Between Cousins;

OR, A DECLARATION OF WAR.

CHAPTER XIX.—(Cont'd.)

For a long, speechless moment Albert gazed at his father, very much as Ella had gazed at him on the day of the great mutual discovery. Between fater and son there was exactly that want of understanding which had been between husband and wife.

"And you will actually let this thing happen?"

"It has happened without me," smiled John—"and if God wills it so, it will be accomplished."

Albert's clenched hand came down upon the table, making the ink-stand rattle and the pens dance.

"No, it shall not be accomplished," he said, all the more intensely for speaking low. "I swear to you that it will not! If you are struck blind, I am not; if you will not act, I will. It shall not happen,—I will prevent it."

He bent across the table to send his challenging look deep into Fenella's troubled eyes.

"What are you going to do?" she asked suddenly, terror-stricken.

"I do not know yet what I shall do"; and Albert slowly straightened himself, "but it shall not happen."

CHAPTER XX.

"Tell him that I am in a hurry, that he is to come at once. I shall be waiting here, beside the spaewife's grave."

It was to a bare-footed urchin that Albert gave the directions, together with a copper coin; and then—the messenger departed towards the quarry—sat down upon a green hillock close at hand, and set himself deliberately and moodily to wait.

Only yesterday still so clear a horizon, and now this cyclone, threatening to sweep away not only the hopes regarding Fenella, but other hopes, nearer and dearer yet! For, even at the risk of discrediting the perspicacity of this genially perspicacious young man, it is time to confess that he seriously believed in his chances of winning the Balladrochit heiress. To be keen-sighted and sharp-witted about other people's affairs is not exactly the same thing as being keen-sighted and sharp-witted about one's own. An extaordinary piece of good luck, of course, but showing, to his supreme self-confidence, no incredible feature. It was as though all the naivete belonging to his years, and so sternly eliminated from his consciousness, had taken refuge in this corner of his nature. That shower of favors of which he had been a recipient all summer, what else should it mean but the crowning of his wishes? Those smiles, those services accepted and even solicited, what but that could explain them? Ah, he had a whole collection of proofs—proofs which weighed all the heavier because they were the first of their sort which had come under his notice, since in his almost austere life—and ambition can be quite as austere as asceticism—woman had, so far, played no part.

Ah, how kind a face Fate had shown all summer, and not to himself alone. Such a happy conglomeration of circumstances had at moments seemed almost too good to be true. Alas, it had been too good. The present catastrophe was there to prove it. Would not Fenella's small hand prove to be that of an executioner? Whatever the heiress might feel for him, would she not shrink from the thought of such a connection as Duncan M'Donnell? Could he even dare to suggest to her to become the sister-in-law of a quarryman? And Julia's new-made engagement, was it safe any longer? The whole future position of the family was trembling in the balance. If any mortal ever turned in his grave, surely Ella had every excuse for doing so! The threatened union would undo the work of twenty-five years. Duncan M'Donnell would prove the dead-weight which dragged them all back to the social depths from which they had so laboriously risen.

He had waited for ten minutes and more when the figure he spied for came striding down the road. As it approached he watched it critically, turning upon it an attention of which it had never before been considered worthy. With a certain sinking of the heart he noted the fine set of the shoulders, the harmonious swing of the step—all things which tended to lessen the chances of his undertaking, since it was with Fenella's eyes that he was attempting to view this man.

Duncan stood still upon the road, a couple of paces from the grave-hill.

"You wish to speak to me?" he asked, with a just perceptible note of challenge piercing through the careful deference of his tone.

"Yes; that is why I sent you the message."

For a moment after he had said it there was silence between them. Albert was continuing upon Duncan's face the same critical observation he had applied to his figure, and with the same discouraging results. Duncan, on his side, was likewise scrutinising. He knew that they stood on the verge of a struggle. How bad was the struggle going to be? It was this he was attempting to read out of Albert's face.

During that first minute Albert had not changed his position. To keep his seat upon the mound while Duncan stood there before him was an assertion of his social superiority which appeared to him essential at this juncture. But for the interview itself the spot was too public.

