

Uncle Remus at the Telephone.

One night recently as Uncle Remus' Miss Sally was sitting by the fire sewing and singing softly to herself, she heard the old man come into the back-yard and enter the dining-room, where a bright fire was still burning in the grate. Everything had been cleared away. The cook had gone and the house girl had disappeared, and the little boy was asleep. Uncle Remus had many privileges in the house of the daughter of his old mistress and master, and one of these was to warm himself by the dining-room fire whenever he felt lonely, especially at night. To the lady there was a whimsical suggestion of pathos in everything the old negro said and did; nevertheless, her attitude toward Uncle Remus was one of bustling criticism and depreciation. By leaning back in her chair a little she could see him as he sat before the fire enjoying the warmth.

"I should think it was time for you to be in bed," she exclaimed.

"No'm, 'tain't," responded Uncle Remus. "I year tell dat wen ole folks git ter bed soon, dey feelin's bin hurted, en goodness knows dey ain't nobody hurted my feelin's dis day."

"Well, there isn't anything in there that you can pick up. I've had everything put under lock and key."

"Yessum, dey is sumpin' ne'r in yer, too, kaze yer Mars John supper settin' right down yer fo' de fier, an little mo' hit 'ud a bin dry spang up if I hadn't a drapt in des w'en I did. I year Mars John tell dat ar nigger 'oman w'at you call yo' cook fer ter have 'im some fried aigs fer supper, en ef deze ain't fried en dried I ain't never see none w'at is. W'en Mars John come you kin set plum in dar en year 'im crack um up in his mouf same lak cow chawin' fodder. Las' Sat'dy night Mars John fotch some fried 'isters home, en ef dish yer nigger 'oman stay on dis hill many mo' days he ull git all his vittles cooked down town en fetch it home in a baskit. Whar Mars John now?"

Just then there was a call at the telephone. The little gong rattled away like a house was on fire. As the lady went to answer it Uncle Remus rose from his chair and crept on his tip-toe to the door that opened into the sitting-room. He heard his Miss Sally talking.

"Well, what's wanted? O! is that you? Well, I couldn't imagine. No. Fast asleep too long ago to talk about. Why, of course! No! Why should I be frightened! I declare, you ought to be ashamed! Remus is here. Two hours! I think you are horrid mean! By-by!"

Uncle Remus stood looking suspiciously at the telephone after his Miss Sally had turned away.

"Miss Sally," he said, presently, "wuz you talkin' ter Mars John?"

"Certainly, Who did you suppose it was?"

"Wharbouts wuz Mars John?"

"At his office."

"Way down yan on Yallerbamer Street?"

"Yes."

At this piece of information Uncle Remus emitted a groan that was full of doubt and pity and went into the dining-room. His Miss Sally laughed and then an idea seemed to strike her. She called him back, and went again to the telephone.

"Is that you, Central? Please connect eleven-forty with fourteen-sixty." There was a fluttering sound in the instrument, and then the lady said: "Yes, it's me. Here's Remus. Yes, but he wants to talk to you."

"Here, Remus, take this and put it to your ear. Here, simpleton! It won't hurt you."

Uncle Remus took the ear-piece and handled it as though it had been a loaded pistol. He tried to look in it at both ends, and then he placed it at his ear and grinned sheepishly. He heard a thin, sepulchral, but familiar voice calling out: "Hello, Remus!" and his sheepish grin gave place to an expression of uneasy astonishment.

"Hello, Remus! Hello-ello-ello-ello-o-o!"

"Is dat you, Mars John?"

"Of course it is, you bandy-legged old villain. I have no time to be standing here. What do you want?"

"How in de name er Heben you git in dar, Mars John?"

"In where?"

"In dish yer—in dish yer appleratus?"

"O, you be—fiddlestick! What do you want?"

"Mars John, kin you see me, or is she all dark in dar?"

"Are you crazy? Where is your Miss Sally?"

"She in yer, hollun en laughin'. Mars John, how you gwine git out'n dar?"

"Dry up. Good night."

"Yer 'tis, Miss Sally," said Uncle Remus, after listening a moment. "Dey's a mighty zoonin' gwine on in dar, en I dunner whe'er Mars' John tryin' ter scramble out, er whe'er he des tryin' fer ter make hisself comfertable in dar."

"What did he say, Remus?"

"He up en 'low'd dat one un us wuz a vilyun, but dey was such a buzzin' gwine on in dar dat I couldn't zactly ketch de rights un it."

Uncle Remus went back to his place by the dining-room fire, and after a while began to mutter and talk to himself.

"What's the matter now?" his Miss Sally asked.

"I 'us des a sayin' dat I know Mars John mus' be suffun some'rs."

"Why?"

"O, I des knows it; kaze ef he ain't, w'at make he talk so weak? He bleedz ter be in trouble. I'm a tellin' you de Lord's trufe—dat wite man talk like he ain't bigger den one er deze yer little teenchy chany dolls. I boun' you," he continued, "ef I'uz a wite 'oman en Mars John wuz my ole man, I'd snatch up my bonnet en I'd natully sail roun' dish yer town twel I fine out w'at de matter wid 'im. I would dat."

The old man's Miss Sally laughed till the tears came in her eyes, and then she said:

"There's a piece of pie on the side-board. Do get it, and hush so much talking."

"Thanky, missis, thanky!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, shuffling across the room. He got the pie and returned to his chair. "Dish yer pie," he continued, holding it up between his eyes and the fire—"dish yer pie come in good time, kaze Mars John talk so weak en fur off it make me feel right empty. I speck he be well time he git home, en ef he 'uz ter git

ter dish yer pie, hit mout make 'im be bad dreams."

