick. En' I been studyin', mawster, det bein's how dere ain't no odd jobs in 'tickler jes' nows'posin' I wuz ter go down ter Sunrise, en' look atter Mawse Nick a little?"

"You call him an odd job, do you?" said the colonel, not without bitterness. "Now, mawster, you is comical, tubbe

sho! Hit's gwan on nigh two years sence Mawse Nick been home ter stay, en' I'm gittin' ole. I hankers ter see dat boy what I mos'ly raised."

"Laws-massy! Hear dat, now!" eise las, with due gravity, "is, that the visual ulated Glory-Ann in the background. perception of your material essence awak "How long do you mean to stay?" the colonel asked, not unwilling to make inens a sensation in the cardiac region that completely eliminates any inclination to

direct overtures to his son. "Hit's a matter of thutty mile en' bet-

ter," said old Gilbert, meditatively rubbing his forehead with his horny forefinger. "A day ter go and a day to

"Suppose you go to-morrow?" the colonel suggested, with secret strong ap-proval. "You can take the ox cart."

"Yes, suh," replied old Gilbert, with a hesitating thought of the hollow in the

blouged to em bol. I ain' nuver 'so ated myse'f wid po' white trash." Nicholas looked at him with an o The sun was down, and the moon not yet risen, when he came out on the other side of the barren, where he ceased his singing, being now near his journey's end; for at the foot of the slope was the smile, saying slowly, "I've turned over a new leaf. I'm not going to be a bad boy large red gate that gave entrance to Sun any more. You can carry that news

'long o' dat 'sturbance what dat Jess

Furnival named ter me. Lemme git outen

dishyer grove quick ez ole Brandy kin

But old Gilbert had to endure the sere-

nade of the screech owl yet some minutes

longer, before he came to the second

gate in front of the house of hewed logs,

which was neither a cramped nor a com

fortless dwelling, though it moved th

scorn of the old negro fresh from the

grandeur of Thorne Hill. "Sich a place

fur Mawse Nick!" he ejaculated con-

A vociferous chorus from the dogs greeted his arrival, and Gilbert prudently

kept his perch on the cart, shouting lustily, "Hello!" "Hello, yourself!" answered a voice through the dusk. "Dat's him, bless Glory!" the old man

the new risen moon; a goodly young fel-

low, tall, broad shouldered and straight

as an arrow; his great brown eyes, his curling dark hair, his straight nose and

rounded cheeks, his broad forehead, and

his mouth and chin with the silky, rec

brown beard of early manhood, old Gil-

bert knew by heart. "How d'ye, Mawse Nicholas! huh you

do?" he shouted, with a chuckle of ex-

uberant delight, as he stumbled up the

steps of sawn blocks. "Why, where in thunder did you come

from ?" cried Nicholas. "Anything the

"No, Mawso Nick, doan you be un

easy. De is all peart. Hit's jes' me,

"Ahal come a -courtin'!" Nicholas

"Now, Mawse Nick ! Pokin' fun at

returned with a laugh. "Can't fool me; you're gotten up to kill."

sont you a box o' goodies. I'll jes' step

But Nicholas forbade. "Here, Virgil,

go bring in those things," he commanded

a negro boy who was hanging about the

piazza. "Hungry and tired, I reckon

but ridin' is pow'ful stiffenin', en' ef you please, sub, I'll jes' drap down here on

de steps. Hit's a mons'tous good sight

is reciprocated in my own personality,'

"Well, I'm not sure but the sentiment

"What I mean to say," replied Nicho

despondency." "Mawse Nicholas," said old Gilbert, in

solemn admiration, "you orter go 'bout de kentry talkin' politics, you ort! You'd

git 'lected ter somethin', sho' ez shootin'

But min' now, Mawse Nick," he sudden-

ly interrupted himself, starting up, "dat boy orter be mighty kerful how he han'les

dem tings, he mout bus' de bottom outen

dat box what Missle-virey put de goodies

"Hit was yo' gran'paw gin' him ter me,

en' I'se toted hit over you many's de

time, when you wuz a baby. We doan

see no sich ev'ry day," he declared, shut-ting the umbrella with a snap, and turn-

