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Notes and Comment

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NOTES AND COMMENT

An exceedingly interesting book has just appeared - *The Negro of the Old South*, by Mrs. Nicholas Ware Eppes, of Tallahassee. Here is an unusual picture in varied but true colors and with vivid detail of antebellum plantation life in Middle Florida; hence the volume must be mentioned again, and will be reviewed in the next issue of the Quarterly.

Our journal was first published in April, 1908, and six numbers were issued during that and the following year. A few copies of these are available for those who may wish to purchase them. Any one or all will be sent postpaid for seventy-five cents each by the Assistant Secretary, Miss E. R. Williams, Box 42, Jacksonville.

Florida has long since recovered from even the more disastrous effects of Reconstruction ; the burden put upon her by the waste and theft of a carpetbag and negro government was soon lifted; the insults and worse suffered during those years are largely forgotten - but the State still carries the mark of that government - Florida still is branded with an alien seal.

All who read the discussion of the State's two seals by T. Frederick Davis in the Quarterly of October last, must agree with him that "Florida is entitled to a new coat of arms". Doubtless all of us would wish to go further and say that Florida should have an old new seal - that the State should again adopt the seal which was its honored mark continuously until August, 1868.

It is said that Governor Moseley designed this origi-

nal seal,¹ and it seems probable that he would at least have a share in its production. Some now might think it crude, and doubtless it is not what would be chosen today ; but its simplicity is an attraction, and it has a charm (wholly lacking in the grotesque details of the monstrosity of 1868) which seems to be a reminder of the early years of statehood.

In continuation, Mr. Davis recently writes - "There was no excuse in the world for changing the seal [in 1868], and their only object was simply to do away with everything that represented Florida prior to the War. The design is not the only absurd thing about it-they provided in the Act that this design 'shall never be changed', and thereby issued orders to subsequent legislatures, an insult in itself".

Mr. Davis is the author of *A History of Early Jacksonville*, published some years ago. Though not an exhaustive work, it received much commendation. The author himself, however, was not satisfied and is now gathering material for a *History of Jacksonville* which will cover the whole period of the city's existence. In order that the volume might be as complete as possible, any one who has matter relating in any way to the place is asked to allow Mr. Davis to see it or to have a copy made.

A similar request is made for Dr. J. O. Knauss, of Tallahassee, who is now completing a monograph on early Florida newspapers and their editors. Should a reader know the location of any early papers of the State,

¹ The authority for this is Charles A. Choate, a Tallahasseean, and a member of the Society in the old days; but what evidence he possessed is unknown. Should any one have evidence relating to the design or adoption of this seal, will he not make it known.

will he not inform Dr. Knauss. Even a single issue might be of great importance - for there are many Florida papers of which not one copy has so far been unearthed.

Any such assistance given Dr. Knauss or Mr. Davis will be highly valued by them and will be a help towards one main objective of the Historical Society - the writing of Florida's history.

The Society would be glad to secure relics of those who were leaders in former periods of Florida history, and also those of the Confederacy. Any such will be carefully preserved. A cane presented to General William J. Hardee, the distinguished Confederate leader, by his fellow officers has been added to the collection of relics of the Society, as the gift of George W. Hardee of Jacksonville.

A good number of members have been added to our roll since the annual meeting in Tallahassee, but the membership still must be doubled before we can support the Society, even with its present limited activities. Hence your share is to secure one new member, and you are earnestly asked to do your part. Our future is far from being assured. There will be a solid foundation under the body only when all of those in Florida who feel a genuine interest in her history are got together.

Since the January number of the journal two Life and several Contributing Members have been added to our roll. In addition to his former generosity to the Society, President Arthur T. Williams has subscribed to a Life Membership at one hundred dollars. Mr. Arthur G.

Cummer, of Jacksonville, has done likewise; and the following are Contributing Members for the present year at ten dollars : Rhydon M. Call, Mrs. Washington E. Connor, Edward M. L'Engle, S. Davies Warfield, and P. K. Yonge. As appeared from the President's annual report, in the last issue of the Quarterly, we must depend on help such as this until our goal of five hundred members is reached ; so we are especially grateful to these contributors. You will be glad to know that the membership roll has now passed the two hundred mark.

Active members who have joined the Society since the list published in the January journal are:

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