A Lesson in Flirtation

MRS. BOVRIL was at home—not to all the world, but to the select few who happened to interest her in that particular year of grace. There were no old friends among them. Mrs. Bovrill had few old friends, and she did not encourage them. She used to say they were like old servants, and became impudent as time went on. Besides, she liked a change, and the men—well, it only took an intelligent man three weeks to find her out.

There were usually about four women in the room, and they were carefully chosen for their ugliness and patient dispositions. Every one said she hired them to irritate the men and increase their longing to escape to her side. It was certainly an understood thing at Mrs. Bovril's that only one man was to sit by her at a time. She gave each one his turn, if he deserved it, and expected him to serve his seven years cheerfully in another corner of the room. That they were content to do this is a proof of the wonderful fascination she exercised over her admirers.

To-day, however, the young men rubbed their eyes and stared. What was Mrs. Bovril thinking of? There was a young and beautiful woman languidly sipping tea on Mrs. Bovril's own particular sofa; she must have got in by accident, or force, or guile. Their hostess would never have been so foolish as to ask a possible rival.

They were mistaken, however. She had been the subject of a special invitation. The fact was Mrs. Paunceforte Deane was there to learn. She had not long been married, and had lived

"YOU REALLY MUST HAVE SOME ADMIRERS."

in the country all her life. Mrs. Bovril had taken pity on her ignorance, and had asked her round to show her how things ought to be done.

"My dear," she had said some days previously, "you really must have some admirers."

"I have my husband," Mrs. Deane had replied with provoking innocence.

"Your husband? Yes, of course. So have I. But if your husband is the only man who is going to admire you, you will soon lose your attractiveness in his eyes. Men like their wives to be run after. It gives them the pride of possession. They like to think that they have got what other men are longing for?"

"And what other men may take from them. Is it not rather dangerous, Mrs. Bovril?"

"How seriously you take everything, child. There is no harm."

"Not in playing with fire?"

"Fire? Fiddlesticks! Come round on Tuesday. I have a few people in. You will like them, I expect. They are rather different to the ordinary people, and I don't want all of them for myself."

Mrs. Deane had laughed. But she was a girl, and liked something new, so she came round.

Mrs. Bovril was kind, gave her the second best man and the best seat, and told all the others how charming she was.

"Fresh from the country, you know, Algy," she murmured, "where all the beautiful cows are, and buttercups and things. Isn't she lovely?"

Algy was fool enough to say "Yes," so he was packed off before his time was up, and he made things so unpleasant all round the other side of the room that the people dropped off one by one, and soon Mrs. Bovril and Mrs. Deane were left alone.

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Bovril, when Algy, who had staid to see all the others driven out, had gone, "how have you been getting on?"

"I don't think my husband will have any cause to be jealous," Mrs. Deane replied, leaning back in a more comfortable position than she had hitherto allowed herself.

"Dear me, how unfortunate you are. You don't know how to treat them, you silly child. You should have watched me. A lot can be done in that way. I suppose you talked about books, and the theaters, and bicycles, and all those sort of things," and Mrs. Bovril smiled contemptuously.

"What else should I talk about—to strangers?" replied the pupil rather crossly, for, to say the truth, Mrs. Bovril's second best young man had not been interested in anything.

Mrs. Bovril laughed. "You absurd child. Do you think that sort of conversation interests them? They are only interested in you—and themselves. You must be more personal. Discuss character of men and women. A little tact will do done with that. You soon [illegible] to your own natures and [illegible], and on that topic you can [illegible] in fifteen minutes. [illegible] hint at domestic sorrows. There is nothing a young man likes so much in a married woman as domestic sorrows."

"But I haven't any," Mrs. Deane said, pulling a rose to pieces and dropping the leaves into a teacup.

"Of course not. But it is so easy to suggest some. I believe Algy Dawson thinks that Mr. Bovril beats me."

"Did you tell him so?" cried Mrs. Deane in disgust.

"No, you goose, but I always look extremely sad, and then brighten up when he comes and sits by me. It makes him think he is the one bright spot in my dark and desolate life. Of course he likes to think that." And Mrs. Bovril laughed till she spilt some tea over her new frock.

"How insincere you people of the city are," said Mrs. Deane, with a demure look on her face. Then a mischievous light flashed into her eyes and she cried, "What fun!"

"Yes, dear. You see what you have missed in the country; but, as I say, you can learn a lot from me."

"Do teach me, Mrs. Bovril," the girl said eagerly, "I think—I think I should be a good pupil."

