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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT HOME ECONOMICS PROBLEMS

Home Economics Letter No. 10, recently published by the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, was written by Dr. Frederick G. Bonser of Columbia University and is entitled "Outstanding Problems Confronting Home Economics in the High Schools." This was an address delivered before the National Conference on Home Economics called by Commissioner William John Cooper, at Washington, D. C., December 6-7, 1929.

Some of the facts revealed in this study are that while the per cent of girls taking home economics in the high schools has increased from 6.35 in 1910 to 28.83 in 1928, there are now over 70% of all high school girls who are not taking home economics.

Some of the outstanding problems discussed by Dr. Bonser are that the courses offered must make an appeal to the interests and sense values of high school girls and that the most helpful and effective kinds of home economics work must be offered *early*—in the junior high school or in the first two years of the senior high school.

"A third problem is that of educating school officers, parents, and children to a new and more adequate conception of home

economics. Just as long as the impression exists that the work deals chiefly with the processes of cooking and sewing, it will make little appeal." Through a study of social and family relationships, budget studies, child care and training, there should be developed "a philosophy of life in the home" "a body of ideals, attitudes, convictions, purposes, understandings, and loyalties." "It lies in the growth of an appreciation of the human factors of home life which give meaning to the material means for maintaining physical existence for the sake of spiritual satisfaction. It is the recognition of the human factors that elevate homemaking from a trade to a profession, and the field of home economics from the level of manipulative training to that of cultural education." Dr. Bonser discusses most ably those social and family relationships which are so vitally related to the home. "This phase has to do with developing in the minds of young people a sane and undistorted conception of marriage." He cites the many influences in our lives today which create unwholesome attitudes toward marriage and family life and emphasizes that it is the problem of the home economics teacher to exalt the home and marriage and children by portraying that which is finest and best in family life.

Dr. Bonser's article should be a challenge and an inspiration to all home economics teachers.

P. P. M.

THE SCHOOL LUNCH

At the eleventh annual meeting of the National Dairy Council held in Chicago on December 5, 1929, Dr. Lydia J. Roberts of the University of Chicago and Mrs. Ethel Austin Martin of the National Dairy Council gave a progress report of the Lunch Room Studies being made under their direction.

It has long since been conceded that the school lunch offers an excellent opportunity

for building good food habits as well as a means of teaching health. With these objectives in mind, a plan was developed and is being tried out in three public schools of different types under different conditions. In the schools selected, one has a complete cafeteria owned and operated by the school, another has a simple cafeteria used to supplement the lunch brought from home, and the third has a small lunch room in a building near the school operated by an interested patron.

The experiment is being carried out in co-operation with the National Dairy Council which assists in the preliminary health survey, sends health lessons and teaching helps to the schools each month, and at the end of the year will help in the final check up and report results.

At the beginning of the experiment a check was made on the weights and heights of the children and a survey was made of their health habits. The check on children's weights showed the following results:

43% were more than 10% underweight
14% were from 7% to 10% below normal weight.
17% were less than 7% below normal weight.
25% were average weight or above.

Food habits and hours of sleep were noted and teeth were examined. The conclusions drawn were used as a basis for working out health lessons. Special emphasis was put on a good school lunch and as an incentive pupils were given lunch cards marked "A" when the lunch selected reached the standards set up.

Already the study shows a great increase in the amount of milk and vegetables taken. Much interest has been shown in the community showing a carry-over into the homes.

The results of the experiments, when completed, will be made available, through the National Dairy Council of Chicago, to all schools interested in putting the school lunch on an educational basis.

P. P. M.

COLLEGE SUMMER SCHOOLS ENROLL 400,000 STUDENTS

College and university summer schools enrolled 414,824 students in 1929, according to the *Journal of the National Education Association*. This is the largest summer term attendance on record, and is indicative of the growing interest in adult education, as most of these students were mature men and women.

Of the total number, 270,237 were enrolled in education courses. This number is more than 29 per cent of all the teachers in the United States, and shows the extent to which teachers "keep up with the times." New York led the other states in the procession to college last summer, with a total enrollment of 41,079. Texas ranked second with 32,857. Rhode Island, Nevada, and Delaware enrolled the smallest numbers with 224, 132, and 332, respectively.

"In interpreting such figures," says the editor, "it should be kept in mind that some states offer fewer and less attractive opportunities for summer school work than others. Consequently many teachers attend summer school outside the state of their service."

SCHOOLS AND THE PRESS

Better co-operation between the schools and the press is advocated by Joy Elmer Morgan, editor of the *Journal of the National Education Association*.

