

# THE COLUMBIAN.

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NO. 7.

## A WEDDING GOWN.

"Oh, missus, missus! Somefins 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 hasty 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 chewed 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 scented from de ole lot what run down a steep place inter the sea. I'll go an' fetch 'em 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 Major Hawthorne must be made aware of this last and sad deprecation 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 to visit de ancestors," answered Glory.

Poor faithful soul! even in the last days of her maidenhood, with the vague terrors of matrimony and the still more appalling responsibilities of unsaved heathen souls hanging over her, she did not forget the ancestors. Long lines of Ludkins's 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 of 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 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 reënt his partner No. 3. He may be a missionary, but a woman's missionary netting. 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 Ludkins' 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 with 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," said Miss Lyddy, "I said at length, 'have you duly considered this prospect?'"

Her thin figure quivered, and her white face that yet had 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 either of us that it is likely to be to our friends."

I knew then that her mind was fully made up. I demurred no longer, but lent myself to the 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 Ludkins. All the Ludkins have been married at home. I will go out on my own roof tree, and 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, and I hope they will forgive my departure, but I will at least go as a Ludkins 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 venerable 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 Ingu) mull. My grandfather, Captain 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 a bureau drawer and unrolled, from folds 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. Will you try it on? We can then tell just what it needs."

Miss Lyddy proceeded to disrobe her-

self 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 Lyddy 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 silent 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 venerable relic lacked a full quarter of a yard of touching the floor.

"However could they?" they ejaculated in an undertone. They ejaculated in a covered herself, and looked up to me cheerfully over her spectacles.

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

We went out together to buy the requisite mull that day, but when we came to put it beside the "venerated relic" of Mrs. Capt. Ludkins, it was evident that time had so enriched the color of the latter that the two were most unfortunately unlike.

"We can lay it out on the grass," I said; "those June dews 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 manner.

The Rev. Nehemiah Applebloom—"A lovely name, don't you think so?" said Miss Lyddy, and she blushed and smiled like a school-girl in her teens—had but a short furlough, and the marriage was to transpire the next week, so the relic was put out to bleach forthwith. It had three days and nights and had been religiously watered by Miss Lyddy at morn and noon and dewy eve, and the next day it was to be taken up early and put into the dressmaker's hands for the necessary alterations, when the dreadful event occurred, with which this narrative opens.

"Glory," I said, "do you keep watch over Miss Lyddy when she returns. Say nothing about what has happened unless she misses the gown from the grass. In that case tell her that I thought it was bleached enough and took it up to dry, and you don't know where I have put it. I am going out now, but if she asks where I 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 swiftly donned my bonnet and set out to find Maj. Hawthorne. It was a bright June evening, and my walk through the meadow and grove that skirted Hawthorneau 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 had lived out his fifty bachelor years in a gay and careless way that had seemed to set the gentler part of creation at defiance. In the lifetime of his parents Hawthorneau had been a rich and cultivated ownership, but it was sadly run down as the home of a bachelor was apt to be. The grove, which had once been the pride of the place, was grown up to brush now, and the serene leaves of many summers' growth rustled under my feet as I walked idly around a thick clump of undergrowth, I heard a chorus of tiny snorts, and the scampering of numberless hoofs, and knew that I had invaded the haunts 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 snorts well raised in 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 men put them 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.

"Major 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 can not 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," I said, I will sit here if you please. To tell the truth, in doors, as seen through the windows, had not the most inviting look, and I was glad to compromise.

"You have no doubt heard"—plunging in medias res, that Miss Lyddy Ludkins is about to be married."

"Married! Miss Lyddy! 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; what the deuce is he going to do with Miss Lyddy? What will Balaam's Corners do without her?"

"Balaam's Corners must do the best it can," I said—I fear a little sharply—for my mind was still in a most aggressive state toward the Major.

"They are to be married next week, and Mr. Applebloom will adjust that matter."

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

"I congratulate you, Miss Lyddy," I said, growing formal, for she had behaved 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 fifty dollars 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 handsome thing.

"Fore goodness!" said Glory, "of dere weren't a clear relation between dem pigs an' providence, den I don't know nothin'."

Miss Lyddy took the same pious view of the matter, and made the Major the most dainty and dignified of wives.

And then Comes Seed Time.

Our farmers will soon be done the harvest, and then follows seed-time for all summer-fallowed land. It was formerly the practice to wait till the early rains had softened the clods and mellowed the summer-fallowed lands before sowing. It was observed, however, that volunteer grain coming forward with the first rains gave a good start in the warm fall weather and warm soil, and that with the early good soil in an equally good state of cultivation. These observations led to the conclusion that the closer nature was followed in the matter of seeding the better. The volunteer was nature's mode of sowing. The grain dropped from the ear at the time of harvest lay on the soil in an equally good state of germination till the rains moistened the soil and caused the seed to sprout. Dry sowing is simply following nature in regard to the time of seeding. By summer-fallowing the land we help nature, by giving the grain a good mellow seed bed, in which the roots can strike deep down and grow large and strong even during the coldest winter weather. Experience is now highly in favor of summer-fallowing and dry or early sowing. Dry sowing may be commenced any time now when farmers are ready to go at it. Seed is preserved just as well in the dry soil as in the sack or bin, and the sooner they work follows harvest the better, for when it gets into the wood and fencing, etc., may be attended to.

