

THE BERRY-PICKERS.

I won the heart of Mary Anne—  
It happened in this way:  
I'd often watched the girl in church,  
And thought I'd like to go  
Picking berries in the meadow  
On a summer's day.

Yes, often when the preacher rose  
And shut his eyes to pray,  
Then Mary Anne she'd peep at me  
Till I was in a glow—  
I won the heart of Mary Anne—  
It happened in this way:

Upon a sunny afternoon,  
When we had mown the hay,  
"Now, Mary, would it not be nice,"  
I whispered sort of low,  
"Picking berries in the meadow  
On a summer's day?"

Then Mary Anne, she took her pall  
And came without delay,  
I rather kind o' think she guessed—  
For girls do guess—but oh!  
I won the heart of Mary Anne—  
It happened in this way:

I don't care much for berries,  
But I'd some h'n sweet to say,  
O Hemlock, how I trembled  
Would she answer "Yes," or "No,"  
Picking berries in the meadow  
On a summer's day?

"O Mary Anne—" I stammered,  
She dropped her eyes of gray;  
But soon I saw a dimple flash—  
I kissed it quick—and lo,  
I won the heart of Mary Anne!  
It happened in this way,  
Picking berries in the meadow  
On a summer's day.

—Samuel Minturn Peck, in Boston Transcript.

MYSTERIOUS MISS DACRES

By Mrs. Schuyler Crownshield.

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CHAPTER V.—CONTINUED.

"Hush!" he whispered. "Don't move! Don't speak! Don't breathe!" It was Elder Wynne. I was struck with amaze. He drew me under the protecting enclosure of the back stairs and whispered:

"Go upstairs to your room; I can attend to this matter alone. Leave me to handle it." I saw now that the old man possessed more vigor than I had thought possible.

"But I am afraid," I whispered, "afraid to leave you. What do you think of it? Do you think she has got into the hands of some house breakers? Oh, if Mr. Beldon were only here! You are so old, so frail. Those men might murder you. Let me stay in the dining room, that I may be within call."

Elder Wynne laughed, a silent sort of laugh.

"We have no time now," he whispered, "to explain matters. Do as I tell you; go upstairs quickly. Leave this matter to me." At the same time he threw back the lapel of his cotton dressing gown, and flashed forth a little gleam of light from somewhere which struck full upon the shining shield bearing the badge of the detective force. We heard a movement within the room, then a hand was laid upon the knob.

"Run," he whispered, "run to your room," and then began to cough violently, following me and calling at the same time up the stairs: "Mrs. Brathwaite! Mrs. Brathwaite!" I was only on the third step, and saw that he had lighted a match and was groping his way towards the dining room door.

At this juncture Mr. Beldon's door was opened. "Who is that?" he called.

"It is only I, sir," said Elder Wynne. "I am searching for some sugar. My cough is troublesome. It is too bad to wake you all up."

At this I came running from the stairs. I was surprised to see Mr. Beldon. "You at home?" said I. "Oh, I wanted to call you some time ago, if I had only known it!"

"Wanted to call me?" He looked annoyed and surprised.

Elder Wynne gave me a quick, warning glance.

"Yes—yes—I wanted to—to—call you. Elder Wynne has coughed—coughed—so—so—coughed so—"

"I have not heard Elder Wynne cough," said he, turning swiftly on the old man,—"at least not until just now."

"So persistently," I continued, "that I was afraid—afraid—he—"

Elder Wynne was now so convulsed with his cough, that I turned to the sideboard and got out the sugar-bowl. I then went to the water-cooler and filled a glass half full of water, and dropped some lumps of sugar within it.

Mr. Beldon watched me narrowly. "Has anything alarmed you, Mrs. Brathwaite? You seemed so upset just now, so—"

"Oh, no," said I. "I never felt safer nor more courageous than I have for the last few moments."

"Pining you in the house, my dear sir," said Elder Wynne, between his attacks of coughing; "finding that a

gentleman was here who would be certain to protect a lady, and go for help if it were needed, is what has made Mrs. Brathwaite feel so secure."

At this moment another door was opened and someone came into the hall. We all three stepped hurriedly out from the dining-room to find Miss Dacres standing there in a wrapper. She staggered and seemed dazed. She brought a peculiar chemical odor with her.

"What on earth is all this noise?" she said. "Do you call this a quiet house? I have not been able to sleep a wink, at least since I was waked up about an hour ago by your gubbling. I shall leave to-morrow. Oh! Oh! I feel so dizzy." She clutched at the stair rail and dropped her candle on the matting.

