1924

"Thirty-five Cents Worth of Food"

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Recommended Citation

Sorenson, Anna (1924) ""Thirty-five Cents Worth of Food," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 4 : No. 3 , Article 7.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol4/iss3/7

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WHAT have we for lunch? asked the assistant manager of a leading hotel, as he sat down beside one of the guests at a business men’s luncheon.

“Oh! 35 cents worth of food at 75 cent luncheon,” was the reply of the other man.

“That’s fine! If this hotel can serve a 75 cent luncheon and keep the food cost down to one-half, the manager will not need to worry about his balance in the ledger at the end of the month,” answered the assistant manager.

The incident just stated, amuses me very much,” said Mrs. L. S. Brown, manager of the home economics tea room, as she finished quoting it. “The public really thinks that hotel, restaurant and tearoom managers make huge profits. This is because patrons of institutional dining rooms are prone to consider only the actual cost of the food itself.

“In a hotel or restaurant business the manager, first of all, budgets his income and allows a definite amount of money to be spent for each item of cost. The cost of service is highest in the modern city hotel. A guest enters the lobby, he checks his hat at the desk for the checker. The ‘captain’ of the dining room shows him to a seat. The third person giving service is the waiter, who brings the food to the table. After the guest has finished the meal, his check is sent to a cashier to be tallied and then to a cashier to be paid.

“The cost of all these people are items of cost which must be included in the price of a meal.”

Likewise, according to Mrs. Brown, the cost of the dishes used must be considered. A certain first class hotel in Iowa owns $28,000 worth of silver dishes. All of these expensive articles, cocktail glasses, asparagus dishes, baking dishes, coffee and tea services, parfait dishes and many others which are used to meet the demands of the public, are kept in a special room known as a ‘silver room.’

“The initial cost and upkeep of this silver service is very great. Two men are employed who do nothing but polish silver the entire day.

“If orange juice were ordered for breakfast, the cost of the glass containing it would be brought to the guest in a silver holder packed with ice. The actual cost of the orange juice would be 5 cents, the cost of the ice 3 cents and the initial cost of the glass $1.00. But the table is spread with a spotless white cloth, the guest is furnished a linen napkin, fresh flowers are on the table, the services of the people previously mentioned are employed, and the labor is needed in the kitchen for the preparation. In addition to these, overhead expenses, light, heat, laundry, insurance and rent must be included.

“Experience has proven that the manager of a public eating place must not have the actual food cost of a meal greater than 50 percent of the price charged the patron, if he wishes to keep out of debt.”

Hotel men consider 40 to 50 percent of the price paid for the meal to be actual food cost, 20 to 25 percent for labor to cook, prepare and serve the food, 2 percent for breakage and replacement, 15 to 20 percent for overhead expense, which leaves from 3 to 10 percent for profit. If a $1.00 plate was being considered the cost of the food would be 40 to 50 cents, of preparation and service 20 to 25 cents, breakage 2 cents and overhead expense 15 to 20 cents.

“In direct contrast to the modern city hotel is the commercial cafeteria where the object is to reduce the cost of serving the meal, giving the customer the benefit. The actual cost of the food remains the same, but the cost of labor and of breakage and replacement is less for the services given and the dishes used are not as elaborate. The use of paper napkins lowers the expense of laundry.

“A large cafeteria in Chicago advertised in the city newspapers ‘1 cent profit on a meal.’ This cafeteria serves five thousand people a day, so volume makes a profit possible.”

Before deciding hastily that a meal can be served for 1 cent we might do well to consider the numerous items involved in the preparation of that meal.

Once Upon a Time

By MARVEL SECOR

LOVE of stories in childhood is a universal emotion. All races of men have traditional myths and legends that tell the achievements of the people and set high ideals. It is important to teach only the best type of stories, because stories told to children do a great deal to shape and develop the character of the child. By stirring his emotional nature and by teaching him the difference between right and wrong.

Story telling is a means of strengthening the imagination through an appeal to the senses. “The Little Red Hen” is an example of a story which appeals to the sense of color; “The Gingerbread Boy” appeals to the sense of taste, and “Why the Chimney Rang” is a story which appeals mainly to the sense of sound.

For any age, the story chosen must fit the mental development of the child. The characters and events must be within the scope of the child’s knowledge or imagination or the story will lose interest, no matter how well it is told or read.

The periods of mental growth which determine the story interests of children may be called the rhythmic, the imaginative, the heroic, and the romantic periods. The child from three to six may be said to be in the rhythmic period because he loves rhythm as found in Mother Goose rhymes and nursery jingles of child and animal life. “The Three Bears,” “Little Hair Chick,” and “The Three Little Pigs” from “How to Tell Stories to Children” by Sara Cone Bryant, as well as bedtime stories, are good for this period.

The child enters a world of make-believe after the rhythmic period and his imagination knows no bounds. Such authors as Grimm, Anderson, and Perrault have written fairy stories that have been popular for a good many years. Fairy tales are one of the oldest forms of literature, and are often enjoyed by grown-ups as well as little tots. “A Tale of Two Cities,” “The Cup That Mother Made” associates fairyland with the home by picturing familiar symbols with imaginative things. “Fairy Tales Every Child Should Know” by Hamilton Wright Mabie and “The Children’s Book” by Florence Tadema are examples of good types of fairy tales. “American Indian Fairy Tales” retold by W. T. Larson is an interesting collection of stories of “the oldest Americans.”

From eight to twelve years of age may be termed the hero period. At this time adventure and hero stories such as “Robin Hood,” “Beowulf,” “Sir Galahad,” “Rip Van Winkle,” “Joan of Arc,” “The Great Stone Face” and many others are very popular at this age. Good stories for this period are: “The Life of Florence Nightingale” by Laura E. Richards, “Moni, the Goat Boy,” by Johanna Spyri, “The Boys’ King Arthur,” by Sidney Lanier, and “The Children’s Crusade” written by Gabriel Pierre.

The suspense element in stories for children helps to develop interest, it holds them breathless to the end, wondering what will happen next. For the youngest child, the suspense element must be

(Continued on page 15)