

MOTHER, THE INDEFINABLE WORD

"Mother" is a word hard to define, not because it has so little of content but because it has so much; not because it is so exclusive but because it is so inclusive; not because it presents a concept so little and obscurely known but because too extensively and intimately known.

One of the definitions which caught our attention the other day was this: "It is woman plus, just as a home is a house plus or a nation a country plus."

Mother is one of those great words like faith and hope and love, elemental words whose meaning and significance and content outrun all the powers of speech.

Happy is that one who has had the privilege of knowing and growing up from childhood to young manhood or young womanhood under the loving care and guidance of a mother who has filled so large a place in life that no word of definition great enough and magnificent enough and meaningful enough can be found to express what is in the heart concerning her.

The lines of Calvin D. Wilson speak eloquently of such a mother:

I landed on this rock, the earth;
There met me at the gates of birth
A loving woman, kind and fair,
With gentle eyes and silken hair
That seemed, with all its loosened strands,
As plaything for my baby hands.
Here for the hungered guest was food,
Divinely mindful, fit and good;
And when the wearied nursling wept
Her arms wound round him and he slept.
Great God, with such a welcome here
I'll venture forth to any sphere;
Lord of the mother, I will tread
All Thine abysses without dread.
—Evangelical Messenger.

ARE ALL CHILDREN IN?

I think oftimes as the night draws nigh
Of an old house on the hill,
Of a yard all wide and blossom-starred
Where the children played at will.
And when the night at last came down,
Hushing the merry din,
Mother would look around and ask,
"Are all the children in?"

'Tis many and many a year since then,
And the old house on the hill
No longer echoes to childish feet,
And the yard is still, so still.
But I see it all as the shadows creep,
And though many the years have been,
Even now, I can hear my mother ask,
"Are all the children in?"

I wonder if, when the shadows fall
On the last short, earthly day,
When we say goodbye to the world outside,
All tired with our childish play,
When we step out into that Other Land
Where mother so long has been,
Will we hear her ask, as we did of old,
"Are all the children in?"

And I wonder, too, what the Lord will say,
To us older children of His.
Have we cared for the lambs? Have we
showed them the fold?
A privilege joyful it is.
And I wonder, too, what our answers will be,
When His loving questions begin:
"Have you heeded My voice? Have you told
of My love?
Have you brought My children in?"

WHICH LOVED BEST?

"I love you, Mother," said little John;
Then forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was off to the garden swing,
Leaving his mother the wood to bring.

I love you, Mother," said little Nell,
"I love you better than tongue can tell,"
Then she teased and pouted half the day,
Till mother rejoiced when she went to play.

"I love you, Mother," said little Fan,
"Today I'll help you all I can."
To the cradle then she did softly creep,
And rocked the baby till it fell asleep.

Then stepping softly, she took the broom,
And swept the floor and dusted the room;
Busy and happy all day was she,
Helpful and cheerful as child could be.

"I love you, Mother," again they said—
Three little children, going to bed.
How do you think that mother guessed
Which of them really loved her best?
—Joy Allison, in Exchange.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER

Here at the dawning of this day, dear Lord,
I come to Thee, who knowest all my way.
I cannot see a single step before;
The future lies beyond tomorrow's door,
This day alone is mine, this little day!
Thou seest all the duties 'round me spread,
The garments to be mended — floors to
sweep;
Young, healthy appetites to be appeased—
These common things, with sorrows to be
eased,
And all the sins of earth o'er which to
weep!
What dost Thou ask of me, dear Lord, dear
Lord?
I would not seek to take the easy way,
But I would work according to Thy will
And every moment to o'erflowing fill,
With labor that will bless this one short
day.
I thank Thee for the answer, blessed Lord;
Thy grace shall be sufficient for my need.
To work at home, and yet, with hand and
heart,
To seek and lift one soul that stands apart—
This then shall be a blessed day indeed!
—Kathryn Blackburn Peck.

THE MINISTER'S SUCCESS

A certain minister of the gospel occupied a high place in a large city. He came from a small Canadian town. One who knew him well was asked, "How did he secure that prominent pulpit? What is the secret of his success? There are greater preachers than he, more scholarly and more eloquent."

The answer was, "He has always done what many other men knew ought to be done, but neglected. He never failed to write notes of condolence to the afflicted, whether they belonged to his congregation or not. He would cross the street to speak to a burdened man. He would take an hour to make friends with a group of romping children. He would pen a sincere word of praise to the sheriff who did his duty, to the mayor who enforced the law, to the teacher in the public school who was faithful. Nothing that might properly receive a minister's notice escaped him. This is the real secret of his success."—Christian Observer.

BEATITUDES FOR PASTORS

Blessed is the pastor who is not swayed by the gossip of the week-day to the extent that he allows it to enter into his Sunday message. He shall have a message from God.

Blessed is the pastor who is not offended when his predecessor is highly spoken of, and who keeps his tongue from speaking discrediting things about him. He shall be well liked by all.

Blessed is the pastor who does not become familiar with the opposite sex. He shall continue long in God's work.

Blessed is the pastor whose home is under control, and whose mate conducts herself, and dresses properly. He shall have blessings untold.

Blessed is the pastor who does not blame everyone else for his mistakes and failures. He will be a great leader.

Blessed is the pastor who is not neglectful of himself, his family, or the building in which he preaches. He will be respected by all.

Blessed is the pastor who has a vision; who with his eyes open grasps every opportunity afforded for the advancement of the kingdom of God. He shall be desired of God's people.

Blessed is the pastor who is sanctified wholly. He shall be happy.—O. N. Robinson.

MANKIND'S HEART NEEDS CHANGING

Arthur Brisbane, noted editorial writer for the Hearst newspapers, a short time before his death gave expression to a truth which has as much pertinency now, following World War II, as it had following World War I. It may, however, be as easily forgotten now as then. He wrote:

"We may sweep the world clean of militarism. We may scrub the world white of autocracy. We may carpet it with democracy, and drape it with the flag of republicanism. We may hang on the walls the thrilling pictures of freedom—here the signing of America's independence, there the thrilling portrait of Joan of Arc, yonder the Magna Charta, and on this side the inspiring picture of Garibaldi. We may spend energy and effort to make the world a Paradise itself, where the lion of capitalism can lie down with the proletarian lamb. But if we turn into that splendid room mankind with the same old heart, 'deceitful and desperately wicked,' we may expect to clean house again not many days hence. What we need is a peace conference with the Prince of Peace."
—Evangelical-Messenger.

BEWARE OF THE CROWD

"Don't trouble yourself about me, sir, I'll slip into heaven with the crowd some day," said a careless sinner to a Christian who was urging upon him the necessity of conversion before it might be too late. The Christian replied, "My friend, you have mistaken the place—the crowd is on the way to hell; therefore, if you slip in with the crowd, you will slip into hell. Scripture says, 'For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it'" (Matt. 7:13-14). He had not thought of that. Have you?—Good News.

"Jesus Christ is the condescension of divinity and the exaltation of humanity."—Phillips Brooks.