

YESTERDAY AND TODAY

By Gertrude G. Lipsett

My Mother had a spinning-wheel
And in the afternoon,
To spin a hank of stocking yarn,
Paced up and down the room.

My Mother had an old box churn
Equipped with rod, and dash,
And then for hours, she'd turn, and turn,
Till butter milk would splash.

My Mother had a scrubbing-brush
To clean a rough board floor,
Down on her knees she had to rush
From front, to the back door.

My Mother had an old wash-tub
And washing-board to match,
And then the clothes she'd rub and rub
And made the soap suds splash.

My Mother ran a leach of lye
To make the season's soap,
She also had a pot of dye
To give worn raiment hope.

But Mother had a lot of time
To help a little child.
To help a neighbour who was ill,
With confidence and smile.

She taught a class in Sunday School,
She helped the Ladies' Aid,
And for the children of the poor
Some useful clothing made.

She sang the alto in the Church.
The golden rule she lived.
Her hopeful voice was ever near
To comfort the bereaved.

Now, I have not a spinning wheel,
My yarn is factory made,
If I, by chance, choose then to knit
The articles all fade.

I haven't got a churn at all.
The cream man at the door
Hands out my butter, takes my cream,
To factory make some more.

I do not use a scrubbing brush
Upon my hardwood floors.
My Electrolux will soon take up
The mud from out of doors.

A leach of lye I never made—
So many new designs
Of soaps, and powders, do the work
In all the cleaning lines.

But I have not a lot of time
To lessen others' toil,
No time to help my neighbour out
With willing hands or smile.

My garments all must fit just so,
My nose must never shine,
My lips and nails must both be bright,
My whole appearance fine.

But I am missing lots of fun
My Mother must have had,
In giving all a helping hand
While looking after Dad.