

Ladies' STORY Column.

THAT PRETTY MISS TRELAWNEY.

BY CLYDE RAYMOND.



By far the prettiest girl ever seen in Low-
boro', commented Tom Brundage, with
admiration glowing in every line of his
good-looking, blonde face, as he settled
himself back comfortably in his chair on
the verandah after bowing with extreme
politeness to a young lady who was
slowly cantering by on a beautiful, jet-
black pony, and followed at a respectful
distance by a smart groom in livery.

'But as poor as she is prettily, it
seems,' replied his mother, hastily.
'For Miss Smith heard Mrs Trelawney
emphatically declare with her own lips,
that, although she meant to give her
pretty cousin every social advantage

while under her guardianship, she had no intention whate-
ver of leaving her her money. There was no mistaking
her determination on that point, went on the lady with
somewhat nervous earnestness. 'And, indeed, there is no
good reason why she should make the girl her heiress, since
Miss Beth Trelawney is related to her merely through
marriage, and rather distantly at that.'

'Which makes no earthly difference, so far as I can see,'
retorted the good-looking young fellow with provoking cool-
ness, 'since Miss Beth Trelawney is quite charming enough
in her own right to dispense with the fictitious attractions
of her cousin's wealth.'

Mrs Brundage turned and for fully half a minute gazed
fixedly into her son's innocent, unvarnished countenance, a sort
of horrified wonder and anxiety slowly materializing upon
her own.

'Tom!' she exclaimed at length, reproachfully, 'you
don't mean that you would let your admiration of that girl's
pretty face run away with your common sense? Surely,
you wouldn't think of marrying her?'

Tom Brundage gave his blonde head an impatient toss,
and lifted his eyes to meet his mother's inquisitorial gaze
with a slightly bitter little laugh.

'If I did it wouldn't be likely to do me much good,
mother mine,' he answered drily. 'There's Phil Living-
ston, the very best catch in the town, doing his utmost to
prevent my having any show in that quarter, not to men-
tion a dozen or two of other fellows more or less desirable,
in her train. Oh, no, mother—with a playfully despondent
shake of the head—you needn't be afraid, there's no
such luck in store for me.'

Mrs Brundage, however, had her own private opinion
about that.

The idea that her handsome son could not succeed in any
suit which he had really set his heart upon, was to her
mind preposterous. However, she thought it wisest to keep
that roseate view of the matter locked up in her own breast,
so she only said in a mild, pleased tone:

'It quite relieves me to hear you say that, Tom. Of
course it would never do for you to marry a girl without
any prospects, as is the case with Beth Trelawney. She
has not a relative in the world, so I understand, excepting
this rich cousin, whose interest in her will cease as soon as
she has enabled Miss Beth to establish herself in life by
making a suitable marriage. But, of course, Tom,—with a
quietly decisive look and accent—'you have too much
common sense of your own to commit any such folly as that,
without needing advice on the subject from me.'

The young man made no reply, only smoked away medi-
tatively, and the subject was dropped.

Very soon after this a brilliant reception and ball was
given at the grand mansion on the hill, which, upon its com-
pletion but a few weeks previous, had been taken possession
of by Mrs Trelawney and her beautiful young cousin, who
had so quickly taken the town by storm.

All the *élite* of the place were present, among them, of
course, Tom Brundage and his mother, as well as the
former's most dangerous and determined rival, Philip Living-
ston, whose pretty married sister had hitherto been the
recognized leader of society in Lowboro'.

The scene was gay and beautiful beyond description, and
Mrs Trelawney, still young enough to look exceedingly well
in her costly gown of heliotrope velvet and modest array
of diamond ornaments, presided over it with the stately grace
of a duchess.

But the real queen of the occasion was her lovely cousin,
Beth Trelawney, who, despite the exquisite simplicity of her
attire, was the fascinating star to which every wandering
glance was constantly returning.

There was something fairly dazzling in the loveliness of
her snow-white skin, her flashing grey-blue eyes, her tawny
golden hair, and the little grace of the slender figure, with
its soft clinging draperies of white, pearl-besprinkled mull.

