

She Mothered Five!

She mothered five!

Night after night she watched a little bed,
Night after night she cooled a fevered head;
Day after day she guarded little feet,
Taught little minds the dangers of the street,
Taught little lips to utter simple prays,
Whispered of strength that some day would be theirs,
And trained them all to use it as they should
She gave her babies to the nations good.

She mothered five!

She gave her beauty—from her cheeks let fade
Their rose-blush beauty—to her mother trade.
She saw the wrinkles furrowing her brow.
Yet smiling said, "My boy grows stronger now."
When pleasures called she turned away and said,
"I dare not leave my babies to be fed by stranger's hands;
Besides, they are too small;
I must be near them when they call."

She mothered five!

Night after night they sat about her knee
And heard her tell of what some day would be,
From her they learned that in the world outside
Are cruelty and vice, and selfishness and pride;
From her they learned the wrongs they ought to shun,
What things to love, what work must still be done.
She led them the labor of the youth
And brought five men and women up to truth.

She mothered five!

Her name may be unknown save to the few;
Of her the outside world but little knew:
But somewhere five are treading virtue's ways,
Seeing the world and brightening its day;
Somewhere are five, who, tempted, stand upright,
Who cling to honor, keep her memory bright;
Somewhere this mother toils and is alive
No more as one, but in the breasts of five.

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