

appendix containing chapters on commission, insurance, both fire and life, stocks and bonds, taxes and other business activities, giving a theoretical exposition of the methods used and showing illustrative exercises, but confining the problems to the results of investments made when definite data are given as to the cost of these investments by the commission merchant, the insurance agent, the stock broker, or the assessor.

These latter chapters might be very well omitted, or only given at the discretion of the instructor.

It is the opinion of the writer that such a method of procedure may perhaps be the answer to the ever-present search for a course in arithmetic suitable to the needs of the junior high school, and also that such a treatment of the subject might perhaps eliminate some of the arithmetical weariness and dislike of the pupil who has been dragged through a course of, to him at least, apparent uselessness. Is it not possible that a course planned in some such way as this might be finished in the seventh grade, leaving the mathematics of the eighth to be given either as algebra to the pupil who expects to continue through the high school or as book-keeping for those who will not continue?

The writer is deeply interested in this subject and invites discussion as to its plausibility.

HENRY A. CONVERSE

V

HEALTH THE RECONSTRUCTION
CENTER OF HOME ECONOMICS
TEACHING

The home economics conference of the N. E. A centered its attention about four of the most vital problems confronting the teacher of home economics in the high school and in the grades. The problems were put as follows:

1. Does home economics teaching function as it should for the girl of high school age?

2. Methods of contributing to vitality of teaching in the grades.

3. How can the school child be given an interest in right food habits through regular school channels?

4. Factors involved in training girls as consumers.

The keynote of the convention was that of the reconstruction of teaching home economics, and placing future emphasis upon "health" and "economics of buying." Much stress was placed upon the fact that the teacher of home economics has a greater responsibility than merely that of teaching 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 work, therefore, bearing upon foods and clothing must necessarily have for its objective the maintenance of health. Millions of dollars are spent annually for food, clothing, and upon household operations by the women of America. Is it not imperative that every girl and woman should understand the economics of buying, that she should be taught to look upon food, clothing, and furniture as merchandise?

In this reconstruction program the teacher of home economics finds herself not only laden with a responsibility for her students, but with a very definite responsibility to the community in which she lives. Miss Agnes Craig, of Springfield, Mass., stressed the necessity of the correlation of all high school subjects; that each subject should be taught with a view to contributing to better home making and better community life. She deplored the fact that the American women were not concentrating their interests upon one phase of social betterment and actually performing a service to their communities, but that each woman who felt the desire of leadership set herself about organizing a social service club, regardless of the community's need or the number of existing organizations which were carrying on parallel work. She felt that women had proved their ability to cope with men, and now that it was time to plow down in their expression of self-determination, and use the power

which lies within their hands to work out the problems of the home.

Miss Mary E. Sweeny, president of the association, in her opening address emphasized the effect of the war upon the status of home economics. Before the war the housewife and the home economically trained woman did not "speak the same language," that is, the scientific terminology of the housewife. During the war the housewife found the home economics teacher proving that she could be practical and conservative and that she had a scientific knowledge which was applicable to meeting various critical situations. Consequently, "since the war home economics has awakened to find itself a place in the sun." But that position was secured only because we were able to make a real contribution to the nation in a time of need, and it will be maintained only so long as we are able to function in the life of the nation.

"Home economics," she said, "must stop being the appendage of education, and the step-daughter of agriculture." We never can sell home economics to the women of America unless we have a big constructive program. It needs propaganda. We must advertise its growth and get it before the people. We must free the public of some of its ideas about our technical phraseology. We can teach health and nutrition without using the terms "calories," "protein," "carbohydrates," "vitamines," or "balanced menus."

We must prove to the housewife that we are human, that we are social, and that we are preventive in our aims and methods of work.

Home economics departments are being added to high school curricula at the rate of six hundred a year. In many of these schools they are added without any definite purpose in view. The laboratory is frequently a room which no one else wants to use for a recitation room. Too frequently it is located in the basement or upon the third floor of a building not considered good enough to house the administration offices, and the equipment has no definite standard, nor has the young, inexperienced teacher, who is often classed as a special teacher, any definite relation to the other members of the faculty or the workings of the school as a whole.

