

### His Hairs were Numbered

Hamilton Clay was the body servant of Colonel Kennedy. He was also as black as night. No one in "the counties" ever called him by any other name than "Ham." It is doubtful if he would have recognized any other name. When emancipation came, Ham's father and mother elected to stay with the Colonel, who provided them with quarters and steady work on the plantation.

For many years after the war the ante-bellum customs were observed in the Colonel's family. One of these was the duty of instructing all the colored children in their religious obligations. This charge always devolved on the eldest daughter of the family, who, every Saturday afternoon, collected the children on the wide porch of the house and taught them catechism.

These Saturday gatherings, if not quite as aesthetic as the modern "pink teas," were, nevertheless, quite picturesque.

The bare-footed wearer of a pair of "gunny-sack" pants which reached up to his arm pits, would appear with a dickey, or removable shirt front, around his neck, and one cuff, which had at one time been white, and which even now stood out in strong contrast on the small ebony arm. The happy owner of a cast-off silk hat would be the envy of his less fortunate companions. A third would show his idea of quality by borrowing his father's top boots, and then show the inconsistency of his principles by looking down on his neighbor because his straw hat was crownless and his feet bare.

The "daughter of the house," fulfilled her duties until she went to the Visitation Convent at Georgetown to finish her education, or acquire an establishment of her own. The second girl would then assume the position of instructress until her turn came to leave home.

In this way it came about that all the children of the slaves in South-Maryland were well instructed in their religion—much better, in fact, than are the colored children of the present day. It is admitted by those who know, that the present colored people of this state have a much better knowledge of their duties to God and man than their children. In some respects and in some localities the emancipation of the slave has not been an unmixed blessing.

For many years after the war the old customs were retained as far as the altered conditions would admit. In this way it happened that Hamilton Washington Clay, or Ham, was well grounded in his catechism and in his religious duties generally. He was as black as ink, which was a sign that he came from an unmixed race. Quick, and with an adaptability for learning within a certain range, good natured, and with a laughing set of the whitest teeth, and with the whitest rolling eyes, it is little wonder that Ham was a general favorite with the children of "Colonel Kennedy's family."

The Colonel himself was very fond of his body servant. He looked after him closely. He kept him out of mischief as far as the watchful eye of a master could accomplish this difficult task. Ham had long since ceased going to the instruction of the young mistress, but for all that his master kept a keen eye upon him, making him go over his catechism again and again, and sometimes rewarding the boy with a cigar from his cigar case. On these occasions Ham would wait his opportunity and creep off behind some shed by himself and enjoy his smoke, chucking to himself the while when he thought how much better off he was "dan dem uddah niggahs." He would never dream of lighting his cigar in the presence of this master.

When Ham had grown to be a big fellow of nineteen, mischief came to him from a quarter of which the Colonel had never given a thought.

In the neighborhood of Mr. Kennedy's plantation there lived a number of negro Methodists, with a colored "pahnun" and a meeting house of their own. Ham had occasion frequently to pass through this section of the country when he would bring his master's mail from the postoffice. Sometimes on a Sunday he also wandered in that direction.

Now on one Sunday in June Hamilton Clay sauntered very near the meeting house when "meeting" was out. A little black cupid was there also, waiting for victims. Ham

suddenly saw a vision which nearly took his breath away. Miss Melinda Caroline Mason, dressed all in white, came from the chapel towards the young man, her dusky face surrounded by a "right smart" bonnet, in which our national colors shone out in unadorned splendor. The bonnet itself was white, the enormous flowers which crowned it were a brilliant red, while the ribbons which fluttered in the breeze were of a deeper blue than the southern sky. All this gorgeousness captivated poor Ham. Under the second button of his buff vest he felt an unusual beating—a thumping sensation at his ribs.

"Boy," he said to himself, "wat's de mattah wid you? I 'speeks you bin eatin' too much cawn bread, sho'."

Incapable of blushing, or at least of showing his blushes, he did the next best thing. He rolled the white of his eyes, exhibited as large an area of cuffs as possible, and clapped his right hand on that part of his anatomy where he supposed his heart to be located.

Miss Melinda Caroline caught sight of him, and she was similarly affected. The little black cupid had taken good aim. The two made sheep's eyes at each other. Melinda thought Ham's big cuffs and bigger double collar, with his scarlet tie, were perfection. At the same moment Ham would have sworn that neither art nor nature could have produced anything more superb than that wonderful bonnet.

"A right smart day, Miss Melinder," began Ham tentatively.

"Right smart, Mistah Ham," replied the black Hebe.

"Been to meetin', Miss Melinder?"

"Yes, hez you been to meetin', too?"

