1921

Confessions of a Trained Aunt

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Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol1/iss10/3

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mineral and vitamins. In the delicate and intricate weaving of new body cells it is of the utmost importance that not one of the vital constituents be omitted. There is no one perfect food. No vegetable or fruit can be used to the exclusion of all others. A variety of all the many fruits and vegetables is essential not only for appetites sake, but for the actual needs of the body.

A good balance between fat, sugar, and protein is to be desired. Excessive sugar feeds the stomach causing distress from gas. Fat retards stomach digestion. Therefore in a meal rich in fat and sugar, the action of the stomach is delayed until fermentation takes place. This is apt to happen after a holiday dinner. Then one has "heart burn" or indigestion.

Excessive use of meat tends to intestinal disorders due to increased bacterial action. Meat is of such pleasing flavor that one must guard against the excessive use of meat to the exclusion of all the essential vegetables, fruits, and dark breads.

It is not expected that every meal of the day will contain all of the desired food stuffs in the proper amounts, but the day's meals or the week's meals can be considered as a unit. Surely in the course of a week the meals can have a good balance of starch, sugar, whole cereals, fat, milk, milk products, eggs, meat, and a variety of vegetables and fruits.

Taber in "Business of the Household" gives the following as a satisfactory amount of food per day for a man at moderate work:

Vegetables and fruits, rich diet 2 1/2 lbs. to plain diet 1 1/2 lbs.

Milk, rich diet 8 oz. to plain diet 8 oz.

Meat, eggs, cheese, rich diet 14 oz. to plain diet 6 oz., 2 oz. less for each added 1/2 pint of milk.

Cereals, rich diet 8 oz. to plain diet 16 oz.

Sweets, rich diet 3 oz. to plain diet 1 1/2 oz.

Fats, rich diet 3 oz. to plain diet 1 1/2 oz.

Another way of determining the proper balance is by a study of the bills for one month.

1. One-fourth to one-third of the money for bread, cereals, macaroni and rice.
2. One-third to one-half quarts milk per person per day.
3. Spend as much for vegetables and fruits together as for milk.
4. Spend no more for meat and eggs than for vegetables and fruits.
5. Decrease the meat as the milk is increased.

In 1918 a survey in Massachusetts gave these figures which are low for present prices.

For a family of four on $10.00 per week the average amount spent for different kinds of food was:

- $2.50 for grain products.
- $2.00 for milk.
- $2.00 for meat, eggs, fish.
- $2.00 for fruit and vegetables.
- $1.50 for fat, sugar, and miscellaneous.

It is often by a study of monthly totals of the different classes of foods that the housewife can best check on her wisdom in buying and the adequateness of the meals for her family.

Confessions of a Trained Aunt

By EDA LORD MURPHY

It is of little consequence whether the word is spelled ant or aunt. In either case it is true that aunts are ubiquitous—even indispensable.

Aunts are to be found literally everywhere, for I have yet to see the place where there isn't an unmarried female person declaiming on the charms of a sister's or a brother's offspring.

I have known some who were willing to listen to talks of marvelous children, but such aunts are few and far between.

Personally, I belong to the much larger number who only enjoy talking about their own nephews and nieces; listening is dull work.

No one knows the self-control it requires for me not to share with all my friends and the wholesome stories of "our baby." I chuckle to myself as I read the letters about this fascinating person. To put the letter in my pocket and steadfastly refuse to read it to the first friend I meet is one of the hardest things I do. Herein lies part of the training.

I've only been an aunt two and one-half years. The first year and a half were easy—it is after the darling begins to talk that we suffer most. I just ache to recount all her mother writes me. At times when my ardor has overcome my better judgment my friends have shown such sweet and obvious efforts to smile and to be interested in baby talk that I've reform'd (in spots).

Several of my friends have deceived me into believing they have a genuine interest in Janet. They even go so far in their friendship for me as to ask, "What's the latest baby news?" If it is one of my homesick days I jump at a chance to tell them of her extraordinary vocabulary and Hibernian imagination; the lovely quality of her voice when she calls her father and mother by their first names or speaks in tenderness of her grandmother who is gone. Her affectionate ways—her coquetry at two, her intensity of grief or joy, her social grace, her fearlessness (she went swimming on her second birthday and adored being dunked) her dramatic instinct, her sense of humor—who wouldn't love to talk about such charms.

I know so many aunts who buy clothes and toys and fairly support their nieces that it seemed as tho I ought to do something. So I offered to take care of her a week while the little mother went on a motor trip. And if they didn't accept my offer! So one morning while we were chasing the neighbor's chickens the roadster went off with the gay young parents.

