

legislators would hear and it would not be so difficult to get free text-books for our State, which is the basal material for the accomplishment of our aim. If more teachers would hear that even in the primary and elementary grades reading may be a bond for the bringing about of unity of thought and feeling among our people, more citizens would hear and our library facilities providing a more diversified reading experience would be increased. If more teachers would hear that reading is a dynamic force, more text-book makers would hear and publishers would not offer to the public a reader built solely on a mechanical basis. For after all, we get what we want. It may not be to the extent we wish it, but it is in the line of our desire. In our small moments we are inclined to deny this, but when we are at our best, we know it is true.

I do not believe in a reading mania, but I believe like Tagore that, "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information, but which makes our life in harmony with all existence". In the realization of this ideal, I think reading has its part and as such in our reading program we would emphasize it.

LUCY S. SAUNDERS

## II

### THE RELATION OF HEALTH TO HOME ECONOMICS

Home Economics covers a vast field in which we consider not only problems relating to the three necessities of life—food, shelter, and clothing—but those "embracing every aspect of human life exhibited in the home." We are realizing more fully than ever that no home exists without a definite relation to its community, state and nation. The homes of this country are responsible for about fifteen million physically defective children of school age, and for the fact that thirty per cent of the young men of an age for military service were not physically fit to respond to the call. It is in these homes also that tens of thousands of young children die each year from preventable disease; it is from them that a steady stream of recruits is contributed to the army of criminals and insane. It is the parents of the population who are responsible for

our deficiency in natural vitality, for so many low-powered lives, for the existence of so many incompetent citizens.

The keynote of the Home Economics conference of the National Educational Association last year was the placing of future emphasis upon "health". Much stress was given to the fact that the teacher of Home Economics has a greater responsibility than merely the teaching of the fundamental principles of cooking and sewing. She must consider each child as a future citizen of the nation, who must be prepared to render the most efficient service of which she is capable; and in order that she may be mentally efficient, she must have that degree of health which makes for initiative, endurance, and success. All the work bearing upon food and clothing must have for its objective the maintenance of health.

Home Economics has a definite contribution to make to three of our great national movements. It is in child health, child care and child feeding; in the functioning of education in the problems of life; and in the forces which are threatening the integrity of the American home. Everyone is interested in the health of children, but not all are awakened to the necessity of teaching health and fixing health habits so that they may make for the highest degree of physical efficiency in manhood and womanhood. Do we often ask ourselves this question—what is health? Health is not merely freedom from illness, nor merely sufficient vigor. It means the possession of a reserve force of strength and energy—the physical capital which is so large a factor in personal success. Childhood is the time to build up this reserve. In other words, "health is that abundance of life and overflowing vigor which are foundations of success and happiness in life."

Why should we teach health? Statistics tell us that over six million of the school children in America are suffering from malnutrition.

Dr. Emerson has called any child malnourished who is 10% underweight for his height. He also made the statement that "children do not become underweight to this degree of ten per cent except for adequate causes. The causes of underweight are physical defects, insufficient food and bad food habits, lack of home control, over-fatigue, and faulty health habits. It is not necessary that the home economics teacher



alone should be responsible for the teaching of health, but every teacher of children should realize that a high type of mental work is impossible when the child's physical condition is below normal.

No teacher has a greater opportunity in this field than the home economics worker. Her vision has been broadened, her interest has been stimulated to include not only the mechanical duties of the house—cooking, sewing, and household management—but also the more vital problems of the home. In the home "the living unit of a living state is made."

We realize today as never before that those who regard their own welfare and desire to give their children the best possible equipment for the stress of modern life are asking how to choose food wisely. So many kinds of food are displayed in our markets, and so many placards offer warning or advice about what to eat, that a thorough study of good nutrition would seem quite an essential asset for the health of our twentieth century girls.

"Health first in the schools" is the call which is heard with increasing frequency in every community which has been touched by the great American awakening to the value of health. The determination is wide-spread that the public schools of the country must never again in the future place book learning before physical fitness. We have at last discovered that health, like happiness, is to a large extent a matter of habit, and that it can be taught. The end to be aimed toward is not information, but action; not simply knowledge of what things are desirable, but rather the habitual practice of the rules of healthy living. These rules, as given by The Child Health Organization are:

1. A full bath more than once a week.
2. Brushing the teeth at least once every day.
3. Sleeping long hours with windows open.
4. Drinking as much milk as possible, but no coffee or tea.
5. Eating some vegetables or fruit every day.
6. Drinking at least four glasses of water a day.
7. Playing part of every day out of doors.
8. A bowel movement every morning.

Successful health education should be taught positively rather than negatively. We must learn to think of health in terms of

strength and beauty and joy, rather than of weakness and disease. Health must not be taught didactically, but by personal example and object lesson. The instinct of imitation is so strong in the child—so strong that every teacher of home economics should be an example of what she teaches. "Clothes do not make the individual, but they make him look a lot better after he is made." Every teacher or successful business woman must be well dressed if she is to measure up to her full capacity for success. The home economics teacher must live the health principles she teaches. "Cleanliness costs, but it is worth the price." A large percentage of illness comes from unwise eating and lack of sleep. The value of simple, out-of-doors recreation may be readily reflected in a cheerful, buoyant manner and a quick, alert mentality.

Of all school activities the school lunch offers the most fruitful opportunity for educating children in the important matter of what to eat, and why, and how to eat it. Many schools where excellent food is served fail to develop the full educational value of the school lunch service because no effort is made to guide the children in their choices of food. Since the necessity of selecting food is one which falls upon both men and women throughout a large part of their lives and since their habitual choices exert a powerful influence on their health and general well-being the educational opportunities of the school lunch should be developed to the utmost. Every school lunch should be a bulletin board showing the food value and the price per portion of the items in the day's menu.

Home economics, if properly taught, becomes instruction almost pure and simple in fundamental health matters. Upon us devolves the responsibility of applying the test to our present day methods of home economics teaching. Are we living the principles we are taught and are we thereby lighting the way to better individual standards of life, better homes, and a better nation?

"It is only when we shall be able to put home economics upon a strictly scientific basis; it is only when we shall be able to see that we are helping to develop a higher physical type of childhood; and it is only when we realize that we are raising the standards and ideals of the home life of the community that we can feel that our method of home economics teaching is functioning in the lives of our students today." MARY L. BROWN