

# MAMMY PLEASANT WILL WORK WEIRD SPELLS NO MORE

Mysterious Old Negro Woman, at 89, Ends a Life of Schemes and Varied Fortune.

"Mammy" Pleasant is dead. The aged colored woman who was the friend of Sarah Althea Hill-Terry and for many years exercised a grim influence over the household of the late Thomas Bell, passed away yesterday morning at the home of Lyman M. Sherwood, a pension attorney, at 2761 Filbert street. She lived to be eighty-nine years of age, and to the end her mental faculties were as acute as those of a young girl.

So ends the life journey of a woman who played an important part in the most sensational lawsuit in the history of the State, who was herself involved in more litigation than ever fell to the lot of one of her race and succeeded in baffling the most earnest efforts of Judges and lawyers to call her to account for alleged misdeeds. In her lifetime she was entrusted with the handling of many estates, and she numbered among her staunch friends many men and women who stood and stand high in the world's esteem.

She was of the South, born and reared on a plantation in Virginia. She was not a young woman when she came to California, for that was only fifty-three years ago. In early days she kept a roadhouse called Geneva Cottage, on the old San Jose road, and when her customers began to stray away from her she devoted herself to the raising of hogs and chickens for market. In this way she eked out a livelihood until she became the friend and adviser of the woman who afterward married Thomas Bell, the millionaire California street merchant. After the marriage "Mammy" took up her residence in the Bell household, and there she held undisputed sway until six years after Bell met with his tragic death in the early part of 1893.

Many are the stories told of this colored woman's hold upon Thomas Bell and his wife. In the trial of lawsuits which came up after Bell's death it was shown that the astute merchant had been as wax in the hands of his humble retainer; that he had gone so far as to purchase property for his wife and allow the deeds to be made out in the name of Mrs. Pleasant. She got money from him whenever she liked, and she gained a reputation for generosity by subscribing liberally to churches and by supporting many colored families out of bounty extracted from her employer. When Bell died "Mammy" undertook the care of the



**MAMMY PLEASANT, FRIEND OF SOCIAL ARBITERS AND GUARDIAN OF "THE BELL HOME OF MYSTERY," WHO YESTERDAY PASSED AWAY AFTER A SIEGE OF WANT AND DESTITUTION.**

would compel the reawakening of his regard for her. To combat this testimony "Mammy" produced witnesses, among them Thomas Bell himself, who swore that on the day named Sarah had not left the house. It was afterwards discovered that these witnesses had been deceived by a woman named Emma Sterett, made up to resemble Sarah Althea. There is a story that years afterward the then demented widow of Judge Terry accused "Mammy" of being responsible for her misfortunes and heaped curses upon her head. Others say that "Mammy" retained her regard for the unfortunate woman and as late as three months ago visited her in Stockton Insane Asylum.

**A WOMAN OF MANY SCHEMES.**  
Other instances of this woman's propensity for scheming are furnished. She trapped the notorious Bernard Raville, and caused him to be sent across the bay just as he was confidently expecting to espouse Mrs. Bell. Then there was the case of the Brotherhood brothers, who were convicted

# NOTHING EFFECTIVE CON

Widow Is the President and Will lose \$12

It might be noon in Judge a reasonable claim of Mrs. her husband left a round But nothing difference in the

Burrell White speak on a whether as a will he did not Mr. White ap some stress of ference with A to state, with capacities, the compromise w

"Judge Br charged Mr. tive in that, s out, he would

Ex-Governor Clunie, asked fact that in the the other two and Mr. White, cost-of-settleme Clunie's share. as to this, but had been-arra

Mr. Clunie sa made was to-p dition to the p which she take of gift from the Clunie was wil

"She was th Mr. Clunie, w explanation of Attorney C. Mrs. Clunie, wa consented to t legal advice on now.

There was a about a settle court, but the l tioned was \$50, take less than If that is-refus to half the esta Friday afterno

# MAN WHO

Court Grants Hu

Guadalupe Cas Associated Char case, was grao Judge Murasky Cano, testified th to work, that b above, the avera not soil his hand if his wife and appeared in cou pair of gloves. Suits for divo follows: Consta Holland, on the filed against Ha Zeuner against Blanche Beck as Mary Fukunoto a cruelty; Mary I. Herbert, for negl against Annie P Zugg against Je

