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Living on $10 a Month

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The Homemaker's Books


When Lillian Gilbreth was married, she and her husband believed that the haphazard way in which most families tried to work out their problems was unnecessary. They thought of family life as a definite project, to which all their expert knowledge as to methods used in industry and their knowledge of psychology could be most helpfully applied.

Every educational or industrial project has a plan; so should family life, they decided. The planning should not remove the romance or interest of marriage, but add a stability and long view which is so often lacking.

Mrs. Gilbreth describes in an interesting manner just how they planned their family life and the methods they used in raising their eleven children.

The children were treated as distinctly individual members of the family and they learned not to fear life, but how to combat and master it. "Live with them, not for them," was one of Mrs. Gilbreth's mottos.

In planning things we should plan the play time as well as the work time, she states, and allow enough time for the greatest adventure—living together.

"Ha-ha, I am not a parasite," said a five-year-old, as she finished dusting a room. Mrs. Gilbreth believes not only in children "learning by doing," but she thinks it necessary that the desire to work should be aroused in every child.

The teaching of etiquette, and the treatment of the superior child, the inferior child, and those who get pleasure from exercising a great amount of power are among the many child problems discussed in the book.

"Living With Our Children," besides being a good book for parents, would also be welcomed by a newly married couple. As Mrs. Gilbreth believes that the children cannot be happy unless the home is happy, she gives valuable suggestions as to how to start a happy and successful home life.

One book read is worth a dozen looked at. No book is possessed until you have read and digested it.

Be as careful of the books you read as of the company you keep, for your habits and character will be as much influenced by the former as the latter.—Paston Hood.

An Indian philosopher, being asked what were, according to his opinion, the most beautiful things in the universe, answered: The starry heavens above our heads, and the feeling of duty in our hearts.—Boswell.

We have all heard a great deal about the high cost of living, but there is still something to be said on the low cost of living. How would you like to support your family on less than ten dollars a month?

It sounds impossible, but it is being done successfully in China. If one were going to try this plan, however, it would be necessary to move to one of the villages in northern China, and there pick out a nice little farm home. The rent will not be very high, for people rent only small amounts of land. They rent it in two pieces, some on high ground, and some on low ground, so that a crop failure or flood will not affect both crops.

The courtyard around the house always faces south, and the main house is the most northern building. Probably the house would not be extra nice, for the houses are largely built of mud, although some are partially made of baked bricks and have tile roofs. The house itself will have three or five rooms. Sometimes the last two rooms will be thrown together, making airy apartments, or the end rooms may be used for the sons' families, for storage, or for animals, according to the size of the family. During the winter, the central room is usually curtained or papered off to reduce the space for heating.

The windows are large, usually about four square feet per room, and open out into the court. They are quite decorative, although they are made only of paper with a scrap of grass pasted on to afford an outlook. The entrance is always through the central door into the room which serves as kitchen, pantry and hallway.

Although the homes have little equipment, everyone has a k'ang. A k'ang occupies about two-thirds of the kitchen. It is a large, bed-like structure, made of clay and edged with wood or cement. Fires are built under this and it may be used as a stove, or it may be used as a table, or in the winter, when a fire is built under it at night, the people sleep on it. This makes such a warm bed that even in this cold climate only one quilt is needed. Of course, it would be a rather hard bed, but the Chinese sleep all right, so what does that matter? The clay usually cracks when it gets old and smoke leaks into the room, but then the k'ang is broken up and used as fertilizer. A new k'ang is built every five or six years.

The k'ang may be used for so many different things that many Chinese women keep house with this as their only piece of furniture. In most kitchens, however, one finds a table, big boxes or chests, chairs or benches, and maybe even cupboards, where clothes in constant use are kept. Nearly every family has some framed photographs of members of the family on the wall, the remainder of which is covered with clippings from newspapers, cigarette advertisements and cheap prints.

One never needs to worry about not having enough furniture to keep the room from looking bare, for the men always bring in their farm implements to help fill up the kitchen. Nor is there a need for curtains; a roller towel hung in front of the door answers for one. The Chinese diet calls for a small expenditure. Every meal consists of three things: porridge, a bread and a vegetable, which is usually a salty vegetable. Cereal is the most common dish, while sweet dishes are rare. Almost all the food eaten is grown on their farms, although some things are bought at the market town, which is a mile or so distant. Peddlers bring fish, vegetables, spices and a variety of other things to the door.