The editor writes, "Do the newspapers in your community appreciate the schools? If they do not, have you done your part to give them an opportunity? Have you and the teachers made it easy for editors to have the facts about the schools? Have you treated reporters as friends and neighbors and fellow teachers, which they really are? The newspapers are rendering a great civic service, not the least important of which is the support of the schools. It would be a fine thing if someone of means would offer a thousand-dollar prize each year for the best newspaper editorial on the schools."

WORLD-MINDEDNESS IN ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

Two series of programs adapted for high school assembly and class room use have been prepared by Rachel Davis Du Bois, for the purpose of equipping the student with a fuller knowledge and appreciation of other races and nationalities. These programs were given by the author before her own school, and are entirely practical.

Series I—*The Contribution of Different Racial and National Elements to American Life* (price 10c) takes up a different racial group or country for each month, with suggestions, including bibliography, for study of its peculiar influence on art, literature, music, science, history, etc. February, for instance, with Lincoln's birthday, is selected for emphasis on the gifts of the Negro; October, because of Columbus Day, for the Italians.

Series II—*Education in World-Mindedness* (price 10c) presents as monthly topics various phases of culture, such as language, science, the dance, mathematics, government, etc., tracing the contribution of each to world unity.

Both Series I and II may be obtained upon receipt in stamps of the price stated from the Women's International League, Pennsylvania Branch, 1924 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

MRS. STEWART'S LITERACY CAMPAIGN

"We have no way to know exactly how many illiterate adults there are in the United States," says Mrs. Cora Wilson Stewart, director of the national crusade against illiteracy. "Of an estimated 5,000,000, approximately 3,000,000 are in the 12 southern states bounded by Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas and Texas. Although the work of the crusade and of the National Advisory Committee on Illiteracy includes all the states, we have decided to concentrate on the South during the next 60 days."

Recalling the use of a newspaper lesson in Rowan County, Kentucky, where copies were distributed free to adult pupils, Mrs. Stewart revealed a somewhat similar plan which may be adopted in the national work. No suitable textbooks were available when, as county superintendent, she undertook a literacy campaign which has now become a national crusade. Lessons were therefore sent out in a little newspaper and a prize was offered to the district in which most illiterates were taught.

To avoid such trite beginning sentences as "I see a cat," the following lesson was printed:

"Can we win? Can we win what? Can we win the prize? Yes, we can. See us try. And see us win."

More recently lessons on roads, stock, forestry, taxation, sanitation and numerous subjects related to the rural adult's daily activities have been prepared. These lessons covered briefly some of the ideas presented more in detail by pamphlets regularly issued by governmental departments.

Rapidity with which adults learn to read and write sometimes surprises the teachers, Mrs. Stewart said. This was explained partly by the fact that many persons classed as illiterate—for example, those in the hill country of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and the Carolinas—have extensive knowledge about their immediate surroundings, although they have had no formal training.

INTERPRETATION

Throughout the centuries civilization has been pushed forward by three men: The administrator who organizes and executes; the investigator who discovers and invents; and the interpreter who makes the purposes of the administrator and the results of the investigator's work the common property of mankind. . . .

The social significance of interpretation is only beginning to be appreciated. It had little place in a civilization based on force. It

has a supreme place in a civilization whose ideal is democracy, where we wish people to govern themselves and to be governed from within by an intelligent appreciation of the values of life. In proportion as the areas of administration become larger and in proportion as research accomplishes its perfect work the need for responsible interpretation increases. . . .

The advance of education literally waits on interpretation. How often our school people have been heard to remark that they are not able to do this or that because the parents of the children would not understand it. The effort to promote understanding requires as fine an insight, as great a preparation, and as difficult a technic as the effort to administer or the effort to do research. . . .

The printed word is a triumphant and vital force in the rise of civilization. Throughout the ages it has preserved the record of human progress. It has survived kingdoms and empires. It has been the chief medium for preserving and passing to future generations the values that man has discovered in his long struggle for the higher and finer things. With the development of the printing art came a new appreciation of the intellectual life. Without printing, the public school as we know it today would have been an impossibility. Without printing it would have been difficult indeed for the present world phase of civilization to have gotten a start.—Joy Elmer Morgan, in the *Journal of the N. E. A.*, February, 1930.

READING COURSE ON PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

For club groups interested in child study and for parents who wish to have a better understanding and a closer relation with their children, the American Library Association has just issued a study outline on *The Pre-school Child* which was prepared to accompany a reading course *The Young Child* issued some time ago. The reading

course, one of the Reading with a Purpose series, is by Bird T. Baldwin; the study program by Grace E. Crum, Associate Manager of the Bureau of Parental Education of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

The study program was designed as a special guide to clubs wishing to concentrate upon the study of the young child. It, together with the reading course and the six books suggested for reading, will furnish material for a well organized season's study. It is divided into twelve main heads such as development of the senses, bodily growth and control, food, sleep and exercise, speech development, mental processes and intelligence, play, anger, fear, habits, obedience, and parent-child relationship. Questions with chapter and page references to the half dozen books develop these topics for the reader.

