

THE PHILATELIST.

"Has that bit of paper any real value beyond its being a fifteen-cent stamp?" demanded Bijah.

"What paper?"

"That 'ere fifteen —?"

He stopped there, someone had sneaked up the alley and had slyly stolen both stamp and Peach-stone.

"Never mind," consoled the boy; "it had no intrinsic value."

"It hadn't, eh," growled the old janitor; "I just want to catch the wolf who absorbed it."

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Uncle Zip's Evidence.

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In response to a question from the Court, old Zip gave his trousers an extra hitch and turned loose.

"Yer see," said he "I war a setten' wid Tilda, an' she war a setten' wid me, a lookin' ober a ole Stamp Album, for her self amooement; an' ef de troof mus be tole, we uns were bofe of us a-setten' togedder."

"Go on," said the Court.

"Yassur," replied Zip. "Well Marse Judge, it war at Tilda's house. I war a-setten'-a setten' in de do'; and Tilda she war a-setten in de do'; an' Tilda she war a-setten an' a-looken, an I war a setten an a-looken ober as I tole um afo'—"

"Never mind about that," said the justice, impatiently. "Go on with your story."

"Yassur. Well, den yer see, Tilda, she war a-setten' in de do' looken ober du ole Stamp Album—"

"What happened next?" asked his Honor.

"Why, nuffen happened nary time," said Zip. "Yer see, we uns war bofe a-setten togedder, an'—"

"Oh bother!" interrupted the court. "Go ahead and make out your case, confine yourself to the question."

"Yassur. Well, ef you must hab it, I war a-setten between un—"

"Between who?" interrogated the court.

"Between who! Oh! Yassur," continued the exasperating witness. "I got um now. Yer wants ter know jes' who I war a setten wid?"

"Bless your soul, yes!" said the justice very emphatically.

"Well, Marse Court, dat sorter mixes up tings. Understand' menow, I's a-tellen' yer de troof. Deacon ob de Baptist Chure! I is, and I cudden't tell a lie ef I wanted to. Well, den, Tilda war a setten—"

"Hold up!" cried his Honor, seizing a ponderous law-book. "You've got to stop this everlasting 'setten.' or I'll settle you. "Tell me at once how many of you were at this woman's house."

"Dat's jes' what I'm a comin at," said old Zip very calmly. "Yer see, in the fust place, dar war Tilda—"

"Good!" remarked the Court.

"An' Tilda, yer see, war a— I mean she war in de do.' An' dar war me next. I war a— I war in de do', an' we war bofe—"

"Dry up!" said the Court. "Now, tell us where the defendent was."