

AFTER SUNSET.

Over my head the skylark singeth,  
Though the sun hath set and the night  
draws nigh;  
What is the message that sweet song  
bringeth?  
Is it a hint that a day gone by—  
Gone by—gone by—may return again,  
And the time of waiting go past like rain?  
The lark still sings as he upward fleeth  
Through the dusk-blue air, and the  
notes drop down  
To the listening earth, and my heart  
that crieth  
For the breath of spring and the sum-  
mer's crown.  
Ah! crown of summer, dost hang as far  
As over the skylark that lone white star?  
Oh, lonely star! But the song hath ended,  
The purple mountains grow darker yet;  
Soon will the crimson and gray be  
blended,  
And nought to tell where the sun hath  
set;  
The blue dusk deepens, more stars there  
be;  
What is the promise ye hold for me?  
Where the hills drop down to the sea  
which spurneth,  
For ever and ever, the patient land;  
Where the blue hills melt to the blue sky,  
burneth  
A distant fire like a love-lit brand.  
My steps descend, and it goes from sight,  
But I know it is strong for the coming  
night.  
Oh, stars and fire! Is your inward mean-  
ing  
To tell of hope for the days to be?  
Of an hour when Time shall go backward  
leaving  
To pluck white roses and red for me?  
And the joy which is past come back—  
come back—  
With a threefold strength that shall  
nothing lack?  
—Clara Singer Poynter, in Chamber's  
Journal.

MYSTERIOUS MISS DACRES

By Mrs. Schuyler Crowninshield.

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CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.

"You wait," she replied. "Ye don't deserve no garden angel, but ye get to hev one all the same. What d'ye think o' that?" She reached out to a beam which supported the flooring and unhooked something from it. "There!" she exclaimed. "Wuz ye took in, or wuzn't ye?" My eyes fell upon a coat, waistcoat and trousers; indeed, there were two pairs, one made as knee breeches, and the other pair the long coverings of a young man of fashion. "An' I'll bet ye'll find the counter-parts of 'em in them boory draw's," said Glorianna. "Perhaps it's a bicycle suit," said I. "She may like to ride so in the evening. They tell me that in Paris the women look almost like men. I know she's lived abroad." I stopped short. This knowledge I had gained from the letters; I must not divulge it too soon. "An' what say to this?" and Glorianna began to remove from the coat-pockets some cigarette stumps, and those little books that I have seen young men take out and tear up to roll their tobacco in. "Well, it's all the same thing. She acknowledged that she smoked. I spoke to her about it. Many women do it. It's considered a rather stylish accomplishment, I believe. She may smoke and wear boy's clothes to ride in, and still be a young woman. Don't you think so, Glory?" "And what do ye say to this?" asked Glorianna, ignoring my humble plea. She had pulled a letter from one of the pockets, and was holding it to the light. "Dear Jim," she began. "Isn't it about time we got on to some-thing?" "Stop! Glorianna," said I, "this is really too much! She could have you arrested for that." "Oh Lordy!" said Glorianna as she dropped the letter and skipped up the remaining steps. "Now go right back," said I, "and place those things exactly as you found them. She told me about her brother Jim, and about his being dead. These are evidently his clothes, and we have been laying bare her dearest secrets. Come! Hang them up quickly, and come out of the cellar." "Yes'm," said Glorianna Towner, meekly. "Now don't ever let me hear of your going into that cellar again through this room," said I, emboldened by the change of front. "No'm," said Glorianna. "I wun't, fer I'm a-goin' home this noon." Thus was my soul torn with constant warnings from Glorianna, with constant anxieties about money matters, and I must say, with constant suspicions about my lower-front. It was dreadfully wearing, and I was relieved in mind when Aunt Jane Mary began to thump. Glorianna did not go at noon, nor for many

