

1928



Address Hope Needham, Household Editor, Drivers Journal, Use one side of paper only. Real name and address must be given, but will not be printed if not desired.

JANUARY 24, 1928

Was Touched

Your little story quite touched my heart. It brought back to me a similar incident of my teens, when I suffered the agonies and humiliations you are suffering now, on account of just such shortcomings in other members of the family. I have often thought, in later years, that probably my parents and brothers and sisters must have been suffering just as keenly on account of mine.

Anyway, on a very important occasion, when we older girls had certain guests for dinner, one of the youngsters suddenly piped up, "Papa, why do you have that silver knife in your coat pocket?" Of course all eyes focused on peculiar adornment, and the air was tense while our father, in his deliberate way, arranged his words for an explanation. When it came, big sister and I were mortified to the point of death, for this is what he said, solemnly but with a sly twinkle in his eye: "I was taken into a corner before dinner by one of the girls and asked to be particularly careful of my manners, and to be sure that I should not make a blunder and put my knife in my mouth, I put it out of temptation's way."

It was a severe lesson to two extremely punctilious young ladies and we never afterward took the direct method of criticism with our father, for fear we would make a bad matter worse.

Would Make Them Perfect

We all come to a time in our lives when we feel that our parents, relatives and friends, with just a few alterations of our choosing would be perfect, and usually we set out at once to remodel them. Resentment almost inevitably follows, and subsequently a great deal of valuable energy is lost in conflict.

Taking it by and large, we'd better let other folks be. I know just how your father's manners irritate and humiliate you, but the chances are that nothing you can do will change

them. Try to make a joke of them, if you can, and be proud of all his good points. You are neither the first nor the last girl of your age who has had to bear up under such a cross.— Lovingly, Hope.

JANUARY 31, 1928

FLOWER AND GARDEN TIME

The seed catalogs have begun to flood the mails, and every one is in a fever to begin spring work. How many plans can be made and unmade before the time is here! The children are already planning spring trips to the woods to bring home plants and shrubs that we want to have growing on our very own place. Whether flowers or vegetables are the most fun to raise is another serious question that fills many a minute. We are



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considering, too, the proposition of starting in the rabbit business. Ruth thinks she would like that tremendously. The boys think they would, too; but each one wants to be exclusive. We felt that Ruth was too young to enter the county calf club, and it looks as though this rabbit proposition would be a fine substitute for that.

Then, of course, there are chickens to be considered. How early shall we start? And shall we have a different breed for each child, or can we work co-operatively? All these are momentous questions, and they bring such a stir, such a breeze of freshness into winter life that it seems spring must really be on the way.—Hope.

FEBRUARY 13, 1928

MODERN METHODS

Today was the appointed day for the committee to meet at the school and plan the next program for the P. T. A. And, by the way, we are to make up the program of songs by the crowd and articles read from current magazines. One is to be Commander Byrd's "Why I Am Going to the South Pole," one is to be on Stefansson's travels in the Arctic, and one is to be "The Synthetic House of Tomorrow," a prophecy of what chemistry and other sciences will be doing for us in another generation, in the way of fireproof building materials, illumination and other matters. Our refreshments (we always eat at these parent-teacher meetings, it seems so heartwarming; one member said she didn't care what we had to eat, just so it was plenty) are to be assorted valentine sandwiches and a fancy Washington icebox cake.



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But what I started to say was that I reached school a while before closing time and I was impressed by the method of conducting a drawing class. It seems to me that when I went to school we were given stereotyped exercises in that subject as in anything else, and that we sat rigidly in our seats during the time assigned. But today Miss Lita sent a small boy to the cupboard for five sheets of drawing paper, asked the others to get out their scissors and crayons, and assigned their problem for the day, "Design a valentine," said she. Just that—no arbitrary rules about how big or how round or how bright. "I've showed you how to make some, now I want you to make one all your own," the teacher continued. That was for the first and second grades. For Ruth (sixth grade) she said, "You are to work on a project this week, fixing the sandtable to represent something appropriate for Lincoln's birthday. You may have a log cabin and trees, or anything you like."

Delights Children

You should have seen the real delight in the faces of all the children. And as they set to work I noticed that they did not have to raise their



hands and ask questions, but were allowed to go quietly anywhere in the room to get what they needed. One stepped to the board and measured a nice red chalk heart that bordered the blackboard (ready for P. T. A.), looked at it critically, shaved it off a bit here and there, until he decided that he had a pretty good shape. Then back he went to his desk and began to color it. Another went to a shelf at the side of the room, opened the teacher's magazine, apparently to a page of valentines, and copied either a verse or a design. Ruth went to a cupboard and got out a stack of colored construction papers, studied them over carefully and chose the shades she needed, and happily set to work on her log cabin and trees. No one made any bother or got in any one else's way. Miss Lita was alert, ready to help when she was needed, but offering no commands or even suggestions until asked. Some way it seemed a more natural and more valuable way to teach the subject than the old way. It was developing initiative that was far more valuable than the military discipline that used to be the pride of a teacher's heart.

#### No Commotion

I know from experience that there are times in the day when there is no commotion whatever. I know that the children are getting all the discipline they need, in the way of concentration, observance of others' rights and all that. But for the last 15 minutes of a gloomy, long day, it seemed an unusually pleasant thing to let them be free to move and act and decide freely on a project that intensely interested them.

Sonny had visited at the school all day, it happened. And the minute the session was over, he bounded to me and bubbled over: "I made valentines for everyone to put in the box. The biggest one is for Miss Lita because she is so nice to me, and one is for grandma and one is for grandpa, and one is for daddy and one is for Ruth and Wilbert—and one more, only don't think about that last one, mother, or you might guess."—Hope.

FEBRUARY 20, 1928

#### At Hopewell

Out here at Hopewell the Cradle Roll is handled in such a delightful way that I want to tell you about it. Mothers are urged to bring the babies on the Cradle Roll to Sunday school, even though they are only a few months old. When the mothers reach the church, their charge of the babies is over until after services. Mrs. Alice gathers all the babies, from a few months to 3 years old, around a low white table. There are little red chairs for the runabouts and a high chair for the yearling, and the littlest one she holds on her lap. Then there is a tremendous basket full of all sorts of enticing toys. This little group, curtained off in an alcove where they will bother no one, spends service hour in happy supervised play. The mothers relax completely and enjoy the hour. The babies are seldom cross or troublesome, and if they are, what matter? Mrs. Alice has all week to recuperate from the Sunday hour, for her children are grown. And how pleasant it makes the time for the babies, the mothers and everybody else. There is none of the distraction that is bound to come in a class where several babies must be watched and managed and held against their wishes.

When it comes church time and the men and women take their places in

the choir, we have one rosy 3-year-old who solemnly carries up her little red chair and sits beside mother. It doesn't disturb anyone in the least. We take the proceeding as a matter of course. We would want Mrs. Mary in the choir even if she had to have all her children clambering over her; what harm does one quiet little mite do, sitting there so contentedly?—Hope.

2/28/28

## SMALL PLEADS FOR FARM AID

### Governor Discusses Political Prosecution, Hard Roads in Opening Campaign

[By The United Press]

HILLSBORO, Ill., Feb. 28.—Farm relief, hard roads and political persecution were the main features of an address here today by Governor Len Small in the opening of his campaign for a third term.

Speaking before a large gathering of hard road enthusiasts from Montgomery, Madison and Bond counties, the governor spoke at length on these three major subjects.

"The federal government has made a great success in stimulating industry by the tariff and other protective measures," the governor said in discussing farm relief. "The time has now come when it should devote its time with an honest determination to secure substantial relief for the farmers of the United States.

#### Urges Price Fixing

"Not only has the American farmer, during the past few years, been compelled to accept prices for his products controlled by the world markets, forcing him to compete with the peasant, and, if you please, the pauper labor of European countries, but he has also been compelled to purchase nearly everything he buys in the most highly protected markets of the world.

"The prices of farm products are entirely out of balance with other values. Yes, the farmer is entitled to a fair deal and every man and woman who works is entitled to living wages.

"I believe that the federal government could create an interstate food producers' commission with powers similar to those granted to the interstate commerce commission to fix and regulate the price and distribution of food products, in such a manner as to secure to the farmer a fair and reasonable return upon his investment and living wages for his labor and at the same time protect the consumer from being robbed by food gamblers and speculators."

#### Plan 1,200 Miles of Pavement

The governor then discussed his hard roads record, telling of the trouble he experienced in getting road contractors to cut the price of construction, the increasing number of miles laid annually and his plans for this year.

"The highway program for 1928 will eclipse the record of 1924 and will establish a mark which will perhaps

never be equalled by any other state or nation for one year," he said.

"We contemplate the construction of 1,200 miles of pavement, 400 miles of heavy grading and approximately 170 large bridge contracts, having an estimated cost of \$42,000,000. The several counties of the state plan to spend an additional \$13,000,000."

MARCH 26, 1928

#### AGES IN CHILDREN

Sonny, our baby, is six years old. If there are lines of demarcation between the seven ages of life, surely this is one, when the baby of the family is six years old. Not so long ago all three children were babies and every activity of life was colored by them. We gave up this and couldn't do that on account of the babies; we did this and insisted on that because it was good for the babies. Grandparents, aunts, uncles and parents were bound together under the rule of, unconsciously so, the little autocrats, the babies. Many and many a thing has happened, sickness, fire, death, operations, hard luck and good luck, sad things and merry, and suddenly the babies are growing up and becoming definite individuals. Not so long ago the days were crowded full with babies, and at half-past six in the evening, when the last one was tucked into bed, Daddy and I drew a few long breaths of relief and congratulated ourselves that the babies were healthy and good sleepers, so that we had a few hours to relax.



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Here the other evening, the children were big enough to sit up with us and play "Old Maid" and "rummy" and "everlasting," and so interested did we all become that it was nine o'clock before we remembered that the children should have been in bed long before. It looks as though we are about to become one of those things we see illustrated in the magazines, a family group. In a recent questionnaire that came to our house, it was asked, "How and where does the family spend the evenings?" Until now the answer would have been simply, "In bed." From now on there will be variety—playing, singing, studying. How long will it be before the children are entirely grown and will be stepping out to social functions without us, leaving Daddy and I once more to spend our evening alone, as we used to do when they were snug in bed?

A little while ago they were babies. Now Sonny is big enough to help scrape paper off the wall for Grandma, help line the brooder house for Daddy, gather the eggs and haul chicken feed for mother, and carry hot lunch to school for the children. Wilbert is big enough to read the "funnies" and the story-papers to himself and Sonny. The first real book he tackled was "Rip Van Winkle," in rhyme. The two boys went off to a corner of the house, and about the time I began to be worried at the unusual quietness, they came to me in the kitchen with this book, Wilbert wearing an exalted but weary look upon his countenance. "Mother, I read it every bit to Sonny, except some words I had to guess at,



and say—it surely seemed like 20 years had passed before I got through!" And Ruth is in the sixth grade, and getting to be quite a pianist. A long time it has been, surely! since the day when all three little codgers held a momentous argument (they didn't know I heard) over whether one grows a little every day, or one big jump on your birthday, or (as one of them offered for a compromise) a little every Sunday. I don't know whether they have settled the argument, or whether they have abandoned the subject as one of those which loses its importance as you grow older.

Yes, their babyhood is over. Looking back, we can see a multitude of places where we might have done better, but for better or worse, that phase of life is over now. It makes one a little sad to realize that it is gone; but we can resolve to profit by any mistakes we made, and make this next phase a little fuller, richer, sweeter, than the one before.—Hope.

APRIL 18, 1928

NOW WE HAVE  
WHOOPING-COUGH!

Remember the old fairy stories, where everybody had "wishes," and when they "wished" they got what they wanted, but found out it wasn't what they thought they wanted? Not long ago Brother was lamenting that he missed lots of interesting happenings at home because he had to go to school. "I'll never get to see them butcher again until I'm grown up," he said, "because they never butcher on Saturday."



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He did so wish he might just stay at home and follow the men around in all the fascinating kinds of farm work. Now he has his wish, but he wishes he hadn't. We have whooping-cough—mother and all three children—and Brother gets to stay home, from school and follow the men around, but the coughing interferes sadly with the enjoyment he expected.

Sonny holds the record for coughing the hardest, Brother for the greatest variety of coughs, Ruth for the most frequent. Mother strikes a happy average in all three accomplishments. We are apparently to get off with light cases. It is a pleasant time of year to have the disease, if we are going to have it; and it is rather an interesting experience to have it along with your children, if you did not have it with your brothers and sisters. Whooping-cough, like misery, loves company. We are as comfortable as could be expected, but for the next few days we're going to let you contributors fill the column, while we are, as the slang phrase goes, "whooping it up."—Hope.

MEMORY GEM

Home again—it's good to be  
Where the homelights softly  
glow.

In the long, long afternoons  
When the shadows longer grow.  
Good to be where all the cheer  
Of the fireside gleams and then  
Flickers low—to glow once more;  
Home again.

—H. Howard Biggar.

APRIL 23, 1928

SO IT IS SPRING

In his famous book on the prairie years of Abraham Lincoln, Carl Sandburg has this to say about Illinois weather in the spring:

"On certain March days in Illinois, the sky is a ragbag of whimsies. It may whisper of spring to come with soft slants of sun, while baby pearl-shell clouds dimple and drift, and then let blusters of wind blow up followed with furies of snow, a little sleet, a drizzle of rain, then sunshine again and baby pearl-shell clouds dimpling and drifting."



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That is the sort of weather we have been having in Illinois this spring, all during March and April. On a Sunday in the middle of March, Sonny's birthday, we took a ride 30 miles or so from home and the day was as bright and warm as May. We remembered a day in bleak November when we had gone to town and Ruth had made up a game for us: "How can you tell that it is winter, when you are comfortable in a closed car and don't feel the cold?" We had thought of lots of ways, such as these: "The grass is dead." "There are no leaves on the trees." "The sky is a cold color." "The clouds are winter clouds." "There is a little snow in the furrows." "When we come to a rutty place in the road, the car jolts because the ground is hard and frozen." "The wind beats the trees in a blustering way." "There are no bright colors." So on this March day we played a new game—"How can we tell it is spring?" And these were some of the things we noticed: "The wheat is getting green, you can see it when you look far off through the corn stubble." "The road feels spongy." "The clouds are fluffy." "The sky is blue." "The colors of the sky and clouds are so bright they smack together"—this was Sonny's remark. "The little branches and twigs of the trees used to be clear and sharp against the sky; now they are blurred, because the buds are swelling." "When you look far across the level fields you see clumps of trees turning rosy and russet. It is too early for green, but the pink and red buds are growing. Some of the trees are creamy-pink, and others shade down through various tints to reddish-brown; they are a little like the autumn colors in the timber, but when we compare them with the dry, brown leaves which still cling to the oak trees, we see that the colors are more delicate and more alive."

Thought Winter Over

So we played our spring game and reminded ourselves that the time had come when we would have delightful trips to town again, no more getting toe-aches before we reached home, no more being shut up by the rain and the snow. Soon we will be going to town by the "middle road," through the timber, where we can't go during bad weather. Or, we can choose the "crooked road," or the "pretty road," or the road where Mr. and Mrs. Nobody live in their old weather-beaten house, with all the little No-

body children. (We play that the perennials which still grow in the abandoned yard and nod their pretty heads to us as we go by are the little Nobody children; and we think there must be a hundred in the family.)

But the next day we had a blizzard, with a keen wind blowing and gritty snow drifting, and the next day the sun came out and the snow melted so fast that the ground fairly steamed. Then we had several dreary days of cold, persistent rain, that took spells of freezing or half-freezing as it fell. Just enough sun blessed us to keep up our hopes that spring would finally come.

They say that mountain folk, torn away from their native haunts, hunger and thirst for the mountain country for ever more. I believe the prairie-land people are just as closely bound to their native country. Lonely and monotonous, I have heard it called; but the great valley, the prairie country, shows to its own people a variety not to be equaled by any other spot, binds us to it with a poignant, permanent sense of loyalty and peace.—Hope.

MAY 21, 1928

THE SLIDING SCALE

"The sliding scale" is a term that has different meanings for different minds, but to the modern American mother of a group of stair-step children its most familiar meaning concerns the perpetual changes as they grow; not only the changes in dimensions that keep us constant-



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busy clothing them, but changes and developments in personality. No sooner do we adjust ourselves to one little character than a new trait breaks out in an unexpected place. Hems must be let out, stockings must be bought larger, "baby-D's" must be handed down the line; and along with these physical alterations we must adapt ourselves to the new excrescences of disposition. In infancy there is a more or less regular form of growth. By the time a baby outgrows its first clothes it is ready for rompers; and if it is fed and rested according to Hoyle it gives very little trouble. But after the romper stage every child seems to be a law unto itself, and begins to grow at peculiar rates of speed and in surprising directions.

Ruth used to be little and round, healthy, but a light eater, a little air-fern child. Now she is shooting up as tall and slim as a tiger lily. Every month Miss Lita weighs and measures the pupils, and every month Ruth is elated at her increase in weight, the reward for the strenuous eating and drinking which she has conscientiously done. Then the measuring disclosed that she has grown so much taller that she is still lacking a pound of what she should weigh. On the last weigh day she cried, with tears of exasperation in her eyes, and said that she was going to stop drinking milk; it only made her grow up-and-down and didn't help a bit for sideways.

Wilbert Looked Like Eva

Wilbert used to be plump and fair—blue eyes, yellow hair, apple-blossom



skin. There was a time when we could dress him up for our amateur theatricals with lace and frills and tinsel, and make him look like Little Eva on her way to heaven. But now the apple-blossom skin is overlaid with tan, to say nothing of occasional scratches; the wavy, yellow hair is darkening to a neutral mouse color, and the waves are cut as short and plastered as flat as possible. An amazing number of angles and knuckles and joints are pushing their way through the baby-curves, and Wilbert is fast becoming a rough-and-tumble boy. He has just lost an upper front tooth, too, and I believe it leaves the widest and funniest vacancy that a single tooth ever left. He is beginning to imitate the qualities that seem to him, just now, most manly—a loud, rough voice, a pronounced swing to the shoulders, a stride somewhat too long for his legs, a tread that shakes the house, and so on.

Sonny never more could be made to look like little Eva. From babyhood his face radiated a mischievousness that was contagious. The more we dressed him in dainty costumes, the more his beaming face resembled Huckleberry Finn. He, too, is losing his droll plumpness, and having been promoted to regular boy clothes, including bow-ties and the like, he is following his brother's manly example, with a few additional uncouth touches all his own. In stead of losing his teeth, he is just cutting his six-year molars; as he explained to me, "I'm getting a new tooth in the last room downstairs."

#### Needed New Shoes

The other day it was shoes that had to be bought. Just when we thought everything was settled for the time being, the boys suddenly kicked through their shoes. A disconcerting, off-season time of year for such a happening. But there being nothing else to be done, the shoes were bought, the customary "half-size larger than before." There was the usual ecstatic practicing in the new footwear, and all would have been well if a hard, cold rain had not come in the night. That meant that overshoes must be put on for play and school. But as soon as the children got below-stairs to put them on, a concerted wail arose, "We can't get them on over these new shoes!"

Then was enacted one of those little tableaux with which we are all so familiar—the resourceful American mother rising to an emergency. There stood the three children with the offending overshoes; there were the three uplifted childish faces, marked with worry and dismay, waiting for mother to suggest a way out of the difficulty. "We'll just hand every pair down a step," she decided. "Sonny, lay yours aside for Cousin Davy, and put on Wilbert's. Wilbert, you take Ruth's. And, Ruth, you wear your rubbers."

#### Mother Finds a Way

Sunshine broke through the clouds of doubt on Sonny's countenance like an anthem without words, trying to say, "What a scrumptious mother I have, just like that finding a way out of the hard places!" On went Wilbert's overshoes over Sonny's sturdy feet, gee-up went all the eight buckles, and away went Sonny to play. Ruth accepted the dictum coolly, as it is the obvious duty of a parent to meet these little emergencies. With an indifferent air she donned her rubbers and away she went, swinging her bat.

There sat Wilbert, alone, save for Ruth's overshoes, eyeing them soberly, broodingly. After a moment he rose heavily, removed his coat and cap and stalked into the living room, where he threw himself on the davenport with a definite and decisive flop. "What?

Not going out?" cried his surprised mother. "Nope," sadly but firmly. "Thought you wanted to play ball before school?" "Did. Not now," was the somber answer. "Why, what's the matter? Why don't you bundle up and go on out?" Came the answer, in a determined voice, with all the pathetic dignity of American manhood itself at bay, "I don't like to wear women's things!"—Hope.

5/15/28

## SENATE REDUCES TAX CUT BILL

**Pares \$25,000,000 Off Measure; Gives Relief to Incomes Above \$20,000**

WASHINGTON, May 15.—Reductions in individual surtaxes of the so-called middle brackets were approved by the senate yesterday on the basis of the recommendation of the Republican members of the finance committee. The retroactive feature of the proposal, however, was rejected.

Radical Republicans voted with the regulars in favor of the finance committee surtax rates and in opposition to a substitute scale of rates offered by Senator Simmons (Dem., N. C.) on behalf of the Democratic members of the committee. The radicals bolted when the vote came on making the reductions retroactive on earnings of 1927, on which taxes are paid in 1928.

#### Revenue Loss \$25,000,000

As approved, the reductions will benefit 125,000 taxpayers with incomes above \$20,000 and will be effective on earnings of 1928 on which returns are filed in March, 1929. The annual loss in revenue will be \$25,000,000.

The reduction followed the general line of the recommendation of Secretary of the Treasury Mellon, who has taken the position that taxpayers subject to the middle surtax brackets have not benefited in previous revenue law revisions to the same extent as those with smaller or larger incomes. The bill as passed by the house made no changes in surtax rates.

#### Defeat Democratic Schedule

There were two roll calls during the consideration of surtax rates. The senate, by a vote of 39 to 43, rejected the Simmons amendment embodying the Democratic surtax schedule, which commenced reductions at \$10,000 and ended them at \$70,000. On this vote the Democrats, with the single exception of Senator Bruce (Md.), voted in the affirmative, while the Republicans, both regulars and radicals, and Senator Shipstead (Farm-Labor, Minn.) were recorded in the negative. The senate then approved the finance committee surtax rates without a roll call.

The second roll call came on the committee amendment making the rates retroactive and providing for a refund from the amounts paid and computed as taxes for the present year in March. This amendment was beaten, 28 to 54. The Democrats voted solidly against the amendment and were joined by Senator Shipstead and 13 Republicans.

**Incomes from \$10,000 to \$14,000**  
Under the surtax schedule as approved, present rates of 1 per cent on incomes between \$10,000 and \$14,000, 2 per cent between \$14,000 and \$16,000, 3 per cent between \$16,000 and \$18,000, and 4 per cent between \$18,000 and \$20,000 will continue to apply. The 4 per cent rate is extended to \$21,000, which under the present law is in the 5 per cent bracket applying between \$20,000 and \$22,000.

The proposed new rates from that point are 5 per cent between \$21,000 and \$24,000, 6 per cent between \$24,000 and \$28,000, 7 per cent between \$28,000 and \$32,000, 8 per cent between \$32,000 and \$36,000, 9 per cent between \$36,000 and \$40,000, 10 per cent between \$40,000 and \$46,000, 11 per cent between \$46,000 and \$52,000, 12 per cent between \$52,000 and \$58,000, 14 per cent between \$58,000 and \$64,000, 16 per cent between \$64,000 and \$70,000, 18 per cent between \$70,000 and \$80,000, and 20 per cent above \$80,000.

MAY 28, 1928

THE BUSY S

The roar of the tractor has yielded to the click of the corn planter, and that in turn to the placid, patient plowing of the crop.

A spell of dry weather permitted farmers to get the corn in the ground in record-breaking time, but the persistent wind was drying the ground and blowing the dust so badly that nothing began to grow. Finally two terrific thunderstorms, accompanied with deluges of water, broke the drouth. Clouds and spattering showers held sway for two or three days, and characteristically we turned right-about-face from our complaints of dry weather and wished it would stop raining. "Always wanting what is not." When the sun finally burst forth we could see the faint green rows of corn, where the seed had sprouted, like magic, over night.

