

# The Fine Art of Doing Without

Isabel Brumleve

Few of us are in such circumstances that we are able to have, through the whole of our lives, all of the things which we desire. Most of us are limited in our possessions to the essentials, and some of us to the bare necessities of life. To be satisfied with what we have is a virtue that may not be easy to attain, but it is possible and pays rich rewards.

I imagine that almost all of us have at some time or another felt that we had to have a new spring coat, but perhaps we did not buy it because Mother needed one more. We could feel hurt and neglected because we did not get the coat or we might be proud and happy when we thought of the many times when Mother gave up things so that we could have what we wanted. I might have only two pairs of shoes and want very much to own the blue pair which I saw in a store window. But I shall stop feeling sorry for myself when I remember that there are boys in the veteran's hospital on Cold Springs who have no feet.

Not everyone has the ability or the talent to keep up with the Joneses, but each of us has the capacity to cherish what it is our fortune to have. Everyone, rich and poor alike, by merely looking about can enjoy the natural wonders and beauty of the earth. The love of our family and our friends may be acquired with only a little effort and love on our own part.

We have taken a big step toward developing the art of doing without when we refuse to be envious of others. The art of doing without should not, however, be regarded as a substitute for ambitions and effort. Nevertheless, the goal of ambition and effort should not be the acquisition of material things. The mere possession of things has not by itself brought lasting happiness to anyone, for there is always someone who wants more. Contentment lies in doing our best and being satisfied with what we have.