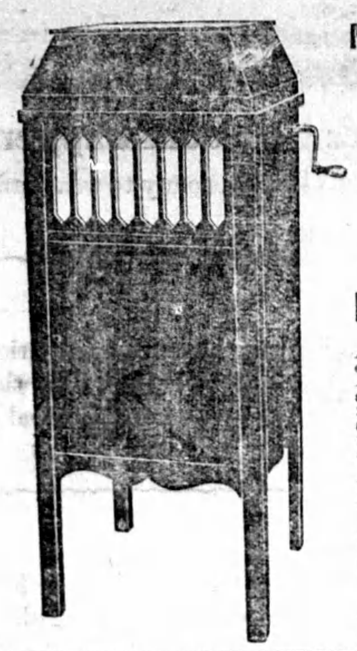

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Between Cousins;

OR, A DECLARATION OF WAR.

CHAPTER IX.—(Cont'd.)

sucking out the earth's blood—Fenella fervently hoped not to meet Duncan. The resolve to leave the hut before there was any danger of his return stood firm within her.

It was Adam who, unconsciously, put several spokes into her wheel, in the shape of wants and wishes which he was growing bolder to formulate, and of that garrulity which his misfortune had increased. At the end, as ill-luck would have, there came up a subject which, with Adam, was inexhaustible.

"Elsie Robson, you know her, don't you?" he blurted out, just as Fenella was drawing on her gloves.

"That dark girl? Yes; I think I know whom you mean."

"And would you say there was anything amiss with her? Anything to scare off a suitor, for example?"

"Amiss with her? No; if I remember right, she is rather good-looking. But Adam," and she rose resolutely, "you will tell me about her another time; it is getting late to-day."

"One moment, Miss Fenella!" and he groped blindly for her sleeve. "Only this one more question: What would you think now of a man who might have her for the asking—her and her croft and her cow—a man who'll require a wife some day, and who yet looks on the other side when he meets her on the road."

"I should say he was very foolish," pronounced Fenella, with all the authority of eighteen.

"Well, Duncan's that fool, Miss Fenella."

"Duncan? Oh? Is he going to marry her?"

"No, he isn't, worse luck—though I've urged him, times out of number. 'What do we need a housewife for?' he'll say, sort of joking in reply. 'Will any housewife keep the hut cleaner than I do? Or will any of them stir the porridge fairer?'—for he's as good a hand at the cooking as at the sweeping," put in Adam par parenthese—"and all the while knowing that I would die easier to see them come together. It's no the act of a dutiful son, in my judgment, though I'm bound to say, it's the only thing he's ever crossed me in," came the gloomy admission.

"Perhaps he doesn't care for her," ventured Fenella, far more uncertainly than she had spoken a minute ago, for this was a ground upon which she felt strange and unfamilar.

Adam threw up his maimed hands.

"Care for her, Miss Fenella! Unless he's got a piece of wood in place of a heart he can't help caring for a lass as bonnie and as well dowered as that! And so daft as she is upon him too! If he's got so small a bit of liking in him, it can't help growing beside her, just as fast as a potato grows when it's put into the ground."

"Then she is very fond of him, is she?" asked Fenella, with that inevitable interest which every typical woman feels in the heart concerns of other women.

"How should she not be? The finest lad in the parish! There is no finer lad in the parish, is there, Miss Fenella?"

"Oh, yes, Duncan is very good-looking," she agreed reflectively: "and he would be better-looking still if he did not so often look cross. Good-night, Adam!" she added, in the same breath, for her own words had conjured up a picture of the scorn in Duncan's eyes which she was anxious to escape. "It is nearly dark. I have stayed too long."

"Just this still," quavered Adam, not yet relinquishing his hold upon her sleeve; "your father has tried his hand for nought, but maybe if you'd say a word, Miss Fenella. It's likely he'll put more on a woman's judgment of another woman than on anything a man may say, and be he the minister himself."