"A great deal rests with yourself, of course," replied Mrs. Bovril. Mrs. Deane turned her head a little, just a little, towards the mirror, and smiled.

"Just a few hints, though," she pleaded. "They would be acceptable. You have had such experience."

"I can only repeat what I have said. Be personal. Personalities are the only proper topics of conversation between a man and a woman. You cannot be too personal. It is better even to be rude than to talk about bicycles."

"Please go on," cried Mrs. Deane, clasping her knees with her hands and leaning forward.

"Well, you can talk about other men—if you like. Not in terms of abuse—that is inartistic—but as if they didn't matter. It institutes pleasant mental comparisons in the man's mind. It is only verbal comparisons that are odious."

Mrs. Deane jumped up. "I must go, Mrs. Bovril. I could listen to you all day. O, you are clever. But isn't it all just—just a little wrong?"

Mrs. Bovril rose too and kissed her. "Silly child, do you think any of us are deceived?"

"Might not those who did not know——" Mrs. Deane said demurely. "Young, inexperienced people; might they not be deceived, and—and——"

"They soon learn, dear," Mrs. Bovril sighed, and looked away. Mrs. Deane wondered how she had learned, and if the lesson had been a pleasant one.

"Good-by, Mrs. Bovril, and thank you so much. I have half a mind to try—some day." And she laughed round the corner of the door and was gone.

* * * * * * *

A month afterwards Mrs. Paunceforte Deane found Mrs. Bovril alone in her drawing room—her "schoolroom," Mrs. Deane always called it.

After a few greetings Mrs. Bovril came to the point.

"Has it been a success, dear?" she cried. Mrs. Deane nodded, and gave a smile suspiciously like one of triumph.

"Sit down, dear, and tell me all about it." Mrs. Bovril smiled encouragingly and began to pour out some tea. "Well, first of all, who is he?"

Mrs. Deane blushed. "O, I don't think I ought to tell you that. He—he is married, and it might——"

"Well, well, it doesn't matter," she replied, sharply. "All men are the same. You are young yet, and will soon get over that feeling. I don't understand it myself, and—you and I are also married—for that matter."

Mrs. Deane looked relieved. "I was afraid you would be vexed," she said, "would think I had perhaps gone too far. I am so glad you don't see any harm in it."

"Is he sufficiently fascinating?" Mrs. Bovril asked. "That is the thing. That, in fact, is the only excuse."

"He is one of the most charming men I have ever met," replied Mrs. Deane with fervor. Then she looked on the floor and spoke more slowly. "So strong, so self-reliant, and, poor man, so unhappy."

"In his wife, I suppose. Of course! don't you remember what I told you?" There was a slight sneer on Mrs. Bovril's face.

"Yes, I remember," she replied. "I have profited by it. After what you told me no man could deceive me. But he—I am sure he is speaking the truth. There!" and she drew herself up defiantly.

"Of course, dear, of course," Mrs. Bovril said soothingly, and laughed behind her handkerchief.

"His wife neglects him—flirts with other men," Mrs. Deane went on indignantly. "I know she does."

"Of course, dear. They all do. Didn't I tell you so?"

"But it is different in this case."

"Why? I don't suppose she means anything, any more than you or I do."

"He thinks she does," Mrs. Deane blurted out, "so it's just as bad—for him."

Mrs. Bovril laughed softly. "For him? Whose fault is that? But I won't destroy your illusions. You are young, and I suppose you want some excuse."

"Not for my conduct. I am merely—merely doing what you have taught me. It is all in fun."

"But for him. You want an excuse for his conduct. Is he so much in earnest?" Mrs. Bovril began to be sorry for the man and a bit ashamed of her own share in the matter. She recovered, however. "You sweet, innocent thing," she continued, "you will soon learn that nothing is ever done in earnest."

Mrs. Deane rose and smiled. "Perhaps," she said sweetly, "perhaps I may some day attain to your position, Mrs. Bovril. As yet I am too young. I am sorry for the harm I have done."

"You ridiculous child, you have done no harm. Must you be going? Good-by, dear. He will get over it. I am rather proud of my pupil's success. Is he really so much in earnest. Poor fellow—pooh! it will do him good!"

Mrs. Deane moved towards the door. "I think," she said quietly, "that Mr. Bovril is one of the best hearted, most——"

Mrs. Bovril rose and knocked down a plate. "Mrs. Paunceforte Deane!" she said with some dignity.