The time is past when the teacher of home economics should be looked upon as a special teacher. She is as much a part of the regular high school faculty as the teacher of English, chemistry or mathematics, and she should assume as much responsibility as they in building up all departments of the school. She must put herself in touch with all lines of education, and it would be unfortunate, indeed, if she limited her efforts to the narrow confines of her technical subjects, and lost the vision of the broad minded, cultural education, which is the right of every American girl. There is no average girl; therefore, there can be no average problem nor method of presentation, although, there are still teachers who cut holes in red flannel to darn with black cotton while each girl possesses a mending basket filled to overflowing in her own home. Each individual girl presents the need of a special problem, and it is only as the teacher determines these individual needs and helps in meeting them that her work is functioning in the lives of her students. And home economics must function in the next ten years or it will necessarily pass away.

Mrs. Henrietta Calvin, of the Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C., recommends making home economics subjects compulsory in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades and elective in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Many girls not only leave school at the end of the ninth grade, but during those years are establishing standards and ideals which are not easily put aside. For this reason, it would be well for many home economics teachers to consider their food and health habits, and check upon their own manner and style of dress. At this age, the girl should be given the ability to modify her own environment. If she is taught to understand the buying power of money, she will more readily appreciate why her parents cannot indulge her in all the new and latest styles of clothing, and why money spent upon foods which do not make for health is preparing the way for disease and inefficiency. Mrs. Calvin told of visiting a class in home nursing, to whom she put the question, "Why should you drink plenty of water regularly?" They could not answer. They had been taught to give first aid and to meet emergencies, but they had last sight of

the simple function in the maintainance of health.

Mrs. Eveyln Wight Allan, Prin. of the Girls Commercial High School, Brooklyn, N.Y., said that the Commercial High School was most in need of the social phase of the home economics work. She thought she could get along without a kitchen in her school, but would need a dining room and living room. The business girl needs to know food values, and how to choose wisely the food she eats, but she rarely has time or occasion to cook it. The business girl does not need the technical knowledge necessary to make her own clothes. She has no time, nor room, nor equipment with which to sew. But she does need to know how to buy her clothes to the best advantage. The average customer considers only style and price, and knows nothing of the wearing qualities of materials or the suitability of color or style of the garment to her own personality.

The business girl cares a great deal about her social manners and personal appearance. She is eager to learn how to meet people easily, and under all conditions to maintain poise. For this reason Mrs. Allen thinks the social phase of home economics as expressed in the dining room and living room would be best suited to the needs of the girl of the Commercial High School. Mrs. Allen thinks the economy of buying should be taught similarly to a course in salesmanship. She believes every girl who goes out to teach textiles and clothing should go into some good reliable store, and there serve as a saleswoman. It is only by handling materials and studying the demand that the girl is going to learn that economy of buying is safety and ignorance is waste.

In the discussion which followed the reading of this paper, it became very evident that the economics of buying was going to be a most important factor in the future methods of teaching home economics subjects. Foods, clothes, and furniture will be considered as merchandise, and it will be the teacher with this additional knowledge who will be most in demand.

Every effort is being made to vitalize the work of home economics in the public school; and Miss Treva Kauffman of Albany, N. Y., has probably done most in creating an interest—by means of the home

project; while Wisconsin is doing some encouraging work with the school project. Miss Adelaide Van Duzer, of Cleveland, Ohio, is creating a great deal of interest in the teaching of sensible dress by the use of some very attractive, life-like dolls. The children dress the dolls in sensible, comfortable clothes and then are allowed to take them home for a week-end visit, thus giving an object lesson to the mother who has not understood how to make or buy the right kind of clothing for her own child. Each child is provided with her own pattern, and encouraged to repeat the problem in suitable materials for herself. These dolls are adaptable models and may be used to illustrate the proper dress for babies, small children, and girls of high school age.

Miss Florence Willard of the Washington Irving High School, New York City, presented some valuable methods of interesting high school girls in good food habits through the regular foods and cookery classes. She has each girl weighed and measured as she enters the class, and then checks up with the standard height and weight.