"But I've got no judgment about the girl," protested Fenella, now in a fever to be gone. "But all right, Adam," she hastily stemmed the flood of further entreaties. "I'll try and see her, and I'll do what I can to help you—I really will. But now, good-night!"

Outside she breathed only half freely, since the steep hill-side to the right and the precipitous bank to the left kept her tied to the one narrow road along which the quarryman was bound to regain his home. In the dusk gathering fast within the hollow the heights had melted into one featureless rampart, while the oaks and ashes upon the river-bank were no more than black silhouettes against a streak of pale yellow sky. There were pale patches upon the shadow, some of which were movable, and some stationary; the still greedily feeding sheep or else some unusually blossom-laden hawthorn bush—while each of the busy burns, swelling in her ear as she approached it and dying away as she left it behind, borrowed from the shadows a mystery which daylight had denied them. It was their voices which drowned the sound of the footsteps approaching, just as the thickening dusk so effectively veiled the figure of the returning quarryman, that not until it was imminent did Fenella know that the meeting she had dreaded had become inevitable.

Evidently her nerves had suffered a little from the suspense, for, with the surging up of the tall figure in such close vicinity, a slight shiver passed over her. Simultaneously she quickened her step, so as to discourage any attempt at conversation, which was all the easier to do as they were walking on different sides of the road. But apparently he was not thinking of any such attempt, for having looked across and hesitated, for just one moment, he lifted his hat, and with a simple "Good evening," would have passed on. If he did not do so Fenella had herself to thank for it; for it was she who in this very moment stood still, perhaps because it had rushed over her that, after all, she owed him an apology, or perhaps because the silent condemnation which she thought to read in his attitude proved more mortifying than could be any spoken word. It was the mixture of these feelings which made her voice a little uncertain as she said:

"Good evening, Duncan!" Then, with an attempt at lightness:: "In a hurry, I see, as usual."

"I'm not in any greater hurry than any other day," said Duncan, standing still at his side of the road, but with his face still half-turned towards his home.

"I am glad I have met you," resumed Fenella, speaking nervously and quite sincerely, despite her recent dread of this very meeting. "I wanted to—to say something to you, about the other day—on the bank, you know."

She paused expectantly, but he said nothing, standing there immovable, and in the dark inscrutable, a figure that might have been cut out of black paper with a queer hump on its back, produced by the bag of tools he was carrying. Peer across as she would to read upon his features the scorn she expected, she could discover nothing. As well try to decipher an expression upon the holes of one of the oak-trees of the background. There was nothing for it but to go on, having once begun, and since evidently he was not going to help her.

"It was very stupid of me—not to speak to you, I mean. But it all passed so quickly; there was no time to think, somehow."

"On the contrary, not stupid at all, but uncommonly clever, I'm thinking," came the voice from over the road, very measured, yet with an accent which helped her to guess at the expression of the face. "In such company as you were it would have been hard, would it not, to point to an ordinary quarryman—a quite ordinary quarryman," he repeated, with careful deliberation, "and to say: 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is my cousin'? Oh, no, I think you did it mighty well."

Fenella's head sunk guiltily. This was what she had expected, what, in her heart of hearts, she knew she had deserved. A few weeks ago the head, instead of sinking, would have been petulantly thrown up, but though still smarting occasionally under what struck her as Duncan's arrogance, she had lately, beside his father's sick-bed, learnt to know and to respect other qualities in him beside the arrogance. It was this rather unwilling respect which made it possible to bear his reproaches.

"I did not mean it that way," she said, now almost humbly. "I should not like you to think that—that—"

"That you're ashamed of us? I should not like to think so either; for in that case, Miss Fenella"—and there came a deeper note into his voice—"I should have no choice but to be ashamed of you."

This time the head did go up, and her lips opened angrily, yet the words which, after a moment's pause, came over them were not angry ones, for the consciousness of her fault had returned upon her.

"If I had had a moment to think—It was so awkkward, somehow"—she said, in a burst of childish sincerity.