"Come along," he said, rising abruptly, and leading the way up a steep lane which at this point branched towards the hill.

A few steps secured the privacy required, and now he faced round towards Duncan.

"I sent for you because I want to speak to you about my sister."

Duncan said nothing; but continued to look at him expectantly from under his down-drawn brows, still in search, as it were, of his intentions.

"She has told me about—what has passed between you, and that she has allowed herself to be persuaded into what she considers an engagement."

"Persuaded is not the right word Mr. Albert," he said, with guarded slowness. "I have persuaded Miss Fenella to nothing. Our hearts have met, that is all."

That "Miss" and the "Mr." were satisfactory in themselves, but a good deal spoiled by the tone in which they were uttered.

"You cannot seriously suppose that the family will recognise such a—such a piece of imprudence"—(he had all but said "folly," but something in the face opposite caused him to modify the term)—"as binding. My sister did not know what she was doing yesterday; she is a mere child, not fit for such decisions."

"And if she had decided to marry—another, would you have thought her too much of a child for that decision?"

Albert waived the point aside as irrelevant, and also inconvenient.

"Don't you see that you are spoiling her chances for life? The most brilliant prospect was opening before her—such a prospect as comes to few girls."

"She had but to take it," said Duncan, in an accent in which Albert, to his consternation, recognised a haughtiness far beyond his own. In face of it a more conciliating tone appeared advisable.

"Look here, Duncan," he said, with a supreme effort at good-temper, "I know that you care for her and I am sure that your affection is disinterested; but it is just beause you care for her that you cannot surely mean to ruin her whole future, by taking advantage of her present mood. Her fancy is excited by your attachment, and in her excitement she imagines that she returns it; no doubt she does return it for the moment, but such—such arrangements are too unnatural to last. Just think of the rough life she would have to lead, of the comforts, the refinements she would miss, of the intercourse she would be brought to; can all that help wearing out her present liking for you? and will not a day come when she reproaches you for taking her out of her proper station? Surely, oh, surely she is worthier and fitter to shine in a palace than to be buried in a hut! No, Duncan, if your love is real, if it is disinterested, you will release her from her foolish promise."

There was genuine appeal in his eyes as he gazed into the dark face before him. Softened by his own earnestness, he had become for the time being almost humble.

"Stop a moment!" said Duncan, slightly raising his hand just as Albert's lips opened afresh, and with a painful contraction of the brow. "Tell me one thing! Has Miss Fenella sent you?"

For an instant Albert hesitated, then regretfully renounced the useless lie.

"No; she has not sent me."

"Then you do not speak in her name?" asked Duncan, the frown slowly relaxing.

"I speak in the name of the family."

"What? In the name of the minister?"

Once more Albert hesitated.

"My father is not the man to trouble himself about such questions as this. You know that he lives only for his ministry. It is I who have to represent him in these matters."

"Maybe. But I doubt whether you represent his opinion of the matter," said Duncan, with a confidence which could not be otherwise than exasperating to Albert's overstrained nerves.

While he was grasping about him for arguments, Duncan deliberately went on:

"I have listened to you, Mr. Albert, and now I ask you to listen to me. All that you have said to me about the change of station, and the giving up of the things she is used to, I myself said to Miss Fenella in the Pass yesterday, and she answered me—as I had not dared to hope that she would answer me. But if there come to her one single doubt she is free in that same moment. She has but got to say a word, and I will never again so much as come under her eyes, if I can help it. But until I have that word—from her own lips, mind!—it will be better for no person to try and come between us. I had never hoped to win her; but, having won her, I will hold her against the world, and against all the brothers, and all the sisters in it—though not against the father. To his will and to her will I shall bend."

"You shall never marry her!" broke out Albert, with the rage of the morning rising within him like a tide.

Duncan watched the struggle in his face with a toleration which verged upon compassion.

(To be continued.)

Prices in Berlin.