From now on we are in the midst of the most satisfying season of the farming year. There is much to do—so much that jobs overlap, so much that every member of the family gets tired, but it is a "happy tired." There is visible progress every day. Gone are the long winter evenings filled with neighborhood parties, community meetings and social gatherings. What is left of the evening nowadays is most happily spent, wordlessly, sprawled on the lawn, enjoying the first cool breezes of the night. The day begins early, and from the breakfast table the family scatters, each member to his definite, particular job.

The inspiring thing about farm work at this time of year is that every person's contribution is very obviously valuable. The fields lie like an open book, and every man makes his mark, for good or ill. Good work will show up for every passerby to judge; slighted work will be even more evident. Work is rushing, but unlike mechanical work, it can not be pushed to the nerve-racking point. There is, in spite of everything man can do, a rhythm, an order and a dignity about the progress of the season that is satisfying. When the men scatter to the fields the housewife is left with



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A BIG BOY COME!

the feeling that she, too, is an integral part of the plant. For if she does not gather up the scattering tag-ends of work the field work can not go on uninterrupted. She has the long days to fill with housework, cooking, gardening, tending chickens, getting the children off to school—to say nothing of washing, ironing and mending the clothes for the comfort of the workers.

School Will Be Out Soon

In a few days school will be out, and the chore of helping the children clean up and pack their lunches will be changed to that of finding fresh things for them to do. The school picnic must be arranged to round out the term in a blaze of glory. The men will so begrudge the time that, if they come at all, they will drop in for dinner in their field clothes, and pretending to be in a terrible rush, they will linger an extra hour or so, visiting and laughing with the crowd. Then will come graduation and everybody goes to that, whether they have children or not. We always pack the house for that. A group of half a dozen one-room schools will combine their exercises, and all the children, big and little, will be on the program before the graduates take their places in a stiff row to receive their prized diplomas from the county superintendent.

We will be late starting, we always are, for the full day in the field must be finished out in spite of everything. We will be late getting through, for the program always turns out to be too long, and we can't leave anything out. We will all get up yawning the next morning, and some of us may be peevish from lack of rest; but what matter if we have made graduation important to our young folks? In these simple little schools we do not give our children much of the fold-out that larger schools can supply, but we can at least give them an unstinted ovation on graduation night. That time is just as important to each of them as Lindbergh's home-coming was to him.

After these affairs are taken care of there will be stretching ahead of us the long, sweet summer; crops will be growing by leaps and bounds, alfalfa hay must be made, and as soon as the corn is laid by (about the Fourth, when we will take a little time out for a picnic of fried chicken), we will watch for the first change of color in the grain. Before we know it harvest time will be upon us—the turn of the season. When the grain is in the shock and there are more golden fields to be seen than green, we always have a little wistful feeling, for the end of summer is not far off. We fill the days with canning and cooking, with picnicking and a wee bit of vacation—and then we must get the children ready for another school year. And so it goes! Neither beginning nor end.—Hope.

MEMORY GEM

'Twas a brown little, plain little,  
thin little book;  
In passing you hardly would give  
it a look;  
But the children all loved it, "because,"  
they all cried,  
"It's full of nice stories, it's lovely  
inside."

'Twas a brown little, plain little,  
thin little girl;  
Her nose was a failure, her hair  
wouldn't curl;  
But the children all loved her,  
"because," they all cried,  
"She is so kind, and so bright, and  
so lovely inside."

—Selected.

A new era has begun in our family life. A Big Boy entered school this fall. You may not realize what a change that brings to a simple family. It has taken our boys a long stride from babyhood toward manhood. This young Lochinvar came out of the east instead of the west; came from a famous training school for boys; came out of a manly atmosphere of big boys and little boys, glamorous with experience and adventure.



Hope Needham

Time was when Ruth and the boys and I idled through happy childish days together, enjoying our turtle place adventures, watching our butcher bird and barn swallow families grow up and fly away, taking the strange crooked road to town, making up stories about the abandoned farmsteads and the lonely gnarled trees that lay on the way. Gone are those foolish days! Ruth and I are quietly relegated to a back seat. Talk now is large and boastful. It deals with tales of prowess in manly sports, with the fine points of boxing and wrestling, with air rifles and other grewsome firearms.

I am being taught the half-forgotten skills of childhood; how to play mumble-dy-peg by flipping a knife in certain prescribed ways; how to tie a knot in a whip so that it will crack; how to snap my fingers; how to make a slingshot. Really, I had forgotten what a difficult technique is concerned in that simple boyish weapon! A year or so ago I made some slingshots for the boys. Woman-like, I had forgotten all the important points. I took any old forked stick, tied some strings and rubber bands to it, and called it a sling-shot. Now I have been properly instructed, and I doubt if I ever forget again. The stick must be a sturdy one of green wood, with the fork at just a certain angle. The bark must be thoroughly peeled off and the surface whittled satin-creamy smooth. Grooves must be cut just so far from the ends, and the rubber tied on securely. A leather pocket for the shot must be accurately cut and firmly tied. Then the same sling-shot must be persistently used, being rebuilt when necessary, until the smoothly-whittled wood loses its new look and acquires the satin finish of an antique—the grimmer the more valuable. Only when it reaches this stage is it a sling-shot worthy to stand among men.

Not a Painful One

I have been told that there are painful interludes in family life when the children reach successive phases of growing up and growing away. This is not a painful one, certainly; only interesting, enlightening, and, in its way, amusing. The boys seem to assume calmly that there comes a time in any fellow's life when good old mother is practically no use to him. And as for me, it is a relief, not a tragedy, to sit passive and be told things instead of having to rack my brain for some new and interesting things to do.

Of course, it puts Ruth's nose rather out of joint and she finds herself in

need of a little adjusting. As she has progressed from the youngest to the oldest in our little school, she has come to be, in quite a natural way, the little dictator and manager. It is true that she has been a benevolent despot, but she held her office simply because there was no competition. Now that this young adventurer has arrived she finds herself dispossessed without even a revolution. It is a bitter dose, but a salutary one. If she wins back her place it must be by sheer merit and superiority. If she does not, she must learn to take place in this little society that she can rightfully maintain.

All the girls are a trifle disgruntled, as a matter of fact. The boys outnumber them two to one, and what time they rest from wrestling, lassoing and playing football they spend in discussing hunting, Tom Mix, Jack Dempsey and such affairs. Occasionally they condescend to let the girls in the baseball games. That condescension is almost unbearable, as our girls until now have played as sturdily with the boys as little Amazons, asking neither fear nor favor. It is galling to these little ladies to be told that "girls are not strong enough" for the other games; but that is the verdict of the world-at-large brought in by this Big Boy who knows. When the girls are not needed to fill in a team the boys forget them entirely, coolly, as men will. What is there for them to do but what most modern women have done—seek other resources and means of independence?

Must Play 'Em Right

Even the rules of our games have been changed. Ruth remarked plaintively one day, "It seems strange that we have to change everything just because Franklin is here. Most of our games were either made up to fit our bunch or the rules were changed so the little ones could play. But now he insists that we have to play real rules in everything." And I found out that the old scrub baseball rules that prevail in many small rural schools are not good enough for a man of the world; they must be abandoned in favor of the big league methods. Our little bases, so conveniently close together that even we stiff-muscled mothers could make a home run occasionally, on picnic day, had to be spread farther apart. Our two pitcher boxes, one for the big ones and one for the little, was entirely out of order. We were just provincial enough not to know better; now we have one official pitcher's box, and if you are too little for that distance, that is your, own fault, and nothing can be done about it except to be philosophical and a good sport and patient until you grow to fit.

Not a bad experience at all for the children just at this time. It may be that Franklin is misinformed on some points; it may be that he is unreasonable and arbitrary; but the fact remains that he comes from a larger world of give-and-take than our little group has known. It is time they learned that one can't go through life remodeling rules to suit himself and his group. It is time they learned to accept the larger rules, and if that makes the game a bit harder, so much the more honor if they can play through and win.

Yes, we have come to a new era in our lives when the Big Boy from Outside comes to school.—Hope.



1929-1932



Address Hope Needham, Household Editor, Drivers Journal. Use one side of paper only. Real name and address must be given, but will not be printed if not desired.

JANUARY 1, 1929

CHRISTMAS EVE AT HOPE'S HOUSE

It is Christmas eve. "Not a creature is stirring, not even a mouse." The children are all tucked away in bed—

no trouble at all to get them to go to bed early tonight! Their stockings are hung from the mantel, the three sizes suggestive of the three bears—large, middle-sized and small. And Santa must have been here already, for in each stocking is an orange and some candy and nuts, and piled about three deep all around the fireplace are packages of all sorts and kinds and shapes tied up with red and green cord and tagged for the various members of the family.

On the mantel is a great assortment of Christmas cards that have been coming for a week or so, reminding us of friends and relatives scattered all the way from New York to California. Yes, this is Christmas eve, and tomorrow is the goal toward which the children have been counting the days for a month or more.

But in all the exuberance of the Christmas season there is one note of sadness. Mother is sick. Yes, she has the flu. Until she came down with it we were one of the few families in the neighborhood that had escaped. But Saturday she went to town to do the last of the Christmas shopping. Daddy should have gone with her to help, but it was such a nice day, and he stayed at home to grind some feed for the cows. And mother got all tired out in the dense throng of Christmas shoppers, and that night she coughed



Hope Needham

and coughed, and the next morning was still tired and "achy," and stayed in bed.

Must Stay in Bed

The main thing for flu patients to do is stay in bed, so that's where we are going to keep mother until it is perfectly safe for her to get up. And so, for this week, the rest of the family is going to try to "pinch hit" for mother, and if the editor doesn't blue pencil all of our stuff, maybe you'll have first hand acquaintance with the rest of Hope's family. And perhaps, if we can sneak it away without Hope suspecting, we will tell you some things about Hope that she has never told you herself.

Isn't it true that we never really appreciate mother until she is sick and unable to wait on us? When father is down and out for a day or two he just stays in bed, mother waits on him, the hired man or the boys or a neighbor milks the cows and feeds the stock, and there is scarcely a ripple to disturb the ordinary routine of the household. When some of the children get sick they are just put to bed out of the way and mother takes care of them and gets the meals for the rest of us just as usual, and, except for one less face at the table, it would hardly be noticed that anything is wrong.

But when mother has to stay in bed, oh, boy! that's different. It seems so terrifying to have her unable even to wait on herself, let alone taking care of all the rest of us. Daddy fumbles around trying to make things comfortable for her, but the hands that are used to the pitchfork and scoop shovel make a sorry attempt at making a bed or fixing an attractive tray for a sick person. The boys wander around the house as if lost, for they are forbidden to bother mother with their little hurts and troubles. And even sister, who is usually so confident when she has mother to lean on, seems baffled now

by simple household problems. Everything about the house gets out of place because mother's touch is missing. The very atmosphere seems to tell even an outsider that something is the matter here. Oh! if mother would only get well! Perhaps after all mother will benefit by an occasional sick spell, if in that way the family will come to appreciate more nearly what she means to them all.

When you read this it will be a new year. I found a poem today that expresses such a fine thought for this season that I am going to pass it on to you.—Hope's Husband.

A Christmas Wish

If Life had not, with all its years of rich experience,  
Brought me full knowledge of the light and dark;  
If I knew not that merriment and gaiety are but  
The lighter fabric out of which we weave  
The tapestry of Life, I should, I doubt not,  
Wish you unflinching joy. I'd say:

"May yours be an unshadowed future.  
May joy  
Be all your portion. Your Christmases,  
I would,  
Through all the years were gay and glad,  
Your entire days felicitous and free."  
But this I cannot, knowing life, forehope.

I only pray that you may be strong,  
So sure of foot, so pure of heart, that  
naught of ill

Can harm or buffet you. I can assure you  
From my own full life, that all of life is good;  
That disappointment often hides a richer gift  
Than we had prayed for. That hope deferred,  
Though the heart sicken, if persistently employed,  
May win from life the hungered treasure, after all.

I can assure you that dreams do come true. That friends  
Are traveling toward us, as even we toward them;  
That deprivation and withheld desires all serve  
Their purpose, leaving one who is not weak,  
But resolute to fight, the stronger for the fray.

I wish you strength and high resolve,  
Big purpose and a worthy aim,  
A heart of love and tender sympathy;  
And, having this, I feel assured  
That Life will bring you all you claim.  
—Author Unknown.



JANUARY 2, 1929

THE PATIENT SEEMS NO WORSE

Good-morning, folks! First you will want to know how Hope is feeling, and I can tell you that she seems no worse, and now is mostly comfortable, but far from fit to leave her bed.

So many of you have written to Hope that you like to hear about her family, so this week that is probably what you will hear for the most part. Those of you who have questions to be answered privately or through the Household will have to wait just a few days until Hope is able to be back with you.



Hope Needham

This is Christmas day, and surely a more beautiful one was never seen. Not the old-fashioned white Christmas, to be sure, but so sunny and mild and pleasant that one could almost imagine himself in California or Florida. We had looked forward to this day as the first Christmas for several years when we would have just our own family at home. For the hired man had gone to visit in a neighboring state and the hired girl had gone to her home in town until after Christmas, and it was going to be so pleasant for us. Well, we are here alone, to be sure, but we hadn't counted on mother being in bed.

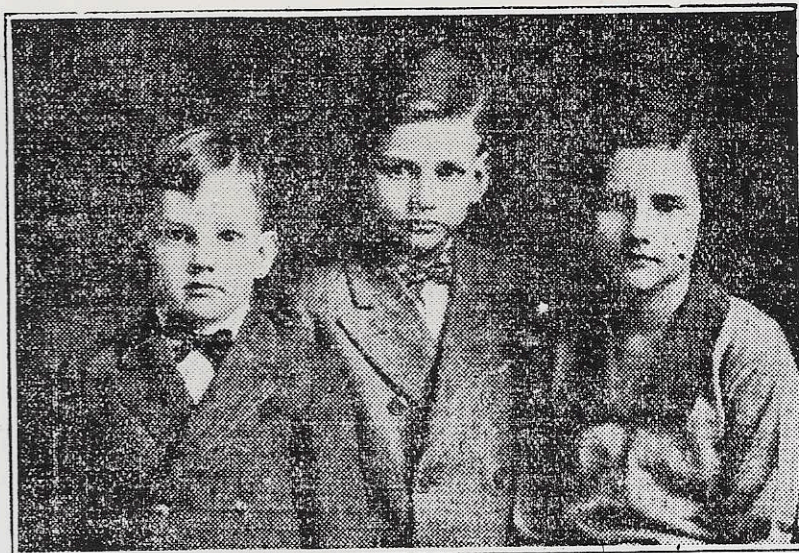
Santa Worked Hard

There is no sickness among the younger members of the family, however, and they are realizing all their fondest hopes, and more. For when children have two pairs of grandparents and half a dozen aunts and uncles who see them often enough to be really considered as members of the family, to say nothing of great aunts and uncles and cousins of varying degrees scattered here and there, it is not surprising if Santa Claus makes several trips into their stock of presents as complete.

I can't begin to enumerate or even remember all the things the little folks get for Christmas. I don't know that I have even seen all of them yet. For by the time I was back in the house after milking, all three "offsprings" were up and dressed and had gone through the whole pile of packages, scattering paper and cord, knee deep over the living room floor, and each one gathering his or her presents in one particular pile where they could feast their little, gluttonous eyes on them. And when I opened the outside door the whole trio burst out at once with: "See what I got!" And then all started to talk at once and show me all the things at the same time, and I haven't yet entirely recovered from the dizzy whirl and suspect that I "don't know the half of it" even yet.

The one thing that Sonny wanted, so he had said, was a football. So strangely enough, Santa, being the good mind-reader that he is, brought him one, and tomorrow, when Sonny rades off to school he will lug with him his new pigskin and no doubt start training to be quarterback at Maple Grove. Wilbert, some weeks ago, had been insistent on getting a gun for Christmas; but I have heard that Santa Claus does not recommend

HOPE'S THREE



Here is another surprise for Hope! This picture of her children was sent in by her without thought of its being published. But we guessed that Hope's readers would be very much interested in seeing Hope's children. So here they are. On the left, Ernest Vail, 6; in the center, Wilbert Needham, 8, and on the right, Margaret Ruth, 11. A family to be proud of!

guns very strongly for 8-year-olds. Anyway the fever had died down before Christmas came, and he thinks now the games and books and puzzles that came for him are just as good. And mother thinks they are a lot better. Ruth, the little philosopher, had not expressed any desire for Christmas, because, as she said, "it is nicer to have the things come as a complete surprise." So she, too, was very, very happy with the bits of feminine finery that constitute a large part of her Christmas things. And that reminds me that our little girl is fast growing up, for she is coming to pay attention to the little things to wear that are "in style."

Sonny Is Satisfied

Altogether it surely is a great day for the children. When Hope told Sonny this morning how sorry she was that she couldn't get a nice Christmas dinner for all of us, he said: "My goodness! With all these presents to play with we don't need any Christmas dinner. And no doubt they, and all of us, will be better off tomorrow for not having gorged ourselves today."

Really the kids would be better off, in a way, if they didn't get so many things for Christmas. So many games and toys and trinkets there are that they can't appreciate all of them, and don't even remember who gave them. And after a few days they will concentrate on two or three of the most interesting things (perhaps the simplest and least expensive in the whole lot), and the rest will be forgotten until they occasionally stumble over them by chance. When there are so many kids in the world that Santa Claus doesn't find at all, who would be overjoyed with just one little simple gift, it does seem almost a sin for some children to get so many things.

Our children could be just as well satisfied with the little treat their teacher gave them at school and a simple gift or two from mother and daddy and a little remembrance from each one of them to the others. And I believe they would come nearer to an appreciation of the true spirit of Christmas, which is "giving," not "getting." But what to do! We can't help it that they have fond grandparents and aunts and uncles and cousins, and

each one of them wants to do something for all the little ones, until the cumulative result is a sort of super-saturated solution of Christmas gifts. Well, in a few years they will be past the age for toys and trinkets, and we can only hope that they will then be as generous with others as folks are with them now.—Hope's Husband.

JANUARY 7, 1929

STATISTICS

A farm woman once wrote: "In the 30 years of my married life I have served 235,425 meals, made 33,190 loaves

of bread, 5,930 cakes and 7,960 pies. I have canned 1,550 cans of fruit, raised 7,660 chicks, churned 5,450 pounds of butter, put in 36,461 hours at sweeping, washing and scrubbing. I estimate the worth of my labor conservatively at \$115,485.50, none of which I have ever collected. But I still love my husband and children and wouldn't mind starting in all over again for them."



Hope Needham

At the risk of reopening a subject that has been resting in peace for some time, I think today I will pass on a few observations about the hired man proposition that drew a good deal of attention some months past. In doing this I do not mean to take sides either with those who would place a halo over the hired man's head, or those who think he is an unmix'd evil that has to be tolerated. I am merely going to state some experiences and facts.

To begin with, you may or not be surprised to know that Hope was not a farm-bred girl. As far as I know, she was never on a farm until she



came to visit me after we were engaged. I tell this because to me it makes all the more remarkable her keen insight into farm home problems, which I know from your letters you appreciate deeply, and her quick adaptation to farm life.

#### Branched Out

We have been married something over 12 years. During the first four years we farmed on quite a small scale and did not have much hired help. But during most of the last eight years we have been farming more land, and in addition have been keeping a herd of dairy cows and handling from 20 to 40 gallons of milk daily. It goes without saying, then, that during the past eight years we have had hired help practically all of the time, winter and summer, and frequently have had two men for several weeks at a time. We do not have any place to keep a married man and family, so all of the time have had the men living with us as part of the family.

During these eight years our two boys were born, just 14 months apart. During this time also our house burned down, and, while we had a good place to live while we built a new one, those who have been through such an experience know that it means a very great deal of extra work to move into a new house before it is finished, and clean it and finish it and make it livable. Our house is not yet equipped with running water, although we expect to have it so before spring. We had to drill a new well to get a reliable supply of water for use in this way. For a part of the time mentioned, but not nearly all of it, Hope has had help in the house. And for the past three and a half years she has been meeting you all through the Household.

#### The Various Men

So much for the background of my observations. We have had all kinds of men during these years. There was a faithful Hollander who had worked for my father for six years. There were two young agricultural college students out on the farm for experience and practical training. There were good, hard-working fellows who had never done anything but farm, and never intended to. There was an ambitious boy who had dreams of going to college to study electrical engineering. There was a middle aged widower who owned a farm in another state, and just worked to keep himself busy. There was an ex-convict from still another state who had served a year's time for bootlegging. And a father of 10 just out of the county jail, where he had been held six weeks for vagrancy. An ex-soldier from the Philippines; a rolling stone who had been in every state of the Union except two, he said; a subnormal boy with a body of 16 and a mind of 8 years, and so on. What a collection they would make if we could have them all together!

Now, any woman who has had to put up with such a collection of strangers in the home must long to be rid of such cares and duties, and must often feel secretly, if not openly, rebellious against it. And from your letters I know that is the way a lot of you feel. But I want to say that never in all this time has Hope uttered a word of complaint or fault-finding with the arrangement. We have felt sometimes that we would like to build a small house for the use of a married man, and so not have the help to keep in the family, but building costs are high and we have always concluded that we would rather use the money in some other way.

#### Kept Busy

We don't go away from home very

much. Of course the cows and the hired help would make that certain. But we don't care to go away very much. We are busy most of the time, and when night comes we are tired and ready to sleep. One of us (but I won't say who) usually falls asleep in his chair soon after supper is over. We are contented to be busy and tied down pretty close to home, because we are working toward an ideal, we are satisfied that we are going in the right direction, and we can see that we are making some progress. And I believe that is the main thing needed to make people contented with their lot. If we could see no further than the humdrum daily routine of farm life, I am sure that we could not endure the hired help in the house with us, or even endure to stay on the farm ourselves. But we believe in agriculture. We feel sure that it will some time come into its own, and we are willing to do our part day by day now as we go along to make this possible.

Just one other thought about this hired man question. Many people object to having them in the home on account of their influence on the children. I think probably that is the most serious consideration. For that reason we have always had that in mind in hiring men, and have kept some men that could not turn out as much as others because we thought their influence in the home was better. But among all this assortment of characters that we have had with us I think we have never had one who influenced our children toward bad habits. I think if the parents exercise the proper control over the children and teach them proper habits by example, and show the hired men in a reasonable way that they want good influences around the children, in most cases there will be no trouble in that way. At least we have had none, and I know of no reason why we should be the exception in that regard.

So now I have told my story. I don't want to call forth an avalanche of argument on this question, or an avalanche of wrath on my head but I wanted the Household readers to know this story, and I knew the only way to get it to them would be to do it behind Hope's back, so to speak. I

think Hope will be with you again soon.—Hope's Husband.

JANUARY 15, 1929

#### THE NEW LEAF

The children are just off to school, on a morning 8 below zero, with snow and ice on the ground and a brilliant sun overhead. They are wrapped so well that Sonny remarked as he left that he felt "nice and buncy." Now that we have watched them start running and sliding down the road, the rest of us can settle down to work.

Yes, even I myself am able to begin to work, though I must say that I have very little strength and ambition as yet. Probably many of you can appreciate how slow the return after this treacherous flu. One reads occasionally biographies of indomitable spirits who, in the face of ill health and continuous suffering, maintain their brave spirits and work industriously. In the prime



Hope Needham

of health I assumed that I, too, would be one of those vallant souls, unconquerable and gallant; but no! When illness approaches, I bowl over like a wooden tenpin and have no more zest in life than though I were one.

Looking back over the year, ever since spring, when we "enjoyed the whooping cough," it seems that every time I rallied from one ailment, Fate biffed me over with another. In August I went to camp with the women of our county and the one adjoining and came home prepared to make you all envious with tales of the good times we had, but I have scarcely had a well day since (don't think that is the fault of camping!), and never once have I felt the inspiration to tell the story and do it justice.

#### It Was Too Much

When the birthday package arrived, so lovingly assembled and packed by "Pep" and "Polly," I was flat on my back in bed; and my reaction was a flood of weak tears as a tribute to the world of friendliness that exists among our folks. Of course I wanted to express my appreciation, but of all the many ways I tried to frame it into words, none seemed adequate. Time after time, as some holiday approached, I would think, "Now is the time for a spirited come-back; now is the time to tell them how much their kindness means to me"—and time after time Fate would lay me out with some trivial but ambition-sapping trouble. So now I am trying as fast as I can to get off personal notes to all those dear friends who helped to make this birthday unique—and let these few words here be the public acknowledgment of a much deeper gratitude than I am able to express.

