

but kindly and upright; a girl that meant well by her fellow-creatures when they came out of the perspective of her inexperienced contentment to be seen by her in that light. Celia called on her future mother-in-law, waiving ceremony when Jack explained that mother could not be brought to pay calls. She went away with nothing accomplished save monosyllables on the part of Jack's timid mother, and a saddened conviction on her part that they never could draw closer. Celia wanted to know and to love the elder Mrs. Cameron, but there was no meeting-point. Down in the depth of her honest young heart she hoped that she was not a snob and that it was not mortification, the feeling that was so like it, that came over her when she remembered that she must play the younger Mrs. Cameron to such a little peasant elder one.

Jack's mother went to the wedding. One of Celia's aunt's, lacking the girl's kindness, impatiently remarked that, 'It did not really matter; everyone knew about Jack Cameron's family.' Jack's mother seemed to try to obliterate herself during the ceremony, and still more during the reception that followed. She wore her heavy gray silk with an air of trying to be an antidote to its rustling, nibbled sparingly of the splendid supper, surreptitiously removing crumbs of the wedding-cake from the corners of her lips with her finger-tips as she replied: 'Yes, ma'am,' to an unheard remark from the bride's magnificent mother.

After Jack and Celia had run the gauntlet of rice, and had gone away in the great French motor-coach which was to take them the first half of their journey across the United States, Jack's father slipped away with his wife, both with an unspoken recollection of their wedding-journey, afoot, the distance of three-quarters of a mile from the church to their four-room house nestling beneath a rowan tree in far-off County Kerry.

'Well, I hope they'll come off as well as we did, and be the half as happy,' said Jack's father out of the middle of his thoughts, and his wife did not need telling what these thoughts had been.

After the wedding the elder and the younger Mrs. Cameron saw little of each other. It was inevitable that it should be so, though it troubled Celia when, at less frequent intervals, something reminded her of it. She told herself that by and by, when certain pressing claims upon her were satisfied, she would make an effort to know the lonely little woman who never could grace her dinners and receptions, but who had given her a remarkably good husband, in love for whom they surely must be united, if ever opportunity offered. But opportunity for some things rarely offers; it must be sought, and weeks and months slipped by into years without bringing the two Mrs. Camerons into closer relations.

At the end of five years there were three little Camerons for the grandmother to watch from a distance, wistfully. There were the beautiful twin boy and girl, and the two-year-old baby, noble children, as big, bonny, and bright as scientific care and devoted love could make them. Celia and Jack rightly thought that there were no children in the world that could surpass them; young as she was, the world offered Celia no rival to them, to her delight in them. Her new maternal joy and pride turned her thoughts more often to Jack's mother, whom, somehow, she did not know how to place within her formal circle.

There came a day when, for the first time in his life, Teddy, the twin boy was ailing. Theo, the other twin, was languid, and Celia, gowned and ready to go out to a great dinner given by her father to celebrate the thirtieth birthday of his immense and increasing business, seeing the doctor passing, sent out a maid to call him in.

'I shouldn't have sent for you, Dr. Longmead,' she said apologetically, as she came shimmering down the stairs, 'but seeing you at my very door I yielded to maternal weakness. I suppose even guarded little stomachs may get upset sometimes, and Ted and Theo are probably having indigestion and will be all right to-morrow, but if you aren't in a hurry will you go up to the nursery and look them over?'

The doctor went up, pulling off his gloves and warming his hands as he went, Celia following in a shimmer of golden silk and flashing gems.

Dr. Longmead raised Ted's head. It had fallen on his arms over a little table, and looked into his eyes. His own eyes changed, the alert, grave look of the physician replacing the amused smile of toleration that had lurked in them as he preceded Celia to the nursery. He examined the child carefully, put down his hand at last and went over to where Theo half sat, half lay, sliding downward in her little willow rocker. Then he looked up at Celia, who stood nervously twisting her fingers, catching alarm from the doctor's manner.

'We will have these little twins put to bed, Mrs. Cameron,' said the doctor gently. 'And then we will telephone for two trained nurses—I'll look after that. I am glad I happened to be passing. I'll go back after antitoxin and return immediately.'

'Is it—it isn't—' Celia began and stopped. 'It is diphtheria,' said the doctor gently, 'but I hope we have discovered it in time.'

Celia had never before known this gripping cold at her heart, the agony of abject, helpless fear for something dearer than life. She did not recognise herself in the crouching, shuddering woman, shivering beside the leaping flames. How suddenly it had come!

The door softly opened, and through it quietly came the little plain figure of Jack's mother. She crossed over to Celia without a trace of shyness.

'My dear daughter,' she said in her soft voice, with its touch of Kerry accent, 'I've come to help you with it. I know what it is, Celia dear—I've been through it. But we didn't have means or learning then to fight it; this will end different.'

