Between Cousins;

OR, A DECLARATION OF WAR.

CHAPTER XXII.—(Cont'd.)

Surely it could not be—yes, it was, though! Every instant and every oar-stroke made it more impossible to mistake the cast of those shoulders and the sit of that dark head. To see here, in the flesh, the man who for weeks past had filled all his thoughts, whose image since yesterday had become an unbearable obsession, was almost like seeing a ghost. Whatever had possessed him? Fenella's doing, perhaps? The broken questions shot through his head. He was so completely astonished that he remained immovable at the water's edge, with no thought of avoiding the meeting.

Nor did he move yet when Duncan, having with some difficulty made the landing-stage, fastened the boat and then stood up, touching his cap as he did so. The wet dripped from him, and there was a pool of water at the bottom of the boat. Taking from the stern a small parcel wrapped in oil-cloth, he stepped ashore, shaking himself the while, in the fashion of a Newfoundland dog fresh from his bath.

"Your sisters were anxious for you to have this to-day," he said, with as perfect an equanimity as though they had parted last on the most friendly of terms; "and so I made a shift to come over."

"Thank you. You must have had a bad tossing. I am obliged to you. Had you to leave your work for this?"

"The quarry is shut to-day. In this wet—"

"To be sure. Of course, work would be impossible. Well, I am glad you have not lost anything by your errand."

"I came because your sisters wished it," said Duncan again, with a slight emphasis which reminded Albert only too plainly of whose wish he meant to speak.

He stood silent again, asking himself desperately how to close the interview, and aware that Duncan was watching him closely and rather expectantly.

It was during that brief pause that the significant whistle of the wind began to rise again in their ears.

"Another squall coming, I'm afraid," said Albert, snatching at the obvious remark.

"I'm afraid so too, Mr. Albert, and I am sorry for it, for it makes it impossible for me to free you of my company as soon as I should have wished. Whether I will or no, I'll have to bide out what's coming."

He spoke differently now, with a flavor of bitterness in both voice and mien. Whatever his expectations had been, it was clear that they were deceived.

"Of course," said Albert, making the one more effort which appeared necessary. "You can't start in this weather, and no doubt you'll be hungry too. The men have only just had dinner—they will be able to give you something. That's their quarters over there."

With a would-be careless nod he turned towards his own cabin.

Duncan sent one look after him, gave one more shake to his wet shoulders, then slowly moved in the given direction.

It was time to do so; for already, beyond the two nearest shoulders of hill, seen like things in a dream, all had grown void. The distance of the loch was one sheet of driving cloud.

Alone in one of the cabins—for the men had returned to the smithy—Duncan sat before the fire, reflectively smoking his pipe, while the steam rose from his wet clothes. It would seem that he had come for nothing. For it was not the delivery of the spirit level alone which had decided him to risk the stormy transit. When last night Fenella had told him of the difficulty of finding a boatman for the loch-end in this weather, the idea of offering himself for the errand had struck him like an inspiration. If it did nothing else it would show Albert that he bore no grudge for the encounter in the lane,, and might prove the first step towards an understanding being come to. Fenella had first caught at the idea, and then demurred, because of the possible danger, at which objection Duncan, as able an oarsman as any that Ardloch held, merely laughed. Perhaps the weather would have improved by next day, she had hopefully surmised; and then—whether they could get another boatman or no, Duncan would take the parcel.

It was not improved, as so happened—quite the reverse; but for Duncan's purpose almost preferable. By raising the value of the service rendered, it would be more likely to make on Albert the favorable impression he hoped for. He made haste to be off, without again enrountering Fenella.

But now it would seem that he might as well have stayed at home—so far as any advance in their interests was concerned. Albert's cold politeness told him more than any repetition of his late excitement could have done. He could read that fixed eye and tightened lip. It came to this, then, that he had been a fool for his pains—and as likely as not would not be able to get back before nightfall, certainly not if this wind held on much longer, which would mean a world of worry for his father, and perhaps of anxiety for her.

And while he sat musing, solitary, another solitary man likewise mused.

In the very first moment Albert had been too much taken by surprise to do more than decently get through the unlooked-for meeting. Now, in the enforced interval of leisure, some order began to get back into his thoughts. He would speak to him, not as the cultured man to the workman, but as one man to another. Neither would he be so extreme in his demands. The word "rupture" should not be pronounced, but only that of "postponement." Supposing, now, Duncan would consent to put off the marriage—not without a shudder could he pronounce the word even in thought—until Fenella was of age. No—he could not let Duncan go without trying this one more chance. And as he thought so, he became aware that the room, lately so dark, was perceptibly lightening.