"Mighty awkward," agreed Duncan, with ominous readiness. "What would your friends have said, and what sort of face would the fine gentleman beside you have made, if you had had the idea of introducing us to each other? Do you think he would have shaken hands with me? or would he have been too much afraid of getting the slate-dust on to his fingers?"

"You're unkind, Duncan!" murmured Fenella, while the tears of mortification stung her eyelids. "And when you see that I'm sorry—you must see that I'm sorry, surely?" she asked, with a mixture of irritation and deprecation.

Probably he did see, or rather hear, since under the present conditions of light there was only her voice to go by, for when, after a short silence, he said gravely:

"I am glad you are sorry, Miss Fenella, for I shouldn't like to think ill of you," the sting had gone out of his voice.

Before she had spoken again he added:

"It's late for you to be walking alone. Father has kept you beyond your time, I'm thinking."

"Oh, I'm not afraid; it's only a short bit to the village."

"It's too long a bit for you to be walking alone after daylight; just ask the minister if it isn't. I'd better be seeing you as far as the bridge."

"There is no need at all," assured Fenella, but he had already crossed the road.

"I'm more likely to know the need than you," he was muttering in his beard.

"But you're tired; you ought to be getting home."

Duncan had made one step in the direction of the village, but now stood abruptly still.

(To be continued.)

DOMESTIC SCIENCE AT HOME

Sixteenth Lesson. Rolls, Tea Biscuits and Buns.

Rolls and tea biscuits make a delightful addition to the daily bill of fare. The regular bread dough may be used in making them.

Parker House Rolls

Use the recine for white bread, the sponge method. When the bread is ready for the pan, roll on a slightly floured pastry board one-quarter inch thick. Cut with a four-inch cookie cutter, brush them with melted butter, then fold over in pocketbook style, pressing firmly. Set on a well-greased pan two inches apart. Set to rise for thirty minutes. Then brush with egg and milk wash. Bake for eighteen minutes in a hot oven. Quickly brush the tops of the rolls upon their arrival from the oven with melted butter.

Tea Biscuits

Prepare the dough as for the Parker House rolls. Roll it one-quarter inch thick, then brush with melted butter. Fold over the dough and beat with a rolling pin for three minutes. Cut with two-inch cookie cutter. Set in warm place to rise for eighteen minutes. Then brush with egg wash. Sprinkle with granulated sugar and bake in a hot oven for fifteen minutes.

Cinnamon Cake

Use the recipe calling for straight dough method in the bread recipes. When the dough is ready for the pans, roll it three-quarters of an inch thick. Cut the size of the pan. Place in a well-greased pan and set to rise for thirty minutes. Brush the top with egg wash and cover one-quarter of an inch deep with one-half cupful of brown sugar, one-half cupful of flour, two tablespoonfuls of cinnamon, five tablespoonfuls of lard. Mix the dry ingredients well, then rub in the lard until crumbly. Place on the dough in a moderate oven and bake for twenty minutes.

Cinnamon Buns

Use the straight dough mixture. Take the dough me. ready for the pans and roll it on a slightly floured pastry board one-quarter of an inch thick. Then spread it with brown sugar, cinnamon and currants and one ounce of butter to every pound of dough. Roll like jelly roll, but in slices one and one-half inches thick. Place so that the buns barely touch each other. Set to rise as directed for bread for forty minutes. Bake in a moderate oven for twenty-five minutes. Remove from oven and glaze with a syrup made of one cupful of molasses, one-half cupful of brown sugar, one tablespoonful of vinegar, one tablespoonful of butter. Place in a saucepan and boil to 220 degrees Fahrenheit, using a candy thermometer.

The yolks of two eggs may be added to these doughs when starting if a richer quality is desired.