"No. I 'se a Cath'lic, Miss Melinder, an' Marse Col'nel makes us culled folks go to church 'arf in de mornin'."

"Oh! youse orter hyah Brother Zebekiah at de Bible preachin', Mistah Ham, he's de best culled preacher I 'se eber heard."

Hamilton Clay said he preferred the instructions of the priest. Evading the topic of religion he got along famously on other subjects. Whether it was the bonnet or the magnetic attraction of Melinda's white eyes, or Melinda's laughing teeth, he did not know, but many times during the summer and fall months Ham met Melinda, accidentally, of course, on her way to, or coming from, the meeting house.

Colonel Kennedy began to notice the frequent absence of his body servant during those times when the boy was free to go where he pleased. He determined to look into the affair. He was saved the trouble, for one day in the fall Ham appeared before his master. He seemed nervous.

"What is it, Ham?" asked the Colonel.

"Oh! Marse Cur'nel, I 'se wants to know if you has no 'jections if I goes to der Methodier meetin' 'ouse wid Miss Melinder Car'line Mason."

"Oh! that's the way the wind blows, is it? Go to the meeting house? Why, no, of course not. Don't you know that's the devil's thin end of the wedge by which he would make you lose your faith?"

"Neber feah 'bout dat, Marse Kennedy. I 'se not goin' to give dat up for the best culled gal in Maryland."

"That's right, Ham. Keep to that. You must not go to the meeting house. But who is this Melinder?"

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### CAUGHT COLD ON THE C.P.R.

A. E. Mumford tells how Psychine cured him after the Doctors gave him up

"It is twelve years since Psychine cured me of galloping consumption," the speaker was Mr. A. E. Mumford, six feet tall, and looking just what he is a husky healthy farmer. He works his own farm near Magneta, Ont.

"I caught my cold working as a fireman on the C.P.R.," he continued. "I had night sweats, chills and fever and frequently coughed up pieces of my lungs. I was sinking fast and the doctors said there was no hope for me. Two months treatment of Psychine put me right on my feet and I have had no return of lung trouble since."

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linda?"

Ham began to show his teeth. He stood first on one foot, then on the other, twirled his hat around and around, and continued to grin.

"Well, who is she?"

"She's daughter of ole Josiah Eben Mason, w'at lived on de Mattingly plantation afore de war; eugh!"

"Is she a good girl, Ham?"

"Good! boss—eugh! She's de fin'st culled gal in dis 'ere state, eugh!" and Hamilton Washington Clay gave a musical guttural sound indicative of intense satisfaction, but almost impossible to put on paper.

He was not generally so free in his manners before his master, who, this time, made all allowances.

"Ham, do you see that broad strap on the wall there?"

"Yes, sah," said Ham, sobered at once.

"Now, if I hear at any time you have been into that meeting house I'll see how closely it will fit across your shoulders. If Melinda must have a cavalier on going and coming from church, you must wait outside."

Hamilton did not know what a cavalier meant, but he gathered enough to know that he was not forbidden to see Melinda.

The cold days of autumn came. Ham then found it very inconvenient to wait outside the meeting house in the sharp wind. The meeting house had a large entrance, in which was a stove. This seemed a much more pleasant place in which to wait, so one-day he asked Colonel Kennedy if he might not go in there.

"I promise you dat dis chile won't go to no Methodist meeting."

Mr. Kennedy consented, seeing that opposition was practically useless. The next Sunday Ham ensconced himself behind the stove, waiting for the reappearance of Melinda. Now, the meeting house was a frame building, and Clay, through the thin door, heard the whole sermon of Brother Zebekiah. When the service was over the first person to leave the church, was the same white-headed colored preacher.

"Woh! wot' you doin' hyah, chile?" he said.

"Well, pahnun, I just 'specks I 'se waitin' for some one hyah."

"But, chile, why didn't you come in an' hear de preachin'?"

"Kase I doan' beleib in yo' preachin' nohow."

"Bress my soul, but it's de gospel o' de Lawd. We 'ez de pure gospel hyar. Didn't you hear me a preachin' thro' de do'?"

"Guess I did, boss, sho'; spesh'ly when you riz it."

"Chile," said the old man, solemnly, "I 'se thinkin' you's lyin'. Wot wuz de tex' dis blessed ebenin'?"

"Yo' tex' was 'The hyahs o' yo' 'ed is numbered.'"

"Yes, dat's so. Dat's de blessed gospel tex'. But yo's a Cath'lic, so you don't know nothin' 'bout these things."

"Hum! eh! Wot's dat? Ken yer 'spond to all my questions?" said Ham, with a knowing look at Melinda.