In a few moments the pie had disappeared, and when his Miss Sally looked at him a little later, he was fast asleep.—*Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution.*

THAT BOY.

[Little Rock Gazette.]

The other day a lady, accompanied by her son, a very small boy, boarded a train at Little Rock. The woman had a careworn expression hanging over her face like a tattered veil, and many of the rapid questions asked by the boy were answered by unconscious sighs.

"Ma," said the boy, "that man's like a baby, ain't he?" pointing to a bald-headed man sitting just in front of them.

"Hush."

"Why must I hush?"

After a few moments' silence, "Ma, what's the matter with that man's head?"

"Hush, I tell you. He's bald."

"What's bald?"

"His head hasn't got a y hair on it."

"Did it come off?"

"I guess so."

"Will mine come off?"

"Sometime, may be."

"Then I'll be bald, won't I?"

"Yes."

"Will you care?"

"Don't ask so many questions."

After another silence the boy exclaimed,

"Ma, look at that fly on that man's head."

"If you don't hush I'll whip you when we get home."

"Look! There's another fly. Look at 'em fight; look at 'em!"

"Madam," said the man, putting aside a newspaper and looking around, "what's the matter with that young hyena?"

The woman blushed, stammered out something, and attempted to smooth back the boy's hair.

"One fly, two fly, three flies," said the boy innocently, following with his eyes a basket of oranges carried by the newsboy.

"Here, you young hedge-hog," said the bald-headed man, "if you don't hush I'll have the conductor put you off the train."

The poor woman, not knowing what else to do, boxed the boy's ears, and then gave him an orange to keep him from crying.

"Ma, have I got red marks on my head?"

"I'll slap you again if you don't hush."

"Mister," said the boy, after a short silence, "does it hurt to be bald-headed?"

"Youngster," said the man, "if you'll keep quiet I'll give you a quarter."

The boy promised and the money was paid over.

The man took up his paper and resumed his reading.

"This is my bald-headed money," said the boy. "When I get bald-headed I'm goin' to give boys money. Mister, have all bald-headed men got money?"

The annoyed man threw down his paper, arose and exclaimed: "Madam, hereafter when you travel leave that young gorilla at home. Hitherto I always thought that the old prophet was very cruel for calling the she bears to kill children for making sport of his head, but now I am forced to believe that he did a Christian act. If your boy had been in the crowd he would have died first. If I can't find another seat on this train I'll ride on the cowcatcher rather than remain here."

"The bald-headed man is gone," said the boy, and the woman leaned back and blew a tired sigh from her lips.

THE DREAMER.

All day the white-haired woman sits
Beside the open door, and knits;
No living thing her dim eye sees,
As, busy with old memories,
She dreams her dreams of what has been,
And knits her old-time fancies in.

She thinks of those who long ago
Went out across the threshold low.
How many times her listening ear
Has thought familiar footsteps near,
And she has started up to find
A dead leaf rustling in the wind.

But never as of those who lie
Beneath the wide and tender sky,
With folded hands on quiet breast,
All wrapped about with peace and rest.
She thinks of them. For her they tread
The green earth with her. None are dead.

Though years have fallen like the leaves
Above the graves where summer weaves
Her grass-fringed coverlet, to keep
Safe hid from us the ones asleep,
She sees them all. Not grass nor mold
Can hide the ones she loved of old.

She talks with them. When brown-winged bee
Make merry in the locust trees,
She thinks he comes and sits with her
Whose voice was love's interpreter.
O dreamer! young again to-day,
What matter if your hair is gray?

Sometimes she thinks that round her knee
Her children play in happy glee,
And when they tired and sleepy grow
She sings some song of long ago,
And on her loving mother-breast
She rocks her little ones to rest.

O dreamer, knitting all the day
Your dreams in with your stitches gray,
Yours is a happy, happy heart—
A haunted world from ours apart.
The years that turned your tresses gray
Have given you back your youth to-day.

83-84.

[Cincinnati Merchant Traveler.]

A year ago we sang in glee,
Hurrah, hurrah for '83,
And now in sadness, don't you see,
We say farewell, old '83.
'Tis thus with friends, however true,
We give the old up for the new;
We don't forget their merits quite,
But time somehow has made them slight.
As with our friends, so with the years,
We give them up with some few tears,
To show that while they're laid aside,
We're not exactly glad they've died.
Ah, well, what reck's it what we say?
'Tis thus the world has run away,
And when our little course is run,
Our friends will do as we have done.
So stop regrets, let's sigh no more,
Here's health and wealth to '84!
Who knows what sorrow it may bring?
Who knows what death knells it may ring?
Who knows what joys there are in store
For those who live through '84?
We give it up, and so must you,
And choose the next best thing to do!
Which, as the oracle is dumb,
Is this, take all things as they come;
Swear off your old sins, let them die,
To give more room for new supply.
Be wise, and resolutions make—
Unless they're made you can not break
A resolution, don't you see?
You learned that truth in '83.
Announce to all your change of heart,
And take a nice and pious start.
Now go along, quite slow at first,
Until you think you've passed the worst—
You think you have, but hear us shout,
The devil is going to knock you out!
But don't give up, it's nice to strive—
Swear off again in '85.
Thus off and on, from year to year,
We drop our sins from church to beer,
Until at last we close the fuss
By lettin' sin drop on to us.
But down with lectures, what's the use
At such a time of turning loose
Such proper precepts? Let there be
A half a tear for '83,
And then let out with rip and roar
A monstrous boom for '84!

W. J. Sampson