"O, Mrs. Bovril, I am so sorry." There was a sly twinkle in her eye all the same. "I thought you said there was no harm. I didn't think you would mind. Your pupils must practice, you know. It was only in fun—ah, I see it all now."

"What do you see," Mrs. Bovril said sharply.

"That one can look at it from quite another point of view."

As a matter of fact, Bovril said that he had never even met Mrs. Paunceforte Deane, and I am not quite sure that the poor man was not speaking the truth. He ought, however, to be thankful to her. Mrs. Bovril does not give lessons in flirtation now.—Chicago Tribune.

"JUMPED" BY A MOOSE.

Easy Enough for the Animal, but Hard for the City Man.

What it did was easy enough for the moose, but a little bit hard for the city man. The moose, perhaps driven down by the storm, seemed bound to get into the cedar thickets, like the white tailed deer, and it led us a merry chase, worming in and out among the snow-covered trees. Needless to say, we were soon thoroughly wetted with the snow, which fell from the trees on our necks and shoulders, but, of course, one does not mind a little thing like that, says a writer in Forest and Stream. The interest of the chase kept us warm. We could see that we were getting closer and closer to our game. Presently we could see that we were getting very close. At last we saw where we had gotten within 100 yards of it. There was the story. A deep pit, as though a great horse had lain there.

"Jumped," said Adam.

"Sure," said I.

Then we sat down and thought it over for a while. We went on some more, and presently we came across two more moose tracks, a big one and a little one, probably a cow and a calf, as Adam thought. We were then three miles from the camp, and it was not too late in the day, so we thought we would follow on and see what this bunch would do to us. They did pretty much the same as the young bull had done. We followed these tracks through all kinds of country, saw where the animals had fed in among the willows and alders, and on the roundwood, and finally puzzled out their trail until we knew that we were getting very close. This time we were near indeed to seeing our moose. We were perhaps not fifty yards away when we came to a couple more big holes in the snow, and some more regular holes beyond. Jumped again! There was the story, plain enough. This time we might almost have heard the bushes rattle as we went out. As we stood there we heard a hoarse, harsh, curious kind of coughing bark. Adam laughed.

"That old lady is just wondering what in the world it was that scared her," said he. "She is frightened, but is not exactly sure what it is that frightened her. Just listen to her." Once, twice and again that same coughing bark came back to us. Then all was still, and we were again all alone in the white wilderness. We concluded that we would go home after that.

Cut Both Ways.

"I want my hair cut, and no talk," said a 16-stone man, with an I-own-the-earth air, as he walked into a Swindon barber's shop and sat down.

"The——" commenced the man in the apron.

"No talk, I tell you!" shouted the heavy man. "Just a plain hair cut. I've read all the papers, and don't want any news. Start right away, now."

The man in the apron obeyed.

When he had finished, the man who knew everything rose from his chair and surveyed himself in the glass.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed. "It's really true, then. You barbers can't do your work properly unless you talk."

"I don't know," said the man in the apron quietly. "You must ask the barber. He'll be in presently. I'm the glazier from next door."—London Answers.

Getting Even with the Mussels.

A man condemned to death recently in France was asked, according to custom, which he would prefer for his last meal. He chose mussels, which, though his favorite dish, he said, caused him a terrible indigestion. "This time, however," he added, grimly, "they will not have the chance."

In a Vital Organ.

Mrs. Rubba—How's Mrs. Chatter this morning, doctor?

Doctor—Suffering terribly.

Mrs. Rubba—What, with only a slight throat affection?

Doctor—Yes, but she can't speak.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

OLD FAVORITES

Soliloquy from "Hamlet."

To be, or not to be; that is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die; to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die; to sleep;
To sleep; perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause; there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death—
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns—puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.
—William Shakspeare.

Bedouin Love Song.

From the desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire,
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!
—Bayard Taylor.

NEGROES GROW RICH FAST.

Many of Those Living in the Creek Nation Are Well-to-Do.

It is not in the South that the richest negroes are found, although many in that region have amassed a goodly store of property since the war. Doubtless the wealthiest community of colored people in the world is found among the Creek Indians in Indian Territory. There are about 7,000 of them, and they are worth on an average $3,000 each. The wealth of the more industrious foots up ever higher, certain individuals being the owners of from $10,000 to $15,000 worth of land each.

These negroes are the descendants of slaves of the Creek tribe of Indians and are known as Creek negroes. They are entitled to a share in the division of Creek Indian lands, also a part of the trust funds. Together the 7,000 negroes own 22,000,000 acres of land. And yet their education is far from complete. Their social environments are crude in the extreme and progress goes slowly amid their huts and fields.