"Sho I kin, an' wull, too."

"Yes," interposed Melinda, "that's a promise, an' if he does, Mistah Ham, you's got to go to meetin' wid me, eh? An' if er don't, I goes to de Cath'lic Church wid you, eh? That's de promise, eh?"

"Dat's so," replied Ham, whose eyes were merrily twinkling.

"Der ain't no question, chile, dat you kin ask dat dis niggah can't 'spond to."

"All right. Now, you say all the hairs of my head are numbered?"

"Sho', don't de blessed book say so?"

"Well, then," said Hamilton, as he pulled out a kinky hair from his head "wot de number o' dis one?"

"Umph! Ugh! Wot's dat question agin'?"

"Wots de number o' dis one?" repeated Ham, still holding a hair between his black finger and thumb.

"Ugh! chile, don't you be askin' foolishness," said the puzzled and crestfallen preacher.

"I done 'low," put in Melinda, "you got to 'splain dat ere question else I goes with Ham to the Cath'lic church."

And she went, for the difficulty was too great for "de pahnun."

### Peggy of the Pines.

By Temple Bailey.

"John Carter!"

The name seems to come out of her dreams. Peggy opens her eyes a little dazed.

Of course there are other John Carters. Carter is a rather commonplace name, after all. So is John.

The high heels of Peggy's patent leathers click on the polished floor of the alcove, and Peggy's blue kimonoed figure appears between the curtains of the arch that divides the room.

"Sleepy-head!" is Catherine's scornful welcome.

Peggy smiles and trails languidly over to a low chair by the fire. She sits down and shakes a veil of soft red-brown hair over her flushed cheeks.

Edith passed her the box of chocolates, and the conversation goes on. "I wonder which one of us it is," sighs Louise.

"If the corner of the conservatory could speak I think it would whisper 'Catherine,'" says Edith.

The color that flames up into Catherine's cheeks matches the red of her crepe gown.

But Peggy, looking through her veil of hair, sees that she likes it. Likes to be teased about Jack, Peggy's Jack—well, not exactly her's—yet, but he has proposed to her every year since she was in pinafores and if she hasn't said "yes"—

"A box for Miss Catherine," states the soft-voiced maid at the door.

The box is full of red, glowing roses—American beauties.

Catherine takes the card out of the little white envelope, and looks at the girls complacently.

"John Carter," she reads.

Oh, little Peggy, little Peggy, it is well that your face is hidden by the silken veil, for your blushes are gone.

Edith's lips are set in a rather tense line.

"What does he say?"

"Red as a rose is she."

"Rather hackneyed for a clever man," comments Edith.

"There is another box for Miss Edith," says the maid, "and one for Miss Louise."

"Not a single valentine for you, baby," says Louise to Peggy. "But the men haven't found you out yet."

She opens her box, gives one glance at the card and leans over to see Edith's.

Then the two girls laugh.

"John Carter!"

Across Catherine's smooth forehead there flickers just the shadow of a frown, but she rallies.

"How impartial. What does he say on yours, girls?"

Louise had orchids, Edith violets. Each card contains a maudlin valentine sentiment, but Peggy listens to the conventional lines with



### COLORING GOODS.

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Some folks say they would buy and use "SURPRISE" Soap for colored clothes if it cost a dollar a cake, so it's pretty plain why so many people use it when it costs no more than common soap.

prejudiced ears. There is only one consolation. Jack isn't a Mormon. He can't marry all three of them!

But over Catherine's face there broods something of dissatisfaction, and Edith gathers up her violets and slips out of the room without a word. After a while the other girls follow, and Peggy is left alone.

She goes and stands by the window, where, through the grey mist, she can see the blurred lights of the big city. Oh, how homesick she is. She wants to see Mammy Chloe and Aunt Sophia, and, most of all, she wants to hear the wind sighing through the pines.

She goes over to her trunk and from its very bottom she drags out a big box, and as the darkness comes on, she muses sadly over the bits of lace paper and faded ribbons.

The girls find her thus when they come in later.

"Valentines?" says Louise. "Old ones?" She picks up a tiny lace paper affair with two red hearts and a cupid.

Roses red and violets blue. Sugar is sweet and so are you.

"That came when I was 7," says Peggy.

"Are they all from one man. Oh, Peggy, Peggy, I believe you have a romance."

"They are all from Jack," says Peggy without malice, and then she stands blushing, for what will they think of Mr. John Carter now?

But the name suggests nothing to the three girls.

"Someone you know in Virginia?" asked Catherine.

And Peggy knows that, after all, she has told nothing, and she resolves to hold her own.

