

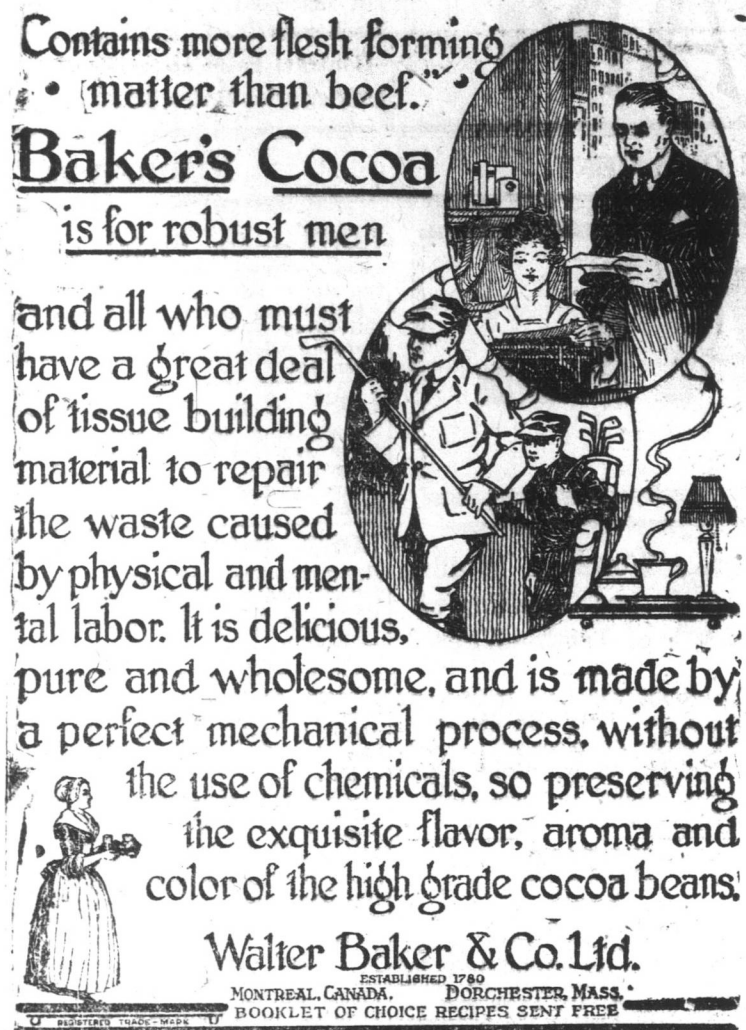
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### Better a Peasant Than a Peer.

CHAPTER XIX.  
QUEEN JEANNE.

Instantly, as if their approach had been anxiously watched and awaited, handsomely dressed attendants appear at all the doors; the carriage is surrounded by attentive and eager, yet not bustling servants; the great hall doors clang open, and Vane, drawing Jeanne's hand within his arm, walks up a long double line of servants into what looks to Jeanne like a church, by reason of its vastness—its old, glistening oak, battle flags and stained windows—but it is only the hall. Here and there are more servants, in full and most elaborate liveries, looking particularly splendid in the light which passes, many-colored, through the painted windows. It is a scene so grand, so rich and so noble, that Jeanne would think it nothing but the unsubstantial fabric of a dream, but for the pressure of the strong arm that holds hers, and Vane's deep voice, as he says:

"Welcome home, darling!"

Suddenly, noiselessly, the glittering crowd of liveries seem to melt. Jeanne finds herself, still leaning on her husband's arm, ascending the great staircase, up which, as far as width is concerned, they might very well have been conveyed by the traveling carriage.

"Lead over, Jeanne," he says, when they reach a wide, sheltering gallery. "See, down there on that marble floor, many a struggle has been fought out. Once the Roundheads laid siege to the place, and—confound them—took it. The men fought to the last, even to the very last, and it lay strewn with—but never mind. We'll put these cheerful stories off until your dinner;

maid—but stopped in time and looked gently at Jeanne.

"Ah, yes, of course!" says Vane. "Jeanne, don't be long, or nothing will be left of me but my skeleton!" and with a laugh he touches her arm lovingly, and goes on to his own rooms.

