

It would be desirable in this connection that the Ministry of Health, in consultation with the Board of Education, should draw up an income scale, to be based on the physiological needs of the family, below which parents would be exempted from payment. In secondary schools which include a proportion of fee-payers as well as scholarship holders, it would be desirable to add the charge to the fee, or to deduct it from the scholarship, rather than to make distinctions between different types of school or pupil.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

While parents who could afford to do so would no doubt prefer to keep their children at home at week-ends and during the holidays, it would be important for others that dinners should be continued on non-school days, and the dining centres should be kept open for this purpose at least on weekdays. From an administrative as well as the social point of view, the Sunday dinner, if possible, should be eaten at home. Where the school lies at a distance from the home, it would be necessary in some cases to make special holiday arrangements. Either the child could be transferred for the holidays to a school more conveniently situated, or use in emergency could be made of caterers. In order to secure regular attendance at the dining centres on non-school days, it would be advisable that parents wishing their children to take advantage of the holiday service should be required to make a small deposit beforehand, and that this should be forfeited where the child failed to attend regularly without reasonable excuse.

The carrying out of a scheme as outlined above would involve some amendment of the present law. The clauses of the principal Acts relating to provision of meals are now *permissive* only. Authorities should be made directly responsible for the proper state of nutrition of children in their areas, and the statutory duty imposed on them to undertake schemes for this purpose. Thus, authorities responsible for maternity and child welfare service should be required to organize in their areas an efficient milk supply for mothers and children under 5 not attending school, while it would be the duty of education authorities to provide a milk service in the schools and also a service of school dinners. The clauses of the Education Act 1921, which impose on authorities the obligation to recover from parents able to pay any expenditure incurred in respect of the purchase of food, should be repealed.