

Do You Know That...

- ▶ Experts are trying to figure the significance of a Soviet order which prohibits export in 1954 of local newspapers from the minority areas of Russia, but continues to permit export of scientific publications.
- ▶ Twenty-eight member countries of the UN Technical Assistance Program were in arrears on their pledges for 1953 for a total of almost 3½ million dollars, 40 per cent of the whole fund. Uncle Sam took care of the other 60 per cent.
- ▶ A group of missionaries have been working for four years on a series of Chinese dictionaries which, when completed in another two years, will for the first time provide up-to-date equivalents of Chinese characters in English, French, Spanish, Hungarian and Latin.
- ▶ The London fog of 1952 was blamed for a heavy incidence of tuberculosis among the animals in the zoo, causing about 30 per cent of zoo deaths that year.
- ▶ Although Harry S. Truman consistently refused to supply loyalty file information to Congressional committees investigating Communism, he authorized the Internal Revenue Bureau to open all its confidential files to one Senate group.
- ▶ East German Communist officials boast that Moscow increased its aid to that area by about three billion dollars after last summer's uprising.
- ▶ The American public puts almost a billion dollars a year of its own money into juke box coin-slots.
- ▶ British Secret Service is reported to be on the trail of a master smuggler who heads an international gang specializing in switching labels on shipments of strategic materials, diverting them from England to Iron Curtain countries.
- ▶ New tests on the adaptability of the human body to temperature changes indicate that man is able to withstand heat so much better than cold that there is a question whether he has any cold-adjustment mechanism at all.
- ▶ The United Mine Workers pension fund expended almost 139 million dollars in fiscal 1953 on pensions and medical care and other payments to its members, leaving a mere 92 million dollars in reserves.
- ▶ When white bread went back on sale in England late last summer, it was the first time in eleven years that it had been available to the British

N. DE T

POOR DADDY!

By K. G. Merrill

LAST EVENING when I called for my little daughter at a neighbor's home where she and another ten-year-old had been watching television, she commented, "We saw Buck Rogers. Gosh it was exciting!" Then with a certain loftiness, she went on, "Poor Daddy! You didn't have anything like that when you were young, did you?"

As she said this, for some reason a sudden swift flash of recollection — as vivid as a curtain rolling up on a brightly lit stage — brought back a childhood setting I had not envisioned in many years. This setting, laid in St. Paul, Minnesota, at the turn of the century, revealed a stark, bare box of a house, set on a desolate, treeless, windswept bluff high above the Mississippi. A mile from the nearest habitation, it was appallingly alone. Far below on the river bank was a railroad switchyard, where swarms of bums were booted off the rods daily. Upon the broad bosom of the stream itself plied steamers and barges from St. Louis and St. Joseph, which were everlastingly casting off without sundry members of their sodden, vagrant crews — men who, lost in the shambles of a shanty town bordering the tracks, had found competition

with the riff-raff from nearby logging camps too interesting to leave.

A fine place to leave an unusually handsome woman alone! Alone with four small children, during the long days while Father was on his accountant's stool in the city, the long evenings while Father was out singing with his quartet. Mother, however, immediately evolved a defensive routine. From the kitchen she could watch the path to the dirt road. The moment she saw a tramp approaching, she'd blow a whistle and all four of us would tumble into the house, slam the door and lock it. Mother would mount guard. As soon as the man knocked, she'd call: "If you're hungry, I'll set out a bit. But don't move off the path or I'll shoot . . ."

It wasn't long before the bo's put some sort of hex sign on the gate, for after a while we were seldom molested by anyone setting foot on the path. But the occasional prowlers who scrambled up the bluff and, unseen, approached the front of the house, were something else. They really frightened us. But Mother handled them pretty well by the simple expedient of answering the door with a loaded Colt 38 in her hand. They were surprisingly polite...