

197. (MARIA: DON'T WORRY IF YOU HAVEN'T PRACTICED THE EXERCISES as much as you were supposed to.) Yeah, Maria never practiced either! (Maria: I knew enough about it and they just showed me once and I knew pretty much what to do, so it's fairly simple, and just trust the Lord.) As long as the girls are right there to tell you what to do, you don't have to worry about a thing.

198. (MARIA: THE BREATHING WAS QUITE SIMPLE--it's not half as complicated as they make it sound in the books, how you have to go from this stage to that stage. As the pains get more intense you can just start panting a little more, so it's really no big problem.)

199. THEY TRY TO MAKE IT SOUND DIFFICULT just to get your mind off your pains or something, but you never did seem to have any really severe pains, did you Honey? (Maria: No, it didn't seem that way to me. I breathed almost all one way. It seemed like the Lord really let me escape part of the labour.)

200. WE GOT THE VERSE: "BEFORE SHE TRAVAILETH SHE SHALL BRING FORTH" and He'd "not let her suffer more than she would be able to bear" (Isa.66:7 and I Cor.10:13)--and really, before she really travailed hard at all the baby was born! So it was a miracle, really a miracle!

201. THE LORD REALLY DID BLESS and answer our prayers! 'Cause you know she's kind of weak and small and little and I was a little worried about how she could take such a big exercise, but she just came

through with flying colours!
202. SHE WAS THE BRAVEST ONE IN THE BUNCH! She was more cheerful and laughing and smiling and talking and with her little bright eyes shining all the way through the whole thing! She really did great! I'm so proud of her! As Rachel said, she was a real little trooper! She said, "I've never saw anybody so brave! She was no brave, she was just a real little soldier!"--And of course she always is.

203. AFTER ALL, SHE'S HAD THE BIGGEST BABY IN THE WORLD for a long time, which is her biggest problem and a lot more trouble than any little babies!! Me!--Ha! So she was well prepared! She took this little one in easy stride. She's lying here kissing her big one--me!

204. WELL ANYHOW, I WANTED A GIRL, but I guess the Lord didn't want me to worry nine months about not having a girl, so He made us think we were going to have a girl for sure. Well, we are supposed to have one, God willing, but it didn't happen to be this one! But anyhow, praise God! (Maria: The doctor, whom we'd told we were expecting a girl, said how wonderful it was, but suddenly after the birth he pointed his finger at me in triumph and said,

205. "BUT IT'S A BOY!" I'd already told the doctor I was certain it was going to be a girl and we'd had dreams about it, so he said, "But it's a boy!" So I said, "Oh well, we just got our times mixed up--the next one's going to be the girl.")

206. WELL, YOU KNOW, HERE BOYS ARE EVERYTHING. They're al-

most Oriental in that business about how you must have a boy first, and boys are what's really important. They call them "barones" like a baron. A barón! Ah, they stiffen up with such pride when they say their first one was a barón!

207. "I HAVE A BARÓN!" You're of course supposed to have a boy first, and that's what everybody's supposed to be praying for and expecting and hoping, that they'll first have a boy. (Maria: The Lord gives most of them boys, too--I guess 'cause that's what they want, and they please Him by having babies, so He gives them the boys first!)

208. BUT IF THEIR FIRST ONE IS A GIRL THEY SEEM SO DISAPPOINTED, their face falls when you ask them about it, and they say ruefully, "We had a girl", like it's such a shame, so sad. They really like boys here and

they really like their first one to be a boy.

209. I THINK I'M GOING TO HAVE TO BUY A DRINK FOR EVERY WAITER IN TOWN because all of them were betting me that it was going to be a boy, they were positive it was going to be a boy. But I kept saying, "No, no. --It'll be a girl."--Ha! Some Prophet!

210. --IT'S A BOY!--AND WHATTA BOY! Praise the Lord!