

SCHOOL FOR HOUSEWIVES

By Marion Harland

Will \$4 a Week Keep a Table for a Family of Three?

SINCE the publication of Ailsa's letter, saying she was fairly "heart-broken" over the attempt to set a table for herself, her husband and child on four dollars a week, I have been snowed under by letters of comment, advice and dissent. A few weeks ago I collected into a symposium certain epistles encouraging her to make the attempt to feed her family upon the sum named. The appearance of these friendly (or misleading) counsels has called out expressions as confident from those who protest against the publication of what they hold is a one-sided and delusive phase of the case in hand. The number and earnestness of these protests move me to give place to-day to the advocates of the other side of the question propounded for our consideration.

NO. 1.

This leads off with rush and "vim" that take the tired reader's breath away:

PARDON the liberty I take with my first letter to you, but my indignation is aroused to such a pitch that I must let loose. In regard to "A. M.'s" letter to "Ailsa" on living on four dollars a week: It is just such letters as hers which breed contention in a great many homes, telling what they can do with so little. Some people make a hobby of it, and what some people could live on would starve others. For instance, cereals—there are four of us in family; three of our stomachs revolt in eating them, while the fourth can eat oatmeal, and likes it. I have heard doctors say it is not good to force any one to eat that which one's stomach turns against. I would like to tell "A. M." that I never got fourteen eggs in a day, which is what she counts, and that instead of twenty-two cents we pay twenty-five cents. Also, that I cannot find any place where I can buy roast for six and eight cents a pound. The cheapest we can get is ten cents. She also lives on ninety-two cents for meat or fish for a week, which is at the rate of thirteen cents a day. I wonder how large a piece six in a family can get out of thirteen cents' worth of meat? I warrant that none of them do hard work. Also, providing that one yeast cake does make six loaves of bread, is that enough for a week for six in a family?

I would like, also, to tell "E. S. H." that any one living on four dollars a week must give her whole thought to that and nothing else, and must also try to do her washing and ironing and sewing, and I fail to see where those eight hours, of restful sleep are coming in, or where she is going to get that fresh air and sunshine. I have ten women here that I have read these letters to, and they all agree that such letters are fudge and nonsense. Just imagine half a peck of apples for six in a family! Her children must know little that apples taste like by the time she gets her apple sauce and puddings out of that half peck. And a half peck of potatoes! My husband can eat a half peck in two meals. It is foolish to tell any one to be broad-minded on such narrow means.

NO. 2.

I HAVE read the suggestions offered to "Ailsa," and would like to say that no matter how hard she may try, she cannot set a table on four dollars a week, at the rate prices are now for victuals. What I find very wrong and cruel

in the women that suggest these items to "Ailsa" is mainly this: There are many women in this city whose husbands are regular bullies, and who, if they read these articles, will make life miserable for their poor wives, who, perhaps, are trying harder than "Ailsa" to make both ends meet.

Another thing I would like to know is where you can buy two pounds of bacon for twenty-five cents. I wish to state, being a housewife myself, a sack of flour for fifty-five cents will not do all the baking that "A. M." said it would; neither will one cent's worth of yeast raise five or six ordinary loaves of bread. If she can feed so many people on a half peck of potatoes, then they only eat as many as she counts out for them (same as eggs), and the rest they will have to sit and wish for.

Furthermore, do you think that men can take the cars and ride four miles to stock yard, to buy meat at six and eight cents a pound? For there is the only place I know of where one can get it at present.

Now I have only one favor to ask you, and that is that you will find a little room in your column to publish this letter, or at least part of it, for the poor women's sake whose husbands will perhaps make life hard for them on account of the mistakes these other women have made.

M. M.

NO. 3.