"He has sent me one each year since I was 5. We grew up together."

"Why, what a little romance," says Edith indulgently, with amused and uplifted eyebrows behind Peggy's back. "Of course he loves you."

"Of course," says Peggy, with an assurance she is far from feeling.

"And you love him."

"I haven't told him so," says Peggy, and the girls looked at her open-eyed. They are not used to small Virginia princesses who have to be wooed long.

"A box for Miss Margaret," announces the maid.

"Margaret? Oh," says Catherine, puzzled, "Oh, Peggy, she means for you."

"Yes," says Peggy, and reaches over her hand.

The girls watch her while she unties the string.

"Do you wish a light, miss?" asks the maid.

But Peggy does not hear her, for there steals into the room a faint, wonderful fragrance, the fragrance of the pines of Virginia.

Louise steps forward and lifts the cover. Under the waxed paper in the long box are silky tassels of shining green, wet still with the moisture of the woods.

There is an envelope, half hidden under the mass of green. Peggy's hand shuts over it; she has seen the writing. No prying eyes shall read John Carter's message to "his fourth girl," as she calls herself bitterly.

"Read it, Peggy," cries Louise.

But Peggy stands up, defiant, the box in her arms.

"Go and dress," she commands.

"We shall never get ready."

"When Mammy Chloe told me that you had joined Louise Dalton's house party, the light went out of the sun. I want you here, and I had traveled all these miles that I might come to you on St. Valentine's day and ask you again—for the thirtieth time, dear—if you wouldn't."

"Mammy Chloe says that you are homesick. So dear heart, I send you a bit of home. To the other girls I have sent flowers and verses that mean nothing, but to my Peggy I send her own pine.

"I shall get back to New York with this and send it up to you to let you know that I shall dine at the Dalton's to-night. I found a note from Louise and will telephone her. Come down early, and I will meet you at the foot of the stairway. And Peggy, oh, Peggy, if you mean to say 'yes' this time, wear a bit of the pine, and I will know that my Peggy is my own—at last."

"JACK."

An hour later a wonderful little figure in a pale green trailing gown, with a rope of pearls around her young neck, and a silken bit of pine among the laces at her breast, comes out of the door, and glides down the hall. As she reaches Louise's room she sees that the rest of the girls are there, but she passes by unheeding.

Down the corridor to the stairway. The girls follow her, and look over the railing as she turns the curve below them.

"She is really beautiful," says Catherine, as the light falls on the up-turned, radiant face.

"Poor Virginia lover," laughs Edith, "if Peggy looks like that all the evening he will have rivals."

Just then a man comes across the broad hall and advances to meet Peggy.

He is tall, strong and handsome.

"John Carter," breathes Catherine, and starts to descend.

But Edith holds her back.

"Look," she says.

They meet half way up the stairway—little Peggy and John Carter. He takes her hand in his. Then there is a breathless moment and the watchers slip away discreetly.

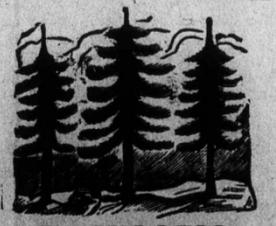
"Jack!" they say, with a light breaking in upon them.

And then they know—beautiful Catherine, and stately Edith, and gracious Louise—that it is little Peggy, after all—little Peggy of the Pines.

### Renan's Latter-day Confession.

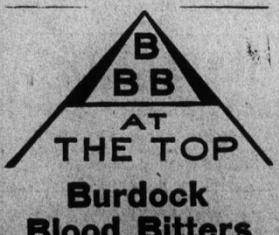
Renan, the French apostate, once made a confession—and that in his latter years. Read it and pass it on to those whose pride forbids their submission to an infallible teacher: "Had I stayed in Brittany, I should ever have remained a stranger to that vanity which the world has loved and encouraged. I mean a measure of deftness in evoking a jingle of words and ideas. \Paris this pleased them; and perchance to my misfortune, I was constrained to continue it. . . I see around me pure and simple men, in whom Christianity is sufficient to produce virtue and honor. Ah, God, save them from ever having aroused in them that wretched faculty, that fatal spirit of criticism, which so imperiously demands satisfaction; and which, when satisfied, leaves the soul so few sweet enjoyments! Would to God it lay with me to stifle it! . . . Have I, therefore, lost all hope of returning to Catholicism? Ah, such a thought would be too cruel for me! No, I no longer hope to return by rational process; but I have often been on the verge of a complete revolt from a guide which at times I mistrusted. The regret of my life is to have chosen for my studies a line of research which will never be quieted, and which always endures through enticing questioning as to a reality forever vanquished."

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