

SCHOOL for HOUSEWIVES By MARION HARRIS

TALK of MILK—"The Perfect Food"



"Our foremothers maintained that milk should be kept in broad, open vessels."

That is what they call it! Chemists (old wives in the "fables") we are now taught to discount disdainfully and up-to-date writers upon dietetics concur in the verdict: Milk is the one and only article of diet that should be assimilated by every human stomach.

After reading columns topped by "scare heads" and pages bristling with statistics, one might expect the thoughtful student to feel something akin to reverence in surveying the milkman's cargo, and to handle one's cream jug respectfully.

Coming down to everyday facts, milk is as sadly misused as any other article of food. In the times when we lived in houses of our own and had pantries, and, if we dwelt apart from town, even in the possession of real storerooms and closets with windows in them that could be opened at will, canny housemothers held certain notions concerning milk that were discarded with the incoming of the flood of folk for whom rooms must be made by abolishing separate residences and economizing ground space.

Our foremothers maintained that milk should be kept in broad, open vessels in a cool place, free from dust, and be left undisturbed from the time it was strained into the shining pans until the thick cream was daintily skimmed off. If the milk were pure and rich, there was a second rising, and this, when removed to the cream crock, left the milk less blue than much that is sold to us for table use. According to the dairy rules of that era, cream did not rise freely unless it had air. In the "scientific" dairy of today it is still "separated" from open vessels, shallow and wide in proportion to their height.

Flat-dwellers and cottagers get the perfect food in covered bottles, and set away in refrigerators, without lifting from the surface the thin paper cut to fit the mouth of the flask, and designed to shield the contents from dust and germs. Our grandmothers would have cried out hysterically upon such "shiftless methods." The truth is that we could do nothing wiser in the change of circumstances. Milk is a ready absorbent of odors and, inevitably, of germs harmful to the human species. To leave it in an open vessel in the modern refrigerator, and a near neighbor to meats, salads, fruits and cooked vegetables, is to invite infection. The milkman bulled better than he knew in devising the air-proof paper covering for his wares. You should leave it in place until the bottles are drawn from the refrigerator to be emptied for use. You do better still to leave in place the corks that are sometimes set over the paper casing. It was wild by them of olden time that the cream would not rise satisfactorily unless it had air. We must content ourselves with the "top of the bottle," and not risk germs and incipient putrefaction by exposing the milk to such air as we breathe.

You cannot be too careful about letting the contents of the flask stand upon the kitchen table after opening it. Milk "turns" with amazing rapidity when taken from the ice and left in a warm room. This same "turning" is the housewife's bugbear. She encourages it by taking the bottle or pan from the cellar half an hour before the milk is to go to the table or be cooked. The path to drinking glass or saucerpan should be as short as it can be made.

One of the nurse's unobtrusive virtues that give the lie direct to scientific theories, however stoutly bolstered they may be by demonstration and learned names, is that the perfect food does not agree with all of us. About one in a



"This Perfect Food in Covered Bottles!"

decade an eccentric baby is born whose untruly stomach refuses to be comforted by the mother's milk or any ingenious substitute containing milk. He must be brought up on barley water or other starchy foods. He lies in the face of law and gospel by the untoward behavior. All the same, the idiosyncrasy is not to be disputed. Perhaps one child in a thousand, after passing babyhood, cannot drink milk, and really dislikes it. This established, it is folly to force the perfect food upon him or her. It is a pity, always, for nature decrees that young things should be nourished, flesh, bone and muscles, by the lactical fluid that stands in every tongue and land as the symbol of healthful sustenance. It is highly probable that the fugitives from Egyptian bondage had lost most of their flocks and herds in the desert, where they would not have found bread but for the miracle of the manna, before they encamped where they beheld a cross, "the swelling flood," the land flowing with milk and honey. Literature, sacred and secular, abounds with proverbial sayings that prove the clue of the one, only and perfect diet. "The sincere milk of the word," "the milk of human kindness," are specimens of hundreds of phrases confirming the fact of general faith in its universal virtues. Yet there are adults, sane and normal in all else, who cannot digest milk. It makes them bilious; it causes heartburn; it is too laxative, or maybe too astringent. Whatever the plea, truth underlies it. Certain digestions refuse to assimilate the vaunted natural sustenance of all mankind.