WITH regard to a housewife living on four (\$4) dollars a week: You cannot tell me or any other woman, no matter how small the husband's income, that you can sit a man down to an evening meal, after a hard day's work, to a dish of peanuts or beans (I don't care if there were fifty kinds), liver or eggs six times a week, saying nothing of the other fifteen meals a week. This might do in instances where the woman runs the whole establishment, and the man is only an excuse. You might say the man I speak of is no man, but man or not, when a woman marries she has to be contented with her lot, and it is a certainty that a man coming home after working all day, and who has probably had a cold lunch, will not be content to eat a dish of peanuts and a nickel's worth of liver. You might think I don't know what I am talking about, but I know of a dozen or more housewives who are obliged to live on small salaries, and that is bad enough without printing articles in the paper to have the men read, come home and tell the wife she is too extravagant, when the poor soul is feeding him as best she can on her small allowance to please him and keep peace in the family. Your columns are very helpful at times, but such outbursts kill everything good they have ever contained, and make a person feel they hate to read the paper.

I am not the only one who thinks this. I have spoken to a great many honest women who are not trying to save a few cents, which will do no good when the poor hen-pecked man fades from want of solid food, but trying to keep their husbands in good humor and health, so that they will feel like working, and can be able to make more money in the future, so they won't always have to starve.

These vegetarians are all right to read about, but I never saw one yet that didn't look as if a

American Girl

NO. 1



good puff of wind wouldn't blow him or her over. I trust you won't consider this too raw and impudent to publish, but I certainly tell you exactly what trouble such letters cause, and I understand you are not in the position I am to learn the true opinion of ordinary people and the effect it has on the men.

V. Q.

NO. 4.

WE ARE all interested in your part of the paper, but in regard to "Mary Moore's" answer how to live on four dollars a week: I can never do that, and we are only a family of four, too. I save beef, too, but I have to pay ten cents a pound; don't know where to buy it at six or eight cents a pound. Then there are potatoes and some other kind of vegetables. Every man won't do without tea or coffee. Our men won't. They will eat a dish of pudding, and then we are not looking for a sample.

For instance, as for peanuts, I could not dish that up. If I did I would lose my home, which I think many a poor woman will. That is, according to the kind of husband she will have from reading these letters of "Mary Moore," "A. M.," "E. R.," "E. S. H."

N. B.—Now I could live on far less than that if I went a-sponging on my friends, or live on mush and milk.

DON'T KNOW HOW.

NO. 5.

Keeps her temper admirably in hand. The perusal of her thoughtful, judicious paper may tone down the nerves jarred by the righteous indignation of her predecessors.

I AM glad to see that attention has been called to this class of women, for no other so greatly needs the assistance of practical household hints as this little forlorn hope of the homemaker's army. As "Secretary of the Interior," or Chief of the Commissary Department, the woman trying to provide healthful and appetizing food for four persons on four dollars a week comes as near to performing miracles as one can in this age of the world.

I have been trying it several years, and find there is nothing picturesque in poverty except among the penants of Picardy or other sufficiently distant places. But our children are rosy with health, and the mother is so busy economizing she has no time for whist, club squabbles or neighborhood gossip. This virtue is its own reward.

But, concerning the "party of the first part," we

This picture is one of Malcolm Strauss' types of American girls which he has drawn to represent the different cities. A series of ten, of which this is the first, will be printed on this page.

find we are dealing with an uncertain element. In books, patient self-sacrifice and perpetual putting is ever compensated by an appreciative husband, who invariably becomes a millionaire. He even so far misses his cue as to speak before his turn, and argue that if \$20 sufficed for one month it would hereafter be possible to make \$15 do the same.

As a rule men have a very vague idea in regard to food materials, either in regard to price or value. If the same energy and hard study of household economy were exercised by the husband as is required of the wife, he would have no opportunity to acquire the tobacco heart nor an indurated liver. Men should be better instructed in regard to the possibilities and impossibilities of the kitchen running at low pressure. Show that the things he likes to find in his dinner-pail "like mother used to make" really are composed of flour, which does not come in the miraculous barrel of Scripture times, but which totally disappears at the end of a given time, even though he himself did the cooking (from which may we be delivered). The household worries and economics should be borne by both parents, else the wife becomes discouraged and cries "Does it pay?" The pitifully few dimes and quarters she has saved from setting her frugal table are spent unnecessarily, though thoughtlessly, by the husband for carfare or to keep alight that incense to a poor man's vanity—the cob pipe. Possibly this is heresy.

