



VOL. XXXVII.

JANUARY 26th, 1910.

No. 12.

A Letter.

DEAR Kathleen,—Surely you don't expect me to tell you all about my summer in the West. I'll tell you about it if I ever strike home at the same time as you do again. You know I never was very strong on writing. You should have seen mother look, when I reminded her with a most supercilious expression, that I taught writing in my school this summer, but you know Kit, you never know what you can do till you try, as the tiny robin said when it swallowed the tomato grub.

Say, Kathleen, have you yet struck in British Columbia that type of girl they speak of as the Western Girl,—you know, the throw-the-wild-mustang, ride-the-bucking-broncho, gallop-up-the-main-street-firing-a-six-shooter type? I don't suppose you have, because your aunt told me you were becoming a bridge fiend. Oh naughty! Well I didn't meet that type either, and I was disappointed. Maybe I didn't get far enough West. The nearest approach I saw to the real thing was the hired girl at the ranch where I stayed when in the country, and a young girl in town. The former was somewhat of a romancer, I believe, altho' she was good stuff and I admired her immensely, but I must tell you about the other.

She was, as she might say herself, "a decent head." I just love to talk about her; if I could only imitate her gesture and expressions. The first time I saw her was when she was leaving some church reception. She was wearing a rough-rider and riding gloves, her hair was hanging in a long, heavy, braid and she had the greatest swagger. We were never introduced to each other, one day she started a conversation by asking me if I rooted as loudly at a football match as at a baseball game. Her father kept the hotel and so she was always around with the men, but she wasn't the least bit like what you would expect her to be. She was mighty sensible and had a certain air of womanliness about her that seemed so incongruous in such a mad cap. She had practically no education. Her mother had always wanted a good time when she was a girl, but had been kept down, so she was determined to let Elsa "go some" when she wanted to. But this indulgence didn't spoil Elsa at all.

She was afraid of nothing and would never take a dare. She could swim, ride, drive, was a crack shot, pitched on the ball team, played the piano, and the cornet in the Ladies' Band. She used to take me driving and would go from one good story to another till she became ashamed of the way I laughed and took me out into the country to recover. She said she never