



Balanced Rations

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The food supply of the farm home is usually of a different form in the winter than in the summer months. It is not changed because we have studied carefully the system's needs but because we can procure a supply of fresh meat and keep it fresh to use as we will, and our cellars too are supplied (or ought to be) with an abundant supply of assorted vegetables. And we are not loath to say good-bye to bacon and eggs which have been our stand-by during the summer days.

We should study to arrange our means to supply a variety of the right kinds of food to produce the necessary proteins, carbohydrates, etc., required for the rebuilding of wasting tissue, producing of the necessary energy for the labor to be done and for supplying fuel to keep the body warm while engaged in the keen frosty air of our western winters. Usually our only concern is to get something good and lots of it irrespective of the season or the body's need. Should our diet be different in winter? It surely should, especially if we are living and working much in the cold air.

Were I to ask—What is the best to take to keep-out the cold?—one man in twenty would probably say, a glass of whiskey, one woman in twenty would probably say a cup of tea and both answers would be far from correct as neither whiskey nor tea contain anything to either produce warmth or nourishment. They are stimulants only and as stimulants are useful. The feeling of warmth produced by alcoholic beverages is caused by the accelerated action of the blood in trying to rid the system as quickly as possible of the imbibed poison, and unless followed by real nourishment the body is less able to resist the cold than before the stimulant is taken. A cupful of hot milk is a stimulant, but it is also a food. Hot tea is valuable only for the water, cream and sugar it contains.

Open air workers in cold weather can digest an amount of fat that would cause bad complexions, biliousness and dyspepsia in the dressmaker, the book-keeper or the student.

It may be from fancy or fad that your family is composed of Jack Spratts and will eat no fat meats. If we are up to our job, we can feed them sufficient in other forms and we can use up the fats of our fresh beef and pork in other dishes that will be gladly eaten when the fat of roast or boiled meat would be discarded. It means a study of foods and cooking methods, but it is an interesting and profitable study.

Fats and How To Use Them

Lard is 99% fat and 1% water and pork dripping is quite as useful as lard in cooking. Beef suet and dripping are quite as useful, though a little harder to handle. Butter contains a little less fat but more water, protids carbohydrates and mineral matter, but it is the best of all fats and should be served raw for it is no more easily digested than the other fats when used in frying—fried butter is simply decomposed fatty acid. Cream is also rich in fats and will often be relished when other forms of fat are refused. We can incorporate large quantities of beef and pork fats in gravies and sauces. By cooking one tablespoonful of flour in each tablespoonful of fat it can then be blended with the gravy or sauce without its presence being visible. We use fats also in cakes, biscuits, cookies, and the familiar pie crust. All of which is enjoyed and digested by the open air worker. There are many kinds of pudding in which chopped beef suet may be used, besides the well-known plum pudding. In fact, it improves any pudding which usually calls for lard or butter.

However it is not much use in supplying an engine with fuel if its shafts, wheels

and working parts are worn out, bent or otherwise out of repair, so the human engine needs more than fuel to be a profitable producer. We must supply the goods that will repair the tissue which is being destroyed by our every movement, even breathing. We must for this purpose, find foods rich in proteins. Protein is abundant in meats of all kinds, more abundant in cheese, beans, peas, eggs, cereals, etc. It is necessary also to provide foods which will make muscle and give energy, so that we must combine these with the carbohydrates which are the starches and sugars, such as vegetables, meals, fruits, sugars and jam.

There is another class of foods required to build the bones, hair, teeth, viz., mineral salts, which are found in vegetables, cheese, beans, butter, oatmeal, fish and in smaller quantities in other goods.

Children who are weak-limbed, bow-legged or have poor hair and teeth and have been stunted in their vegetable



Icelandic Hayrack near Lake Winnipeg

and fruit diet, can be cured by proper attention to food. It must be remembered that we can wash out these salts in our method of cooking. For example, baked potatoes or unpeeled boiled potatoes are a very much better food than potatoes peeled and soaked in water before boiling. The mineral salts being near the skin, are peeled off usually, while much of the starch is also lost in the preliminary soaking and boiling.

To make the balance complete we should combine foods and see that we combine such as will fill the bill from day to day, not giving an excess of one kind which produces disorders if not thrown off as waste material. For example, we might serve potatoes and rice for dinner, whole wheat, porridge and sugar for breakfast, and Johnny cake with maple syrup for supper. We would thus have an overdose of starches and sugars or carbohydrates. These, of course, might be stored up as fats to be used for fuel, but the chances are a few continuous days of this diet would cause a disordered stomach to send out signals for more proteid. The daily average ration of a grown person should be ten ounces of carbohydrates, three ounces of fat, three and a half ounces of proteid, one ounce of salt and ten cupfuls of water. We take one-third of the water in our food and must drink the remainder. This is the balanced ration for an average grown person, but an out-door worker will require more, an old person less. Brain workers taking little exercise must vary the diet also.

As a rule it is much less expensive to serve a variety of foods in properly

balanced form, so that it pays to study the question.

Some foods are almost perfect in themselves, milk being one of these. Eggs, milk, cheese and some others contain all that is required to maintain life, but not quite in the right proportions. The English workman's lunch of bread, cheese and ale is nearly perfect, though the alcohol in the ale is not any benefit.

The New Englander's pork and beans, cod fish and potatoes is a diet, cheap and almost perfectly balanced.

