

Maida's great eyes were greater than ever. "Beechy!" she protested. "You are n't fourteen!"

"No, I know I'm not; but I'm seventeen. And when I told Ralph that, he proposed at once. You see he's been my father confessor ever since we've been on this trip, so he knows all that's best and worst of me; and I do think we shall have real fun when we're married. I told Mamma I'd have no Princes on *my* ranch, and I won't. But if she's fool enough to take that man, after all, she and I can visit each other's ranches after this, and we'll be all right. Mine's going to be in England or Scotland in summer, and in winter I'm to live with Félicité and the duck. Oh, I shall be happy, and so will Ralph, I hope. But I never thought a good democrat like Papa's daughter would go and marry a man with a title."

"A mere baronet. It need n't go against the grain much," remarked Sir Ralph. "Think how much worse it is for your poor cousin!"

"Why?"

"To marry a 'real live lord,' who will some day be a marquis."

"Oh!" exclaimed Beechy. "She who said she would like to teach other American girls a lesson."

"I did n't know," Maida faltered.

"What?" asked Ralph. "You did n't tell her?"

"I forgot all about it," I said. "But Maida, dearest, it does n't matter. I —"

"Nothing matters but you," she said.

"And you," I added.

THE END