When Christmas approached, and I saw that I would have to spend the Big Day in bed, I was, of course, very despondent; and when I get despondent, I believe I could carry off the prize for the depth and breadth of my pessimism. However, when the day actually arrived, and the children were so helpful and uncomplaining about the situation, and Jim assured me that I needn't worry about the Household, as he would take care of everything—and the day was so bright and I felt so much better—things weren't half so bad as I had forecast. By the way, I haven't yet read what he used for the department while I was sick, but as soon as I get this message off to all of you I'm going to relax and read every word of it.

Now that I am back at the typewriter, I must confess that I begin to feel the faint stirrings of interest and ambition, and for the first time realize that I am not a permanent invalid (it doesn't run in the family). So here's belated New Year greetings to you, every one, from a heart that is almost cheerful once again!

#### To the Word

The poem selected for the memory gem today expresses my approach to the New Year very completely. It seems that for an appalling number of years I have looked back over a disappointing twelve-month, and asking for a new leaf, have started with tremendous courage, only to wind up far short of expectations, with nothing but a blotted page to show. I have decided that it is hopeless to expect much improvement; and instead of a batch of new resolutions, I am making only one: to use good resolutions throughout the year like a patent medicine, "shake well and take as needed." My progress toward perfection will not be a sudden blaze of glory, I am convinced, but a long-continued "inchin' along to Jesus."

During these months when I have failed so often to write anything for the column, having to content myself



with handling the clerical part of the work and filling the space mainly with contributions from all of you, it has often occurred to me that there, is nowhere else a department which could so successfully have "run itself," been so heaped with friendly, chatty, generous, neighborly letters and helpful ideas passed along in fellowship. For all the help you have been to me, in every way, I thank you, every one. Happy New Year!—Hope.

#### Praises Hope's Husband

Dear Hope and All: So many times I've wanted to write to the Household of late, but I haven't stopped long enough to put my thoughts on paper until now. I read of Hope's illness and I concluded I'd wait no longer. I surely hope by this time she is well and strong again, with no ill effects of the dreadful flu.

Now, I do want to say a few words in praise of Hope's husband. Not that I was glad she wasn't able to attend to her duties, but don't you sisters agree with me when I say if she had been able to we should not have had his good letters of their Christmas at home. If there is anything I thoroughly enjoyed it is such letters as he so aptly has written. I love to see into other folks' homes—seems we have a better understanding.

"Cimmeraria," your letters are so inspirational; how do you do so much, with so many little folks? "Ruth Vernon, will we have a New Year's letter from you? There are so many sisters who write such helpful things to our daily column that I simply couldn't miss a single copy.

I am planning to crochet worn clothing into rugs. Do they give satisfaction? I have never made any before. Am planning also to do some spring sewing these cold months. I also enjoy the flower talks and suggestions, but, as my strength does not permit, I cannot spend much time with them.

Will close wishing each and all a happy new year. As I have a birthday soon, I'll call this my birthday letter.—Henrietta Marie.

FEBRUARY 6, 1929

#### SOLVING HIRED HELP PROBLEM

The question of whether or not we like to keep hired help in the home was pretty well threshed out last fall,

leaving most of us of the opinion we had when the discussion started—that might not be an ideal arrangement, but that many of us submitted to it, willingly or unwillingly, because there seemed to be no better plan.

When "Hope's Husband" said his say on the hired-man question, a husband from Iowa, a little more practical than some of the others, came forward with a letter making definite suggestions for providing a tenant house. I saved his letter and a copy of Jim's reply to it, for it seemed to me a good beginning for a discussion which might lead to more definite results than the first one. These two men each suggest a plan for a tenant house—one a very modest plan, the other more substantial. What do you think of



Hope Needham

these plans? Can you suggest a better one?

The men who are interested might contribute ideas on cost and construction, while the women might suggest interior arrangements looking toward compactness and convenience. How small and how cheap a house can we build for tenants that will be satisfactory? It is mainly the cost that keeps more farmers from building. As soon as I can, I hope to get from my brother a description of the "shack" which he and his wife built on their claim in South Dakota a few years ago. I never saw it, but in the snapshots it appears to be a delightful home. It was a very small and simple little shingle-sided bungalow; but they were very comfortable and happy there, and devised many a clever makeshift to save space without sacrificing comfort and attractiveness. What they did might be duplicated in tenant houses for Corn Belt farms.

#### Letter to Hope's Husband

As I got up at 2 a. m. to fix the fire I decided to write you a few lines as I see your troubles are a good bit as ours.

To begin with, I will introduce my wife and myself. My wife grew up on a large farm where they had to do for hired help and she knows how. She had been a whirlwind when it comes to getting things done but her heart developed a leak and she didn't feel well last summer and fall, but is better now, as we haven't had a hand in the home for about six weeks and she is taking medicine. She has usually had some help in rush seasons but it is hard to get help to stay on the farm. She has a high school education and has been very active in farm bureau work, also church, missionary and W. C. T. U.

I think there is a general revolt among the more educated farm women in regard to boarding the help and I don't blame them much if they have a husband and children to do for. As for myself, I partly grew up in town but the love for the horse and farm has made a farmer of me. The tractor is sharing honors now with the horses, as it is more efficient in the hands of most young men. I worked on this farm for ten years and I have now run it on a 50-50 basis for ten years.

The people I worked for were and are yet pretty much of a mother and father to me, but I never felt at home in their home. I had an unusual job, as I was allowed to accumulate 20 head of good cattle and horses. We operate on 700 acres of land, keep one married man the year around, one single man nine months or more, and in rush seasons as high as five. The extras are hired by the day.

#### The General Wage

Married men work here for \$600 per year and a few trimmings. Single men get \$50 per month and won't shuck corn except for big money by the bushel. What I want to get at is this. Plenty couples are getting married with nothing but a car. It seems to me that we farmers, even renters, could build small buildings, say, 8 by 16, with a partition, line with wall board, then paper. The cupboard could be hung over the oil stove as we have one for pots and pans. We also have a round table which folds until it is only about a foot wide and we use it in the kitchen to eat off of since we haven't a hand in the home. Such a building as I have in mind could be moved easily and used for other purposes if one wanted to.

It could be placed where there was shade and water not too far distant and I believe many a couple would

rather start in a place like that than in town or live in some old shack with lots of rooms. My wife says you and your wife are educated and influential. If you think this idea will make anyone happier, plan interior arrangements and publish it in the paper. Farms are getting larger and it seems that some way ought to be worked out to save the youth of such women as yours and mine.

It doesn't hurt anyone to work, but it is that little extra that they can't get done that plays the mischief.—An Iowa Husband.

#### His Reply

Your very interesting letter was passed on to me by Hope, and I have read it and thought about it a good deal since. I quite agree with you that the plan of keeping the hired help in the house with the family is not the most pleasant arrangement, and in many cases it is practically out of the question. Any other arrangement that can be made is better than having the wife and mother break down her health by caring for hired help in addition to her regular family. Personally, I have always hoped that it would not be long until we could make other arrangements in our home, but somehow that time has never come.

I was much interested in your suggestion that farmers build small movable houses for the hired men to live in. The material for a house 8 by 16 feet with a partition in it would cost approximately \$200. The farmer could do very much of the work himself, so the total money outlay need not be much more than that amount. It looks as though such a building would be within the reach of most any farmer who used hired help regularly, and it is possible that this would be a good way to solve the help problem in many cases.

Personally, I believe I should hesitate a good bit about asking a man to make a home in a house of that size. A building 8 by 16 feet would be just a nice size brooder house for about 300 little chicks. It would be just about right for a home for two sows with litters. It would be less than half the size of an ordinary box car. Of course there are families living in worse places, and no doubt many men could be found who would be glad to have as good a place as this for their family, but I don't feel like encouraging such a condition.

#### Condition of Affairs

I have always felt that if and when I built a house for hired men, I would build it as substantial and comfortable and convenient as my means would allow. It is true, as you said, that many men are getting married with no other possession than a car, and not only that, but many men have been married for several years and have good-sized families and still have no property other than a car. Very likely the car is not paid for. A generation ago when a man married and started to raise a family, his ambition was to provide a comfortable home for them. But today this idea is rapidly going out of date. I heard a prominent business man in our town say recently that he would rather have a nice car than a good home any time. This is an unhealthy condition of affairs.

Henry Ford provoked a great deal of comment in the industrial world when he set certain requirements for his employes in regard to their homes and their standards of living. And his system worked. By requiring his workmen to maintain certain standards of living he made them better



March 15, 1929

TENANT HOUSES

workmen and better citizens. While I would not care to dictate to a hired man how he should spend his wages, I think if I provided a house for a married man I should like for it to be a comfortable, convenient and reasonably attractive house, and I should insist particularly on his taking care of it. I believe such men can be found who would take pride in having and caring for such a home, and I believe they would be more loyal and conscientious farm hands than the fellows who neither have nor care for anything but a car.

The house that I would build for such use would be preferably a four-room house. In many instances three rooms would do, but many very good hands have too much of a family to accommodate in one bedroom. One room could serve for kitchen and dining room, leaving one for a living room and two bedrooms. This four-room house would be a plain, rectangular building about 16 by 30 feet, one story in height, with no fancy decorations or cut-up corners about it to add to the expense. I would have a basement under the house, for that adds to the comfort and convenience and gives a lot of room at a small cost. Our own house is of frame construction covered with stucco, and I would build the tenant house the same way. The first cost is but little more than good siding, and it is more durable, and the painting bills are negligible on such a house. A good grade of composition shingles would be used on the roof. Plaster board partitions would be much cheaper than lath and plaster, and just as good, I think. I forgot to say that the basement walls and floor would be of concrete, as I could do that part myself.

Would Cost About \$700

The material for such a house in this locality would cost about \$700. If a three-room house would be sufficient, it could be built about 16 by 24 feet, and the material cost would be from \$100 to \$150 less. We know from experience that much of the work on such a house can be done by a farmer and his regular help, and so I think the cash outlay for the four-room house need not be more than \$1,000 or \$1,100.

This house would be an easy one to heat with a pipeless furnace, so I would install such a furnace. They can be purchased very reasonably. If we had running water in our own house I would pipe it also to the tenant house. It would not cost much to do that, and I think the kind of man I would get in this house would be reasonably careful about using the water. I should insist on his being so.

Now to some this may seem like a pipe dream, but I believe it will work. Some people say you can't get men who will appreciate and take care of a good house, but I hope some day to try it out. The Golden Rule still works if it is given a chance. Until I find out differently through bitter experience, I shall go on thinking that a good, substantial, comfortable and convenient tenant house will pay financial dividends to the man who makes a practice of hiring farm help, and who finds it impracticable to keep them in his home.

But Hope just looked over my shoulder and asked what I was planning to build. When I showed her the figures and told her what it was all about, she said, "Well, if I had that much money to spend, I'd rather spend it on improvements for our own house and go on boarding the hired help." So there you are.—Hope's Husband.

"Iowa Husband" and "Hope's Husband" started a mighty interesting discussion when they undertook to relieve us housewives of the chore of caring for the hired man. The letters are so many and interesting that I wish we could publish them all, but, space forbidding, we have grouped some of them for today and will try to find space for more later. It has been necessary to shorten the letters considerably in order to make room for the best suggestions. I wish we could publish some sketches of floor plans, and perhaps a little later we can do so.



Hope Needham

Let's begin with my sister's description of the little shack on my brother's claim in South Dakota:

"It was cozy until winter came, and it would have done very well if we hadn't had Davy to wash for. The shack was built of light lumber, with shingles stained green. It consisted of one room with a tiny kitchenette joined by a cute little service window. There were shelves on the garage side of the kitchenette for pans, kettles, supplies, etc. Coal was stored in the garage and put into the kitchen by a little chute. Out there we bought coal by the hundredweight in bags. There was an elevated drip shelf or water cooler arrangement just outside the kitchen, connected through the wall so that the faucet was handy inside the kitchen. You know out there everybody had icehouses (about as big as a coal shed), and would fill them after the winter freezes to last all summer. The ditch water was so hard and apt to be unpalatable, so chunks of ice were melted for drinking water.

"In the big room, close to the little arched service window, was a service board with a drawer four or five inches deep for silver, etc., and under this we shoved our little leaf table. The "sideboard" was about 14 inches wide, and the table was one with a 12-inch center section and 14-inch drop leaves, so it made a nice size table for us when open.

Garage a Lean-To

"The garage was a lean-to. We made a doorway closet between garage and living room, put a pole up and hung our coats and heavy things there. It jutted into the room about six inches, door linter was about eight inches, and four feet wide, and projected also into garage about six inches, so the space was sufficient. Above this door we had space to put hats and so on clear to the ceiling; built little doors to open there. Closet and storage space were, of course, in demand. In one corner we had a little curtained closet, rather shallow, but reaching from floor to ceiling, with a shelf above head height and space to hang clothes below. Along the garage walls were all sorts of convenient shelves and hooks for putting magazines, paint, nails, wire, etc. And at the back of garage was a lumber rack which was so spaced it could be used as an overflow bedroom or bunk space in emergency.

"Off the kitchenette the door led to a tiny porch, and here was the cutest little drop-shelf table and bench on either side, for evening and breakfast meals in summer and fall. The porch was screened in, for mosquitoes were bad.

"The whole cottage was probably no more than 12 by 15, garage in addition about the same size. The kitchen was just big enough to have a four-lid low coal stove and a little two-hole kerosene stove side by side, with just room for one to stand between service window and stoves. Dishpan hung below service window. I would not recommend so small a place (without basement) for a couple with even one child. It was hard to keep things in shape and have space to walk through even in ideal weather; and in bad weather it was worse. Of course, we didn't have sink, running water or pump. We got water from the town water tank or from the irrigation ditch. It might be that such a house, or, say, one with two rooms, with a sink and water, would be so much better than the other inconveniences would seem little. I think the permanent house would pay better returns in satisfaction.—Your loving sister, Margi."

April 29, 1929

"LITTLE SISTER" HAS ARRIVED

"Little Sister," whose coming we awaited all these years; "Little Sister," who was to be a companion for Margie Ruth, in spite of 11 years difference in their ages; "Little Sister," who was to round out our mixed quartet, has arrived gloriously safe and sound. It happened at half past eleven Saturday night, April 20, 1929, at St. Mary's hospital, 10 miles from home. A nine-pound baby, black haired, black eyed, pointed chin and fat cheeks—very much resembling Ruth.



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The only disconcerting feature of the whole affair is that "Little Sister" got exchanged some way and turned out to be another boy. At first blush that would seem to be an overwhelming travesty of justice, but it is amazing how quickly we human beings can adapt ourselves to the tricks of fate. Except for an instant's disappointment when I heard the doctor's voice, through the mists of chloroform, announcing the mistake, the whole arrangement has seemed all right. Even Ruth is reconciled. "Aftr all, mother, what does it matter?" she said, after she saw the baby. "I don't care if you don't. A baby's a baby, and we'll have just as much fun taking care of him as if he were a girl."

Wilbert is gravely excited, while Sonny fairly twinkles with mischief waiting for the time when I refer to him again as my baby boy, and he can retort "I'm not the baby now!"

A Geranium—Some Dandelions

Daddy and the children came down to spend Sunday afternoon with baby and me, bringing our first flowers—a red geranium and a handful of dandelions. There'll be no sweeter ones anytime to me. And in my handbag, carefully treasured for this very occasion, lies a pile of the birthday handkerchiefs from you readers, so a good



many of you are keeping me company by proxy.

On account of the sudden change in plans we have no name selected but I'll let you know as soon as we decide. My own leaning is toward Jerome, or Cedric, or Geoffrey, or Gregory; but Daddy looks askance at all of these; says he would prefer John.

The weather is bright and warm and everything seems so peaceful. It looks as though, after the dreary winter, spring and health and happiness have really come to our house to stay.

Here is a bit of verse, written by a college friend of mine to her baby daughter. You may have happened onto this poem in her first volume of published verse—"The Scarlet Cloak," by Lois Montross. It is a little more appropriate, perhaps, for a girl child than for a boy; but all you mothers will appreciate this poetic expression of the things we needs must sacrifice for our babies, though we do it ungrudgingly.—Hope

#### To Charmian, Unborn

My body folded tawny wings  
To walk with slow, uncertain feet;  
My body put off silken things  
For linen, humble and discreet.

My songs that were as butterflies,  
So frail they bore but phantom gold,  
Clung to the earth and dare not rise  
Out of the withered grass and mold.

My laugh is dumb that fluttered wild,  
My hands are bare of shining rings,  
My soul goes fasting that a child  
Be born for silk and song and wings.  
—Lois Montross.

April 5, 1929

#### SPRING HAS COME

Spring has come. I don't tell by the greening grass and wheat, nor the red buds on the maple trees, nor the

leafing lilac, nor by the general urge of vitality in the air, nor any of those commonplace signs. But tonight the boys came home from school and begged to be allowed to put on swimming suits and paddle in a cold, muddy pond which the winter rains had left. If I don't let them, it is just because I do not "Realize How Roasting Hot it is today; their Heads are all Sweat, and



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they simply couldn't Bear to wear their Sweaters Home, and they have played All Day without Any Wraps at All, and they have Felt the Water and it is as Warm as if it had been on the Stove. And if they can't go Swimming, can they anyway Wade?"

When matters reach this point at our house then it is spring; it is spring indeed. It takes a long discussion to convince a boy of 7 or 8 years that it is warm by comparison with winter, but not yet warm enough to cavort around outdoors au naturel. In the spring of the year boys are like the new willow saplings—they may bend under argument and coercion, but they spring right back to where they started! Marbles and football and baseball have come into popularity again without opposition on stern parents' parts; but when the annual tussle begins to convince the

younger generation that it is not yet time to change to summer underwear and go swimming—then the line between winter and spring has been crossed.—Hope.

May 8, 1929

#### THE BOY IS NAMED

Joseph Sidney is the compromise daddy and I have effected in naming "little sister." Two substantial names



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which have stood the test of time by appearing in nearly every generation of the paternal family, as far back as the genealogy is known. If you do not happen to care for those names, we can only say, as one visitor did when I told her, "Oh, well, you'll get used to them!" There are multitudes of things I want to say and that I had hoped to write during my "vacation" here in the hospital, but while the spirit is willing the flesh is weak, and furthermore, writing is tedious for me to perform and for the editor and printer to read. So for a few more days I'll lay up treasures of thoughts and give them to you by typewriter when I get home.

Thanks to many of you; there is a great attendance of material on hand to fill the space while I am off duty. But I'm feeling actually "too good to be true," and before long I'll be crowding the rest of you out.—Hope.

MAY 15, 1929

#### HOME AGAIN

Young Joseph Sidney and his ma are home in the bosom of the happy family, and how thankful they are to be there! You should see the proud look in his daddy's eyes, and should hear the proud tone in Margie Ruth's voice when she mentions "our baby," and in Wilbert's when he says "my brother."



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(Sonny is so near his own age that he considers him the other half of himself, but this new child is distinctly "my brother.") And you should see the smiles break over Sonny's face when he says, teasingly, "Hello, Joe!"

Yes, we're home where we can wander around the house and yard and see all that has been done while we were away. There is a new garden fence and a big special space for flowers and perennials, safe from chickens and pigs and romping children. The violets are blooming—seems to me they never were so big and dark and rich. This cold, wet, cloudy weather may have delayed farming, but at least it made the violets beautiful! We picked a great bunch of them for my mother for Mother's day. And the asparagus—

and the rhubarb! Maybe it seems strange that those home-grown luxuries make one feel lyrical, but when we say asparagus on the farm we don't mean those anemic-looking, pallid-flavored, woody stalks that come out of a can, served whole like mid-Victorian ladies laid out in a faint.

No, we mean the crisp and tender stalks of a frank and cheerful green, cut into inch lengths, cooked swiftly just to the right stage and seasoned with nothing but salt and butter. We even use a spoon in eating it, so as to get all that delicious, health-giving juice. It's hard to find a flavor any more satisfying than that of fresh asparagus, cut, cooked and served within an hour, so that no particle of the savor of sun and dew is lost. Nothing is better, unless maybe fresh rhubarb! There's another subject deserving of a poem. And a little later there will be another—green peas; and then new potatoes; and then all the other garden stuff, each item a climax in itself. Of course, there are many pleasant things in life besides food, but what a zest a healthy appetite gives to living!

Field work is late around here. The weather is cold and we have had much rain. But today is bright, and the roar of tractors can be heard from all directions, far and near. They will be heard from dawn to dark every decent day from now until the corn is planted. There will be no stopping for dinner. Where one man must do all the work, the women folks will be taking lunches to the field; and where two men share the work, one will drive the tractor while the other eats. Such a busy, happy time, with the men crowding themselves and the horses to get the crops in the ground, and the women and children helping out "around the edges," tending chickens and gardens and lawns, and running errands. From now till fall one job will lap over the next, so that we'll be so busy we'll hardly have time to realize how blessed we are in our country life.—Hope.

MAY 17, 1929

#### SABBATICAL YEAR

In the colleges the professors are granted a sabbatical leave of absence every seventh year—a period during which they are free to take their ease, study, travel, rest, or do whatever will best put them in condition for another six years of work. Now that we have a new baby (and by a coincidence it is just seven years since we had one before), I'm thinking that I may count this as my sabbatical year, and, following the advice many of you have offered, let the baby be an excuse to take things easy for a while, relax a bit from community activities and household work. Let me quote from one of the Household readers who was first to send me a letter of congratulation. She is a woman who has raised a large family successfully, and kept her health and her wholesome attitude toward life through it all. She explained it in these words (of course it was a personal letter, but I'm sure she won't mind my sharing this paragraph with you):



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"I have turned off lots of hard work, but I take my time to it, and if I can't get it all done today, just leave the least important until tomorrow. My house was old and unhandy the first 15 years and then modern after that, but I always kept it just average; couldn't keep it perfect. I can't stand driving myself; must read some to keep pace with the children's mental development. I have stopped right in the middle of everything and dropped down on my back to read a silly love story in a magazine and then could go back to the work rested. I don't mean that that class of reading develops much mentality, but when tired don't try to read anything that requires much thought; read something that is already thought out for you. . . . Some folks work too hard and too fast and won't be content to let George do anything that they can do themselves. If you are built that way, the only thing to do is to get where you can't see the work."

#### A Sensible System

That seems like a sensible system for a man or woman to follow if he or she is determined to maintain or regain health; and that is the system I intend to follow for a while, even if I am feeling so well that I want to make the whole garden and transplant all the rose bushes and do the family washing and baking. A little too much ambition might set me back, and I've had all the ill-health I care for. So, in this Household work, my talks with you are likely to be along the lines of the foolish, frivolous things that happen in a family—things that are "easy on the mind" and require no thinking out.

It would be hard to express what the contact with all of you has meant and still means to me. It is so cheering and inspiring to have a flood of greetings from so many friends every day. Sometimes one of you says in a letter, "I hope I'm not making any trouble for you," or "I hope I'm not writing too often." Trouble! Too often! Bless your hearts—you can't make any trouble or come too often. It is such a privilege to have your letters that I constantly feel indebted to you, and am anxious to return to the best of my ability the help and inspiration you all give to me.

Little J. S. sends his love and thanks to all the many readers who sent greetings and gifts to him and his mother, and he says tell you he thinks he is going to like it here. Lovingly—Hope.

July 30, 1929

#### AFTER SUMMER RAIN

One of those glorious, soaking, summer night rains has broken a dry spell. Morning dawns in golden splendor



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and the soil mellow. It is far from

over a drenched world. The soil is black and oozing moisture. No field work today! A rainy day has its own restful charm in the country, but for real ecstasy give us a sunny day after a needed all-night rain! Morning passes quickly, routine chores being less tedious when the world is bathed in beauty. Afternoon finds the rich summer vegetation dry

dry enough for the men to work in the field, and there is no canning or heavy extra work for the women and children; so we have one of those unforgettable farm family days when our work is so leisurely it almost seems like play. The tension of rushing the crops into the ground is over, the nerve-strain of heat and drought is gone; a delicious relaxation pervades the atmosphere, and the work we have to do is so light and interesting that it is a gentle tonic. Pleasant work, and health, and contented hearts! What a combination for happiness!