# OLDEST H FRAT

Gamma Eta Ka ing  
The Gamma E United States of est high school / its twenty-second ses on Decemb The fraternity 1

and that  
 Trust  
 high finan-  
 ists, asked  
 Schwab a  
 receiver.  
 Schwab's  
 ending the  
 it is sought  
 in court.  
 for the  
 ompel Mr.  
 has had in  
 his is con-  
 ing upon  
 e inflated  
 mpany.  
 S.  
 to permit  
 cesion to-  
 eel, as of-  
 would do;  
 onds held  
 suing the  
 mortgage  
 to be car-  
 ller vault  
 mpany.  
 placed in  
 ble neat-  
 t.  
 he signa-  
 red that  
 agreed to  
 the clerks  
 at under-  
 Thurs-  
 as to the  
 the safe  
 it that he  
 tire issue  
 rney was  
 b's abil-  
 ard com-  
 eel Com-  
 sued.  
 ation of  
 obuilding  
 rricular,  
 ramling"  
 Young,  
 lence for  
 finance.  
 Dresser  
 blegram  
 he Beth-  
 T.  
 gh finan-  
 for the  
 ds, how-  
 part as-  
 Baron to-  
 atement  
 at I in-  
 on him  
 tacked on  
 hat, last  
 ure from  
 ad been  
 mitted  
 ng made  
 a 'com-  
 ou were  
 also fig-  
 tments  
 he pre-  
 1902, in  
 obtained.  
 g to the  
 file."  
 as made  
 Bethle-  
 e com-  
 on and  
 know  
 was ob-  
 to take  
 ing the  
 ccess in  
 signed  
 DAY  
 All drug-  
 E. W.  
 YEAR  
 ociation  
 ociation  
 resident,  
 Mrs. G.  
 re. J. F.  
 Jones,  
 Sadler;

who played an im-  
 portant part in the  
 most sensational law-  
 suit in the history of  
 the State, who was  
 herself involved in  
 more litigation than  
 ever fell to the lot of  
 one of her race and  
 succeeded in baffling  
 the most earnest ef-  
 forts of Judges and  
 lawyers to call her to  
 account for alleged  
 misdeeds. In her life-  
 time she was intrust-  
 ed with the handling  
 of many estates, and  
 she numbered among  
 her staunch friends  
 many men and women  
 who stood and stand  
 high in the world's  
 esteem.

She was of the  
 South, born and  
 reared on a plantation  
 in Virginia. She was  
 not a young woman  
 when she came to  
 California, for that  
 was only fifty-three  
 years ago. In early  
 days she kept a road-  
 house called Geneva  
 Cottage, on the old  
 San Jose road, and  
 when her customers  
 began to stray away  
 from her she devoted  
 herself to the raising  
 of hogs and chickens  
 for market. In this  
 way she eked out a  
 livelihood until she  
 became the friend  
 and adviser of the woman who afterward  
 married Thomas Bell, the millionaire Cali-  
 fornia-street merchant. After the marriage  
 "Mammy" took up her residence in the  
 Bell household, and there she held undis-  
 puted sway until six years after Bell met  
 with his tragic death in the early part of  
 1893.

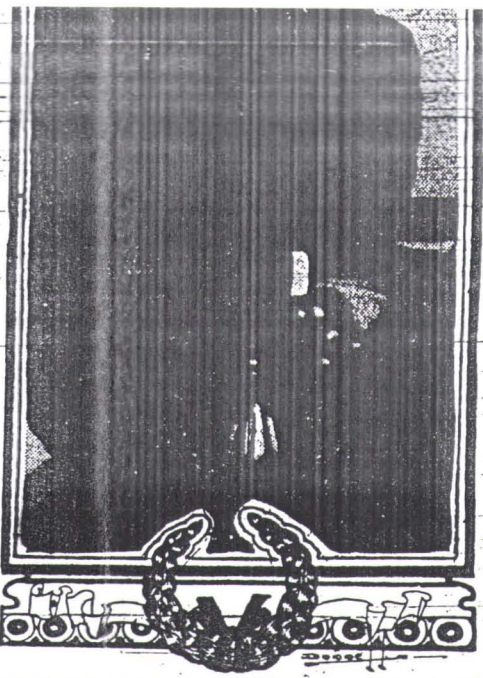
Many are the stories told of this colored  
 woman's hold upon Thomas Bell and his  
 wife. In the trial of lawsuits which came  
 up after Bell's death it was shown that the  
 astute merchant had been as wax in the  
 hands of his humble retainer; that he had  
 gone so far as to purchase property for his  
 wife and allow the deeds to be made out  
 in the name of Mrs. Pleasant. She got money  
 from him whenever she liked, and she  
 gained a reputation for generosity by sub-  
 scribing liberally to churches and by sup-  
 porting many colored families out of bounty  
 extracted from her employer. When Bell  
 died "Mammy" undertook the care of the  
 widow and children, and by some she is ac-  
 cused of having exerted her influence to  
 such evil purpose as to bring about a com-  
 plete estrangement between them.

