BY GEO. MILLS JOY:

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BERNE, N. C., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1864.

NO. 75.

It was soon after the first of those do you come from !" terrible Wilderness battles of last springthat Little Starlight made his first ap- sleepin' out recen'ly. Yer see I'se a veterans, and would, after the march, pearance among us.

Now have you any idea who Little Starlight was? Very probably, from his romantic name, you picture him to yourself as a pretty boy-a beautiful Young America, with clustering curls, and the relevant blooming precocity of face and form. Nothing of the kind. Our Little Starlight was a negro urchin, extremely small for his agewhich might have been fifteen could we have had a date to reckon fromand as black as the ace of spades, up to Richmon'. An' yer see, de ole intentions. when the ace of spades is excessively black and shiny. and no down your

Where he came from, who he belonged to, how he came among us, w never exactly knew. He was a sort of masculine Topsy, and probably 'growed' somewhere in the vicinity of our bivouac. On the morning after the battle he had been found in our lines, strutting about the camp in a very nonchalant way, with a quick, observing eye for every thing he saw. His appearance was comical in the extreme. Upon his ebon head, and entirely concealing his crisp wool, was jauntl placed a span-new artillery cap, which he had probably found on the field .-He had fastened to the right shoulder of his ragged coat-a swallow tailed blue of onknown antiquity—an ...ims mense epaulet, probably plundered from the baggage of some officer; while silken sash of flaring crimson was twined round his waist in a manner at once striking and barbaric, with a long end that trailed behind like the gaudy tail of some variegated tropic bird .--His trowsers-we will skip them; let it suffice to say they were unmentiona ble to the last degree.

No one could tell how the little fe low got into the camp, and he wouldn't tell himself. The pickets and sentries swore prodigiously that he had not passed them. So we were compelled to let the mystery of his appearance remain unsettledi

It was shortly after sunrise when the corporal of the guard brought him be-

fore me, with "Here's a prisoner, or contraband,

or something of the kind, chaplain. just picked him up, and don't know what to do with him."

I almost exploded with laughter at seeing the individual in question, but immediately sat down on a stump and proceeded to investigate. Capt. Allen came along at the same time, and presently the Major also dropped in. So we formed ourselves into an informal court-martial around the object of our attention, with the view of having some amusement for the hungry half hour that would elapse before breakfast .-The "brass" of the lad was surprising: for he never changed countenance during the whole of this ceremony, which we made as imposing as we could by word and look. All eyes were turned on me expectantly, so I opened the proceedings.

"What is your name, my boy ?" "Dun'no, mass'r. 'Spect I isn't got none," was the reply, accompanied by a sparkling grin of extraordinary breadth, as though his anonymous condition was a matter of much self satis-

faction. "Oh, you must have some name," home ?"

contagion, by means of a new lining to the coffin wen I skinned along kinder slow, some ens on the night preceeding the early composed of Gutta Percha, offers his services for time dev'd sing out 'Nig' sometime corning of his canture.' time dey'd sing out, 'Nig!' sometime norning of his 'capture.' 'Little Nig !' an' den agin, 'Hyar, you He was a favorite in the company, d—d Nig!' I'll bet dey did, mass'r! and a standing joke with the regiment, Yah! I'se awful cuss. I is!" he in a single day. No one could surpass you'll see the blood fly yourself. Yah! It was but two true. continued, swinging his arms gleefully him on the drum, and he never com- yah! I'se a awful cuss, I is.' about and shuffling his bare feet as if plained of too much work. We made contemplating a breakdown.

Consignments of Cotton and Naval Stores will re- conceal the laughter which almost sprouting tail. choked him. "Silence, or I'll commit Little Starlight was not one of us And through all those battles, and he saw me.

mained silent, and, taking off his cap, the unfinished tale."

comical than his mirth.

awful cuss, I is. Yah! yah! I'se--" Sile.ce!' exclaimed the judge.

Sartin, sartin, mass'r! Yah! yah!" see he's gwine away, he is.'

'But what was your master's name?' 'Cunnel Billy.

Billy what?

lest behin' wid ole missus an' de gals, to use his fire-arms, and if at long range, wile Mass' Billy gwine to de war way it was, nevertheless, with the best of missus she dun gib dis nig a lickin', so I jis slips out in de night time, climbs grave ones. He was a natural born inter de barn, steals all the pigeons, an' thief, and my most impressive sermonclars the track for Ole Virginny. Yah! izing totally failed to convince him of yah! Is'e a awful cuss, I is!'

the pigeons?". I asked, my curiosity carrying me away from the subject in placent with his sin, meeting my ad- ward the ground where the skirmish

Libs on 'em to be shore, mass'r Dey'se bully fodder, nicer dan de hard tack. Yah! I'se got jis one lef'.