Daddy is making concrete at the new well, whistling merry tunes while he works. Out by the woodpile big Fritz is building a complicated rabbit hutch for the boys, singing now and then in his majestic German voice, telling them anecdotes of the war, describing various matters in the old country, while they hunt out the needed scraps of lumber and hand up the tools, listening, chattering, asking questions, jumping from one subject to another like monkeys from tree to tree. Sister and Kooi are weeding in the garden (we have abandoned the use of their Christian names; whenever I call Ruth I get either two answers or none). Mother is weeding her flower beds around the house foundation, with baby Joseph cooing and kicking in his basket near by. We are all in calling distance, and sometimes we shout back and forth, joking, or exclaiming over exciting incidents like an airplane overhead or a pretty butterfly or bird or a new blossom in the garden. But a good share of the time we are quietly working at our independent jobs, each one (or at least mother), engrossed in thought. What the rest think about at such moments I cannot say, but here are some of my vagrant meditations:

#### Important and Essential

It begins, of course, with a wordless joy in being surrounded by a healthy, happy family, and having a home and a husband, realizing that here, if nowhere else in the world, I am important—more than that, I am essential. I am an integral part of this establishment, this little universe. It is good for the soul to realize one's personal importance that way. Then for some unexplainable reason my mind recalls a remark made by a friend from Chicago just the other day. "You farm women aren't rushed to death with your housework like I am! You have so much leisure for other things!" I remember resenting her statement at the time, thinking, "Leisure! If you call it that! Canning, washing, ironing, churning, gardening, chickens, a thousand things!" For you know we all like to feel that we have a little harder job than the other fellow, and most of us farm women enjoy thinking that our city sisters do not work, just dabble around at nothing, a bit of cooking, a touch of dusting, and the rest of the day free to doll up and go calling. Oh, well! If we insist on imagining their days like that, we must allow them their little notion that our housework is no burden. We both, no doubt, have our days of stress and our days of calm. But I doubt if they ever have quite such a day as this, for their husbands can't leave business and work around home just because it rained the night before!

And then I remember that not all farm homes are having such a day as this. Where there is sickness and worry and overwork, hard times in any of various ways, even a marvelous day like this can't bring relief. I think of all the "homebirds," troubled by many things, tied fast to home and hearth by the never-ending stress of

raising babies. How they would enjoy a peaceful afternoon like this, and how seldom they can have it because of the multitude of indoor tasks. I look back to the time when Ruth and Wilbert and Sonny were babies together, and I never seemed to be free an hour in the twenty-four. And the strain was not physical; it was mental and emotional, too. The adapting of one's self to new responsibilities was difficult and the development of a new philosophy of life; youth rebelled, as it always rebels and frets, until the back is fitted to the burden.

#### The Transition Period

The freedom of our youth was gone, and we had not yet learned that there is a sweeter and more lasting joy in service. My heart goes out to all the "homebirds," tired little country mothers with many little children and too much work to do, and to all the fathers, especially the young fathers, who are working too hard and finding that economic stress is crowding out many of the pleasures they had expected to get out of life. Especially does my heart ache for those homes where there is discord, for how appreciation and sympathy can sweeten drudgery! Little wives, who grieve because youth is slipping away in the swirl of work, and who crave the few words of compliment and comfort that would lighten your hearts, try giving your husbands some of those same compliments and appreciations, and see if the bread of kindness so cast upon the waters doesn't come back to you!

And from the homes of overwork and worry, my thoughts fly to those where there is not enough work any more. The home of "Our Invalid Friend," for instance, where she must fold her hands and watch a loving husband do man's work and woman's work, too; her hardest work being satisfied with no work to do. And the home of all our grandmothers, who write, "I wish my little ones were young again. . . . They grow up so fast. . . . Father and I are alone, the children scattered in homes of their own. . . . There is so little to do." And, most of all, my heart yearns over the homes of all our "Betty Sads," where a little one has been taken away, leaving such emptiness, such aching leisure. Oh, thank heaven for busyness, for work, for the bother of babies! May I nevermore feel for an instant that any task is too tedious, if I may only have my family circle unbroken!

So the afternoon flows away, and now Jo and I have gradually moved almost entirely around the house, and the girls are sauntering in from the garden; Fritz and the boys are calling us to come and admire the splendid new home for the chinchillas; daddy is finishing up his concrete work, and it is time to get the cows in and have supper and prepare for a peaceful country night. And I know, as I straighten up and look out admiringly over our yard and barnyard and rich green fields, and turn, with a heart swelling with sentiment and lofty thoughts, turn to the ridiculous task of preparing fried potatoes, scrambled eggs and raspberries and cream to prove my affection to my beloved family, that I will always cherish this jewel of a day in the filagree setting of life, and hold the memory of it in my heart forever.—Hope.

#### MEMORY GEM

As one lamp lights another nor grows less,  
So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.  
—Selected.



September 6, 1929

**WHAT DO WE OWE OUR TEACHER?**

Up early, everybody, this crisp late-August morning, for this is the day we clean the school! True, it is an afternoon affair, to be followed by a wienie-roast and a bonfire at night, but the excitement begins at daybreak. Margie Ruth gathers up the pails, brooms and mops, soap and cleaning-rags and such necessities, while the boys feed the rabbits and finish the morning chores. Then Daddy loads the big iron kettle into the back of the truck, already well-laden with sacks of cucumbers and the three children, and away they go. The kettle will be dropped at the school house, and after the pickles are delivered to the factory, and the wienies and buns and ice-cream procured, back will come the hilarious family to haul the water and get it heated. Meanwhile Kooi and mother (and the corresponding Koois and mothers in all the families of the District) are hurrying through the routine tasks of home and preparing the "extras" that everyone will want to supplement the wienies at the outdoor supper. And after a hurried dinner, everyone will gather to one of the nicest, friendliest annual affairs our community knows.



Hope Needham

School will begin the day after Labor day, as usual. This will be Miss Lita's third year with us, so there is an atmosphere of confidence; maybe not so thrilling as when a new teacher is coming, but thoroughly comfortable. There is merriment by fits and starts, as the work spins along, but there are also moments of silence broken only by the splashing of water and the rubbing of cloths. At those moments one's thoughts go racing down various bypaths; and one of the paths is in this direction: What do we owe our teacher?

**Duty Begins Far Back**

Our duty begins far, far back of this day of cleaning the school! From earliest babyhood our child was being prepared. To be fair to the teacher we need to send to school a child who is well physically, normal mentally, stable emotionally; one who is self-reliant and amenable to discipline. No teacher can do her best with a rude ill-mannered, helpless child. It is our place to do the preliminary nursery work.

We owe the teacher a child who is clean, well and pleasant, one who will obey instructions and who will cooperate.

Having so prepared the child in his baby years, we owe the teacher throughout the years of schooling proper home care for the child; food, rest, healthy habits. Even more important than these material things, we owe our teacher our confidence and trust. We owe her an attitude which will help instead of hinder her; we owe her interest without interference. Almost invariably a teacher wants to be successful in her teaching and to be friendly with all her patrons. Since she is frequently young and inexperienced and may naturally make mistakes in judgment, it is the duty

of parents to be ready to go a little more than half-way to keep the atmosphere free from friction.

So many of us do not realize how much responsibility the teacher takes off our shoulders in raising our children; how much training she gives them that we have neither time nor ability to give. If parents will cooperate with teachers by giving every child the sort of home atmosphere he deserves—a home where he gets proper nourishment and rest and the right kind of sympathy in all his activities, they will find that the teacher will furnish her part of the training which is needed to build good citizens.—Hope.

September 9, 1929

**THE "EXTRA" GENERATION**

"Is grandma Joseph's grandma, too, or is she his great-grandma?" asked Ernest Vail the other day, and it set me thinking of how much of an "extra" generation our little newcomer seems to be. We lived our own childhood and forgot it; went along through high school and college days, clear into Plato and higher mathematics; then we married and jumped right back to Mother Goose. We lived childhood again, with our three little ones who were so close together, up to grammar school days, and then just when Mother Goose and all it implies were fading from memory, along came Joseph Sidney, and we traverse the path again. It is almost like being a grandmother and a mother all at once. They say grandparents enjoy babies more than the parents do—and that makes me seem all the more like a grandmother; for this baby is unadulterated joy.



Hope Needham

Joseph Sidney (such a massive name for such a bit of sweetness!) is growing and thriving just as all well babies do. He gains four ounces a week—not as much as the older boys did, but still all that could be expected during hot weather. He has been promoted to a four-hour schedule (6, 10, 2, 6, 10) and that gives his mother a little more freedom, while he grows just as fast. He has cereal at 10 in the morning, and occasionally a supplementary feeding of modified cow's milk at six in the evening. In another week he will begin to take strained vegetables. He likes being on the floor where he can toss and turn as he pleases. He laughs out loud and talks a musical but unintelligible language while he plays. He can reach out and grasp a rattle, and is especially fond of dangling a string of red and green crokinole rings which the boys strung on a stout string for him. Margie Ruth has bathed him three times and often prepared his cereal. She especially enjoys dressing him in his finest togs when he is going out in society. Jo is friendly with every one but seems a bit partial to his daddy, whom he bats in the face with soft little wandering fists to show his affection.—Hope.

October 12, 1929

**THIRTEENS**

Today the banks are closed all over the nation, and streets in far cities are a-flutter with flags. To most of you it is just Columbus day; but to us it is a wedding anniversary. Thirteen years ago, on a magnificent day in the most magnificent time of year, we began our life together. And even as that very day contained both sunshine and rain, so our succeeding years have alternated between joy and sorrow. Joy has strongly predominated, with just enough shadow for contrast. There is an ancient superstition against the number 13; for years it has been accounted unlucky. But we have never had a finer or more satisfying year, and the climax of all was the arrival of little Joseph, the 13th living grandchild, in the notoriously fickle and ill-starred month of April. Maybe you think it was hard luck that he wasn't a girl, a little sister, a partner for Margie Ruth; but no! A boy is just exactly what suits us best!



Hope Needham

Perhaps 13 gained its reputation from the fact that it is the largest integral number, indivisible by anything except itself and one. This first 13 years is a cycle in itself; an epoch. It has been a time of the gathering and blending of the clays of character, and the modelling of the first rough pattern of the vase of life. May we, in the next 13 years, be given grace to mold and polish and refine that vase into a thing of strength and beauty, before the stuff permanently hardens, and our work is done.—Hope.

November 19, 1929

**ALL THINGS COME TO HIM WHO WAITS**

Many a moon has passed since we first began discussing water lily pools in these columns. If we have seemed to harp too much on the subject, it was partly because reading about them was as near as many of us ever hoped to get to having one. They say constant dripping will wear away a stone, and perhaps it is the persistent reference to pools that has resulted in a real pool for me. When the men finished running concrete in the forms for the new garage the other day, they began digging a hole in the back yard, and something told me it must be for nothing else than a lily pool!



Hope Needham

Sure enough, it is taking shape, about 8 by 12, two feet deep in the middle and sloping to the edges. Old woven wire fence has been laid for reinforcement, and the concrete has



been poured for the bottom and part of the side. When you get that far on such a project, it is practically impossible to abandon it; and so I am counting on the consummation of an old, old dream. Let me suggest that the rest of you who long for one try the same means: Lay any reference to lily pools where it will meet the eye of the "gude man," and perhaps in very self-defense he will build you one.—Hope.

November 4, 1929

ROADS

"A mist on the far horizon, an infinite tender sky, a haze on the golden cornfields, and wild geese soaring high." Is it any wonder the poets worship autumn, the culmination of the year? In the spring, when buds are bursting, seeds swelling, leaves unfolding, nature cries "Push, push!" In midsummer, when the sun pours its light-giving rays over the teeming earth, it says "Rush, rush!" But now, at ripening time, the message is "Hush, hush!"

Homeward bound, Margie Ruth and Jo and I feel the benediction of the season. We skim the pavement hardly conscious of movement, so richly soothing is the world. Baby Jo, delighted at being able to sit up in his basket, beams on what little part of the universe is visible to him, but Ruth and I are abundantly alive to the glories round about us. A piercing blue sky arches above, the level fields roll away to either side, alternately black-velvet plowing and tawny stubble-field and green baby-wheat; the fields of ripened corn, like multitudes of ash-blond maidens, sway and rustle in an ethereal dance; and on the far horizon the timberland, fairly sodden with color, rises out of purple shadows. It is as though vast subterranean paint-vats had boiled over, as if a volcano had thrown up geysers of color to set and glaze in this autumn air.

I know a place where the trees arch over a bridge so thick and yellow this time of year that they almost burn, and remembering it, I say to Ruth, "Shall we take the Beautiful Road home?" To my surprise, she only murmurs, "No; just go straight ahead." And, turning, I see that her eyes are full of dreams. Drenched in this beauty, she is following mythical paths of thought, apart from me. There was a time, not so many years ago, when she would have cried childishly, "Oh, yes, and then by the Crooked Road, mother, where there'll be lots of color!" But now she is too old for that. Isn't she 12 years old and in the eighth grade? Perhaps she is thinking, "This time next year I'll be in the midst of all the marvels of high school, with football games and boarding in town, and lots of girls to chum with, and who can appreciate how wonderful it all will be to me?"

The Byway

So I drive over the bridge with the gorgeous yellow arch, and one big perfect yellow leaf drops to the black water and floats away. I muse, "How cheerful it is to see a lot of leaves scamper and romp in the wind, but



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how melancholy to see one lone leaf let go of life!" But I say nothing to Ruth of such things, for she is lost in her dreams. I turn beyond the bridge and take a "cut-across" byway that we seldom travel. It used to be an adventure and a hilarious surprise to turn here, but Ruth scarcely notices now. Then we come to a queer little place where a lane dips out of sight under dense shrubs. Such an old-fashioned little road, so out-of-the-way that it doesn't know that yellow is all the rage and is still wearing its last-summer green! We have never dared try this road, for we don't know whether it has an end; we used to like to think that it dipped right down into Brownie-Land. But today, in a droll spirit of perversity, I boldly turn. "She pays no attention! Truly she is a child no longer; she is venturing out into worlds of her own. Within a few rods we suddenly emerge from the shrubbery into level land, and behold, we are on a road that carries no mystery whatever; we are headed straight for Our Own Road, which is so familiar that it gets no special attention, and so we trundle home, in silence and in peace. Precious little girl-child; little second self! Traveling the fascinating road of Growing-up! Little do you realize how much of my own life you re-live for me. In those next few years how many new roads you will be trying! You will think you are blazing new paths, so strange and wonderful life will seem. Little will you realize how near your mother is to you, how much she understands. I want you to live your own life, to stand on your own feet. But no matter how many roads you travel, nor how far, real roads and dream roads, may we travel the Home Road together!—Your Mother.

December 23, 1929

PREPARATION FOR THE DAY OF GIVING

Saturday morning—and the children and their father have gone to town to get their Christmas haircuts and do their Christmas shopping, while mother and Luella, with Baby Jo looking on, hurry to hide away some of the candies and gifts that had best be out of sight. It was an exciting morning, getting all the lists made out, deciding how best to manage to make the children's modest hoards reach far enough. Even with the gifts they have made at school, they found it necessary to "go in together" on some names in order to make a presentable showing. But at last every one was accounted for, and they are off. The shopping day is almost as important as Christmas



Hope Needham

MEMORY GEM

O brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother;  
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;  
To worship rightly is to love each other,  
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

—Whittier.

itself. And the happiest feature about the whole performance is that not a person was forgotten or left out; and not a gift was planned that is not heartily and generously given. The funds are so small and the lists so large that the children put a 10-cent limit on their gifts; but the loving care with which they spend each dime lends a luster that gold could not give.

It is heart-warming to think of all the thousands of homes where the same activities are going forward this Saturday before Christmas. Even as the "belfries of all Christendom," the hearts of little children (and grown-up children, too) are rolling along the unbroken song of love and fellowship. "Give, give, said the little rill," we used to sing in school. "I am small, I know, but where'er I go the fields grow greener still—the fields grow greener still."

Time for Rejoicing

The sweetness and generosity of the Christmas spirit fill the earth. We rejoice that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and we give not alone material things, but kindness and tolerance and love—all in remembrance of that Greatest Gift of long ago. Do you remember how Tiny Tim hoped the people saw him in church, because he was a cripple and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas day Who made lame beggars walk and blind men see? Not a thought of himself and his afflictions, except as it might carry comfort to some one else. So all of us, at Christmastide, yearn to rise above our faults and frailties and give love and understanding to all.

I wish I might send each of you your heart's desire for Christmas. I wish I might even send every one a bayberry candle to burn, for—

"A bayberry candle burned to the socket

Brings health to the body,

Joy to the heart

And gold to the pocket."

But since I can't even do that, let me give you my heartfelt wish: May Christmas grant you a richer gift than any material thing. May it give you an inner light which will warm your heart for at least half the year; which will shine like a lamp of peace and good-will over all your relationships with mankind, making you slower to blame and quicker to praise; which will glow so brightly that it will irradiate and make clear to you the motives and acts of other folks; which will illumine your way so that there will be less heartache and more happiness for you and your fellow men on the path you tread this year.

And may you each have the blessing of a few minutes absolutely alone on Christmas day, when you may reread the Story in peace and quiet and meditate on what the angel-message of long ago has meant to the world: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which be to all people, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."—Hope.

I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men!"



December 28, 1929

Almost two weeks of fog and soft wet weather; not a ray of sunshine in all that time. And then, when every-

one was consistently complaining about the weather and maintaining that anything would be better, up sweeps a snow-storm from the northwest, and once more "the gray day darkens into night, unwarmed by any sunset light." We have a change in the weather, but such a change that we almost wish we hadn't complained about



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the fog. Now we have a little more cold and a lot more wind, but the murky grayness is only altered by being in motion instead of being still.

Two days and two nights of blinding snow and scolding wind; no milk-trucks, no mail-cars, no school. Roads bare in spots and level-full in others. Where are those oldtimers that tell us we don't have the winters we used to have? We are re-living "Snow-bound" in all its glory, almost on its anniversary. By a humorous trick of fate we have a transient marooned with us who is far more of a blessing than a burden. The bread-man with his truck of pastries, cookies and bread got this far, homeward-bound, the day the storm descended, and fortunately (for our neighborhood) slipped into a ditch. So we have a stock of provisions, as well as the mild adventure of contact with a new personality, to help us while away the hours of imprisonment. The men of the neighborhood, bundled and booted, one by one make the arduous trip across fields or along fence-rows to our house to get a load of bread. The bread truck was easily pushed out of the ditch and brought under shelter, but not until the drifts had piled so high that further progress was impossible.

Then in the third night the wind subsided and the snow lay down to rest. In the morning the sun shone out with amazing brilliance, and heartened by the sight, all available men set cheerfully to work to shovel the community out. First the shovels, then horses plunging, then a grader working through and at last a track is opened, and we are back to normalcy. First the milk man goes through, in bobsled instead of truck. Soon the bread man will say good-bye and eventually the mail-man will come along. And the sun is shining, and every one is well, no one has suffered, the roadmen are ruddy and hungry, and we gather around a hearty dinner to talk over another of those episodes that brighten up a placid life and make milestones along the path of life.—Hope.

MEMORY GEM

On stormy days  
When the wind is high,  
Tall trees are brooms  
Against the sky.

They swish their branches  
In buckets of rain  
And swash and sweep it  
Blue again.

—Dorothy K. Aldis.

# The Household

Address Hope Needham, Drivers Journal, Chicago, Ill. Real name and address must be given, but will be withheld on request.

January 24, 1930

## TOO BIG A SUBJECT?

Dear Hope: While scrubbing away with a hand power washer on my weekly laundry I was wondering why the farmer's wife has to do so much more real physical labor than the city man's wife.

The thought came to my mind of how the hard-working farmer raises his grain, and then who sets the price? We hear how it is controlled by the supply and demand, but in reality isn't it the speculator who sets the price? Of course the farmer does not receive a fair price for his grain, but the consumer pays enough for it, and if the government wants to help the farmer, why not abolish the speculator and then the middle men will only be those who are necessary to handle the grain, thus bringing the producers' and consumers' price closer together. There certainly is too wide a margin between the producer and consumer and where does it go?



Hope Needham

A lot of it goes into the hands of the speculator who happens to be the lucky one. Wouldn't it be better if it were divided between the producer and consumer?

Much of our grain lies hoarded in a store house, benefiting no one except the speculator, and when our new crops come on this stored grain plays havoc with the prices.

I do not relish the idea of the farmer being referred to as a "down and outer" or "broke and don't know it," when the fact is he is the most independent and essential man in the world.

Of course, this is too big a question for a farmer's wife to tackle, but I'm certainly anxious to see an improvement in farm conditions and it does seem to be a mistake to have our grain turned loose into the hands of the speculator, it's like throwing a bone to a pack of hungry hounds the way they grapple over it. Yes, I've watched "the pit," and it is one grand mass of scrambling, roaring, deafening excitement.

Hard work? Yes, mentally, but is it a legitimate business? And isn't it a detriment both to the farmer and to many a small speculator?

I enjoy your column. Some of the wives' troubles do seem trivial, but no doubt many of them will realize this as they grow older and have bigger trials come to them. I say just be thankful if you have good health and plenty of substantial food for your family and a comfortable home. Best wishes to all.—M. E. H., Illinois.

### None Too Big for Sincere

Too big a subject? There is no subject too big for any sincere person to tackle, and in this matter of the welfare of the agricultural population certainly the women not only have the right to express themselves

but should consider it their duty. In no other business is the wife so intimately a part of the "firm." And in deciding what is wrong and what needs to be done to correct any existing evils, we need to take another of those "far looks." We need to look at the matter not only from an individual standpoint, not even from a class standpoint, but from the point of view of the whole nation. We must admit that middlemen fulfill a necessary function in such a complex civilization as ours. We must admit that even speculation (that is, dealing in futures, taking a risk or making a gamble on the future) serves a legitimate and worthy purpose. If it were not for some form of speculation we could never hope to stabilize prices. But it is obvious that much of the speculation indulged in nowadays, both in farm products and in stocks and bonds, is only a mad orgy of buying and selling phantom values, resulting in bitterness of feeling and inequalities. Neither the profits nor the losses in such dealings are in proportion to the effort involved, nor to the value of the service. But just where to draw the line between helpful speculation (a wholesome risk on the future) and between pure gambling (an attempt to win at someone else's expense) is the problem which has never yet been solved. We hope that the new federal farm board, by building up co-operatives powerful enough to influence the market will be a solution. Only time will tell. Certainly the farm board is functioning as actively and definitely as any federal board has ever done in its first half year.

### Real Work Yet to Be Done

It is all very well to say that no legislation will be effective. It is true that we cannot expect legislation to solve the problem, and now that we have the legislation creating the farm board, the real work is still to be done. However, this much legislation was needed; for neither individual farmers nor small co-operatives were powerful enough to accomplish anything—just as local option was not powerful enough to conquer the liquor evil. And with farm relief, as with prohibition, we must expect a long period of experimentation even after the law is passed. In both matters we may eventually have to "back track" (we hope not!), but it is only by trying out the experiment on a national scale that we can hope to make progress. Except for minor corrections in the operation of the board, we should not look to further legislation to solve our problems, except for a law modernizing our tax system to equalize the burden.

The individual farmer must still carry his own responsibilities. No law and no co-operative organization can make a shiftless farmer into an industrious one, nor turn a poor farm into a productive one. The inefficient farmers cannot expect to be carried along by the workers, but must turn to other occupations. The poor or marginal lands (that is, those which even with good management can barely pay their way) may need to be



bought up by the government and re-forested, or in some other way withdrawn from competition. And new lands should not be opened up until they are needed.

But in other respects each farmer must work out his own salvation, and that means he must bring himself and his farm to the highest point of productivity. With the help of his big marketing co-operatives and the farm board, he can then demand an equitable reward for his efforts and his produce. The old law of supply and demand has been too many times manipulated to get desired effects for us to accept it as our fate. Any talk of a "farmer's strike" or arbitrary limitation of acreage is not only unwise but impracticable. Here is the straightforward way in which this principle was expressed by E. E. Stevenson, the president of our own county farm bureau at its recent annual meeting:

#### "Surplus Matter of Imagination"

"The farm bureau and the Illinois Agricultural association, officered as they are from the bottom to the top by actual farmers and producers, are lending valuable assistance to the co-operative societies for the handling and marketing of farm products. . . .

