

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Dave Helbrod came out from his concealment in the plantation he had formed a cunning estimate in his own mind as to "how the land lay" between the two parties to the conversation he had just heard. From his hiding-place he could see the flush on Fritz's cheek, the brightness of his eye, and his evident delight at having been of service to Miss Vaughn. In jumping to the conclusion that the young man was in love with her, he did neither more nor less than many people have done before and since in similar cases.

It was destined that he should see another small act of the drama, for as he sneaked along the road, in the rear of the riders, he perceived another equestrian rapidly riding towards them.

It was Vernon, who also was taking advantage of the fine morning to exercise his favorite riding horse. As his contracts in various districts of the city and province were entirely at a standstill on account of the strike, he thought he might as well utilize the opportunity for a little horsemanship, of which he was very fond.

But, of course, Helbrod could not hear the con-