No wonder that so many feminine hearts beat anxiously
as, understanding so thoroughly her portentious condition,
they were obliged to witness the blind adoration of sons or
brothers, for whom they had far more ambitious views, at
fair beauty's shrine.

'Tom is perfectly bewitched,' Mrs Brundage groaned in-
wardly, as she watched the young man following beautiful
Beth about like her very shadow. 'Upon my word, I must
invent some plan to put a stop to that affair.'

Soon afterwards she managed to obtain a few minutes'
à la tête with the dangerously charming girl, which brought
to Beth's dainty cheeks a few shy dimples, and to her bright,
blue-grey eyes a flash of silent laughter, which her suddenly
drooped lashes hid from her companion.

But it was noticeable that during the rest of the evening,
she kept poor Tom at a much greater distance, setting the
infatuated fellow half distracted by the unaccountable
change in her manner toward him.

Nor was Mrs Brundage the only person present who
deemed it necessary to interfere with the happiness of Beth's
admirers.

The haughty sister of Philip Livingston took occasion
to acquaint the young lady in her delicately supercilious
fashion, of her lofty aspirations for her brother's future and

her unqualified disapproval of any serious attentions on his
part to one whose only dowry was her beauty.

Again Beth's lovely face dimpled with demure, yet
roguish smiles, and again those bright eyes danced and
sparkled behind their gold-fringed curtains.

'I cannot pretend to misunderstand you, madam,' she
said, with a pretty, graceful air of dignity, as the lady con-
cluded. 'I think the situation is hardly so formidable as
you seem to fear; but should such a crisis ever arise, I shall
know how to decide it in the way you wish.'

And, with that laughing light in her brilliant eyes and
an irrepressible curl of her proud lip, Miss Trelawney glided
back into the glittering throng, and was soon seen in the
very midst of it waltzing with Philip Livingston himself.

That same evening she was called upon to face the crisis
of which she had spoken to his sister.

Gently, but very firmly, Beth refused the offer of his
hand and heart which Philip Livingston made to her so
ardently, when he at last succeeded in luring her, for a
moment, into the conservatory.

'Well, there is one case disposed of,' she murmured to
herself, with a smile and a sigh, as the disappointed lover
left her with all the happy light gone from his handsome
face. 'I trust his sister will cease now to worry about his
infatuation for poor, penniless Beth Trelawney—the smile
brightening suddenly on her charming lips. But there is
Tom Brundage—poor fellow! I hope I shall not be com-
pelled to repeat this experience with him. He is really
desperate, though, and I'm afraid it's going to be unavail-
able. But it's so funny to see the horrified looks of their
watchful relatives! I wonder what they will say when—'

'Miss Trelawney!—Beth! Oh, I am so happy to find you
here alone. I wanted to ask you why you have avoided me
so persistently for the greater part of the evening?'

It was Tom Brundage's voice, of course. He had seen Mr
Livingston leaving the conservatory alone, and the look on
his rival's face had told him a great deal, and given him a
sudden hope for himself. Beth turned a rather startled face
upon him.

'I—I think I'm engaged for this dance, Mr Brundage,'
she returned, in slightly altering tones. 'Shall we go back
to the ballroom? I was about to do so when you came in.'

She made a step toward the door, but he laid his hand
lightly on her arm, detaining her.

'Please don't go. Oh, Beth, you must know how I love
you. Surely you have—'

'Mr Brundage,' she interrupted softly, a slight irres-
pressible smile wavering across her exquisite lips, 'is this the
way you should address me, when—when, as I have recently
learned, you are the affianced husband of Miss Ethel Lane?'

'Ethel Lane's—affianced husband—?' he fairly gasped,
an almost comical look of consternation on his face. Then,
the light of a sudden hope succeeding it: 'Oh, it is not so—
you know it isn't, Beth; that smile betrays you. But
who could have— Ah! I see!—a swift flush rising to
his brow. 'I know that is a favourite project of my
mother's, but it will never be—never! whether you can
care for me or not.'