"It is not the province of the farm bureau to encourage a decrease in production. With the best that we have been able to do, we are within six months of starvation. The surplus with which we are confronted is largely a matter of imagination and is but seasonable at the most.

"A plan of orderly marketing by which the price of a commodity may be stabilized throughout the year will do much more to settle the question of the surplus than a program of decreased production, which is to begin with, impracticable and could only result in great suffering to those least able to stand it. Efficiency in production has been and must continue to be the watchword of the farm bureau. The fertility of the soil must at least be maintained or increased if possible. We have no moral right to burden the generations yet to come with a depleted soil in order that we may enjoy a temporary benefit in increased prices for our products."

(As space is running short we will conclude this discussion tomorrow with an article written by our own Faith Felgar a little over 10 years ago.)

January 27, 1930

#### HELPING OURSELVES

"The Lord helps those who help themselves" is not an idle saying, and nowhere is it more applicable than in



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this matter so much before the public eye just now, farm relief. In the dairy business particularly, in which it seems there is more grief in surpluses and marketing than in any other branch of agriculture, the principle holds good. In our locality butter fat is now at the lowest figure it has been for years for the month of January, thirty cents a pound. The season

of heavy flow has not even begun, and yet the market price is perilously near the cost of production. It is generally agreed that one of the causes of this situation is the tremendous increase in the consumption of oleo.

The manufacturers of that product have improved their technique and advertised the product and they sell it at a figure which makes it a serious temptation to substitute oleo for butter. Present-day oleo is a palatable, fine-textured, attractive-looking fat, but it does not contain the vitamins and minerals essential for health, as butter does. A product of butter fat who sells milk and cream and buys oleo for home use is not only injuring his business from an economic standpoint, but is depriving his family of necessary food elements to which they have a greater right than any one else. It is to be hoped that every reader of this paper will consider carefully before he trades his butter fat for oleo. At first thought, he may think he is saving money or making money by the practice,—and of course we have all sympathy for those who must make every penny count.

But in the long run, if all the farmers who need to save money are selling cream and buying oleo, the market will be so glutted with milk-products that the price will be forced down and down until it meets the price of oleo. And every farmer knows that it is impossible to produce high class butter fat cheaply. It should be the principle of every farm home to select from the produce of the farm all that can be used to further the health and well-being of the family, then to sell the rest. Many farm families are necessarily deprived of many modern comforts and conveniences of city life. At least give them their fill of wholesome and healthful food; the best the farm affords, not the culls and left-overs and substitutes.—Hope.

March 15, 1930

#### A MEDLEY OF SUBJECTS

Dear Hope and Household Folks: This morning my mind is a medley of thoughts. Tonight we are to present our home talent P. T. A. play. It has been my privilege to direct it, and I am proud of our home folks. Our dress rehearsal last night was perfect. It is wonderful what talent there is in every community if only we take the pains to search it out and develop it. We are giving the same play that "Molly Manning" and her church society put on earlier in the year, and we want to thank "Molly" for her part in helping us with our play by sending us suggestions.



Hope Needham

Yesterday afternoon the county home and community chairmen of the state extension work met for their monthly round table. We discuss all our problems with each other, our home demonstration agent and a worker from the state university. Yesterday we had a 4-H club leader with us and our discussion centered around the boys' and girls' club work for this summer. Our home demonstration agent pointed out the need of

more and better home economics projects and less of calf and pig clubs for our girls. The state representative said we should not neglect the calf and pig clubs too much, as farm girls needed to be trained to be helpful farm wives in the future. We had a long debate over this question. It was about 50-50, as the saying goes. How I wished Hope and "Ruth Vernon" were with us, for I knew each one had a decided opinion and would express herself sincerely. We need to discuss this problem more now than ever, when agriculture is in the "lime-light" and conditions are changing so rapidly.

About half of the women there yesterday said they would soon have to help with the chores, especially when the men start working in the field, besides, their own work would be heavier, with garden and chickens, house cleaning and what not. The question is—should the women be expected to help with the chores just because the men have to get the crop in? Of course, it is imperative that the crops get into the ground at the proper time, especially if the season is already late or rains hinder the progress of the work.

#### Considers Her Dignity

Our county chairman of the women's work said she would not go to the barn for any man, no matter what happened. She contended that her place was in the house, even though there would be losses outside if she did not help out occasionally. She did not even believe in giving assistance if any of the stock was sick and no other man could be had to help. She would rather see the animal die than lower her dignity to go out and help. Just then I wished Mrs. Simmons were with us. I am sure she could have given us a splendid talk. Then our former township chairman spoke up. She said: "I have run the farm of 80 acres myself while my husband was sick and we could not afford a man. I learned to love the stock and became so interested I took up dairying and now have a fine herd of dairy cows. It was through my help we were able to send our seven children through high school and university, and now see them in good farm homes of their own. I do not feel that I am less a lady than I was before I did this, and I admire any woman who will help her husband when necessary." She also said that her husband loved and respected her as much as ever and was always willing she should have any modern convenience in the home that would lighten her work.

Just to cite a few of my own experiences: A few years ago we lost a very good dairy cow because I did not take time to go out when I heard unusual noises in the near-by pasture. I can never forgive myself for this neglect. Not because of the loss in dollars as much as the terrible suffering I could have spared this poor dumb creature, for hours upon hours. Just this very morning I heard a noise in the barn. The men were not yet up (it is my custom to rise when I awaken, even if the hour is early). So I went out and discovered a cow had broken through the barn floor and was standing with her hind legs down through the floor. I at once called the men and they went to help her out. Brother said he had noticed the bad place in the floor a few days ago, but just did not take time to fix it then. Now, that cow could have broken her legs by trying to get out alone. And so it is with many other things. I believe a woman should take interest enough to at least notice if anything seems unusual, even though she cannot go out to help with the work.



A few more words to answer the questions of so many. Thanks so much. Father is in his usual good health, not even having had a cold this winter. To several who asked about my son: He is at St. Stanislaus seminary at Florissant, Mo., just out of St. Louis. He is preparing for the mission field, be it in this country or foreign lands, wherever he is needed. Yes, he is the only child I have. No, he does not come home for vacation. It would break too much into the routine of the work and studies. It requires a period of from 12 to 15 years before the men are finished. They study and teach by turns. My boy, although only 21 years old, has been sent to a negro mission for practice work and has also preached several sermons. Now he is back in the seminary digging out Latin and Greek and other languages. Best wishes to all. Sincerely—Pep.

#### Two Things Enter In

We have a daughter who has been in home economics projects for two years and who is taking up a poultry project in addition this year. She summed the matter up pretty neatly, I thought, when she explained why she took both. "I love the sewing and wouldn't give it up, but I'd like to work part of the time with something alive and something outdoors. And, besides, the sewing project doesn't bring in any money!"

As to the outside work by farm women, it seems to me the most satisfying philosophy is to meet the situations that arise, never being hampered by an ironclad rule of conduct. "I will do this," or "I will never do that." In many cases the housewife would have neither time nor talent to contribute to the outside, nor would there be need for her to undertake it. Whether or not she should habitually help with the farming depends altogether on the circumstances and the ambitions of the couple concerned. It is a pity for any woman habitually to work beyond her strength or to neglect the house and children to save a man's wages; but since most of us do more than tend a house and children nowadays, if we are real partners and want our husbands to succeed, we have the privilege of a choice in selecting the ways in which we shall help. It is no more demeaning to do farm work than to tend garden or raise chickens, or bake or sew or write books, and many women really enjoy it more. Some couples work side by side in everything they do; both help outdoors, both help about the house, and each enjoys both phases. In other households the lines of work run parallel and are mutually sympathetic, but they seldom need to cross.

#### Willing But Awkward

My husband and I, for instance, would be entirely willing to help one another out if occasion should arise. Willing, but awkward. For myself, I know enough about the theory of farming to be interested in every operation and to keep in touch with all the plans; but for me actually to harness a horse would require literally a feat of imagination. It is not that I have refused to do such work, but that the days have been full and that particular thing I have never needed to know. My husband, on the other hand, lends a sympathetic ear to the theory of housekeeping, but would far rather pay what wages it takes to hire a helper for me than to be obliged to handle the practical details himself.

If the time should come when he had to prepare a poached egg for me, for example, it would seem to me a more touching tribute of devotion than a box of American Beauty roses.

for it would represent the humble and courageous effort to accomplish a difficult feat, for my sake. And so I say that it all depends on the persons concerned. It is no more nor less of an aspersion to say of a woman, "She never helps outside," than to say, "She always helps outside." There is no glory in doing such work when it is not needed; and there is certainly no glory in refusing to do it when it is needed.—Hope.

May 20, 1930

WELCOME BACK,

"RUTH VERNON"

Dear Household: Come, "Missouri Mule," let us reason together! Your letter about smoking was fine, but why

give all the virtues to the women! The men in our family have been just as virtuous as the women. If our daddy smoked I would not try to keep Jimmy from using the filthy weed. Women have not smoked until recently. A few have begun to "tag" the men. I predict this will open the eyes of the men smokers as nothing else could, and they will lead these foolish ones out of their folly. Few men want their mothers, wives or daughters to smoke, and I have never heard a woman say, "I'm so glad my husband smokes and chews!"

"Pep," you knew I just couldn't keep still when a discussion of outdoor work for women was on. I remember years ago, when I had promised to become a farmer's wife and realized just how little I knew of farm life. I begged my parents to let me go to K. S. A. C. to learn how to make butter and raise chickens! They consented, and I went in perfect confidence that I'd learn all a farmer's wife should know. But to my dismay I found that butter-making was taught in the animal husbandry course and poultry raising was also relegated to the boys. So it isn't entirely my fault that I have the ideas I have on this vital subject.

I learned in my own home to make butter, and still make all we use. But the chickens are beyond me.

What do you do with a setting hen that eats all her eggs (Peg says to wring her neck!)

#### "Them's My Sentiments"

Hope wrote my sentiments exactly, and, like you, Pep, I have no patience with any woman who would not help a domestic animal if she could. But when I hear trouble at the barn, or even the chicken house, I get the "good man" up instead of investigating myself. Just one question, Hope. You say Ruth is taking up a poultry project. Now, will Wilbert, Sonny and Jo take up sewing projects? I fear we'd have a bit of trouble getting Jimmy to either sew or can.

I have known women who were so proud of the money they made raising chickens, pay out much more on ready-made clothing which they should have made themselves. Nothing wrong with the chicken raising, but why the pride? Isn't there greater glory in a girl or woman designing and making her own clothing than raising chickens, pigs and calves? Which would



Hope Needham

you rather your son do—a man's or a woman's work

So many times I've wanted to write to Mrs. Simmons and tell her how very much her "home" articles have helped me, but fearing she is too busy to bother with letters with nothing in them about chickens, I've never said thank you! Since reading her article, "An Attempted Plea for Tolerance," I must tell her that we all didn't misunderstand, but since it brought forth an even better article I'm not very sorry that some did.

Weeks later! I put this away in a drawer and forgot it, even wondered why Hope had cast it all in the waste basket! Reading "Molly Manning's" delightful letter made me want to assure her I feel the same responsibility in regard to my children's conduct. Whenever they have made mistakes I feel that I should have prevented that, and if they ever do a grave wrong I will be mostly to blame, or rather their parents. I've known so many parents who would accept the compliments their children brought them, but not the condemnations. But isn't Hope's thought that a child learns the good characteristics as well as the bad ones from parents comforting?—Ruth Vernon.

#### No Law Against It

Questions always welcomed here! If Wilbert, Sonny and Jo do or do not take up sewing projects, it will not be because there is compulsion either way. I'm sure the club would be open to them, but from the present indications they decidedly will not want to enter. However, I would not forbid Ruth her poultry work on that account, any more than I would say to Sonny, "You can't be a doctor, because Wilbert wants to be a farmer." Our daughter, like her maternal parent, has a bit too strong a taste for books, and we encourage any taste for handicraft, as a balancer.

Housework, it is true, provides handicraft of various sorts, and we encourage that. But Ruth is learning to cook and sew and clean, and enjoys them all. But, having grown up as a bookworm, I have made the discovery in comparatively recent years that no individual tastes the fullness of life without some form of outdoor manual labor—in plain English, nice dirty work. It is both a sedative and a stimulant. It touches life with serenity and wholesomeness, and it is hard for one who does his own hoeing and digging to be a radical or a fanatic.

It is true that too severe and too prolonged manual labor, especially if performed under great economic stress, wears down courage and tangles nerves just as badly as strenuous mental work. If I could arrange the lives of us humans I would choose that every one should alternate days of gorgeously grubby work with days of interesting mental exercise. Workdays would be long enough and hard enough to bring real fatigue and luxurious rest. On the alternate days I would like for every human being to enjoy leisurely well served meals, baths and clean clothes, every mechanical device to make life comfortable, work of an interesting and stimulating but not physically tiring kind, and ample time for recreation and the amenities of life. Since this is only a pipe-dream, anyway, we need not figure out who would perform those necessary services which are menial but not necessarily grubby; but perhaps we would find a group of persons who would be willing to forego the sweaty days of hard labor for the lighter, if inferior, tasks.

And if I could order the development of my children I would like nothing better than for them to hap



pen casually, as the years go by, onto craftsmen of various sorts who could show them the delight there is in any occupation for a master-craftsman, for one who loves his work, whether that work is sawing wood or managing a colossal organization. Then my girls would not be housewives nor my boys farmers, for the reason that they knew nothing else, but because in those occupations they found their best satisfaction in life. Their father and I find what we want in farming. Our children may not. They shall be free to choose, and I hope we shall be able to provide them sufficient experience on which to base their choice. Man's work or woman's work—there is no sharp dividing line any more. In the home, baking is woman's work; in commerce, it is often men's. All I ask is that whatever they choose, they try to do it to the best of their ability—and enjoy doing it.—Hope.

June 6, 1930

**KEEP SMILING ANYWAY!**

**Not So Easily Settled**

You are right in saying that laughter and love are more effective tools for child training than switches and scolding. But of course the question is not quite simple even after we accept that fact. In "Homebirds" case, for instance, she has not only the children and her work to consider, but the matter of pleasing an unsympathetic husband. We are all of us torn by many desires, of course; we not only crave to satisfy our housewifely instincts and mother our children in the best possible way, but we want the approval of our husbands, we must cater to the requirements of hired help, we want to ward off the barbed criticisms of neighbors and relatives, we want to earn money, we want time for pleasure and diversion. How to maintain a wholesome balance between all these demands is a problem which is hard to solve. Suppose we just shut our eyes to the mess, and pick up the stubborn little rebel and love him back to sweetness.

There is not a doubt in the world that it is the logical, wholesome thing to do, both for his sake and his mother's. But noon comes and the head of the house is surprised and displeased that the house is not in order and dinner not on the table. "You should have done the work first," or "You ought to just make the children mind, or better still make them help you with the work," is his comment. And the hired man doesn't like to wait for meals. And the neighbor on one side disapproves of your pampering the children while your work waits, while the neighbor on the other side thinks you are too strict with them. Your own mother perhaps thinks you have far too much to do, while your mother-in-law thinks you don't do enough. The missionary society thinks that if you had any religion, you would arrange to get out to the meetings, while Mrs. Stick-to-Work looks with a coldly disapproving eye on any jaunts away from home.

It takes a brave and philosophical soul to disregard all such criticisms. So the greatest problem in child training, after all, is not training the children, but training ourselves to accept the frictions of life as wholesomely, gently and generously as we may. If we could be left alone with our children, with nothing but motherly affection to guide us, we might not be any more successful with them than we are in the midst of skimped and strenuous lives. But as "R. G. K." remarks, "if you can't do everything, keep smiling anyway."—Hope.

# The Household

Address Hope Needham, Drivers Journal, Chicago, Ill. Real name and address must be given, but will be withheld on request.

June 14, 1930

**EMPHASIS AND LEVERS**

Once upon a time I heard a story of a politician who disappointed many of his constituents by voting contrary to their expectations on some matter dealing with the welfare of young people. When these constituents called him to account for the change in his attitude, his explanation was, "The outside pressure was, so strong!" The answer of one of his constituents was, "Where were your inside braces?"



Hope Needham

This story comes to mind in connection with the current discussion in these columns of those two perennial bones of contention, dancing and smoking. And once more I am impressed, as I have been so many times, with the fact that the greatest protection against any poor habit or any wrong-doing is the "inside braces" set up during childhood. The braces must be in place, sound and permanent, well before the "outside pressure" is brought to bear.

And when it comes to establishing the "inside braces" we must decide the method which is best to use. It seems to me the emphasis should be positive, whenever possible. First of all, parents should set the examples of temperance and tolerance which they expect their children to follow. Example is a great positive force, you realize, when you compare its influence with the power of mere words. If you speak quietly to a child you will get a quiet answer. If you shout angrily, "Be still!" you get an echo of your own tone in the retort. If you say to a boy, "Better not smoke," while you have a cigar in your mouth, he will draw the natural conclusion that you do not mean what you say. If you say to a baby, "Don't touch that!" you leave him bewildered, without direction. But if you say, "Take this!" you can give him a harmless object while you quietly remove a hurtful one.

So, as a child grows up, if the emphasis is placed on what to do, the matter of what not to do will largely solve itself. Proper activities will crowd out the temptations for improper ones. If we emphasize strong bodies, good health, sound teeth, steady nerves, firm muscle, interesting work, happy play, we shall have less difficulty with the problems of smoking, drinking and bad companionship. Every lever we can provide our children for developing the best they have in them is a protection against evil, as is pointed out in the following letter from Radical of Iowa.

One lever she mentions having provided for her boys is athletics; another is saving for college. One we have given our boys—I mention it not because it is the strongest or the most important, but because it is one example of setting up plenty of braces before the outside pressure comes—is

that they are each promised \$100 on their 21st birthday if they have used neither tobacco nor liquor up to that time. It is not likely that a time will come when one drink or one smoke will seem worth \$100, and if they do not take the first, they are safe. We have not put the proposition to them as though drinking and smoking were the greatest evils, and if they avoid them they will have no faults. We have merely pointed out that it is hard, almost impossible, for young boys and men to be moderate in the use of drink and tobacco if they once acquire the habit; and with the habit they will not attain quite the size and strength and character that they can without. We have laid down no commands; but the boys know how we feel about the matter, and their voluntary choice is supported and influenced by our general attitude and by the reward. So calmly do they assume that they will fulfill the conditions of that reward, that Sonny remarked the other day, when I told him we couldn't afford to get him something he wanted, "You can take it out of my hundred dollars if you want to." We make no stipulations about their behavior after they are 21, but we hope they will have acquired reason and judgment enough to manage their lives suitably after that.

Ruth Vernon, please don't feel, because of several of us do not agree with you on this subject, that we do not appreciate your sturdy defense of your side. We have stood shoulder to shoulder on too many subjects, we know each other too well to let a difference of opinion divide us. There is nothing more honorable than honest opinion, honestly expressed. As you say, your prejudices are colored by your upbringing. So are all ours. I believe all of us who have taken part in the discussion agree with the famous Voltaire, who said: "I do not agree with a word you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."—Hope.

August 12, 1930

**FARMERS**

**A PHILOSOPHIC LOT**

Prolonged and excessive drought is the most important element of our welfare here in northern Illinois. It is so pronounced that fields and gardens are drying up. Corn is already seriously damaged — and there is still no relief in sight. Letters from some of you in Nebraska and other states indicate that you have at last had relief, probably in time to save the crops. For you we are glad, and for those who are still worse off than



Hope Needham



we are (as is true farther south in our state and farther east than Illinois), we are sorry. But all in all, farmers are a philosophical lot. They continue harvesting and threshing and storing grain, even in the face of discouraging weather and low prices.

Threshing is going to be over before we can turn around, with straw so dry and not even dew to hinder an early start each morning, the work is booming along. Small grain with us is of exceptionally good quality and in many cases the yield is good.

Getting threshing done early is going to leave us more time than we sometimes have to work at odd jobs of building and improving the farmstead. Now is the time when many of us would delight in transplanting and sowing seed for perennials were it not for the excessive dryness of the hard-baked soil. We can at least make plans, and hope for rain. And if rain doesn't materialize, we can still devote our extra hours to the school sewing, curtain making and furnishing up the house. Speaking of perennials, I want to share an interesting flower letter which I have just received from an expert and an enthusiast in answer to some of my amateur questions. It was a personal letter, but I am sure the writer will not object to passing on any information she has given.—Hope.

August 18, 1930

FARM MUSINGS,

OPTIMISTIC AND OTHERWISE

Are Not in Despair

A lot of talk going around these days about hard times, isn't there? Drouth, short crops, unemployment,

stock market crashes, and so on. Threshing was completed in our vicinity without the shocks ever having felt a drop of rain. Fine quality grain we had, too—what there was of it. And now we are all wondering whether the rain which is bound to come some time can possibly save the later crops—corn and soy beans.



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Lots of talk, lots of figuring, lots of difficulty—but in the main I believe our farmers, and I suppose it is about the same with all you readers, are by no means in despair. We are old friends with adversity. Now that other classes are beginning to feel the pinch, we can sympathize. Trouble isn't half so hard to bear when it is spread out among so many. In fact, when it begins to assume the proportions of a country-wide disaster, much of the sting is removed. A great calamity puts us on our mettle, binds us together for mutual protection and help. It may be that we Americans are destined to go through some grievous economic difficulties, but we are not likely to be confronted with such calamities like famine and earthquakes, as many sister-nations have gone through and survived.

Other classes are beginning to be bewildered by conditions. Crashes in values disturb them more than they do farmers, for they have nothing so tangible to hold on to. Wages fall, work lets up, business slackens, the wheels of industry hesitate, and what

substantial footing is left? Values are in a turmoil. But farmers have their old stand-by—work that needs to be done regardless of rates of interest and agitation at the pit. It is up to the farmers now to uphold the morale of the whole country. We are all in a slough of despond together, but we'll clamber out, and the first ones out must help to pull the rest. I dare say the farmers will be the first ones out.

Passed Prosperity On

Back in 1912, in those incredible years of prosperity before the great war, the editor of our paper described the "horn of plenty" of that season—bumper crops and good feeling all around. He said, "Everybody looked to the farms rather than the politicians to give progress a little boost, and the farms have made good. . . . Providence passed prosperity around to the farmers, and the farmers helped it along by putting in a busy season. . . . Greater agricultural wealth will mean an era of unbounded general prosperity. . . . Do not envy the farmer's affluence. He makes prosperity's wheels spin for all the people." Even in this year of threatened crop shortage, if the farmer is a just a little better off than the rest, he can start the wheel to moving. Let's try!

I have just been reading a new book called "Prosperity, Fact or Myth," by Stuart Chase. I was particularly interested in the chapter on farming prosperity, and was encouraged and cheered to read what the author had to say. After painting the darkest side of the picture, by statistics showing how little of the vaunted national prosperity had reached the farmers, he said:

Can Forget Rules

"In the face of this depressing testimony it is pertinent to inquire how farmers continue to exist at all. As a matter of fact many of them have ceased to exist—as farmers.

"For agriculture to show a profit and loss account in red figures may be sad, even tragic, but it is not evidence of extermination. . . . The farmer is carrying on a job far older than the money and credit system. He is handicapped seriously by its rules, but in a pinch he can still defy them. No penalty of sudden extermination hangs over him. If his books do not balance, if his debits exceed his credits, he can throw his books out of the window and go out and pick a mess of peas, or milk the cow. He has a roof over his head, food in his fields, fuel in the wood lot. He can stand a financial siege if he must.

"Farming is a career, not a business. Its roots are very ancient and run profoundly deep. In the face of plowed earth, flowing stream, hillside, meadow, orchard, woodland, all the figures which I have spread upon the record suddenly grow dim. . . . Red figures or black figures, the farmers have gone on plowing and sowing and harvesting.

"Theoretically millions of them are bankrupt, actually most of them have not shared in American prosperity—but they continue to exist, strong, hardworking, reasonably healthy. Because they are farmers. Their strength lies in the soil, not in engraved figures on pieces of paper.