"Missy charged me to tell you dere is

"Red head and freckled face?" said

"Now, Mawse Nick! You ter be jokin'

dat way, when you know Miss Flora is got hair lak de inside o' a chincapin burr,

en' her face is lilies en' roses, en' her eyes

"Go on, poeta nascitur!" Nicholas cried

"Tell you what's a fac', Mawse Nick,

"Hum!" said Nicholas. "How many times a week do you think I could ride

Old Gilbert rubbed his forehead in deep

"You mought-straighten hit wid

"No, I'll be hanged! Here was I sent,

and here I mean to stay until I'm invited

home again!" Nicholas declared, almost

"But you see, Mawse Nick," old Gilbert

"Did my father send you down here to

how you had some 'sturbance down here

ter Eden, en' how dat low white trash

Marcus White tried ter stob you. I

'lowed hit wuz all a lie. Marcus White

is kin ter de Furnivals, en' what is de ter

mix 'long o' you? But I was dat oneasy

in my min', come dark, I went up ter de

Nicholas, angrily, starting up.

dat you is safe en' soon'."

"And told my father?" interrupted

"No, Mawse Nick, I ain't let on ter no-

Nicholas was much moved; he turned

away, and walked up and down the piazza

several times. When at last he sat down,

"Gilbert," he said, with an effort to speak

lightly, "you have the soul of a gentle

"Pm 'bleedged ter ve, Mawse Nick,'

said the old man, getting on his feet to

how his acknowledgments. "Yo' gran'-

naw en' you naw way gemman on' I'se

body; I jes'come now ter see fur myse'f,

gret house.

back and forth, these thirty miles, for

you orter be settin' up ter Miss Flora yat

ing to caution Virgil about the box.

nearer my own age."

pink.'

Nicholas.

de is stars."

her sweet sake?"

thought before he said:

mawster, en' git ter be at home.'

gayly.

now.

jes' ter look at ye, Mawse Nick.'

Nicholas responded sonorously.

"Wha' dat, Mawse Nicholas?

"No, Mawse Nick, I ain' so hongry

back en' fetch em outen de cyart.'

matter at home?"

come fur change."

you are, old man?'

temptuously, as he halted his ox.

rise plantation. Old Gilbert dismounted, with some home, if you like." "Bless Gawd!" ejaculated old Gilbert. "That affair between me and Marcus White happened some time ago; it's all over now, and my father need know rheumatic grunts, to open this gate. A whippoorwill was calling in the grove through which he had to drive to the nouse; and as he climbed back upon the nothing about it.' cart, a screech owl uttered its uncanny

"The Lor'-a-mighty, Mawse Nick! His wuz de troof, den? Way off here-or none but niggers en' de oberseer ter tek keer on you?"

"Oh, I was well attended to," Nicholan replied evasively. "I'm going to lead a steady life in future; so this affair may as well be forgotten."

"De Lawd be praised! Not but what I knowed you wuz jes' a foolin' wid you chances ter have young folkses fun, Mawse Nick."

But old Gilbert had not been three days at Sunrise plantation before he learned that it was Nicholas' invariable habit to ride away as soon as he had eaten his 6 o'clock supper, and it was always late before he returned.

"Dat boy do too much prowlin' by night," the old man grumbled. "Mawe "Mawee Nick orter be home flyin' roun' Miss Flore, en' me orter be home mindin' my own en me ofter be home mindin my own the mixe. No rid a bad crowd I'm "bleeged ter stay to a could be the my observations," And in order to sena his observations," old Gilbert had to contr. a blan.

"I dunno whey Mawse Trock kin be gwine so stiddy," he argued, "bedoutes hit's dat place de calls Eden, what has tried dese some years ter be a town. Jes a sto' en' a meetin' house, en a han'tul o little onpainted dwellin's, sich es mought suit de Furnivais. I gotter git Mawer Nick gimme me a pass ter Eden. 'Pears lak I mought be outen terbacker, en' brung fo' bits wid me in case o' n Old Gilbert drew from his pocket a long black plug of tobacco, which he looked at affectionately. "Hit's wuth all o' two bits," he said, and sighed; "but dis nigges is a chu'ch member in full standin', en I ain' gwan tell no lie, lessen satan git me.

He laid aside the harness he was patching, and went out into the grove, w after assuring himself that there was no one to see him, he shut his eyes, whirled around and threw the tobacco as far as he could send it. "Now," he said, "The plum out, I kin ax fur pass ter go tet. Eden. Hit's my bounden duty ter look tter dat boy."

The pass was readily granted, and while yet the sun was high in the sky old Gilbert set forth, attired in his glory, with the shadow of the cherished unbrella over him.

