

THE TRAIN-BOY.

"Mid the rattling of the train,
And the locomotive's noise,
Like a patient ear-teaser.
Comes the train-boy's voice;
And while mankind squirms and wriggles,
He doth hatefully rejoice.

He'll wudge you with his elbows,
And he'll tread upon your corn
With his big high-pressure box-toes
Till of sympathy it's gone;
And you wax profane, and sorrow
Till you ever had been born.

With caramels he'll peit you.
Then his candies will distract you;
And he'll dominate your tributes;
With his invalid fruit.
Till he's ready to uncover
The freckled-patched cheroot.

He'll parades his water-lilies,
That were gathered in the spring;
Then a choice job of yellow-
Covered literature he'll bring,
And these ancient publications
In your lap he'll destryling.

Magazines he'll shower upon you,
Daily journals he will pour,
With his travel guide-books printed,
Quite a dozen years or more;
And the self-same ot has vended
Heaven knows how oft before.

You may sleep, or swear, or threaten,
To you is every art employ.
You may be a person, or a person,
And their bitterness alloy;
But not a continental
Cares the wild, untamed train-boy.
—Commercial Travelers' Magazine.

PROVIDENTIAL PIGS.

"Oh, missus, missus! Somefin's done happened."

Blank horror and dismay were depicted upon the face of my small African, as she stood upon my threshold with upraised hands and eyeballs that seemed starting from their sockets. Her pause was one of preparation, for with the innate consideration of her race she sought to break the news gently to me, but the burden of it was too great for her, and with the next breath she exclaimed:

"Dem pigs done chawed up Miss Lyddy's weddin' gown!"

"Glory," I exclaimed (she had been piously christened Gloriana), "Glory, how did it happen?"

"Dunno!" said Glory. "Pears to me dem pigs has got Satan in 'em. Guess dey's 'scended from de ole lot what run down a steep place into the sea. I'll go an' fetch ye a piece!"

She sped out and instantly returned with a tattered shred of India mull that had once been white, and still bore some resemblance to a gown. Poor Miss Lyddy! This was all that remained of her dream of wedding splendors. It was too pitiful! I felt at once that the bonds of good neighborhood had been irretrievably broken, and that Maj. Hawthorne must be made aware of this last and worst degradation of his unseemly pigs.

But who would break the news to Miss Lyddy?

"Glory," said I; "where is she?"

"Gone over to de burryin' place ob her ancestors," answered Glory.

Poor, faithful soul; even in those last days of her maidenhood, with the vague terrors of matrimony and the still more appalling responsibility of unsaved heathen souls hanging over her, she did not forget the ancestors. Long lines of Ludkinse lay buried in little sunken hillocks in the family burying-place which lay just in sight of her sitting-room window. She herself was the last her race, and until within three weeks it had seemed that the only fate which awaited her was to live out her little space under the ancestral roof-tree, and then take her place in the silent ranks of those who had gone before. But a change had come. It came in the person of a returned missionary from the Micronesian Islands, who had buried the first and second partners of his joys and sorrows somewhere under the palm trees of those tropical lands and had come back to the scenes of his youth to recruit his health, serve his cause, and look up partner No. 3. He met Miss Lyddy at a woman's missionary meeting. He called the next afternoon and was invited to stay to tea. He accepted the invitation, and next morning Miss Lyddy came into my room—for I, too, domiciled under the Ludkinse roof-tree, for a consideration—and, with much hesitation and many faint and delicate blushes, informed me that she had promised to share the future lot of the Rev. Nehemiah Applebloom, to take care of his six children, and to support him in his arduous labors among the heathen of the Micronesian Islands.

I was struck dumb with amazement.

"Miss Lyddy," I said at length, "have you duly considered this project?"

Her thin figure quivered, and her white face, that had yet a delicate remembrance of youth in it, grew tender with feeling.

"Yes," she said; "I think I have. I have always had a presentiment that I should marry a minister or a missionary." Admirable and prophetic faith! And Mr. Applebloom says he knew the moment he set eyes upon me that I was ordained to be his wife; so you see it is not the surprise to us of us that it is likely to be to our friends."

