FOOD VALUES AND ECONOMY IN THE KITCHEN.

The all-important subject of economy in diet has been the subject of many discussions of articles in the newspapers. Everyone has been cautioned to be thrifty and to save expense. It is not practical to carry out many of the drastic changes suggested by many economists. Vegetarianism cannot be forced upon the ordinary household, but the sensible housewife asks herself first what it is absolutely necessary to economise in, and secondly, how can it be done without causing the meals to decrease in food value to the body, and providing meals that are wholesome and appetising.

First, what is it essential for the patriotic Briton to economise in, so that more money than is necessary need not be spent on food? Meat certainly, as it has increased so much in price. Meat contains flesh-forming substances which build up the body and repair the tissues of the body constantly being used up in the process of living. The flesh-forming substances are not easy to obtain inexpensively in the diet, but are found in certain vegetables, as well as in fish and animal products, such as cheese, eggs, etc. The housewife should know something of food values even though she knows very little about science:—

Foods.—Meat, milk, fish, eggs, bread, etc., are made up of food-stuffs or food substances which have some special work to do in the body.

These food-stuffs are:

1. Proteids, which principally build up the tissue.
2. Starches, which give heat and energy.
3. Sugars
4. Fats and Oil
5. Mineral Salts and Acids, which purify the blood and make bone, teeth, hair, nails, etc.

Foods contain two or more or sometimes all of these food-
stuffs, but are classified according to the predominating or most important of these.

**Flesh-forming Substances are found in the following foods:**—

1. Meat (expensive). Fish (varying in price, but more expensive than before the war). Eggs (much more expensive).


All these are very nutritious flesh-forming foods.

Macaroni, spaghetti, vermicelli, bread (standard or wholemeal especially), all contain flesh-forming substances to a lesser degree, and are usually classed with the starchy foods.

Many of these vegetable foods sound dull and uninteresting, but a little care on the part of the housewife, to realise that without meat a tasty dish must take its place, and that meat once a day, or even once in two days, is sufficient, should be the maxim preached in every household for the times of trouble and distress that are before us.

**Heat-giving Foods.**—These are less expensive than flesh-forming foods, and much more easily obtained in the diet. They are starches, sugars, fats and oils. Bread, potatoes, lentils, cornflour, sago, rice, etc., give the starch. Sugar is obtained from fruits such as raisins, figs, prunes; in milk, and in cane or beet sugar, but the most valuable of all, Fats and Oils, from the animal and vegetable kingdoms. These are especially valuable in winter-time, and if given in suitable and not overwhelming quantities, should provide heat for the body during the coldest winter day, and do away with the necessity of sitting over the fire to obtain artificial warmth. Bacon, pork, suet puddings, salad oil, butter, lard, nut butter, and margarine are most suitable in winter. The prejudice against margarine is fortunately dying out; it is useful for most purposes in cooking, though some brands contain more water than butter, so are not so good for frying; pastry and cakes made from it are light and digestible, and as nourishing as if made with butter.

**The Bone-Forming Foods** are found in common salt, in the lime that is contained in water, in green and other vegetables—these all contain valuable ingredients which keep the blood in good condition and the body in good health.
In the average diet the following proportions should be present:—

Flesh-forming substances  ...  ...  4½ ozs.
Heat-giving substances {starch, sugar 14½  "  or more.
          \{fat  ...  3  "
Mineral substances  ...  ...  1  "

Water about 5½ lbs., taken mostly in food, but 2½ pints taken in milk, tea, coffee, or other beverages, is a good average allowance.

It is important that a certain amount of liquid is taken; it carries off the impurities from the body, and enters into the composition of blood, the carrier of the digested food products to all parts of the body.

Every housewife should aim at providing meals which give these necessary food substances in the best proportions, and on pages 22 and 23 menus have been drawn up with this in view.

**Economy in the Kitchen.**—Not in the diet only, but in the kitchen and the actual cooking, a cook may economise in many points.

1. **Jam-Making and Bottling Fruit.**—Where there is a means of obtaining fruit inexpensively and of a good quality, it is very essential that it should be made into jam; preserving sugar or white crystallised sugar is not very much more expensive than formerly if bought by the dozen pounds (July, 1915).

2. **Bread.**—Never allow pieces to accumulate. Use up all crusts possible at the table. Finish one loaf before beginning another. Cut off the crusts, if required; it is less wasteful. Use wholemeal bread as well as white bread, as it is more wholesome. Have a separate box for pieces, and use them up in one of the following ways:—

**Breadcrumbs.—(a) White,** made from crumb of bread dried, pounded, or crushed with an old rolling pin, and sifted. These are useful for fish, or for coating mixtures light in colour.

(b) **Medium** crumbs from crust and crumb, cut in small pieces and pounded, crushed and sifted through a sieve. Most useful for all purposes where coating is required.

