

# Mammy Pleasant, the Old Negress who Holds the Fate of Rich and Powerful Families in Her Hands.

### A Tale of San Francisco by Winifred Black.

Mammy Pleasant is a bankrupt. The courts of California have just declared her so, and now she's good and happy. All the same, no one in San Francisco believes she's poor and not a soul in California would be surprised if she should die today and leave an estate of a cool million dollars.

Mammy Pleasant is going to be in a book some day and then nobody will believe it.

They believe it now out in California. Old Mammy Pleasant and her life are very real things there just now. Mammy Pleasant is an old negro woman.

She's as black as the ace of spades and she's 80 years old.

She can just read and write, and what she doesn't know about geography and the rule of three, would sit a large book, but there are senators and men in high places down in Washington today who turn pale at the very mention of her name.

Every newspaper office in the state of California has an obituary of her kept under lock and key, all ready for immediate publication and when she dies half the men in town will cease to draw a long breath until they've found out who her lawyers are and what they are going to do with the papers she left behind her.

Mammy Pleasant has lived in California since nobody knows when.

She knows the inside history of every big family in the state and what she knows she never tells unless there is money enough in it.

Several times during her life there has been money enough in it and then things became very interesting to who it might concern.

The first time that the general public began to hear much about Mammy Pleasant was back during the Hill vs. Sharon case. Sarah Althea Hill, a tall and distinctly personable blonde of somewhat vague antecedents, sued Senator Sharon, millionaire, United States senator and pillar of respectable society, for seduction. To which Senator Sharon replied by denying that he owed Althea anything other than money. Sarah Althea Hill as she was not and never could, would or should be his wife.

There was a long and bitter fight in the courts. All California was divided into factions—one for the senator and one for Althea to be an innocent victim to the wiles of a false and perjured scoundrel; the other declared in season and out of

season that Senator Sharon was fighting a good fight, in defending the rights and privileges of a rich and affectionate man against the cold-blooded scheming of an exceedingly clever adventuress.

Senator Sharon won his suit. Sarah Althea walked out of the court room a woman without a name.

Now, in this suit, Mammy Pleasant was Sarah Althea's principal witness. She was an old maid for some time, a sort of confidential maid to her, and she swore that her mistress was Mrs. Senator Sharon and that the senator had frequently so acknowledged her to be.

It was said that Senator Sharon's friends offered Mammy Pleasant \$50,000 to throw her testimony on his side of the case, to which Mammy Pleasant is said to have replied with an ominous roll of her gleaming eyes: "I'll stick to my money if I have to swing to it," which she accordingly did, although she did not swing for it.

Sarah Althea married Judge David Terry who had been her lawyer in her suit against Sharon. Judge Terry was a gentleman of the old Southern school. When he offered his proud name to the woman whose reputation has been dragged in the mire of that bitter suit all California stood aghast. Mammy Pleasant laughed and dressed the bride for the ceremony. Judge Terry bought her a magnificent house, installed his wife in it, invited his friends to call, and Sarah Althea seemed in fair way to forget all her troubles.

One day Judge Terry and his wife went into the dining room of a little eating station between Stockton and San Francisco and Judge Terry was shot dead in the very presence of his wife.

She then threw herself upon the body of her husband and called upon the God of Mercy to strike her dead there.

No one could quiet her till Mammy Pleasant came. Mammy Pleasant took her by the hand and said that one time there was something queer about Mrs. Terry. She lived in a great, magnificent house in Fresno.

One night she belated rider alighted at the gate and knocked at the front door. The great house was ablaze with lights, from attic to basement. He knocked again and again and still again, and when he got no answer he pushed the door open and went in.

The great house with all its chandeliers ablaze, was empty. He went from room to room, last in a sort of little oratory he found the woman who had come there a bride.

She was dressed in white and she wore a wedding veil fastened with a wreath of orange blossoms.

She was kneeling in front of a little altar talking softly to herself, "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in

sickness and in health, till death do us part," she said, and "Yes, honey; yes, my little honey," answered the woman who bent over her.

It was Sarah Althea Terry and Mammy Pleasant.