noons after that. I think now that she was quite conscious when she was well off, but at the time I feared her departure with every day that dawned, and I was in dreadful bondage to her, to Baldwin Towner through her, to my lower-front, and not the least to Aunt Jane Mary. My lower-back did not worry me at all, and my upper-back, Dr. Wynne, was a delight and a joy. His cough began to desert him now, and he grew steadily better. Marmaduke Smith came out to see him every day or two, and they often walked in the flower garden of an afternoon, or sat in the arbor conversing in low tones. He said it was about the college taking his volumes on "The Lost Tribes" as a text-book. I knew that President Smith would help him out if he could. He said that if that were settled he would go on to Washington at once, but that Marmaduke must apply to the trustees, and that couldn't be until the next Monday. Sometimes they came in and sat on the piazza as the sun was setting, and their talk was always of books and the higher education, until I really got rather tired of having so much learning about me. Sometimes it happened that Miss Daeres would come home while they were sitting there. She never seemed to like it, and usually she rode on, and came back when President Smith had left and Dr. Wynne had gone upstairs. If they were still there when she came past the second time, she would go on again, or else stand her wheel against the tree, open the gate, and walk swiftly round the house. I told her once that it wouldn't do any harm to be introduced to two of the most learned men of modern times, but she always replied that she had come for rest, and not for education, and she meant to get it if possible. Why she should know these people just because I did she could not see. Americans, she said, were always crazy to introduce people who didn't want to know each other.

CHAPTER V.

And now, it seems to me, begins the most interesting part of my story, the beginning of the end. One day the ladies, ever thoughtful, had sent the carriage down to see if I would not like to go for an airing. It was quite late in the afternoon, but I had told them that it was the only time when I could possibly accept their kind offer, as then my daily round had been accomplished. It was tiresome to drive alone, but Miss Elizabeth had a severe headache, and Miss Evelyn could not leave her. I first knocked at the door of my lower-front to see if she would not like to take the vacant seat. In truth, it came into my mind that perhaps in the close companionship that a long drive brings about she might be willing to say a little more about herself, and I was anxious to learn what there was to tell before I began to suggest anything to the ladies. I knocked, but no voice responded; I opened her door a little way, but the room was empty. I almost wished that I could bundle up Aunt Jane Mary and take her out with me. Then suddenly I bethought me of Dr. Wynne. I ran up to his room and knocked. He came slowly to the door, as became an old and weak man, and my heart reproached me that I had not thought of him at first. "Dr. Wynne," said I, "will you take a drive with me? I won't say a little drive, because I shall stay out just as long as I can." "Let me see," said Dr. Wynne, smiling and showing his fine teeth. I always wondered to see them so white and firm! "Isn't this my day for President Smith?" He went to his table and fumbled with a calendar with the trembling uncertainty that is so pitiful in old age. "Ah," he said, "here it is. No, he does not come to-day. Yes, I am at liberty to go with you. I shall enjoy it very much. Can you show me the old Swedes' meeting house? I have always wanted to see it." "Certainly," said I. "Our road lies that way." "That pleases me very much," said Dr. or Elder Wynne, as he preferred to be called. He came slowly down the stairs and out through the garden and climbed into the great, roomy carriage. I covered his thin old knees with the lap-robe and we were off. "Where to M'?" said old John. "Along the Winchester road and through the Overly lane to the Swedes' meeting house," John touched his hat, and we sped swiftly along. The day was balmy and we had the windows down, but Elder Wynne kept pulling up the lap-robe when it slipped away. We drove several miles and then turned into the Overly lane. Here the young trees, which were just bursting into earliest bud, met overhead. I felt sure that the woods must hold for me some treasures in the shape of woodland flowers. "Would you mind, Dr. Wynne, if I were to get out a moment to search for flowers?"

