



# COMMON SENSE in the HOME

EDITED by MARION HARLAND



## WHEN TO BEGIN TRAINING A CHILD.

A FEW weeks ago a letter came to me from a correspondent touching upon a topic which never fails to compel my interest. I shall not quote verbatim, but give the substance of the inquiry.

Briefly it was this: Was her boy, 3 years old, of an age when his training might begin? She thought so; his father thought not. He believed in waiting until the child was old enough to know right from wrong, and that a chance should be given for the boy to develop his own individuality before the parents undertook to bring him in line with theirs. What was your opinion about it?

My first sentiment was one of pity, not unmingled with amusement. Poor parents, to have waited until now to begin training; and poor child, who had been unblest with discipline until he was 3 years old! What a hard time lies before all of them. That was the pity, and the amusement was at the absurdity of the idea that training should be postponed until the child knew right from wrong. As well say he should not be taught to walk until he had a knowledge of his muscles, his anatomy, the laws of gravitation and a few of the other details which make walking possible and practicable! As sensible as to put off teaching him to read until he had a comprehension of language and literature!

The vegetable kingdom is the plant, the tree, the vine which follows its own bent the one which bears best fruit, or is most useful or ornamental, or the one which has been pruned, cut back, grafted, and trained?

Granted, then, that training is of value, why, in the name of common sense, do you wait until the child's mental and moral muscles have stiffened before you begin giving him this benefit? You begin bending the twig, pruning the vine, training the animal while the branches and muscles are tender. Is there any sense in waiting until there are habits formed to be unlearned and customs established to be radically changed? One thing more: Do you like the untrained product so far as children are concerned? Do you find them nice to live with? For I don't.

**Ways of Undisciplined Child.**  
I dined at the house of a friend not long ago. Little Janet was at the table. It was an hour when children should be in bed, but Janet had said she did not want to go to bed, and she did want to sit up. So there she was with us, and if I were inclined to sing I would say it was there "with both feet," literally as well as figuratively. She kicked the table steadily, paying as much attention to the mild protests of her parents as she did to their suggestions that she should eat this or that. She hammered her plate with her fork, she sang into her tumbler (have I said she was 6 years old?), laughed and sang at her mother's remonstrances, ignored her father's commands, and made as much a nuisance of herself as any child well could.

It was not her brother, but one of another family where I was visiting, who, at the age of 5, broke up an afternoon call because the visitors came in just as his mother was beginning to sing to him. His loud wails rendered conversation impossible; his mother's gentle request that he would go out to see his nurse for a few minutes he met by throwing himself on the floor and yelling furiously. And as we left the house his mother helped him to his feet and said, "There, there, Freddie, don't cry any more. Mamma will sing to you now."

tion. For the children who are untrained are not happy.

**From One Point of View.**  
You question that. Have you ever noticed the difference between the youngsters who have it all their own way and those who have been educated to obedience? To look at it from only one point of view, is not such a scene as I have noted—and scenes like this are an everyday matter in many households—productive of more pain and misery than any amount of judicious early training?

Not so many years ago I was taken by a friend to the dancing class where her little daughter was to display some of the skill she had learned in certain character dances. With us went the 4-year-old brother of the small performer. For the first two or three numbers he was content to sit quietly with us in a chair against the wall and watch the exercises, but after a while the music and the sight of the flying feet filled him with emulation. Out into the floor he went, among the dancers, doing some funny little steps of his own, bobbing and ducking in a way which was amusing to the spectators but extremely disconcerting to the dancers.

His mother dived out after him and brought him back, but he refused to stay by her. He wriggled from her grasp, was off again and was again brought back.

"Leonard, you must stay here!" she insisted. "Listen, there's a big policeman downstairs, and he'll come and put you in a black closet if you don't mind. Yes, he will!"

But Leonard knew that policeman of old and refused to be intimidated, and finally had to be taken home, kicking, struggling, and screaming, as he was borne from the room.

tions are likely to arise. You may wish your child to be carried to the skies—essentially—in flowery beds of ease—but do you for a moment suppose that this is going to happen? Don't you know that he will be called upon to endure hardness, and are you not fully aware that he would be a pulpy and worthless member of society if he escaped conflict? Then why do you wait until he must undergo the roughness of a harsh and unsympathetic world instead of accustoming him to the recognition of constituted authority while he is still pliable?

Wherever or whatever we are, we must yield obedience to some power. When your boy goes to school he must obey the teacher; he must defer to certain customs of his fellows or be punished or sent to Coventry. Are you willing he should get through that experience untroubled by any previous knowledge of deference to authority?

