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DEAN MACKAY TAKES WELL EARNED VACATION

By F. W. BECKMAN, Professor of Agricultural Journalism

THERE will be a vacant chair at the council table of the Home Economics Division of Iowa State College this coming year.

Dean Catherine J. MacKay will be away. After eleven years of unremitting toil for the upbuilding of the home economics work of the College, Miss MacKay has been granted a year's leave of absence. She will seek to regain full health and strength, for her loyalty to her work has led her to give rather too generously of her vitality. The rapid growth of the Home Economics Division, the development of many new kinds of work, the extraordinary strains of war times—all these demands pressed so urgently that Miss MacKay seemed to find no time to stop and recreate. But now circumstances permit and she hopes to make good her overdraft on her constitution.

Home Economics at Iowa State without Miss MacKay will seem much like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. She has been heart and soul of the division for so long, that she personifies it; it stands for her and she stands for it. Her faculty will miss her; her students will miss her; her friends throughout the state will miss her; her friends throughout the country will miss her, and because of that understanding she has been honored by election and reelection to the presidency of the American Home Economics Association in 1916 and 1917.

When Miss MacKay came to Iowa State in 1890, it was as an assistant professor in domestic science. At that time the instruction in this subject was under the jurisdiction of the Division of Industrial Science. In all, there were enrolled about 116 students. Now the work is organized in a Division of Home Economics, of equal rank with the other great divisions of the college. It enrolled this past year in excess of 800 students, many more than can be found in similar work anywhere else. When Miss MacKay first came to Iowa State, there were three teachers besides herself. At the present time they number more than forty. When she came, only ten degrees based on domestic science or home economics courses had been granted by the college; at present the number of such degrees granted numbers about 600. Ten years ago, the possibility of graduate work in home economics was a vague possibility; today it is a realization. Ten years ago, home economics extension activities were in the beginning stage; today the message of better home making and community upbuilding has been carried by the College literally to every square mile in the state.

That's genuine achievement! Many others, of course, have contributed to it. However, that achievement reflects particularly the genius and labor of a fund of friendliness that seems never to fail her and her gracious manner always disarms misunderstanding. Sometimes men say that trouble may be expected whenever and wherever men undertake to do things together. Dean MacKay presides over a faculty of thirty to forty or more, and yet the Home Economics Division has the distinction of generating fewer differences than perhaps any other Division of the College.

For all her busy life and her devotion to hard work, Miss MacKay never takes on the busy individual's grumpiness. She has a fund of friendliness that seems never to fail her and a gracious manner always disarms misunderstanding. Sometimes men say that trouble may be expected whenever and wherever men undertake to do things together. Dean MacKay presides over a faculty of thirty to forty or more, and yet the Home Economics Division has the distinction of generating fewer differences than perhaps any other Division of the College.

Thousands of friends will send good wishes with Dean MacKay as she sets out for a year of rest and recreation at her family home in Winnipeg and elsewhere. She has given them much in the years they have known her. Her associates in the home economics faculty will close up ranks for the year and put still more of devotion into their work, because of such stuff are they made.