

Now, if there is one thing to my mind more contemptible than another, it is that male impostor whom ladies so charitably designate by the mild term 'a flirt.' It is all fair for us to have our little harmless vanities and weaknesses. We are shamefully debarred from the nobler pursuits and avocations of life, so we may be excused for passing the time in such trivial manoeuvres as we can invent to excite the envy of our own, and triumph over the pride of the opposite, sex. But that a man should lower himself to the part of a slave, 'tied to an apron-string,' and voluntarily be a fool, without being an honest one—it is too degrading!

Such a despicable being does us an infinity of harm; he encourages us to display all the worst points of the female character; he cheats us of our due amount of homage from many a noble heart, and perhaps robs us of our own dignity and self-respect. Yet, such is the creature we encourage in our blind vanity, and whilst we vote him 'so pleasant and agreeable,' temper our commendation with the mild remonstrance, 'though I am afraid he's rather a flirt!'

I saw the drawing-room on that morning was no place for me, so I folded my work, and curbing my tongue, which I own had a strong inclination to take its part in the war of words, I sought my own room, and found there in addition to the litter and discomfort inseparable from the process of packing, a letter just arrived by the post. It was in Cousin Amelia's hand, and bore the Dufferin post mark. 'What now?' I thought, dreading to open it least it might contain some fresh object of annoyance, some further inquiries or remarks calculated to irritate my already over-driven temper out of due bounds.

Cousin Amelia never writes to me unless she has something unpleasant to say, was my mental observation, 'and a very little more would fill the cup to overflowing. Whatever happens, I am determined not to cry; rather than face all those ladies with red eyes when I go to wish Lady Scapounce good-bye, I would forego the pleasure of ever receiving a letter or hearing a bit of news again!'

So I popped Cousin Amelia's epistle into my pocket without breaking the seal, and put on my bonnet at once, that I might be ready to start, and not keep Cousin John waiting.

The leave-taking was got over more easily than I expected. People generally hustle one off in as great a hurry as the common decencies of society would admit of, in order to shorten as much as possible the unavoidable *genre* of parting. Sir Guy, staunch to his colors, was to drive me back on the dotted drag; but his great face fell several inches when I expressed my determination to perform the journey this time unaided.

'I've bitten the team on purpose for you, Mrs. Kate,' he exclaimed, with one of his usual outbursts, 'and now you throw me over at the last moment. Too bad; by all that's disappointing, it's too bad! Come, now, think better of it, put on my box-seat, and catch hold of 'em, there's a good girl.'

'Inside, or not at all, Sir Guy,' was my answer; and I can be pretty determined, too, when I choose.

'Then perhaps your maid would like to come on the box,' urged the Baronet, who seemed to have set his heart on the enjoyment of some female society.

'Gottide goes with me,' I replied, stoutly; for I thought Cousin John would be pleased, and Sir Guy was at a non-plus.

'Awfully high temper,' he muttered, as he took his reins and placed his foot on the roller bolt; 'I like 'em saucy, I own, but this isn't a regular vixen!'

before him, after all.

The last sentence escaped my lips without my meaning it. Had I not come upon it unexpectedly, I think I should have kept it to myself. John blushed, and looked hurt. For a few minutes there was a disagreeable silence, which we both felt awkward. He was the first to break it.

'Kate,' said he, 'do you think I shall be married before Miss Horsingham?'

'How can I tell?' I replied, looking steadfastly out of the window, whilst my color rose and my heart beat rapidly.

'Do you believe that Welsh story, Kate?' proceeded my cousin.

I know by his voice it couldn't be true; I felt it was a slander; and I whispered, 'No.'

'One more question, Kate,' urged Cousin John, in a thick, low voice: 'Why did you refuse Frank Lovell?'

'He never proposed to me,' I answered; 'I never gave him an opportunity.'

'Why not,' said my cousin.

'Because I liked some one else better,' was my reply; and I think those few words settled the whole business.

I shall soon be five-and-twenty now, and on my birthday I am to be married. Aunt Deborah has got better ever since it has been settled. Everybody seems pleased; and I am sure no one can be better pleased than I am. Only Lady Horsingham says, 'Kate will never settle.' I think I know better. I think I will make none the worse wife because I can walk, and ride, and get up early, and stand all weathers, and love the simple, wholesome, natural pleasures of the country, John thinks so to, and that is all I need care about.

I have such a charming *trousseau*, though I am ashamed to say I take very little pleasure in looking at it. But kind, thoughtful Cousin John has presented brilliant with an entirely new set of clothing; and I think my horse seems almost more delighted with his finery than his mistress is with hers. My cousin and I ride together every day. Dear me! how delightful it is to think that I shall always be as happy as I am now?

THE END.

Is the following, which we find in a western exchange, to be taken as an indication that "short-horns are becoming common and cheap?" "Mr. James Healy, late of the Grove Farm, Adelaide, has sold his short-horn bull, Marquis of Hastings, to Mr. Thomas Nell, of the 4th line, for \$65."

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