

Blanche E. Welling Describes

A SIMPLE BUDGET

That Will Enable You To Run Your Home On A Business Basis

AFTER years of experience I learned that any budget plan to be a success in my home over any appreciable length of time must be kept as simple as possible. Gradually I have worked out a simple plan which has been very easy to use, yet entirely practical over a period of more than ten years. Its operation is even simpler than the explanation sounds, and this is how it works:

Each year I take a fresh notebook (one that opens out flat like a book is the best), and I write the date on the first page.

On the next page I make a list of all the big occasional bills to be paid during the coming twelve months. This includes such major items as various kinds of insurance, taxes, vacations, expensive items of clothing and any other big expenses not easily paid out of one month's income.

After I have completed this list of annual expenditures, I add up the figures and divide the total amount by the number of months in the year. The resulting amount is deposited every payday in a special savings account which I keep only for the specific purpose of paying these big expenses. Of course if our paydays are weekly or semimonthly I base my figures accordingly. This amount is always the first item on the budget plan I make out each month.

Each Month Is Different

The next step in my budgeting is to plan for a proper division of our income each month, so on the following page of my budget booklet I make out a plan for one month's expenditures. Each month is different, so I make out a new plan each month in the year. I do not list every minor detail, because

experience taught me that this was one of the things that made my former budget systems burdensome or even failures. Moreover, my figures are usually only approximate amounts, and I do not worry if the actual bills are a few cents more or less than the amounts I estimate.

I allow a certain sum to miscellaneous; this item covers small emergencies and differences that are bound to come up during the month. The plan also allows a reasonable amount for my husband and me for personal expenses, and out of this amount each of us takes care of dozens of small expenditures each month, and thus we avoid another large and troublesome amount of detail.

On the page opposite my monthly budget plan, I record the payment of most of the important expenditures. I sometimes even make note of names and addresses of business firms, and memorandums which may

prove beneficial for future reference. Often I jot down the number of miles covered as well as the money spent while on a certain trip. In fact, looking back over my old budget memorandum pages is very much like reading a diary.

Where Do We Stand?

The items listed on my monthly plan are crossed out as they are paid. I insert the date and state the exact amount only when I think it necessary; but I keep all canceled checks and receipted bills for a certain length of time, usually until the next bill from the same firm has been received. This simple method of recording

expenditures has proved itself entirely satisfactory over a period of many years. Furthermore, by avoiding unnecessary detail, the keeping of a household budget book has become a pleasure to me instead of a burden.

Finally once a year I make out a financial statement showing the condition of money affairs in our home on that date. This usually occupies the last page in my budget notebook. In our case as in the majority of cases, I imagine, this is a very simple thing to do. I merely make out a list of our assets and then another list of our liabilities. I subtract the one from the other, and then I have in black and white the figures that tell how much we are worth financially year after year.

The natural time to start using a budget plan in the home seems to be around the first of the year, but there is no reason why one cannot be started at any time. Business concerns, clubs, churches and government departments start their at a time best suited to their needs. Why shouldn't a home, the most important business on earth, do the same thing?

More and more men and women are realizing they should run their home finances on a business basis, and the secret of making a success of this important undertaking is to keep the budget plan as simple as possible and then stick to it. Take time to plan today and you will avoid a great many of tomorrow's worries.

BARTER

By Sara Teasdale

Life has loveliness to sell—
All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
Climbing fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

Life has loveliness to sell—
Music like a curve of gold,
Scent of pine trees in the rain,
Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Holy thoughts that star in the night.

Spend all you have for loveliness,
Buy it and never count for cost;
For one white singing hour of peace
Count many a year of strife well lost.
And for a breath of ecstasy
Give all you have or could be.

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