



# **A Fool's Errand: A Novel of the South During Reconstruction (Cosimo Classics Literature)**

*Albion W. Tourgee*

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There had been rumors in the air, for some months, of a strangely mysterious organization, said to be spreading over the Southern States, which added to the usual intangibility of the secret society an element of the grotesque superstition unmatched in the history of any other.... Here and there throughout the South, by a sort of sporadic instinct, bands of ghostly horsemen, in quaint and horrible guise, appeared, and admonished the lazy and trifling of the African race...

-from "Chapter XXVII: A New Institution"

Subtitled "A Novel of the South During Reconstruction," this 1879 bestseller, by a participant in that great social experiment, is the barely fictionalized account of the career of a Northern lawyer in North Carolina after the Civil War.

A champion of the poor and landless of any race, and a keen observer of the dilemmas facing uneducated Negroes in the postwar period, Tourg e offers us an important eyewitness account of one of the most tumultuous eras of American history, one that continues to influence the course of the American experiences of race and class to this day.

American abolitionist and lawyer ALBION W. TOURG E (1838-1905) also wrote *Figs and Thistles* (1879).

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