I knew that her mind was fully made up. I demurred no longer, but lent myself at once to discussion of the wedding, which I plainly saw was what Miss Lyddy desired of me.

"You will be married in church, I suppose?"

"Oh, no," said Miss Lyddy, with gentle decision. "I am the last of the Ludkinse. All the Ludkinse have been married at home. I will go out from under my own roof-tree. If I must seem to forsake the ancestors," she paused to regulate a little choking in her throat, "I will at least not forsake their traditions. I shall leave a little money with the Parish Clerk, that he may see that the graves of my dead are kept in proper order, as I always have loved to keep them; but I shall at least go as a Ludkinse should. It is my desire to be married in my grandmother's wedding gown."

Miss Lyddy's voice trembled, and there was a humidity in her eyes, at which I did not wonder, for it was much like a funeral, after all.

"I thought, perhaps," went on Miss Lyddy, "if I brought the venerated relic to you, you would tell me if anything were necessary to be done to fit it to me. I don't care for the fashions, you know, and my grandmother, as I remember her, was about my height, but still, you know—something—some changes might be advisable."

"Certainly," I said, "do bring it to me. I should so like to see it."

"It is sprigged India (she called it Ingy) mull. My grandfather, Capt. Simon Ludkins, brought it home from over the seas. I'll bring it."

Like some pale and gentle ghost she rose then and went to the bureau drawer and unrolled from rolls of linen that smelt of lavender, the frail relic of Mrs. Capt. Simon Ludkins' wedding state. It was fine embroidered mull, the undoubted product of Indian looms.

"It's lovely," I said, "and so well kept that it will be just the thing for you. Will you try it on? We can tell then just what it needs."

Miss Liddy proceeded to disrobe herself and put on the spider-net gown. As she did so the changes in fashion's mandate became only too evident. It had no waist to speak of, and just a little lace-trimmed puff for sleeves.

Miss Liddy was evidently surprised. She had not thought of this. I knew well what the troubled look upon her face meant, and I pitied her maiden sensibilities. Could it be possible that her grandmother, Mrs. Capt. Simon Ludkins, had ever worn such a gown as this? She said not a word that could indicate the depth of her mortification, but her face was a study for an artist.

"There must be sleeves," she murmured, after a few moments of silent and embarrassed contemplation.

"Yes," I replied, cheerfully as my constrained gravity would allow. "And you might have a fichu and a flounce on the bottom."

She looked down. She had not before realized that the skirt of the venerated relic lacked a full quarter of a yard of touching the floor.

"However could they?" she ejaculated in an undertone. But she quickly recovered herself, and looked up to me cheerfully over her spectacles.

"Old Mrs. Capt. Simon? I remember her well. A mighty fine woman. She never would have gone to the ends of the earth with a missionary. It's the craziest scheme I ever heard of."

I began to fear I should never get to my errand.

"It was put out on the grass to bleach, being a little yellow with age. It was a lovely embroidered India muslin that the old Captain brought home from India himself."

"How well I remember him in my boyhood! A jolly old soul! A granddaughter of his go off to the Cannibal Islands to be eaten up by savages. I won't have it!"

"Her heart is set upon going," I continued. "The wedding-gown was put out to bleach, and this very afternoon those little Berkshire pigs of yours—they are a nuisance to the whole neighborhood, Major—trampled and rooted it to pieces, so that it is utterly ruined."

"Little black rascals!" said the Major, with a chuckle behind his neckcloth.

"And I have come, without her knowledge, to tell you of it, because I was sure that, under the circumstances, a gentleman of your breeding would feel in honor bound to make some reparation to Miss Lydia."

The Major mused and looked at his boot for a moment in silence.

