

You ain't never seed me rastle. Shucks! I kin tie one han' behin' me an' put your back in the dirt. Yes-sir-ree!" He stuck his tongue out of the corner of his mouth and stood blinking at the officer.

The two men who were standing near, one tall and muscular and the other short and fat, exchanged glances and tried their best to keep their faces straight.

"When did you leave the Yankee army?" the officer asked.

"Las' night!" responded Danny Lemmons. "Lord, yes! I follered 'em down from Sugar Mountain, tryin' to see what devilment they wuz up to. When I wanted to jine in the war, they 'low'd I wuz crazy in the head an' unbefittin' in the body."

It was a bold stroke, but it was effectual. The fierce look of the officer faded into one of astonishment.

"How did you get through the lines?" he asked.

"I walked," replied Danny Lemmons; "I jest had to walk. Them fellers tuck my creetur away from me."

"Go in that room there and wait till I call you," said the officer.