Unlike the other Indians of the rich five civilized tribes the Creeks insisted upon freeing their slaves to give them an equal share in their lands and money. At that time there were few slaves, but the number grew through descendants, until now fully 7,000 have laid successful claim to a "head right" on the Creek rolls of citizenship. They have their own representatives in the Creek Indian Legislature, their own schools and their own churches. Everything bids fair to make them the model community of negroes in the United States when Indian territory is recovering from the tangle wilderness of reconstruction, its laws made uniform and itself a State of the Union.

There is little culture among the Creek negroes. They have a social set all their own, to which not even the Indians are invited. Their characteristics are in a great measure differ ent from the negro of the South or the North. It is a mixture of both, with additional peculiarities.

Like the Indians, these negroes have their dances in the open, which have come to be a sort of religion with them. And, following in the footsteps of the Southern Negro, they have barbecues, 'possum hunts and the like. As a Northern type of the negro they are more industrious and independent of the whites, know how to work hard and save their money, and, like the type from the city, are well dressed—gaudily, but at the same time wearing expensive clothes.

These 7,000 Creek negroes live in a tract of rich land called the Canadian River bottoms, and Okmulgee is their town and trading point. Okmulgee is the capital of the Creek Indian nation, and has been for years a negro town. Recently, however, white people flocked in and have taken possession. The negroes are starting their own towns along the branch of the Frisco Railroad.

Notwithstanding that many of these Creek negroes are industrious, there are some among them who rent out their estates and lounge in idleness about the railway stations. It is a common sight to see a 500-acre tract of rich land in the Canadian bottoms being tilled by a white man. Invariably, upon inquiry as to his landlord, he will refer to the negro owner in no complimentary terms. Meanwhile one will find the owner shooting craps or enjoying himself eating turkey and 'possum in a neighboring village.

When the Creeks freed their negroes in 1864 the two fraternized for a time, and even intermarried, but that has all passed now. In accordance with the terms granting their freedom, the Creek negroes are allowed a voice in the tribal government, and so they have their own members in the Council, have their own schools and all that; but the Creek Indian feels above the Creek negro and refuses to associate with him.

Etiquette of the Handkerchief

"Your handkerchief isn't a wash rag," said a patient mother the other day when she caught her daughter in the midst of a dry cleaning. The daughter naturally saw no reason for the comment. "Everybody does it," she said.

"So they do," responded the mother, "but other people's rudeness is no excuse for yours." Yet the next time the mother went shopping she stopped in front of an elevator looking-glass long enough to mop some smudges from her nose.

It has so come about, through the constant showering of soft coal soot in Chicago streets, that the handkerchief is here used for a face mop. Go where you will, in whatever class of society and to whatever kind of gathering and you will find people mopping, surreptitiously perhaps, but nevertheless mopping. The inevitable smudge never fails to call forth a surprised consternation and the consternation unconsciously hides behind the folds of a handkerchief.

Be it lace or linen, or just common cotton, no handkerchief is too good for this service. The ornamental square which is tucked in at the belt of a dinner gown or hidden away in a sleeve is not too good for it, neither is the generous cambric which shows its corners above the breastpocket of a top coat.

Despite the abuse which the handkerchief is thus obliged to endure, it is an ornamental and graceful piece of furniture. It was not meant to be argued with, yet it gives itself kindly to that service. It is used by the actress as a signal of distress and in the nervous hands of an emotional woman it is a safe barometer of her sympathies.

It is a school girl's trick to chew the corners of a handkerchief, yet that too, has its mitigation. It is undoubtedly rude to play with a handkerchief no matter what the provocation, yet she who manipulates a handkerchief with the grace of long association laughs at this rule of etiquette. If she would assume an innocent air there is nothing she will more quickly undertake than this same by-play with her handkerchief. She flirts with her handkerchief and hides her embarrassment behind it and weeps into it and makes it altogether the most useful bit of finery that her toilet possesses.—Chicago Chronicle.

Like Cæsar's Wife.

"Do you think it polite," said the foolish stranger in Crimson Gulch, "for a man to sit in his shirt sleeves and play cards all day?"

"Yes, sir," answered Three Finger Sam; "and maybe it'll be for your own good to remind you that the fewer sleeves a man has on when he plays cards around here the less liable he is to fall under suspcion."—Washington Star.

Not to Be Frightened.

Employer—Well, what did he say when you called for that check?

