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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Housekeepers' Chat

Wednesday, August 6, 1930.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "The School Child's Wardrobe." Suggestions by Clarice L. Scott, clothing specialist. Menu and recipe from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Suits for the Small Boy."

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Aleen's mother called me up last night. "Aunt Sammy, haven't you any ideas about pockets for girls? I'm planning Aleen's school clothes this week, so they'll be all made by the middle of September."

"Well," I answered, off-hand, "you can put all sorts of pretty pockets on girls' dresses, can't you? Make them part of the design. Now, with Billy--of course he has to have lots of different pockets. Places to put the funny things he collects -- string, and stones, and marbles, and match-box tops-- you know how it is with a boy."

"Yes," answered Aleen's mother, "a boy has at least one or two pockets things don't fall out of. But Aleen particularly needs some sort of a pocket where her carfare and lunch money will be safe. The teacher declines to keep small change for each of forty children, and I don't blame her. But if Aileen leaves her money in her desk or in her coat, it sometimes disappears, I'm sorry to say; if she tries to carry it round in a purse, she leaves the purse somewhere; and patch pockets on loose, thin dresses are absolutely useless. I confess I'm puzzled."

"I'll ask Miss Scott about pockets," I said. I was going to talk to her anyway about clothes for school children. Miss Scott is one of my friends in the Bureau of Home Economics who designs children's garments. She wrote the bulletin, "Suits for the Small Boy," which I have spoken of so often. I asked her about pockets in girls' dresses.

"That's a problem we're working on, Aunt Sammy" said Miss Scott, "but it is by no means solved. Each suggestion has some drawbacks. On very little children we use patch pockets on bloomers, but a bigger girl could hardly get at such a pocket in public. Perhaps a bloomer pocket could be reached through a placket in the right hand side seam. If pockets are used on the outside of school dresses of any sort, they would be safer if made with a flap that buttons over. A generation ago mothers put pockets in side seams, but children did not like them. Pockets on belts worn under the clothing seem to twist around uncomfortably. One friend of mine says she wore a purse on a ribbon around her neck all through her school days. How about that? Couldn't you ask your radio friends, Aunt Sammy, to send us their suggestions?"

So I am putting the question to you now: Where do your younger girls carry their carfare and lunch money without losing it?

From pockets we went on to school clothes in general. "Please tell me, Miss Scott," I asked next, "what you consider a satisfactory wardrobe for a school child. I'd like to give my radio friends some suggestions they can carry out in readiness for the first busy days after school opens. Everybody has more time for sewing in August."

Here are Miss Scott's suggestions.

"I suppose," she said, "you are thinking of both boys and girls, from the time they start to kindergarten, at five years old, up through the grades at least to high school. One or two general points apply to all clothing, whether the wearers are boys or girls. We have to think about children's incessant activities, to begin with, and design clothes that give the utmost freedom of movement, combined with attractive appearance, easy care, and durability. By easy care, I mean chiefly laundering, and especially, easy ironing.

The selection of a good design is just as important whether the clothes are ready-to-wear or made by the mother. If the mother makes them, simplicity of construction is essential. A good design means not only pleasing lines and good fit, but garments that a child can put on and take off with the least possible trouble. Front openings, with very few, large, findable buttons, easy to reach, will do a lot to reduce the morning scramble to get ready for school.

"Let's talk about a boy's clothes first. In the lower grades, wash suits will be worn practically throughout the year. In very cold weather the child may need extra warmth, which can be provided by means of a sweater or the lumber jacket which has been so popular with children in recent years. The knitted cuffs, collar, and belt on these jackets, and the front opening, help to make them about as unrestricting as a warm garment could be.

"A boy will need enough clean suits, or at least, clean overblouses, so that those worn one week may be replaced by others the next week. If a fresh blouse is needed every school day and Sunday, six will be in the wash the next week, and six others will be required. About a dozen in all.

"Children grow so rapidly that it is well to make these suits rather roomy and loose at the beginning of the year, but they must not be too large or they will be uncomfortable. If the Oliver Twist style is used, any letting down must be allowed for around the waist, by moving the line of buttons lower.

"Girls' school dresses should be made of wash fabrics, or light weight washable wool, that look fresh and unwrinkled as long as possible. Prints or gingham with attractive all-over patterns show accidental spots less readily than plain colors, but most girls need a clean wash dress almost every school morning, so that enough garments for two weeks' wear should be provided. Make very deep hems at first, to permit lengthening. Raglan sleeves are good. They do not bind as the child grows broader across the shoulders and chest. Elbow sleeves are satisfactory in most climates, and less apt to restrict the lower arm or get dirty rubbing on the desk. Matching bloomers, or French

panties of plain color harmonizing with the dress, are very good for school use. Collarless styles give children the least trouble when coats are put on, are easiest to iron, and look clean longest.

"For winter wear, two-piece outfits are good for both boys and girls. Flannel or jersey skirts or trousers may be worn on an underbody, with either a light-weight sweater of the pull-on type, or, in milder weather, a cotton over-blouse designed suitably for the boy or girl, as the case may be.

"Just a word about choosing school coats. The plainer in style the better. Raglan sleeves and wide front laps provide for growth. See that the collar is comfortable against the child's neck. Some materials chafe the skin."

I have a menu and a recipe to give you today. Just the thing for the hungry boy or girl who comes home at noon. And you won't have to wait for school to open before trying this new recipe on the younger members of the family. Next time you have two chickens or more for dinner, set aside the wings and bony pieces and use them in the menu I'm going to give you now. Pencils and notebooks ready?

First, the menu: Casserole of Chicken Wings and Eggplant; String Beans; Oatmeal Bread; Stewed Plums.

There are nine ingredients in Casserole of Chicken Wings and Eggplant:

Chicken wings and bony pieces	Fat
1 medium sized eggplant, pared and diced	1 cup chopped green pepper
Salt	1/2 cup chopped onion, and
Pepper	Water
Flour	

Nine ingredients: (Repeat)

Wings of young chickens and pieces too bony to fry successfully are excellent prepared in this way. Salt the chicken, roll in flour, brown lightly in fat in a skillet, and transfer to a casserole. Cook the eggplant, green pepper, and onion in the fat for about 10 minutes, season to taste, and add to the chicken in the casserole. Rinse out the skillet with 1/2 cup of hot water, pour over the chicken and vegetables, cover, and cook in a moderately hot oven (375°F) for about 1 hour. Serve from the dish.

Once more the menu: Casserole of Chicken Wings and Eggplant; String Beans; Oatmeal Bread; Stewed Plums.

Tomorrow: "Concerning Porches."

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