Jeanne looks after him for a moment, then follows the old lady down a corridor, which has its old oak relieved by exquisite paintings on panels of dull gold. Gradually the decorations grow of lighter character, and presently the old lady opens a door and ushers Jeanne, with a little courtesy, into a delicious little room, furnished in exquisite taste—a little nest in the old tree of a castle. Jeanne looks around with hushed breath, then, with an exclamation of childish delight, she runs across the room and stands before a picture which is hung over the antique mantelpiece.

It is a picture of gray cliffs and a spring sky, with billowy sea, and a boat sailing in over the bar. It is the Nancy Bell, Jeanne knows whose hand painted it, and her eyes fill with happy—too happy—tears. The old lady watches her from a respectful distance.

"When—do you know how this came here?" she asks.

"My lord sent it a week ago, and gave directions where it was to be hung, my lady."

"It is a picture of my boat, and Newton Regis, where I came from!" says Jeanne, explaining.

"Yes, my lady," says Mrs. Fleming. "This is your ladyship's own room. This is the dressing-room," she adds, opening another door. "And the next is your ladyship's bed-chamber. That door leads to my lord's rooms. They have been decorated and refurnished, en suite, my lady. Is there any alteration your ladyship would like made here?"

"There are simply perfect," says Jeanne; "and what a lovely view!"

"The best from the castle, though they are all beautiful," says Mrs. Fleming. "Will your ladyship allow me to remove your hat?"

Jeanne blushes, then with her old, candid laugh, shakes her head.

"I have never had a maid in my life," she says. "I—I think I'll manage, but—don't go please," she says, as the old lady, dropping a courtesy, moves away. "You shall stay in case I want any help. Oh, where are my boxes?"

"In the dressing-room, my lady," says Mrs. Fleming. "I made haste to get them up while your ladyship was downstairs, and I will get what your ladyship requires."

It is all magic! Jeanne thinks.

"Oh, yes, thank you. Well, then, there is a thin black lace dress there—"

Mrs. Fleming goes to a wardrobe instantly, and Jeanne, with a sensation of never requiring her hands any more, resigns herself into her care.

"Your ladyship must be very tired," says the old lady, setting about her task in the gentlest manner, and wondering where my lord found this exquisite flower with the child-woman's smile and soft, silky hair.

"I am—and I am not," says Jeanne, leaning back with a luxurious sense of rest, as Mrs. Fleming loosens the mass of silken hair and brushes it gently—almost lovingly; "and you are the housekeeper?"

"Yes, my lady."

Jeanne sighs rather wistfully.

"I wish—"

Mrs. Fleming suspends her task.

"Yes, your ladyship."

"I wish you were my maid," says Jeanne, frankly.

"The old lady's face lightens up.

"Your ladyship is very good to say so," she says; "you have only to say so; there is no difficulty—my duties are very light."

"They will be very light so far as I am concerned," says Jeanne, laughing.

"I am sure of that, my lady; too light!"

It is all settled.

"If I wanted a white elephant, I suppose I should get it!" thinks Jeanne. "Yes, it is a great thing to be rich and powerful, for all Vernon says to the contrary."

With deft hands Mrs. Fleming arranges the lace dress, fixes a flower in the silken curls, hands Jeanne a pair of bluish pink gloves, fastens them, and pronounces the toilet finished.

"You must show me the way down," says Jeanne, "or I shall lose myself in the castle keep, perhaps."

"It will not be the first time in the history of the castle that a lady has found herself here," says Mrs. Fleming, with her gentle smile.

Jeanne follows her down the stairs, across the broad hall, but there her further services are rendered unnecessary by the appearance of Vane, who, in evening dress, awaits her.

Mrs. Fleming, meanwhile, watches them—the slight, stately figure against the stalwart, broad-shoulder one—for a moment, with something like a tear in her eyes.

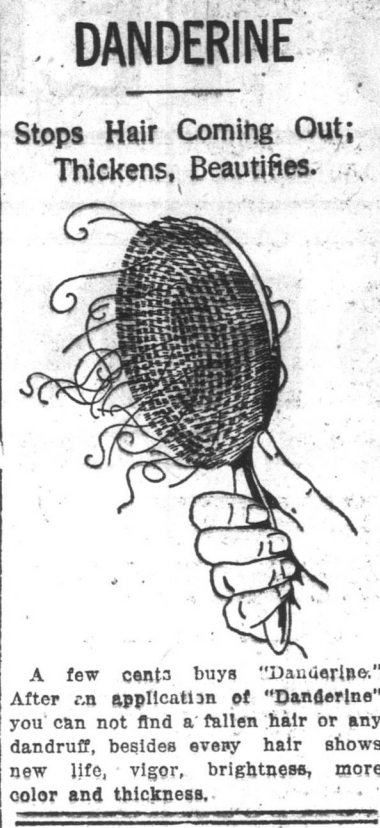
"God bless her sweet heart!" murmurs the old lady. "She be a flower indeed! No wonder he loves her—the heart of a stone she'd crack!"