He stepped to the window. One after the other—as each veil in turn was lifted—the ghostly forms of the hills were emerging from the cloud-curtains, until, as though by magic, the void is filled, the circle completed. Mountain and mist begin to draw apart. From moment to moment it becomes more triumphantly clear that the world, after all, is not all grey. As the cloud-veils drift away the browns and purples of the foreground, the azures and amethysts of the distance creep back into the picture. And now a watery sunbeam—the last of the day—falls into a hollow, black but a moment since, and fills it to overflowing with a luminous vapour, as a cup is filled with wine.

"He will be off now!" was Albert's thought, as, snatching up his cap, he stepped forth.

At the door one of his men met him with the news that two of the boats had been torn from their moorings during the squall, one of these being Duncan's

"He'll just take one of ours," said Albert impatiently. "Where is he? I want to speak to him."

"We've only two sound ones remaining, sir. Niel Moffat's boat got a leak on Friday, if you remember."

"Well, one is enough to catch the others with. Never mind about that now. Ah, there he comes! Back to your work, Donald!"

As Duncan stepped out of the next cabin, Albert went forward to meet him.

"You will not mind my borrowing a boat, Mr. Albert, I trust," said Duncan stiffy. "Mine has got loose, and I've no time to go hunting it. If I don't get home before night father will be fretting"

"All right, all right. One moment, Duncan—I've a word to say to you."

"Mind you don't take Niel Moffat's boat," Donald called after them. "It's no just sound."

With a fairly successful display of a calm which he did not feel, Albert, while the two men walked towards the landing-stage, brought forward his suggestion. It had been planned as an appeal; but the bodily presence of the hated man turned it almost into a demand. Away from his enemy it his actual vicinity the conciliating tone aimed at refused to be struck—the words of peace stuck in his throat. The coldness of his tone was reflected in Duncan's answer.

"Your demand would be just, Mr. Albert, if your sister was of that mind. It is her wishes I go by, not my own; and I happen to know that she does not wish to delay beyond the spring."

"She might consent to a delay, if the reasons were good."

"And, if she consented, would you pass your word to give up your opposition to the marriage?" asked Duncan, with a piercing side-long glance.

Then, in face of the other's visible hesitation, he smled grimly.

"Don't trouble to speak, Mr. Albert. Your face says that you wouldn't—Whatever your tongue might say. What, then, would be the gain for us? If I thought it was for her peace of mind I would wait, light-heartedly; but I see that it would only be a drawing out of the pain. It's a kind of torture she's living in, as it is, and the sooner it's put an end to the better."

"Then you will not fall in with my proposal?"

"I cannot fall in with it."

"And you imagine that you will marry her in spring?"

"I more than imagine it, Mr. Albert. Short of an act of God, I do not see what is to prevent me."

They were at the landing-stage already, and before he had done speaking, Duncan had clambered into the nearest of the three boats, and was busy fitting the oars into the rowlocks. All three had rain-pools at the bottom, but the fading daylight warned too loudly to let him consider the advisability of baling out the water.

Duncan was just loosening the chain when when he appeared to remember something.

"I'm all right in this boat, am I not? Didn't Donald say something about a leak?"

"Yes, you're all right," said Albert mechanically, seeing neither the boat nor Duncan.

But, even with his words, the blood-red cloud passed away, and he saw both boat and boatman clearly.

"Sure?"

There was a scarcely perceptible pause before Albert said:

"Sure."

"Good evening, then, Mr. Albert. It will be night before I make Ardloch, but I trust to get in before the next storm."

The boat had got some twenty yards when he took his hands from his pockets, and put them to his mouth, as though he were about to shout; but no sound came. Plunging them back again, he turned upon his heel, and, without one glance backwards, regained his cabin.

(To be continued.)

The lyre-bird of Australia, which is about the size of a pheasant, is the largest songbird in the world.

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From Industrial Agent to Flight Commander

Interesting despatches of incidents in the lives of flying men in England are given in letters to friends written by Acting Flight Commander Graham Waters Curtis, formerly Industrial Agent of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Montreal, who is now a flying instructor in England. The school in which he teaches is a vast expanse of country close to a beautiful seaside resort. He writes: "The view from the air is superb, and we often fly out over the sea, and dive down near the British warships and wave to the sailors. When diving we only travel at the rate of about 175 miles an hour! I am kept very busy instructing and am turning out a lot of expert pilots. The school I am connected with is one in which flyers finish their course of training. A lot of chaps from Borden come to us to get final lessons, and then they are sent to France. We do all kinds of fancy performances—loop the loop, roll, make spinning nose dives, side slips, and vertical turns."

