

Sept. 20, 1949

Bethesda, Md.

Dear Helen and Pop,

Thank you for many things. First, for sending your address in Madrid at last. I was a t alloss to know where to send my letters to you and was beginning to think that you were under the impression you had already sent it. That would have been, as Laurence ohn pts it "wather a dweadful mistake".

And second, for the lovely box of surprises that came a few days ago. It came at the boy's nap time, so I had to tell him that it only contained, as far as I knew, uninteresting things for ladies. Having been to department stores, he is well aware how terribly boring ladies accessories can be. So I opened it when he was asleep, and saved out only the little bunny family, keeping the other things for his birthday and his Christmas stocking. He was most taken by the bunny family, as were all his friends- "Why, they're no bigger than a MINUTE" said he. And as for me, I know exactly what time it is all day now, and can no longer accuse William of failing to tell me when it's time to go to bed. It's a darling little watch, and I'M most pleased with it, as are all the children who beg to have me show them the works on the other side of the watch. And the gloves are so lovely! as soft as silk, ust the sort I never feel able to afford. I suppose I should have saved them for Christmas, but I really couldn't wait. So thank you both very, very much for them all- I only wish I could have been with you at the places you bought them!

The boy goes around saying "Twenty-two people and ONE DOG!" since he received father's postcard of the cable car in Annecy. I had to tell him the dog was too short to reach up to the window, because he was worried that he couldn't see it in the picture. He is also fascinated by the fact that Putty knows how to stand on her head and ttake pictures. Since I have acquired a camera with one Wheaties boxtop and fifty cents in coin he will probably soon ask me to do the same.

We had a full social week , and fortunately no cnicken pox. We had dinner at Boise Hart and his mother's lovely old house in Alexandria last Tuesday, and met the Services, an F.S.O. and his wife who are well known in the Department for having been through a particularly sad mill. When he was in China dear old gen. Pat Hurley accused him of being a saboteur of all of Hurely's plans, and "probably" a communist in disguise. He was second Sec'y. of Embassy at that time, not making a fortune, but spent six months and all his savings trying to redeem himself from Hurley's irresponsible accusations. "hich was rather difficult rinancially, since he also had a wife, twu growing children and one baby more on the way. ack Service's friends got together a collection of money to help him, and at the end of it all he was reinstated and completely exonerated . He's a quiet, amiable sort of fellow, and it's hard to see how anyone could find him as ob ectionable as Hurley apparently did. His wife, though not beautiful, is as nice as apple pie and conversationally attractive.

On Wednesday night we went after dinner to the Lobenstine's new house for a party or sorts. The Lobenstines have ust come up.

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Lima, and he is our new Peruvian desk officer. The occasion for the party was the visit of a man named Dr. Giesicke, who is in his sixties now and is attached to the Embassy down there on cultural matters. At the age of twenty four he was made Rector of the University of Cuzco due to some political troubles and the patronage of the then current dictator, who decided he would like to put some fresh influences to work on the University. He told us some interesting stories of how he got on then. Later on he took up archeology and dug away for years and years on pre-Inca remains, about which we questioned him at length. I am always fascinated by that part of the world. The Spanish certainly made a mess of what was at the very least a most orderly and well-managed civilization. But I can never find out as much as I'd like to about the state of pre-Inca civilization, so I'm beginning to suspect that very little must be known for certain. I've read all the books I've been able to get hold of on the subject. I hope some day we can be assigned to Peru, so I can see Macchu Picchu.

We went to a cocktail party at the home of a wealthy F.S.O. on Thursday- and a fine home it was. Mr. Pierrot took time off by resigning during the war and sold airplanes to the Brazilians, with the happy result that he coined something like a mint and is now back in the Foreign Service as a gentleman diplomat. The party was held in his recreation room in the basement, a huge affair complete with bar, games, fireplace, and the like. F.S.O.s in Washington seldom live so well. On Friday night we went out to the home of our friends the Fishburns, who were at the Fletcher School with William. He is going to be Labor Adviser to the American Republics section soon, but has been working in another branch of the Department up till now. He told us a story about some friends of his who are on the Latin American Committee of the CIO. It appears they went down to S. America on a six weeks tour recently, met some of Bolivian exiles in Argentina who have since been involved in the revolution which just failed, talked only to them, never went to Bolivia, and came away thoroughly convinced that the party to which they belonged was a friend of labor, the elected gov't. was fascist and anti-labor, and that anyone who said anything else was crazy. With the result that they were just about to issue a scathing denunciation of the State Department's policy in mildly deprecating the revolutionists. Having talked to the exiles, they knew the whole story, and were not going to be fooled by anyone. Somehow or other they saved themselves from making a statement in favor of a most reactionary minority group of old-fashioned South American revolutionaries who fortunately failed to overturn one of the first liberal, elected governments in Bolivia! But they still don't trust a word that comes out of the State Department, naturally. They were convinced not to issue the statement by someone else, John Fishburn doesn't know whom.

