WILLAMETTE FARMER: SALEM, OREGON, AUGUST 1, 1884.



THE LAND OF THE AFTERNOON.

An old man sits in his garden chair, Watching the sublit western sky ; What sees he in the blue depths there, Where only the Isles of Memory lie ?

There are princely towers and castles high, There are gardens fairer than human ken.

There are happy children thronging by, Radient women and stately men, Singing with voices of sweet attune The songs of the land of the Afternoon.

The old man watches a form of cloud That floats where the s zure islands are.

And he sees a homestead gray and bowed, And a hand that beckons him afar.

O, cheek of roses and hair of gold ! O, even of Heaven's divinest blue ! Long have ye lain in the graveyard mold-

But life is infinite, love is true. He will find her-yes-it must be soon:

They will mest in the Land of the Afternoon The sky has changed, and a wrack of cloud

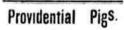
Is driving athwart its troubled face, The golden mist is a trailing shroud.

It is cold and bleak in the garden place, The old man smiles and droops his head, The thin hair blows from his wrinkled brow

The sunset radiance has spread O'er every wasted feature now;

One sigh exhales like a breath of June. He has found the Land of the Afternoon.

"And in the afternoon they came unto A land where it seemed always afternoon - The Lotus Eaters.



"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 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 know," 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 shattered shred of Indian 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 Ibjor Hawthorne must be made aware of this last and worst depredation of his unseemly pigs.

"But who would break the news to Miss Lyddy?'

"Glory," said I, "where is she !" "Gone over to de buryin' place ob her

ancestors," answered Glory. Poor, faithful soul; even in those last

days of her maidenhood, with the terrors of matrimony and still more appalling responsibilities of unsaved heathen souls hanging over her, she did not forget the ancestors. Long lines of Ludkinses lay buried in the sunken hillocks in the family burying-place, which lay just in sight of her sitting-room window. She herself was the last of her race, and until within three weeks it had seemed that the only fate that 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 Microneian Islands, who had buried the first and second partners of his joys and sorrows some where 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 -I, too, was domiciled under the Ludkins roof tree, for a consideration-and with much hesitation and many faint and delicate blushes, informed me that she promised to share the future lot of the Rev. Nehemiah Applebloom, to take care of his six children, and to sup- like a school-girl in her teens-had but a port him in his arduous labors among short furlough, and the marriage must the heathen of the Micronesian Islands. I was struck dumb with amazement. "Miss Lyddy," I said at length, "have you duly considered the project?" Her thin figure quivered, and her white face, that had yet a delicate rewith feeling.

"Yes," she said; "I think I have. I have always had a presentment that I should marry a minister or missionary." Admirable 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 no sur- that case, tell her that I thought that it prise to either of us that it is likely to be our friends."

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

regulate a little choking in her throat-"I will at least not forsake their traditure ; but I will at least go as a Ludkins my grandmother's wedding-gown."

Miss Lyddy's voice trembled, and there was 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 less hoofs, and I knew I had invaded a were necessary to be done to fit it to me. I don't care for the fashions, you know, freak, the very brood of Berkshire pigs and my grandmother, as I remember that were the source of my borrowed her, was about my height, but you know -something-some changes might be advisable.'

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

"It is sprigged India (she called it Simon Ludkins, brought it 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 is lovely," I said, "and so well kept that it will be just the thing for you. just what it needs."

Miss Lyddy proceeded to disrobe herself and put on the spider-net gown. As she did so the changes in fashion's man- quented by women. dates became only too evident. It had lace-trimmed puff for sleeves. Miss the honor to serve you?" Lyddy was evidently surprised. She had not thought of this. I knew well what the troubled look on her face meant, and pitied her maiden sensibilities. Could it be possible that her grandmother, Mrs. come on a very painful errand." Capt. Ludkins, had ever worn such a gown as this? She said not a word that could indicate the depth of her mortifi-

cation-but her face was a study for an artist. "There must be sleeves," she mur-

mured, after a few moments of silent and embarrased contemplation.

