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Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, May 27, 1932

(Not for Publication)

Subject: "A Luncheon for the Girl Graduate." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Another party time of year has arrived. The letters coming in these days are proof enough of that fact. Somebody wants advice on giving a patriotic dinner for memorial day. And somebody else wants to know what refreshments to serve at a shower for a June bride. Another friend is entertaining an out-of-town guest at a June breakfast. And finally here's a letter from a girl who is graduating from high school and wants to celebrate the event with a luncheon for her girl chums. Congratulations to all those girl graduates, but especially to this one who says she likes to cook and wants to prepare this luncheon all by herself. I think she deserves our time this morning, don't you?

It's fun to plan a menu just for girls because they appreciate dainty attractive meals. So for a luncheon like this, get out your prettiest linen, your best silver and fine china. And be sure to have a lovely centerpiece of gay flowers. If possible choose flowers that harmonize with the color of your china or glass. For a luncheon, I always think a simple glass bowl is most attractive to hold your flowers.

As for the menu, this is the time to feature dainty food rather than the heartier dishes men enjoy.

Here's the menu for you, Girl Graduate. Cream of mushroom soup for the first course. With it, serve small, crisp crackers. Second course, a spring salad served with very thin nut-bread and butter sandwiches. The salad is dainty, crisp and colorful, planned to appeal to the eye and the appetite. Use crisp lettuce leaves and sprigs of watercress for the salad greens. Arrange on these slices of tomato, cucumber, rings of green pepper and a gay radish rose on the side. Of course you'll use French dressing with this dainty salad. And put it on at the very last minute.

For dessert, something different and a bit fancy, planned to appeal to the feminine taste--a chocolate roll made like jelly roll and served with fluffy whipped cream. Chocolate roll is such a different dessert and so suitable for party occasions that I'm going to give you the recipe.

But just a minute. We have to decide first what to give these girls by way of a beverage. Well, after all when one graduates from high school one feels very grown-up. And just by way of complimenting this grown-up event in one's life, I think we might serve dainty cups of after-dinner coffee with the chocolate roll.

This menu would also be quite suitable for a simple bridge luncheon at this time of year. I'll repeat it. Cream of mushroom-soup. (The recipe for that is in your green cookbook.) Spring salad; Nut bread and butter sandwiches; chocolate roll with whipped cream; and coffee.

The recipe for chocolate roll is a long one but you'll find it well worth the effort of writing down. The roll is made much like jelly roll.

There are seven ingredients in this recipe.

- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tablespoons cold water
- 1 egg white
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2-1/2 squares of unsweetened chocolate
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- Sponge cake

I'll go over that list. (Repeat.)

Put the sugar, water, unbeaten egg white and salt into the upper part of a double boiler. Have the water in the lower part boiling. Commence beating the mixture with a Dover beater at once and beat constantly while it cooks for 7 or 8 minutes. Add the chocolate and when melted take from the stove and continue to beat for 5 minutes or until it has thickened. Add the vanilla.

Prepare any desired sponge cake recipe, but be sure to bake the cake in a large thin layer in a moderate oven about 325° to 350°F. for 10 to 15 minutes. (The sponge cake recipe on P.92 of Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes Revised is especially satisfactory for this roll). Turn out at once onto a paper which has been sprinkled with powdered sugar. Cut the crusts with a sharp knife. Spread the chocolate filling over the cake as smoothly and rapidly as possible and roll the cake and wrap it in the paper. Allow the cake to stand until cold and then cut crosswise into thin slices and serve.

How to discuss a few questions that seem to be puzzling lots of homemakers.

The first one is about aluminum ware. Some way the idea has got abroad that aluminum ware is dangerous to health, that foods cooked in aluminum absorb some kind of poison. How such a notion started is hard to say. Certainly it was not to protect the public from harm. Perhaps the original idea was to help the sale of some other kind of cooking utensils. But in the end such trade wars serve merely to befuddle the public; they benefit nobody. The Department of Agriculture has not conducted any experiments on aluminum ware. But it has made a careful study of the scientific literature reporting experiments done by other reliable research institutions. Not one statement can we find, backed by scientific research, that even suggests aluminum ware as the cause of disease or as a menace to health.

The next question has to do with clothes, or, to be exact, with cotton fabrics for summer dresses. Even if we didn't know it in any other way, we could tell by our letters when the spring sewing fever begins to catch people. One of the sure signs is the question, How can I get the

color in fabrics? And will green hold its color better than lavender? As to home methods of setting the color in fabrics, the textile experts say bluntly - there is nothing in them. If the color of a fabric were set by salt and water, or an alum dip, or a teaspoon of pepper in the wash boiler, or any other such simple means, the manufacturer would have treated his cloth with that process before he put it on sale. For the more color-fast a fabric is, the better sales value it has. So save your salt, or your alum, or your pepper, and your time, advise the textile chemists. Buy fabrics marked with a label that guarantees them not to fade. Then if they do fade, return them to the store, and ask for your money back.

When it comes to one color being more fast than another, here again the textile experts shake their heads. There are various classes of dyes, some better than others. A blue fabric and a pink fabric dyed with a poor quality dye are equally likely to fade. But if the dye is good, a green material will hold its color with any other in the rainbow.