Miss Willard has discovered that, although most girls make an average increase up to 13 or 14 years of age, about that time they lose quite perceptibly. A fact which, when brought to her mind, interests the girl at once in her own health. She is then taught her energy requirements, given a knowledge of food values, and interested in making a wise selection of foods for her own individual needs. She is taught to market for these foods to the best possible advantage, and is then taught a scientific, attractive method of cooking the food. Her interest in establishing good food habits for younger children is enlisted through requests which come from the grade teachers for posters, health stories, and health suggestions for language lessons.

Miss Mabel Bragg, Assistant Supt. of city schools of Newtown, Mass., followed with an enthusiastic report of what her grade teachers were accomplishing in the establishment of good food habits. Miss Bragg says, "Principals want healthy, happy children in their schools." She found some objections raised at first to the mid-morning lunch of milk and a cracker, but she never compelled a child to drink milk, and he very

soon saw he was being left out of something which the others enjoyed very much and always later asked the privilege of joining the group. So much stress was placed upon the necessity of eating a good breakfast before coming to school that one morning a small girl who had been unable to secure breakfast before she had to leave for school, forced her father to bring her breakfast to her as soon as it was prepared. Miss Bragg feels that the interest and type of work which they are able to secure from the children have proven to her without a doubt the merit of establishing good health habits.

Possibly one of the most fascinating papers read at the convention was the one given by Mrs. Green, of Missouri. Mrs. Green introduced herself as "just one of those ignorant mothers who needs all the help she can get to raise her own daughter." But she succeeded in making us all feel that with a few more such mothers the necessity for teachers of home economics would soon pass away. She presented the challenge of the adult woman to home economics. She feels that valuable as home making subjects are to the girls in the high school and college, they are never really appreciated or understood until the girl enters her own home, and indirectly responsible for the preparation of food, the management of the house, and the care of a child.

It is these young women who, Mrs. Green thinks, would be most benefited by courses which would give them advice and counsel at the time when it is needed most. She also threw out a most searching challenge to the institutions of higher learning when she told of her method of selecting a college for her daughter. She prepared a questionnaire which she sent to four women representing four of the leading universities and colleges. In that questionnaire she made the following statement:

"I am seeking a college for my daughter that will teach her, first, to carry her part in making an ideal American home; second, to aid her in the development of leadership; third, to enable her to maintain her own social standing; and fourth, an institution in which she will come in contact with fine, noble women teachers."

From each questionnaire came the same answer: "Do not send your daughter here."

What can be the matter? Has she asked the impossible? Are her standards too high? Does not every American mother have the right to expect just this from the college to which she sends her daughter? Or are we as institutions of higher learning falling short of our highest good? If every subject in the college curriculum was taught not for the subject matter alone, but with a view to its functioning in the betterment of American ideals and home life, could we not then qualify?

GRACE BRINTON

VI

PROGRAM OF DISTRICT "G" TEACHERS' MEETING

HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

Address, Hon. Harris Hart, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Richmond, Virginia.

Music

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

Easter Service.

"Report of the Department of Superintendence of the N. E. A.," Mr. W. H. Keister, Superintendent of Harrisonburg Public Schools.

"The Call of the Teaching Profession," Mr. A. B. Chandler, Jr., President State Normal School for Women, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

"How Teaching May Be Made More Truly a Profession," Mr. S. P. Duke, President State Normal School for Women, Harrisonburg, Va.

"The Ideal Teacher," Mr. G. L. H. Johnson, Superintendent of Public Schools, Staunton, Va.

Departmental Conferences:

Superintendents, Principals and High School Teachers, Supt. John C. Myers, Chairman

"Next Steps in the Development of Virginia's High Schools," Mr. Henry G. Ellis, State Supervisor of High Schools.

"General Science in the High Schools," Mr. Marvin N. Suter, Instructor in Bridgewater High School.

"Home Economics in the Small High School," Miss Grace Brinton, Head of Home Economics Department, Harrisonburg Normal School.

"A Discussion of the Manual and Courses of Study for the High Schools of Virginia," Mr. Milton C. Hollingsworth, Principal Edinburg High School.