And sure enough, as he spoke, he drew from one of the capacious pockets o' his tattered coat a sorry looking pigeon, still alive, which, before we could guess his intention, he proceeded to put to death in a very summary manner. Nipping the head of the bird between his finger and thumb, he twirled the body around in the air till it fell to the ground, completely twisted from the head, which remained in his hand.

'What are you doing that for ?' I exclaimed, somewhat horrified at what I saw, as were the rest of the 'Court.'

The little fellow threw away the pigeon's head without answering, picked up the body, and laid it at my feet. with a 'Yah! yah!' from which I judged that it was meant as a present for my breakfast.

Well, what is the decision of the Court? said I laughing, and turning to the Major. "I really do not know," was the re-

ply. "Ask the monkey if he will fight, and which side he favors.' I put the question. 'De Union all de time, shore!' was

the enthusiastic reply. 'What can you do?' I asked. The little fellow cast a comprehen-

sive glance around him in every direction, as if he could do any and ever, thing under the sun, and was merely puzzled upon which to try his hand for

At length his eye caught sight of a kettle-drum which was taking an airing a short distance off, and with a guffaw of delight he ran toward it. Quick as thought the strap was over the shoul- free!' der, the sticks were in his hand, and throwing back his head with a gesture of pride, he rolled off the reveille with the flourish and accuracy of a master.

turning to me-'Johnny went into the Jis' lemme git on to him-once!' hospital day before yesterday, and we have had but little music since.'

'An excellent idea!' said I. The Major also agreed; and Starlight, to his infinite satisfaction, was stalled as second drummer boy, Company C .. - th New Infantry.

His name-by which he was altogeth-"What did they call you at er known among us-originated, at the suggestion of one of the officers, in the "I allers come wi'out callin'. But wonderfully starry aspect of the heav-

"Silence!" roared the Major, who river, and then presented him with a

tigue, marches which tried to the ut- division. "No whar ob late, mass'r. I'se been most the stalwart frames of hardened execute with gusto a dozen breakdowns, Jim Crows, and Bob Ridleys for the diversion of the weary regiment. 'Who do you belong to?' I resumed. never saw him flinch when under fire, 'Yah! yah! I ain't got none. Yer and I have seen him under the hottest. He had a penchant for obtaining trophies on the field of battle; and carried so many knives and pistols upon his person that he was quite a walking 'Dun'no. Ver see dis chicken were arsenal. More than once he was seen It is true he had his foibles, and

the gravity of his fault. He seemed 'Pigeons! What did you do with to consider himself naturally depraved, and was therefore philosophically commonitions with his usual "I'se a awful was progressing. cuss, mass'r, I is." In my heart, earch as I would, I could find less of blame than pity for him when I thought of the criminal neglect, which must have attended his bringing up, with that of the rest of his wronged and unfortunate race. Besides, the material effects of his thieving were not considerable. There was not much to steal in the first place, and when any one did miss anything worth retaining, atight clutch upon Starlight's windpipe and a few preposterous threats would generally his virtues more than counterbalanced his follies. For his hand was as ready to support a wounded man to an ambulance as it was at rifling the pockets affair. The smoke of the musketry fire of a fallen foe.

> most redeemed him in my eyes; and that was his passionate desire for freedom-his enthusiastic devotion to the cause under whose banner he served.

My duties as chaplain were in sad demand in those bloody battle days when ministrations to the dying and prayers for the dead were so frequently which often discouraged me except when I spoke of the future of his race, of their prospects for freedom and improvement. His eyes would light up at this, his expressive features would fairly glow with enthusiasm.

'I feels it in my bones. It'll come 'roun'

You are so already, said I. 'The President's Proclamation has made you so. You have nothing to fear.' 'Jis' so, mass'r,' he replied.

'Bravo!' cried Capt. Allen. 'You're Presiden' he am a nice man, he am the man we want. Why not have But I doesn't feel it in de bones; I neb him drum for our company?' he added, ber will till I git on to him, yer know 'On to whom?' 1 asked.

'On de Ole Man-Cunnel Billy. Jis lemme git on to him, den I'll be free! 'You surely would not kill your old master?

'Wouldn't I? Yah! yah!' And thereat Starlight began to fumble among the various knives and pistols which adorned his person in a manner anything but conciliatory. 'Trus' dis chicken, he continued. 'I keeps on de much.' look out in ebery fight. I seed him

comic manner in which these senti- many as twenty brave fellows were clusteracted as presiding officer, at the same genuine uniform, of which he appeared ments were enunciated; but, as it was, ing around him with sympathetic looks and time knitting his brows furiously to as proud as a young peacock of her I shuddered at the intensity of passion which lurked in his tones.

you for contempt !" long, but if I should undertake to des- rapid marches and counter-marches. Yeh! yah! Mass'r Chaplain,' he cried, with which Con Counter-marches. Yeh! yah! Mass'r Chaplain,' he cried, with which Con Counter-marches.

