

Where's Mother?

Bursting in from school or play,
This is what the children say:
Trooping, crowding, big and small,
On the threshold, in the hall—
Joining in the constant cry
Ever as the days go by,
"Where's mother?"

From the weary bed of pain
This same question comes again;
From the boy with sparkling eyes,
Bearing home his earliest prize;
From the bronzed and bearded son,
Perils past and honors won—
"Where's mother?"

Burdened with a lonely task,
One day we may vainly ask
For the comfort of her face,
For the rest of her embrace;
Let us love her while we may,
Well for us that we can say,
"Where's mother?"

Mother, with untiring hands,
At the post of duty stands.
Patient, seeking not her own,
Anxious for the good alone
Of the children as they cry,
Ever as the days go by,
"Where's mother?"

In the Morning of the Vicar's Life.

BY ARTHUR W. TARBELL.
(Continued.)

For a time both men were silent; nothing was heard but the storm outside that rattled the windows and blew in fierce gusts against the panes. Then the Vicar spoke.

"Draw your chair nearer the fire, my lad; it's scarce warm enough we can get on a night like this. Ah, they are terrible—these nights—on the poor dalesmen of this wild valley. I shouldn't wonder but old Brobridge up on Scar-Head Ghyll would lose more cattle to-night than he can well afford. There are times—when we who are privileged not to be men of the soil, like best to sit by the fire and watch the flames or listen to the wind as it moans in the chimney. They seem to whisper to us of things gone by."

The Vicar paused, but the younger man knew that it was not the time for him to speak.

"Tell me, my lad, of what were you dreaming here by the fire just now—of the large and wealthy parish you hope to have some few years hence in a distant city?"

The probationer was surprised at the elder churchman's sympathetic insight. "Yes, Vicar, I confess I was indulging in some rather improbable castles in the air."

"Ah, well, don't make the church too big nor the parishioners too wealthy. Things shrink with age, you know. The fates seem to enjoy mocking us by allowing us to have such grand castles when we are young, and then force upon us the bitter contrast of reality when we are older."

The Vicar reached forward to replace one of the logs that had crumbled and fallen from the andirons. The probationer thought he saw, by the light of the fire, a tear glistening in the old man's eye.

"Yes, my lad," he presently continued. "I doubt if there is any sadder bit of irony concerning human fate than the fading away of the splendid dreams of our youth as we approach the afternoon and evening of life. We trim our lamps and set them on a pedestal, meaning that they shall shed their light upon a none too happy world and make everything bright and cheerful. And all to what end? Scarcely before we realize it, the light, somehow or other, seems to grow dim, and we find that the wick has not been trimmed and that the oil has not been replenished. Then, almost without any effort on our part, the lamp itself goes out. And so dies many another good intention. Ah—it is sad—I know of nothing sadder."

The Vicar paused. But it was only for a moment. Then he began to speak with the manner of a man who was retrospectively thinking of something that deeply concerned his life.

"I knew of a young man once who while he was in college began to construct air-castles that

far exceeded in splendour and magnificence anything that can be found in the Arabian Nights. Each one surpassed in grandeur the one that preceded it, and the last—ah, why need I conceal the fact?—the young man was myself, and on just such a night as this, oh, so many years ago, something happened, and all these beautiful dreams of youth fell at one blow, and the young man was young no longer. He had learnt what it was to live in a world like this.

"I hardly know why I should wish to recall that night—but—well—I must, that is all. And then—strange too as it may seem—I see something in your face—I saw it this afternoon—that carries me, with unaccountable persistency, back to that night. Yet it must be my fancy only; of course there can be no other reason. However, I will tell the story; it may serve its purpose. It now concerns no one but myself, so it can do no harm; the others have long since been dead, and my own lamp is fast flickering out. The old Doctor tells me that I am failing rapidly, and may be called at any moment."

Still the young man did not answer; he knew that none was expected. So he waited. And the storm in the valley seemed to grow fiercer, and the wind rose and fell in the chimney with long, weird moans. The Vicar gave his chair a hitch nearer the fire and settled back in it with a feeble gesture.