"I think—" I began, I was about to add—"you will," when Elder Wynne stopped me with a glance. I saw now that I had better keep quiet and leave matters to him.

"Is it this gentleman who has the back room who is making all this disturbance?" she continued. "You told me, you remember, when I came here that he never was at home at night, that—"

Here Mr. Beldon stepped forward and bowed. "I am glad at last to meet this young lady face to face," said he. "Will you introduce me to her, Mrs. Brathwaite?"

"A strange place and time," I remarked.

"I do not wish to know you, sir," answered Miss Dacres, freezing. "You have annoyed me ever since I have been here, and if there were not a very potent reason for my remaining, I should leave at daybreak."

Mr. Beldon turned away, apparently much mortified. "She's a regular tartar," he whispered in my ear. "What have I done to her?"

"It was only Dr. Wynne's cough," said I, "which got me up. He has his syrup now, and will go back to bed." I took the glass from the old man and turned to go up the stairs, whereupon Miss Dacres also turned and went into her room and locked the door. Mr. Beldon followed suit as to his own chamber, and Elder Wynne and I were left facing each other.

He began to cough and wheeze as he mounted the stair, following me. As I was on the fourth step, I heard a sound in the upper hall. I looked upward, and distinctly saw the whisking away of a red wrapper. Only Aunt Jane Mary wore a red wrapper. Could Glory have come into the house to sleep and have taken my aunt's robe? That was the only solution that I could come to. What an outrage! Could such a thing be possible?

I went on to my room, and to my surprise, when I turned to close my door, I saw that Elder Wynne was close behind me. He followed me into the chamber, and saved me the trouble of closing my door. Then he straightened himself, and in a twinkling threw off all his disguise, and stood before me, an erect, wiry, clean-shaven map of I should think, about eight and thirty. I opened my mouth to exclaim, I suppose, perhaps to scream. He raised both hands in air.

"Don't say a word," he whispered. "You know that I am all right. I came with President Smith. You can trust me."

I was certainly very much frightened. Perhaps this man was playing upon me. Perhaps he was deceiving Marmaduke Smith as well as me.

"Now be quiet," said Elder Wynne—"perfectly quiet. I don't ask you to believe anything that I say. You can go in town and see Marmaduke Smith to-morrow morning and ask him. You will see that I speak the truth. I am a detective on the police force of the city, sent out to Galtersville in the interest of a better government. Now I will go back to my room. Go to sleep, Mrs. Brathwaite, and rest assured that I am exactly what I tell you I am. But let me give you a note of warning. Do not attempt to manage this case yourself. I will attend to it."

With these words he picked up his disguise and slipped across to his own room. I locked the door and lay down to quake until morning. I did not sleep a single wink, and at about six o'clock, pale and red-eyed, I descended the stairs. I felt wrecked in body and mind. As soon as it was time, I should send in to the village for President Smith and make myself sure of at least one person in my household; but I was saved that trouble, for about half after eight o'clock I saw the president himself coming out in his buggy. He drew up at my gate, hitched his horse, and came into the garden.

"Ah, how do you do, Mrs. Brathwaite? Can I see Elder Wynne?"

"Oh, I am so glad to see you!" I cried, running to meet him.

"Hush! Hush!" said Marmaduke soothingly. "Is Wynne any worse?" This he said in a louder tone. We went into the hall, and I saw that Miss Dacres' door was open as we passed. "Don't get excited."

President Smith nodded his head at me as much as to say, "Tell me that he is?"

"Yes," said I, "he had a return of his cough last night. He came down and felt about in the dark for some sugar and water. I heard him and came down. Will you go up?"

"If I may," he replied,—"if I may,"

He went upstairs and knocked on Elder Wynne's door.

"Come in," I heard the quivering old voice say, and President Smith disappeared within the doorway. After a while I heard a voice calling me. I went to the foot of the stairs, and saw President Smith leaning out of Elder Wynne's door. "Please come up, Mrs. Brathwaite," said he, "I want to give you a little advice about my old friend here."

I dragged myself up the stairs to the door of the room.

"Come in," said Elder Wynne in his weak voice.

I entered. Elder Wynne sat by the window looking at the far-away fields, green in the early sunshine. President Smith closed the door, and stood, his back against it.

"Sophronia," he said in a low tone, "my friend here seems to think that you doubt him somewhat."

"Did he send for you to tell you that?" I asked.

"Yes, he certainly did. I got his message just after eight o'clock, or as soon as the office was opened, and here I am. Stand up, Brother Wynne," said Marmaduke Smith.

Elder Wynne arose, and stood all doubled up.

"He is imposing on you," I cried. "Do you know what he is?"