"I am sorry for them, but I do not pity them—sometimes indeed I envy them."—Hope.

September 22, 1930

SCHOOL IN SUMMER

AND VACATION IN WINTER

System Not Perfect

Not many of us feel that the present school system is perfect. We are all willing to experiment with the hope of improving. The question of more school in summer and less in winter is a most interesting one, for it is so complicated and so involved with other factors of child welfare. I imagine the first argument against school in summer would be "It's too hot for the children to study," but that might be open to argument. Children as a rule are not as sensitive to heat as older people; that is, they are not conscious of it making them uncomfortable. For that reason they often overdo in hot weather and exhaust themselves at active play, unless restrained. The lessons and the routine of school might protect them from that danger.

But a more vital argument against summer school occurs to me; whether it is valid or not I leave to you. It is that the school would interfere with a very important part of a country child's education; that is, contact with the farm work. A vacation in the winter would give the children delightful chances for outdoor play and exercise, even in bad weather, for moderately rugged children can stand much bad weather if they are properly clothed. But the farm activities are not so varied nor so interesting during the winter; and isn't it decidedly worth while for the child to get a goodly proportion of his "education" from practical contact with the affairs of life? The modern tendency is more and more toward just that practical point of view. Children are taught less by rules and printed directions and more by actually doing.

In some advanced schools, the children even learn how to figure wall-paper problems by actually papering small play-houses, which have previously been constructed by children who were working other arithmetical problems in this practical way. Such problems are artificial and may easily be overdone, but the country child's summer life is not artificial, and from it he learns many valuable conceptions of life. I imagine most country boys, at least, would make a great outcry if they had to miss hay-making, threshing, silo-filling, and all the miscellaneous adventures of boyhood associated with them.—Hope.

MEMORY GEM

I live for those who love me,  
Whose hearts are kind and true;  
For the heaven that smiles above me,  
And awaits my spirit, too;  
For all human ties that bind me,  
For the task by God assigned me,  
For the hopes not left behind me  
And for the good that I can do.  
Banks.

MEMORY GEM

"Suppose that this vessel," said the skipper with a groan,  
"Should lose her bearing; run away, and bump upon a stone."  
"Suppose she'd shiver and go down, and save ourselves we couldn't."  
The mate replied, "Oh, blow me eyes, suppose again she shouldn't." —Selected.



# The Household

Address Hope Needham, Drivers Journal, Chicago, Ill. Real name and address must be given, but will be withheld on request.

January 8, 1931

After the grand climax, the inevitable, flat letting-down. After the Glorious Christmas, the dull interim, and then—the New Year. As the days grow almost imperceptibly longer, our spirits proportionately rise.

We resume an interest in life; we take stock of past affairs, we look forward to better things, and we begin again. Some of us experience a real spiritual rebirth in actually watching the old year out; some of us specialize in New Year resolutions; most of us delight in winding up old records, answering letters, starting new books and accounts. A few of us will keep up such records meticulously throughout the year and be able to compare them, virtuously, with records past and future. Obedience to those few! Most of us, probably, no matter how ambitiously we begin, will let the records lapse after a few weeks or months—whether it be diaries, household accounts, good resolutions, or what not. But even so, there is a value in making a good beginning; and in the total of the years, may it not be as interesting to compare the beginnings as the whole seasons?

## Celebration Is Delayed

In some households the celebration of New Year may not occur on the mystic date itself, but be a bit delayed, as it was in our house. We have had chickenpox, off and on, for several weeks. That is, when they were off of one, they were on some one else. The boys began it—they caught the disease at school, and the teacher and the other pupils all had an interesting two weeks vacation at the same time; a premature holiday that made Christmas seem an anticlimax. Then Baby Jo and his mother indulged, temperately and with practically no discomfort. And finally the head of the house acquired the germs and was sick with a vengeance; really sick and unmistakably miserable, in spite of the fact that is seemed humorous to most people to learn that a grown-up had such an infantile disease. Altogether, chickenpox and Christmas was so jammed together that we were hardly ready for New Year's day at the proper time. But all's well that ends well, and the chapter is closed unless Ruth add an unexpected epilogue. We have kept her away all these week-ends, hoping she would escape. But as she stayed at grandma's and saw all of us occasionally, though briefly, she may not be entirely safe. If she takes chickenpox, it is likely to be just at the time of her first semester high school examinations.

Due to the early "vacation" our school decided to forego a holiday at Christmas time, and so the house has been quiet and the days have been long. Real tragedy swept near our household just before Christmas and the thought of it make quiet hours more depressing than they usually would be. The "pleasant little maid"



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of whom Pep told you, lost her oldest brother in a tragic automobile accident just before Christmas, and she has stayed with her family ever since. We miss her here and our hearts ache for those so suddenly and gruesomely bereft of a loved one.

## Much Good in Life

During the quiet hours while I work at my typewriter, alone in the house (Little Jo spending the afternoons with Ruth and grandma), the clock ticks so loud and the house stays so orderly that in spite of business, I am vaguely melancholy. Time and again my thoughts wander to that bereaved household, and with a start I recall that in just a little while these rooms of ours will be filled with commotion and noise, while theirs—

There is talk of hard times, but how can hard times hurt us, if only our little brood is safe and well, all of us together? There'll be no complaining about hard times and going without, as long as we can be together. They talk of farm life being hard, so filled with work and drudgery. Remember that old English prayer: "Give me a good digestion, Lord, and also something to digest." Let's paraphrase that and say, "Give me an appetite for work, and then some work to do." No work will seem too hard, as long as we can be together.

As we look back over the past year, we see many failures and petty sorrows and shortcomings, and we hope to rectify many blunders in the days to come. But with a full heart we are thankful that our greatest burden, the illness of our least one, is not a burden at all compared to the burdens some parents must bear.

What a blessed privilege it is to relax, to resolve and to begin again.—  
Hope.

January 14, 1931

## EMMERSON

If you cannot have what you like, try to like what you have.

"And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time.

"A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing

but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius, for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wanted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new ac-



Hope Needham

quaintances, the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years, and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling walls and the neglect of the gardener, is made the banyan of the forest, yielding shade or fruit to wide neighborhoods of men."

## Universally Accepted

A text so magnificent needs no comment or elucidation; indeed, it is presumptuous to elaborate on the theme. Each life will supply its own details, and Emerson's thought will be almost universally accepted as true. By a peculiar coincidence I was seeking this paragraph to re-read it after an interval of several years and to meditate on it in connection with the recent tragic death of a young man who was frequently part of our household. It seemed to me that now I could understand and appreciate it better than I did when I first read it in my younger days. And at the very time I was seeking it, the mail arrived, carrying a copy of it in connection with a long letter from Driftwood. She, you will remember, has in the past ill-starred year met more tragedy and loss than most of us are called upon to bear. She, too, was finding profound truth and comfort in those same lines of Emerson's.

In large matters and small Emerson's proposition works out, almost invariably. There have been times in our family's experience, for instance, when necessary changes in hired men have come at a time that seemed at first disastrous for our welfare—times when the "gude mon" was ill, the children little and much care, and myself entirely unexperienced in managing the farm work, in giving directions and checking up on results. But never has such a change proved as disastrous as we expected; practically every time we secured help which not only was adequate but which widened our experience in interesting and helpful ways. Once the newcomer was a young college boy who had flunked out and was in just the mood to throw off all restraint and conventionality. Sent to the farm for a season of probation, he found himself. He came up to us when we needed him sorely; he was strong and capable and he met the responsibilities put upon him. The situation brought out the best in him. And as for what he contributed to our experience, he not only carried on our worldly business while necessary, but he disclosed to us the psychology of modern youth; taught us that over-sternness of parents and teachers, nagging, forcing a child into the kind of study for which he has no aptitude, is quite as likely to end in his ruination as in his salvation. Some temperaments grow morose and irritable in the presence of criticism, but blossom in the fresh air of free responsibility and appreciation.

## The Seamy Side

Another time it happened that we had to change help at frequent intervals during a whole season, but in the rag-tag procession of vagrants, jail-birds and ex-convicts, there was not one but what contributed a valuable contact. The vicissitudes those men had been through disclosed to us a seamy side of life which we had never known existed, and made us a little more understanding, a little more sympathetic with the down-trodden of the earth.

When our house burned to the ground, after a series of misfortunes, largely due to the post-war deflation, it seemed we had reached the climax and suffered irreparable loss. But if it had not been for that calamity I should never have felt the powerful urge to do something outside the work



of the home; never should have dared for the place which Faith Felgar left vacant, when she finished her valiant course and lay down to rest, a few months after our fire. And if these seeming ills had not occurred my life would have been deprived of the rich and inestimably compensating contact with the hundreds of personalities of this department.

And so it goes with every human life. Sooner or later light is mingled with the gloom.—Hope.

April 24, 1931

### TO BAKE OR

Never content yourself with doing your second best, however unimportant the occasion.

What middle-west farm woman, in her eagerness to economize during these hard times, has not debated in her mind, the question "To bake or not to bake?" My conscience bothered me considerably last year, until finally when autumn came and work was not very pressing in the garden and among the poultry, I decided to tell the



Hope Needham

genial "bread-man" who makes his route three times each week, that he need not stop any more through the winter. I began baking our bread, taking for granted I was being thrifty, without keeping any actual account. Then one Saturday I used every bit of flour I had and so I thought it would be interesting in beginning with a full sack of flour to keep a record of everything that I made from it. This I have just finished, and here are my findings:

Besides bread I baked such things as rolls, pies, cookies, biscuits, a few cakes—the usual line of home baked articles. I computed the cost of these things by the price the bakery man charged when he was stopping here, and they amounted to \$10.20. Then I estimated as nearly as possible the cost of the ingredients I used, and together with \$1.25 for flour they amounted to about \$5.00, leaving a profit of \$5.20. I made no allowance for my time, as it was a part of my job in the preparation of meals. I also made no allowance for fuel, which should be counted, for there are times, though I use a coal range, when more fuel is used than would be otherwise.

### Another Angle

There is still another thing to consider. My family is small, and it took me almost two months to make that \$5.20. Had my baking been larger, I could have saved on fuel, for it takes just as much heat to bake a small baking as an ovenful. And it takes just about as much time to say nothing about the quality of the finished product, for many women have told me and I have found it true, that it is much easier to make good bread when a large quantity is made.

I believe that most of the saving that is made by baking at home is made on other articles than bread, and I believe most farm women bake their pies, cookies, etc. No one likes good home made bread better than I do, and it gives me a feeling of genuine pleasure when my bread is good, but once in a while something goes wrong somewhere during the process,

and a poor baking of bread is a keen disappointment.

### Just as Wholesome

I see no reason why baker's bread should not be just as wholesome as home made. There are points in which it even excels, as in keeping fresh, and in making toast. In summing up I should say that the baking question is an individual one among homemakers. No rule can be made to fit all homes, or even any two homes. The woman with a large family probably can well afford to bake bread, while the woman with a small family, who likes poultry and garden work, probably can profitably buy her bread, at least during the summer season. As for me, during the coming busy season, I have almost made up my mind to let the bread man bring me my "staff of life," while I am out in the garden sunshine cultivating my vitamins.

The bread which we buy is satisfactory, but nobody can bring me fresh vegetables like I can raise at a price I can afford to pay. The time I would use in baking bread would practically take care of a garden. And in gardening I am not only engaged in a healthy exercise but am laying up a store of health and vitality for my family for the whole year.

### Tabulation

	Retail Price	
22 loaves bread	.....	\$1.40
4½ dozen rolls	.....	.54
5 dozen parkerhouse rolls	.....	.60
16 pies	.....	4.00
2 dozen cup cakes	.....	.40
2½ dozen date bars	.....	.75
2½ dozen baking powder biscuits	.....	.15
2 dozen muffins	.....	.15
3 cakes	.....	1.50
2½ dozen frosted creams	.....	.50
2 dozen cookies	.....	.20

\$10.19

### Home Cost

Flour	.....	\$1.25
Butter	.....	.60
Eggs	.....	.60
Milk, baking powder, flavoring, soda, salt, fruit, nuts, frosting	.....	1.75
Sugar	.....	.81

\$5.01 5.01

Difference ..... \$5.18  
—Mrs. Elmer Brandes, Illinois.

July 8, 1931

In "Aunt Lemon's" straightforward article recently regarding the training and educating of children there was

much to which we could all say "amen." With her main thesis most of us will agree—namely, that habits of industry must be formed in early childhood; but of course in the details opinions will vary. Some of her words regarding education, for instance, open up a chance for comment.

She suggests taking the child into the farm business at an early age as an actual partner. "How about the child's education then?" she says. "Must not this of necessity be neglected if he has a real business to claim his time?" And apparently she thinks it will not.



Hope Needham

"High schools and colleges are luxuries," she states. "Anyone who can get the thought from the printed page and has the will to do so can get an adequate education along almost any line he chooses.... Our strong men and women of the past were not picked up on the shoulders of the public and carried to maturity. The real men of all ages have been self-made.... Educational institutions monopolize our children's world, requisitioning all their available time, if not in study in games and social functions."

Now of course the old saying holds true: there are two kinds of education, that which is given you and that which you get for yourself. But that does not mean that the only education you get for yourself is apart from books and formal courses of instruction, in spite of all the jokes about the school of experience and the university of hard knocks. Getting an education is a job in itself, especially in technical lines. Only the exceptional few will fight their way through to greatness without schooling; the great mass of average people will not. "Those who can and will" get an "adequate education" by reading alone are rare indeed; I doubt if it can ever be done in lines involving chemistry, mathematics, metallurgy, music, electricity, and so on.

### A Handicap

Sometimes we hear people say, "If I could afford to send my children to college I wouldn't do it. Let them earn their way and they will appreciate it more." Such people never realize the strain they put upon those children. Studying is just as much real work as taking in washings. A child who has been properly trained in habits of work and concentration and judgment will apply those lessons to the genuine work of getting an education. The hours he has free from study should rightfully be spent in "games and social functions," for all human beings should have some time for recreation. With laboratory and library work in addition to classes, there will not be an undue number of those hours for the right kind of student.

Farm children are specially blessed in being well prepared for the ordeal of advanced schooling, for most of them have learned the importance of regularity and the necessity of work. By the time they are 10 years old practically all farm boys and girls have regular chores to do and help in necessary seasonal work such as corn plowing, cherry picking, and so on.

We give due honor to those exceptional few who must earn their education expenses entirely by their own efforts, just as we honor those who fight against ill-health or any other involuntary obstacle. But it is as unreasonable to put unnecessary obstacles in the way of an education as it would be to start our boys to work in the field with old wooden walking plows and other obsolete equipment so they would "appreciate" the modern inventions.

### Valued Too Much

Work is a splendid thing for any one. But I sometimes think farming people emphasize its value too much, honoring the "practical" and ignoring whole realms of the intellectual. Many farm boys who, with their rugged health, steady nerves and good habits would make the finest doctors, lawyers, technical experts, architects, or artists, never have a chance to develop their real abilities or to know what profession they would enjoy most as a life work, because they have been enmeshed too early in the processes of earning a living and building up a farm. I would not want our children to be farmers because they know nothing



ing else to do or are fitted for nothing else. If they choose to farm I want it to be because, knowing many other possibilities, they find greatest satisfaction in this. I hope some of them will farm, but I also hope some of them will not, for a diversified family is much more interesting than a one-line group. "The secret of happiness," says a modern philosopher, "is this: let your interests be as wide as possible, and let your reactions to things and people be friendly rather than hostile." So I would like my children's interests to be wide enough to include other means of livelihood than farming and to be appreciative of and friendly to many other modes of life. Any life is the fuller for including both labor and thought, for, as Ruskin put it, "it is only by labor that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labor can be made happy."

Aunt Lemon's reference to "white collar jobs" brings another thought to mind. All those who look on education as a means of getting a white-collar job, meaning by that a soft snap, are bound to be disappointed. In the first place, many white-collar jobs are more nerve-racking, monotonous and unremunerative than farming. And in the second place, the purpose of an education is not to make money or to get out of work but to enrich life. Those who acquire it for its own sake usually make more money afterward, but that is incidental. Those who acquire it purely for the sake of the money have missed the whole spirit of the undertaking; they fail to make more money immediately, so they complain that an education is no good and stop trying to learn. Their interests settle into grooves and their earning capacities likewise. The truly educated continue their education to the end of their lives, acquiring new interests, making new contacts. The earning capacity often increases in proportion; but even if it does not they have the satisfaction they sought in life—Hope.

April 9, 1932

**TWINS**

Dear Hope and Household Friends: We enjoy the letters and appreciate all the helps which appear in the Household department. I have an unusual request. I am making a scrap book of pictures (cut out of any paper) of twins, triplets and quadruplets. Would the Household readers please watch for pictures and clip them out for my scrap book? If you send just one or two at the time it will take too much postage. Please wait until you have several collected and I will pay the postage.



Hope Needham

The origin of this unusual hobby was because when our "little sister" arrived Dec. 16, 1928, it happened to be two little sisters and a little brother. They are now past 3 years old and are sturdy and full of pep. I am making this scrap book for a keepsake for them.

Thanking you for your trouble, I am, yours respectfully—Mrs. Crist Estergard, Callaway, Neb.

**Hope's "Twin School"**

This unusual request provides me with a pretext for boasting of our "twin school," the very school where my own two boys are going now. Out of 16 pupils there are only four "singles"; the rest all come in pairs, as follows: Albert and Alberta Rush, Wilbert and Ernest Stevenson, Waneta and Vaneta Austin, Louise and Lou Eleanor Gaff, Victor and Vernon Rush, Charles and Charlene Rush. The four singles are Franklin Carter, Clarence Thorson, Mildred Smith and Robert Brandes. The story makes a good one as it stands, but for the sake of strict honesty, I must admit that not all the pairs are actual twins, though they are named so that it would give that impression and the children are near enough of an age and size to look like twins. Our actual total of twins is only three sets, but even that is unusual, don't you think?—Hope.

November 22, 1932

**"LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY!"**

That motto of English Montanian's, taken from the old Christmas carol, touches the heart in times like these.

"God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay!" For a good many months letters coming to this desk have reflected directly or indirectly the well-known depression. Here's a typical one: "We're not so bad off as some, but it hurts to see daddy working so many hours to keep from hiring help. I've burned nothing but cobs for months and months and it isn't because I enjoy picking the smelly things up and hauling them to the house. But I don't complain, as he can't help it. I never used to have to do such things as I do now. Haven't bought either laundry or toilet soap for goodness knows when. Usin' cooked cereal altogether—cheaper and as good for the children. Eating Leghorn cockerels all the time meat's gone and can't afford to buy. Drive mules everywhere we can to save gas. So glad we have a bad road when it rains; don't need look further for an alibi."

"But we've lots to be thankful for: Three healthy, happy kiddies that don't know what depression means. The baby is past 2 and no more in sight another cause for thanksgiving. And we've lots of potatoes and garden stuff, so we needn't complain."

An old, familiar tune, eh? In our school district we shifted last year's books around among the families so that scarcely a new book needed to be bought. When cold weather approached, we did the same with last year's overshoes. More cotton stockings are being worn than were seen in years; and my aren't they comfortable when the cold winds blow? A little boy in the district was rushed to the hospital with peritonitis, at the point of death, the doctors thought. He has lived for nearly six weeks since then and can soon be brought home. We were all so busy sending in food for the six children and the daddy left at home, helping clean the house occasionally, keeping the children here and there overnight, etc.,



Hope Needham

that we completely forgot to grieve over the price of corn. Seemed as though saving that child's life was more important, some way.

**Affliction Came First**

I believe that educator was right who declared recently that the real affliction and calamity in our nation preceded the "depression." The really bad time was that period when so many were getting something for nothing, living selfishly, grasping for more. Then it seemed so much more important "to have" than "to be." We're gradually coming back, says that educator, from the ideal of a life of comfort and convenience to the ideal of a better life. We may not have so many material things, but we have friendship in good measure, pressed down and running over.

All of us are bound to face tragedies of greater or less poignancy before we come to a real era of peace and happiness. It will do no good to belittle them or pretend they are not there. But, on the other hand, we must not let them get out of proportion for in most lives sorrow and trouble are only a part of the picture. Let us rejoice in the fortitude of those who keep on climbing, no matter how weary and bewildered they become. "Kindness in others' troubles, courage in your own." After all, there's much to be thankful for, even in 1932. Let nothing you dismay!—Hope.

December 23, 1932

**HOPE'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

Outdoors a full moon and zero weather and snow as smooth as frosting on birthday cake, and the ethereal

blue of daylight pushing the silver-gray of night away. Indoors the cheerful yellow glow of lights and a singing kettle and steaming breakfast sausage and pancakes, and one contented family realizes that we are really in the midst of Christmas—coming. A houseful of children is a great help in bringing the spirit of the season to a boil.



Hope Needham

We are more numerous than common at our house this year, for two little nieces of 6 and 8 supplement our own "stair-steps" of 15, 12, 10 and 3. To hear the chatter and the merrymaking over Christmas plans, no one would know that a you-know-what in ten letters beginning with D had been hanging around these parts for a long time. Money makes so little difference to children if the festival spirit holds sway.

We have drawn names so that each person is to get one and give one Christmas gift. That plan simplifies the planning and also saves mon— Here, here, we intended not to drag in that old bugbear again! Oh, well, why not simply be frank about the matter. Everyone's hard up this year, so if we have any Christmas at all, it must be largely a matter of the spirit.

We've been re-reading that old favorite, "Little Women," lately. And we are struck by the contrast in the attitude toward poverty there and in some modern books where authors rave at it with bitter invective. In "Little Women" poverty is nothing to get hot about, nothing to resent with violence and spitefulness. It's just



something to be met with humor and courage, like the weather, or growing-up, or other natural phenomena. Just being poor needn't be sordid, needn't be a tragedy. The real tragedy is for those who do not have work that must be done day by day. We who have children and chores to look after are lucky. Consider the poor in towns and cities, who dare not take a few days' job at any kind of work because it would remove them from the relief rolls for the rest of the uncertain winter. Theirs is a real tragedy, for the situation is doing something profoundly relaxing to their characters, in spite of all they can do. Their pride and ambition is slackening and perhaps can never be rebuilt. We must do what we can, as soon as we can, to provide that great middle-class body of citizens not only with sustenance but with work. In the meantime, let us who have a place to work appreciate it, and do our tasks with heartiness.

Perhaps this doesn't sound very Christmas-y. However, I'm sure when the big day comes, every one of you will supply the festive spirit plentifully. Kindness in others' troubles, courage in our own makes a good foundation on which to build that wanted attitude of "Good will to men!"

"Unbar your heart this evening,  
And keep no stranger out,  
Take from your soul's great portal  
The barrier of doubt.  
To humble folk and weary  
Give hearty welcoming.  
Your breast shall be tomorrow,  
The cradle of a King." —Hope.

#### CO-OPERATION

This is the law of the jungle,  
As old and as true as the sky,  
And the wolf that shall keep it  
shall prosper,  
But the wolf that shall break it  
must die.

As the ivy that girdles the tree  
trunk,  
The law runneth forward and  
back;  
For the strength of the pack is  
the wolf,  
And the strength of the wolf is  
the pack. —Selected.

#### MEMORY GEM

He came to my desk with quiver-  
ing lip,  
The lesson was done.  
"Have you a new leaf for me, dear  
Teacher?  
I have spoiled this one!"  
I took his leaf, all soiled and blot-  
ted,  
And gave him a new one, all un-  
spotted,  
Then into his tired heart I smiled;  
"Do better now, my Child!"

I went to the throne, with trem-  
bling heart.  
The year was done.  
"Have you a New Year for me,  
dear Master?  
I have spoiled this one!"  
He took my year, all soiled and  
blotted,  
And gave me a new one, all un-  
spotted,  
Then into my tired heart he  
smiled:  
"Do better now, my Child!"  
—Selected.

## ASK TROOPS TO OPEN IOWA ROADS

**Sheriff at Sioux City Makes  
Request After Strikers  
Stone Deputies**

1932

[By The United Press]

SIoux CITY, Ia., Sept. 16.—Sheriff John A. Davenport today telephoned Gov. Dan W. Turner asking that the militia be sent here after a critical situation developed in the farm strike blockade of highways leading to the city.

