

# Information for Consumers

By Ruth Moyle

**I**N THE last issue of Home and Country I suggested in this issue we would go into the kitchen to take a look at ways and means found there, that could help us conserve some of the housewife's time and energy and, I hope, health and strength.

Now I find I'd like to postpone that particular visit for one more issue. Instead I'd like to tell you something about Dr. Lillian Gilbreth, the famous mother of the famous twelve in "Cheaper by the Dozen."

A few summers ago I had the good fortune to meet Dr. Gilbreth. Dr. Gilbreth is far from being the crisp, very efficient type of person you might connect with rigid time schedules and time and motion studies geared to management in industry. She is rather a very warm, human, comfortable person, one who must be a wonderful grandmother to the children of her "dozen."

At a conference I attended this summer I met a Home Economist from Connecticut who has been working with Dr. Gilbreth on energy conservation in the home. We were all delighted when she told us one of Dr. Gilbreth's plans for the future (she is now well over eighty!) is a return trip to Russia "as soon as she can find time, in the next three or four years!"

My first thought—probably it is yours too—"How in the world can one person accomplish so much?" My next, "What a wonderful example of a strong personal belief that the more time and energy you can conserve while doing the routine jobs around the house, the more time and energy you will have to enjoy the many interesting and worthwhile things there are beyond our routine activities."

Dr. Gilbreth has many excellent suggestions to offer on how this might be done. If you have read the story, or seen the movie of "Cheaper by the Dozen" you'll remember that the death of her husband left Dr. Gilbreth with the full care and responsibility for the twelve children. To earn the living for the family she carried on her husband's work—engineering in time and motion, and in labour saving methods. In doing this, Dr. Gilbreth put into practice in her own home many of the theories and methods they had worked out for industry. Their first step, for example, was to decide as a family, together, which activities around their home were unnecessary and of least value. These they discarded. The remainder they looked at critically. How might they combine or simplify them? One principle accepted by the family was "Two pairs of hands are better than one." Working in pairs, Dr. Gilbreth found, cut down time and labour. For example, two pairs of hands can make a bed in no time flat. There were other advantages, too. Bedmaking

soon became a time when Dr. Gilbreth could visit and chat with her helper at the same time she was instructing in the technique of bed-making.

Another rule accepted by the family was: If you have an unpleasant job to do, choose as pleasant a place as possible to do it in.

And still another—Alternate work with rest. Dr. Gilbreth is very emphatic about this. Have a pleasant spot somewhere, where you can sit for just a minute or so **before** you get tired.

Dr. Gilbreth set up a group of "What? Why? When? How? Where? and Who?" questions for our guidance. For example, What? What does the job accomplish? Is it something really needed? Does it make anyone happy in doing, or in enjoying the results?

Why the job? We should look at our objectives, and rate the importance of one over another.

When? First find out how long it takes to do the job, and then fit it into our time schedule.

How? This, of course, is the chief area of work simplification. It also gives the answer to the question, Where?

Who? That helps us to decide how much time and energy we can, or should, expect from others in the family.

Here is a quote from this world-famous Mother and Engineer that answers very well the question I'm sure many must ask: "Why all this fuss and bother about work simplification?" Dr. Gilbreth says:

"Work simplification in the home is of great importance. What takes place at home not only makes for happiness or unhappiness there, but influences very member of the household throughout the entire day . . . Good house-keeping and good family relations send people from home ready to work, and welcome them back ready and able to rest."

★ ★ ★

## DISCIPLINE

By Bob Adams

If you have kids you have to train them,  
You have to check them and restrain them  
Or other folks will want to brain them.  
But be not grouchy, mean and "sot"  
Nor yet too free with "no" and "not."  
If folks keep saying, "Don't, Bob, don't,"  
I much more likely will than won't.  
But if, to check my wicked ways,  
Some other, nobler task they praise,  
Then say to me, "Come, Bob, let's do it,"  
I rise right up and go right to it.  
When our boy Jim was ten or 'leven,  
To live with him was short of heaven.  
Sidestepping books and useful labors  
He was a scandal to the neighbors.  
But now no more we jaw and scold him;  
In 4-H club work we've enrolled him.  
He has a garden twelve by fifty;  
His cukes are crisp, his onions nifty.  
This gives us food in many messes  
And keeps him clear of cussednesses.  
God made our kids so full of pep,  
They cannot keep our sober step,  
And, whether kissed or whether cussed,  
They're bound to either build or bust.

★ ★ ★