WHEN MILK DISAGREES That milk, however fresh and rich, is to some a bile-engendering diet is not to be questioned. In such a case, if it is considered expedient for one to drink it regularly, the addition of a teaspoonful of lime-water to each glassful will counteract the evil tendency and not affect the taste unpleasantly. Mothers who are made uneasy by the breaking out of a red rash upon the bodies of nursing or feeding babies, apparently in perfect health, may get a cure in this simple precaution. The alkali combines pleasantly with the oily properties of the milk and makes it digestible. I provoke contradiction in asserting that rot one person in ten drinks milk properly. I read a while ago in a popular novel by a famous author of a skilled nurse who gave a glass of milk to a typhoid patient which "he swallowed at a gulp." Had the nurse understood her duty she would have insisted he should sip it slowly and take a long time in getting it down. The gulp left it hard curd in the stomach, and I suspect that much of the discomfort attendant upon a milk-fed diet with

"The Addition of a Teaspoonful of Lime Water to each Glassful."

biscuit, nibbled between sips, tones the digestive apparatus to its work. For uncounted generations the best substitute for the natural nourishment of the young of the human species was held to be cow's milk, diluted with one-third part of hot water and slightly sweetened. Then arose the scientific dietist in the majesty of modern research and taught us to sterilize milk into the exact component parts and proportions of mother's milk. Thousands of babies were saved alive yearly (or so we believed) by this system. In the twentieth century we are informed by these same wisemen—or their immediate successors—that milk should be pasteurized, if we would get the full values of the perfect food. Sterilizing was a blunder throughout, they would



"A Slice of Bread Nibbled Between Sips."

those with whom "it does not agree" is due to neglect of this simple rule. Teach children, from the first, that milk must be drunk in a leisurely fashion, with long breathing pauses between the sips. Feed milk, swallowed by the half pint on a warm day, when one is hot and thirsty, cannot but induce indigestion. It should never be inhaled upon an empty stomach. A slice of bread or a

when our handlings outgrew bottle and feeding cup, we passed the patented treasure on to our poorer and ignorant neighbors. Are there patent pasteurizers? And in what does the difference between the old wrong way and the new right way consist?

Another blow to former belief and custom is dealt when the "milk of one cow" theory is exploded. We used to rest secure that we were doing the latest and best thing for our babies in making sure that each nursing got daily and constantly the milk from one cow, selected as especially healthy and well fed. Mothers went to infinite pains to assure themselves of these essentials to the little one's welfare. Often we went out of town a month earlier in the season than was our wont, to settle ourselves where there could be no doubt on this point. In my own country home one particular cow was known familiarly as "baby's foster-mother." The milk drawn from her was kept by itself, and the child had no other. In this city, we thought we secured the same end by paying two or three cents extra a quart for "one cow's milk" from honest (?) vendors, who got supplies straight from the country and kept the "one cow's" milk of life in a separate can on the wagon. My optimism is of a stubborn strain, but it had a staggering blow early one morning when, chancing to look out of my window into the quiet street, I espied the honest countryman filling the reserved little can from one of the larger!

Then, I was furiously and righteously indignant. In the light of later information (scientific and warranted) I know that the man was really in advance of his generation, and entirely justifiable in the deed. For it would appear that the blend of lactical fluid is preferable to the product of a single cow for nursery uses. Why, I am too obtuse to comprehend, much less to define to my fellow-countrymen.

This story is likewise referred to our professional staff.