"No," said he, "not at all." I went through an opening in the fence and along the stream. There were little patches of snow still lying in the shaded spots, and I realized that there could be no flowers, that I had come to the wrong place; then I turned to retrace my path, when just under a great tree upon a flat stone I saw something lying. I picked it up. It was Miss Daeres' pocket-book. I had seen it in her hands several times. I put it in my pocket, and quite forgot it as I continued my search for flowers. There was nothing to reward me, and I returned to my carriage. Elder Wynne was quivering about the Lost Tribes (and I can truthfully say that I wished many a time that day that he had never found them) when John drew up at the door of the church. The stone step was but a few paces away from the road, and I alighted and helped the old man down. I was wondering if I should have to go on to Maltby's, the sexton of the new meeting house, and get the key, when I saw that the door was open a little crack. I pushed it, and it gave at my touch. I walked into the semi-darkness,



IT WAS MISS DACRES' POCKET-BOOK.

holding to Elder Wynne's hand that he might not stumble, and together we entered the vestibule of the church, and then I pushed on to the main door. This, too, I thrust open, and then we stood in the central aisle of the old stone building. "Hist!" The sound came out of the darkness. "Who is that?" said I. "Maltby, is that you?" I heard. "We've—I've seen enough. It's a very interesting old—By this time the speaker was close to me, and we recognized each other at the same moment. "Oh Mrs. Brathwaite! Is that you? What a queer place to meet you in." He spoke in a very loud tone of voice. "Softly, sir, softly! You are in the Lord's House," said Elder Wynne in his soft, quavering tones. "I beg your pardon, I was so surprised. There's nothing to see—nothing, I assure you. I've been all over the old ram-shackle affair—there is really nothing." He stood in the middle of the aisle. His so standing blocked our way. "What! Not the carving of the Resurrection and the font given by the first Swede pastor? Why, where were your eyes, Mr. Beldon? We must see those, of course. Come, Dr. Wynne." My lower-back backed slowly down the dark aisle, talking volubly to us and occasionally glancing over his shoulder. The church was dimly lighted, and I suggested having one of the windows opened—the blinds, rather. "I will go in the carriage and get the sexton," said I. "I think we can send for him more easily," said Mr. Beldon. "Hi, Johnny!" and there appeared out of the darkness the little deformed child whom I had often seen playing round the door of the Maltby homestead. "Go and tell your father that Mrs. Brathwaite wishes the blinds opened." "He's gone to the village," replied Johnny, "but if you and the lady had enough of light—"

"The lady says she cannot see," said Mr. Beldon, breaking in, "how-ever—"

"I mean the other lady," said Johnny.

"Go! at once, Johnny," broke in Mr. Beldon, "and see if he hasn't come home yet." There was a sudden gleam of outer sunshine as Johnny ran through the door, and by its ray I perceived a handkerchief on the cushioned seat near where I was standing. I picked it up at once. It had a variegated border which I knew well.

"Thank you," said Mr. Beldon, holding out his hand.

"It isn't yours," said I. "It belongs to my young woman boarder, Miss Daeres."

"Does it?" said Mr. Beldon, clapping his hand to his pocket. "Where, then, can I have left mine? Does that young woman penetrate even to the temple of the Lord? Is nothing sacred from her, not even this holy edifice?"

I did not like his tone, and Elder Wynne looked at him as if it jarred upon him.

"Young man," he said, in his quavering voice, "when you come to my

age you will not speak slightly of a pile like this, or of its Master." "I don't call that slightly, sir," said Mr. Beldon, respectfully. "I really am surprised at that young woman. I meet her everywhere on the road. She prides into everything, but she seems no more willing to make my acquaintance than I am to make hers. I wonder if she was here lately." Elder Wynne began to cough. "The church is damp," I said. "Oh, dear! How reproached I shall be if you have taken more cold. Do come out into the sunshine." "The church is not really cold," said Mr. Beldon. "Let me see if I cannot open the blind without waiting for Maltby. It would be a pity, after you have come so far, not to—"

It came over me just then that he had declared that the church held nothing of interest.

"No! no!" said Dr. Wynne, hurrying towards the door much faster than I had thought possible he could. "I cannot stay here longer. I must get out, out into the air."

His tone frightened me, and I hurried after him. I never saw him show such vigor. He was standing on the church step when I came through the door, and was shading his eyes with his hand and looking down the road. My eyes followed his. "Who is that?" He indicated a flying figure silhouetted against the setting sun.