Although the fuel is quite expensive, the people have found several ways to economize. The most noticeable way is the system they have of cooking their food. It is all cooked in one big pot. They will cook the cabbage first, add enough water to make a soup, and then

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summer to take an eight months course. She would have finished her training the middle of February, but as she was eager to find work here in America and not return to Estonia until August or September, she postponed her training and took the emergency position at the hospital, January 9 she delivered a talk from the broadcasting station, WLS, on "Foods and Cooking in Estonia."

"Oh, yes, I knew Bess Streeter Aldrich," said Mrs. C. E. Burton of Shenandoah, Iowa. "Why, we used to have the same beau. That was back in 1902 or '03. She was his girl in school at Cedar Falls and I was his girl at home. We had heard about each other, but never met until one day when we both happened to be on the same street car. 'Hi' was at the station and introduced us and after that we became close friends. And the man," chuckled Mrs. Burton, "well, neither one of us got him.''

Fern Carl, '18, has accepted a position as home advisor in Rock Island County, Illinois. Since graduation she has been doing extension work in West Virginia.

**Farm and Home Week**
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finely shredded lettuce, then roll the slices. Put into a damp towel, and place in the icebox for about an hour.

**THOUSAND ISLAND DRESSING**
1/2 pt mayonnaise dressing
2 eggs, boiled hard, and the yolks and whites chopped separately
1/2 green pepper, chopped
1 pimento, chopped
2 tsp. strained chili sauce
Mix the ingredients in the order listed.

**GRAPEFRUIT MEDINA**
2 grapefruit
1 one-third ounce glass of strained honey
1 tsp. powdered sugar
Peel grapefruit as you would an orange. Also remove the pith. Cut the sections of fruit out, and remove the membrane so only the pulp is left. Squeeze juice from membrane. Mix the juice, honey and powdered sugar. Pour this mixture over the pulp and let stand in an icebox over night. Serves four.

**Grow Up**
"If we are to lead mankind we must grow up," said Dr. Edward Steiner, associate professor of applied Christianity, Grinnell College.

"To improve our country, we should all think about what is good, true and beautiful, not think in terms of size and number," he declared. "We ought to grow away from quantity to quality."

"It is marvelous how young we are," he continued. "Whenever you ask an American how he is, no matter how many heartaches he has, his reply is sure to be 'Fine,'" said Dr. Steiner in his characteristic way.

"We are a great, vital nation, but," he commented, "our childishness is shown by our spirit of optimism and our boastfulness."

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set this away in a covered dish. The mush is next boiled in the bottom of the pot, and the coriander is either put on the side in slabs, or bread and turnips are steamed on a grass rack above, where the cabbage is kept warm. Housewives are not considered extravagant if they have dumplings once a week, though the kind they make require hours of cooking.

Very little food hygiene is known here. But experience has taught the Chinese to drink boiled water and eat cooked food, so one would not have to spend half his allowance buying magazines to keep up on the latest developments. Unfortunately, babies are fed greasy doughnuts and candy. But babies do not cry much in China, for as soon as they whimper, they are fed.

Clothing does not take a great deal of the family budget. The Chinese have clothing of three weights—the single, the lined, and the wadded. The latter is quilted more or less heavily with cotton batting. Most of the clothes are made of heavy, durable cotton cloth, usually of indigo blue. Endless time and energy are spent in making these clothes, and not a scrap of material is wasted. And even though it is a hard job, the women make all the shoes.

Very little work is required in laundering, as the wadded garments are ripped up and washed infrequently. Each time the cotton is respread and this same cotton may be used as long as 30 years. In winter, people put on layers after layer of clothing until it gets to be an unwieldy bulk. One may not know his friends on the street because of the astounding increase in size.

Now, there is little money left for luxuries, but still even the poorest afford enough to keep them smiling. If smiles show happiness, one need not fear losing that in China, for smiles are seen everywhere. Even a ten dollar budget can bring happiness.

(Based on "Observations on the Social Life of a North China Village," by Jean Dickinson, formerly Associate Professor of Sociology, Yenching University, Peking.)

When we see men of worth, we should think of becoming like them; when we see men of a contrary character, we should turn inward and examine ourselves.—Confucius.

God sends experience to paint men's portraits.—Henry Ward Beecher.

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