alterations, when the dreadful event occurred with which this narrative opens. "Glory," I said, "do you keep watch on Miss Lyddy when she returns. Say nothing what has happened unless she

was bleached enough and took it up to dry, and you don't know where I put it.

misses the gown from the grass. In

where, tell her you don't know." Glory was faithful, and had besides the natural craft of her race, and I knew that she could be trusted. As for me, I "You will be married in church, I sup- swiftly donned my bonnet and set out to find Major Hawthorne. It was a bright "Oh, no," said Miss Lyddy, with gen- June evening, and my walk through the tle decision. "I am the last of the Lud-i meadow and grove that skirted Hawkinses. All the Ludkinses have been thornedean would have been a more demarried at home. I will go out from ightful one if I had borne a mind more under my own roof-tree. If I must seem at ease. The major was a gentleman to forsake my ancestors"-she paused to by birth, but he lived out his fifty bachclor years in a gay and careless way that seemed to set the gentler part of tions. I shall leave a lit le money with creation at defiance. In the lifetime of the parish clerk, that he may see that his parents Hawthornedean had been a the graves of my dead are kept in proper beautiful estate. It still retained many order, as I always loved to keep them, marks of wealthy and cultivated ownerand I hope they will forgive my depar- ship, but it was sadly run down, as the home of a bachelor is apt to be. The should. It is my desire to be married in grove, which had been the pride of the place, was grown up with brush now, and the sere leaves of many summers' 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 numberhaunt of the major's last agricultural woes. Away they scampered, their snouts 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-Ingy) mull. My grandiather, Captain 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 Will you try it on? We can tell then to greet me with an air of old-school politeness, dashed with a faint wonder that I, a woman, should have the hardihood to approach a place so little fre-

"Good evening, Miss Grace. I am no waist to speak of, and just a little happy to see you. In what can I have

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

"Major Hawthorne," I said, paying no attention to his offer of a chair, "I have

"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 stuffy inside this evening."

"No," said I, "I will sit here, if you please." To tell you the truth, indoors, as seen through the windows, had not he was full on his knees before her, and

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

"It was put on the grass to bleach, peing 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 Canibal I am going out now, but if she asks Islands to be eaten up by savages! I where tall her you don't know" wont have it."

"Her heart is set upon going," I continued. "The wedding gown was put out to bleach, and this very alternoon those Berkshire pigs of yours-they are a nuisance to the whole neighborhood, Major-trampled and rooted it 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 gentle-man of your breeding would feel in honor bound to make some reparation to Miss Lyddy." The major mused and looked at his

boot for a moment in silence.

"Miss Grace," he said at length, "I am under obligations to you for the service you have rendered in this matter. Will you have the goodness to say to Miss my compliments, that I Ludkins, with skall 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 no 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 benevelence 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 had been in hearing when the message had been delivered to Miss Lyddy, and she, too, was on the watch. At last she scudded in from the hedge, her ivories all aglisten, and her eyes wide open and full of a rather incomprehensible mirth.

"He's a-comin'," she said, and such a sight."

At that moment the gate clicked, and up the walk strode, indeed, a most aston-ishing figure. The major had gotten himself up into a continental suit, which he must have fished out of the unknown depths of the ancient attics of Haw thorndean; black velvet coat with lace ruffles at the wrist, knee-breeches, white satin waistcoat, slippers, with shoe buckles, powdered wig and cocked hat. He was six feet tall, portly and wellformed, and he looked every inch a signer of the declaration at the very least. He was followed by his colored man, who carried a large brown paper parcel.

"He's come a courtin' missus," said Glory; "ye can see it in his face." I had not the instinct of Glory, and doubted it. But what his errand was I

was dying to know.

But he disappeared into Miss Lydna's parlor and I was left outside to temper my impatience as best I could. Pres ently Glory entered tip-toe.

"Missus, missus," she whispered, "de do's swung open jes' de leas' crack, an' its jes' opposite de big murror; an' if ye come out here in de hall ye can see it all in de murror as plain as day, an' it's a heap better'an a play."