"Hush, my dear lady, hush! Hush!" President Smith held up his hand, while Elder Wynne went towards the fireplace, turned back the carpet, inserted a plug whose end was covered with white plaster within a



HE INSERTED A PLUG.

hole which his action had laid bare, and then replaced the carpet. "That's the woman of it," he said. "You must never surprise them. Now, go on, but please lower your voice a little."

"Marmaduke," said I, speaking very fast, "you think that this old man is your friend?"

"I know he is," said President Smith.

"You think that he comes from a western university, that he is a minister of the gospel, that he is here about his book on the Lost Tribes, that he is going to Washington to obtain a pension, that he is a weak old man, who—"

"Who said that I believed all this?" asked President Smith, calmly.

"Well, everything shows that you do. Your coming out to see him so often, your walking with him in the garden, sitting with him in the grape arbor, talking about the Lost Tribes."

"Who said that we talked about the Lost Tribes in the arbor and the garden?"

"Well, you talk of them on the piazza till they have driven me wild. Whatever it is that you talk about, this man is deceiving you. I was reassured last evening when I saw the insignia of his office, but he may have stolen that badge, and I have come to the conclusion that he is playing a double part."

"I am conspiring to save you, Sophronia, to save you from yourself and your trusting nature. Poor Sophronia, you do indeed need a man to take care of you. Until you find one, I confide you to the care of my good friend, Bob Jennings, the crack sleuth-hound of the detective force."

I turned pale. I could not see myself, but I felt a pallor creeping over my features. I sat down, trembling.

"Don't cry, Sophronia! Don't faint! It's all right. There is a conspiracy, right here in your own house, and we are trying to save you from it. Jennings and I. We don't know just what it means, as yet, but—"

"But your untruths, Marmaduke Smith. How do you excuse those?"

"The end justifies the means," said he. "The end certainly justifies the means."

"How could you know what was happening out here? You never come near me—"

"I should like to come, Sophronia. I should like to come. I thought of you at once when Jennings said that he wanted a boarding place near the village, and then, strange to say, I discovered that this was the very house where he wished to take up his abode. He told me the story, as far as he knows it, and I volunteered to help him. Now, let me give you one word of caution. You have stumbled upon this matter long be-

fore we intended that you should know anything about it. Now, the only thing for you to do is to act as if you knew nothing about it. Treat these people exactly as you have all along, and—"

"Oh, how can I listen to the Lost Tribes any longer?" said I, almost crying. Truth to tell, my nerves were shaken by all that had come and gone.

"I will promise, dear Mrs. Brathwaite, to change the subject now," he said, and I went to my room and locked my door, sitting listless, far into the morning.

CHAPTER VI.

No one can imagine how dreadfully I felt at the turn that matters had taken. If this girl was really the little Amaranthe of my young ladyhood, and I could not doubt that she was, it seemed a terrible thing to have found her associated with strange men who could come into her windows at night. But, after all, was I certain that any strange man had come into the window at night? I thought of asking Mr. Beldon to help me, and set him as a watch upon her. The fact of the existence of that plug which Elder Wynne had cut in some way out of the floor of my upper back did not escape my mind. That, of course, was to keep a watch upon Mr. Beldon, but I thought that Elder Wynne, or Bob Jennings, rather, had overreached himself.

I made up my mind that when I went downstairs in the morning I would speak very plainly to my boarder. I waited until nine o'clock, and then I went across the hall and stood at the door of the lower-front chamber. I waited a moment, hesitated, bent my head and listened. I thought I heard some movement within, and gave a gentle tap at the panel. There was no answer. I tapped again. Still silence!

I turned the knob gently, and thought, as I did so, "What if she has gone away as she threatened?" My heart gave a great throb at this, for I could not bear the idea of having her leave me. There was something about her which drew me towards her, and was she not, after all, little Amaranthe? No matter what she had done, or seemed to have done, she was still little Amaranthe, the daughter of Eugene Darlington my old friend, and the niece of the dear ladies at the Hall.

I pushed open the door. The room was dark, the blinds closed, the green shades drawn closely. There was a sickening odor in the room, at which my heart sank way, way down. What if she were dead? What if my attitude towards her had been too severe? What if she, poor, lonely, unprotected creature, had taken her life, here, under my roof, where, instead of suspicion and injustice, she should of all places have found seclusion, confidence and the kindest of care? We send missionaries to the heathen; shall we not minister to our own?

I groped my way cautiously in and now, with the streak of light from the open door, began to see more clearly. I looked, fearful of looking, towards the bed. No, she had not left me. Her slight body was there. Was her spirit there also? She was pale and still; a white cloth lay across her eyes and brow. My dress made a slight rustling sound. How glad I was to hear her voice say, weak though it was:—

"What is it?"