Gov. Turner, who previously had refused requests for the national guard, did not immediately indicate what action he would take.

Sheriff Davenport called on the governor for aid after the picket forces lured a group of his deputies into a trap and stoned them severely. The men were stoned in retaliation for arrest of 15 pickets by deputies yesterday in a foray in which night clubs were swung freely and a road-side picket camp burned.

#### Fears More Violence

Davenport informed the governor he feared further violence unless militia were sent into the area. He said his force of deputies was insufficient to prevent renewed outbreaks which he believed imminent due to the high feeling aroused by the clash of deputies and farmers.

The pickets, he said, were in an angry mood due to organized efforts of the sheriff's forces to disperse them.

Davenport said the picketers resorted to a ruse to get the sheriff's deputies out on the highways. One of the pickets telephoned the sheriff's office saying help was needed by truckers to get through the picket lines. Four carloads of deputies responded and passed unchallenged through the picket lines. Finding no one in need of help they turned about and were met by the pickets with a hail of missiles. Windshields were broken and deputies bruised.

#### Sheriff Angered

The incident so angered the sheriff that he immediately telephoned the governor declaring that "the situation here is beyond my control."

"I call on you to open our highways for a resumption of business throughout the Sioux City territory."

The pickets seek to raise the price of farm products by an embargo of produce on the local market.

The governor was reached at his home in Des Moines. He said he still hoped to settle the matter without resorting to the use of militia and announced he planned to confer with Davenport again today.

#### Businessmen Protest

Approximately 300 businessmen attended protest meeting here last night at which speakers declared the blockades on Sioux City highways have cost the city thousands of dollars daily in lost trade.

The mayor and city officials went to Des Moines this week and conferred with Turner, bringing back a plan for ridding the highways of pickets by combined use of county and city officers. The campaign was only well

started yesterday, however, when Davenport evidently decided it was too much of a job for local authorities.

Picketing has been going on intensively since a meeting of mid-western governors here last week-end. A meeting of the executive committee of the holiday association is scheduled here Sunday. Tentative plans call for resumption of the strike Sept. 21. The picketing now in progress is independent of the strike leaders.

## STRIKE DATE SET BY HOLIDAY ASS'N

**Leaders Set Wednesday as Date  
for Resumption of Midwest  
Farm Strike**

1932

[By The United Press]

SIoux CITY, Iowa, Sept. 19.—A general strike order was issued to midwest farmers today by the National Farmers' Holiday association recommending that, effective Wednesday, all nonperishable farm produce be withheld from market and that highway blockades be lifted.

In an appeal directed to all agricultural producers of the middle west, the holiday association directors urged that farmers sell no more grain and live stock until prices reach the production cost level.

The association suggested that the embargo on dairy products, poultry and perishable produce be lifted for 30 days to be reinstated at the end of that time if the general strike has not succeeded in its objective.

#### Tell Farm Problem

Pickets who have maintained a virtual blockade in the Sioux City area for several weeks were commended for their work in "bringing the farm problem to the attention of the entire nation."

However, the association said, it felt "such voluntary and spontaneous picketing of the highways has served its purpose, therefore be it resolved that we earnestly request that further voluntary picketing of highways be immediately discontinued."

Local co-operative organizations to enforce the strike order were suggested to replace picketing. Community organizations to resist foreclosure of farm mortgages were also asked.

#### Blockade Lifted

Indications were that pickets would follow the suggestion of the holiday association. The blockade here was lifted. Two groups of picketers pledged themselves to place sentinels along the highway to see there was no hindrance of entry to the city.

Sheriff John Davenport, who last week asked Gov. Dan A. Turner for national guardsmen to aid in controlling the situation, announced he had released all his special deputies and would rely on the farmers to prevent further picketing.

Those signing the holiday association resolution were President Milo Reno, Des Moines, Iowa; E. N. Hammerquist, vice president, Farmingdale, S. D.; and John N. Bosch, secretary-treasurer, Atwater, Minn.



1933-1934

# The Household

Address Hope, Needham, Drivers Journal, Chicago, Ill. Real name and address must be given, but will be withheld on request.

January 16, 1933

## SHE DESERVED A HEARING

"Now, why in the world," writes one of our circle, "did you let Illinois Bittersweet bring religious argument into our midst? It does no one good, and only stirs up bitter feeling." Well, perhaps we should explain briefly why we allowed it. We would not have permitted her to begin a discussion of comparative values of the different creeds, rituals or dogmas; that would indeed stir up rancor. But her letter was the outcry of a smitten soul in rebellion against fate, and as such deserved as much of a hearing as those ill-treated wives, misunderstood daughters-in-law and harassed mothers of many babies, who all have been granted the comfort of their cry. We can complain of faults in politicians and administration of government without being traitors to our country, and so Illinois Bittersweet can rail against human flaws in the organized church without being out of place.



Hope Needham

Psychologically it was good for her to express her rebellion. And psychologically it was good for many orthodox believers to be shocked by it. Too many individuals take their religion for granted. They inherit it and never really examine it. To my mind, no religion is vital until it has been shaken and tested and tried in the furnace of doubt and criticism. Many of the unorthodox have a finer, sweeter, truer faith than some of the smug church-goers who simply attend from habit.

"And would you mind telling us your own attitude toward the church?" concludes the same writer.

### Two Views

Some individuals feel that they cannot attend a denominational church, for conscience's sake, without first subscribing entirely to every point in the creed and ritual of that church. Others of us believe that such stand-

ardization is not necessary. We cannot all see alike, but we can be in harmony in the spirit if not in the letter. On that basis we can conscientiously attend church for the benefit we can get out of it and for the good we can do, even though there are as many variations in faith in the congregation as there are individuals.

You remember in "Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years," how one of the babies used to come tugging at her skirts saying, "Mother, I've got a tiredness, I want to be took." He wasn't tired the way he just wanted to sit down somewhere and rest, or go to bed and sleep; he wanted to be gathered up in those loving arms, where he could relax in utter trust in the strength and sympathy of his support. So we grown-ups sometimes get a tiredness that can't be conquered by changing occupations or just by resting. We need something more than that. The church is, or can be and should be, the sort of place we need—a sanctuary and refuge, a place where we can go when we get a spiritual tiredness and "be took."

Many of us need such a place these days.—Hope.

### MEMORY GEM

To every man there openeth a way and ways and a way;  
And the high soul climbs the high way—and the low soul gropes the low;  
And in between, on the misty flats, the rest drift to and fro.  
But to every man there openeth a high way and a low  
And every man decideth which way his soul shall go.

—John Oxenham.

January 30, 1933

## WEEK'S MENUS FOR

## ECONOMY AND BALANCE

### Suggested Market Order

The market order for this week's menus is suggested by Inez S. Willson, home economist. It is planned for a family of five, two adults and three children. The prices quoted here are ones which prevailed in Chicago markets during December. They may vary with different markets and in different localities:

#### Meats

Pork shoulder roast—3 pounds	\$ .30
Ground beef—1½ pounds	.15
Breast of lamb—2 pounds	.10
Lamb stew—2 pounds	.10
Beef pot-roast—2½ pounds	.30
Beef liver—2 pounds	.14
Pork heart—2 pounds	.20
Bacon squares—1 pound	.11
Salt pork—½ pound	.05

#### Vegetables

Potatoes—20 pounds	.20
Carrots—3 pounds	.15
Onions—3 pounds	.10
Tomatoes—3 No. 2 cans	.25
Cabbage—2 pounds	.10
Spinach—2 pounds	.15
Beets—1 No. 2 can	.08
Turnips—3 pounds	.10
Beans, navy—1 pound	.05

#### Cereals and Breads

Bread (half white and half whole wheat)—10 loaves	.50
Flour—2 pounds	.11
Rolled oats—1 pound	.05
Cornmeal—1 pound	.03
Tapioca—1 package	.09
Macaroni—1 package	.07
Rice—1 pound	.05

#### Fruits

Oranges—5	.12
Apples—4 pounds	.19
Prunes—1 pound	.06
Bananas—5	.10
Apricots—1 pound	.15
Raisins—½ pound	.06

#### Milk

Milk—14 quarts	1.26
Milk, evaporated—14 "tall" cans	.79

#### Eggs

Eggs—½ dozen	.17
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#### Fats

Lard—2 pounds	.11
Butter—½ pound	.15
Butter substitute—½ pound	.08

#### Sweets

Sugar, granulated—2 pounds	.13
Sugar, brown—2 pounds	.15

#### Miscellaneous

Coffee—½ pound	.09
Seasonings	.20
Cod-liver oil for children	.14

Total.....\$7.48



February 24, 1933

SNOWED IN

Tuesday, Feb. 7. Snowed in! And the storm still raging. The snow began suddenly yesterday afternoon,

just about the time school was out, and within half an hour was flying so thick that one couldn't see ten feet through it. I got out of the car to get our children and also picked up the little boy who lives beyond us. We took him home, and it was a thrilling three-mile drive through the swirling flakes as thick as walls around us. The



Hope Needham

wind and snow continued all night, so that we have three and four-foot drifts already and by night they will be much deeper. Strange, but in pictures one sometimes sees snow drifted right against buildings up to the window sills and higher. Here the snow stops five or six feet from the building abruptly, and the space between the drift and the house is swept almost bare. Is it just the way the wind is blowing, do you suppose, or do drifts always stop short of obstructions, like baffled animals halted in their tracks and afraid to approach nearer? I've heard that a hole on the prairie will never be filled with snow, that the wind will whirl and swirl and keep it bare.

The cow tester is snowed in with us. We are always fortunate in having some wayfarer stalled with us when a storm comes on. It gives an extra fillip of adventure to the occasion, for we never know what sparks we may strike from new personalities when we are stranded together. That gives us a household of eight—Daddy, mother, the tester, the "big boys," 12 and 11, the little nieces, 8 and 6, and the precious baby, nearly 4. If the daughter of the house had only been snowed in with us the circle would have been complete. But we took her back to high school (she is a junior now, you know) Sunday afternoon, in the brightest mildest weather you ever saw. We were talking of yard cleaning, shrub planting, and such remote subjects then. Now it looks as though it would be a long time before we would be digging in earth. Except for a cold spell before Christmas we have had a mild and spring-like winter, not even enough cold weather to butcher.

Popcorn It Is

Well the men and boys have done the morning chores, and we have had breakfast and tidied up the house, and what now? The children suggest popcorn. Odd to make popcorn in the forenoon—but what's the difference? The whole world seems topsy-turvy anyway, so popcorn it is. Candy, too? Well, let's take stock of our stores. In case we are snowed in for several days we may run short of some items. And of course sugar is one of them. Taffy is permitted, or any candy that can be made with sorghum or honey, but we must treasure the sugar until we see how long we are house-bound.

Reading? What's there to read? Unfortunately, all the magazines except a few parents' magazines have just been sent on to neighbors. Lots of old dog-eared classics on the book shelves, but they don't appeal to the younger generation. Card games, dominoes, magic tricks, chemical ex-

periments—new activities suggest themselves, and groups shift and form according to the interest. I've read somewhere that mathematicians have figured out how many different ways in which eight people could be seated at a dinner; some thousands of combinations, it seems. We have eight people here, not just to be seated at one meal but to be entertained all day, and I believe we have hit on all those different thousands of combinations already. Every one is happy and cheerful and more or less thrilled in this unreal, disembodied world. Time seems to stand still, and yet the meals seem to come awfully close together.

The big minstrel show for tonight has been postponed a week. There'll be no mail today, and the radio isn't working. The big envelopes containing next week's installments for this department lie lonesomely on the desk, waiting their chance to get on their way.

Today seems like a queer unrelated bit of life to set into the midst of our placid days. There is something magical about it, like those palaces the geni produced on an instant's notice, and eliminated just as quickly. Today will remain as a strange, treasured jewel in our memories.—Hope.

February 25, 1933

THE BLIZZARD RAGES

Wednesday, Feb. 8.—Ten below zero this morning; the wind is still blowing and it is hard to tell whether snow is still falling or just whirling around from drift to drift. The men and boys came home from chores with frostbitten spots on their cheeks and noses. Speaking of men, we are truly lucky to have our husky young cow tester with us, for he is a big help with the chores, now that our own hired man cannot get here.



Hope Needham

The teacher tried to get to school, but stopped here exhausted, just one-third of the distance. So there'll be no school today. That gives us one more person to work into our mathematical groupings, and what a good time we do have! More popcorn, of course. And speaking of popcorn. They say everything comes to him who waits. For years I have longed for lovely rich-piled Wilton velvet carpets on my floors, and furnishings to match. Now don't think I am going to say that those things have suddenly come to me. Far from it! What I started to say is, that at last the time has come when I am actually glad I haven't them! Think of the worry it would be to have fresh buttered popcorn in such quantities in the same house with a mob of romping children and those choice possessions, all mixed in together! Truly thankful I am, for once, that we haven't much that can be spoiled. Roll up the scatter rugs, let the popcorn fall where it may, brush it up occasionally, and on with the fun!

Time for Experiments

Shut away from the ordinary routine of life, this is an ideal time for experiments. Yesterday I set a potato-water started for bread and set sponge last night. So this morning we took a portion of the sponge and

made soda crackers. Well, we ate them. They were, as we used to say of the poor soldiers' rations, clean and wholesome if not palatable. We don't know just why they didn't turn out better. Perhaps we didn't pound them enough, or perhaps too much, or perhaps we shouldn't have had quite so many hilarious cooks beating tattoos in different tempos over the dough. The next time I try to make soda crackers will be when the rest of the family has gone off to a considerable distance on a picnic or something.

Another experiment was rug-making from silk hose—more successful in some ways, although, like the little boy who started to draw a picture of his daddy and wound up by calling it a pump, I have decided to call my "rug" a "chair-seat," and be done with it, for it may be many a moon before I have either time or stockings to make it larger. These stockings had been accumulating for some time; I craved to try my hand at making them up, but as may surmise, I find little time for such handiwork since this department is part of my job. I had dreaded particularly the task of cutting the hose into strips. So today I simply omitted that part and went right into the braiding (they were a bit thick to handle with a crochet hook!) Simply snipped off the heels, soles and toes, so that the stocking tapered off at that end. Cut off the hems if they were cotton, spread them out to single thickness where they were silk.

Sorted by Colors

Laid them out on the table by colors, shading from light to dark, and laying the tapered ends all one direction. Then with the help of little Paula, who held the end of the braid taut while I worked and told her stories, we started in with the braiding. Fitting the tapered end of a fresh stocking into the hem end of the one before it, kept the braid practically even throughout. The work went quickly and smoothly, and we had our chair-seat finished in a couple of hours. The natural shades of the stockings blended beautifully. I doubt if I would consider dyeing them, even if I had plenty of time.

Trying to telephone the Chicago office to tell them that it was still impossible to mail the installments, we discovered that a wire had snapped somewhere, so we are teetotally cut off from the world. Strange how serenely we can trundle on without contact. At a time like this it is easier to understand a hermit's contentment. Though I would never want to be shut off from the world without something to read!

With the wind as strong as it is, there is probably not much being done to clear the roads. Around our place the men and boys have shoveled out paths where they are needed, but they fill up and have to be opened again in a few hours. We have no way of knowing whether our vicinity is alone in being snowbound or whether the whole country is in the grip of the storm.—Hope.

MEMORY GEM

Not for thee the dull jar of the loom and the wheel,  
The gliding of shuttles, the ringing of steel;  
But the old voice of waters, of bird and of breeze,  
The dip of the wild fowl, the rustling of trees!

—Whittier.



February 27, 1933

**SNOWBOUND BUT HAPPY**

Thursday, Feb. 9.—Twenty-two de- grees below zero! B-r-r-r! That's the coldest temperature my personal ex- perience has ever reached. The wind has gone down and the world is dazzling white with mountainous drifts in ev- ery direction. Spots in the fields and yards are completely bare, but, ironically, snow is laid with a heavy hand wherever human beings want to go. The road machine will never be able to negotiate such drifts. Sturdy teams of horses and shovels wielded by men will have to break the first track through. But it is so cold that there will probably not be much work today. It looks as though this would be the longest tie-up we have ever gone through. But provender is holding out well; we have plenty of fuel; our house is steadfast, and all is well. So far as we have discovered, none of the live stock is injured, none of the stored vegetables and fruits have frozen. It was too cold for the boys to get out, so they have drawn lots for helping in the house. We had the house in order before the men got home from chores; in order, all ready to wreck again as soon as breakfast was over.

Wilbert, the 12-year-old, drew the living room for his share. He is de- cidedly thorough in his work; no cor- ners were slighted. He dug out dust from behind radiators and behind the piano, dumped out the toy chest and cleaned it from end to end. To the very limit of his fair and just portion of the house he cleaned thoroughly— but not an inch farther. Don't think for a minute that he would brush up the hall, just as a little extra gener- ous touch. The living-room was in his bond, and by his bond he swore.

**Contrasts**

By contrast, Sonny, the second boy, who drew the dining-room for his al- lotment, set cheerfully but casually to work. Straightened up the papers and magazines which had been left on the sideboard last night, pushed a couple of piles of papers on mother's desk a few inches to one side, touched the furniture with a sketchy dust-rag, swiped up the floor with the first tool he got hold of that would do the work, and strolled smiling to the kitchen ready to help some one else just as cheerfully, so everyone could be ready to start some game. Wilbert, the methodical, appropriated a complete set of implements before he started his task; broom, floor brush, dust mop, dust cloths, etc., but anything that is left in the broom closet is O. K. with Sonny—he just goes and gets something when he gets far enough along in the work to notice that he needs it.

The little girls are kitchen maids. Paula, the 8-year-old, is an unusually helpful and dependable little lady. She will wipe the dishes, serve the cereal, set the table, carry on the hot dishes, or do any little chore required. She is ambitious to learn to bake and is quite skillful about it. The smaller sister, Caroline, 6 years old, low voiced and deliberate, is just as willing to help when necessary, but when it falls to her lot to play with Jo instead of



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doing housework, it seems to me I see a faint gleam of relief in her dark eyes.

Dear little Jo, who will soon be 4, though is so small that he seems younger, loves to help whenever the rest are helping, and one of his fa- vorite ways, designed by himself, is to have a chair set up by the sink and pass one wet article at a time from the draining pan to the one who is wiping dishes. It slows up the process most ludicrously, but he feels that he is an important link in the chain, so we let him do it. Maybe we spoil him—but it is hard to be strict or impatient with the one you have nearly lost.—Hope.

February 28, 1933

**THE PROBLEM OF FOOD**

Friday, Feb. 10—Much warmer to- day; quite a summery temperature— only 10 below. Gracious! Ten days ago the thought of zero weather would have sent cold chills down our spine, but since yesterday we are grateful for even 10 below! So quickly does the human race adjust itself to hardships. That's why the farmers still hang on; hard times could be so much worse that by compar- ison they are reason- ably well off.

Yesterday we thought much of the folks who are on the relief list in our township. Un- til now a charity case in our vicinity has been a rarity, but now we have a good many families on relief, espe- cially a group in the edge of the township who really belong to the ad- joining town (or shall I call it a city?) Many of these people have been out of work for two years now (in normal times they work in factories). They have not suffered particularly, because they have garden space and are thrifty about storing up food for win- ter, but odd jobs are getting scarcer and scarcer, and one can't live indef- initely without any cash at all. So they have had to apply for relief.

**83 Cents in Cash**

Now, by actual count, during one recent week we ourselves only made a cash outlay of 83 cents for food— but we had not only canned fruits and vegetables, but stored roots, corn meal, lard, meat, poultry, eggs, milk and cream and butter, all produced right on the farm in large enough quantities to support us. These people have smaller spaces to raise food, very few of them can raise live stock or keep a cow, so that they must buy a larger proportion of food. How do you suppose they can manage on the small allotments which can be given them? And when we consider fam- ilies farther inside the city limits, where there has been no opportunity at all for garden space and storage of food, we wonder still more. And yet, larger allotments cannot be made. The farmers who are paying the taxes to support the needy are many of them losing their farms and all they pos- sess; how can they bear any more taxation?



Hope Needham

It is a problem which is hard to solve. There will be much suffering before matters are settled, and all we can do, apparently, is to go blunder- ing along trying what seems to be the best system available. I have great sympathy for those who are trying to administer relief justly, even as I have for those who must accept the meager rations that can be offered.

The men are starting to open up some of the roads. Neighbors have got this far in bod-leds, but report that it is hard to get through and that some miles, on each side of us, can't be traversed by horse or by sled. They think by tomorrow, if the weather moderates, they can take a sledload of men and shovels and shovel their way to the village four miles away to get supplies for all of us who need them.—Hope.

March 2, 1933

**CELEBRATING AT HOME**

Sunday, Feb. 12. The thermometer is still climbing. It is a beautiful day, but we can't go anywhere. A couple of miles between us and the church are utterly im- passable yet, and the chores take so long that we can't be ready to go by bobsled the extra miles we would need to travel to approach the church from the other side.

So we are hav- ing a quiet little Lincoln celebra- tion all to our- selves. The teacher is with us, and that makes it seem a little more festive than if we had just the family. Roast chicken and its usual accompaniments, home- made ice cream and angel-food cake will be the order of events. It's pretty nice to have a couple of boys big enough and ambitious enough to take complete charge of the ice-cream. When you have raised boys to that status, you feel that you have ac- complished something solid for your country, and you can (temporarily) rest on your oars.

Last time we made ice cream, I must tell you—it was Wilbert's turn to manage, and he decided that it would be nice to freeze the strawberry sauce right in the cream. We make up raw fresh strawberry sauce in season by crushing the berries with twice their bulk of sugar and sealing it up for winter use. We all like the sauce used like a strawberry sundae, but it did seem like a good idea just to freeze it all together, so at the last minute we dumped it in. The result was lovely in texture but much, much too sweet. I tell this as a warning to other little 12-year-old boys and their mothers, to decide the question before they have aded any sugar to the usual mixture.

Tomorrow we'll have mail for the first time in a week. Not that the mail-man can get to us—far from it! But the men have arranged by phone to meet him at a certain village some four miles away. They will go in a bobsled and bring back mail for all of us along the way. Sonny thinks they had better take one sled for the the Household mail and one sled for the rest—but unless I miss my guess, the rest of you will be shut in just about the same as we are, and the mail won't be very heavy.—Hope.



Hope Needham



March 1, 1933

THROUGH THE DRIFTS

Saturday, Feb. 11. Just zero this morning. How mild the climate is growing. The bobsled of men got through to the village today, taking the belated mail for our department, and bringing back groceries for all of us. After they got back, the cow-tester, who has been shovelling away alone as best he could and experimenting with his car, induced some of them to go back with the sled and help him shovel a way so that he could go on his rounds. By taking a round-about route, they finally got him through to a hard road, and so far as we know he is safely on his way. But the wind has risen again and is filling in the tracks once more. The road patrolmen are doing their best but have been able to clear only a few roads. The hard roads are passable now, they say, but may fill up again tonight. Meanwhile, it looks as though we would not get out for another day or two.



Hope Needham

The men have browsed around and found the break in the telephone wire and spliced it. How good it seems to be able to talk to folks again! In our neighborhood, though—in fact, all over our county—many rural phones have been disconnected the past year as the farmers felt they couldn't afford to pay the rates at present prices of grain.—Hope.

May 8, 1933

MORE IMPORTANT THINGS

Easter Sunday! And what a dolorous day! The heavens have wept steadily and inconsolably since midnight. In fact, nature has indulged in a melancholy mood hereabouts for many a day. We had too much spring in January and not enough in March and April. While some of you westerners are bemoaning the drought that lingers with you, we have been overwhelmed with moisture. Having come like a lamb, March went out like a lion, with the handsome demonstration of midnight thunderstorm and hail that you would ever care to see. The creek waters were the highest we have ever seen (now laugh you folks farther down the watershed, who know what real floods are!) washing across the road near bridges and culverts, sweeping fences off their moorings, and even drowning some small live stock. Rain after rain followed this torrent, seldom more than a day elapsing between showers. The fields will not be dry enough to work for several days, and it seems strange not even to have oats sowed by the middle of April. If we were logical, we would contemplate the late season with serenity, at least, for nothing



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can reduce the much-discussed surplus like a seed-time, or no seed-time. Now that nature appears to be copying the leisurely tactics of the senate, we should, logically, enjoy our unexpected vacation and long for it to continue a couple of months more. But are we so logical? On the contrary, we are fuming, fretting and fidgeting against the delay. The baby chicks, thriving as best they can without benefit of sunlight, are not half so charming as they usually are when they can run on the green grass. Any goodness knows how many extra quilts, rugs and whatnot have been completed this vicinity by fingers that were itching to be out in the garden.

