

Charles Kushnik Has 16 Children and is Glad of it



If there are any two men in this wide world who should meet and present each other proper greetings and mutual felicitations it is surely Theodore Roosevelt of Washington and Oyster Bay and Charles Kushnik of Eden, Wis. President Roosevelt is renowned far and wide as the strenuous advocate of the anti-race suicide propaganda. Mr. Kushnik is not so greatly renowned, but just the same these two men should meet and compare notes. For while Roosevelt is by word of mouth and pen adorning his fellow men in this, our land of the free and small families, to raise many children to brighten their homes, Kushnik is and has been for the last twenty-four years following the president's precepts to the last letter.

If President Roosevelt some bright Sunday afternoon would drive out to the little Kushnik farm, which lies snugly out of the way of the main road amid the hills of Fond du Lac county, near Eden, he would see a sight that would gladden his philoprogenitive heart. At first, if he was unwise as to the state and number of the Kushnik family, he would surely think that he had run into a country party or social by mistake. He would see sixteen sturdy, robust, country children and young folk playing and sitting in the front yard. Eight of them would be boys and eight girls. They would range in age from the staid young married woman of 24 to a romping boy of 7, and if any one was at hand who knows the Kushnik family he might explain to



little brighter, a little happier, and take a little of the work of the old folk. So many children a trouble? Nein, nein, Mein Herr!

Mr. Kushnik corroborates all that his wife says about the many benefits and joys to be derived from a large family. He says—and listen, you husbands and wives who sometimes sit up nights worrying how to bring up the two or three that you call your own—that the family problem is one that is easily solved. According to him the large family is its own solution, and the larger the better. "It is not hard, and it is not so expensive as some people might think to bring up and keep a family as big as ours," says he. "I came here to Fond du Lac county twenty-two years ago. My wife and I were both young then, as we are still. We had two little daughters then and money enough to buy the twenty acres of land where the house now stands. That was all the land we had for a long time. The family grew

increased and multiplied. The first wing came when the family numbered six and the old house was outgrown. It is comprised of three rooms and marks the progress of the family from small to medium size.

Apparently the home with this wing added sufficed for several years, for the wing that grew out on the opposite side is, by all evidences of the eyes, at least ten years newer. This was built when there were ten little Kushniks to house and the family was mentioned about the countryside as "pretty big." But fame more than local was to come to this family, and the last wing on the house, which cropped out from the rear, attests to the day when its numbers were sixteen. Potatoes averaged 120 bushels to the acre last year on the farm of Charles Kushnik, and the market price was \$1, so the house has recently experienced a complete coat of paint, which makes the wings look all of the same age, but the neighbors driving past will point to them as notches in the progress of the big family.

"There's the six wing," they say, indicating with their whips the first addition. "Then there's the ten, and behind is the sixteen wing. Charlie's family grew so fast he didn't have time to build a new house, so he just slapped on another wing whenever they grew short on bedrooms." And "Charlie," seeing the motion of the whip, comprehends and smiles happily.

How to Raise a Large Family Economically

light along at the rate of one every year, but we managed to make enough out of the twenty acre farm to support them.

Income Increases with Family.

"How did we do it? Ha, ha! It is not hard. It does not cost much more to keep two young children than it does one when they are all good and healthy. With the advent of each child, of course, our expenses were increased some, but all the time the farm was beginning to produce more, too.

"As the children grew larger of course it began to cost more to keep them. There were more pairs of shoes to buy, more clothes, and more food. When they got old enough to go to school there were books to buy. Sometimes there were books and new clothes for twelve children to be bought at one time when the school opened in the fall, but we always managed to buy them and also managed to keep the children in school. It cost much more than the average family. But it is in the autumn, after the summer's harvest is done, after the corn is cut and shucked ready for husking, and the potatoes in the ground are clamoring to be dug before the big frosts come, that the advantages of a big family, at least on a Wisconsin farm, are to be best understood.

Not Worried by Lack of Help.

There is a twenty acre field of potatoes to be dug and picked. It takes a man a day to dig half an acre of potatoes. The farmer must pay \$2 a day and board for every man whom he gets to help. When potatoes ripen late the farmer with a couple of thousand dollars' worth of them in the ground gets gray headed worrying about getting good help and enough of it. But Charles Kushnik of Eden worries not in this, the strenuous season for the Wisconsin farmer. THE SUNDAY TRAINS' man's first introduction to him and his family was the sight of five sturdy boys, five pretty girls, and two cheerful adults putting a hole into the twenty acre field at a bewildering rate. The five boys and the father were digging and the five girls followed, putting the tubers into baskets as fast as they were taken from the ground. The mother walked about the field and beamed generously on them all. In another part of the big field another son had already started on the fall plowing.