I "majored" that week in the "Care and Feeding of Infants." I lived by the clock. My preference for sleeping late and for a nap after luncheon were relinquished for a schedule like the following.

Crack of dawn awakened by a tiny voice calling my name in two tones, one high and one low. What I thought would be a stern command to turn over and go to sleep would collapse into abject adoration when I saw those pink cheeks, smiling eyes and arms outstretched.

Breakfast at seven and all was right
with the world if I succeeded in making history so interesting that oatmeal (2 oz.) or egg (one whole) and with (8 oz.) slip down in spite of a capricious appetite.

Followed our walk, our saunter of all occupations the most exhausting, interrupted by dashing after her to prevent this or that disaster.

Finally at eleven, the bath which was such fun for the little duck, then the nap—possibly two hours long, during which auntie did all her reading, writing, sewing, calling, and marketing planned for that day.

At one o'clock we'd dress up all sweet and clean with pink socks and pink sweater, looking like a rosebud. In fifteen minutes what with spinach or asparagus or mashed potato or prunes or chocolate we were looking like dark brown east-siders.

I thought she was old enough to play in her sandpile alone, but no cornet ever produced such a tone as she did when I sneaked around the corner of the house. Finally it ended in carrying a little East Indian stool around with me and sitting like any other nurse, until the young autocrat chose to get outside the chicken wire.

At six both of us were more or less cross and sleepy. We'd go upstairs. We'd try to settle down but a far-off whistle on a train or a child's cry or a honking Ford would drive sleep miles away. She'd say one begging word and I'd think "It's not scientific to rock them but something's got to be done." Then the rocker would squeak and we'd both get the giggles.

Keeping House at the Practice Cottage

By MILLIE LERDALL

BOUNDED ON the west by a lovely and spacious living room, on the east by a perfectly adorable snow white kitchen, on the top by the cosiest of sleeping rooms, and with a center isthmus of a gay reading room and attractive dining room, the practice house is the fulfillment of that dream of all dreams—a lovely harmoniously furnished little home minus nothing except perhaps, the man.

More than this it is a final step in the linking of "science with practice" for the practice house is a home maintained by the college where for a brief period the senior home economics students of Iowa State may put to a very practical test the knowledge they have gained from their four years work.

The students who go to the practice house must have a general knowledge of all things pertaining to the problems of housewifery and house management along with a certain amount of patience and ability to meet emergencies. They must be able to make budgets, keep accounts, follow time schedules, make beds and clean and polish silver and all the other duties which the care of a home brings. With all of the knowledge which they have naturally accumulated in the three years of their college career, they are ready to pack their bags and cross the threshold of the practice house without a quiver, having full confidence in their own ability to keep a house as it should be kept. Each student carries on her work just as she would do ordinarily except on the days when she is chief cook and then because her duties are particularly heavy, she is excused from her classes.

The house is harmoniously furnished throughout with combinations of subdued and bright blues, grays and browns predominating. In the living and reading rooms the bright colored curtains of the windows are offset by rather neutral gray walls and white woodwork. The reading room is characterized by its gray furniture, bright cushions and well chosen pictures hung at a comfortable height from the eye. A group of interesting magazines on the mahogany table invites one to sit in the kitchen with its spotless white walls and checked gingham at the windows has that cheery atmosphere so conducive to work. The sleeping rooms above are attractively furnished, one in mahogany and three in ivory with curtains to complete a harmonious color scheme.

At present thru a system of rotation four students remain at the practice house for a period of eight days, one girl coming and one girl leaving every two days. An instructor in charge is at once advisor, supervisor and chaperone but the girls have the responsibility of managing the home.

Just as many hands make light work, so does scheduling of tasks make for efficiency. That's the reason why, in spite of a few unforeseen and unpreventable disasters, the general regime of the household runs so smoothly. "Each girl to a task and for every task a girl!" is the unspoken yet understood slogan that prevails. The girls' duties are divided into distinct groups of two days each and each group of days has its set of duties very clearly defined. Each girl becomes successively assistant, second cook, cook and manager.

Oh it's so delightful to be assistant! Not a care or responsibility to mar the whole horizon unless one deliberately pores ahead to 'trouble troubles before trouble troubles her.' For no one can deny that it is quite a responsibility to cook for or try to manage a household of five or six people. But to be really and entirely assistant is to make the beds and care for the upstairs rooms. In general to be a good helper and keep the eyes and ears at attention all of the time so that when one must assume the greater responsibilities later on, the adjustment will not be so difficult.

It is then with self satisfaction and growing confidence that on the next two days of her stay in the practice house the girl assumes the role of second cook. She almost looks forward to cooking for the family and plans her menus with all the enthusiasm of a young child about to hear an interesting story. But 6:15 does