

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, October 4, 1933

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "BETTER SCHOOL-DAY LUNCHES." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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You've heard of the fellow who always gets the short end of the deal. But did you ever think that many of our school children are in just that situation about their meals? In many homes noon is the customary time for dinner--the nourishing meal of the day. So Father and Mother and uncles and aunts sit down every noon to a nice, hot, hearty meal. But Jack and Mary haven't time to come back from school at noon. So they either eat their meal out of a box or buy a little lunch at school. Then, at evening when these youngsters should be making up for the skimpy noon meal, the rest of the family are content with a small supper. You see how Jack and Mary get the short end of the bargain all the way around.

Situations like this have a lot to do with the large number of malnourished children which health authorities find in both city and rural schools. Malnourishment brings on many of those winter ills that children suffer from. Three squares a day are important for the sake of health, happiness, and good grades. A breakfast that will stand by the child until noon, a nourishing lunch containing at least one hot dish, and an evening dinner that makes up what the other meals lack--all these three are important for any child's success at school. It's up to Mother to see that the daily menu fills the needs of the school child as well as the rest of the family and to see that the lunch the child takes to school will be enough to carry him through the afternoon.

Speaking of school lunches, I have a good story to tell you about a lunch plan worked out in rural schools in Maryland. A few years ago a country school teacher in Maryland became disturbed over the health and attendance records of her pupils. The children weren't well. They missed a great deal of school because of illness. Many underweight children came to school without any lunches because they had nothing to bring or were ashamed to bring what they had. And most of the children who brought lunches simply brought a cold biscuit or a piece of cold corn bread or a piece of cold fried meat. So the teacher with the help of the district nurse and the home demonstration agent started lunch clubs. Although they had to get on with very little equipment and a few supplies, these women served one hot dish for the children every school day throughout the winter. The idea soon spread to seventeen schools in this and an adjoining county.

The second year, home demonstration agents and teachers raised the funds, and the agents trained older boys and girls in the schools to prepare the hot food that was served. The third year the parent-teacher association took over the project. Results? The children have gained weight, and school attendance is much improved. Children who had not been bringing lunch, now bring some



biscuits or bread to eat with the hot dish, and lunch time has become a sort of picnic hour.

What are some of the inexpensive hot dishes suitable for use in a project like this? Well, the foods specialists suggest quite a list. Cream soups, for example. Cream soups are hot and nourishing, and contain those two much-needed foods for children--milk and vegetables. Cream of corn soup, cream of quick turnip soup, cream of split pea soup and finally oatmeal and potato soup are all inexpensive choices. Children enjoy meat stew with vegetables. They enjoy creamed hard cooked eggs on toast. They like scalloped or creamed dried lima beans with crisp bacon. Still other good choices are scalloped or creamed salmon; spanish rice; and creamed mixed vegetables.

Sandwiches, of course, are old stand-bys for the lunch box. And children won't tire of sandwiches that taste good and have variety. You can put a good deal of nourishment into a sandwich. Egg sandwiches, for example, are nourishing for the noon lunch--sliced hard-cooked eggs, salad dressing and perhaps thin slices of crisp broiled bacon, or eggs scrambled with canned tomato. Cottage cheese makes another good and nourishing filling for the children's sandwiches. Spread soft cottage cheese on one slice of bread and spread jam, jelly, honey, marmalade or conserve on the other; or spread cottage cheese on one slice and a mixture of grated raw carrot, grated onion, and salad dressing on the other. Vegetable fillings are good if well-made and carefully seasoned. One popular filling is shredded cabbage or lettuce, ground nuts, and grated onion mixed with salad dressing. Another vegetable filling is baked beans or lima beans with diced broiled bacon and sliced tomato.

Good meat sandwiches? Lots of those. Chopped cooked beef, chopped celery and pickles and salad dressing. Broiled bacon, chopped raw mild onion, salad dressing. Sliced boiled tongue and a very little horseradish. Canned fish also makes good sandwiches--flaked salmon or other fish, chopped celery or pickle and salad dressing.

Tomorrow: "October Jobs, Outdoors and In."

