

THE THIRD GENERATION

By Leila M. Church.

The mirror over the dressing-table reflected the tired but flushed and eager face of the mother as she stood back, head at one side, to view her last addition to the room—the making of the bed. It stood in the corner by one dormer-window, through which one might see entrancing pictures of swaying elm tops, blue sky, and far away the line of the hills. The bed itself, a resurrection, was the mother's pride. Its four slender posts were draped with a wonderfully clever imitation of that which had dressed it seventy-five years earlier. And the valance, with quaint little knotted fringe that the mother had searched the city over to find, and the sheet and pillow cases beautifully embroidered with the daughter's monogram—all standing waiting and ready.

"Isn't it all just too lovely?" said the mother, delightedly. And then, with a little anxious note in her voice, "Do you think she will like it?"

The father stood in the doorway, looking on.

"Why, yes; how can she help it?" he answered, hopefully. Being a man, he was optimistic.

The next day the daughter would return from her long absence from home, a visit of a few weeks with cousins in a distant town. Together now the mother and father stood, to examine and to appreciate all the details of the great surprise.

The room had always been the daughter's, since she had been old enough to discover how fascinating a third-floor room is, with four dormer-windows, but the mother had found the possibilities. With all the ardor of a girl planning her long-dreamed ideal of a room, she had bought, selected, sorted and banished, till now it was perfected, the last thing was done.

It was father who had the fireplace fitted in, with its high, colonial mantel, and he also contributed the andirons.

The mother selected the paper, with its riot of roses and buds over walls and sloping ceiling alike, and she had covered the high-backed rockers and low chair herself with the flowered cretonne exactly like the paper. The mirror was Great-Grandmother Drake's, and the candlesticks at each end of the mantel; but the dressing-table—not even father knew how much she had paid for that from her own allowance. The old dresser had been in the room before, but it looked quite different in its new cover, and little new bedroom slippers peeped from beneath the valance of the bed.

With appreciative eyes they both studied the room. Over the mantel was a dark old portrait of Grandfather Drake as a young man, in high collar and satin stock, with sloping shoulders and fancy waistcoat. The oval frame was dull gilt and effective.

The mother was doubtful about it—she feared it was hung too high—then she wondered if the daughter would care for it, although she had always been such a great admirer of Grandfather Drake.

Once the daughter had said she wished she might have certain old photographs of her father and mother. On each side of the mirror, and directly over the candlesticks on the dressing-table, was a small, oval frame like that of Grandfather Drake's picture, only in one of these was a demure little maid, with parted hair, and low-necked, short-sleeved gown, showing dimpled arms and shoulders, and in the other the dearest, pudgiest, round-faced and wondrously killed little father.

"Weren't you the dearest thing?" cried the mother, giving him a sudden little hug.

"I don't know," he answered, smiling, "but I am quite sure you were."

"Do you think she will like it?" she repeated again, after a pause in which she took in every detail, the result of weeks of planning and hard work and anxious effort to please. "It is just the sort of room I should have liked."

The next day was cold, with alternating downpours of rain and fog. The father left late in the afternoon for the depot, arriving a full half-hour early, that he might be there in time for the train.

At home everything was aglow with light and warmth. The dining-room table was laid with the best silver and china and the new table-cloth, and was lighted softly from the candelabra, which were heirlooms of great value. The library fire snapped and crackled cheerily, and on the piano and on the table in the hall were bowls of carnations. A new picture hung at the stair landing. Everything was ready. Katie at that moment, in the kitchen, was whipping the cream for the delectable dessert.

The mother stood by the window, watching and listening eagerly for the first sounds of arrival. She had ar-

rayed herself in her best white wool gown, with pipings of pink velvet, worn over her very best pink slip. Her cheeks were pink with excitement, and in the coils of her soft brown hair was tucked a pink geranium. She ran from the window to rearrange a flower that dropped too far, and missed the sight of their approach up the street; but at the sound of feet on the porch, she was at the door, the light streaming out over her lovely flushed face and eager, outstretched arms.

For a few moments little was said, and the father made a great pretense of kicking off his rubbers. Then the daughter extricated herself and looked around.