Mammy Pleasant made the intruder promise not to tell what he had seen. "Honey's sick," she said; "jes' a little mind feverish, that's all, and the man promised, rode away and broke his word. But the next day when the neighbors came Mrs. Terry and Mammy Pleasant were gone and the great house was locked up empty."

They went to San Francisco and lived quietly in some rooms that Mammy Pleasant engaged. Mrs. Terry had spent all her money and lost all her friends. One day Mammy Pleasant went down to police headquarters and asked for the assistance of the detectives. Mrs. Terry had run away and she could not find her. The police sent out special men and they searched the city high and low for the woman whose face was known on every corner.

They did not find her.

Old Mammy Pleasant found her kneeling in front of the altar of the old French church that stands on the outskirts of town. She wore a ragged veil and she was saying, "For better for worse, for richer for poorer, sickness and in health," over and over, and she has never stopped saying it while she wakes since. She is locked up in the insane asylum in Stockton. Mammy Pleasant goes to see her twice a week, though Mrs. Terry never knows her.

That's one chapter in Mammy Pleasant's life—one.

There are others.

The Thomas Bell chapter, for instance. Thomas Bell was a California millionaire. He wanted a sweetheart.

Mammy Pleasant introduced him to one. He found her so agreeable that one fine day he took her to a little church perched on the side of windy fog-went hill and made her his bride. It was on that wedding day some one, whether Mr. Thomas Bell or his brand-new wife no one is quite certain, which surrounds his father's life and death.

These are only two of the families in which Mammy Pleasant has been a part. She is reputed enormously rich. She has great influence with the bench and bar, and it is said that she has a photograph of every circumpectly when old Mammy Pleasant trudges up to headquarters with children in her arms and a bundle of 50 years old notes and grows the fatter. When she dies, something interesting will happen at least a dozen families in the richest part of San Francisco.

And now she's gone through the courts and declared bankrupt!

What next?

Mr. Thomas Bell was found lying in the hall of his house, cold and dead. He had fallen or been pushed over the balustrade from the second story.

Mammy Pleasant was in the house at the time.

She had always taken Mrs. Bell's part. The house where Thomas Bell was found dead has been called haunted ever since. It is in San Francisco the House of Mystery.

Mammy Pleasant was the autocrat of the household. She bought the supplies, checked the children, O. J. and Mrs. Belle checks, saw all the visitors, and for the past two years denied her mistress to visit on any day.

The eldest son, young Tom Bell, was terribly dissipated. The other children were normal enough. When Tom quarreled with Mammy Pleasant and was ordered out of the house, he went to another house to live—a house of no too savory reputation—and one morning he was found lying on the floor of the hall. He had been pushed over the balustrade.

He was not dead, only dangerously hurt.

For six months he lay fighting for life. He won his fight.

He never drank again. He said that his father had drunk and that he would never do so. He declared that Mammy Pleasant had deliberately taught him to be a drunkard; that she was dragging his mother with opium and that she had robbed the Bell estate of nearly all the money his father had left. He brought suit to recover it.

Mammy Pleasant went on the stand and swore that she was the child's mother, not one of them was the child's mother, upon Thomas Bell and that she had received only a proper part of the \$30,000 that went with one of them for her share in the partition.

Mrs. Bell came out of the house in the daylight for the first time in years and she was drunk. She said that she had told the truth, and then she swore that she did not, and then she took it all back again to be a drunkard; that she could not remember upon which side she was a witness.

Young Tom Bell lost his suit, but he swore to be avenged, and he is devoting his whole life to a determined effort to get his father's money back.

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What next?

Winifred Black

## CONSOLIDATION

### Railway Presidents' Plan for a Pooling of Interests.

ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE

The Meeting Now in Progress in New York Will Make History—Recent Purchase of Burlington Stock Was Part of the Plan of Consolidation of all Lines and the Stopping of Work on its Westward Branches is a Manifestation.

The railway presidents of the United States now meeting in New York are considering the preliminary step to the formation of a great pool that will embrace every road in the United States. President Jeffery of the Denver & Rio Grande is chairman of the meeting and executive heads of some of the biggest systems enjoying transcendent success. From a message received in Denver by President Jeffery it is gathered the trust, pool or whatever it may be called, is on the verge of being launched.