The Chinaman can do lots of hard work on rice and codfish with lots of water. He might improve it with a little fat.

A wealthy man can get a balanced lunch on oyster soup, paying the price for the oysters which are very little value as food, giving only the flavor, the milk biscuits and butter supplying the nourishment. The poor man can get just as well balanced a lunch of bread and milk for one tenth of the cost, in fact bread and milk is more nearly man's requirements than the ordinary dinner for which we pay a quarter.

A mixed diet well planned is best, but the meat portion should be reduced and other proteins increased.

Sir James Barr, senior physician of the Liverpool Royal Infirmary, ascribes the meat eating habit as the cause of the condition in the system which allows the old age bacillus a chance to get in its deadly work; cheese and beans are useful substitutes. The former is more easily digested if cooked. The latter to be thoroughly digested and assimilated should be cooked slowly for hours. Many a fine specimen of man has been produced on oatmeal and milk. Many

a good one on potatoes and buttermilk, while the consumers of roast beef and plum pudding to say nothing of bread and cheese are not among the least in the world; but Alberta oats, Saskatchewan grain, Manitoba wheat, Ontario cheese, Quebec maple syrup, British Columbia salmon and fruit and the Maritime province apples and fish to say nothing of the beef, mutton, pork and beans and other cereals, with the eggs and fowl scattered all along the trail from the Atlantic to the Pacific can and has produced men, women, boys and girls better than the best. It is up to the homemakers to see that there are no weaklings. Somebody has said, "Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are."

SOME BALANCED RATION RECEIPES

Baked Beans

Ingredients:—
2 cups white beans,
½ lb. salt pork,
1 teaspoon mustard,
2 teaspoons sugar,
1-8 teaspoon pepper,
½ tablespoon salt,
1 teaspoon molasses.

Pick over, wash and soak the beans twelve to twenty four hours in soft water (the water may be softened with half a teaspoon of soda). Drain, rinse and put on to simmer in soft water. Wash the pork, score the rind and simmer with the beans. When the bean skin will crack when one is taken out and blown upon, drain off the water. Put the beans in a bean-pot (earthenware preferred) with the pork just buried in the middle.

Put the remaining ingredients in a cup, add boiling water, mix and pour over the beans, adding enough boiling water to just cover the beans, cover closely and bake ten hours or more in a slow oven. Keep adding water just to the top of the beans.

Long slow cooking is essential in making beans readily digestible. The New Englanders serve baked beans for Sunday breakfast after cooking all night in the village baker's oven.

Creamed Macaroni

Ingredients:—
½ cup macaroni,
½ cup grated cheese,
1 cup cream sauce.

Put on to boil three cups water, ½ teaspoon salt, break macaroni in one inch pieces, drop in boiling water, boiling hard until tender for twenty-five to forty minutes. When tender, drain in a colander, rinse in cold water to make it white. Mix the cheese with the cream sauce, stir in macaroni and reheat.

Cream Sauce

1 tablespoon of flour cooked in one tablespoon of butter, then add one cupful of hot milk, bring to a boil.

Broiled Steak

Have the steak not less than one inch to one and a half inches thick. Heat an iron pan smoking hot, put on the steak, leave for ten seconds. Turn, leave ten seconds. Turn, etc. Thirty-five seconds is long enough, but many people prefer it cooked about ten minutes. Put a grease on the pan; do not salt until done.

It is quite nice broiled over a good bed of coals instead of the hot pan. To balance the ration serve with this carrot and onion sauce.

Scrape and chop fine two small carrots one large onion. Cook until tender in two tablespoons of dripping, then add one tablespoon of flour and sufficient water or milk to make a smooth sauce.

EARLY GARDENING

Once again the season is at hand when the fore-handed housekeeper begins to plan for a supply at the earliest date of green table stuffs, and early plants for bedding. In this land of late cold springs, to do our very best outdoors, it is generally July before we can get much from the garden to supplement the left-overs of winter, and break the monotony of a worn-out menu card. Indeed such is the rush of the warm seasons that one has to be vigilant to mature, not to say ripen, many of our most desirable vegetables even with the help of a liberal start indoors, before old winter overtakes us again. Anyone who takes the time to go about among the greenhouses and florists shops in the city, will have an eye-opener as to what is being done in the line of forcing and transplanting bedding plants and vegetables. Almost any vegetable can be transplanted if handled carefully, though, of course, it does not pay to do this beyond certain limits. But citron, squash, cucumber, pumpkin and melon can be grown most successfully and a reasonable crop assured by the transplanting process.

Obtain small wooden boxes, those that berries are marketed in are just the thing. Some could be easily made from the thin boards of fruit cases. Good ones have been made from heavy pasteboard, but the wood is better. Fill with rich soil. Plant plenty of seeds in the usual way. Keep in a sunny window, and away from the frost. Let the soil be kept moist, but not wet. The advantage of this plan over the hot-bed is that each box will be enough for one hill when set in the open and the roots need not be disturbed in the very least, the soil is allowed to dry and the box taken off carefully before planting. Many gardeners have worked for the season at what appeared to be a good crop of these vegetables, only to find when they came to cook them that the crop had gained size but not maturity and was therefore nearly worthless; and much of the work went for nothing.

Yet even though one makes a hot-bed the small box is the best for starting the vegetables named.

For the sake of the little children, if nothing else, a special effort should be made to have flowers. A sure way to have pansies this year is to sow the seed now, and by the time the ground

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