

WAR ON WASTE

Canada Expects Every Woman to Count Her Pennies

By ESTELLE M. KERR

WE haven't begun to economize, but we have come to the conclusion that we ought to, that we may in the dim future have to do so. Our papers are full of suggestions and the word "substitute" is upon every tongue, substitutes for meat, for butter, for eggs, all sorts of unattractive alternatives are suggested to take the place of the things we like most. Women's pages in our papers, once teeming with information as to the correct length of skirts and height of boots, now positively reek with recipes. The cook-book lies on the editorial desk in the place once sacred to the dictionary, and the woman journalist, who has never kept house in her life, supplies all sorts of surprising information. We learn with joy that in winter we can make our own ice, hence it is cheaper to feed the family on ice-cream (next June she will tell us that grate fires are cheaper in summer than they are in winter). Then follows all sorts of recipes for substitutes for ice-cream. Some of them, containing no milk, have little or no nourishing value—but then they are so refreshing at this time of the year. Others derive their nourishment from great quantities of nuts, raisins, ginger and all sorts of imported fruit used in their manufacture; still others require from two to six eggs.

"Left-overs" are another profitable subject for discussion. The lady editor assumes that in ante-bellum days we threw the remains of our Sunday roast into the garbage tin, and offered all sorts of appetizing dishes that can be made from the despised cold roast. If she exercised her genius in devising some means of breeding smaller sheep, so that their legs would not last all week, I, as a member of a family of three, should be deeply grateful. Our joy in the Sunday roast is dimmed by the knowledge that on Monday there will be cold lamb; Tuesday lamb fricassee with onions or minced on toast; Wednesday lamb curried with rice, while on Thursday we shall bid it farewell in soup. A lady whose family is even smaller than mine, confided to me that she frequently feeds it on sweetbreads.

"Don't you find that very expensive?" I asked.

"They do cost a lot," she replied, "but then, you see, there is no waste!"

ANOTHER item that can be expanded into whole columns, is the use of stale bread. Personally,



The "Limousine Ladies" have driven up the market prices.

I am very fond of dry bread, crusts, and toast. I like tomatoes and peppers stuffed with bread crumbs. I love oysters and chops fried in bread crumbs, and fish baked with bread crumbs, but I abominate bread pudding, though it seems to be the chief joy of Canadian cooks. They hoard and hide the loaf-ends and then astonish you with an enormous bread pudding, into the manufacture of which a perfectly good egg or two, milk, sugar, and either a lot of currants or your best strawberry jam, have vanished. One member of the family empties the cream jug over his share and gulps it down, the others say they will take a banana instead. What becomes of the rest of the pudding we do not know, we don't like to ask for fear of its reappearance, but the cook is triumphant and openly boasts that she never wastes a crumb of bread!

THE lady editor (who has boarded all her life) tells you that only the slacker (domestically speaking) uses the telephone, your real economist goes to market. This remark hits home, we believe she is right, yet we continue to use the telephone and in our own particular instance find it economical. For going to market, when you live at the outskirts of the town, occupies a good deal of time, and if your time is valuable you will hardly save the ten-cent carfare in a morning's purchase. We even avoid our grocer—such a smiling, rubicund, jolly grocer, who takes the greatest interest in every household he serves—for, with the most guileless expression in the world, he draws your attention to rare fruits and hot-house vegetables, begs you to try a new (and more expensive) brand of coffee, recommends a cheese, offers you a bargain in tinned pineapples. Like Oscar Wilde, the only thing we cannot resist is temptation. So we use the telephone. But we admit our weakness and if you know a sour-faced grocer who never polishes his apples, do give us his address, and if it isn't too far we shall straightway set out with our market basket. The telephone girl at one corner grocery is corrupted by her smiling manager, for when you have delivered your order she tells you in a voice as sweet as honey: "We have very nice cauliflowers to-day." But when we find that they are twenty-five cents, while brussels sprouts are fifteen and a cabbage (she reluctantly admits) is twelve, we order cabbage. We rather like carrying parcels and don't conceal them in one of those cute little khaki bags made at the Woman's Patriotic League with a tricoloured ribbon across one corner to show that you are serving your country. But our grocer hasn't far to send and by careful planning, we don't order more than four or five times a week, for we realize the fact that for many of the retail dealers the High Cost of Living means the High Cost of Delivery, and in hundreds of cases this charge spells the difference between profit and loss, and the woman who telephones three or four times a day for small orders forces up the price for the poor woman with her market basket. The cost of paper and twine is another serious problem that he has to face, and the grocers in Ottawa have issued an appeal to their customers to expect less in wrapping than formerly. One grocer declares that his paper and twine bill now equals his rent bill, and both of them have advanced 100 per cent. within the year.

YOUR market woman is spared all this expense and she should be cheaper, but I was unfortunate on my last visit. I tried to buy eggs, and, behold, they were more than my grocer ever dreamed of demanding.

"Oh, she replied, 'I can get anything I ask from those limousine people.'" And indeed the market place was filled by ladies in costly furs, whose chauffeurs followed with market baskets, and a string of touring cars and shining limousines standing near showed that the cost of delivery was here no problem. The competition was keen, but I managed to secure a chicken, discovering later that it was not drawn and that I had paid the same price that my grocer was asking—and, besides, I really cannot afford chicken.

GERMANY, who still claims she is impregnable from a military point of view, now admits that economically she may be defeated, and as the purchasing power of a nation is largely in the hands of its women, we find ourselves pitted against the women of Germany, and it behooves us to learn the



The High Cost of Living often means The High Cost of Delivery.

strength of our enemy.

Frau Hedwig Heyl is a woman who will not let Germany starve. Even before there was any real danger, this kitchen strategist wrote a war cook-book telling housewives how to economize. But in three months the book was worthless, because many of the ingredients required in the recipes had disappeared from Germany. Then Frau Heyl, together with other food experts, began to seek substitutes for the foods that were no longer available.

"We have found a substitute for everything," she is quoted as saying, "but the German appetite. We can find nothing to take its place."

In those first days of the war a great "food organization" was begun. Cooking classes were opened, in which housewives learned about the various food substitutes. Old-fashioned methods of drying fruit and vegetables were re-introduced, because it was recognized that a large store of these should be laid in while the sun shone.

The reason for returning to old methods was that there were not enough glass jars for the great increase in preserves, and for what jars there were the rubber bands were lacking.

It was Hedwig Heyl and the women who worked out the scheme of bread cards, without which chaos would have reigned. And she stood for milk cards and butter cards before the rest of the world saw the need of them.

Although over sixty, she works every morning in a canning factory (formerly dye-works) putting up cans of beef for the army at the rate of 6,000 a day. She is a natural tyrant and a good business woman, and watching her quiet management of the women working under her, one loses all sense of there being any starvation in Germany.

ECONOMY to be really effective should be national, and some day the country will appoint a commission to plan the production, sanitary transportation and economical distribution of food as intelligently as it now plans its tariff and its army. There should be legislation by which the storing of foods should be a measure of conservation rather than a means of speculation. This will take the genius of a leader with the knowledge of a food economist. The immediate methods which the housekeeper should adopt are the cutting out of the luxuries and the out of season foods, the reducing of meats in the dietary, careful purchasing in order to eliminate waste, a clever use of left-overs and a larger knowledge of the process of cooking.

A number of Thrift Centres are being established in Toronto, and an expert has been engaged to demonstrate economic cooking in various districts of the city. This is the beginning of what will doubtless grow to be a national campaign for thrift throughout the country. Much of the success of the movement depends, however, upon the willingness of "the so-called thriftless" to learn thrift.