

How to Live on 6d. a Day.

A CONTRIBUTOR HAS DONE IT,
AND RELATES HIS EXPERI-
ENCES HERE.

I was detained for some weeks on the Continent. Knowing that I might not be able to return for some months, I decided to live in the most economical way that I knew. To this end I purchased coarse bread, some butter, and cheese, with various fruits from the country people, who brought their produce to market early each morning.

These foods I consumed in my room, repairing to an excellent working-man's restaurant, where I obtained a large plate of rice, or some similar pudding, or potatoes and peas. The cost—excluding occasional luxuries—amounted to a very small sum, ranging near sixpence a day.

Sixpence a day will provide an average man with an agreeable and substantial breakfast, dinner, and supper, even in war time. He must, however, learn to select the right foods, both as to their cost and nourishing value.

The simplest, cheapest, and most reliable foods are wholemeal bread, rice barley, wheat, coarse oatmeal, haricot beans, dried peas, lentils, maize flour, and semolina, which is a rich product of wheat, with margarine as a fat, and such fruits and vegetables as cost the least at the moment of buying. Among these are bananas, apples, potatoes, parsnips, and carrots, with onions and some herbs, which should be kept handy for flavouring.

The man who proposes to live on sixpence a day must not expect any meat, milk, or butter, coffee, or tea, but he will lose nothing by that. A teaspoonful of oatmeal stirred into a tumbler of water with a small pinch of sugar will, after standing a few hours, provide him with nourishing drink.

As food bread holds the first place, and twelve ounces are allowed for the day, with two ounces of sixpenny margarine. In addition to this the following foods may be varied at will. Rice, barley, rolled oats, semolina—made with skimmed milk and some nutmeg—and sweetened. Rice

and barley may be made into savoury dishes with the assistance of curry powder, which costs a penny a packet, and of which only a pinch is required, onions, leeks, or savoury herbs.

Peas may be made into soup, with one or two vegetables, which may be bought in penny lots from a coster's barrow, and again flavoured with onions and herbs. Appetite and relish play a great part in the enjoyment of food, and for this reason I suggest this savoury flavouring, as I also recommend sugar, if it is used with moderation.

The two meals—breakfast and supper—may be composed in similar ways, but some of the foods should be varied. For example, breakfast may consist of half a bloater as a relish when a good fish can be bought for a penny, or a whole fresh herring, when the cost is a halfpenny each, with bread, margarine, and oats, barley or wheat, cooked in the oven, or in a porridge-pot.

Dinner may consist of bread, soup made from peas, lentils, rice, or barley, or a plate of haricot beans, with rice, barley, or semolina, sweetened or curried, or flavoured with onions and herbs. To these the potatoes, parsnips, carrots, cabbage, or fruit—the varieties being selected in accordance with their prices, for there is no time when some are not cheap.

Now we can get at the cost of the food for a day:—

12 oz. bread, 1½d.; 10 to 12 oz. oatmeal, rice, beans, lentils, peas, barley, wheat, or semolina, 2d.; 2 oz. margarine, ½d.; fruit or vegetables, 1½d.; leaving a farthing to cover the cost of sugar, nutmeg, or curry powder.

In practice, where the chief foods are purchased by the pound the cost will be still further reduced. I know an institution where between 100 and 200 people are fed on a still better ration at less than 6d. a day.