Between Cousins;

OR, A DECLARATION OF WAR.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(Cont'd.)

"If you did not love him, then I thank God that you sent him away. Another man will be more fortunate, and he will find your heart free."

Fenella said no word, as across the road their eyes once more irresistibly drew together.

"He will find your heart free?" asked Duncan, with an acuter note in his voice.

But Fenella had borne his gaze as long as was in her. Down went her chin again, and back went the umbrella-point into the half-bored hole.

"Your heart is free, Fenella?"

She had a mad desire to fling up her hands over her face, so as to escape those inquisitorial eyes, but made, instead, a faintly negative sign, while her lips gave nervous jerks, and her eyelids burned intolerably. He looked at her as though doubting his senses; and when suddenly a clear drop splashed upon the larobing umbrella, and hung there for a moment like a crystal bead, he made a quick step forward, and checking himself, drew back again.

"Don't play with me, Miss Fenella," he said, with a new and rather stern solemnity. "Am I the man?"

There was that in the urgency of his tone which beat down even bashfulness. Almost as solemnly as the question came the low but clear answer:

"Yes; it is you."

Again he made an impetuous forward movement, and again stopped himself forcibly, keeping still rigidly to his side of the road.

"Miss Fenella!" he said deliberately, "this cannot be done in a hurry; not unless you are quite certain that you know what you are doing. Maybe it is pity that is moving you; but I would not be taken out of pity." All the old scorn was in his voice as he said it.

"It is not out of pity, Duncan."

"And you will not regret what you are giving up? I would rather have nothing than only half your love."

"You shall have the whole,"

"You are ready to be a workman's wife?"

"I am ready to be your wife, Duncan."

"And you are strong enough for the fight?—for a bitter fight it will be."

"With you I am strong enough for anything."

He paused one moment longer, then slowly came across the road, and slowly took her two hands in his. But for the way in which they shook, his outward calmness might have deceived her. Very slow too and gentle was the first touch of his lips upon hers.

But the second was different, for already something had begun to race in both their veins. The first kiss had been that of the humble worshipper at the feet of his goddess, the second was that of the human lover to his human love.

Then for a space Fenella leaned dizzily against his arm. Round her the hills seemed to turn in a circle,—a magic circle which kept out the world. A long, long breath came over her lips, such a breath as is breathed at the end of a struggle, both by the vanquisher and the vanquished.

After a space Duncan spoke thoughtfully:

"And now it is we two against all the others."

"We two against all the others," she repeated; and a moment later added:

"Not against all, father will be on our side, I think."

CHAPTER XIX.

Frowningly Albert M'Donnell watched the dip of the oars in the water. The week-end was not yet reached, but a note from Julia called him home. It contained a good piece of news, though not the one he had been looking for. Mr. Berrell had spoken, and all was right between him and Julia. So far so good. That cat was killed, anyway. But in proportion as there had been little doubt regarding this issue, so was elation at the accomplished fact tempered. The affair still waiting to be delt with was of a far more critical nature, as after the note of this morning he could no longer doubt; for it had brought news of Fenella as well, though crowded into a postscript by the writer's personal pre-occupations.

"I can't make her out at all," Julia wrote at the bottom of the page. "Nothing seems to have happened between her and Mr. Macgilvray the other night. And yet she doesn't seem at all unhappy, although I heard yesterday that he had left Balladrochit."

It was this postscript which, like a trumpet-note of alarm, was calling Albert to Ardloch. He could have lived two days longer without pressing Mr. Berrell's hand, but he felt that he could not sleep another night without knowing the reason of Ronald Macgilvray's departure.

At the Rectory he began by taking his measures, which consisted in giving Julia her orders, tacked straight on to the somewhat hurried felicitations—for an undisturbed half-hour with Fenella was the first requirement.

It was in the bow-windowed sitting-room that they were left alone very speedily—Fenella nervously busy with the flowers in the window-box, Albert somewhat provoked at missing his habitual perfect coolness, and thinking best to conceal the fact by a restless peregrination of the room.

"I am sure Julia will be happy," he observed, as the door closed upon the new fiancee. Then, as Fenella said something acquiescent but not quite intelligible, he went on without a pause:

"And how about you, Fen? Surely your little affair is settled by this time? It would be rather good fun to make a double event of it?"

Out of the arsenal of weapons at his command he had selected this breezy and bantering tone as the one most suitable for an attack which would probably, after all, be only a skirmish.

Fenella, with her back to the room, bent a little lower over a cyclamen from which she was picking the withered leaves, and remained silent.

"Come, Fenella, you have something to tell me, have you not?"

This time there was a touch of bonhomie added to the breeziness.

"Yes; I have something to tell you."

The voice seemed to come up from among the cyclamen, half suffocated by the crowded blossoms. It was the last minute in which that secret which she had been hugging to her heart since yesterday would be a secret, and the pain of exposing it to publicity was almost as great as the apprehension of results.