She was a perfectly healthy, fresh, nice-looking girl of about nineteen, with clear, gray eyes, a rather round face and a pretty color. People said that, with a few changes in her hair and a slight tightening of the lips, she might resemble strongly her mother's mother, Grandmother Bell.

"My, but aren't you all ablaze here!" she said, cheerily. "And flowers—why, Mother Drake, how extravagant!"

The mother's face grew sober a trifle.

"Shall I go right up, mother? I want to get into something comfortable."

"Yes, dear. Father will carry your bag."

The father and mother exchanged a very knowing glance. The daughter started for the stairs, and they eagerly, trying to appear unobtrusive and above suspicion, followed. At the first flight he put down the bag, and they finished the last flight at a gallop, close at the heels of the daughter.

Hand in hand, with pleased, expectant smiles, they stood in the doorway, peering in as the daughter entered. The fireplace, where a small log was cheerily burning, sent out a soft glow, aided by the candles on the dressing-table. The dull frames of the pictures sparkled bravely in places. One chair was drawn comfortably to the fireplace, while another stood invitingly near. Flowers were on the table, and the bed showed snowy and tempting, with its fittings beautifully embroidered with the monogram of the daughter.

They watched her stand, amazed, and look slowly around the room. Turning suddenly, she saw them there in the doorway.

"How awfully nice!" she said, after a silence that was breathless on the part of those without. "Why, what made you do it? I am afraid you'll get all tired out, mother. Seems to me you don't look quite as well as usual to-night," scanning reprovingly the face of the one standing in the doorway, whose pretty color had almost entirely disappeared.

"It is very nice, I am sure," she continued, going up to the fire to investigate that. "You're a great person for surprises, mother. New paper, although I really think I like the old paper better, I had it so long, dad, and new curtains, and I see you have the same old bureau. But where on earth did you get the bed?"

There was a pause, when the mother tried bravely several times to say something. At last, murmuring an incoherent remark about dinner, she turned and fled.

The father found her at one corner of the library sofa, staring straight ahead and with one hand tightly clenched over a ball of a handkerchief. He smiled whimsically.

"How about it?" he asked. "Do you think you are going to cry?"

She shook her head mutely. Then each, seeing the anxious face of the other, suddenly began to laugh, to laugh long and heartily at the whole situation.

"Anyway, you are better off than I am," he said, finally. "She spoke of the bed, but she didn't say anything about the fireplace." And he put his hands reflectively deep into his pockets.

The mother only laughed, but it ended with a little sob that caught at her throat.

One evening a few days later the mother was called away to a sick friend. The daughter brought her books to the library, where the father stood, rather aimlessly moving about the table. Ever since the night of her arrival home, the father had acted queerly, it seemed to the daughter. Often, after a long sober pause, she would find him studying her intently, as if there were something he could not understand.

Of course the mother was always mother, one expected her to be what she was. That day one of her girl friends, whom she had taken upstairs to show her new room, had remarked, "What a perfectly lovely mother you have! If I had a mother, and one like yours, I should be the

happiest person on earth! I should love her to pieces!"

The daughter had taken it as a matter of course, and smiled carelessly at her orphan friend's ravings.

The father went to the safe, and after a short search, brought back to the table two little leather-covered books, worn and old-looking. He called the daughter to him.

"Here is something I should like you to read to-night—I think you will find these interesting. I have always meant to have you read them some time, and to-night is a good time—you'll be alone. I am going down to the shop. You will find me there if you want me."

She took the books and glanced at them curiously. At the door he paused. "Don't fall asleep before you read them, and drop them into the fire," he added, humorously. "They are precious."

"No, indeed, I won't, father! What are they?" But he had gone.

She opened one of the books. The name on the fly-leaf caught her attention—"Cornelia Bell, Diary for 188—." How odd, how interesting! she thought. Mother's diary! She drew her chair to the open grate, then abandoned it and dropped to the hearth-rug, where she began to read.

It was the later diary she read first, the happy chronicle of the mother's first meeting with the father, of their growing friendship, her shy delight in the secret of her love for him, and later, exultant and awed joy over the precious thought of his love. Tender, shy and quaint emotions were expressed in those pages, the story of a maid and a man in their beautiful youth, one's father and mother.

