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## THE CHILDREN'S FOOD

By Mrs. Nestor Noel

Most mothers are very particular about what their children eat while they are infants. They measure their drinks and are careful not to give them too much, and if they find that plain milk does not agree with them, they add lime water or perhaps put the baby on a diet of some milk preparation. But when a child is two years old, all this precaution suddenly stops. The child comes to table, eats meat, has a bite of cake here, a sip of coffee there, and maybe, also a slice of pie! As for regularity, that is a thing of the past. If the father be a farmer, the breakfast and dinner hour are pretty punctual, but as for the supper, especially during seeding and harvest, this is scarcely ever at the same time two days running. A man wants to finish his "piece," or his "stooking" or his "stack" before he returns to the house. Often it is dark when he begins his supper, and the little children are tired and cross.

A child should have its supper at the same time every evening, preferably about six, and it should not wait up for the father. What does it matter if this means two separate tables? The gain to the child is enormous, far exceeding any little extra trouble on the mother's part.

to have known. We all ought to know what our children eat. If not, we need not be surprised when they get some sudden illness. If the children were taught from infancy that they must not eat unless mother knows what they have, they will never fall into the bad habit of taking things themselves. If Johnny asks for something, don't say: "Oh, see what there is in the cupboard," but go and see yourself, and be careful what you give him.

We hear of far too many cases of appendicitis now-a-days, and I cannot help thinking that, with a little care, these could have been avoided. For instance are all women careful about cleaning the rice? I have noticed little dark stones in rice—stones just the size to lodge in the appendix and to remain there. It is not much trouble to clean rice. One has only to put a little at a time on a white plate, and the black and brown stones show at once, as the rice is spread out.

Then, with regard to raisins. Why will people go on buying raisins with seeds, when there are so many "seedless" and "seeded" raisins on the market?

And oranges, too. If you give a little child of four a whole orange, it is pretty sure to eat a few pips. An orange should be divided into quarters, and every single

## The Old Mansion

By Jeannie Pendleton Ewing

Sole of its kind, it lifts its head  
In this mean neighborhood,  
As if a duchess visited  
Her poor to do them good,  
Closed, oh, so long! Its fanlight blind  
Its graceful railing web-entwined.

No need to have its history told!  
No need to send its bell  
Clanging through barren rooms. Unrolled  
Is all it has to tell  
In its mere gateway, carriage-wide;  
Its fine old air of vanished pride.

Gone are the coaches from the door;  
Gone is the music's beat,  
The satin shoe that touched the floor  
As tread a dove's pink feet.  
Outside, the wheezing organs chime,  
And ragged children dance in time.

But lady-wise, the old house sits,  
A gracious almoner,  
Dispensing still some benefits—  
Since grass-plots bear for her  
Bright dandelions as of old.  
She heaps the children's hands with gold!

For, by preparing the children's supper beforehand, we are also likely to give them healthier and lighter suppers than if they ate with the grown-ups. And, if they are not in bed on the father's return, we must be careful not to let them have little mouthfuls from the table. It is very bad for a child to eat late at night. It gives indigestion and bad dreams, and changes a good-tempered child into a cross, disagreeable one. Children do not know why they are cross, but it is mostly because they have eaten something which was not good for them. I have seen a parent hit, shake and push a child about, when it was cross and troublesome, when, after all, it was the mother's fault that this was so, because she had given it the wrong kind of food. How often children are blamed when it is the parents, themselves, who were at fault!

There is another bad habit practised in the country. It is that of letting little boys and girls go berrying alone. In this case, they often eat far more than they bring home, and sometimes they pick up the wrong kind of berries and get very sick. If an older girl were with the little ones, it would be much safer.

One other thing which mothers often do is to allow children to go to the cupboard, as soon as they can reach it, and take out something to eat at all moments. I once heard a mother say: "I never know what the children pick up to eat." This did not show her good sense for she ought

pip taken out, before it is given to a very small child. Sometimes a mother hands a child an orange—just to keep it quiet! This is not a good reason for giving food of any sort, when it is not the right time for the child to eat. If women think these little things—such as taking pips out of oranges and lemons—are too much trouble, they may find they have a great deal more trouble later on, through their carelessness, when the child gets sick and the mother "cannot imagine how it happened!" And what is worse, she may even lose a precious life.

One idea which some women have is that it is not polite to leave anything on the plate, and so a child, who has no appetite, is obliged to sit at table and try to force down food which can do it no good, but may do it much harm. It is quite right that "grown-ups" should be polite and eat what they take, because they serve themselves, and should know exactly what they want. But we generally help our children, and we may put more on their plates than they can eat, so is it fair to force them to finish what they did not take? Some women are so unreasonable where children are concerned and they exact a blind obedience in everything, without telling the why and the wherefore. But in a house where the mother talks to children and explains things, the little mites learn to eat and drink just what is good for them, because they take their meals reasonably, and do

not gobble up animals.

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