"Miss Grace," he said, at length, "I thank you for the service you have rendered me in this matter. Will you have the goodness to say to Miss Liddy, with my compliments, that I shall do myself the honor to wait upon her to-morrow at 10 o'clock to adjust this unfortunate matter? I beg, in the meantime, that she will give herself as little solicitude; for, though I cannot restore the ancient and venerated dry goods, I will do the best that is possible under the circumstances to make the loss good."

He bowed over my hand, and the audience was evidently concluded. Was I satisfied? No, indeed. What woman would not have felt wronged to be left, at the end of a mission of disinterested benevolence, in such a state of doubt and uncertainty as this? But I was obliged to go home, nevertheless, and wait as patiently as I could for the stroke of 10 next morning.

Glory was faithful, and had beside the natural craft of her race, and I knew that she could be trusted. As for me, I swiftly donned my bonnet and set out to find Maj. Hawthorne. It was a bright June evening, and my walk through the meadow and the grove that skirted Hawthorne-dean would have been a more delightful one if I had borne a mind more at ease.

The Major was a gentleman by birth, but he lived out his fifty bachelor years in a gay and careless way that had seemed to set the gentler part of his creation at defiance in the lifetime of his parents. Hawthorne-dean had been a beautiful estate. It still retained many marks of wealthy and cultivated ownership, but it was sadly run down, as the home of a bachelor is apt to be.

The grove, which had once been the pride of the place, was grown up with brush now, and the sere leaves of many summer's growth rustled under my feet as I walked through it. At one point, coming suddenly around a thick clump of undergrowth, I heard a chorus of tiny snorts and the scampering of numberless hawks, and I knew that I had invaded a haunt of the Major's last agricultural freak, the very brood of Berkshire pigs that were the source of all my borrowed woes. Away they scampered, their snouts well raised in the air, and each with a curl in his tail that seemed too ornamental to be wholly the product of nature and to justify the village rumor that the Major's own man put those tails in curl-papers every night. They had the air of spoiled children, every one, and were evidently the Major's pets. But that didn't matter; they had ruined Miss Lyddy's wedding-gown, to say nothing of other aggravating exploits which do not belong to this story, and I was determined to have satisfaction out of their owner.

I found the Major sitting on his piazza, with an after-dinner look upon his handsome, good-humored face. He rose to greet me with an air of old-school politeness, dashed with a faint wonder that I, a woman, should have had the hardihood to approach a place so little frequented by women.

"Good evening, Miss Grace. I am happy to see you. In what can I have the honor to serve you?"

He had read my face, and knew that I had come on a mission.

"Maj. Hawthorne," I said, paying no attention to his offer of a chair, "I have come on a very painful errand."

"Sit down, madam," said the Major, politely. "I cannot possibly permit a lady to stand on my piazza. I ought, perhaps, to ask you to walk in, but it is rather stuff inside this evening."

"No," I said, "I will sit here, if you please." To tell the truth, indoors, as seen through the windows, had not the most inviting look, and I was glad to compromise.

"It is beautiful," I said; "but who is to be the bridegroom?"

"My dear Grace," said she, "the Major has brought me his mother's wedding-gown to be married in."

"It is beautiful," I said; "but who is to be the bridegroom?"

"You have, no doubt, heard—"

plunging in medias res—"that Miss Lydia Ludkins is about to be married?"

"Married! Miss Lydia! No! Hadn't heard a word of it," said the Major, in genuine amazement. "Who is the fortunate man, pray?"

"The Rev. Nehemiah Applebloom, a missionary to the Micronesian Islands, who has come home to recruit his health and find a wife."

"I know him," said the Major. "Saw him down at the station—a long, lean, lank individual—just fit for his vocation; no temptation whatever to canibals! But what the deuce is he going to do with Miss Lydia? What will Balaam's Corners do without her?"

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"Maj. Hawthorne subscribed \$50 to the Micronesian mission, and sent Mr. Applebloom elsewhere to look for a wife, and the verdict of Balaam's Corners was that he had done the same thing."

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.

"I wanted to ask her how she had disposed of her presentment, but I did not dare."

"That matter, indeed?" She spoke as though it were already as remote from her as the pyramids.