These Horrible Primary Colors.

"Miss Lightfoot of Baltimore," says the Washington critic, "tells a funny story of Oscar Wilde. When the resthete was introduced, she made conversation as she would for any other stranger. He had mentioned at the club that he was going to New Orleans to look up some property left him by a relative, and when she had exhausted the ordinary 'airy nothing' she asked: 'When do you go South, Mr. Wilde?'"

"South? South? Why, ah! what do you mean, Miss Lightfoot, by South?"

"Why, you know, Mr. Wilde, you are only on the border of the Southern States!"

At then she entered into a little account of the subdivision of the country, to which he responded so stupidly that at last she laughed and said:

"You have never studied geography, Mr. Wilde?"

"Oh, no," was the response; "never, never, I could not, for the colors on the maps are so discordant, and they distress me. I never could bring myself to look at them!"

His Way.

A stranger who was having his boots blacked at the postoffice corner Saturday felt somewhat interested in the "shiner" and observed:

"Boy, do you go to school?"

"No, sir."

"Are you good in figures?"

"I dunno."

"If I had ten cents and gave you five, how much would I have left?"

"That isn't the way I figger," replied the boy after a moment's reflection. "If I black yer butes for five cents and you don't pay I'll foller ye and throw ten cents' worth of mud on the job!"

The man settled before the other boot was touched.—Detroit Free Press.

The excellencies of a man's nature are often the means of his fall and rise, and often afford the platform for his most dangerous temptations and keenest sorrows.—Rev. S. P. Herron.

them. It had an ample waist, elbow sleeves, and a train a yard and a half long.

"My dear Gracie," 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 recency, as she whispered in a tone of gentle but consummate triumph: "The Major himself! Didn't he look grand in his knee breeches?"

"And Mr. Applebloom?"

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Common Sense About the Piano.

Little girls fear the piano, and long for the time when, having at last mastered its difficulties, they will not be called upon to play upon it any more; while numberless great girls regard it as one of the many nuisances which they must put up with until they get married: Once, however, liberate young women from that piano to which like serfs they have so long been "assigned" but not "attached," and some of them will take to cultivating it for its own sake, while the remainder will at least spare both themselves and their friends a considerable amount of annoyance.

The enormous difficulty of modern piano-forte music constitutes in itself a reason why in the education of young girls the piano should not, like "dancing and deportment," be made obligatory. A woman can get through life so well without playing the piano; and for a few shillings, or even in extreme cases for a single shilling, she can, if her lot happens to be cast in London, hear from time to time the finest players that this great pianoforte-playing age has ever produced. It is not because the larger instrument attracts her attention that woman should be liberated from the task work imposed upon her in connection with it. It is because music, like every other art, demands from its votaries special gifts and inclinations, and because among women who are thus endowed it is a mistake to suppose that the piano is the only instrument suitable to them. Let it be understood in the first place that it is no more a disgrace for a young lady not to play the piano than it is a disgrace for her not to draw, to paint, or to model; and, in the second place, that if she does mean to play some instrument it is a mistake for her to restrict herself as a matter of course to the piano. Next to the organ the piano is, thanks to the orchestral effects which it can be made to produce, the finest instrument for which every great composer writes as a matter of course, and for which every great composer's orchestral works are arranged in reduced form. To the violin, which—except when "tours de force" are indulged in—yields like the human voice but a single note, is a very common thing, but is one we should not care to undertake. The violin, to be effective in a truly musical sense, must, like the human voice, be accompanied by the orchestra, or by the pianoforte, or by other members of the violin family. The pianoforte (putting aside of course, the two colossal organs), the only instrument which, for harmonic as well as melodic purposes, is complete in itself, and which is really an orchestra in all.

There are good reasons, then, why all who care much for music should study the piano, but no reason why they should study the piano exclusively. Often in the same family there are two, three and even four pianists. How much and how advantageously the musical domain of such a family would be increased if, instead of without neglect of the piano, the instruments of the violin family were taken up, with a view not necessarily to string quartets, but, at least to the numerous pieces written by great composers for violin or violoncello, and piano. "The violin—I include always the viola and violoncello—is no doubt," says Mr. Hullah in his excellent little work on "Music in the House," "a difficult instrument; but the difficulty of acquiring a serviceable amount of skill on it has been much exaggerated. To be come a Joachim, a Holmes, or a Piatti, is the work of a lifetime, even for men gifted with equal aptitude and perseverance." Under these circumstances, and at the right time of life, and supplemented and encouraged by a thousand circumstances as impossible to take account of as to bring about and foresee. But there is an amount of skill below—very much below—that of artists of this class which, if accompanied by feeling, taste and intelligence, may contribute largely to the variety and agreeableness of music in the house. It may be hoped that in a few years, without the number of our domestic pianists being too much diminished, that of our domestic violinists will be considerably increased. Some half dozen lady violinists have appeared this season in London public concerts, who possess the very highest merit; and at a half private, half-public concert given recently at Stafford House for the benefit of a charity, the chief attraction was a string band consisting of no less than twenty-four lady executants. The diversion, then, of feminine talent from the piano towards the violin, not a movement which has to be originated; it needs only to be encouraged.—[St. James Gazette.