(c) **Brown** crumbs from crusts cut in pieces and browned in the oven a golden brown colour, and pounded and sifted. Useful for meat balls and for improving the outside of ham, bacon, or baked fish.
Keep all in covered jars, and after use, dry, sift, and return to jars. Do not use dried crumbs inside mixtures.

**Puddings.**—Bread and butter puddings may be made with thin slices of bread and butter from bread too stale for table use and yet not hard. If bread is soaked in cold water, squeezed and beaten with a fork until free from lumps, it can be used instead of fresh breadcrum in all stuffings and puddings.

3. **Meat.**—Avoid buying veal or lamb—not only is it expensive and not as nourishing as beef or mutton, but the animals should be left to mature for use when meat is scarcer. Arrange for a meat meal only once a day, or once in two days.

4. **Fish.**—Do not arrange what to buy until the fish-shop is visited and the prices ascertained. Prices vary much in this war-time from day to day, and some days fish would form an inexpensive meal.

5. **Vegetables.**—Again study the market prices. Much comes from abroad in all large towns. They come in by train and are delayed in transit. Serve vegetables in different ways. An unsavoury, watery cabbage, which formerly represented the English cooking, should no longer be tolerated. Toss them in butter or some fat to add to their food value, and flavour and season them. Do not soak them for a long time before cooking as it drains out and drowns their flavour, and do not leave them a minute in the water after they are cooked. Steam them when possible, though it spoils the colour of green vegetables, but it preserves their food value. Cook potatoes in their skins, whether boiled, steamed, or baked, as it retains their flavour and food value; if liked, cut a strip all round the potato, and after cooking the skin will come off easily. Use up all cold potatoes, as part of salad, or mashed with butter and milk and made into mixtures with grated cheese, cold meat or fish.

**Parsley.**—To keep parsley fresh from seven to ten days, wash it, dry in a cloth, and keep in a tightly-covered tin box. It will be quite fresh and good, whereas if kept in a basin of water it goes bad very quickly.

6. **Cheese** is almost invaluable as a flesh-forming food, but it is indigestible to many persons. It is much better grated, or introduced into a sauce for coating poached eggs or with cooked macaroni, spaghetti, or even a cauliflower. Every small, dry piece can be grated and kept until required.

7. **Milk** is essential, especially for children. In the country,
where skim milk may be obtained, add fat, such as finely-chopped suet, to a milk pudding, or a few pieces of butter. Keep it in very wide mouthed jugs or in shallow basins, as it keeps better. It is safer to boil it in very hot weather. Milk should be very lightly covered, so that air may get to it. Muslin weighted at the corner with beads is very suitable.

8. *The Stock-pot* may be an extravagance in the kitchen, as pieces that can be utilised for making into dishes suitable for supper or luncheon will be put into it, unless there is a strict supervision. On the other hand, all bones cooked and uncooked, gristle, and pieces of vegetables, bacon rind free from fat, trimmings from cutlets, clear gravies, and small scraps of meat, can be put in, and soups made from the stock by the addition of flavourings and thickenings, or as a foundation for more elaborate soups.

*Vegetable Stock.*—Vegetable peelings, if clean, can be covered with cold water, and cooked for two or three hours, and will form a nicely flavoured stock containing valuable mineral salts, suitable for soups. Too much potato or green vegetable must not be put in, or the stock is a dark colour, but apple skins in moderation, carrot, onion, turnip skins and a little green vegetable are most suitable. This stock will keep only for a day or two.

*Management of Stock.*—1. Strain the stock each night into a large clean basin.

2. Keep the bones and meat separate; throw away the vegetables if they are soft.

3. In hot, close weather do not add fresh meat unless it has been scalded first.

*Care of Stock-pot.*—1. Scald the stock-pot each day with boiling water and soda.

2. Scour every other day.

*Pieces Unfit for Meat Stock-pot.*—1. Fat in any form.

2. Pork.

3. Green vegetables.

4. Bread, or any farinaceous substances, sauce, etc.

These turn the stock sour; and fat can be utilised in other ways.

If any stock is over it can be reduced for glaze, though it takes a large quantity to make a small amount of glaze. The
stock is strained and reduced to the consistency of a thick syrup, skimmed constantly, care being taken that it does not burn.

It is used for coating meat rolls, galantines, ham, and is valuable as a colouring and flavouring for gravies.

9. Correct Proportions in Cooking.—For example, when making milk puddings, use 1 oz. of the starchy food to 1 pint of milk, and for cornflour and other moulds, 1½ ozs. to 2 ozs. to the pint. So many people take too large a proportion of the starchy food. When making barley water the barley used for clear barley water should be used again for thick barley water, and yet again for a barley pudding.

10. Use the method of cookery most suited to the food which is to be cooked, with a view to digestibility as well as economy. For example—(a) Stew tough pieces of meat.