Suburban Possibilities

ALTHOUGH a "mere man," I am always interested in your department. Silicate of soda (water glass) will be had from any drugist. One part of water glass to nine parts of water is a strong emulsion. The liquid may be used for the same purpose as the eggs covered. Americans eat too much! No wonder they feel living expensive. Just think of a breakfast table, with coffee, ham, bacon scrambled eggs, waffles, maple syrup,

any one of these articles with coffee and butter and coffee makes an ideal breakfast. Never cook it on the stove. Allow two or three eggs for persons. Beat the whites very stiff on a platter with a silver fork. Add a spoonful of cream and a little milk. Beat thoroughly. Turn in the stiffened whites and cut them into the milk with a spoon. Do not beat. Melt butter or lard in a cup. Pour in the mixture and cook rather slowly to avoid burning on the bottom of the pan. Let it stand for a minute after the gas is turned off, and at the lack of the flame to prevent falling. The melted should slip out of the pan upon a hot dish, feathery and delicious. Do not cook too long. Have it salted. This recipe may be varied by mixing branflakes, minced ham, potatoes, tomatoes, fruit, etc., with the yolks before cutting in the whites. But the plain one.

One of our correspondents complains of a family of three. That is a small fortune. The man has a "white" whiskey—clear whiskey of something similar. Know of a family of three in this city who live upon a small flat. The man has a "white" whiskey. He keeps an exact account of all their expenses and knows just where they stand. Living here is as cheap as in a small place. Rent is higher, but eating and groceries are cheaper. A quarter acre or less will produce all the summer vegetables, and a large family do not raise winter vegetables as one knows in the fall.

Will our esteemed masculine member excuse me, as in reading the last lines of his interesting letter, a comical reminiscence visited me of a dream of mine. I read once of a land of leisure where "breadfruit" was picked from the trees, butter from a tree of another species, and sucking pigs, ready roasted, ran about with waving tails stuck in their backs and squealing. "Will somebody get up!"

For in the waking-world world potatoes must be planted, hoed and weeded, and fruits, pease, onions, carrots and apples require the attention and labor of a man, who cannot earn his living elsewhere and cultivate a garden profitably at one and the same time. Who is to work the quarter acre if the owner or lessee be a business man who hires him to the city on the commuter's train half-past 7 A. M., and there earns



"I know that the man was really in advance of his generation."

The Housemothers' Exchange

the money with which to buy clothing and groceries by the sweat of his face all the long summer day? I have seen the experiment made many times and with such pitiable results that the vision of home-grown fruits and vegetables no longer attracts me. I own that a family of three on a quarter acre of ground, if frugally, upon a quarter acre of ground, every inch of which is forced to do its best by the skilled labor of a man who has no other profession.

Churnless Butter Correspondents press you with inquiries into the process of making churnless butter, of which I wrote in a former letter. This is my way, and it is not patented. Stir the milk into wide, shallow pans and set away in a cool place in cold water. When the milk is thick, add as much as possible into a suitable vessel. Let it stand in a wire butter strainer until the butter "comes." In warm weather the butter comes much more readily than in cold weather. Strain the milk for table use. "Labeled as 'butter'" it and beat with eggwhisk for butterine.

Do not work salt into it in the usual way, but do not "mess" with it too much. It makes it city and soft. I have answered letters from Washington to Alabama with regard to patent churnless butter. Some with the yolks before cutting in the whites. But the plain one. You are kind to advert "sweet butter" (that is, saltless butter) in small quantities in my issue syllabus. It comes quickly and is nice. Abroad little salt butter is eaten on the tables of the well-to-do who live "delectably," and tourists soon learn to prefer it to salt. Grocers in America sell it under the name of "sweet butter." In the summer we make it in the glass vessel spoken of.

A Blunder Corrected I am sorry for my blunder in writing the recipe for white fruit cake. I should have said, of course, my "white" of eggs beaten very stiff. This is such a lovely name for a cake, that I am sure it will be good name before the error is corrected. When I saw the recipe, under the name of a man, in the shape of a malice cross and led in the shape of the masonic emblem in blue and gold in the center, I was very much struck at the original recipe for using cold yeast. You may tell the readers of the Exchange that I call this "sliced hash."

Ask "E. B." (Muscatine, Iowa) if he ever tried scalding the liver fish? Then heat and fry as you work cheese. The gravy around it will be thick and fine. Write to me if you work cheese. A valued correspondent, who might truly sign herself "A Constant Reader," she saw and she has answered my query as to the whites that should have gone into her cake, and we have here her sincere thanks.