The daughter was conscious of queer little thrills of interest as she read of these things, little intimate manners and tender caresses, when they were new and strange and wonderful. It was like the most entrancing love story.

And to think it was father and mother! It made one's heart grow big and soft and eager to love.

"Dear old dad!" she murmured with a smile, as she read an eloquent account of a charming necktie he wore in his youth. She understood now why mother and father each must ever be young to the other.

She finished the book and gazed dreamily into the fire. New thoughts, new ideas came into her mind. "What a very fascinating girl mother must have been!" she said, aloud. For a long time she thought deeply over what she had read. Precious indeed they must seem to father, these books.

After a while she opened the other diary, written before father had appeared in her life. Grandmother Bell, whom the daughter had stood in awe of most of her life, figured strongly in the pages.

She felt that she never understood before how lonely her mother had been as a girl, although she had always known that her childhood had not been particularly happy. She could see why she had been so lonely in spirit, the mother as a girl was so entirely different from her brother, who was a good deal of a prig, and from her Puritan mother.

The daughter smiled as she read in one place, "To-day mother received a letter from her friend, Sarah Smith, who is a terribly good woman. She wrote she had been to visit a poor, sick woman, bedridden over twenty years, who believed in the Life Everlasting, but liked to have some one come in now and then. I laughed. Mother said I laughed just like all the Bells, the worst thing she thought she could say to me."

In another place she read, "What I like about Thanksgiving and Christmas and New-year's and Fourth of July is that it is a holiday, and you dress up, but you can sew and do things. Sundays there are so few things you can do. I know some girls who always make candy. I shall let my girls make candy, week in, week out, night and day, if they like."

And again: "I said to mother, 'I always make believe I am a butcher slicing off cold boiled ham when I cut bread, don't you?' Mother was disgusted. 'No,' she said, coldly, 'I have no desire to be a butcher.'"

Sometimes sentences or paragraphs caught the daughter's eye. The tears sprang quick to her eyes as she saw her successful, rather pompous Uncle John in the lines, "When we were ready to go, John kissed his wife, nodded awkwardly to me, and said, coldly, 'Well, good-by.' I got so hungry for something to love and hug and squeeze, and never let go. I wonder if I had a husband if he would kiss me good-by."

The daughter remembered that the mother's husband was equal to the most affectionate, and was glad. The pages that interested the daughter most contained an account of a home-coming of her mother from a short visit. Never before had she realized how much it might mean to one who loved all the little beauties and graces of life to live surrounded by those who never dreamed, never idealized, and lived in a small world of plain outlines.

She was with her mother, in the pages of the diary, on the car of her return home. She saw the eager girl, in imagination, with a love for home, in spite of all, a desire to see her mother and tell her of her visit, of the things that had happened, and to show the little gift she had denied herself to bring home with her. She could hardly wait to open the door, all eagerness, all smiles.

When the door opened, she saw the girl mother enter joyously, ready to be welcomed. And she saw vividly her Grandmother Bell, sitting there at one corner of the dining-room table, gloomily lighted by a small kitchen lamp, eating bread and butter with a cup of cold tea, her severe face not softened in the least by her dark woolen dress. The daughter could see her look of amazement as the girl mother entered; she could hear her say, "Why, what made you come home to-night? I didn't expect you till to-morrow."

And then, when the wonderful gift was produced, a new table-cloth, that appeared to have been wished for, and representing a sacrifice of long-saved money, she could see her unfold it slowly, almost severely, rub one corner between her two hands, hold it up to the light, spread it out, and say, "What made you spend your money, Cornelia? I had hoped you would get a new hat. The table-cloth is very nice, though I never cared much for the snowdrop pattern. How large is it?"

The daughter laughed. It sounded exactly like Grandmother Bell.

The mother had written out her heart's burden in her little diary. At the end of this episode she wrote, "When I have girls I shall just lie awake nights planning how I can make them happy, and everything as bright and pleasant for them as I can. I shall let them do as they please, and try every way to please them. But perhaps, after all, they won't care, like mother."

The other affair—when the girl in the diary had made a dressing-sack for a surprise for her mother, and spread it out invitingly in the best front room, and written a series of notes containing directions as to how to find it. The daughter laughed to think of the grandmother running from pin cushion to parlor vase, from teapot to chair-cushion, each time finding a note telling where to go next.