Old Yorkshire Scones

Cook a sufficient number of potatoes to measure one cupful when mashed, and while hot add two tablespoonfuls of butter, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of salt, one cupful of scalded milk. Beat well to mix. Let the mixture cool to eighty degrees Fahrenheit, then crumble in one yeast cake and a sufficient quantity of flour to make a stiff dough, about three and a half cups. Turn on a pastry board and knead well for twenty minutes. Now break off pieces weighing one and a half ounces. Mold into balls. Cover a tray with a cloth: lay the molded balls on the cloth and allow them to rise for ten minutes. Now flatten them out with the palm of the hand. Cover and let rise again for thirty minutes. Lift with a spatula or cake turner and put them one inch apart upon the upturned bottom of a baking pan. Use a little sifted flour to cover the top of the scones. Bake in a moderate oven for fifteen minutes.

Do not grease the upturned surface of the baking pan, but cover it with a slight coating of sifted flour.

Egg Glaze for Rolls

Use one egg and four tablespoonfuls of syrup. Beat well to thoroughly mix, then apply to the rolls with a brush.

The housewife will find that, if she buys two medium-sized paint brushes of fair quality, she will save materially in greasing pans and in applying glaze, giving the food a better appearance. Treat the new brushes to a soda bath in scalding water. Wash well, then rinse in plenty of cold water. Now dry, and they are ready for use. Always wash the brushes after using.

Worth Protecting

A good article is worthy of a good package. A rich, strong, delicious tea like Red Rose is worth putting into a sealed package to keep it fresh and good.

A cheap, common tea is hardly worth taking care of and is usually sold in bulk.

Red Rose is always sold in the sealed package which keeps it good.

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MUSIC IN THE HOME

Music a Necessity in Wartime.

In time of war everyone expects to sacrifice a certain amount of luxury. By a simple process of taxation such sacrifices are automatically systematized for the entire community. But the question arises: What is a luxury, what a necessity?'

It has been proposed that musical instruments should be classed as luxuries. In other words, music is to be classed with liquor and tobacco as one of those utterly useless frivolities that every serious and patriotic citizen should be glad to give up.

What an anomaly! Music, always a necessity, becomes in time of war absolutely indispensable to a nation. When the nervous system of every individual is working under constant strain, the calming, sustaining influence of music should be given every opportunity to make its presence felt. When patriotic emotions demand expression and encouragement, it is music that will supply it. When thousands of people have to be brought together to one common purpose, music is the only universal language, the only oratory that reaches every heart. We want "O Canada," "The Maple Leaf" and the National Anthem to be sung in every home, in every public place. Yet some so-called economists limit the possibilities of music by placing an embargo on the instruments that should lead us in singing.

The musical sense is one of the highest and noblest possessed by man. It is also one of the most fundamental reaching down to the earliest stages of civilization and the lowest orders of intelligence. The savage goes to war with the beat of the tom-tom in his ears, and the greatest religious and political movements have equally owed their impulse to strains of music.

Time was when music, no matter how universal in its appeal, could be heard at its best only by the rich, but the last ten years have changed all this. The tremendous advance in the manufacture of all kinds of musical instruments, both of the old kind to be played by hand and of those that reproduce the work of great artists, has put the highest type of music into every home.

People are learning better every day the great truth that music is not a luxury but a necessity.

Here in Canada where we have a composite of classes, races and traditions, to be welded into a nation and into an army, we have only one language that all can understand, one means of expression that is common to all. Music to create and foster national spirit and consciousness, music to stimulate recruiting, music to brace and inspire those who march to war and rush to battle, and finally, music to sustain those who have to remain behind and wait—our need is for music, and music, and still more music.

Let u do nothing to discourage the one most powerful influence in the creation of a real and lasting nationalism.

Keep seed corn away from rats and mice.

When scrubbing linoleum add a little paraffin to the water. It takes out dirt and grease and gives linoleum a beautiful polish.

Potatoes add succulence to the dairy ration. Where corn silage is not available and there are plenty of small potatoes, a peck a day will give a marked increase in milk flow. Introduce into the ration gradually and run through a root cutter to avoid the possibility of choking the animal.