Clerk—That he would break every bone in my body and throw me out of the window if I showed my face there again.

Employer—Then go back at once and tell him he can't frighten me with his violence!—Illustrated Bits.

Enforced Athletics.

"Joe is a great walker."

"Indeed? How long has he been walking?"

"Lemme see. I believe the twins are 5 months old."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Stout in Defense.

Sidney—Have you any marked ability of any kind?

Rodney—Well, I've kept a lot of widows from marrying me.

Good Use for Moonlight.

Tomatoes are said to ripen best by the light of the moon.

Science and Invention

A white rust is an unexplained "disease" of English and German galvanized iron that has developed within a year or two.

The largest pendulum ever made is that with which Messrs. Berbet and Flammarion have been demonstrating the earth's rotation in Paris. A lead ball of fifty-six pounds is attached to a fine piano wire about 210 feet long. The oscillation lasts sixteen seconds.

The explosion motor holds the palm for lightness. The best electric motor with its storage battery is stated to weigh nearly one hundred pounds to the horse power, and the Serpollet steam engine, flashing water into steam from a coil boiler, about fourteen pounds. But the Bourdiaux gasoline engine gives a horse power with a weight of only eight pounds.

The new self-luminous mixture of a French chemist, claimed to require only very short exposure to light and to be unusually brilliant and lasting, consists of twenty parts of dehydrated sodium carbonate, five of sodium chloride, one of magnesium sulphate, five hundred of strontium carbonate and 150 of sulphur. The well-mixed materials are kept at a white heat for three hours in a muffle from which the air is carefully excluded.

In his experiments with various vehicles, M. Michelin has found that iron tires require greater motive power than either solid rubber or pneumatic. An electric automobile running at 5 per cent greater speed with pneumatic tires took 18 per cent less power than when fitted with solid rubber tires, and in stopping, the solid tires required an increase of 14 per cent in braking power.

In the singular failure of the old windows of York Cathedral, the glass has lost most of its transparency, and in places has become so perforated that it crumbles at the slightest touch. To stop the "disease" some glass of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries has been removed. It is known that the hardest cement is sometimes disintegrated by chemical action set up by minute organism, and it is supposed that the destruction of the glass has been due to some fungus.

Owing to the property which aluminum possesses of producing a very high temperature when burned with substances that give off oxygen, it has lately been employed in Berlin for making a new detonator, for firing explosives which do not readily respond to the action of the detonating compositions hitherto used. The aluminum is used in the shape of a powder mixed with the other substances filling the percussion caps or detonators. The sudden high temperature induced by the pulverized aluminum results in a greater mechanical energy than can be produced with compositions not containing aluminum.

The adoption of liquid in place of solid fuel has not taken place so rapidly as some experimenters anticipated. In the opinion of Edwin L. Orde of the British Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the trouble arises from the exclusive use in boiler furnaces of crude oil, which contains a considerable percentage of water, 10 per cent at least; and this destroys the conditions necessary for perfect combustion. It is averred that some of the crude oil shipped from the wells contains as much as 40 per cent of water, and when used on shipboard the constant agitation prevents the separation of this water, which consequently enters the furnaces. The experiments of Dr. Paul show that liquid fuel is capable of giving 50 per cent more efficiency than the best coal.

"Took It" Literally.

Once upon a time a very nervous man called on his physician and asked him for medical advice.

"Take a tonic, and dismiss from your mind all that tends to worry you," said the doctor.

Several months afterward the patient received a bill from the physician asking him to remit $18, and answered it thus:

"Dear doctor, I have taken a tonic and your advice. Your bill tends to worry me, and so I dismiss it from my mind."

Moral—Advice sometimes defeats its giver.—Medical Talk.

A Back-Handed Compliment.

Cinderella had just put on the crystal slipper. "Do you think it makes my foot look smaller?" she asked, with charming naivete.

"Perhaps," replied the prince; "but I can see right through it."

Disconcerted by this back-handed compliment, the poor girl blushed, but as colonial buckles and open-work stockings had not yet arrived she had to be content with her undeceptive footgear.—Judge.

Not Well Received.

Ida—Why are you pouting, dear?

May—Why, Harry said he believed he could learn to love me.

Ida—I don't see anything awful in that.

May—Yes; the idea of him having to learn.

Surplus Water for Baths.

A large factory in Jena, Germany, utilises its surplus hot water in such a way as to afford the laborers nearly a thousand baths a week.

Some marriages are failures because the woman in the case is suspicious and some are failures because she isn't.