"That?" said I. "That? Why, it looks very much like my other boarder, Miss Daeres." Mr. Beldon looked after the diminishing figure. "I believe you are right," said he. "That is Miss Daeres. I wonder where she came from?"

When we reached home I found Miss Daeres sitting on the piazza. "Where have you been?" she said. "I am starving. I have been home for hours."

"Not quite hours," said I, "if that was you saw spinning along Overly Lane."

"Well, that may be an exaggeration; but what made you think I was in Overly Lane?"

"I saw you. We all saw you. Mr. Beldon said it was you."

"Was he with you?" she asked.

"No, we met him in church, the Swedes' church."

At this she began to laugh. "Oh, that Swedes' church!" she said, "that Swedes' church!"

"Here is something that I found there, something of yours."

"Not mine!"

"Oh, yes, yours. Glorianna has ironed it too often for me not to know it."

She held out her hand and took the handkerchief. "So it is," said she. "Where do you say you found it?"

"In the Swedes' church—on the seat of one of the pews."

Elder Wynne was seated in a chair near by. He had taken up the evening paper, which concealed his face, and was looking apparently at the first page, but he did not turn it, nor make the rustling that newspaper readers usually do.

"Come into my room," said Miss Daeres suddenly, "I want to tell you something."

I entered the hall, then her room. When we were inside she closed the window which was open to the piazza and the door into the hall.

"Now I'm going to make a clean breast of it," said she. "I was in the Swedes' church, and this is my handkerchief. Now you sit there, and let me sit here; or wait, no, let me get down here." To my great surprise, Miss Daeres placed me in a rocking-chair and seated herself on a little stool at my feet. "There! we're all comfortable so. Now let me rise to explain. I did go into the Swedes' church." She laid her head against my knee confidingly. She looked up into my face with those lovely eyes. Why had I never seen before how lovely they were? "I was out on my wheel this afternoon, when I came across that queer old church. I had never seen it before. I jumped off and went up to the door. To my surprise, I found it open a crack, and I went in. The inside was so dark that at first I could hardly feel my way, but I went down the middle aisle and stood by that queer old tomb. It gave me a sort of shivery feeling, and I was glad to hear voices overhead. They were a man's voice and a child's. Their owners were coming down from the belfry, I thought, for they seemed to be in the front of the church. I was foolish not to run right out of the building. I had plenty of time, but I got dazed. I thought they would be going in a moment, and that I could hide until they were gone. And how foolish that would have been! Just think, if I had stayed there, and been locked up alone! Miss Daeres gave a little shudder, and laid her head in the folds of my gown. Unconsciously, almost, I smoothed her boyish, yellow hair, and in my heart I was crying out, "Have I found you, little Amaranthe?"

"Well, when you—"

"Well, I crouched down behind the front pew and waited. To my horror that Mr.—Mr.—"

"Beldon," I supplied.

AN ORIENTAL MAIL SERVICE.

The Curious System in Vogue in the Land of One Thousand and One Weights.

There is a glamour around Bagdad, a halo of mystery tinged with pomp and splendor. The home of Haroun-al-Rashid and the scene of his adventures, it is known as widely as the Thousand and One Nights, but like Constantinople, the capital of the empire in which Bagdad stands, it glitters from the distance, the nearer view dispelling many a cherished ideal. Still, even amid the strange hygiene, quaint etiquette, and odd ways of the place, the resident comes across scenes and incidents so odd as to make one believe it is yet the days of Haroun—that the sun of history has gone back many degrees on the dial. Some things cannot be compared with our institutions, and others can—the management of the mail is one of the latter, says a London paper.

There are two ways of sending this in Bagdad—one the Turkish, the other the British. Practically all letters going west go by the Turkish system. By this there are two routes, one by camels to Damascus, and thence to Beirut, whence it is transported by steamer to Brindisi, and afterwards by rail, the other by camels to Mosul, and then by mules and rail to Constantinople. Letters from Constantinople take some 12 days; not long ago the time suddenly jumped to 46 days, and when the post office officials were asked to explain, they said: "Now the mail comes partly by rail. Hence the delay!" This is a sweetly oriental idea—a railroad to take 34 days longer than camels.