She put her arms around Celia and drew the tall girl down on her slender shoulder, patting her and stroking her hair. Celia looked at her long and wonderingly, then dropped her head and cried, clinging to her.

'Oh, mother, mother! Oh, mother, mother!' she moaned, and that was all. But indeed it was all there was to say.

The motherhood that overflowed from the little woman transcended the mere fact of her being Jack's mother. It seemed to Celia, unexpectedly, that no one else in all the world could be so near to her, so comforting to her in this hour. She was Jack's good mother, but she was the mother of four little children who slept beyond her kiss in the graves where diphtheria had laid them. And her own children! Celia shuddered. Ah, yes; they were one, Jack's mother, the mother of the dead children, and she, the mother of the stricken ones.

Through the ten days that followed, in which Ted and Theo went down to the very grasp of death and were snatched back, and the baby sickened, flickered almost out, yet came safely through, the elder and the younger Mrs. Cameron were all the world to each other. The elder relieved her first sorrow in anxiety for her grandchildren, and Celia learned all that she had never known, taught by grief of the reality of life and living things. And most of all she learned to know Jack's mother.

When it was all over and the pale baby came down in her nurse's arms, while Jack followed with white Ted, and another nurse bore wan, weak Theo for the first meal in the great dining-room since they had feared no children would be spared to gather around their father's table, Celia fell back to take her little mother-in-law in her arms.

'Mother,' she whispered, 'don't leave me. Stay here always. You've been all the world to me. I couldn't prove it, but I feel that the children would have died if you had not come. Stay here always.'

The little woman shook her head. 'We're best in our own homes, my dear, when it's fine weather,' she said with her quiet smile. 'I don't know what society and I would do with each other. I'm thinkin' I'd be best where I've been fitted by the years that have gone over me, and that's in my own house. I'm better in teethin' than at teas, Celia. But my girls have gone far from me, and I'm glad I found a daughter. I'll be here, quiet, with you often, dearie, but not to spoil the splendor when the big world breaks through. We've grown so close, daughter, that it never'll matter again where my little body stays, will it?'

'Close! As close as love, as close as closeness!' cried Celia, illustrating with a hug that engulfed Jack's little mother. 'Oh, you dear little brown saint, I do love you!'

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Masterton

A pleasing little function took place at the Masterton Hospital on Thursday afternoon, the occasion being a visit from the Very Rev. Dean McKenna, accompanied by Miss Simpson, from Wellington, and a number of the pupils of St. Bride's Convent. Advantage was taken of the opportunity of hearing Miss Simpson, who is an accomplished flautist, and an impromptu concert was organised. Miss Simpson rendered quite a number of items in splendid style, and was listened to with much pleasure by the patients and members of the staff. The young ladies of St. Bride's Convent also contributed to the programme by giving a graceful rendering of an Irish dance. Pianoforte solos were also contributed by others of the visitors, and the entertainment, which was thoroughly enjoyed, was brought to a close with a rendering, by Miss Simpson, of 'Auld lang syne.'

The annual swimming sports for the children attending St. Patrick's School and St. Bride's Convent were held at the Dixon Street Baths yesterday morning. The weather was all that could be desired, and there was a large attendance of parents and visitors. Thanks to the Very Rev. Dean McKenna, who was assisted by Messrs. J. A. McEwan, McCarthy, J. Pryor, H. O'Leary, Dunphy, and R. Hodgins, the gathering was quite as successful and as enjoyable as any of its predecessors. The following are the events:—15 Yards Learners' Handicap (boys)—T. O'Dowd, 1; C. Reynolds, 2; M. Kerins, 3. 15 Yards Learners' Handicap (girls)—K. Bunney, 1; D. Frost, 2; A. Treador, 3. 50 Yards Boys' Championship—G. Treador, 1; D. Welch, 2; C. O'Connell, 3. 25 Yards Schoolgirls' Championship—N. O'Dowd, 1; E. O'Leary, 2; J. Scott, 3. 25 Yards Convent Girls' Championship—M. Bunney, 1; D. Jones, 2; D. Duggan, 3. 15 Yards Handicap (boys under eleven)—C. Hodgins, 1; L. Jackson, 2; C. Reynolds, 3. 15 Yards Handicap (girls under eleven)—K. Bunney, 1; A. Treador, 2; B. Scott, 3. 50 Yards Handicap (boys over eleven)—G. Treador, 1; D. Welch, 2; Claude Hodgins, 3. 25 Yards Handicap (girls over eleven)—M. McCarthy, 1; E. O'Leary, 2; J. Scott, 3. Diving (boys)—D. Welch, 1; J. O'Dowd, 2; C. O'Connell, 3. Diving (girls)—E. O'Leary, 1; N. O'Dowd, 2; F. Russell, 3. In the plate diving competition for boys and girls, Nellie O'Dowd, J. O'Dowd, and Douglas Welch tied. There were also a great number of novel races, which were all well contested, and resulted in some very close finishes.