"The die has fallen then?"

"Yes."

"You are engaged to Mr. Macgilvray?"

Fenella stood up straight, and, with a sort of wrench of resolution, faced round towards her brother.

"I am engaged, Albert—to Duncan M'Donnell."

The words were quite plain to Albert's ears, and even to his understanding, if that which beats against our consciousness without being admitted into its inner circle can be said to be plain.

"Duncan M'Donnell?" was all he said, without either astonishment or anger, and with as great a blank in his voice as though he had never heard the name before.

"Yes—our cousin, you know, Albert."

"Since when?" asked the same blank voice.

"Since yesterday."

Albert happened to be standing near a chair when the blow fell; he sat down upon it without taking his eyes off his sister—all the restlessness suddenly died out of his limb, and in the new position still continued to stare at her with an attention which seemed struggling to transform what he had just heard into an intelligible thought. She had drawn nearer now, and was speaking in haste.

"Listen, Bertie; I know, of course, that you will not like it—you cannot like it—and it hurts me to go against you, but I cannot help it. I have been fighting against it all summer—I know it now—but it has conquered me. That is why I sent away Mr. Macgilvray. I meant to keep my secret and never to marry anybody; but yesterday, in the Pass, I met Duncan, and then—it—it happened."

"You have sent away Mr. Macgilvray?" cried Albert, getting to his feet again, and in the action shaking off the hand which Fenella had laid upon his shoulder.

It was the first item of her speech upon which his mind felt able to fasten. Here was something which lay within the limits of comprehension and of belief; whereas the rest—

"Of course, I have sent him away. What would be the use of his staying here, now that I am engaged to Duncan?"

"You are not engaged to Duncan!" said Albert, very quickly, turning upon his sister, with a touch almost of savageness. "It is absurd and nonsensical to talk of it as an engagement, just because he had the impudence to make lov eto you in the Pass yesterday."

The numb blankness was gone from both voice and eyes now, and in its place rage was beginning to circulate in his brain, as the revived blood circulates in the veins of a half-frozen body.

Fenella turned very red, but her eyes did not fall before those of her brother.

"He did not make love to me—he did not mean to; he thought I had accepted Mr. Macgilvray. It was I who betrayed myself."

"You?" Albert's lips twitched into a sneer. "Has the intercourse with peasants, which I was mad enough to tolerate, brought you as low as this, Fenella?"

Although she grew redder, yet her head went up by another inch.

"I don't know what you mean by being brought low. Duncan cares for me, and I care for him, and have let him see it—just as Julia has let Mr. Berrell see that she—that she is ready to marry him. If it is no disgrace for her, then why for me?"

"And you imagine that you will be allowed to marry this boor?"

"I am sure father will allow it."

(To be continued.)

To provide a new food product the United States bureau of fisheries will experiment with canning and corning seal meat.

Next time you are in town, drop in at the hardware store and get a small coal-scuttle. Take it down to the granary and keep it there for putting grain into sacks. Beats anything you ever tried.

VALUE OF STATIONARY DEVICES

There is a great difference between a modern home kitchen and a modern hotel or institution kitchen. This difference is not so much one of size as of principle. For instance, in the home kitchen we have separate detached tables, stoves, etc., and portable smaller equipment. Very little is built in or permanent. In the institution kitchen, on the other hand, tables are more likely to be connected with the stove surface, all equipment is at the same height, connected by various means, so that work may be "routed" or done one step after the other.

Many more pieces of equipment, too, are permanently installed. The advantage here is that everything is ready when it is needed, and need not be adjusted, moved around or possibly lost. In the home kitchen of the future this ideal will have to be met—stationary, permanent installation, similiar in type, similar in finish, height of surface, etc. It is this ideal which is now so well worked out in shopsand factories, in hotel kitchens, in cafeterias, etc.

Stop a moment and think what any one does in making a cake in the usual manner. How much of the work is spent in actual beating and how much in holding a wobbly bowl in place? Every act of beating, mixing, grating, molding bread, etc., which is done in a wobbly way, is increase in difficulty and muscle strain 25 per cent. Now, why does not the housewife see the advantage of the clamped, permanently fastened fixture? Recall again, the mixer for mixing eggs or syrups used at the modern soda fountain. Is it not clamped or screwed to the shelf surface and self-operating? If a woman did it, would she not still cling to the traditional way of holding a wobbly bowl and operating a jerky beater?

Every device can now be bought in a clamped form. There is the bread mixer, which can be fastened equally well to shelf, stool or table. There is the cake mixer, which screws to the table top. There is the meat chopper—just consider how much more efficient this tool is than the bowl and hand-chopper which it supplants, merely because it is fastened instead of loose and wobbly! There are also excellent devices for beating eggs and mayonnaise also clamped. Coffee grinders may be fastened to wall or table; contrast such types with the old-time square coffee mill, which the worker held in her lap and which required a vast deal of turning on the lap until the coffee was ground.

