

the soldier impatiently. "Is the Johnny dead?"

"Who? Marse Jack? No, suh. He hurted mighty bad, but he ain't daid yit. Ain't you one er dem ar gentermens what I seed tradin' wid Marse Jack an' de yuthers out dar twix de camps?"

"Upon me soul, ye 're a long time makin' that out. Oi'm that same peddler."

Plato's honest face broadened into a grin. "Marse Jack up dar at de house," he said in a confidential tone. "Ef his min' done come back I speck he 'd be mo' dan glad ter see you. But I'm skeer'd ter kyar' you up dar, kaze I dunner what ole Miss, an' Miss Floe, an' mammy 'll say."

"Trust me for that same," remarked the soldier. "Take me down this fince, will ye, an' tell 'em at the house that private O'Halloran, av the sharpshooters, has taken the liberty for to call on the lad."

The negro proceeded to make a gap in the worm fence, remarking as he did so: "I be bless' ef I don't b'lieve dat ar nag what you er settin' on is Marse 'Lisha Perryman's saddle-hoss."

"Like as not," said private O'Halloran calmly.