There is nothing in human life so beautiful as the willing self-sacrifice of the mother in the various unseen ways known only to herself. She must abandon nearly everything that gave her pleasure before marriage. Her music, painting, occasional lecture or concert, a paid seat in church, and occasional guests, must all be entirely given up. But being a good and conscientious woman, she does this willingly, and even unconsciously. Least of all, is the mimic tragedy going on in the brave mother heart exposed to the gaze of outsiders. The burdens of this uncomplaining but sadly perplexed class can be greatly alleviated by means of really helpful suggestions in regard to domestic economy and the comradeship of their better halves in this matter. The men have developed thus far that they see the practical benefits of "balanced rations" for animals, so in time they may realize that something similar might be of benefit to their children.

The watchword of the poor man's wife must be "Waste nothing." Save everything in a cleanly way out of reach of mice and dust. Use promptly before it spoils, and cook no over-supply. No woman of limited means can afford to lose even one batch of bread. We cannot be surprised if the husband patronizes the free-lunch counter, if at home the bread would hold the house down during a cyclone.

The reason why certain foods must be cooked in certain ways needs to be more fully explained that sickness may be prevented. There are many recipes we have all tried that will be of help to our worried sisters, but this article is already too long to include any of them. In closing I would merely reiterate that the attention of the husbands and fathers should be drawn to the subject in hand, and my faith is such I believe many a tired little mother will find her weekly (and weekly) allowance increased by a dollar or two.

M. S. H.

A Serious Discussion of Home Study for Our Children

Another parent raises her voice against the slow massacre of the innocents by the imposition of study after school hours:

(No. 1.)

I SHOULD like to say a word in regard to home study for the six-year-old, which was mentioned by "Indignant."

I feel compelled to say it is preposterous, and should be considered a crime, to compel a child of six years, or eight years, or ten years, to study at home. I believe children should be raised like kittens, and their characters and studies allowed to form themselves gradually, but surely, I have seen children (who show every month a best of reports) become so confused when compelled (not by teachers) to do school work at home that they could not tell one figure from another, and would declare they saw the figures "dancing around."

This applies to my own little daughter of ten years, fourth grade. I believe mothers have many times preparing to lie which they should teach their children at home, especially to girls. I believe these things should also be taught in the public schools in separate classes for boys and girls, and in positive, if it were, there would be fewer girls ruined, and fewer broken-hearted mothers.

The teacher who stings herself "Indignant" is to be highly commended in the stand she has taken.

One more remark, and I have done. I believe every child should be excused from the room when necessary. I have seen a great suffering and serious results from teachers compelling children to sit through the whole half day, and not allowed to leave the room, then severely reprimanded for not "doing anything" with their work. There are a few evils that should be swept from the public schools. This is one of them, and I should like to see your paper take hold of this matter in such a way as to compel the changes, which to me seem necessary for the health of the younger children.

E. W.

With all that is true and forceful in the foregoing communication, we must not leave out of sight the sound truth that laws are made for the many, not for the exceptional few. An illustration of a rule that sometimes bears hard upon the unoffending came under my own observation the other day.

A lively 8-year-old, in the glad consciousness that he knew the answer to a question put to the school

in general, snapped his fingers in raising his hand to attract the teacher's attention. To raise the hand was in order. To snap the fingers was out of order. He was sentenced to write "Order is heaven's first law" one hundred times as the penalty for infringement of school discipline.

"I had no option," wrote the teacher to whom the mother addressed a note of remonstrance. "He is the best boy in my room, and it hurt me to punish him, but every child in school would be snapping his fingers twenty times a day if I had overlooked the breach of good behavior."

The mother was sensible enough to see the propriety of the explanation.

The symposium bears rule in this issue of "School for Housewives and Mothers." Before dismissing the important matter brought forward by one fair-minded, if "indignant" teacher and true friend of children, I make room for a few more letters sent

in, in response to my call upon mothers for their views in this matter.

(No. 2.)