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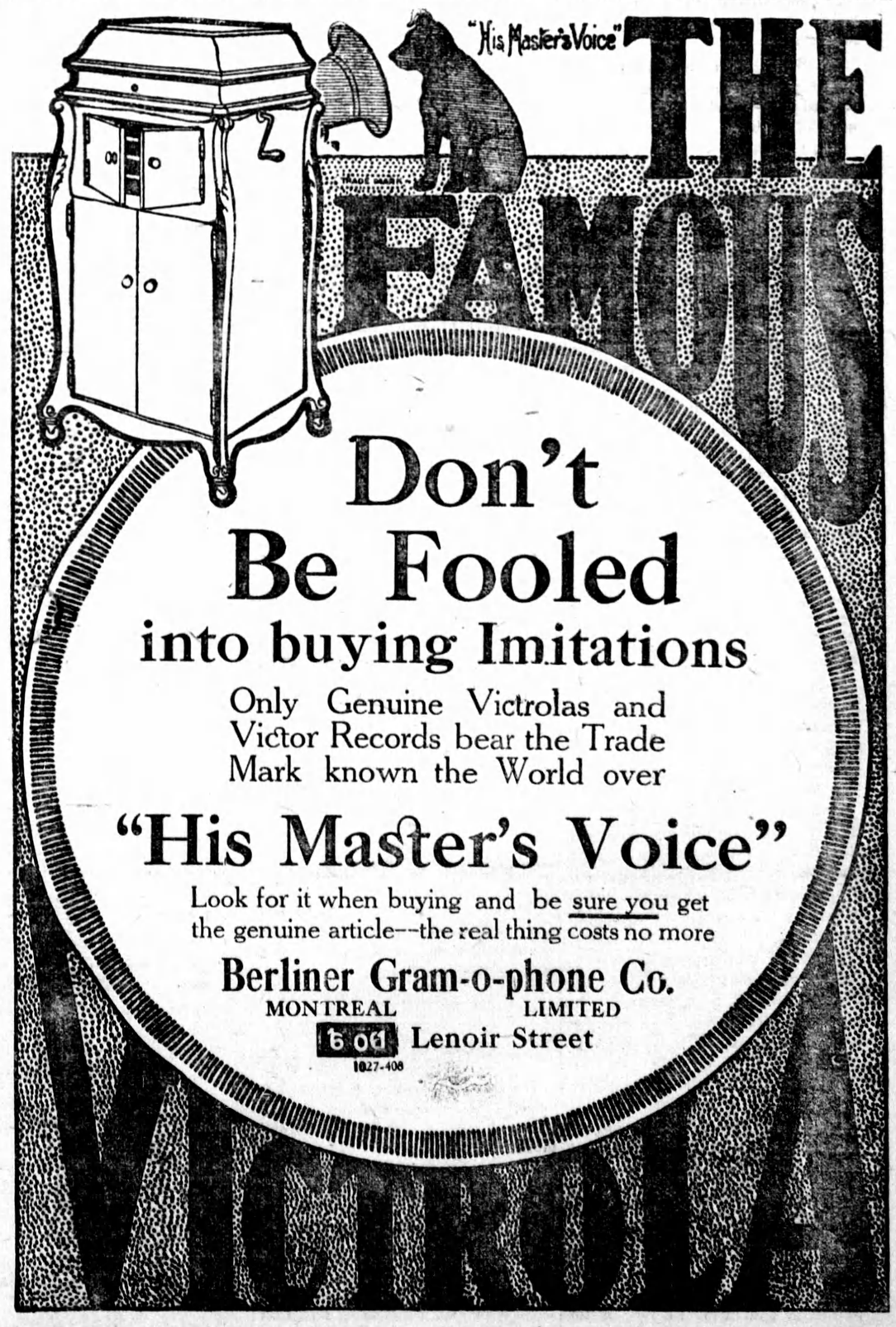
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