

Sisters All!

Dear Martha,

We got home last night after a nine-hour drive from MacNeil Bay. Mother and Dad were in good spirits when we left. Dad is not so rugged as he was before his illness, but he is still able to accept occasional calls to supply. They have a fine garden, just in its prime right now. Such tasty, tender new beets, green peas, and luscious tomatoes! Mother and I did up nearly a hundred cans, and she will have several dozen more before she is done.

It is hard to think of our parents as old. Somehow one always looks to them to provide a certain strength, a sort of last resort in times of stress. I find myself dreading for the time to come when they will no longer be there, with their encouraging confidence in me and their unflinching faith in God's wisdom and goodness. That is why it means so much to me to visit them for a week or so. I feel better for having been exposed to their simple, natural way of life.

Mother took me on a tour of their yard one day. "I like to walk around every day and see how my plants are coming," she told me. "Now see, that cucumber vine has taken hold of the string and started to climb. I had to put a fence around it to protect it from those miserable snails." We admired her tall, husky tomato plants, the rhubarb newly planted this summer, and her carefully nurtured talisman rosebush. "And see my syringa," she said. "That came from the front yard of the house where I was born."

Of course Dad had a stack of books and religious periodicals on his desk and was eager to discuss issues of latest interest to him. He and John had long debates on the ecumenical movement and the practical value of pacifism.

It was good to find Mother and Dad so well and alert. The pastor counts on seeing them in the third row on his left every Sunday, and the church folk look forward to a meaningful testimony or prayer from either of them. Their letters add significance and continuity to our lives, with their expressed interest and concern for their children and grandchildren.

For their sakes, I am glad that they can be busy and active, and I hope they continue so for many years. But however curtailed their physical abilities may become, they have already added to our lives the eternal dimensions of faith and love. There is in them a serenity of spirit that comes from victory over past failures and hardships. They are our cherished link with the past, our continuing example of life made significant because it is committed to God.

Through the years, they have become so grounded in Christ that it seems only natural and reasonable for them to draw nearer to their source of life and love their "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" of their existence. When I look at them I think of Browning's inspiring challenge:

Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be,

The last of life, for which the first was made;

Our times are in his hand

Who saith, "A whole I planned,

Youth shows but half; trust God: See all, nor
be afraid!"

With such parents as ours, and such a heritage, we shall
always be rich.

Your loving sister,

Mary

Miss Thelma Rose Writes*

Dear Highway Friends,

It has been a long time since any contact has been made with you in this way, mostly because there has been little of general interest to write; and there is not to-day, yet somehow the urge is to "keep in touch". Many of your faces are visualized just now, some who have been neglected correspondence-wise. At Christmas one friend wrote, "I'm looking forward to your Christmas letter". Well, she has not received it yet!

Under the circumstances, nursing duty has taken the best of my strength and time. There has been little left for church attendance and few have been the Sundays off. (Have had more lately.) At times one feels depleted in soul, and there seems nothing accomplished of spiritual value. In the rush of life, it takes so much grace to live above the environment of suffering, worldliness and looseness of modern thought, while working with those mostly of another faith, if any faith at all. It is a lonely life when one has no fellowship even with the finest nurses and little or no time for one's own chosen Christian friends for weeks at a time. Only Christian nurses can realize this, and the drain it can be on one spiritually. One gleans hungrily from religious radio programs and Christian literature, and tries to maintain private devotions. In the latter I have lacked, and pray that God's Word again will become more meaningful to me, and His Voice clear once more. He has been grieved by some of my recent questioning, "WHY?" This has been easier to fall into during the last few months when physical health became below par. There was agreement with the voice of the enemy that God did not lead clearly as before, and I was not a victorious witness before the world. It seemed that every small failure, mistake and negligence was brought to remembrance, and there was no earthly friend that could really understand, so no such help was sought. But Jesus was near all the time seeking to teach new things of Him, and remind of His past faithfulness. Now, with improved health after medical treatment, there comes fresh hope as we enter the Easter Season. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom.6:4 From Psalm 138, these words speak this morning, "In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul . . . Though I walk in the midst of trouble thou wilt revive me . . . The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."

Yours for better things in Him

Thelma Rose

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More Than Fifty an Hour

More than 1,200 new alcoholics a day are being produced in the United States, or an average of fifty an hour, around the clock, says Dr. Andrew C. Ivy, of the University of Illinois. He also says that more than 8,000,000 Americans are affected with alcoholism, of whom 5,000,000 are outright alcoholics and 3,000,000 are prealcoholic problem drinkers.

THE MORNING PRAYER

He who rushes from his bed to his business and waiteth not to worship is as foolish as though he dashed into battle without arms or armour. Be it ours to bathe in the softly flowing river of communion with God, before the heat of the wilderness and the burden of the way begin to oppress

C. H. Spurgeon.

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