He describes how "little excitements" happen when one aeronaut gets into the "wash, or slip-stream of air" made by a preceding navigator. The letters indicate that Acting Flight Commander Curtis is a lucky master of the high school in which he soars. He says: "We have a lot of smashes, but very few deaths,— considering everything. None of my pupils has been killed yet."

Acting Flight Commander G. W. Curtis and his machine just after a "crash" at a training camp in England.

Acting Flight Commander Curtis has lately been recommended by his commanding officer for a first lieutenancy, and expects to be sent to France at any time. He joined the Royal Flying Corps on November 15th, 1916.

Correct Diet as Health Insurance.

Isn't it queer that when so much that is vital in life depends upon food and correct feeding, so few of us understand a thing about balanced ration, or pay any attention to feeding the human family sanely. We are told that food will play a big part in winning the war, yet we go about conserving with only a hazy idea of what we can best use as foods if we wish to conserve our strength and development, as well as conserve wheat for the allies.

Yet the whole thing is so simple that "even the way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein." We eat to promote growth and to give us srtength, or, as the experts say, to give us heat or energy. There are three classes of food and everything we eat may be placed in one of these three. They are the proteins, or the foods which promote growth, and the carbohydrates and fats, which give us heat and energy. The proteids consist of lean meat, eggs, milk, and the legumes. At least these are the important proteids, though many cereals contains proteins, and the proteins contain others of the food elements. For instance, milk contains fat in the shape of cream, and wheat contains proteid—the gluten which makes wheat bread elastic. The carbohydrates are the starches and sugars, and the fats we all know.

It will be seen at once that children must have plenty or proteids if they are to keep up a normal growth, while adults who have attained their full development may get along with just the amount of proteids necessary to replace wornout cells, that is, to build the body up daily as it is burned out with work.

Here is where our danger will come in during these days when we are asked to save food. We will be tempted to economize on the milk and eggs given our children, a thing we have no right to do. The children must be properly nourished or their health will be impaired for life. Those of mature growth may get along on skimped rations with only temporary inconvenience, provided the food shortage does not last too long. But children must be fed.

Up until seven months the baby should be fed nothing but milk. Mothers' milk preferably. Failing that, consult the best doctor you can secure as to the right way to modify cow's milk. Don't give your baby a prepared baby food because some one else gave it to her child and it "got along." And don't give condensed milk except as a last resort and on a physician's order. It is too sweet for a perfect food.

At seven months the salivary glands are able to do their part in digesting starch. Begin with a wheat breakfast food, or rice. Either is more apt to be digested by the average child than is oat meal. Feed only a teaspoonful the first day, and note the effect. If the cereal you choose is not digested, causes distress, choose another. Remember each child is a law unto itself and you must decide what yours can best digest. If there is a tendency to constipation oat meal is good as a corrective. If the tendency is the other way, rice is a good food.

After a few days' trial, if the starchy feed is properly digested, try to introduce egg into the dietary. Half a coddled egg, or soft boiled, is enough to begin with. Give this in the morning, and if it is properly digested, add a little more at each feeding until the baby can eat the whole egg. Crackers and hard toast, not toast soaked in hot water or milk, may be given. Watch the child to see that it does not nibble off pieces large enough to choke on. Orange juice, a tablespoonful to begin with, and scraped apple should be given each day. Home-made sugar cookies may also be given occasionally in moderation.

Remember, these foods should not all be introduced at once. Never give more than one new thing on any one day, and wait for at least twenty-four hours to see its effect, forty-eight hours is better. Otherwise you can not tell which food upset the child.

Remember, that you child's future depends to a large extent on how you feed it, for health plays a large part in our ultimate success or failure. An eight-year-old boy in our block developed tuberculosis of the hip bone. He had practically nothing to eat until he was two years old except condensed milk in a bottle. His mother would not cook him cereals, it took too much time to sit down and feed him. Fresh eggs were too expensive. He used to throw the bottle away and lie on the floor and cry with hunger, but the mother declared he could take the milk or go hungry. She had too much to do to bother with "a kid."

When tuberculosis developed the mother blamed a fall at school. Other mothers, whose boys had worse falls with no ill effects, blamed wrong feeding. And they were right.

What Waste Costs.

The waste of 500,000 pounds of paper a week, Canadian authorities estimated, entailed the cutting of at least 2,000 trees a week. Every ton of old paper recovered means a saving of eight trees of mature growth, says the Christian Science Monitor. The saving of woollen rags for the manufacture of shoddy saves land for crops which othrewise would be required for the raising of sheep; men, money and material—capital and labor—are conserved every time a bit of material is re-employed which formerly was destroyed.

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