"It is not easy for me to speak now, my friend, of anything that goes deeper than the weather or parish affairs, so I scarce know where to begin; but then it's no very great story, after all, and I dare say many a better man has been through the same thing. At any rate, the time when it began was back in the early part of the century when I was a Balliol man—at your own university, it seems—so you'll understand my surroundings. Of course I am well aware that the Oxford of then and the Oxford of to-day are two vastly different things, and yet I imagine that the dreams a young fellow has there were pretty much the same then as now. Although I take it as no very great credit, I was particularly fortunate in my undergraduate career. I cleared the 'Smalls' and the 'Greats' with what seemed to me no terrible amount of work, and not being content to take merely a 'pass' degree, I aimed at the highest and secured a 'first' in Literae Humaniores. Besides that I made a good many firm friends, was a member of the Union Debating Society, then just started, and was regular on the eleven and at one time a substitute on the crew. So you see a few years later, when I entered the church, I had as auspicious a start as any young fellow could wish. But ah—the irony of it all, the greatest error of my years at Oxford—was, that my ideals were too high. It may sound strange for a man to be told in this grossly material world of ours, that one's ideals can be too high, but nevertheless as I see it now through the focus of years, such was the case. In those days I was like a man climbing a mountain, who kept his eyes so constantly upwards on the summit, that he never saw on the ground beneath him anything of good or of interest; and so many a rich opportunity was passed by, and many a thing that it was his to do was left undone. But the gray hairs of my head, if they have brought nothing else to me, have shown me wherein I then erred; for I have since learned that the one thing demanded of us, the fulfilling of the highest ideal of all, lies in the manner in which a man does his daily work and his daily duty.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Strength out of Weakness.

It is indeed a universal law that strength is made perfect in weakness; that strength is brought out into strongest relief when it appears in a naturally weak agent. The law has infinite illustrations, and they are very beautiful. For instance, the most timid bird will show courage when its young ones are threatened with danger. Here it is the instinct of parental affection which brings strength out of weakness. And, to take a higher illustration, what is more interesting to mark how many of the greatest commanders in war by land and sea have been men whose con-

stitutions seemed always on the point of breaking down? Here it is patriotism or professional pride which makes strength perfect in weakness; but when we come to spiritual dangers and conflicts, there really is no power in heaven or in earth that can give us permanently the victory but the power of Christ from above working in us here below. We must come to feel that Christ is absolutely essential to us; that at the foot of His cross, and the foot of His throne in heaven, is the only strength which can carry any one of us through life on earth to life in heaven.—*Rev. H. M. Butler.*

A Changeful Glory.

Innocence is not righteousness, though many a soul thinks because it has not been stained by sin it is righteous. Innocence has no waves, no perils, no tragedies, no gulf-streams, nothing so stormy as a plunging breaker. Innocence is a plain of white snow. The rosy hues of sunset do not glimmer down into its depths. No one is engulfed in its splendour; no one can sail upon its bosom. It is passionless, without a yearning or a song. Righteousness is like a sea, full of currents; it is restless and restful with living energies. It has perils, and means storm and stress as well as peace and beauty. It offers opportunities to its sailor for heroisms and enterprises of soul. A mountain can describe justice; it is its portrait, hard, unmovable, grand, crystalline. But righteousness is mobile, just as grand, but full of movement. Its waves adapt themselves to the facts, yet are supreme. It has a psalm and a changeful glory.

Hints to Housekeepers.

Remember, slamming the door of the oven makes cake fall.

A few drops of lemon juice make cake frosting very white.

Three tablespoons of freshly made Japan tea with a bit of nutmeg gives an indescribable flavor to an apple pie.

Put a few sticks of cinnamon-bark and a little lemon juice with crab-apple when making jelly; the flavor is good.

To give a fine flavor to cornbeef hash use good stock for moistening, with a pinch of salt, sugar and cayenne.

To give an appetizing flavor to a broiled beef steak cut an onion in half, rub it over the hot platter with the melted butter.

AUNT LYDIA'S GINGERBREAD.—Add to one well beaten egg one cup of molasses, one cup of flour, one teaspoonful each of salt, ginger and soda, and one-half cup of boiling water. Bake in a shallow pan.

APPLE CREAM.—Core large tart apples, fill holes with sugar and bake. Into a pint of boiling milk stir half a cup of sugar and the beaten yolk of one egg: when cold, flavor with vanilla and pour over apples.

To ward off an incipient cold in a child give it a good, hot bath in a warm room. Then rub the chest and throat with coal oil, and heat it in. Over that put a liberal rubbing of vaseline. Then roll the child up in a nice, warm flannel that will cover it all over, and tuck it in bed. Generally this will break up a cold that has just started, and also symptoms of croup. If the hoarseness is of a croupy nature, a half teaspoonful of vaseline given inwardly is not bad.

COCOANUT TART.—Melt together over a slow fire two ounces of butter and four ounces of sugar, let this cool, and then stir in four ounces of grated cocoanut, one ounce of chopped citron, the rind and juice of half a lemon, and lastly four well beaten eggs. Line a shallow tin with pastry, pour in the mixture, cover with a layer of thin pastry, and bake for three-quarters of an hour.

HONEY COOKIES.—One quart of honey mixed with half a pound of white sugar, half a pound of butter and the juice of two lemons. Stir this mixture very hard, then mix in gradually flour enough to make a stiff paste. Cut into round cakes and bake in buttered pans.