The study program, the reading course and the necessary books are available at most libraries. Club and study groups may also get the outline and the reading course from the American Library Association at nominal prices for quantities.

SCHOLASTIC AWARDS

Although closing time for The Scholastic Awards is weeks away, manuscript and art entries are already pouring into the offices of *The Scholastic*, the national high school magazine.

This opportunity for high school students to prove their importance in art and literature meets with an enthusiastic response every year, but the number of entries in the 1930 Awards is heading for a new high point.

Around \$4,500 is open to the winners besides special awards for material that, even if it does not take a prize, is used in The Student-Written Number of *The Scholastic*.

Three main prizes and ten honorariums in the Literary Division go to short stories, essays, and poems. Because it is one of the principles of *The Scholastic* to give the

young creative spirit complete freedom in its choice of mediums, every literary composition, regardless of its classification, will be considered for publication in The Student-Written Number.

As free a hand is allowed in the Art Division, which offers regular prizes for the best works in pottery, pictorial art, graphic art, textiles, design, metal work, sculpture, and jewelry. Besides the prizes for these major classes, there are many special prizes for which every entry is automatically eligible.

The best work in the Art Division will be greeted with additional honors in the Third National High School Exhibit. Out of the thousands of pieces submitted in *The Scholastic Awards*, several hundred are selected for this exhibit which visits, in the course of the year, all of the major cities in the United States.

Schools represented by prize winning students derive a reward, too, in the form of books or works of art equivalent in cash value to one half of the prize earned by the student.

WHO ARE THE SLAVES?

"When one recalls a male's devotion to such fetiches as the silk hat and the stiff collar and the docility with which he wears heavy woolen garments when heat and humidity are at their August highest, one doubts whether women are still the only slaves of fashion." So writes Helen Atwater, editor of the *Journal of Home Economics* and author of a new booklet on the art of homemaking just published by the American Library Association.

Clothing is discussed as one of the problems to be met by the homemaker who is trying to "utilize her family resources of money, time, and personal talents, to bring the greatest returns in health, enjoyment, and usefulness." Miss Atwater also discusses the problems of family life in relation to the home, home management, house

furnishings, food and nutrition, and beauty in the home. She recommends half a dozen books which should be of special interest in every household.

THE READING TABLE

TABLE ETIQUETTE. By Mary D. Chambers. Boston: The Boston Cooking School Magazine Company. 1929. Pp. 263. \$1.75.

This book is a well arranged description of what is new and good in all phases of table service. It explains the types of table furnishings as well as their uses. It gives all of the tributary factors such as writing and answering invitations; how to make introductions; courtesies on various occasions; and Table Talk and Conversation. The illustrations are pen drawings very simple to interpret.

The modern hostess need have no fear of not being "right" if she follows Miss Chambers suggestions.

M. L. W.

THE DELINEATOR COOK BOOK. Edited by Flora Rose and Martha Van Rensselaer. New York: The Butterick Publishing Company. 1928. Pp. 788. \$2.50.

The Delineator Cook Book is the revised edition of the New Butterick Cook Book, the recipes having been tested and approved by the Delineator Home Institute. It is a general purpose cook book based on the most modern methods involving practical and accurate technique of good cooking. The book is valuable to beginners as the principles of cookery are clearly explained. The illustrations are taken from actual photographs and show careful planning and selection. The covers of the book are washable.

M. L. W.

THE HOME ECONOMICS NEWS. Manual Arts Press. Peoria, Ill.

The Home Economics News is starting out as a magazine that has splendid possibilities. Its staff is well known and we expect help and inspiration from them.

M. L. W.

THE SEWING MANUAL. By Grace Fowler and Ada Alexander. New York: Macmillan Company. 1930. Pp. 189. \$1.40.

This is a logical and systematic compilation of material for the esthetic and practical training in the field of clothing. It is a hand-book for the student and contains simple clear-cut explanations, definite exercises calling for individual application of the principles involved, lesson assignments, and references for each topic discussed. It fixes the responsibility on the pupil, and this is very necessary in developing initiative and independence in thought and work.

The emphasis given to color and principles of costume design by the authors places clothing work in its legitimate place among the fine arts; at the same time the necessary training in the fundamentals of construction have not been overlooked.

A. R. B.