

nourished by nothing but ice-cream sodas. Does not a scientific book ever challenge your curiosity? Or a book on economics or art or morals or history?

Of course it is harder work to study than it is merely to read; but that simply means that study requires more of the steam of curiosity to make it go, just as an actual railroad locomotive requires more steam than a boy's toy engine.

And the amount of enjoyment you get out of the world you live in depends largely upon how well your curiosity has been encouraged and trained. Haven't you noticed that you do not respond very well when people talk to you about the beauties of nature, and the joy that comes to us from the world we live in? That is because you have not been sufficiently curious.

YOU walk through the forest as a stranger. Don't you ever wonder at the different kinds of trees, and want to know their names and their habits?

Are you acquainted with plant life and with the individualities of the different flowers and grasses and mosses?

Do you know the stars that have been looking down on you every night of your life—which are the planets and which are the fixed constellations? Do you know the rocks, or have you never been sufficiently curious to study enough geology to give you a pleasing acquaintance with the earth upon which you tread? Have you never been curious about the laws of chemistry and the composition of the foods you eat and of the clothes you wear?

If you had curiosity enough, and had it trained enough to push you forward in these directions, would not the world be a much more interesting place to live in? Would you not be less easily bored?

In your own home, have you any decent sort of an equipment of the machinery of curiosity? Have you an unabridged dictionary in which you can find out all about any new word you happen to hear? Do you have a gazetteer of proper names that can satisfy your curiosity about some person or place that has newly come to your attention?

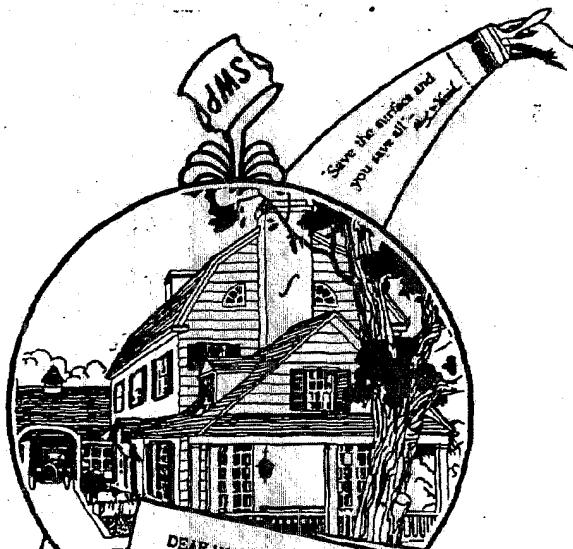
Do you really care to know what is the proper pronunciation of this or that word, and have you a book that will tell you?

Have you an encyclopedia, and are you curious enough when you read about Armenia or Czechoslovakia or Uruguay in the newspapers, to go to it and find out just exactly the necessary facts? Have you an atlas, so that on the map you can satisfy your curiosity as to any unfamiliar place of which you have heard?

And, above all, are you bringing up your children with all the means of stimulating and training their beautiful, natural, and creative curiosity, or are you letting their curiosity run wild, to lead them into inefficiency, idleness, and perhaps evil?

Are your children curious enough about their own bodies, to know what happens to their food after they have swallowed it, and why? A child is eternally asking why. And the more alive he is the more he asks the question. And are you just as constantly trying to equip yourself either to answer his questions or to show him how he can find out the answers for himself?

Curiosity is our most dominant instinct, and we would do well to give it its due attention.



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