As he grows older and undertakes business as a profession, any kind of work, he is under a director, a ruler, an employer. To him, too, he must resign his own will, his own ideas, if he is to be a success in learning the details of the work in which he is engaged. He must bow to the laws of the land or get into trouble. He must obey the laws of nature or suffer. He must conform to the will of God or lose the beams of life here and hereafter. How are you fitting him for any or all of these allegiances if you fail to train him to obey you, to trust your wisdom, to believe that you know best what he should do until he is old enough to weigh and compare for himself?

**Discipline Not Harshness.**  
One great mistake made by many of the parents who object to training young children is the notion that discipline connotes harshness. It need do nothing of the kind.

So long as your children are persuaded that devoted love is the cause and accompaniment of the discipline you need not be afraid that they will drift away from you. If you make justice one of the foundations of your training, begin with your tiny baby and, as you drill him in regular habits of eating and sleeping, accustom him to the method of obedience. When the time comes—as it may—when he will attempt a small revolt, don't give way, but hold your own. Avoid issues as much as possible, but when they come meet them squarely.



Don't encourage anarchy and free thought in your own nursery, but start your child well on the way towards good citizenship by teaching him that his own will is not

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# MARION HARLAND'S HELPING HAND

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

BECAUSE of the enormous number of letters sent to the department I must ask contributors to limit their communications to 100 words, except in cases of formulas or recipes which require greater space. I want all my correspondents to have a showing in the Corner, and if my request in this respect is complied with it will be possible to print many more letters. Attention is called to the fact that Marion Harland cannot receive money for patterns, as she has no connection with any department that sells them. Marion Harland.

THE space usually occupied by the Helping Hand will this week be given up to a symposium, suggested by the query of a young wife as to the feasibility of providing good and nourishing food for a family of two upon \$1 per week.

It is not practicable to print all the replies drawn out by the ingenious confession of what she rightly assumes must be her lifelong profession. I have selected representative letters and leave the consideration of these to a jury of the peers of the practical housekeepers who have stepped forward to counsel.

They will please accept my thanks for their generous and kindly response to my appeal to the constituency.

No. 1 is from Kansas City, Mo., a part of our territory that is wide awake to the importance of our work and for the house-mothers of America. We have numerous and intelligent correspondents there to whom the department owes much of its efficiency.

Having been for some time a faithful reader of the Helping Hand, and having derived much benefit therefrom, I should like to be of some use in turn.

I enclose a list of purchases with the prices of the same which I am paying in Kansas City, Mo., together with the daily menus which said purchases will supply. As you see, the total exceeds \$4 by 20 cents, but as nearly half the corn starch, lard, and oat meal would be left at the end of the week the real cost for that time would fall short of the sum named by "Nora."

**Suggestions Based on Experience.**  
As the suggestions are all based upon actual experience, I am sure they are practicable.

My husband does not heavy work, but is under constant mental strain, therefore requires as much nourishment as a day

laborer, if physiological experts are to be credited. Our appetites are rather hearty than otherwise, but I never exceed the 'four dollar' limit unless we have guests. I often manage to introduce a dainty salad or some other delicacy.

In making my list, I presupposed Nora's cupboard to be bare of everything but baking powder and a few flavoring ingredients.

I find canned milk much cheaper and more trustworthy than fresh milk, but if this be unpalatable, fresh milk may be bought, carefully skimmed for use on cereals and puddings. I find salt pork, properly freshened and daintily cooked, an inexpensive substitute for bacon.

Of course, the menus I suggest could only be prepared from the stock of groceries mentioned by careful supervision of measuring and serving, but with the liberal supply of bread and butter provided each meal should prove ample for two people of normal capacity. You say, "two or three." If the third were another big, hearty John, perhaps the table would be cleared before appetites were appeased. I am supposing the third to be a cozy, rosy little "John Jr." In this case the meals will be sufficient—until he reaches the 'growing age.' After that—no man knoweth. A boy's appetite is truly formidable!

You asked for an opinion of "A Practical Housekeeper's Menu." I will frankly say that I consider it deficient in variety and in nutrition. Perhaps more experienced eyes than mine will see worse faults in that which I submit.

Pardon this long letter! "Nora's" appeal recalls vividly my own endeavors during the first few months of housekeeping. Once supplied with staples, of course, much better meals could be provided for four dollars.