When your letters come depends upon when the mail arrives, and may be any time of the day. Perhaps one of the most comical parts of the service is the fact that the carrier cannot read. At the office he is told what houses are to have letters. Then he slings his bag over his shoulder and trots off, hopping from side to side of the concavity that is gutter and street, and thus wends his tortuous way through the city till he arrives at a house for which he has mail. Upon entering he unslings his bag, opens it and pours the contents on the floor, at the same time telling you to pick out such letters as belong to you! There is a charming naive and ingenuousness about the whole proceeding which strikes the westerner as irresistibly comic. When you have taken out your share the remainder is bundled back, and off he goes to the next house.

Queer Language, Verily. "It is a queer language," said a bewildered Frenchman. "A horse falls into ze subway and hees owner falls out with ze contractaire. Ze house, it goes up in smoke and ze firm goes under from ze fire, while ze goods go down on account of ze smoke and ze wattaire when ze fire goes out. "Ze wife run up a bill at ze shop, ze bookkepaire runs up ze column of figures in ze ledger, ze husband runs from ze collectaire, ze shop-kepaire runs over to ze court, and ze attachment runs about a month and zea it runs out. "Ze gamblair, sees ze poor foreigner, ze foreigner sees ze gamblaire's bet and raises it; zen he sees a flush royale and zea ze police seize ze whole business. Ze gamblaire sees ze warden and ze foreigner sees his money no more. It is a strange language in ze great contry of America."—N. Y. Times.

THE GENERAL MARKETS.

Kansas City, Feb. 3.	
CATTLE—Beef steers	4.00 @ 5.20
Native stockers	2.80 @ 4.35
Western steers	2.75 @ 4.25
HOGS	6.00 @ 6.90
SHEEP	3.10 @ 5.00
WHEAT—No. 2 hard	68 @ 67 1/2
No. 2 red	35 3/4 @ 40
CORN—No. 2 mixed	35 @ 36 1/2
RYE—No. 2	46 @ 46
FLOUR—Hard winter pat.	3.25 @ 3.50
Soft winter patents	3.30 @ 3.50
HAY—Timothy	10.00 @ 13.50
Prairie	4.75 @ 9.00
BRAN	77 @ 78
BUTTER—Choice to fancy	14 @ 23
EGGS	17 @ 17
CHEESE—Full cream	13 @ 14 1/2
POTATOES—Home grown	45 @ 50
ST. LOUIS.	
CATTLE—Beef steers	4.30 @ 5.50
Texas steers	2.30 @ 4.35
HOGS—Butchers	6.65 @ 6.90
SHEEP—Natives	3.80 @ 5.25
FLOUR—Red winter pat.	3.45 @ 3.55
WHEAT—No. 2 red	71 1/2 @ 75 1/2
CORN—No. 2	40 @ 43 1/2
OATS—No. 2	35 1/2 @ 36 1/2
RYE	50 @ 51
BUTTER—Creamery	19 @ 26
DRY SALT MEATS	9.12 1/2 @ 9.37 1/2
BACON	10.00 @ 10.37 1/2
CHICAGO.	
CATTLE—Steers	3.00 @ 5.85
HOGS—Mixed and butchers	6.50 @ 6.75
SHEEP—Western	3.75 @ 5.00
FLOUR—Winter patents	3.60 @ 3.75
WHEAT—No. 2 red	75 @ 76
CORN—No. 2	43 1/2 @ 44
OATS—No. 2	33 1/2 @ 35 1/2
RYE—May	50 @ 50 1/2
LARD—May	9.25 @ 9.35
PORK—May	15.35 @ 16.47 1/2
NEW YORK.	
CATTLE—Steers	4.25 @ 5.30
HOGS—Mixed western	6.80
SHEEP	3.00 @ 4.62 1/2
WHEAT—No. 2 red	81 1/2 @ 82 1/2
CORN—No. 2	53 @ 59

[To Be Continued.]