"Hit's two hours be sun, Mawse Nick," he said cheerily, as he passed the plasm, "en I kin come home by de light o' da

moon. I'se treed too many 'possums ter be skeered o' de woods by moonlight." Nicholas laughed to himself with the unspoken thought, "I verily believe all the old chap wanted was a chance to hois that umbrella."

It was two miles to Eden, and old Gilbert, as he trudged along, had no more idea than a child how he should proceed in order to learn the secret of his master's nightly rides, but with a firm lief in the righteousness of his under-taking, he hoped for the guidance of a special providence. "Maybe I ain' gwan fin' out nothin',

but I gwan to do my bes'," he said to himself. "Sporreted young gemmens lak my Mawse Nick is sartin sho' ter gen talked about, en' I mought hear some-thing. En' I mought git sight o' dat black hawse o' his'n."

He readily found the one store where the scant retail trade of the place was transacted and entered with his pass in his hand.

The storekeeper, a tall, lank, sal stoop shouldered man with long hale and a heavy beard of dingy hue, leaned over the counter, and eying old G brass buttons with a smile, ren "You must ov come from the mu

"You'd be tuk wid a mighty honin' ter git back," said Glory-Ann. "You ter talk 'bout quittin' here, when you can't so much as dress yo'sef," she concluded half in pity, half in reproachful pride.

"I can!" retorted Missy, indignantly as she tugged at the stringy and inade quate blue ribbon that was supposed to keep in subjection her rebellious hair.

'Den hukkom you don't nuver do it? demanded Glory-Ann, with sly humor.

To this thrust Missy made no reply, and the old nurse began anew to exhort her to "mind her book." "Do, now. Missy, lak a good chile, jes' as Misslevirey said; "an I'm gwan mek de nicest little ginger pone, tubbe sho!"

Tempted by this prospect, Missy slowly rose, and clasping her small sun browned hands on the top of her head, stood contemplating, with lazy indifference, her old nurse's struggling achievement of the perpendicular. When at last Mom Bee, with a grunt of thanksgiving, stood upon her feet, Missy's eyes had found an attraction in the Home Field, beyond the garden fence, where the corn in the furrows was making a promising show of green. In an instant her languor and indifference vanished.

"Mom Bee! Mom Bee!" she cried ex-tedly. "There's Daddy Gilbert in the citedly. Home Field; you reckon he's goin' to the branch?"

"Jes' lis'n at dat, now!" said Glory-Ann, in a discouraged tone. "Why ain't you mindin' yo' book, stidder studyin' dat ole nigger's doin's?"

"I'm a goin' with him!" Missy announced, as she rushed from the room, and went tearing downstairs deaf to all remonstrance.

"Jes' look at her now!" lamented Glory-Ann, as the child slipped through a gap in the garden paling, and made wild haste across the furrows, reckless of damage to the growing corn. "She is jes' as heady as Mawse Nick heself; an' mawster ain' got no room ter complain when his chillen tek dey own way; dey is made atter his own petterun plum!"

"I'm a-goin' with you!" panted Missy, as soon as she was within hearing di tance of her father's much indulged old slave, who, being slightly lame, and duly considerate of the corn crop, was making his way leisurely.

"Mawster above!" exclaimed the old man, with a grin that displayed his big white teeth. "Here you come tromplin de cawn lak so much pusley, an' gittin' yo' skin tanned up. Why'nt you satis-

rt.

call to foller atter dem po' white trash De Thornes is quality; de ain' got no business wid de Furnivals." "You mean ole nigger!" cried Missy,

stormily. "I ain' gwan see no chile o mawster's 'sociatin' wid dem Furnivals," said old Gilbert, unmoved. "You tote yo'sef stret back ter de gret house, else I gwan tell Missle-virey, mun."

Missy, after a few irresolute moments, wiped her tears on the skirt of her gingham sun bonnet, and went resignedly back to the gap in the garden paling, slipped through and confronted Glory-Ann in the latticed gallery between the kitchen and the main building.

Glory-Ann was seated in a low, splint bottomed chair, with a broad, smooth board across her knees, and a pen-knife in her right hand; she was making ready to crimp Miss Elvira's ruffled aprons that lay folded in a basket on the stool at her side. She paused in 'he act of lifting the apron from the basket, and looked over her spectacles with an air of grave rebuke at the flushed face of the

child coming up the steps. "I'm bound you ain' made nothin' by yo' trip but two shoefuls o' sand," she said, severely.