- List of Purchases.**  
**"WEEKLY BILL FOR MARKETING."**  
To provide the meals here set down:  
Butter ..... 40  
Bread ..... 60  
Lard ..... 15  
Sugar ..... 10  
Eggs, 1 doz. .... 40  
Flour ..... 19  
Apples (8) ..... 10  
Prunes ..... 15  
Oranges (3) ..... 10  
Bananas (6) ..... 15  
Corn starch ..... 10  
Potatoes ..... 30  
Salt pork ..... 10  
Kidneys (2) ..... 10  
Total ..... \$2.50  
It is cheaper to buy staples in larger

quantities. I try to set apart a portion of the week's money for that purpose, as it saves much in the end. One is limited by beginning the week with a bare cupboard and providing for one week only. I had dried fruits cheaper and more satisfactory than canned unless one puts up one's own fruits.

I hope this may be of some assistance to "Nora" and perhaps to others as well.  
"A CORDIAL FRIEND."

**Letter from Iowa.**  
No. 2 writes from Davenport, Ia. Recently we had an answer from New York City. So far as in me lies I shall report to "Nora" from different sections of the country.

My husband and I do light housekeeping and so have no baking done at home. I use a two burner gas stove and in close a menu for the week which I think rather attractive. It may be got up for \$4.50 per week.  
"My husband is foreman in a plant"

here and lunches at their restaurant at the rate of 90 cents for six luncheons. I think that if I could do my own baking and could take all his meals at home I could bring expenses down to \$4 per week. I had dried prices, also, so if any one doubts that the menu may be provided at the price named—or even if you think that "Nora" or any other housewife could profit by reading the list, please print the same.

Of course, it requires careful buying. As, for instance, the 30 cent boiling piece of meat must be all good lean meat to last for three dinners and still leave some for luncheon. I watch advertisements and always trade at trustworthy places. My husband and I are hearty eaters and are growing stout.

**"FOOD EXPENSES FOR A WEEK."**  
Cheese, 5 cents; oysters, 10; crackers, 5; doughnuts, 8; seven quarts of milk, 50; potatoes (25 cents a peck), 20; beef (to boil, at 10 cents a pound), 30; squash (a 10 cent squash lasts three meals), 5; butter (a pound lasts a week), 35; 10 cent package of

tapioca, 2; four eggs at 28 cents a dozen, 9; bread, 15; two oranges, 5; three and one-half pounds of sugar for 25 cents 15; brown sugar, 8; cake, 15; cookies, 10; fat (25 cent package), 15; 10 cent package cornstarch, 2; can of salmon, 15; steak, 10; can of corn, 7 1/2; pork, 15; sausage, 10; lard, 6 1/2; cream puffs, 5; salt, pepper, and vanilla, 5; coffee (we do not like it strong), 7; tea (I am the only one who drinks it), 5; onions, 10; Mr. B.'s luncheon, 90; can of molasses, at 15 cents, I used a teaspoonful at a time, 2; total, \$4.50.

Blessed among women are the Iowa housewives!

**Anent New York Prices.**  
No. 3 writes a friendly letter (and throughout its length upon one side of the page) and in a clear round hand. She gives us New York prices—confessedly the highest upon the continent.

"To Nora: Not using tea, I cannot say how much more that would be, but the figures I set down here are for the best in our market. Excepting EGGS! The price for them is prohibitive. The best bring 62 cents a dozen. There are localities where the figuring upon my list might be cut down one-third.

A pot roast may be dished up a second time for stew with tomatoes, onions and potatoes. Everybody knows that corned beef makes a delicious hash and supplies cold cuts for luncheons and for sandwiches. Left-over bread may be wrought into nice puddings, but it must be thoroughly dried first. Roll it into crumbs, add an egg, three tablespoonsful of evaporated milk, and a teaspoonful of water. Your three cans of milk make seven quarts if diluted as directed. You may have boiled onions, baked, boiled, or stewed potatoes. Save a small portion of your can of tomatoes to be stewed with bread crumbs.

I cannot begin to tell you of the variations you may have and enough nourishing food for two strong, healthy people. I have kept my husband and myself in good food for \$4 a week for over a year. And this right here in this city of New York! We have not had the same old thing over and over again, either!