"Oh, needsome, if you only knew how easy it is to win the affections of those beneath you! If any one had been required to die for my Lady Jeanne, Mrs. Fleming would have been quite ready to go cheerfully to the stake or the block in her stead.

In ten minutes the select servants

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had been informed that "my lady" was the most beautiful creature that ever the sun shone on—and an angel!" exclaimed Mrs. Fleming. "I wonder—I wonder how long they've been married! Just like my lord to keep everything so secret!"

"Poor Vernon!" says Jeanne, carelessly, as they enter the room in which dinner has been laid, and she looks around at the exquisite decorations of subdued gray, lit here and there by a choice picture or a touch of gold.

"How you must have suffered in those rooms at the Park! I can understand now!"

He smiles, and whispers in her ear: "I was happier there than than anywhere else—when a certain young lady by the name of Jeanne was in them!"

There are several footmen hovering to and fro, but at a signal from Vane, the butler, a staid old gentleman, dismisses them, and himself waits, which, if Jeanne only knew it, is a great and marvelous piece of condescension.

It is not an elaborate dinner—which Vane detests, but its simplicity is rendered elegant and artistic by the French chef, who has spent a good many hours in designing and perfecting it, so as to make it suit both my lord the marquis and his bride.

Jeanne—hungry Jeanne—whose experience of dinners is limited to those arranged by Aunt Jane, and the heavy-handed solidity of the pastry-cook, thinks it simply delicious, and would say so if she did not fear that the butler would expire on the spot. But Vane does not seem to entertain any dread, and is just as bluff and cheery and simple as of old; once he actually so far forgets himself as to get up and fill Jeanne's glass, laying his hand, as he does so, on her white, warm shoulder with a loving caress. If the butler is shocked he manages to conceal his emotion admirably, and waits, like an exquisitely-fashioned machine, all eyes and ears for their lordship and ladyship's wants, and none for their manners. At last the staid old gentleman brings in, with great solemnity, a tiny bottle, all crusted and cobwebbed, and, handling it with the tenderest care, uncorks it and places it at Vane's elbow. Then, with a bow which have become a bishop, noiselessly disappears.

Vane takes up the little wicker cradle in which the bottle lies.

"The old port," he says, with a laugh. "Tully is in an admirable humor to-night. I don't get this every day in the week, Jeanne. It strikes me rather forcibly that this is intended as a compliment to you. You'll have to help me to finish it; Tully would die of grief and disgust if we left any of it. Come, for his sake, if not for mine, and again he leans over, kissing her this time as he fills her glass.

Jeanne's laughing protest is of no avail, and the wine—well worthy of Tully's adoration—is finished.

(To be continued.)

