

# THREE-CENT SCHOOL LUNCHES

*What has been done for New York children*

Experiments in school lunches, with most gratifying results, have been made in seven of the elementary schools in Manhattan, provided for by the New York school lunch committee, an organization of women. These experiments in the schools of New York have been conducted on the principle that food should be furnished at cost. Last year 174,109 lunches were served in the seven schools at a cost of \$8640.50, or 4.96 cents per lunch. The receipts were \$5730.38, or 3.29 cents per lunch, a loss to the providers of only 1.67 cents per lunch.

It is believed, says a writer for the Mother's Magazine, that with buying on a large scale and with several centralized kitchens in which the food would be cooked and prepared for a number of schools, this loss can be made up or nearly so, and the lunches placed on practically a paying basis.

At first, the pupils were required to purchase three-cent meal tickets and were given the choice of a number of fixed menus, varied from day to day. This year, however, when the system was extended to 10 schools, seven of which are in Manhattan, the a la carte plan was adopted, and most of the articles put on a separate one-cent basis. For pupils who prefer a fixed meal, however, there is still a special three-cent menu in each school each day.

The following is a sample special menu for a week:

- Monday—Rice, tomato soup and bread.
- Tuesday—Mashed potatoes, meat gravy and bread.
- Wednesday—Pea soup and bread.
- Thursday—Lentils, rice and bread.
- Friday—Potato soup, croutons and bread.

In addition to these three-cent lunches a child may, for a cent, buy any one of the following: Hot cocoa, sandwiches of various kinds, four crackers, salads, cooked fruits, such as stewed prunes or apple sauce, or in fact any of the other articles on display. The following articles were selected at random, from one of the one-cent counters:

- One baked sweet potato in jacket.
- Mashed sweet potato in cone.
- Rice pudding in cone.
- One hot sausage with slice of bread.
- One candied apple.
- Two pieces of sweet chocolate.
- One banana.
- Three figs.
- Ice cream sandwich (one graham cracker with slice of ice cream).
- Half orange peeled, with one graham cracker.

Two small cakes or cookies of different kinds.

- Five molasses candy kisses.
- Boiled dried peas in cone.
- Two thick slices of good bread and butter.
- Two pretzels.
- One peanut butter sandwich.
- A two-inch square of apple pie.
- A two-inch square of custard pie.
- A two-inch square of shortcake.
- A single cake.
- Boiled beans in cone.
- One cheese sandwich.

The service in each school is in charge of a superintendent—usually one of the teachers—who makes weekly reports in regard to the expenditures and needs, and who draws for supplies on the stock purchased by the committee. The board of education furnishes the kitchens, dining rooms and the equipment for each.

The cooks, whose services are paid by the committee, get \$1 a day. The dining room service is supplied by the pupils of the schools. There are always from 20 to 30 of the older children of each school who are glad enough to serve the food and wash the dishes afterward for their own lunches. Where more than the required number volunteer for this service, they are divided into shifts and given employment on alternate days. The "waiters" wear clean white caps and aprons and those who handle the bread wear white gloves. This paraphernalia is, of course, furnished by the committee.