

14 MARY MINDS HER BUSINESS

and last, but not least, the verification of the fruitfulness of the vine.

The girl's name was Martha Berger and her home was in California. She had come east to attend the wedding of her brother and was now staying with the Pearsons a few weeks before returning west. Her age was twenty-six. She had no parents, very little money, and taught French, English and Science in the high school back home.

"Have you any brothers or sisters?" asked Miss Cordelia, with a side glance toward Miss Patty.

"Only five brothers and five sisters," laughed Martha.

For a moment it might be said that Miss Cordelia purred.

"Any of them married?" she continued.

"All but me."

"My dear! . . . You don't mean to say that they have made you an aunt already?"

Martha paused with that inward look which generally accompanies mental arithmetic.

"Only about seventeen times," she finally laughed again.

When their guest had gone, the two sisters fairly danced around each other.

"Oh, Patty!" exulted Miss Cordelia, "I'm sure she's a fruitful vine!"