**Her List of Purchases.**  
Here is my list of purchases, set down honestly:  
Three and one-half pounds of sugar ..... 22  
One pound of coffee ..... 30  
One pound of butter ..... 41  
Seven leaves of bread, not toast ..... 42  
One pound of loose oatmeal ..... 60  
One quart of apples ..... 10  
One can of tomatoes ..... 10  
Two quarts of potatoes ..... 15  
One pound of rice ..... 30  
Two quarts of onions ..... 10  
Three cans of evaporated milk ..... 30  
Soup meat ..... 45  
Two and a half pound pot roast ..... 42  
One pound of pork chops ..... 37  
Four pounds of corned beef ..... 65  
Thirteen eggs ..... 55  
One cabbage ..... 15  
Soup greens ..... 63  
Total ..... \$2.93

"I do my own baking, and watch 'left overs.' I buy carefully, keeping on the watch for 'special sales' in meat and staples.

"A small kitchen garden helped about \$5 worth last summer, not counting the cost of seeds."  
M. H.

the final decision and that the best thing which can happen to any one is once in a while to recognize the fact that there is some power he is bound to obey.

I am hearing from both! Particularly from the husbands! One, evidently having overlooked the preliminaries to the menu and the statement of authority, burst forth with "Holy Moses!" And, apostrophizing the paper by name, "Are you daffy?" Noting that hominy appears seven times in as many days, he comments: "There are a dozen cereals cheaper than hominy!" and at the seventh repetition relieves his tortured soul with "Gee!" whatever that may stand for in the semi-profane vocabulary.

I have to thank the critic for a hearty laugh, and beg that he will not credit me with the menu which he has wrought him up to the verge of audible execration!

I should be glad if the readers of the letters just given would in candor and in seriousness let us know their several opinions of the question under debate. Other answers to "Nora's" problem are too long to be inserted here. All agree that the aim she named will provide sufficient food for two people weekly. Our New York housewife sketches an attractive variety of meals as possible to the ingenious cook. I wish some enterprising wife who caters for two would put the possibility to the test.

**\$4 a Week Menu.**  
The symposium upon "Nora's" problem of setting her table for two upon an average outlay of \$4 per week is concluded by the publication of a quiet, sensible, and modest letter from one who writes with the confidence of an experienced manager.

"My table expenses for the first year of housekeeping averaged \$18.77 a month. This provided food for two people regularly, a few guests, and several dinners for four and five. Twelve months at \$18.77 totals \$225.24 for the year, with \$4 per week for fifty-two weeks will amount to \$208.

"I canned all my fruit, including pine apple, made my own pickles, jellies, and jams. Tomatoes were the only vegetable I put up myself.

"I do my own baking, and watch 'left overs.' I buy carefully, keeping on the watch for 'special sales' in meat and staples.

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## FAMILY MEALS FOR A WEEK

SUNDAY.	LUNCHEON.	DINNER.
<b>BREAKFAST.</b> Oyster stew. Coffee. DINNER. Boiled beef. Potatoes. Tapioca. <b>SUPPER.</b> Bread and butter. Frosted cake. Tea. <b>MONDAY.</b> <b>BREAKFAST.</b> Pancakes with butter and brown sugar sirup. Coffee. LUNCHEON. French toast. DINNER. Cold boiled beef. Bread and butter. Cafe. Tea. <b>TUESDAY.</b> <b>BREAKFAST.</b> Remains of salmon. Cornstarch pudding (leftover). Bread and butter. Tea.	Fried egg. Doughnuts. Tea. DINNER. Boiled beef sliced and fried in butter (a leftover). Potatoes. Bread and butter. Squash. Cake. Tea. <b>WEDNESDAY.</b> <b>BREAKFAST.</b> LUNCHEON. Remains of beef. Potatoes warmed over. DINNER. Canned salmon. Bread and butter. Potatoes. Boiled onions. Cornstarch pudding. Tea. <b>THURSDAY.</b> <b>BREAKFAST.</b> LUNCHEON. Remains of salmon. Potatoes warmed over. Cornstarch pudding (leftover). Bread and butter. Tea.	Steak. Bread and butter. Snow pudding with custard sauce. Tea. <b>FRIDAY.</b> <b>BREAKFAST.</b> LUNCHEON. Leftover of steak. Potatoes warmed over. Rest of snow pudding. Bread and butter. Tea. DINNER. Four pork chops. Canned corn. Tapioca. Coffee. Bread and butter. Tea. <b>SATURDAY.</b> <b>BREAKFAST.</b> LUNCHEON. Dry toast and butter. Tapioca. Tea. DINNER. Sausage. Fried onions. Bread and butter. Tea.

(We have the same breakfast every morning six days in the week.)