For answer, Missy sat down on the floor, threw her bonnet into a corner, and pulling off her shoes, emptied two little piles of sand at Glory-Ann's feet. "You gwan 'pent of all dis trapesin' în de brilin' sun, one o' dese days," Glory-Ann proceeded remorselessly. "De way you goes on is enough ter set dem freckles fur ever 'n' ever.

Missy put up her little sunburned hand and meditatively rubbed her cheek. 'My cousin Flora has got frecklessome," she said.

"None ter hu't!" retorted Glory-Ann. "And Dosia Furnival ain't got one; she's prettier than my cousin Flora, any how," Missy proclaimed, with defiance, Glory-Ann stopped her work, and clutching the two ends of the lap board while she straightened herself up, demanded:

"Is you been ter dem Furnivals, Missy? Is you been?" "Daddy Gilbert wouldn't let me,"

Missy pouted. "Tubbe sho," said Glory-Ann. "What's

a Thorne gotter do consortin' wid a Furnival, which de Thornes is quality?"

"Dosie is more nicer than my cousin Flora," said the unrepentant Missy, stretching herself out on the floor, face downwards, resting on her elbows and supporting her chin in her hands, as she gazed up serenely at her admonisher. 'She don't snap me up, ever."

"I'd lak ter see her try hit!" cried Glory-Ann, her very turban bristling with insulted family pride. "Miss Flora is a Thorne, en' a Thorne kin snap at a Thorne; but a Furnival-po' white trash! And Glory-Ann made an emphatic pleat in Miss Elvira's ruffle. "Don't lemme hear no mo' sech talk," she commanded, with all the authority vested in her title of Mom Bee. Then she lifted up her voice and called sharply: "Amity! you

triflin' gal, come here stret, en' put on dis chile's shoes." Amity, a girl of fifteen, in training for Miss Winifred's maid, was scated in the shadow of the Chinaberry tree, beguiling the tedium of towel homming by building sand houses over her feet. She started guiltily when she heard herself called, tumbled off the upturned cotton basket that served her for a stool and darted to the gallery, where she set her-

ie could I in his money was to co it over. This ceremony he performed by an ingenious process of his own invention, that did away with the necessity of abstracting the coin when once it was deposited; each deposit being made in sums of \$5 securely tied in a bit of asna-

burg, the whole amount could be pretty accurately reckoned by touch, the account being kept upon a tally stick, which old Gilbert always carried with him. When he had fingered his wealth to his satisfaction, Gilbert carefully read-

justed the platter over the tin broken pot lid, raked the leaves over the spot, and skillfully heaped up the brush. "Ole nigger gittin' stiff, tubbe sho'!" he said, rising with a grunt. "Time I

wuz fixin' up 'nother bottle o' white ash bok en' whisky. I git de bok en' Missle virey gimme de whisky. Hit ain' too late for sassyfac, nuther. Little Missy allers honin' after sassyfac tea. I gwan tote her a bundle o' sassyfac ter de gret house dis night, seein' I wuz 'bleged ter spite her 'bout dem Furnivals."

Old Gilbert took his way home by roundabout route, through an old field known as the berry patch, where elderbushes and sassafras saplings grew rank in the fence corners, hedged round by little thickets of the odorous horse mint.

Here the old man set to work; down on his knees, by the aid of his ready jack knife, he was deftly extracting the roots whose rich aroma diffused itself around, when his trained car caught the sound of steps approaching.

"Wha' dat?" he whispered to himself, with palpitating heart, lifting his head to listen. "Rabbit?" A yellow cur, with cropped ears and

barely three inches of tail, jumped upon a log on the other side of the fence, uttering a short, sharp bark. Old Gilbert peered over the fence to

right and left of him, along the bridle path that skirted the field. "Whey you come fum, you ondemanded beas' critter?" he said, scornfully ey-

ing the cur, which he recognized as the property of "dem Furnivals" The dog answered with a velp, jumped off the log and ran across the bridle path

into the woods, but presently returned at the heels of a lank, sandy haired, sallow youth, clad in faded jeans. Old Gilbert's heart knocked at his ribs

as he thought of his treasure in the hollow of the wood; but "manners" de manded that some greeting should be given, and policy dictated a certain obsequiousness of tone, but the old negro bade the youth "Good morning" with a bow very many degrees removed from

the respect he would have accorded to 'quality. The lad responded with sullen reluctance. "Whicherway is you comin' fum?" old