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in a serious manner, which was more er excessively hungry, and his slender credit, winning golden opinions from frame was of iron mould. He endured all, and, upon one occasion a hearty "Well, my friend," I resumed, "where without murmur or any marks of fa- hand-shake from the General of our

It was, however, at the severe skirmish on our left, immediately following our general repulse from the rebel works, and shortly before the transfer of our army to the south bank of the James, that the part which Starlight played in the great drama was to assume a truly tragic phase is at the and bell odw .

The enemy's skirmishers and ours were hotly engaged, and the fight bid fair to be bloody, if brief. I was immediately in the rear of the regiment, which was in reserve, busy with the wounded; and Starlight was hopping about me, doing what he could to assist, but now and then looking up, and throwing curious glances toward the fight, which was not distant. Is sorlienw

Suddenly an exclamation from him caused me to turn, when I saw him gazing intently with his hand pointing to-

'Hooray! hooray! Dere he is-dere he is! he shouted.

He succeeded in directing my attention to a fine looking rebel officer, who was cheering on his men in 'a charge they were making on our position.

'Dat's him! dat's him!' cried Starlight, at the same time freeing himself from his drum and casting it on on one side, while his voice was wild and strange with a fierce joy.

And before I could arrest him, or excause him to "slell out" the missing actly understand his intention, he article if it was really in his possession. snatched a musket and bayonet from And it seemed generally conceded that the ground, and ran like a deer after our column, which was advancing to penel the threatened assault.

From my position I could see the whole

was thick, but a western gale was blowing, There was one thing alone which al- and the opposing columns were pretty plainnost redeemed him in my eyes; and ly discernable. Then the firing ceased, and I saw them meet in the shock of steel to steel. The ranks of the rebels were broken, and they scattered back towards their abattis and the thick woods on their right; but the officers retained their ground, endeavoring to inspirit their men by their own examples, and fighting bravely. I saw Little Starlight rush headlong at the man whom he had direquired; but I found some time, nev- rected my attention, and I could hear his ertheless, to devote to Starlight. The shrill cheer come floating to me on the wind. little heathen always listened with the He seemed to be but half the size of his anprofoundest gravity to every thing I tagonist, yet they met with a shock which said, but with a perceptible solidity seemed equal on both sides. The officer evaded the bayonet of his puny foe, and struck out sharply with his sword, and I saw the blood spring up high from the negro's neck. But the next instant they closed, the rushing bayonet gored the breast of the officer and he rolled to the plain. Twice -thrice, I saw the flashing bayonet leap 'Yes, mass'r,' he one day exclaimed, into the air, and then flash down again upon the prostrate man, and then, with a one day or 'nother. I knows I'll be louder whoop than before, Starlight sprung on further into the fight, and the whole scene was shut from my view by the gathering smoke, for the breeze died away.

The fight was soon over. The rebels were driven far back into the woods, their abattis captured and held, and we in possession of the field. My interest in what I had witnessed was so intense that I immediately

hastened to the ground. Our loss had been inconsiderable, but that of the enemy was large. Their dead lay around in all directions. I found the officer with whom I had seen Starlight engaged. He wore the insignia of a rebel captain, and was stone dead, with his breast many times pierced by bayonet thrusts.-As I was standing beside the body, sergeant K-- of Co. C, came up to me with a

troubled look. 'Little Starlight is dying, sir,' was his greeting, and he wishes to see you very

'Starlight dying! Impossible!' I ejaculick my ole mudder till de blood flew. lated, at the same time hurrying to the

Little Starlight lay at the edge of the en-Upon briefer acquaintance with Star- emy's works, with a frightful gun-shot him wash himself thoroughly in the light I should have smiled at the serio- wound in the back part of his head, and as tearful eyes. You may not believe, but nevertheless I speak the truth when I say

All orders promptly filled. Having been in the North Carolina trade for over twenty years, we teel of this injunction, the little fellow re-teristics "the sun would go down on to the walls of Richmond Little Ct."

With which Gen. Grant terrified and as I knelt by his side and took his hand, as I knelt by his side and took his hand, as I knelt by his side and took his hand, as I knelt by his side and took his hand, as I knelt by his side and took his hand, as I knelt by his side and took his hand, as I knelt by his side and took his hand. The walls of Richmond Little Ct. Somewhat startled by the vehemence cribe one-half of his whimsical charac- with which Gen. Grant terrified and as I knelt by his side and took his hand. to the walls of Richmond, Little Star me in de fight, mase'r? Did yer see me commenced stroking his mat of a head He never got out of humor, was nev- light conducted himself with sterling tackle dat ole coon, Cunnel Billy? Yah