

Normal Prices Returning

One statistician has estimated that there are in this country today constructive expenditures totaling five billion dollars, which are hesitating to begin on account of the high prices of materials and labor. It is evident that an individual corporation is reluctant to erect a building which today will cost him \$100,000, if he feels that six months or a year hence he can duplicate the same identical structure for \$60,000 or \$70,000. However, there is a certain patriotic element in all this, and if everybody waits for the bottom price, we will all suffer from the inevitable stagnation, and complete resumption will be indefinitely postponed. The policy of the founder of the Rothschild banking house, which was to buy securities neither at the lowest price nor to sell at the highest, and which the baron demonstrated so successfully, is not a bad one just now. There is, moreover, the probability that a building, erected at more than the normal cost, may furnish the opportunity for conducting, for some years at least, a business at profits which will warrant the unusual expenditure. There is always a "happy medium" somewhere between the abnormally high and abnormally low, which is usually difficult of determination, but which is warranted and advisable.

Some building materials have already fallen in price; a substantial reduction in many others will doubtless produce greater profits at the end of twelve months, by reason of increased sales, or sales which would otherwise not be made at all, than by trying arbitrarily to maintain war prices, which is ultimately impossible. The Sales Department of the War Department, which has the disposal of hundreds of millions of dollars of raw and manufactured products, bought for war purposes and no longer needed, has already arranged for the release of certain commodities. The lumber associations have been authorized to commence the sale of the vast quantities of lumber on the Government's account and expect to clean up the entire surplus in six months. The copper interests, representing 90 per cent of the American producers, expect to dispose of the Government's holding of copper in fifteen months, or less. Sodium nitrate and hardwood lumber are also now ready for release. Other lines will follow as rapidly as arrangements can be made, and all without "breaning" the market, though prices will naturally be less than war-time prices. A fair start has been made toward settlement with the thousands of contractors and subcontractors, although the process is less rapid than could be desired. On the whole, we are recovering from conditions of the "day after" quite as rapidly as should be expected.—H. H. Windsor, in the May Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Connecticut Blue Laws

Boys and girls who have to go home when the curfew rings at 9 or 9:30 p. m. should read some of the old laws of Connecticut and rejoice that they did not live in our early Colonial days. Here are several of the most interesting ones. Look them over carefully and compare them with our modern care-free lives:

No one shall run on the Sabbath, or walk in his garden or elsewhere, except reverently to and from meeting.

No woman shall kiss her child on the Sabbath day.

No one is to cross a ferry, but with an authorized ferryman.

No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep houses, cut hair, or shave on the Sabbath day.

No minister shall keep school.

Whoever wears clothes trimmed with gold, silver, or bone lace above two shillings by the yard shall be presented by the grand jurors, and the Selectmen shall tax the offender at 200 pounds.

No one shall read common prayer, keep Christmas or saint's day, make minced pies, play cards, or play on any instrument of music, except the drum, trumpet and Jew's harp.

No man shall court a maid in person or by letter without first obtaining the consent of her parents; five pounds penalty for the first offense, ten for the second, and for the third imprisonment during pleasure.

Developing Neatness

"My hardest struggle?" asked the young widow who is "barring up" a family of three. "My most difficult problem is to have the children pick up their own toys and clothing every time. It is said and said that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, for if I were not right after Tom and Ned, to say nothing of little Agnes, they would never gather up one thing."

"Has the struggle been worth the gains that you have made?" came the next question, a bit dubiously.

"Indeed it has, for I'm just beginning to see the results. But for a long time I grew very weary repeating the same directions every night and insisting that clothes must be placed where they could be most easily donned in the morning. Now there is no question about it. Of course there is always something new to tackle, but I'm keeping on, the best I can."

Every mother realizes how hard it is to insist upon a certain thing, especially when children are tired. But every victory won is a victory not only for the mother but for the boy or girl who is receiving this splendid training.

Have you ever thought of the boys who went into the service, the ones whose dotting parents had never insisted upon a thing's being done? What a "hard row" those lads must have "hoed"! Never had obeyed, and now forced to do so! How much easier it would have been if they had always had such rules.

A mother gave her children permission to crack nuts for candy. Down upon the floor they "plumped" with never a thought of protecting the carpet. When they were through their mother probably had to sweep up the remnants. How much easier to have taught them neatness.

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"Those in the audience familiar with Madam Rappold's voice were a trifle astonished—the voice they heard seemed unquestionably hers, although they faced the visible evidence of her closed lips. Then Madam Rappold's lips opened, and her voice poured out. There were two voices in the Auditorium now. Here it became evident that, although Madam Rappold was singing, her voice was matched so perfectly by the voice in the cabinet that it was impossible to distinguish between the two."

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