

knew it, too, by the fact that his mistress had selected him in preference to his own father to take charge of the active management of the plantation business.

The selection was certainly a good one. Whatever effect it may have had on Uncle Shade, it was the salvation of the plans of his mistress. The negro seemed to have a keen appreciation of the necessities of the situation. He worked the hands harder than any white man could have worked them, and kept them in a good humor by doing as much as any two of them. The Saturday half-holiday was abolished for a time, and the ploughs and the hoes were kept going just as long as the negroes could see how to run a furrow.

A theory of the neighborhood was that Uncle Shade was afraid of going to the sheriff's block, and if this theory was wrong it was at least plausible. The majority of those who worked under Uncle Shade were his own flesh and blood, but his mistress had made bold to hire four extra negroes in order to carry out the plans she had in view, and these four worked as hard and as cheerfully as any of the rest.