

FEEDING A MULTITUDE

WOMEN, says the Kaiser, should have but three interests in life: the church, the kitchen, and the children. Yet when men undertake to feed a multitude they are apt to oust women from even this limited sphere. The Woman Army Cook was introduced for the first time in this present war, and it was not until a few months ago that she was permitted to serve at the Front. Many hospitals and convalescent homes are managed by women, but only one of these is under the jurisdiction of the War Office. When Sir Arthur Keogh, head of the Medical Department, went over this hospital in Endell Street, London, Eng., and examined its books, he said to its Chief, Dr. Flora Murray:

"You women ought to equip and run every hospital. How do you do it so cheaply?"

As cooks, men are frequently superior to women, but it is very seldom that they qualify as food experts and administrators in household science, so when dietitians are required, they are sought amongst women. The Military Hospitals Commission, realizing what an important part diet plays in the recovery of the sick, are making this branch of their organization as efficient as possible and have been fortunate in securing the services of Miss Violet Ryley as chief organizing dietitian. The benefit of her system has already been felt in the hospitals where it has been established.

MISS VIOLET M. RYLEY has been loaned to the Military Hospitals Commission by the University of Toronto, where she has been in charge of the dining hall for the past six years, supervising the feeding of 1,200 men each day—often 600 at one meal—and overseeing a staff of 36 servants. She has secured the assistance of Miss E. A. Sherwood, of Nanawee, as organizing dietitian of hospitals in the east, and of Miss Lillian Peace, who will install the system in the western hospitals. Both these ladies have had wide experience. Miss Sherwood is a graduate of the Lillian Massey School of Domestic Science, and has since served in a hotel, a hospital and a cafeteria. She recently declined a very flattering offer as head of the catering department of a Chicago Club to accept this far less remunerative position, where she feels that she can be of patriotic service. Miss Lillian Peace has conducted the Y. W. C. A. cafeteria in Toronto for six years, and under her management it was a big revenue producer, though similar establishments in other Canadian cities incurred liabilities.

There are now 40 institutions under the jurisdiction of the Military Hospitals Commission, and in at least 28 of these dietitians will ultimately be needed. Miss Marion McTavish is in charge of the Spadina Hospital, Toronto, Miss M. F. Sandwell will take charge of Drummond Hospital, Montreal, Miss Ann Douglas will be installed at the home for incurable soldiers at Euclid Hall, Toronto, and Miss Athos Nesbitt at Whitby, where there will ultimately be 1,500 soldier patients. Each head of the dietary department will have under her one or more pupil dietitians, graduates in household science, who need three or four months of practical experience in an institution before they can become trained administrators. They work under the head dietitian with the status of internes and have no salary, but an allowance of \$10 per month to cover the up-keep of their white uniforms. Having spent from two to four years in the study of domestic science, they understand nutrition, cooking and invalid cooking, but they must learn how to govern, to plan work for

employees, to be resourceful in emergencies.

A dietitian may have decided to serve fruit salad which involves a good deal of labour in slicing oranges and bananas, to feed hundreds of men. If some of her helpers are taken ill she must quickly substitute another dessert. The janitor's schedule may call for the cleaning of the corridors on a certain morning, but if she receives word that a load of potatoes is to arrive that day it is advisable to postpone the cleaning and she must plan to utilize his time in some other way, in order that value may be received for the money spent on his wages. On one occasion the time-table of a cleaner was posted in the hall. This interested the soldiers very much. They evidently thought something had been planned for every moment of his time, and one of them added to the list of his duties:

"In spare moments kindly whitewash the coal."

The pupil dietitian must become a trained inspector, able to note in a moment anything that is wrong, she must become a good business woman and gain experience in buying or requisitioning in large amounts, for in normal times a considerable amount of money may be saved by contracting for food in large quantities. She must learn the most economical thing to buy—which is not necessarily the cheapest. Two cents per pound may be saved by buying cheap rice, but the overhead expenses are the same, and if it proves an unsatisfactory lesson, there is waste, rather than economy. Above all, she must learn to be prompt and to exact prompt-

Organizing Dietitians of the Military Hospitals Commission



MISS LILLIAN PEACE.