YOU ask what other mothers think about the six-year-old taking his little reader home to prepare the next day's lesson. This mother thinks it an outrage! The idea of a child—almost a baby, and at a young time out of his mother's arms—being obliged to cram his poor little head with lessons after the school session is over is enough to make sensible parents indignant. I think the mothers should rise in a body and demand an easier, if lower, method of study for our little folks.

AN ANXIOUS MOTHER.

(No. 3.)

YOU are very kind to take up this subject. Here is my "opinion." I think it is wrong to give children so much home work. I have a little daughter of eleven years, very ambitious (always No. 1, 2 or 3 in class), who has already lost almost a year through breaking down and having a severe case of typhoid fever. She is now in ninth grade, and the quantity of books she must drag to and fro every day would tire any grown woman. She is only a weak little girl. The work would do her good, but the load she must carry overbalances whatever benefit she might derive from the fresh air. Then it takes her over two hours to study a geography lesson, spelling, history, physiology, do twelve examples, study a

grammar lesson and write a special composition, with three small illustrations. "Oh, how my head does ache, mamma!" is her exclamation almost every night, as she bends over this work, yet determined to conquer, and to please her teacher.

"How can she bear this strain? I am just as anxious as any mother to give her a good education, especially as she gives promise of doing well. She certainly makes wonderful copies of pictures, and is thorough, but her body cannot stand this strain, and I do cry out: 'Give the children a few hours to play and recuperate.' They would become stronger, consequently better qualified to go through all the grades and be an honor to their teachers. Now, many a child faints on the way, and the mothers are obliged to take them from school because so much is required of them both in school and at home. It seems they must study every hour if they want to reach the top notch.

(No. 4.)

I ANSWER to "Indignant." I think it is altogether wrong to have children study at home. My boy is 6 years old, and must study in the evening. He asks me to help him, which I cannot do sometimes, being too busy, and it worries him. In the morning I can't get him to play, as his studies trouble him and the fear of his teacher. I think five hours of studying enough for a child of six. I send my child to school to learn there, not at home. I think "Indignant" is right. I do wish she was in our school, and my boy in her room!

M. R.

NEW METHOD OF PAINTING IN OIL ABOLISHES BRUSHES

THE great Titian once remarked: "What might not be done in the art of painting if we only had the colors in our fingers."

This aspiration, spoken of as an unrealizable dream, has now, after the lapse of some centuries, been apparently given form and substance.

It is not that any artist has come to the world whose aims give off the painter's colors as part of its natural outgrowth, but according to the story the nearest possible approach to that gift has been hit upon.

France is the bearer of this new artistic message. In Paris an artist of prominence, J. P. Raffaelli, it is stated, has solved the problem of making oil-colors hold.

This discovery was first made known last June. Since then the value of the invention has rapidly gained headway in that city. Many painters of eminence have painted pictures by the new means. And in addition a large and successful public exhibition of their works has just closed in the Galerie Durand-Ruel, one of the leading art centres of the French capital.

The collection of pictures excited great comment, as bringing out in a remarkable degree the individual manner of the artists along with even increased brilliancy of color. Equal excellence was gained with a saving of one-quarter of the time such work usually called for by the old style plan.

And they are said to have been all painted without brushes, palette, oil bottles or other appliances so essential in the usual style of oil painting!

These results were achieved by the solid oil-colors being made in the form of

pen-like pastels that are taken in the fingers and rubbed on the canvas or paper. Of such colors the inventor has so far produced two hundred different shades. When still further shades or blending is necessary the colors are suitably combined one upon the other and worked to the shade required.

When rubbed on the canvas, according to the requirements of the subject, oil or turpentine is needed to thin, no brushes to manipulate, no siccative to dry, and no varnish to preserve. All is in the artist and the oil-color stick.

Incidentally it is asserted the solid oil-colors may be equally well used to paint miniatures, make indelible pastels and pencil drawings, and permanently color photographs. With a penknife the solid sticks of oil-color can be sharpened to the finest point.