And then he poured out such a rapid, passionate decla-
ration of his love for her, that Beth's heart ached for the pain
which she knew she must soon deal him.

They were very hard to say—those few words whose
intenance blasted all his hopes; but in a few minutes it
was all over, and Tom knew that the heart he coveted had
long since been given to another, to one who was coming in
a few weeks to claim, not it alone, but also beautiful Beth
herself.

'I tell you this, my little secret, because I really like
you, Tom,' she explained, with a sweet confidence that
looked half the sting out of his bitter disappointment. 'Be-
cause, though I cannot accept your love, I do want your
friendship. But to the rest of Lowboro'; it is to remain a
secret still.'

In due time he came, the conquering hero who had won
the heart of beautiful Beth Trelawney. His name was Jack
Standish, and he was a handsome, manly fellow, with a
dashing figure and a dark, bright, honest face that won your
liking at a glance.

Then fashionable Lowboro' was astonished by the re-
ception of wedding-cards. There was a quiet, beautiful
marriage ceremony in the grey stone church, and later a
magnificent reception at the mansion on the hill; and
through it all, the bride's fair loveliness was the theme of
every tongue.

'A lucky fellow that Standish, by Jove!' exclaimed one
of the guests as the young couple drove away to begin their
wedding journey. 'If the bride was only as rich, now, as
she is beautiful, why—'

'And so she is, Mr Damon,' said Mrs Trelawney, who
chanced to overhear the remark. 'All this property is hers
in her own right, and a great deal more besides. Yes, in-
deed, Beth Trelawney is a great heiress, with more money
at her command than she knows what to do with.'

'Is it possible?' ejaculated Mr Damon, almost paralyzed
by this bit of news, while the other guests began to flock
around them with faces whose expressions were simply in-
describable. 'Why, my dear Mrs Trelawney, we all
thought the fortune was yours, and that your charming
cousin was living—ahem!—well, sort of dependent on your
bounty, so to speak.'

'Not at all,' laughed the widow pleasantly. 'Quite the
reverse is true, I assure you. You see, Beth has some
whims of her own, as all heiresses have, I believe. Learn-
ing accidentally that such a mistake in regard to our posi-
tions had gained ground somehow in Lowboro', she declared
it would be a good joke to keep it up until after her marriage,
and persuaded me to silently acquiesce. The little face
has afforded her much innocent amusement and has injured
no one. Hereafter, however, you will see her in her true
position, and like her herself the less for having first known
and admired her for none alone.'

As to Mrs Brundage and her fellow-marplots, I have nothing
more to say. Their shame and consternation was some-
thing which can only be imagined, not described.

An erring husband, who had exhausted all explanations
for late hours, and had no apology ready, recently slipped
into the house about one o'clock, very softly, denuded him-
self gently, and began rocking the cradle by the bedside, as
if he had been awakened out of a sound sleep by infantile
cries. He had rocked away for five minutes, when his
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THE AFRICAN NATIVE CHOIR.



LONDON, may, with a difference, be likened
unto a mighty spider's web. The spider
Amusement has an insatiable appetite, and all
is grist that comes to his mill. The 'differ-
ence' is that the flies of Entertainment are not
killed by him, but are rather supplied with
ample means to live. It may not, at first
sight, appear complimentary to say that, as
we have our frozen mutton from New Zealand,
our roast beef from the States, our eggs from
France, and our butter from Kiel, we have also our *prime*
doane from Canada and Australia, our *tenori* from martial
Poland and musical Italy, our *dansesuses* from everywhere.
Before now America has sent us her coloured minstrels,
and it is but fitting that South Africa should send us a
native choir.