MISS VIOLET M. RYLEY.
Chief Organizing Dietitian.



MISS E. A. SHERWOOD.

ness from others, for Miss Ryley states that 90 per cent. of the complaints in dining halls are for slowness of service.

THE soldier-patients have testified their unqualified approval of the dietitians at Spadina Hospital Toronto. Some of the boys call them "dieticians," others simply "tetticians," and one whose ailments entitled him to a special diet, said:

"I want to see the 'politician' to tell her I'd like some tomatoes."

Soon after the ladies took charge the dining-room became strangely overcrowded. It was then discovered that some of the men from one of the military hospitals nearby had heard of the "good grub" and smuggled themselves in for meals. Yet the dietitians' dining-room costs less per patient to operate than the other one. It averages 36 cents per man per day, and housekeepers who know the prices of foodstuffs in Toronto may well wonder. This is the menu served the day we called:

Breakfast—Cream of wheat, bacon and scrambled

eggs, honey, rolls and butter, tea.

Dinner—Clear vegetable soup, roast beef with gravy, potatoes, carrots; rice pudding with fruit sauce.

Supper—Baked beans, tomato sauce; cake; fruit; tea.

Fish, creamed oysters and boiled eggs were provided for patients on a special diet, and the officers' menu, which is slightly more elaborate, costs 50 cents per man per day.

The dietitians try to give interest and variety to the menus. When a small spoonful of ice-cream is served on the apple pie, it costs but a cent more a helping, but the men are most enthusiastic, and a snow-pudding that has been coloured a pale pink and is served with custard sauce was worth a cheer. When a vote was taken at one of the hospitals to discover the patients' favourite dessert, "the pudding with the chocolate sauce" won, and this was nothing but a bread pudding in disguise!

FIRST-CLASS food and plenty of it, first-class service and the minimum of waste is the aim of the dietary department. Plate scraps are never utilized and garbage is sold as food for pigs whenever possible. Garbage tins are sterilized after each emptying, and are refrigerated during the time it is necessary to keep them on the premises. The portions served are small, but each man is allowed as many helpings as he can eat, and the dietitian keeps a careful watch on food thrown away with a view to guarding against future waste. On rainy days, when the patients are confined indoors, they

eat much less than on a fine day. On the other hand, the attendance at supper is smaller on a warm day, for many of the men are taken for motor drives or go to visit friends. The dietitian notes all these facts and provides rations with due regard to the weather.

Second helpings are always served on clean plates, but food is as hot, and cold food as cold, as possible, for it must always be remembered that palatability has a direct effect upon digestion. Stewed peaches which have stood for a

time in a warm room are very different from peaches that have been buried in the ice and salt left from the ice-cream till they are chilled and almost frozen, served with a dab of whipped cream. The men requiring special diets are served on trays from a diet kitchen convenient to the wards, and an effort is made to find out what dishes a sick man may fancy, but their wishes must "pass the censor" before they are granted, as one patient assured his nurse that he must have his eggs fried, as that was the only way they agreed with him!

CLEANLINESS and speed are the chief requisites in the service, and Miss Ryley plans the kitchen and dining-room layout with the architect, so as to arrange it most conveniently. She designs her kitchens so that not an elbow will bend unnecessarily, and says that under proper conditions a kitchen should be able to send out at least 20 plates a minute. The best modern hotel equipment is purchased by the Commission, plate-warmers are installed and every possible device for labour-saving is used. The men employed in the kitchen are returned soldiers. The buying is done by the Quartermaster, under the directions of the dietitian, who studies the market reports. A receiving clerk weighs, measures or counts all the goods as they arrive. He receives no invoices and if his reports do not tally with the quantity ordered, the contractor is inter-

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