Beyond the garden from my kitchen window stand two tall gnarled old crabapple-trees, not good for anything; thing from a practical standpoint, for their fruit is scanty, high-borne, puckery, woody and wormy; but to me they are the prelude to the symphony of spring, for they are the first of the trees to show a blur of green. They are late this year; I have known them to show the first barely-discernible mist of color by the end of March. From the day that those hoary friends of mine hang out their faint mossy sign, that spring is here to stay, you needn't talk to me any more of depressions, gold standards, allotments, and such matters that sufficed to occupy our minds all winter, for I shall be too busy with more important things to hear a word you say.—Hope.

September 26, 1933

"JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR"

Our flower round-robin arrived today, bringing messages of the summer from far and near, but the most striking feature of the lot was my own letter of last May returned to me. You would find it hard to imagine a more pathetic picture than the contrast between my buoyant plans of springtime and the dreary results in the fall. Of course it is rare for any one's achievements to come quite up to their expectations, but this summer was extraordinary.



Hope Needham

Seems to me our community has been favored with more varieties of misfortune than ever fell to the lot of one section before. We have always prided ourselves on doing our share of complaining; city friends tell us that it is a universal and outstanding trait of the farming fraternity to complain; but really about the worst we have had to complain of heretofore, in the way of natural phenomena, is that the rains haven't been spaced just to suit.

If experience is a good teacher, we are a well-educated lot. But this summer! Dear, dear! All the plagues and the pests of ancient Egypt descended on us. At the time my May letter was written we were revelling in heavy spring rains. All of a sudden those rains stopped, as though a bad leak had finally been mended, and apparently the water was never turned on again after the repairs were finished. By June the lawns and gar-

dens were streaked with cavernous cracks, and we had the hottest days and the longest stretch of them in succession that we had ever had. Some days we had hot winds like blasts from an oven, and on other days a deadly calm in the midst of heat; and if there was any choice at all between the two, it was that one was worse than the other.

No Gardens

Spring gardens dried up and withered away. If a radish matured it was so hot and woody that it couldn't be eaten. Some people planted gardens three times, and then had nothing to show for it. And as the first plantings were very late, due to the spring rains, we were well into the summer before we could really adapt ourselves to the idea that something was wrong with our gardens! Here we were, with rows of shining jars on the shelves, anticipating many a merry day in the canning kitchen—and behold, there was not enough to garner in even for the daily meals.

Myself was one of those who tried later plantings after the first failed to produce results. Among other things, we sowed a row of radish seed, and believe it or not, the very next day a wavering three-inch crack chose that very row to meander down. The seed was never recovered. For all I know it fell straight on through to China; or, if it is still struggling to reach the top, it probably knows by now how the farmers have felt the last ten years: The more you struggle, the deeper in you get.

Flower seed, blithely sowed in the midst of April and May showers, grew and flourished, but by the time the plants were ready to transplant the ground was so dry and hard that nothing short of a blast of dynamite could have lifted them from the ground.

At the normal time to plant corn, most fields were mud. As fast as a bit of ground dried up sufficiently farmers would dash in and plant what they could, so that along in June it gave one a queer feeling to drive along the roads and see planters and plows in adjoining fields, and it almost seemed that there were more planters than plows. As the summer went on, you would pass one field just beginning to tassel (most of it tasseled when rather short, too), and the next field might be just big enough to cultivate the first time.

All sorts of plagues afflicted the corn crop. For instance, one of our neighbors got a piece planted early, but the rains rotted the seed. As soon as he could, he replanted, and then something began to shear the young plants off at the surface of the ground. He found worms at work, and of course the first suspicion in his mind was that the dreaded European corn borer had arrived; however, it proved to be only the common cutworm. Half the stand was taken, but cultivating slowed up the worms and he didn't replant the third time, but before long he found mysterious cavities eaten out of the stalks a few inches above the ground, and the only explanation we have ever found was that it must have been pheasants or other wild fowl pecking the stalks in search of insects or worms.

The Chinch Bug Plague

But by this time practically every one suddenly discovered that we had a plague of chinch bugs. Now, in some parts of our state they always have chinch bugs, just as we always have weeds. But they were such a novelty here that many farmers had never actually seen them; it is 40



years since there were enough in these parts to be troublesome. Barley, wheat, oats and even corn were attacked. The fields were simply alive with the bugs. Wherever it was feasible, farmers began to plow trenches around affected fields and lay dust barriers and then creosote barriers to try to keep the pest from crossing to adjoining fields. People came from miles around to watch them run the creosote lines. As it may be as new to some of you as it was to us, we'll describe the method. A trench was plowed around a field and a log pulled along it to hollow out a dusty ditch. At intervals of a few rods post-holes were dug in the trench. Then two or three times a day a narrow creosote line was run along near the top of the trench on the side farthest from the affected field from a bucket in which a nailhole had been punched to let the oil out. The insects would crawl into the trench and across it, but reaching the creosote line would turn and follow alongside hoping to find a break, and eventually would tumble into the post-holes, where they would be killed with kerosene or tamped to death. When they moved from field to field where no barriers were put up, they moved in unbelievable masses, millions upon millions of crowding, greedy crawlers.

Within two or three weeks much of the small grain was completely destroyed, and most of what was left was light and chaffy on account of the heat and drouth. By that time the bugs had matured and grown wings and flown to new abiding places to lay a fresh generation of eggs. Of course, we knew that barriers would be useless against the second crop of bugs, as they would be scattered everywhere. The only hope was that the corn would be mature and dry enough to withstand the depredation. Luckily, much of it was. Sweet corn suffered the most, when the bugs finally began their work; many farmers who grew sweet corn for the canning factory lost half or more of the crop, and they say the bugs were black on the stalk clear up to the ears.

#### Threshing No Job

So we've been through a major engagement with chinch bugs, and it will certainly be something to remember. Threshing, of course, was through early on account of all these misfortunes, and farmers have had an unusually long time in which to clean next year's invasion. It looks as though we would go into the winter with as neat an assortment of fields and fences as we have ever seen. For years the idea of fall cleaning up of weeds, stalks and similar rubbish has been preached, but until something of this sort impresses the importance on us, most of us just ease along without doing the best we know.

And chinch bugs wasn't all! For some reason every one, including the club boys and girls, had more trouble with unthrifty pigs than ever before. Whether it was just the excessive dust, or worms, or what, the young pigs would cough and thump, and even repeated doses of medicine didn't always cure them. The trouble seemed pretty general all over the country, and I haven't heard an explanation that fully satisfied me. My own opinion is that it is just the natural perversity of a hog to act up when we already have our hands full of trouble.

I dare say there are other plagues that could be listed here. Depend on it, we haven't missed any possible ones, even though I haven't mentioned them. And yet, this community is by no means as downcast as you might think. It's a funny thing how cheerfully life goes on in spite of hardships. Of course, there has been plenty

to think about, plenty to lift up our hopes, in the progress of the new deal, in the advance of farm product prices and all that. And so farmers are going right on with their plans for another year, as usual; keeping up their spirits, hoping and waiting for better times. After all, a plague year isn't so bad!—Hope

December 21, 1933

#### A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

The approaching Christmas-tide bids fair to be the best in several years for country people. Most of our vanities and superfluities have been burned away in the fire of adversity. For the last few months a faint but steady feeling of encouragement has been creeping back into our hearts, like sapin to the trees. It looks as though by Christmas time most of the common people would have some little physical or financial improvement on which to build confidence and trust.



Hope Needham

The cotton and wheat growers surely have felt already an easing of the tension, and those unemployed who were set to work on public improvements. In our vicinity the corn loans are beginning to come through. It takes only a little to hearten a nation as low in spirits as ours—if that little is a promise of better things to come. And we of our part of the country are wholeheartedly with the administration, believing that the day is at hand when we shall have a more equitable distribution of wealth in our nation than has been since the old colonial days. It is not so pleasant a prospect for the class of people who have lived under the false philosophy of life that it is commendable and smart to make their living by the sweat of other men's brows, but as to the rest, the outlook infuses us with fresh courage.

Thumbing through some of the old dog-eared classics on our bookshelves this quiet Sunday, we happened on to the essay on riches by Francis Bacon, and some of his remarks are very appropriate for today. For instance: "As baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory. . . . Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly. . . . The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul. Parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent; for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of riches; for it is our great mother's blessing, the earth's; but it is slow. . . . The gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest, and furthered by two things, chiefly by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing. But the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature; . . . when a man buys not to hold, but to sell over again, that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer. . . . Usury is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst, as that where-

by a man doth eat his bread in the sweat of other mens' brows, and besides, doth plow upon Sundays."

#### Will Be Happier

Yes, it seems to me that we are climbing, slowly but surely toward the light. And even those classes who now feel that they are being imposed upon because their old exorbitant profits are to be cut down, will find eventually that they as well as the world in general is happier when wealth is more evenly divided.

In the gloom of early morning, needing supplies of one sort or another, I started to the basement, but my sole match expired before I reached the gas-jet, and rather than re-climb the stairs for another, I blundered on about my errands in the dark. Suddenly a little voice called out from up above, "Don't be afraid, modder; I'm right here at the top. I'll wait here till you come up!" Dear little duplicator of motherly phrases, my four-year-old had just awakened and come to the head of the stairs. At the words I turned and looked up at Jo in his loose white pajamas, arms outstretched waiting to give me a comforting hug, a smile of loving solicitude on his little face, and the kitchen light falling softly round about him. Something about the tableau touched me so poignantly, "stabbed me so wide-awake," that tears rushed to my eyes. And through them my baby seemed to waver and melt into a large, nobler, white-robed figure, and blending with his baby words I seemed to hear the old, old message, "Be not afraid; ye shall be comforted!" and the light about him grew rich and strange, as of a Star shining.

Somehow I stumbled up the steps, laid down my humble burdens and gathered the child into my arms. There we sat, with tears rolling down my face, washing away the bitterness of recent years; with his little hands tenderly stroking my cheeks. He did not question my emotion, for to his mind, I had been through a real ordeal in that dark basement, alone. In a larger sense, and for a longer time, than he could understand I had. So have we all—but may the light and spirit of this glad season lead us up.

Merry, merry Christmas to you all, my friends! And may the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace!—Hope.

#### MEMORY GEM

Mother is a little girl who trod my path before me;  
Just a bigger, wiser little girl who ran ahead—  
Bigger, wiser, stronger girl, who always watches o'er me,  
One who knows the pitfalls in the rugged path I tread.

Mother is a playmate who will always treat me kindly—  
Playmate who will yield me what true happiness demands;  
She will never let my feet stray into brambles blindly—  
Mother's just a bigger little girl who understands.

Mother is an older little playmate who'll befriend me—  
Yesteryear she traveled in the path that's mine today;  
Never need I fear a foe from which she might defend me—  
Faithful little pal who ran ahead and learned the way.  
—Strickland Gillilan.



# The Household

Address Hope Needham, Drivers Journal, Chicago, Ill. Real name and address must be given, but will be withheld on request.

January 29, 1934

MATERNAL VS.

## PATERNAL DISCIPLINE

The other night our two big boys (11 and 13) were starting to a 4-H meeting with their dad. All sleek and gleaming with soap and water and dressed their neatest, they waited happily in the living room, chatting with mother while daddy got out the car. Suddenly (as mothers will) mother noticed a special detail about the costumes, and exclaimed, "What no gloves! Isn't it too cold to go without?"

"Why, no! (very manly and masterful). Sitting around the house here you don't realize how hot it is outdoors! Nobody would need gloves to-night!"

Just then a horn tooted and the boys rushed pell-mell out the door, closing it behind them with a sturdy bang. In fifteen seconds the door opened again, more quietly, and one after the other the boys tramped back in the room, a little less merry of countenance than when they went out.

"Whatever can be the matter!" exclaimed mother.

"Gloves." (Glumly.)

Clump-clump went one boy after the other across the living room. Clump-clump down the back hall. And after a pause, clump-clump back again.

"Well," remarked mother virtuously, as they approached the door once more. "Maybe next time you'll take a bit of advice."

"This isn't advice. This is orders," was the parting shot of the last boy as the door closed behind them. And they were off.—Hope.



Hope Needham

February 12, 1934

ONE ROOM SCHOOLS

Dear Friend: You have such good and helpful articles in the department that I just wondered if you had any available material you could send me for a farm club debate, which is defending the one room rural schools in preference to the consolidated schools.—Thelma.

Dear Friend: I am sorry I do not have any bulletin or articles in printed form covering the question you raise. However, here are some points which may be helpful. They are only suggestive and may be developed as fully as you wish, or rearranged and combined to better advantage.

1. It is much more economical to maintain a one-room rural school which is already in existence than to build a new plant, probably voting bonds to finance it, sometimes building a larger plant than is immediately needed, etc. The maintenance of a larger plant increases expense, on account of the need of a janitor, more use of lights, etc.

2. There is no transportation problem in connection with the one-room school. Such schools are located within walking distance of all pupils. Larger schools require good roads, buses or other means of transportation, a trustworthy driver, etc. There is more expense, more danger, and more anxiety generally on the part of parents on account of the longer delay in the children getting home after making the rounds in the bus.

### More Local Control

3. There is more local control in one-room schools, less chance for politics and graft. The school can be just as good as the patrons want it—they are in direct contact and can control every factor.

4. Smaller classes are the rule in one-room schools, and this is in line with the latest modern, progressive ideas of education. The biggest drawback of large schools is large classes conducted in a mechanical way, rather than small classes with every individual given a chance for development.

5. Standards can be just as high, or higher, in a one-room school. Good wages and sympathetic patrons can attract the best and most conscientious of teachers, because they know they will be under direct inspection all the time (which will keep them doing their best), while at the same time they know every good point will be personally appreciated.

6. Sufficient playground equipment can be provided by the one-room school at a modest expense. It is not elaborate gymnasiums and swimming pools that make a good school, after all—it is high standards on the part of the teachers and directors. Farm children of grade-school age have plenty of good exercise and active outdoor life and do not need the artificial gymnasium equipment as badly



Hope Needham

as city children, who have no natural places to play.

7. Children of a one-room school get sufficient social contacts with people of their own district. It is not until high school age that they need the broader contacts.

### Both Points

These points cover both the positive points which you would use first and the rebuttal of the usual objections to the one-room school. These may set you thinking so that you will develop other and better points. I shall be interested to hear how your debate goes off.

This answer does not mean that I am personally in favor of one-room schools in all cases. Much depends on the community. If a community can unite on a plan, the larger school can be made superior to the one-room school. However, you asked for points for your side of the debate, and we need not go into the other side.—Hope.

September 24, 1934

SCHOOL BEGINS

Well, we have gotten one boy started in eighth grade and one boy in high school and one girl partly prepared for college.

By the time you read this she will be on her way to the campus. We took the older boy and some neighbors to high school today and while they got registered and initiated into the architectural scheme of the high school building, Ruth and I spent the afternoon and most of the family holdings on clothes.

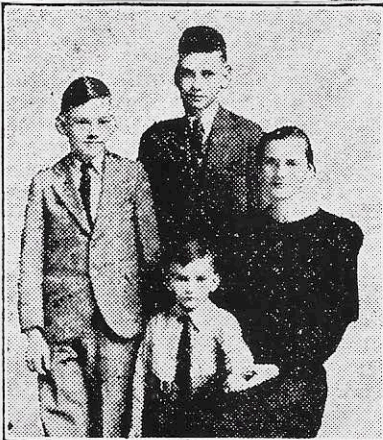
We got her a tweedy-brown suit, long-coated, and a dark brown knit dress with a rosy-brick color collar, and a brick-color wool touched up with brown velvet; also a dark green sweater with a plaid of lighter green and white. We got a bit of yellow organdie for a blouse, and some leaf-mold brown linen for another. These, with what she has left from last year, will constitute most of her freshman wardrobe. It wouldn't take a magician to know, from that lay-out, that she is a brown-eyed girl.

Jo and I will soon be alone for most of the day-times. But we have our special games and books, and we'll fill in the time. We met with a minor catastrophe recently, though I hesitate to tell of it, as the story is bound to disclose some of my less dignified practices as a mother. Sonny and Jo were playing indoor hide-and-seek on Sunday afternoon, it being a rainy day (and what I mean, really wet) outdoors. It was my province to help Jo devise novel hiding places, and one of the best and most amusing was upon a shelf in a clothes closet. He was boosted safely enough, but when it came to getting down—ah, there was the rub! And a most severe rub it turned out to be. Poised on a funny little footstool made from a wooden grocery box, braced to meet his weight as he jumped into my arms, I managed to bring just the right strain and stress on the stool to start it s'ppping, and down we both came with a crash. I bounced and landed full force on the stool, shattering it into splinters (hence the expression,



Hope Needham

## HOPE'S CHILDREN



These are Hope's youngsters as they appear today. From left to right, Ernest, 11; Wilbert, 13; Margaret Ruth, 16, and in front, little Joseph Sidney, now 4.



shiver my timbers). Rallying enough to climb onto the bed, which was close at hand, in fact so close that most of the casualties were perpetrated by contact with it, I took inventory of the damages and found them to be as follows, to wit:

#### The Inventory

1. One scrape and bruise on the left leg, six inches long or more and delicately garnished with delicate shaving-like tendrils of mutilated skin.
2. One puncture thereby, where a nail had apparently penetrated entirely through the epidermis and struck a capillary, drawing a droplet of blood.
3. One bruise on the right jaw, from a blow which felt as though it had lifted my entire head and neck and set it down a few inches farther west on my shoulders than it should be—as you hear of cyclones lifting entire buildings and depositing them in cornfields at a distance, intact.
4. One huge and astonishing bruise on the left elbow, four or five inches in diameter at least, right over the funny-bone.
5. A general sensation of dissolution.

As I carry no accident insurance, my recovery was rapid, and I am enjoying the amazed comments of friends on the modernistic color effects of the elbow bruise. By a clever manipulation of the joints I manage to carry the arm so that the bruise is prominent and not to be missed by the most casual observer. There is such a melancholy pleasure in displaying the scars of suffering. Joey was unharmed, and the game continued without benefit of mother.—Hope.

September 25, 1934

#### REUNION IN OCTOBER

##### A Good Idea

What a lovely suggestion this is! If you all will consider this your invitation to return to the circle, whether you have been absent because you were busy or discouraged or just too contented to take time to write, we'll have a heart-touching reunion in October.

My first contact with our paper was in college days, when it used to come to Dean Rankin's desk every morning. My only reaction then was that it was a paper full of prices and figures, and farther than the first page I never investigated. But a few years later, when we took the paper into our home because it was so newsy, so compact and so free from scandal stories, all the features became a part of our daily life. When dear Faith Felgar passed away so suddenly, and her mantle most miraculously fell to me, the paper became necessarily the pivot around which all the rest of my activities revolved. It is almost impossible to explain how enriching and refreshing and comforting it is to receive daily intimate contact with many personalities by means of letters. Letters happy or sad, practical or philosophical, letters that are expressive of our best selves, our real selves. Handwritings become familiar as the loyal readers during Faith's regime continued to communicate with and support a department which had been obliged to substitute for the guide of more than twenty years an untried and inexperienced editor. Some handwritings stood for humor, some for stimulation, some for comfort, some for more or less ardent discussion on any subject under the

sun. Some of those handwritings which used to come so frequently come no more. The writers in some cases have been forced to drop out of the circle, in some cases by hard times, in some by death. Some perhaps have lost interest; some are too busy to write. I'm hoping there will be a renewal of interest and of courage, and that many who used to write will join us at the Reunion in October.

##### Busy Days

Nine years ago it was when Faith passed on and was succeeded by another. Our youngsters then were aged three, four and seven; and what busy days they are in any farm household when the children are that small many of you can testify. Ruth was just starting to school and the boys were still so small that they had to be helped with buttons and shoe laces, and had to have the "funnies" read to them. Now Ruth is starting off to college, Wilbert to high school and Ernest Vail to his last year in the grades. And our little addendum, the so-called Household baby, Joseph, will be ready to enter school in another year or so.

At that time our three were the first and only grandchildren in the family; now there are twenty cousins altogether. A superstitious person might conclude that "J" is our unlucky letter, for the two little nephews we had to give up were both January babies, and their names were James and John. One lived two years and the other only five days. And it was our Joey who of all the group, was stricken with the most severe and lingering illness, when he was just a year old. We used to love to tell you about the baby and his progress from day to day, not because he was anything special, but because in our large circle there were many babies about the same age, and we felt that all those parents would enjoy comparing notes and laughing over the little endearing happenings connected with a child. And for those whose children had grown older it would bring back memories too sweet to lose. Seemed it would make us all nearer together to be watching a baby grow. You can imagine, then, how stunning it was to receive an anonymous letter in November, 1929 saying:

"Mrs. Needham: Aren't you afraid that a continuous mention of your young hopeful may end in a result equally as tragical as that of a favorite plant of a well known radio flower lady, who repeatedly bragged of her plant until one day a weary Willie came with an ax and chopped the much-talked-of plant down. One rarely picks up the paper but what they must read of your young hopeful. Other people have children.—Another Weary Willie."

##### Short-lived Pride and Joy

After that we mentioned Jo as little as we could, partly because of this letter, but partly because his illness came upon him. I think if the writer of that letter could have known the anxious hours and days and weeks we spent over the little cradle she would have never begrudged us our short-lived pride and joy. This letter confirmed in me a profound prejudice against anonymous letters as a means of venting irritation. And never would I send to anyone an anonymous criticism, lest I lay one load too many on an overburdened heart. We can know so little of the griefs of other people at best; we can do so little to mitigate them—it seems a pity to risk increasing them in any way. If criticism must be written, why not burn the letter?

instead of sending it? Or if it is a criticism meant in kindness, why not soften it as much as possible—and sign a name?

But this is getting far afield from the Reunion. Here are some tentative rules (but luckily we shan't need to be arbitrary about any of them): Write your letter just as soon as you can. Try to have it reach me by October 1. Mention any old-times you would specially like to hear from.

December 1, 1934

#### COMMENTS ON THE NEW DEAL

The following letters were all written before election, but on account of the reunion were crowded out of their rightful turn. This explanation is given in order that you may not be surprised at the fact that no mention is made of results in that election. If these letters were intended to convince the opposition and win votes, the writers may be disappointed that they are late in appearing, but in the long run it doesn't matter. It is a curious fact that at the present time no one seems to be able to convince anyone else of anything—that is, to win him over from one side of the question to the other. You are either for or against; and the more the opposition talks, the more you are just as you were before.



Hope Needham

Myself, I am, have been and I dare say will continue to be unequivocally for the New Deal, because I believe the motives back of it are right, and the men administering it are sincere, honest, unselfish, intelligent and (what is even more important) they are sufficiently practical to dig in and block out plans and carry them out, not just talk in high-sounding phrases of what ought to be. I have never seen or heard an argument opposing the New Deal which I didn't feel sure I could riddle with ease; and when I have my opponent nicely riddled, he smiles and says, "Oh, yes, of course, I see how you look at it, but—" And off he goes, confidently riddling me.

##### A Healthier Attitude

Well, that is a lot more wholesome situation than for a majority of the people to be as cynical about government as most of us were a few years ago, when we would shrug our shoulders and say, "Nothing can be done about it. Corruption and graft and vested interests can't be controlled. Why even bother to go to the polls and vote?"

I am sorry for those who sincerely oppose the New Deal. The added bitterness of feeling that we are going the wrong way must be almost unbearable, added to the difficulties and disappointments of recent years. But I have faith in our people and I feel confident we'll make out some way. There is a definite easing of tension already—it won't be long till all of us, those who oppose and those who believe, will be reaping the benefits together.

Some of these days I'll "bust loose" and 'spress myself at greater length on this matter—not that I hope to convert any of you, but because it relieves and clarifies my own feelings and encourages those who agree with me.—Hope.