Butter is selling in Berlin at $2.25 per pound, sugar at 56 cents per pound, ham and bacon at $2.11 per pound and Ivory soap at five bars for $1.12.

This information was received by the United States Food Administration through a reliable source, from a responsible person, who personally had charge of his own apartment in Berlin as to food prices current in that city previous to his return to the United States about October first.

At least 70 per cent. of all fires in Canada is believed to originate from some form of carelessness and neglect.

Tubes made of glue have been invented in Europe for handling petroleum, gasoline and some gases in place of rubber tubing.

Food Control Corner

The food situation in the Allied countries of western Europe is graver than it has been at any time since the beginning of the war. Information has been received by the Food Controller which shows that the utmost effort must be made to increase spring acreage and to secure a much larger production of bread grains in 1918 than was done in 1917. Mr. Hoover has already pointed out that if ships have to be sent to more distant countries to carry food stuffs to Europe, fewer ships will be available to carry soldiers and supplies from this continent, with a result that the continued participation of the United States and Canada in the war will be greatly hampered.

The statement has been thoroughly canvassed, and among those who have studied it, there is unanimous agreement that the only solution of the food problem is greater production in North America. In this connection it is especially important that the spring acreage sown in bread grains should be as large as it can possibly be made.

Every person who can possibly produce food must do so, no matter how small his or her contribution may be. Those who cannot produce food, can at least conserve it. The utmost economy is imperative. The situation to-day is critical and the world is rapidly approaching that condition when price will not be the most important question, but when even the people of Canada may be glad to eat any food which they can obtain.

The successful prosecution of the war by the Allies will depend to a very large extent upon the extent of food production and food conservation this year by the people of North America.

Baron Rhondda in a recent message says "The food position in this country, and I understand in France also, can without exaggeration be described as critical and anxious. I am now unable to avoid compulsory regulation. I fear it will have to come with long queues of people awaiting in the severe weather in practically every town in England for the daily necessaries of life."

Why Not a "Bean Day"?

We have had wheatless days and meatless days urged upon us, but why not consider the merits of one "bean day" every week? Beans, as we know, are meat equivalents; and even though the price has trebled in the last year, they are still cheaper and give more nourishment of the same kind than animal protein. Now, with the gathering of the crops, dried beans should be hanging a-plenty in cellar or attic and the creative housewife will find still more ways to use them than before.

There are black, red, white and all manner of mottled beans. Their value is about the same; all are high in protein and starch, so that really the bean is meat and potato combined. The whole family has also sulphur compounds of great value. The one disadvantage they possess is the thick leathery skin, which sometimes irritates the stomach and makes people think that "beans don't agree with them." It is better to keep back the skins when cooking for children and persons of weak digestion.

Mashed Beans

Until recently few housekeepers were familiar with the method of using pulp instead of the whole bean in the familiar "pork and beans." To make this pulp, boil any lima, pea or red bean in very little water until tender. Press through a fine puree strainer and season. This pulp can then be used hot instead of mashed potato, or it can be made into croquettes or patties or as a stuffing for meat and vegetables. The pulp of lima beans is particularly sweet and delicious. If combined with beaten egg yolks and stiffly beaten whites it makes a souffle or baked custard which is most delecious and nourishing, especially for children.

This pulp is really a 100-per-cent. no-waste food, for even though the price of beans is abnormal, it must be remembered that there is not an ounce of loss through bone, gristle or trimming; they are the most concentrated food. The one ingredient that they lack is fat, so it should always be combined in their cooking; high contrasting flavors, like tomato, pepper, thyme, etc., should also be used.

Much is being made of the new emigrant from Japan, the soy bean. It is the most nutritious of the entire family, is as easy to cook and tastes just as well as our own navy bean. It can be boiled, baked or made into soup and the flour makes delicious muffins and pancakes. Ask your dealer about the soy bean and try some of your favorite recipes with it.

Another bean that could be used more is the large red kidney bean, whose pulp is particularly mealy. This is the kind used by Mexicans and Asiatics and which is so tasty in hot, pungent dishes. The pulp mashes well, makes excellent croquettes and stew. The small red and white mottled Italian bean has very good flavor, especially excellent for baking. The lima has the sweetest flavor of all and makes the best mealy pulp.