Onion Juice I please tell me what you mean by "onion juice." Does it refer to the juice of the onion, or how is it made? "Onion juice" also tells me why architects and builders show so little common sense as almost invariably to put battens directly under windows. Is it that they think bathrooms need no ventilation? PUZZLED (Chicago). Onion juice is made by mincing the onion and squeezing out the juice through netting or cheesecloth. It is a more delicate flavoring than when the chopped or sliced onion is used. I fancy because the bathroom is generally rather small and the battens large in proportion. It must be near the window if you would have the room well lighted and aired.

A Seasonable Recipe Green Tomato Mince-meat. One peck of green tomatoes; five pounds of brown sugar; six apples; two pounds of

beef, with a piece of suet; one pint of vinegar; one tablespoonful of cinnamon and the same of cloves and nutmeg; one teaspoonful of salt. Cook the meat and chop fine. Also, chop nuts and apples. Press out juice of lemons together and cook steadily for four hours. If any ingredients be left out, it will not be a success. If it be worth anything, print it. If not, the waste basket may have it. Mrs. S. (Beloit, Mich.). We get a large percentage of our best things from our older members. You show that you do not consider yourself past the learning age by accepting, approving, and passing along a new recipe. Age has ceased to be a question of years.

In Sore Need Readers will be interested in excerpts from a charming letter too long and too personal for publication. 1. Can you tell me who Theodosia Garrison is? I have an impression that she is a granddaughter of Horace Greeley. 2. A woman in whose behalf I would be glad to see the name of the Exchange has had one leg cut off and part of her face eaten away by an abscess. Another abscess is now forming in her head. My object in bringing her pitiable case before you is to try to get a doctor for her. When I went to see her, she was in a wheelbarrow, and I carried her from room to room. She is now in a hospital. I have written her name in my list of names to be sent to you. I do not think that Theodosia Garrison is a granddaughter of Horace Greeley. Her mother was Silas Wright, Fighting Her mother's maiden name was Bodeley. Her residence is New York city.

S. P. C. A. Please tell me how the agent for the branch of the society in these parts and whether you have any more. Write to the secretary of the state society in Philadelphia for information.

Salad Dressings To salad makers who would economize, try the pork of one egg to one cup of oil, thus reducing cost and improving the quality of the mayonnaise. French salad dressing may be mixed and kept in a fruit jar for weeks. Shake at once in a covered jar. M. P. (Lavenport, Iowa).

Suggestions I will send a few ideas that might help some in household labor. When slicing corn, use a strainer. When necessary to keep broken eggs, place them in a glass cover with cold water and keep in a cool place. When layers of cakes persist in sticking, press three or four wooden toothpicks through from the top, planning the layers together. For mayonnaise dressing, always use an egg three or four days old. Failure is often due to a too-fresh egg. Keep a letter file hanging on the kitchen wall with little paper bags. A tin of pink of salt sprinkled in a pot of coffee will settle it effectively. Buy your perforated cover India-rubber. I use it for a cover in frying bread-streak or anything "crispier," for a steamer, steamer and colander. Wilted Lettuce. Fry some bits of bacon. Add one-half cup vinegar. When boiling add two whole eggs and stir until they are barely set. Turn once over a pan of lettuce that has been cleaned, broken into bits and well drained. Toss all together thoroughly and send to the table at once in a covered dish. JEMIMA (Delano, Cal.). As you may observe that your tale of "pinks" is one short, I must tell you, regretfully that we cannot mention any proprietary preparation, even incidentally. May I ask if wilted lettuce is really palatable? We cook lettuce sometimes, and like it. But wilting is quite another process. Have you tried it for yourself?

FAMILY MEALS FOR A WEEK

Table with columns for Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Supper for each day of the week (Sunday through Saturday). Includes recipes like: Sunday Breakfast: Raspberries and currants, cereal and cream; Lunch: Ham and corned beef, baked potatoes; Dinner: Roast beef, baked potatoes, green peas; Saturday Breakfast: Grapefruit, cereal and cream; Lunch: Brunswick stew; Dinner: Canned fruit, cereal and cream.