In the kitchen there should be some sort of shelf so firm that even heavy devices may be kept permanently clamped on it. The utility motor, for instance, which takes the place of any servant in the home, should be stationary. There is need of more screws and less drawers in the average kitchen! If a device is really worth while and is used frequently enough to justify its purchase, it should be permanently installed instead of being set away on a shelf or in a drawer, where it must be hauled out every time it is needed.

The reason the portable device is inefficient is because it takes so much energy to hold it in place, aside from the actual energy needed for the task itself. Therefore, it really doubles the work instead of making it easier. With the clamped device, however, all the energy of the worker can go into the actual task of beating, grinding, or whatever it may be.

"Clamp, clamp, clamp," should be one of the housewives' slogans. It will mean more efficient kitchens and less wasted energy.

HOW TO ECONOMIZE ON FLOUR IN BREAD.

The familiar 'war bread' means bread prepared by combining a minimum amount of wheat flour with other materials for bread making. Since, in the process of manufacturing patent flour, about three-fourths of the mineral salt is lost, it is evident that, by milling a larger percentage of the wheat, the food value as well as the positive amount of bread-making material would be greatly increased. This added mineral matter may become a vital factor in making up the diet of children.

The manufacture of old-time graham flour, or wheat meal, which is simply the entire grain cleaned and ground, has been almost entirely abandoned, no doubt because of its perishability. Due to its bran and mineral salt content, flour of this type possesses laxative properties, which are often desirable, although the protein of the coarser flours may not be so completely absorbed. Much of the graham flour on the market at present is merely white flour to which bran has been added.

Some of the materials which may be substituted for wheat flour are: cornmeal, buckwheat flour, soy bean meal and potato flour. Cornmeal may be used in the proportion of one part cornmeal to two parts wheat flour. Buckwheat flour combines well with wheat flour in any proportion. Soy bean meal and cotton-seed meal are both useful in small amounts.

Potato flour, such as has been used abroad, is not generally available in our markets, but boiled mashed potatoes may be substituted for slightly less than half the flour. Boiled rice may also be used with flour in about the same proportion.

Equal measures of cooked bean pulp and flour are satisfactory in muffins.

NAVAL HISTORY OF THE WAR.

Brief Summary of the Conflict's Progress on the Sea.

On the sea Great Britain showed her supremacy immediately after the declaration of war, forcing the German navy to run to cover behind Heligoland bight and in the Kiel Canal and compelling German merchant vessels to seek neutral harbors all over the world. The few German warships on the high seas were run down. The chief naval exploit of the war was the battle of Jutland, which took place on May 31 and June 1, 1916, off the coast of Denmark, in which Germany lost three battleships, six cruisers and five destroyers, and Great Britain six cruisers and eight destroyers. The Germans withdrew to their home ports.

German mines sank a few British vessels, among them the armored cruiser Hampshire, in which Lord Kitchener and his staff were travelling to Russia on June 5, 1916. The British have lost ten battleships, nine light cruisers, and a large number of destroyers, submarines, torpedoes, armed merchant auxiliary cruisers and by Oct. 15, 1916, 2,000,000 gross tons of shipping, nearly one-tenth of the whole British mercantile tonnage.

During the first eight months of the present year 4,561,000 tons of shipping were sunk, including allied and neutral ships. New construction was then estimated at about a million tons, leaving the loss to shipping at 8,500,000 tons.

The climax of the destruction came in April with 55 ships sunk for the week ending on April 22. The weekly sinkings have lately been reduced. Shipbuilding is increasing. Tonnage amounting to 5,466,100 has already been contracted for in the United States alone. Although 20 per cent. of the British merchant tonnage had been destroyed, Great Britain's imports show a decrease of only 6 per cent. compared with last year. Moreover, the destruction of the submarines themselves is increasing.

Food Shortage in France.

Shortage of wheat in France is becoming more and more alarming each week. M. Maurice Long, Minister for General Revictualling of France, indicated recently that a further reduction of 20 per cent. in the bread ration would soon become imperative. The manufacture and consumption of pastry regarded as a luxury was entirely suppressed on January 1st, except on Sunday and holidays.

Switzerland on Rations.

The food situation in Switzerland is rapidly falling to the danger line. A ration that is far below the consumption in many of the countries at war has already been ordered. Under the new regulations, the Swiss may have only a pound and a half of sugar per person per month. The bread ration has been fixed at about half a pound a day, and the butter ration at one-fifth of a pound a month.

An attachment for telephone receivers which silences all the buzzing, whirring and jarring noises has been invented by a Dutch engineer.

Denmark on Rations.

Denmark is now looking forward to a reduction of wheat rations. Final figures for the cereal harvest show a total of about 62,000,000 bushels, which is 20,000,000 bushels less than in 1916 and about 10,000,000 less than was estimated in the summer, when the populace was put on bread rations. The authorities are already considering a further reduction in the allowed consumption.

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