

QUOTED LAW FROM CESAR

And Convinced the Judge of an Acquittal.

A STORY OF LAW IN THE SOUTH.

Ex-United State Circuit Judge John W. C. Jones tells a good story on himself of how he came to be a profound lawyer.

A party of lawyers were telling yarns in the rotunda of the Palmer House, at Chicago the other day, and when Judge Jones' turn came, he told this one:

"I want to tell you of the greatest legal victory of my life," said the Judge, as he lighted a cigar and propped his feet against the wall. "It was down in Newberry, south Carolina, during the trying period just after the war. I was at that time a practicing lawyer—that is I practiced when I had any cases to practice with. One day old 'Uncle Zeke,' one of the old negroes of the settlement, came into my office and said:

"Mars Jones, I wants you to c'lar me. I'se gwine to be 'rested for stealin' three pullets out ob Mars Callom's coop."

"Well Zeke," I asked, "did you really steal the pullets?"

"Mars John, I just tuk 'em."

"Did any one see you?" I asked.

"Yar, boss," said the old negro, disconsolately, "two ole white buckrats."

"Well, Zeke," I replied, "I can't do anything for you under the circumstances."

"Now Mars John," said old Zeke, "here's lehen dollars. I jist you to try."

"Well, I consented to try. The case was to be tried before an old magistrate named Robbins. He was totally uneducated and was, moreover, a perfect dictator, and no negro ever came before him who was not fined the maximum penalty

and sent to his field to expiate the crime in the sweat of his brow.

"The magistrate heard the case. Every possible proof was brought to show that Zeke stole the pullets. There could be no doubt of it from the testimony. I did not put a single question to any of the witnesses, but when the testimony was all in, I arose and in a most dignified manner addressed the magistrate:

"May it please your honor, it would be useless for me to argue the position he holds, and before one who would adorn the Superior if not the Supreme Court bench of this grand old commonwealth; and if I may say that those who know you best say that you would grace the Supreme Court of the United States, the highest tribunal in the land. It would be useless to dwell upon the testimony, you have heard it and know the case as I do. However, it may not be out of order for me to call your Honor's attention to a short passage in the old English law which clearly decides this case, and which, for the moment, your Honor may have forgotten."

"Then I fished down in my pocket and drew forth, with a great flourish, an old copy of 'Julius Caesar.' I opened it with great dignity to the first page and read the first line which is familiar to every schoolboy, '*Omnis Gallia in partes tres divisa est.*'

"That decides the case," said I, throwing the book upon the table. "That clearly acquits the defendant."

"With great dignity and solemnity I then took my seat. The old magistrate was completely non-plussed. He looked at me a moment quizzically, and scratched his head; then turning to Zeke, he raised himself to his full height and said:

"Zeke, I know you stole the pullets, but by the ingenuity of your lawyer I've