We spent the weekend weeding and fertilizing our yard, on the advice of our gardening expert-neighbor, Mrs. Rhine, who told us we should "Feed our bank now, when the food will get into the nuts of the grass". Mrs. Rhine will talk your ear off if you aren't terribly cautious, but she certainly does know about gardening and flowers and "nuts" and things, so we arrange to talk to her when we can think of a way to end the conversation tactfully.

Yesterday was the great day, of the beginning of Laurence

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ohn's school. He should have begun last Thursday, but because he had been exposed to the chicken pox Miss MacGee asked me to wait till Monday in case he should come down with them at last. I was allowed to accompany him on the first day, and it was quite an experience. We are sending him in a taxi pool, which calls for four or five other children and delivers them. I was also allowed to go in the taxi yesterday. The boy was all dressed up in his new tweed trousers and his turtle-neck jersey and his new shiny shoes. At the school door he had his first qualm, and feebly said he'd rather not enter. But we went in nonetheless, and the teacher, Mrs. Ward, showed him where to put his rubbers and extra sweater. We found some other children playing terribly quietly on the floor, and one child weeping bitterly and calling aloud for his daddy, and yet another child sitting on a small chair noiselessly crying, with big teardrops rolling down his cheeks in serried ranks. It was heartrending. The noisy weeper was a small boy about four, who looked fairly large and sturdy and tough, and had a deep-voiced way of saying "But I want my daddy to cc-come! I want daddy!" The quiet tear-dropper merely sat unobtrusively in his chair silently and hopelessly allowing the salt water to drip remorselessly down onto his overalls. Our boy was most interested in all the weeping, but didn't start to weep himself until the whole school began saying its prayers, saluting the flag, and singing. At the singing the noisy cryer began to howl even louder than before from his perch in Mrs. Ward's lap, and the sight was apparently too much for Laurence, who gripped my hand and began to shed tears as quietly as the other little boy. I think the ceremony was a little too solemn for the little ones who were new, and who had to sit quietly for what was to them a very long time. Mrs. Ward soon gave up the weepy cryer, and asked him and the other children to retire to the play yard, which they all gladly did. I'm sorry to say that it was only the little boys who cried, and the little girls (two or three of whom didn't look to be more than a bare three years old) were as calm and stoical about it all as if they were small icebergs. I am beginning to think that the male is the weaker sex. In the playyard almost everyone perked up enormously, and Laurence ohn was in an instant as happy as a lark, riding on everything, going through everything, swinging on everything, and naming everything after some sort of truck. He left me immediately, and I was soon surrounded by a small bevy of the less happy tots who had decided I was a source of maternal comfort upon which all could draw. Later on a five-year-old came out to play, but found the going too tough for his fibre, and spent the morning clutching my hand and following me around telling about his homelife. In Laurence's class there were the usual assortment of children, some quiet introverts, some quiet extroverts, and two comparatively old and large boys who had a tendency to bully the little ones. I think Laurence will go his own way and make his own way in relative peace when he gets used to things. The children were entranced by the way he named things after trucks, and the little horse merry-go-round was very soon being called a garbage truck by all of them. He proudly showed one little boy the way to the little boy's room, after having been there once himself. I'm not at all afraid for his eventual complete adjustment to school. This morning he had to go all by himself, and was a little dubious about it, but when the taxi came he dashed out to it and hopped merrily in without so much as a backward glance at his anxiously smiling mamma in the doorway. I am eagerly awaiting his return at lunch time, to find out how he did today.

I must get his lunch ready now! Much love,