Gilbert asked, insinuatingly. "I dunno ez hit's any o' yo' business," was the surly answer. "I ain't no furer

from home then you, en'I ain't a nigger. I'm a-huntin' of a hawg, en' ef you ain't tolled hit ter yo' pen, you ole prowler, maybe you're fur gittin' onter hits

tracks. Old Gilbert's heart waxed hot. That he should be accused by this "po' white

trash" of tolling away a lean and scrubby old hog! "De Lor'-a-mighty!" he exclaimed, with a sort of persuasive indignation. "Doan' you en' yo' folks know what I have got hawgs ev'y blessed year fattenin' cawntinual? I cuores my own bacon, en' is been doin' dat same, veor

"RESPECTED MADAM: I am a God fearin woman, and I feel it on my konscunce to warn the famly of Mr. Nick Thorne that Sunrise Plantation is a lonesome place for a young man of sperrits and ift he are not speedily removed out of harms way great trouble is in waitin and so no more from yours respectful, "ROXANNA WHITE."

Miss Elvira, not daring to show this note to her brother, lest it might widen the breach between him and his son, had gone up to town to consult her cousin, Mrs. Herry, in whose judgment she placed unbounded faith, though she had not always the courage to follow her advice. But Mrs, Herry was on a visit to her plantation in Jefferson, and Miss Elvira had returned still burdened with the afflicting note, which she was always poring over whenever her brother was out of the way. She began reading it furtively at the tea table as soon as the colonel retired to his musings on the front piazza. Missy, why had come in late to her supper, was eating waffles and honey with a leisurely gusto that had driven Griffin Jim to a stool in the kitchen, with the remark, "Fo' legs is better'n two legs ter wait on Miss Winifred's delays," and thus Miss Elvira and her little niece were alone together.

Winifred improved the occasion. "Aunt Elvira," said she, "don't you

think it's time Brer Nicholas was let to come home? He's been gone ever since befo' corn droppin'." Missy's calendar was of the plantation.

"Oh, Winifred, I'm afraid Nicholas isn't -- always--well conducted," Miss Elvira stammered, not knowing what to reply.

"It ain't no difference to me if he is had or good," said Missy sturdily; "he is Brer Nicholas. Only I don't believe he ain't just as good as can be."

"But he ought not to disappoint his father as he does," sighed Miss Elvira. "Well, I reckou 2" a mints

"Let high

him some," Missy cious hrewdness of "Y a don't Miss Elvira,

self that she this child. 18 And Miss vocabulary strongest of

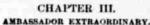
wood where his treasure was ha' ter start 'fo' sun-up."

"Very well. I'll write you a pass. Nicholas can write you another to return with."

This meant unlimited leave of absence "Thankee, suh," said Gilbert, with his lowest bow.

Glory-Ann immediately sought Daphne, Miss Elvira's maid, for the satisfaction of expressing her mind.

"Jes' you orter hear dat succumstantial ole nigger claimin' dat he raised Mawse Nicholas!" said she, in high dudgeon. "Whey wuz me, I'd lak ter know? En' whiles I'm a-raisin' en' amindin' of Missy, here he is cavortin' of hissef 'bout de kentry in de yox cyart. When she gits growed s'pose he'll be layin' claim ter her raisin' en' exactin' privulliges 'cordin'.





At break of day old Gilbert set forth on his journey in the jolting little cart. drawn by a small black ox that went a plodding gait. The old man, with a view to doing

Mawse Nicholas honor, was attired in his Sunday best-a blue broadcloth coat with brass buttons, and a black satin vest, once the property of Col. Thorne's father, a pair hat stiff and tall, discarded by the colonel. He sat upon a plank across the front of the cart, with his feet dangling outside. The plank was cushioned by a blanket in which was folded his every day suit of homespun. A box that held a contribution to Nicholas' larder, from Miss Elvira, was safely bestowed in one corner, at the bottom of the cart, where a wallet containing his noon refreshment lay beside

Late in the afternoon, he came to an expanse of pine barren; vast, solemn, sombre, it stretched in every direction the rays of the sinking sun shining faintly athwart the multitudinous, tall dark trees, whose boughs, swaying in the upper air, maintained a continuous susurrus that emphasized the silence. Himself and his ox were the only living creatures vis ible in this solitude, save an occasional bird that darted above his head, as if in haste to escape to a more genial wood; ad old Gilbert, to keep himself in heart, pion to sing his hymns. Lifting up his count he made the solitude resound to a

sence willpines: York Ath? humble, humble, humble, for none of fumble, de beli done toil!

are looked "i mble, humble, humble, defent the celebade, yo' time gwan comet

in. En' dere's my rumberilla!" he exclaimed, excitedly, as Virgil stagger "I'se fum Tallahassee, suh," said Gil bert, doffing his hat. "Col. Thorns" through the gate. "Min' how you tote dat rumberilla, you plantation nigger! Han'tcher! You gwan brek dem ribs, man Gilbert, come over ter de Bunri en' den what? Dishyer rumberilla is older den you is, Mawse Nick," he explained with pride, as he spread it open

plantation; en' here's my pass, sub." "Anything you'll have?" said the sh keeper, glancing at the paper and hand to satisfy himself that it was unbroken. ing it back.