**ORDERED FROM BELL HOME.**

Mrs. Bell's belief in "Mammy" was ex-  
 traordinary. As time rolled on and friends  
 became convinced that the colored woman  
 was engaged in feathering her nest at the  
 expense of her benefactress, they would  
 remonstrate with Mrs. Bell, only to be met  
 with the rejoinder, "That's a bit at 'Mam-  
 my.'" In this way things ran along until  
 one day, in the spring of 1899, a deed to  
 property supposed to have been purchased  
 for Mrs. Bell was discovered among Mrs.  
 Pleasant's effects made out in favor of an-  
 other person. There was a stormy scene at  
 the Bell mansion, and "Mammy" was told  
 to take herself off for good. She resisted at  
 first and withstood a siege in her room.  
 Finally, when the police had been called in  
 and an urgent message had been received  
 from her legal adviser, she yielded to the  
 inevitable and shook the dust of the Bell  
 household from her shoes for all time.

She went back to the San Jose road for  
 a time, and then took up her abode at 2107 1/2  
 Webster street. Then, as she became more  
 infirm, she went to friends. She lived with  
 the Sherwoods since last November. Mem-  
 bers of the Bell family, particularly the  
 boys, Fred and Reginald, kept up their  
 friendship for the old woman and called to  
 see her constantly.

"Mammy" Pleasant's connection with the  
 famous Sharon case was peculiar. She was  
 always believed to exercise a remarkable  
 influence over women, amounting to hypno-  
 tism, and by some was credited with having  
 mastered the mysteries of the voodoo art.  
 At any rate, she fascinated Sarah Althea  
 Hill, and in part guided her course through  
 the long and sensational trial. There was  
 evidence introduced that one day the fair  
 plaintiff had buried certain articles of per-  
 sonal clothing belonging to Senator Sharon,  
 in the superstitious belief that this act



**MAMMY PLEASANT, FRIEND OF SOCIAL AR-  
 BITERS AND GUARDIAN OF "THE BELL  
 HOME OF MYSTERY," WHO YESTER-  
 DAY PASSED AWAY AFTER A SIEGE  
 OF WANT AND DESTITUTION.**

would compel the reawakening of his regard  
 for her. To combat this testimony "Mam-  
 my" produced witnesses, among them  
 Thomas Bell himself, who swore that on  
 the day named Sarah had not left the house.  
 It was afterwards discovered that these wit-  
 nesses had been deceived by a woman  
 named Emma Sterett, made up to resemble  
 Sarah Althea. There is a story that years  
 afterward the then demented widow of  
 Judge Terry accused "Mammy" of being re-  
 sponsible for her misfortunes and heaped  
 curses upon her head. Others say that  
 "Mammy" retained her regard for the un-  
 fortunate woman and as late as three  
 months ago visited her in Stockton Insane  
 Asylum.

**A WOMAN OF MANY SCHEMES.**  
 Other instances of this woman's propen-  
 sity for scheming are furnished. She  
 trapped the notorious Bernard Saville, and  
 caused him to be sent across the bay just  
 as he was confidently expecting to espouse  
 Mrs. Bell. Then there was the case of the  
 Brotherton brothers, who were convicted  
 of a felony in 1870. Mrs. Pleasant was al-  
 ways suspected of having a hand in their  
 escape from the County Jail on Broadway;  
 but it is also said that when a reward of  
 \$5,000 was offered for them she advised  
 them to make for her home on the San Jose  
 road, and by notifying the police had them  
 nabbed just as they reached the outskirts  
 of the Mission.

Many colored persons made Mrs. Pleasant  
 executrix of their estates. Among those  
 she handled were the Park, Rider, Harris,  
 Susanne and Monroe Taylor estates. It is  
 of record that little or no benefit resulted  
 to the heirs from the colored woman's ad-  
 ministration of their properties; and many  
 times and oft "Mammy" was haled into  
 court and asked to explain. But she was  
 a difficult person to trap, and nothing ever  
 came of these proceedings.

"Mammy" went through the insolvency  
 court a few years ago, yet she was gener-  
 ally credited with possessing considerable  
 means. It is doubtful, however, that she  
 left any estate, though at the time of her  
 death she was engaged in lawsuits for the  
 recovery of the Bell diamonds and of the  
 Bell estates in Sonoma and this county, all  
 of which she stoutly declared rightfully be-  
 longed to her, and not to the widow or chil-  
 dren of Thomas Bell. She employed Sam  
 Davis of Carson City to prosecute these  
 actions for her and deeded all she had to  
 him, even making a will in his favor. A  
 few days before she died she gave her power  
 of attorney to the Sherwoods, with whom  
 she resided, so if she has left anything  
 there is likely to be litigation over her prop-  
 erty.

In person "Mammy" Pleasant was tall,  
 spare and erect. She always affected a black  
 dress and hat, with white apron and necker-  
 chief, and a green and black tartan shawl  
 thrown over her shoulders. She had many  
 curious traits, one of which was that she  
 never entered a theatre. She died merely of  
 old age. Her remains will be taken to Nap-  
 to-day for burial.

Further the Sport of Boating Money Is

**GANS SHOWS HE CAN  
 REACH THE 133 NOTCH**

Negro Champion Does Not Forget That

**STANFORD IS IMPROVING  
 ITS ARTIFICIAL LAKE**

Further the Sport of Boating Money Is