

money to purchase enough food long ago.

Right here I waste no sympathy over the blonde hausfrau. That blonde may be my own sex, but she's not my own kind; she's the mother of a bad, perverted lot of people and she has never wanted to be anything else. She has never cared for the rest of us women. Womankind are divided into German-women and all others. There's something about the German idea of the human being that revolts me; and I think it's very much because on one hand the Germans estimate themselves as so many pounds and pints and chemical constituents and energies; on the other hand as strutting super-people that could gnaw the edge off the moon. No, if any German woman is busy writing things like this I hope I never have to read them.

We may as well admit that we women are directly and indirectly in normal times the world's great wasters. Suppose that only men ate in hotels, restaurants and cafes, would there ever have been such ridiculous parades of luxury as our such prosperity bills of fare? Oh, of course men eat more and they waste a lot. But the average woman at an hotel is a cause of waste before the waiter takes an order at all. The silly man she is with—probably her husband—urges her to take all sorts of things she doesn't need and half the time doesn't want. He is vain. So is she. It looks important to sit among a maze of improbable and expensive dishes. And the more improbable and expensive they were, the less we ate of any of them. We just picked them over and three-fourths of the food we paid for we wasted. Nobody cared, so long as the man had the price.

But that's only the public side of the thing, and under the controllership all that is to be abolished. So far, so good.

BUT what of us at home? Are we any the less wasteful? Far more so. We waste less at a time, but we have all the time there is to do it. Twenty-one meals a week we do at every meal a certain amount of wasting. I don't know anything about domestic science. But I know that the gap between what is paid to the producer and what I pay to the dealer is considerably widened by how I have been wasting in the kitchen.

We can't of ourselves regulate the prices we pay for things, except by an occasional boycott, and by constantly so seeing to it that the grocer or the butcher or the manufacturer of package goods does not short-weight us. We look to government to do this. As a rule governments don't. Now that we have a food controller we expect the price we pay to be a fair one even if it is high. We expect to get even with the corner grocer who has piled up twice the income of his average customer in less than half the time and often with about half the brains. Of course the grocer may hand the knock back to the wholesaler who has been holding him up. But the wholesaler can't hand it back to the producer, because the demand is sure to out-run the supply.

I notice Mr. Hanna is quoted as saying "must" with reference to reducing our consumption of wheat and meat. I don't like that word. In this business of helping thing along we'd all like to be given credit for a little free-will initiative. It seems to me there should have been some musting in this country long ago, and I could mention a lot of things it would apply to very well, from motor-cars to fancy boots. However, the people of Beacherville intend to obey the law. At the same time they want the pattern to be wide, as the cloth is supposed to be cut by it.

Just for instance: If straight prohibition is to be applied, why doesn't Mr. Hanna issue a ukase directing that from now on nobody in Canada is allowed to make ice-cream wholesale for sale in any quantities whatsoever? I suppose ice-cream is made of cream. If it is, then the annual consumption of good butter-making and cheese-making cream, for up into the millions of pounds for a food which nine times in ten is used as a mere extra, is one of the economic crimes. We glibly ask Mr. Hanna about margarine, and he says he doesn't know—yet. But what's the sense of importing or making margarine to save on butter when we fling the butter away in the shape

of ice-cream—delicious luxury as it is?

This is only a sample suggestion. It's not original with me. Ice-cream prohibition was talked about last year. But a lot of things are talked about. There was no time lost closing up the Ontario bars in 1916. For three months of the year I doubt if the bars were any more wasteful than the ice-cream parlours.

Mr. Hanna says we—meaning all of North America—must save 160,000,000 bushels of wheat to ship to Europe. This is where one of his two great musts comes in. The other applies to meat. The figures are partly Mr. Hoover's at Washington. I'm still a little peevish about that "must." But I'm going to see how this third-fraction works out—without depending altogether on Hoover and Hanna.

North America is an economic unit says Sir George Foster. Still I notice that when President Wilson wanted to put an embargo on foodstuffs he didn't have Mr. Hoover ask any opinions of Mr. Hanna about it. Assuming that we are that kind of unit, how do we get at the figures? I notice that one of the big New York papers prints an estimate of

609,300,000 bushels of wheat for the United States this year. Suppose we place Canada's wheat crop at 225,000,000 and add the surpluses on hand to make 850,000,000.

A safe estimate allows five bushels of wheat per person per year. So the total amount of wheat needed normally for the whole 120,000,000 population will be 600,000,000 bushels. Subtract that from 850,000,000, and you have left the 250,000,000 bushels for export. But the total amount required by the Allies, according to Mr. Hanna, will be 460,000,000 bushels. The deficit for us to make up by saving on wheat we eat ourselves—somehow—is therefore 210,000,000 bushels. Mr. Hanna's figures state 160,000,000. I'm willing to go him 50,000,000 better.

That means for, say, 120,000,000 people about one and three-quarter bushels each to be saved in a year. Or it means each of us eating just about one-third less wheat than usual.

So the one-third less is no mere guesswork. It's mathematics.

I don't know how it works in the case of meat. But to save one-third on our wheat-eating means—To eat more wheat and less flour.

So the sooner the millers are instructed to stop making white flour the better. As long as they make

it some one is going to eat it. I daresay if the potato crop is a big one we shall do some of the wheat-saving on potatoes. Beans and corn-cake will help a good deal.

Uncle Sam will supply most of the corn.

But it's our business in Canada to produce most of the extra wheat—

Because we grow one-third as much wheat as the United States and we consume ten times less.

There—I think that's about enough food-mathematics for one article. My head aches. But it seems to me that when the word "must" is used in this country in regard to food questions it should be accompanied by as many reasons as possible. In this connection I think the press should be furnished with a set of simple calculations to teach people. Every intelligent house-wife should be furnished with a set of food-value figures telling her how she can substitute one thing for another without robbing her family's stomachs. When I pay 68 cents for a pound and 5 ounces of veal I'm naturally wanting to know what I could put in place of that meat without becoming an out-and-out vegetarian.

The man who gets that 68 cents is taking no chances. He is better off than I am. If he is allowed to keep on the way he is going he will be entitled to a knighthood one of these days.

Meat is one of those things that can be juggled with. Bread can't; at least everybody seems to be roused to a furore the moment another cent or so goes on to the price of a loaf. But the butcher can go on putting 5 cents, 10 cents, anything he likes on the cost of a pound of meat, and nobody does anything but say "it's too bad," and "we'll have to eat less meat I suppose," or "I don't see why we can't get along without it altogether."

No, nobody organizes even sentiment against the meat trust. And I suppose if it could be proved that there were several million pounds more in storage this year than last it could all be explained by saying,

"Well, of course, you know, we must keep vast quantities on hand for the men at the front. The need is SO great."

And that passes for patriotism just because it's big enough to get by without any one stopping it. However, human nature seems to be a strange mix-up. The higher up you get in the scale of living the more afraid people are to tell the truth about one another—especially if some man who makes a fortune out of what we pay for a necessity is mixed up with a great lot of benevolences. None of us like to see philanthropy made disreputable.



The man who can work out this problem should not be afraid of any big interest.