"Two bits wuth of terbacker, of you please, suh," old Gilbert made answer, producing an ancient leathern 'Yo' town's a-growin', suh?" he a gratiatingly.

"Slowly, slowly," was the answer. "We'll have a railroad to the moon ab the year 1900."

a sugar heart in dat same box she sont comprehension; but the little crowd losf-This joke was beyond old Gilbe you, Mawse Nick, det she kissed it when she wropped hit up." "Dear little sister!" Nicholas sighed, ing around set up a perfunctory shout, for the storekeeper was the local wit. The talk that followed had no bearing whatever upon the affairs of Nicholas half to himself. "How I wish she were "Dere's Miss Flora, you know," said Gilbert, insinuatingly. "She's gwan on 19. Glory! Mawso Nick, you jes' orter Thorne, and Gilbert went out and sat on the steps a little disheartened. He had fancied that every one would be talking of his young master, but Thorne Hill see Miss Flora sense she come home outen school. De w-a-y she can clatter de pi-anner, tubbe sho! En' she's ez pretty ez was smaller than old Gilbert dream

and even this insignificant world of Eden turned upon a pivot of its own. As the dusk deepened, and lights began to show in the windows of the southering houses, C'' rt rose and orr, of souther the levely and describe street; for night came early to these primitive folk, who

were now at their evening meal. "Call dishyer Eden?" he muttered, in deepest scorn. "Better name hit Chaneyberry. Nuver seed sich a many Chaney-berry trees in all my time. En' de ain' good ter cat, nuther. Ef hit wuz Tallahassee now, many's de kitchen whey I mought git invited."

He wandered on aimlessly to the end of the straggling street, where a house, guiltless of paint, like all the others, oomed up in the dusk, isolated, upon the edge of an old field.

A prey to homesickness-a suffering unknown in his experience hitherto-o Gilbert sat him down on the stump of a noble oak that had been felled to make room for the overrated China tree.

"Wish I wuz back ter Thorne Hill,"he sighed. "Sich a supper ez I could eat! What straits you is brung dis po' ole no count nigger ter 'sperinnce, Mawse Nick! I gwan tell you 'bout dis when you en' Miss Flora gits married."

But the clatter of a horse's hoofs presently created a diversion in his thoughts and made him forget the pangs of hunger. It was Nicholas, who rode up to the

gate in front of the lone house, dismountde bottom fac'. Jes' yestiddy down by de berry patch me 'n' dat Jesse Furnival ed and hitched his horse. Continued next Saturday swapped some words; en' he let me know

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SPOKES FROM THE WHEEL.

Richard Howell, the great English professional bicyclist, who is as ponderous in stature as he is in racing, has been matched against A. H. Robb for \$500, to ride one mile before June 14. Each man will ride by himself and be timed by the referce, and the rider doing the fastest time to rec the stakes. Robb holds the one mile pro-fessional record for an ordinary wheel, 2 min. 33 4-5 sec. Howell weighs 195 pounds in racing trim, and he rides a nineteen pound wheel.

The reappearance in racing of Willie The reappearance in mong or this Windle, the great bicyclist who was dis-qualided test year by the League of Ameri-can Who met for being in the pay of a bicycle house, shows that his enforced idlesleycle house, shows that his enforce ness has not interfered materially with his speed. He won the two mile handicap scratch in 5 min. 47 4-5 sec.

with fierceness. remonstrated, "folks ain' blin', en' dem of nankeen pantaloons, and a white what looks at Miss Flora onct is mighty apt ter look "gin. Dere's a lot of young gemmen buzzin' roun' her same ez a Juny bug after a fig bush." preach my cousin Flora to me?" Nicholas demanded, sharply. "No, Mawse Nick. I'm gwan to tell

a dingy umbrella, the cherished posses sion of twenty years.

that dayain, in harmony with the sigh-

tra, the training of the season with the seaso And by season we season we season we broad standard of the season with the standard of the season with the sea