The odors in the room were nauseating. I ran to the window and raised the sash, and let some of God's mild summer breeze and shining sun into the room. She cried out at this and clasped her hands over her eyes.

"Oh! Oh!" she said. "I cannot bear it!" I wondered what it was she could not bear, whether the sunshine or her thoughts.

"What is it?" I cried. "What have you taken? What is this dreadful odor? Are you ill? Amaranthe! little Amaranthe! are you ill?" She wearily dragged the cloth from her forehead, and opened her eyes stupidly.

"What was it," she muttered, "that they gave me—those—those—men? It made me stupid, sleepy. The room is full of it. Ah!"—she snuffed at the fresh, sweet air—"how good!"

[To Be Continued]

Doubtful Consolation.

Young Wife—I'm so unhappy.  
Girl Friend—Why, dear?  
"I'm beginning to realize that my husband married me for my money."  
"Well, it ought to be some consolation to know that he isn't as big a fool as he looks."—Chicago Daily News.

A Speed Limit.

"I'd like to know why they call this train a 'limited,'" said the disgusted passenger; "I don't see anything limited about it."  
"You don't," laughed the engineer.  
"Well, it's limited to ten miles an hour."—Philadelphia Record.

The Score.

Muggsy—Me aunt died yesterday.  
Swipsey—Wot wuz de score?—Ohio State Journal.

**New Cure for Lame Back.**

Rutledge, Minn., Feb. 16th.—Mr. E. C. Getchell of this place relates a happy experience which will read with interest by all those who have a similar trouble.

It appears that last winter Mr. Getchell was seized with a lameness and soreness in his back which grew worse and worse till at last it became very bad and made it very difficult for him to get about at all.

After a time he heard of a new remedy for backache which some of his friends and neighbors said had cured them and he determined to try it. The name of the remedy is Dodd's Kidney Pills and Mr. Getchell has proven that it is a sure cure. He says:

"I used two boxes of Dodd's Kidney Pills according to directions and my lameness was entirely cured and I am all O. K. again. Dodd's Kidney Pills are as good as represented."

This remedy is very popular here and has worked some remarkable cures of Backache and Kidney Trouble.

**His Idea.**

Mrs. Henpeque—Married men live longer than single men.  
Henpeque—Yes; and it serves them right.—Detroit Free Press.

**Bathing the Baby.**

Young mothers naturally feel anxious about the baby's bath. It is best to begin at six weeks to put the little one in the water, first folding a soft towel in the bottom of the basin. Use only Ivory Soap, as many of the highly colored and perfumed soaps are very injurious to the tender skin of an infant.

ELEANOR R. PARKER.

Sillicus—"Everyone says he is a genius."  
Cynicus—"Then I guess he might be. It takes genius to convince other people that you are one."—Pala delphia Record.

**Seeking a New Home?**

Why not try the great Southwest? Low colonist rates on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Ask for particulars and literature. Address James Barker, Gen'l Pass. Agent, M. K. & T. Ry., 101 Wainwright Bldg., St. Louis.

Jealousy is the drop of bitter that prevents the wine of love from cloying the palate.—Town Topics.

The Public Awards the Palm to Hale's Honey of Horehound and Tar for coughs. Pike's Toothache Drops Cure in one minute.

A man's own good breeding is the best security against other people's ill-manners.—Chesterfield.

Iowa Farms \$4 Per Acre Cash, bal. crop till paid. Mulhall, Sioux City, Ia.

Faith overcomes many failures.—Ram's Horn.

If you want creamery prices do as the creameries do, use June Tent Butter Color.

The blacksmith is a blow hard—when his fire is low.—Farm Journal.

**How an abscess in the Fallopien Tubes of Mrs. Hollinger was removed without a surgical operation.**

"I had an abscess in my side in the fallopian tube (the fallopian tube is a connection of the ovaries). I suffered untold misery and was so weak I could scarcely get around. The sharp burning pains low down in my side were terrible. My physician said there was no help for me unless I would go to the hospital and be operated on. I thought before that I would try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, which, fortunately, I did, and it has made me a stout, healthy woman. My advice to all women who suffer with any kind of female trouble is to commence taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound at once."—Mrs. IRA S. HOLLINGER, Stillville, Ohio.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

It would seem by this statement that women would save time and much sickness if they would get Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound at once, and also write to Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass., for special advice. It is free and always helps. No other person can give such helpful advice as Mrs. Pinkham to women who are sick.

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