A special committee of Western railroad presidents was recently appointed to devise a plan for an equitable division of traffic earnings. This report, after a mature deliberation based on experience and practically unanimous theories, has been submitted to the general meeting of presidents and executive officers now in session.

The report provides for a division of traffic agreement, or, plainly speaking, a blind pool. Each road maintains its proportion, but the smaller roads are materially aided, and the common good is the main result aimed at. The proposed agreement could hardly be construed a violation of the anti-trust law, it is reported, and undoubtedly will be recommended for adoption, if it has not been done so already, at the secret conference.

The committee drafting it believes the interstate commerce commission will not so carefully scrutinize such an agreement or try to attain the end for which it is designed—the maintenance of rates. The result will be, should it be adopted, to weld together the line on a basis that will soon result in the abolishment of individual offices and the establishment of a common or general office at every junction point and town of importance. It means the discharge of thousands of employees; an enormous cutting down of salaries and other expenses of each line.

Another special committee of the representatives of Western railroads will re-

## FOOL BURGLAR

### Tried To Do Business While He Was Intoxicated.

THE QUEER BREAK OF SMITH

While Smoking a Cigar He Entered the House of a Former Jailor and Endeavored to Burglarize the Room of a Special Policeman—Scared Off Once, He Returned to the Charge—Deep Contrition.

With a lighted cigar between his teeth, and puffing like a heavily loaded engine going up hill, Robert, alias Marlon Smith, was discovered at an early hour yesterday morning in the act of burglarizing a room. To make matters worse, the room he was burglarizing was occupied by a special policeman, and a former city jailer is the proprietor of the rooming house where the burglary was taking place.

Smith says he is a carpenter and a water, but the police insist that he is a burglar. He stoutly, however, when they make the assertion, but they back it up with sufficient evidence to bind Smith over to the district court on heavy bonds. To disturb a policeman or try to take anything from one is considered a wide breach in burglar etiquette, and an unpardonable sin; consequently Smith has a chance of repenting for his stupidity behind the bars of the penitentiary.

During Friday night Special Policeman

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Sailors sold by others 48c  
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Sailors sold by others 65c  
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Philadelphia and Return for \$45.50. REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION, Philadelphia, Pa., June 13, 14 and 15, good to go by either the Chicago and St. Louis Special or the Burlington Flyer.

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Chicago Directories in Europe. London, June 5—Chicago city directories will henceforth be found in the libraries, hotels and public resorts of the leading European cities, for the use of merchants and tourists.

The omnibus companies are sending representatives to the United States to buy horses. The supply has fallen far short of the demand, owing to the heavy purchase of the war office and the waste resulting from hard work to which horses are subjected in the London omnibus service.

PRICE OF WHEAT.

Aspen, Colo. Editor of the Post: Please inform me through the columns of your very valuable paper if wheat has sold within the past three years at the market price in the markets of the United States for \$1.50 per bushel, to decide a bet and oblige.

A CONSTANT READER.

Yes. During May, 1898, wheat was \$1.50, the letter "corner" figure. The highest price it has been in a quarter of a century was during the Hutchinson corner, in September, 1888, when it reached \$2.

Butterfield, Undertaker and Emballer, 188 Street.

## When You See

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Bicycles absolutely kept in repair, per month.....\$1.00

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COMFORTABLE—Ice Cream Free,  
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Two Harness and Three Running Races Daily.

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## LOST TEETH

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## Inspector Denman Will Have a Thorough Investigation.

Coal Mine Inspector Denman has received word from John F. Keblor, general superintendent of the Colorado Fuel and Iron company, stating that Flourine Germelk, injured in the Fremont mine on Friday, died at 8 o'clock Saturday morning. The Fremont mine is in Williamsburg, Fremont county, and belongs to the Colorado Fuel and Iron company. This is the second accident on property belonging to the company within a week. Simon Tosallin met death in the English mine at Engleville, Las Animas county, on June 5. Coroner P. G. Siple made the usual autopsy report, stating the death was due to the unfortunate man's own carelessness. An inquest he deemed unnecessary. An investigation will be made, however, and Deputy Inspector Jones has gone to Engleville at once. Inspector Denman is determined to protect the miners.

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Miss Powell Goes to California.  
Miss Martea Gould Powell leaves this week for an extended trip through California.

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