"I should think Grandmother Bell would have been dizzy," she thought.

At last, when she found the dressing-sack in the front bedroom, she said to the girl mother, "The shades are up and the sun is fading the carpet. How long has that been like that? The dressing-sack is all well enough, but don't ever leave the shades up again like that."

After finishing the diary, the daughter sat still on the hearth-rug for a long time. She thought of all she had read and learned of the cheerless life that must have been her mother's, of her sensitive temperament, her love of the beautiful, and the austere Grandmother Bell. The words kept repeating themselves in her mind, "Perhaps they won't care!"—the girls whom she had planned to do so much for.

The daughter suddenly realized how much the mother had done for her one girl, what a dear, lovely, charming mother she was, taken always as a matter of course. She felt now that she never had appreciated her, she had been like Grandmother Bell. Tears came to her eyes and rolled unheeded down her cheeks, staining their pink roundness. She looked at the picture of the mother on father's desk, mother in her wedding-gown, as she was at the beginning of a newer and a happier life.

She clasped the little books against her wet cheek. "Dear girl mother," she said, softly. "I do love you."

Suddenly she rose and went in search of father. Along the halls she crept softly, quickly, as if she feared some one would steal away the beautiful thoughts that kept crowding into her mind. Father was in his workshop, in the basement, where he liked to think he made things, and where he framed pictures sometimes, and had a good time.

She opened the door, filled with the thoughts of her mother, and went to him.

"Father," she said, softly, her eyes still bright with the tears of her emotion. He did not hear her at first. When she called again, and laid her face against his shoulder, he looked up. He put his arm round her and drew her to him.

"Father," she said, again. This time there was a little break in her voice. "I have read the books, and can't I—can't we—oh, let us do something for mother—quick!"—The Youth's Companion.

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Power of Suggestion.

It was the reserve force stored up in the years of conquest and the habit of triumphing in whatever they undertook that gave such power to the Washingtons, the Lincolns, the Gladstones and the Disraelis, says Orison Swett Marden in Success Magazine. It is the reserve power which we feel back of the words and between the lines of a powerful book; not what is actually in the printed words that impresses us most. We are not so much affected by what an orator like Webster actually says as we are by what he suggests; the latent power, the mighty reserve force that we feel he might put forth were the emergency great enough.

"That Tired Feeling"

Is a condition, not a theory. Far from being a matter of trivial or joking comment, it is a condition of real danger. It is a never-fading symptom of a state of the blood and nerves that will not cure itself, but, unless prompt measures are taken, will go from bad to worse. Just now, when so many contagious diseases are prevalent, it makes the system especially susceptible to attacks of sickness. To mention "that tired feeling" is to suggest the remedy—Hood's Sarsaparilla, unquestionably the most successful blood purifier, nerve tonic, appetizer, and general "spring medicine." It makes people well.

Tendency of Government.

There is no question that American democracy is veering away from representative government toward a form of democracy in which executive and the people themselves will make laws. And, notwithstanding all the perils that come from centralization of power, which is the ultimate effect of the abandonment of representative government for so-called direct action, so long as legislative bodies continue to be proved unreliable, and strong-willed and honest executives offer themselves to the people, so long will this trend continue. Unless the people discover and utilize ways of selecting better representative lawmakers, or legislators prove themselves more trustworthy, the transfer of power and prestige from the legislature to the executive will continue, until there is in effect a king ruling by popular consent, uncrowned, but a despot to the extent that he can play on the popular mind, its passions or prejudices.—Boston Herald.

How Scott Bore Adversity.

Once when I was staying with Mr. Ruskin he took delight in showing me his Scott MSS. He brought down "Woodstock" from the shelf, and turning the leaves over slowly and lovingly, he said: "I think this is the most precious of them all. Scott was writing this book when the news of his ruin came upon him. He was about here, where I have opened it. Do you see the beautiful handwriting? Now look, as I turn over the pages toward the end. Is the writing one jot less beautiful? Are there more erasures than before? That assuredly shows how a man can and should bear adversity."—London Graphic.

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