In working them on the paper, canvas or other foundation they are handled exactly like pastels or pencils. Hard in the stick, they become soft and pliable to the finger the moment they are spread on the canvas. It is also said that the solid oil-color pastels never dry in the stick. By simply removing the thin skin which forms at the exposed end they may be used months, or even years, afterward, as fresh and effective as at first.

Among other advantages claimed for them is that any kind of varnish can be used to cover the painting, or it may be left unvarnished. In either case it never darkens, changes color otherwise, fades or cracks. With their aid nothing is really needed of the ordinary outfit of the painter but the scraper and some turpentine. Palette, mixing of colors, maulstick, color box and oil bottles, with their dirt, burden and labor of cleaning, are all dispensed with.

Best Recipe for MAYONNAISE Salad Dressing

ALMOST every mail brings a request for a trustworthy recipe for mayonnaise salad dressing. Will the guests cut out and carefully preserve that given below that I may not have occasion to repeat it under a month.

A SURE FORMULA FOR MAYONNAISE

BREAK into a soup plate the yolk of one egg, and squeeze a few drops of lemon juice over it. Then, with a silver fork, begin to stir (not beat) the egg around and around. Add the oil, a drop at a time, until the mixture begins to thicken, when it may be put in larger quantities. To one egg nearly a pint of oil is used. When very thick, thin the mixture by stirring in gradually a half cup of vinegar. This done, add again, little by little, the remainder of the oil, and continue the stirring until once more very thick. Have the white of the egg beaten to a froth stiff enough to be cut with a knife, and set in the refrigerator until just before serving the sauce, when the "whip" is quickly added.

All the ingredients, including the bowl, should be set in ice several hours, that they may be chilled through. The colder the materials the greater are the chances of the sauce being a thorough success. But the directions must be exactly followed. A mayonnaise is one of the subjects with which no liberties are to be taken. In spite of all precautions, the egg will occasionally curdle, but there is a remedy even for this misfortune. Take another yolk and begin again from the beginning, as at first. When this mixture is very thick, the first dressing may be added, little by little, and very cautiously. If done carefully and slowly, the result will be a smooth, uncurdled mayonnaise; only there will be twice as much as you intended to make. You will, however, have the consolation of knowing that any of the mixture that is left over may be kept until next day on the ice, and will be as good as ever, and the household will be only too happy to have one of the endless varieties of salads for tomorrow's lunch.

One egg and a scant pint of oil will make enough dressing for a family of ordinary size.

SHRIMP SALAD

ONE can of shrimps, three tablespoofuls of vinegar and one of salad oil. Mayonnaise. Turn the shrimps out of the can several hours before you make the salad, drench them with the mixed oil and vinegar, and set on the ice until needed. When the lettuce is arranged on a salver, sprinkle it with very finely-cracked ice, drain the vinegar and oil from the shrimps, and lay them among the leaves. Add mayonnaise dressing, and serve immediately.

BLIND FOR MANY YEARS, HER LIFE IS FULL OF SUNSHINE

MOST remarkable woman is Miss Wood, covered outside with plush and in Lucy Reed, of Danby, Vermont, side with satin. She evinces great taste and, although deaf, dumb and blind, leads a useful and cheerful existence. Danby is a quiet fair. All the money she makes by the little village in the heart of the Green state of her handiwork Miss Reed uses in charity, for she is a member of a well-to-do family.

A Woman Banker

THE Klondike party is the latest form of church entertainment. The leading idea is that gold is the staple of Klondike. Consequently yellow monopolizes the colors used in the decorations. Use yellow cheesecloth for the hangings and draperies. Cover the chairs and the tables with the yellow stuff, and dress the young women who serve the booths in yellow. Let the admission be in the shape of pieces of silver done up in yellow paper. Let the box office be presided over by a divinity in yellow, and let a small fairy in yellow give to each guest a small shovel decorated with yellow ribbon, which is to be used in digging into a claim. Said claim is one of any number of flower pots in which small evergreens and other plants have been placed, and in the soil of which pots various bonbons done up in yellow paper have been secreted. After a blind woman is arranged for pretty and every find the digger must purchase a tastefully arranged boxes out of cigar box new shovel.