Most too Briny.

"Father," began the boy as he looked up from his First History, "are silver mines very fresh?"

"Fresh! What do you mean?"

"Why, they have to put salt into 'em to make 'em keep don't they?"

"What nonsense! I don't understand you."

"Well, I heard some men in the car say that you salted a silver mine and made a hundred thousand dollars, and I wanted to ask what the salt was for."

The way that boy was hustled off to bed made him dream of cyclones all night.

A street railway has been laid between Athens and the Piraeus, which serves the whole city, passing by the Parthenon and the Acropolis. But what a prosaic, every-day sort of age this is when such things can be as horse cars in the land of the ancient Greeks.

PITH AND POINT.

"A source of anxiety." The head of a turbulent river.

Cold, moist weather has affected Pennsylvania's honey crop.

Chance is a word void of sense; nothing can exist without a cause.—[Voltaire.

Little Boar's Head, N. H., is threatened with the erection of a Blaine summer cottage.

The chief glory of man does not consist in never falling, but in arising every time he falls.

I. in at Birmingham, Conn., where Clara Prima Louise Donna Kellogg has summered down.

A daily paper has one big advantage over the human face. It can every now and then add new features.

The enlarged Sunday edition of the New York Daily News is everywhere received with unqualified favor.

Camden's Post is of the opinion that systematic lying doesn't make customers any quicker than it makes voters.

Hard on a would-be Governor: "General Beaver lost his leg in his country's cause, and his head in Cameron's."—[Williamsport Sun.

It is fashionable for Newport belles to read Goethe's bestially holding the volume in their laps, with its pages upside down.

Captain Von Eisenbecher, who has just left the post of Envoy from Germany to Japan, is to be transferred to Washington, name and all.

There seems to be bolting and kicking out of the traces all over the country. Reason—the country has more great men than offices—Mobile Register.

"Yes, I'm opposed to caste," said Madame Ringsparkle to a Saratoga acquaintance, "but really, my dear, there should be line of extinction!" Her friend agreed with her.—American Queen.

"Sweet sixteen" is all bosh when referring to a girl. At that age she is the crossdest and most imprudent of any period of her life, being too old to spank, and not old enough to box her mother.

The Norristown Herald is authorized to announce that at the last convention of undertakers held in New York it was resolved substitute the toy pistol for the kerosene-oil can as the emblem of the order.

The Imperial Gazette of China celebrated its one thousand five hundredth birthday last month. The founder of the paper was detained by business—Detroit Free Press. You mean by "a press of matter," don't you?

Herbert Spencer says he may publish his notes of what he sees in America. You bet he will! Where is the Englishman who ever scribbled that didn't write up what he saw, and thought he saw, in Yankee land?

An advertisement in a New York paper reads: "Wanted—A man accustomed to handling snakes," which leads us to ask: "Will not a man accustomed to seeing snakes be a serviceable man for the position?"—Philadelphia Sun.

Festive host (who has been told by his wife to make himself agreeable).—"Uncommon slow, ain't it, Six Pompey? Fact is, my wife thought it would be rather fun to ask all the bodes who've asked us and get 'em to meet each other and pay them off in that way, you know! And she did, by Jove! And the best of it is, they've all come!"

A Coney Island horse-jockey who died the other day confessed to having participated in thirteen "put-up" races where it was arranged beforehand which horse was to win.

Married Women and Property.

The incapacity of a married woman to be rated even in respect of her own house in which she lives with her husband is due to the fact that, except to the very limited extent allowed by the Married Women's Property Act, a wife is still unable to hold property without the intervention of trustees. The owners of a house settled to the wife's separate use are, in contemplation of law, not the wife nor the husband, but the trustees, who allow the husband and wife to live in it. The effect of this permission is to constitute the husband legal occupier. Such occupation as the wife has, is, in law, the occupation of the husband; and although the trustees hold for her, yet when, with their sanction, she and her husband live in the house, the effect is the same as if the trustees were strangers to her. The wife is thus excluded from offices for which rating is a qualification, but under some circumstances the parish might seriously be embarrassed. The husband being the rate payer, the wife's furniture cannot be seized for the rates, although it is in the house rated, so that if the husband has no property, the only way open to the parish of enforcing the rates is to put the husband in jail until the wife pays them. Such are the anomalies which arise from retaining the shadow of the old rule by which husband and wife are one, and that one the husband, while the substance has long departed. All that is required is a simple enactment making married woman capable of holding property.—[London Law Journal.

Sleepers.—A sleeper is one who sleeps. A sleeper is that in which the sleeper sleeps. A sleeper is that on which the sleeper sleeps runs. Therefore, while the sleeper sleeps in the sleeper the sleeper carries the sleeper over the sleeper under the sleeper until the sleeper which carries the sleeper jumps off the sleeper and wakes the sleeper in the sleeper, and there is no sleeper in the sleeper on the sleeper.