

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF HOME ECONOMICS

THE fundamental principles underlying Home Economics are found by analyzing the principles or rules of action underlying the everyday activities and life of the woman in the home as she has to manage it, *i. e.*, home situations. To me the most outstanding one is selection. Selection of the right thing for the right place, the right use, the right person, governed by locality, social and economic levels, æsthetic enjoyment, and the physical and mental well-being of all the individuals concerned.

Modern living is a selective process, and selection is becoming more and more an art and a science. We have so many things concerned with shelter, food, clothing, and playthings to select from; we have so many interest which necessitate a selection of the most worthwhile to our life, and to the influence we exert, consciously or unconsciously, upon those about us; we have so many places to go; so many books and magazines to read; so much music to hear, and so many plays to see; we have so much money to spend or to save. Homemakers have all this to guide for the members of their families, and it involves a keen and intelligent appreciation of relative values.

The secret of success lies in knowing what is both beautiful and useful. There should always be a close relationship between beauty and use, in order to give the most permanent satisfaction. To study the works in all phases of art through the periods before the industrial era gives one evidence of this. E. A. Batchelder in his book, *Design in Theory and Practice*, is most convincing on this point. Permanent satisfaction eliminates restlessness, irritation, and a constant desire for something

new before it is justifiable to discard the old. This is the quality which gives life and interest to the economic aspect of selection and possession.

To select with the ideas of beauty and use in mind involves an appreciation of what *is* beautiful, and an analysis of the use to which the material will be subjected. Appreciation is relative. What is beautiful to one is not always so to another. However, a good test to apply before buying anything, especially on a limited amount, is—"Shall I thoroughly enjoy living with this thing throughout its possible existence?" To answer this question honestly involves much thought and some idea, conscious or otherwise, of why a thing is good. Its relative value in the scheme of things then begins to appear logically. Mrs. Richards has said that Home Economics stands for "the simplicity in material surroundings which will most free the spirit for the more important and permanent interests of the home and of society." Without an appreciation of what is fundamentally good, and of the fitness of things, this ideal cannot be reached.

Aside from knowing what is good in line, form, and color, there is another phase of appreciation which is very important in our field of work; that of workmanship, and the materials themselves. The best, and I believe the only sincere way to appreciate a thing or an occupation, is to make the thing and perform the task oneself. Manipulation, or individual experience in the many phases of homemaking is necessary if the aim be the development of wise and intelligent selection based upon sound appreciation. If in our technical work our focus is not on the technique for its own sake, but its true relationship to the thing done, we will stimulate an appreciation of the workmanship and responsibilities of others which our students utilize in everyday life. Will this not aid in creating an intelligent attitude in our social structure which will make this world a better place in which to live? Will this not establish a more intelli-

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gent selection of material things, and a more appreciative use of them, together with an appreciation of the service rendered by others?

Utilization is the last point I wish to mention. In this day of labor saving devices there is need for more intelligence in the home about the care and use of them based upon the science involved. There are both economic and æsthetic principles involved in the serious consideration of the proper care and utilization of all the material things brought into the home. Time and money are released when this is thoughtfully managed. We are confronted with the problem of the worthy use of leisure time, and the wise investing of money. These, too, are problems of the home which could be discussed at great length.

The purpose of education is training for a high type of citizenship. As the world advances toward the concept of perfection, the ideals of what this means are constantly broadening to a higher level. The training for homemaking citizenship left the home and was undertaken by the schools. Now the very obvious coöperation between the progressive and trained homemakers, and education for homemaking is leading into the type of home which fits into modern life, as Mrs. Richards again says, "the ideal home life for today unhampered by the traditions of the past."

Thus I believe that selection, appreciation, manipulation, and utilization with their relative divisions and sub-divisions are the fundamental principles in Home Economics.

LILLIAN A. CUMMINGS

CO-OPERATIVE SUPERVISION

Co-operation has been arranged between the University of Virginia and the school authorities of the county of Albemarle and of the city of Charlottesville by which an associate professor of the university, Mr. Eustace E. Windes, will be "director of supervision" for the schools of the county and the city.—*School Life*.

RESEARCH WORK IN HOME ECONOMICS AT THE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS

ARE MOST of the children in Virginia adequately fed? Are they getting milk, green vegetables, and fruit sufficient for growing children? Are collard and turnip greens a good source of vitamins? When these greens are cooked are most of the vitamins lost? Can onion or garlic flavor and odor be removed from milk? If so, by what method? Will the dyed sheets stand light and laundering? What types of sheeting wear the longest? Do ultra-violet rays penetrate through clothing materials?

The answers to these questions and many others have been sought by home economists engaged in research work at the agricultural experiment stations and recently the answers to these particular questions have been found wholly or in part. For the three year period, 1925-1928, seventy-eight reports were published on problems which concern the home either directly or indirectly. During the current year, over 100 projects in the field of home economics under about that number of research workers are being carried on in forty-two states. More than a quarter of a million dollars is allotted to these studies. Of the 101 projects, sixty-five relate to food and nutrition, five to textiles and clothing, three to housing, and twenty-eight are social and economic problems.

At present many more problems are being studied in food and nutrition than in other fields, but this is to be expected because food and nutrition is the field of home economics first developed. A number of these projects are concerned with the vitamin content of various foods or with the effect on this content of cultural methods, degree of maturity, milling, cooking, drying, and storage. Several other projects are studies of the effect of various factors, such as age,