

NEW YORK CALL'S DIET SQUAD TRIES LIFE ON \$5 A "WEAK"; SHE SAYS OUTLOOK IS BRIGHT

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The Chicago diet squad is living very cheerfully and growing fat on meals that cost forty cents a day. And the more people that there are doing the stunt together the better meals they are getting, and the more fun they have at it. Co-operative cooking is Cheap.

In an editorial in The Call of a few days ago it was proved that the average working man was living on far less. Less even than the United Charities allow to feed a grown man.

Chicago is not the only city that is going to have its feeding squad. The Call is going to have a feeding squad of one, and I am it. The average working girl receives five dollars a week; a good many families of four and five are endeavoring to live on five a week. We hear an awful lot of the barren statistics, but you never get the real thing. So I have taken a room on the East Side, down on Cherry street, and I am going to follow the course of eating that the Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor dietician gave me.

On \$5 a "Weak"

I am going to live on five dollars a weak all by myself for one month, and each weak I'm going to tell how it feels. I am sure that it will be quite different from the one that the diet squad of Chicago says it is.

The room that I have taken is, as I have said, down on Cherry Street. It has one large window in it, and if you crane your neck you can see a little bit of sky. But you have to crane your neck. I am quite sure that, although the room is on the fourth floor, the sun never reaches it for other tenements hog all of the light that they can. The ceiling and the floor are a beautiful swamp green; the walls are a salmon pink. There is a clean, white curtain at the window, and there are clean, white sheets on the bed. The floor is clean. My landlady says that I must keep it in this state, because she is an orthodox Jew and her house must be clean.

So, twice a week, I must wash the floor and woodwork. On the little table in the corner I shall put my one-burner gas stove to cook my meals on and on the other side my typewriter. There is a two by four inch mirror, but no dresser. The room costs me one dollar and a half for a week, and I must pay for a month in advance; thus I burn my bridges behind me.

This is Some Menu

My menu for the week is as follows: I have just so much food, and no more, And from this food I must eke three meals a day. Milk, 70c; bread, 25c; $\frac{1}{4}$ pound butter, 11c; sugar, 4c;

cocoa, 5c; meat, 10c; vegetables, 20c; fruit, 15c; cheese, 7c; potatoes, 4c; rice, 2c; flour, 1c; cornmeal, 4c; soup, 10c. This remarkable collection of food adds up to \$1.82. My room is \$1.50. \$1 put by for clothes. Soap 15c, matches 2c and then, when all is added together, the result is \$4.64 and there is the princely sum of 36c left for recreation. Hurrah!

This room was the most hopeful of all that I looked at. The others were discouraging looking, dirty, and humble. This had an air of one holding its own in all the poverty and dirt of the tenements around. When you go into the front room, there is a clean linen cloth on the table, and the windows look out on the river and Manhattan bridge spanning it. The little girl that opened the door for me was reading the life of Helen Keller.

A Cheerful Outlook

The other child was scrubbing the door. The mother, they said, was out, taking a shower at the public baths a block away. The outlook was cheerful.

This test is as fair a one as any one not forced by necessity could make. Right now, because I have taken the decisive step, I am suffering the tortures of the condemned. I am afraid that I am homesick.