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"The Conjure Woman" by Charles W. Chesnutt

Extracted on Apr-20-2024 09:45:14

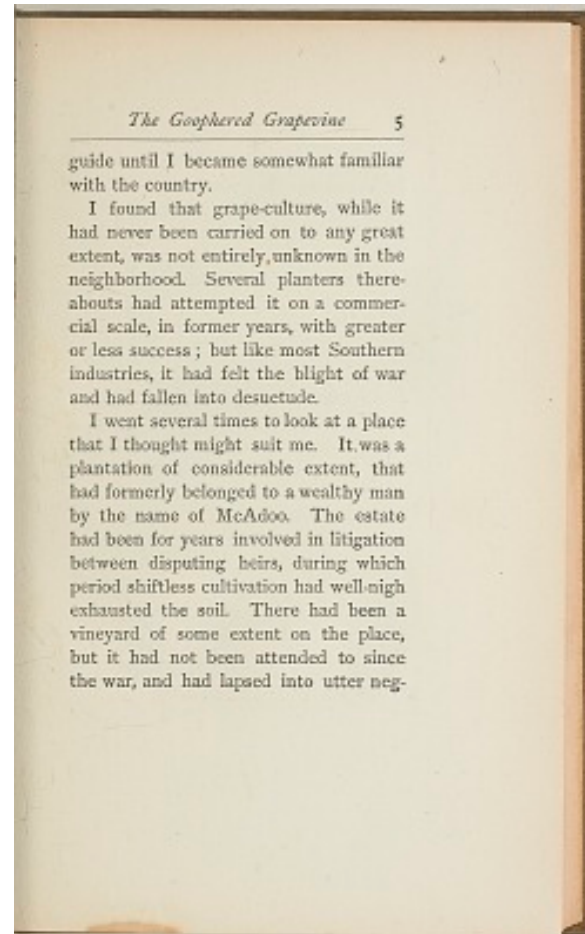
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guide until I became somewhat familiar with the country. I found that grape-culture, while it had never been carried on to any great extent, was not entirely unknown in the neighborhood. Several planters thereabouts had attempted it on a commercial scale, in former years, with greater or less success ; but like most Southern industries, it had felt the blight of war and had fallen into desuetude. I went several times to look at a place that I thought might suit me. It was a plantation of considerable extent, that had formerly belonged to a wealthy man by the name of McAdoo. The estate had been for years involved litigation between disputing heirs, during which period shiftless cultivation had well-nigh exhausted the soil. There had been a vineyard of some extent on the place, but it had not been attended to since the war, and had lapsed into utter neg-



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