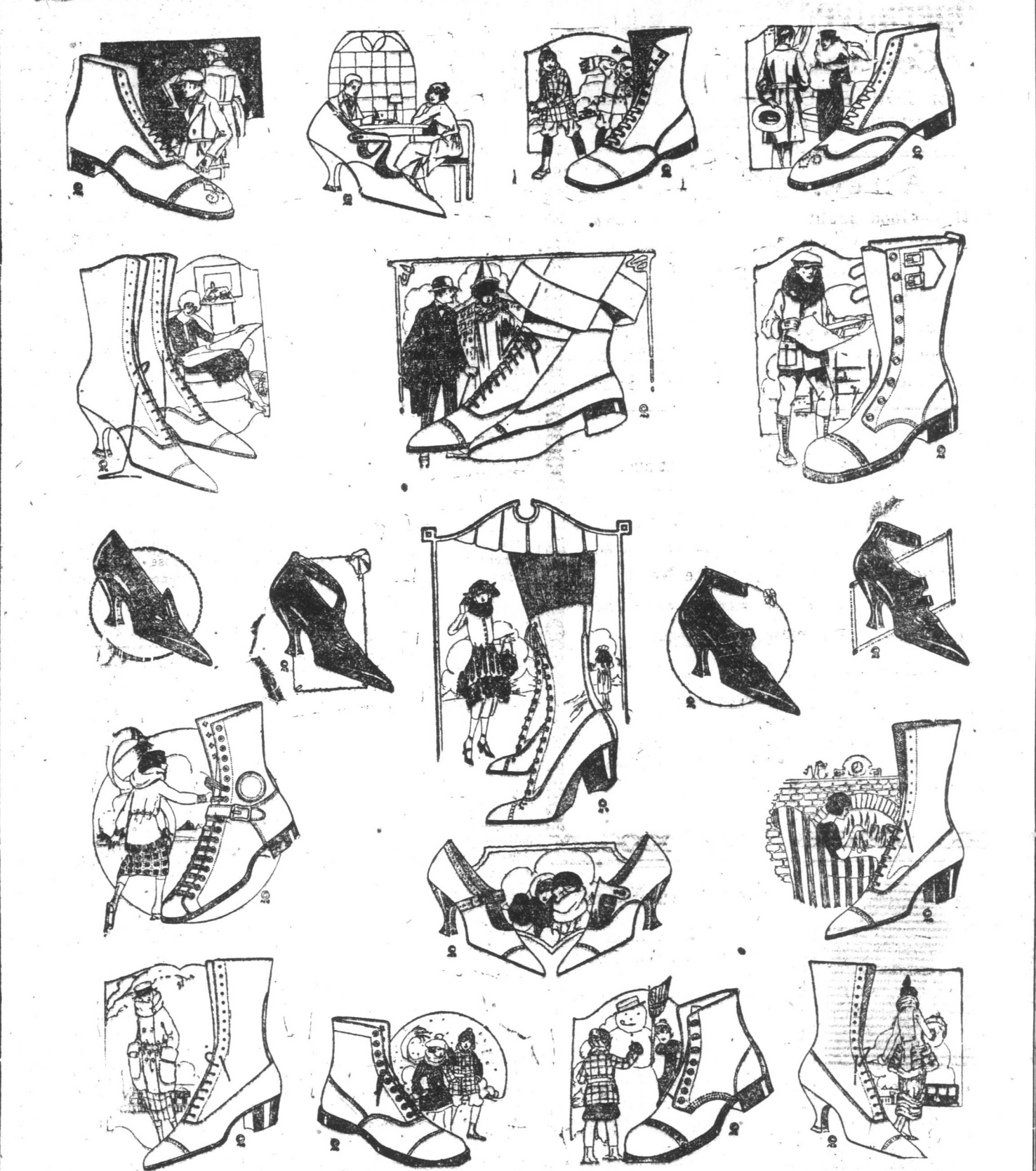
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Put a 16-oz. bottle, your 2/4 ounces of Pinex; then add plain granulated sugar syrup to fill up the bottle. Or, if desired, use clear molasses, honey or corn syrup instead of sugar syrup. Either way, take one or two spoonfuls, and gives you 16 ounces of better cough syrup than you could buy ready-made for \$2.50.

It is really wonderful how quickly this home-made remedy cures a cough—usually in 24 hours or less. It passes to penetrate through every air passage, loosens a dry, hoarse or tickling cough, lifts the phlegm, heals the membrane and gives almost immediate relief. Splendid for throat tickle, hoarseness, croup, bronchitis and bronspinal asthma.

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### Household Notes.

Dainty bread and butter sandwiches with ice cream are preferred by some to cake.

Hard sauce is much enriched by the addition of a few blanched and chopped almonds.

If plenty of salt is used in making bread, the bread will keep moist for a longer time.

Yolks of eggs and cream beaten together in a basin make an excellent thickening for soup.

Should a cake crack open while baking, you may be sure that you have used too much flour.

An excellent combination for a fruit salad is oranges, apples, pineapple and marshmallows.

For candy making, use a wooden thermometer with which to stir, as it is very easy to keep clean.

Just before serving boiled Brussels sprouts, sprinkle over them a half cupful of grated cheese.

Add a couple of sultana raisins to the cottage pudding batter. They give it a holiday appearance.

If you wish your biscuits to have a brown gloss over them, brush their surface with milk before baking.

Hominy grits served with sausage are delicious, and they will cause sausage to be more easily digested.

Cook spaghetti in casserole with thin slices of onion, tomato and pepper in alternate layers. Season well.

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