It is now possible to secure in package form flour made from various beans. These make excellent soups very quickly or can be used as a thick cereal or made into puddings in which children delight.

Making Up Leftovers

Beans are also a food which use up scraps and leftovers to the best possible advantage. Any small trimming of meat, ham, celery tops or the water in which vegetables were cooked can be used as the water in which to boil the beans and increase their nourishment. There is not a ham shank too small or a bacon rind too old to be used for flavoring. Carrots, cabbage, and celery too wilted to appear as vegetables can be cut in fine bits and combined in the various bean dishes. Beans should always be cooked with the pot lid off in order to let the sulphur compounds escape. The water in which they were soaked should not be used; but do not throw away the water in which they were parboiled, as this holds some of the valuable elements. It seems natural for beans to cook best in earthenware, and many of us should try the plan of cooking soup in crockery like our frugal cousins, the French. The flavor is better and the service made easier by cooking and serving in the same dish.

Cold beans can be utilized in many kinds of salad. A delicious one is made by combining the cold beans with thinly shredded cabbage, green pepper and mayonnaise. The cooked beans make a stuffing for tomato cups or when combined with sliced apple or celery give a substantial salad. When you want something new for a snack lunch try cold beans with boiled mayonnaise and diced celery eaten with a hot frankfurter and a cup of coffee. There as so many ways to serve beans that they could be served every day in the week; but if we decide to have only one bean day we will help along the war and at the same time benefit our own stomachs and pocketbooks.

Save the Fat and Soap.

What can be done when once women really set their minds upon the conservation of all resources is wonderful. A splendid example of a big institution run with the best of everything used, but nothing wasted, is the Ontario Military Hospital in Kent, England. The Army Medical Service there is conducted with the greatest efficiency, and the food for the sick men is the best to be had, but there is not one ounce of fat or anything wasted. Even the grease off the plates is melted down and used for munitions or other purposes. Wounded soldiers who have been nursed in England at the Ontario Military Hospital at Orpington speak in glowing terms of the treatment they receive there, and one and all express the wish that if they ever get wounded again it will be to this hospital they are sent.

If we have learned nothing alse we have learned the value of the stock-pot in our larders since the war began. Even the remains of oatmeal porridge, becon rind, scraps of vegetables and bones, when boiled long enough and strained, make most delicious soup.

This snowy weather the children's boots would be made much more watertight by being rubbed over with a little melted fat or oil. This also prolongs the life of the leather, which is a consideration these days. Many ways of using scraps of soap have been adopted by the thrifty housewife. One of the simplest is to save the pieces until two or three handfuls are accumulated, then put into a stone jar, or tin, and fill with boiling water, stirring until melted. When cold you have a splendid soap jelly, which is excellent for washing flannels.

Even broken china can be used to feed your fowls—occasionally! The next time a plate is broken try smashing it almost to powder and throw it to the hens. The lime and clay in earthenware and china is very good for them and they enjoy pecking at it. The fowls lay much beter for an occasional tonic of broken plates!

ENGLAND'S BRAVEST WOMAN.

The Dowager Duchess of Sutherland Has Won This Appellation.

Millicent, dowager Duchess of Sutherland, once known as England's most beautiful woman, is now called "England's bravest woman." She was one of the first British women to go into France on nursing duty. Her first year in the service was spent much of the time under shell fire and several fragments of shells ripped her garments during those bitter days when British pluck "held on" without sufficient shell protection from its own forces.

In 1915 she was captured by the Germans, being too busy binding up the wounds of the maimed "Tommies" in the trenches to bother about retreating when the Huns took one section of the first line. For eighteen months she was detained in Germany and finally exchanged for a German lady whom the English had similarly captured.

After a few weeks' rest at her home she returned to the firing line, where she is now stationed, actively directing a section of nurses in one of the hospitals nearest the fighting line.

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