"You see how it is that we could raise such a large family without any trouble and on such a small farm," said the father proudly. "I keep all the profits of the land in the family. It doesn't cost a cent for any of the work on the farm, and the work is done much better than any hired men would do it. Look at these boys and girls. Does it look as if they suffered any from lack of care and attention because they are part of such a number. No, they are all healthy and my wife and I are still young and strong. The farm here is a good one and the older children have good positions or have married well."

So it would seem that the family problem is no problem at all, but simply a foolish chimera that people have conjured up for their own disturbance. Mr. Kushnik should know whereof he speaks, and he says so. All that is necessary, apparently, is to arrange that the children be all strong and healthy, learn to love them—and have a farm, preferably a potato farm, where the activities of the young may be utilized with due profit.



the illustrious visitor that this was Sunday afternoon and the Kushnik children were all at home today.

Proud of Family Roster.

Then Papa and Mamma Kushnik would come out and proudly tell off the long list of names and ages of their happy offspring on their fingers. These same names and ages tell a story that is replete with human interest. The roster is:

Girls	Age	Boys	Age
Lulu	24	Charles	16
Etta	23	Frank	16
Elizabeth	22	Ernest	15
Minnie	21	Herman	15
Anna	17	Paul	12
Martha	17	Henry	11
Emma	14	Louis	7
Pauline	7	John	6

If there are any other fathers or mothers in this country who can show a list of their own children to equal this Charles Kushnik and his good wife, Elizabeth, would like to know of them. If there are any families who are worried and troubled over the burden of two or three children they

should list to the story of the Kushnik family and the wise words of the heads of it.

Mr. Kushnik and his wife have found little of the "woe and trials" that are declared to be an inevitable part of the upbringing of a large family. They have reared one of the largest and certainly the most unique family in the land, and they are not sorry for it. Sorry for it? On the contrary, they are glad and happy because Providence so bountifully endowed them in the matter of progeny.

Mr. Kushnik is a small man, a sturdy little German of the kind who came to this country from the fatherland and settled on a homestead when the middle west was considerably less thickly populated than it is now and by sheer perseverance and hard toil wrought farms and homes for themselves in the wilderness. The mother of the remarkable flock that bears his name is, on the other hand, of the large, German type of house frau, and the fifty years to which she owns have passed lightly over her head, and she is today possessed of the fat, red cheeks and the high spirits that once probably marked her as the belle of some little German village.

Every Addition Brightens Home.

She agrees heartily with her husband that a multiplicity of children is a joy and pleasure to the heart forever.

"Trouble to raise a large family?" she repeats in answer to a question. "Where is the trouble? Is it not so that many hands make light work and many kinder make light to the home? Surely, no one will say that they are not glad to have one little darling to brighten their home. If one child makes the home so much happier does it not follow that two should make it twice as happy, and sixteen eight times as happy as two? We have found it so. Every one of these sixteen is just as dear to us as if he or she were the only one. Every one of them helps to make the home a

"Here is where the big family began to help. I could then and can now work my farm better, plant more acres, and care for them better than any other farmer in the county, and never had to pay one cent for hired help. The children did it. As they grew up they learned to do the work of the farm and do it well. My farm looks like a garden in the summer time. There isn't a foot of the land which can be broken that isn't under the plow and cultivated as closely as a man will cultivate a little garden in his back yard. Other men might have bought more land if they were in my place, but I know it is better the way we have it.

"That is how we managed to care for our big family so easily. Of course, it might have been harder in a city. Here the more help you can have on a farm the more money you can make out of it. Every year one of our children got big enough to start to work in the field we began to raise more and better crops. The expenses grew in the meanwhile, but we were always just a little ahead."

Farmhouse Indicates Family's Growth.

The Kushnik home is a low, substantial farmhouse. A close observer can nearly read the increase and growth of the family in its construction. First there is the original farmhouse, the little square, unostentatious, one story, four room style that farmers first build when their family is small and the funds limited. From each side of this structure additions and wings have grown as the tribe of Kushnik