It was a temptation, but believe me. dear reader, I resisted it. Only as Glory ran back to her peeping I followed to pull her away and send her out of doors -that was simply my duty-and there

Applebloom elsewhere to look for a wife, and the verdict of Balaam's Corners was that he had done the handsome

thing. "'Fore goodness!" said Glory, "ef dar weren't a clar relation between dem pigs an' Providence, den I don't know nothin'." Miss Lydia took the same pious view of the situation, and made the major the

most dainty and dignified of wives.



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constrained gravity would allow. "And ou 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 fully a 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 heerfully over her spectacles.

"How ingenious you are!" she said with an air of sweet relief. "I knew you would help me out."

"We went together and bought the requisite mull that day, but when we came to put it beside the "venerated relie" of Mrs. Captain Ludkins it was Balaam's Corners do without her?" evident that time had so enriched the unfortunately unlike.

"We can lay it out on the grass," I aid ; "these June days are just the thing for it, and as it will be evening, nobody will in the least notice."

Again Miss Lyddy smiled gratefully, and declared that my suggestion should be carried out in the most faithful man-

The Rev. Nehemiah Applebloom-"A lovely name, don't you think so?" said Miss Lyddy, and she blushed and smiled transpire the next week, so the relic was put out to bleach forthwith. It had already been put upon the grass three days

and nights, and had been religiously dress-maker's hands for the necessary craziest scheme I ever heard of."

"Yes," I replied, cheerfully as my the most inviting look, and I was glad to she with that rapt, scraphic look upon 0 compromise.

> "You have no doubt heard that Miss Lyddy 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 Appleblossom, 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 get down at the station-long, lean, lank individual-just for his vocation ; no temptation whatever for the Cannibals! But what in the duce is he going to do with Miss Lydia? What will

"Balaam's Corners must do the best color of the latter that they were most they can," I said-I fear a little sharply -for my mind was still in a most ag-

gressive state toward the major. "They are to be married next week, and-

"What will become of the 'ancestors?" interpolated the major, in whom surprise seemed to have gotten the better of his habitual politeness.

"Oh, she has made arrangements with Mr. Crow about that."

"Just like her: Dear, faithful girl." The major had all his life loved all the sex, not one, and I was not to be beguiled by this show of feeling.

"She had set her heart upon being married in her grandmother's wedding gown

"Old Mrs. Captain Simon? I rememwatered by Miss Lyddy at morn and ber her well. A mighty fine woman. noon and dewy eve, and the next day it She would never have gone to the ends membrance of youth in it, grew tender was to be taken up carly and put in the of the earth with a missionary. It's the

she with that rapt, seraphic look upon her face which no woman ever wears except en the most vitally interesting except en the most vitally interesting occasions. But, Glory disposed of, I went back to my sewing and waited as best I could the conclusion of the momentous interview. The major came out at length, as smiling as a May morning, leaving the brown paper parcel behind him.

It was very still in Miss Lyddy's room for a quarter of an hour, and then she. too, emerged from her retreat. Spread over her hands was a gown of cream-colored brocade embelished with the loveliest roses in full bloom, with blue forget-me-nots trailing here and there among them. It had an ample waist, lbow sleeves, and a train a vard and a half long.

"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?"

She smiled as angels do, and looked afar ; a delicate flutter of pink hung out in her cheek to deprecate her recreancy. as she whispered in a tone of gentle but consumate triumph "The major him-Didn't he look grand in those self ! knee breeches?"

And Mr. Applebloom?"

"Major Hawthorne will adjust that matter

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

"I congratulate you, Miss Lydia." I said, growing formal, for she had be-haved shamefully.

"Don't blame me," she murmured. "Major Hawthorne declares he has loved me since I was a child, but never thought himself worthy of me, the gay deceiver; and Mr. Applebloom you know, is only the acquaintance of a day.

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

Major Hawthorne subscribed \$50 to the Micronesian mission, and sent Mr.

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