Apart altogether from the marvellous exploits of Stanley
in that hitherto 'dark horse' of continents, Africa contains
within her bosom secrets that make us gasp with wonder as
to what will be. Her power is stupendous; her strength
enormous, and her possibilities open up a vision to which
the wildest of Arabian nights' entertainments are flat, stale
and unprofitable. Who can yet gauge the extent of her
unfathomable wealth, or the magnitude of her diamond fields?
Enterprise has done much to open up South Africa, but, as
yet, we are merely sipping at what must prove, in genera-
tions to come, a splendid mouthful. There is a fascination
in the future of Africa from which it is almost impossible
to tear one's self away. The idea of forming a native choir
and bringing them to England originated with the Rev.
James Morris, a Wesleyan missionary. He was, however,
unable to carry out the idea, and Messrs E. C. Howell
(brother of the M.P.), James Henry Balmer, and Walter
E. Letty, put the idea into effect and started from Kim-
berley some seven months ago with four natives, travelling
some 3,000 to 4,000 miles, visiting the different Educational
Mission Colleges and augmenting the choir *en route*.

Many were the difficulties to be overcome on this long
journey. There is a strange prejudice against natives in
South Africa. For instance, one hotel proprietor refused
accommodation to the Europeans on account of their being
connected with the native choir. One town (Worcester, in
Cape Colony), refused accommodation to the whole of the
choir, and they were compelled to put off the next day's
concert and leave the town in the night. At another town
the European members waited till the hotel keeper had re-
tired, and then gave up their rooms to the natives, and
walked about all night. Prejudices were finally overcome
and strong sympathies enlisted in the cause. The object of
the visit of this choir to England is to interest the public in
the internal, social, and material progress of South Africa
and its native population, by the establishment of trade
and technical schools, for teaching manual handicrafts,
domestic economy, cooking, nursing, and such other useful
arts as are essential to the future well-being of the native
people of Africa. The choir consists of sixteen well-educ-
ated natives, representing seven different tribes. These
are Amaxosa, Fingo, Basuto, Tembe, Zulu, Bapedi, and
Cape.

The provisional patron list in this country contains many
well-known names, such as the Duke of Sutherland, the
Bishop of London, Lord Knutsford, Mr Burdett-Coutts, Sir
Donald Currie, and a number of others. Among the female
members of the choir, we may single out for remark
Johanna Jonkers, a pure Zulu girl, daughter of a woman
who suffered terrible hardships at the hands of some Dutch
people, who had brought her as a slave out of Zululand,
the woman obtaining her freedom by running away from
her cruel masters and finding refuge and help in the town
of Burgersdorp; Makhombe Manye, a Basuto girl of the
Bapedi tribe—she was a school teacher in the colony, and,
besides a good, sound education, she speaks and writes five
different languages, displaying a remarkable intelligence
and possessing a very plaintive, pathetic mezzo-soprano
voice; Mbikazi Nobengula is of the Fingo tribe; Malabese
Manye, Basuto; Mrs Xiniwe an Amaxosa, and F. Gqoba.

Since their arrival in this country the choir have made
many successful appearances in aristocratic circles, the chief
being a performance before Her Majesty at Osborne. It is
not a little singular that all the South African visitors ex-
pected to find their Queen much older-looking than she
really is. The fact having been conveyed to Her Majesty
that among the singers was a man who had fought against
her flag in the Basuto War, the Queen, between the parts of
the concert, desired him to be pointed out to her. When
this was done Her Majesty rose from her chair and bowed
with much ceremony to Standish. The Queen's reply to the
man who made a speech of thanks is worth recording: 'I
am pleased to see you all here this afternoon, and have ad-
mired the singing very much.' The Duchess of Teck was
present at a garden party given by Mrs Master, and ex-
pressed herself charmed by the singing of the choir.

The Duke of Sutherland had the choir at a reception at
Stafford House, Lord Dysart at one of his garden parties at
Ham House, Petersham, and the Bishop of London at Ful-
ham Palace. The choir are engaged to appear at Lady
Burdett-Coutts' house, Stratton-street, Piccadilly. After
their successes in town the South African Choir start on a
provincial tour under the management of Mr N. Vert. His
Excellency Sir Henry Brougham Loch and Lady Loch, have
all along taken the deepest interest in this interesting
venture, and their enthusiastic patronage has done much to
popularise the enterprise.—*Ladies' Pictorial*.

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