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The Homemaker(s Committee Report

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The Homemaker's Committee Report

By MISS AGNES McDoNoUGH

All of these women did their own housework. All reported they did their canning and preserving in whole or in part, and almost all, or 96%, did their own laundry. This figure is rather surprising. About 80% of these women did their general cleaning. Fifteen percent did all their own bread making. Over 80% did part of their dressmaking. More made their dresses than made their underwear. Less than one-quarter of the women did any of their own millinery and none did all of it.

The women reported that the current rates of pay for general housework in their neighborhoods range from six to eighteen dollars per week. General cleaning cost from 25 to 50 cents an hour, laundry from 30 to 65 cents, plain sewing from 20 to 30 cents, and dressmaking from 35 cents to a dollar.

TABLE I

Average Daily Hours Spent on Household and Farm Tasks by 68 Iowa Farm Homemakers

(Average size of family, 4.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Average Daily Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meals, preparation and cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework in general</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canning, curing, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Housework Hours</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total on Farm Tasks</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average daily time spent on Household and Farm Tasks... 8.9

Of the various kinds of leisure indulged in by the home economics graduates, reading was the most popular, averaging 10 hours a week for the 24 women reporting, and visiting, next most popular, taking 5.3 hours a week.

Merely to know the amount of time spent in household tasks is only a beginning.

(Continued on page 8)

TABLE II

Statistics Relating to Expenditure of Time of Twenty-eight Home Economics Graduates Who Are Homemakers in Iowa (Average Size of Family, 3.7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number giving a reply to question</th>
<th>Number Replying Affirmatively to question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of those replying who worked for pay before marriage 74.1
Average number of years spent by those working 2.8
Average hours per day by those engaged in:
- Housework and care of children 6.9
- Poultry and dairy 1.4
- Assisting husband 1.7

Percent doing in whole or in part:
- Housework in general 100.0
- Sweeping and cleaning 81.5
- Laundry 96.3
- Food making 42.4
- Canning and preserving 100.0
- Underwear 70.4
- Dresses 80.9
- Coats and suits 8.0
- Children's clothing 69.7
- Military 24.0
- Percent of homes planned to eliminate steps 70.8
- Percent of women organizing work 96.0
- Percent who follow their plans 100.0

Percent knowing how long each task should take 64.0

* Only four, or 15%, did their bread making wholly; ** No one made all her coats and suits; § No one made all her hats; † Only 15, or 66.7%, followed their plans wholly.
to make a definite plan for increasing the number of subscriptions.

Another item which is mentioned in the program of work for state associations is the successful completion of the Ellen H. Richards Fund. Each state is asked to accept full responsibility for $300 to be applied to home economics, student who desired to do graduate work in research in this field. The first award was made for the work of Miss Lita Bane, who is the incoming president of the American Home Economics Association, for the work of Miss Ruth Cowan, the department of nutrition at the University of Chicago. The council voted to increase the scholarship from $300 to $500 for the year 1925-26. This makes the adequate provision for a person working under the scholarship. Any graduate of a home economics department in a recognized institution who is qualified to do research work is eligible for consideration by the committee on awards.

The national program of work also stresses the importance of student clubs. We read that the importance of student clubs cannot be over-emphasized at this time. The association must turn its attention to the development and guidance of this work. Each state association has been asked to make a definite plan for development of student club activities. A state student club committee has been organized and has had one meeting. The report from the executive secretary in regard to the student clubs brings out the fact that there are 342 affiliated clubs in 1926, but that there are a few clubs in 1925. Iowa is able to report but eleven, four college clubs and seven high school clubs. This is entirely too small a number for our state, for we have approximately 788 towns and cities where home economics is taught. Texas, Virginia, Illinois and Michigan lead in number of student clubs. What Illinois can do, Iowa can do also.

Dr. Katherine Blunt said, "The chief single event of the year, a great unifying force for us, is the initiation of our work for child study and parental education. We have been rejoicing in our four yearly grant from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, and just recently the executive committee has consummated the appointment of Anna E. Richardson as child study field worker. Her ability, her well-known interest in the problem, her work for several years with Iowa State College, her inside knowledge of the administrative machinery necessary for the development of any new venture, her great variety of workers in this field, her experience while with the Federal Board for Vocational Education in a national-wide enterprise, all make her a most fortunate choice for the association."

The Iowa Association was fortunate enough to have Miss Richardson with us to tell of her plan for child study and parental education. For the past two years our national association has sponsored a contest for designs for an association seal. At the annual convention this year the best design was chosen, and it is to be used for the association's seal and pins. The motif used is the Betty lamp. "This was considered a happy choice, for it is the lamp which in Colonial days gave light for all household industries." Two styles of pins are to be awarded: one for members of the council, and one for members of affiliated student clubs.

One of the interesting features of the meeting this year was the commercial exhibits. It was not only a source of income for the association, but it was very profitable for the members who were present.

The American Home Economics Association has many other interesting activities. Its international relationships, such as its affiliation with the United Practice office of the U. S. Department of Commerce, the affiliation of the New Zealand Home Economics Association, the affiliation of the Education Home Economics Association, its connection with the Constableton Women's College, and others are of interest. Its activity in matters of legislation, such as the Federal Aid in Education Bill, and the Fess Amendment to the Smith-Hughes Bill is of vital importance to us. Its provisions for the census study of American families will, no doubt, bring a valuable contribution to her field of study. Its provisions for the work of the eight social agencies of the three committees makes it possible to provide for all home economists no matter what phase of the subject they have chosen. Its cooperation with such organizations as the Federation of Women's Clubs, Better Homes in America, the National Child Health Association, American Red Cross, Division of Simplified Practice of the U. S. Department of Commerce, Women's Joint Congressional Committee, the National Restaurant Association, and innumerable others are of interest to all home economists.

The 1927 annual convention of the American Home Economics Association will be held the latter part of July in Asheville, North Carolina.

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ginning, however. By what standard are we to judge whether the time spent is or is not excessive? We need carefully worked out standards of performance of various tasks under various conditions of living. A beginning toward such standardization was made by Miss Elizabeth E. Hoyt, a member of the Committee, this summer, as a part of her work in the Household and Home Economics Department at Iowa State College. Miss Hoyt started with a specified menu for one week and a specified standard of the number of times cleaning and other tasks should be performed. This week, and on this basis we went through the household work with a family of two adults and two children for two weeks in a modern home using modern conveniences, and for two weeks in one of the home management houses on the Iowa State College campus. The full results of this experiment will be presented in a forthcoming number of the Journal of Home Economics. She found that on the farm where she drew water from a well, cooked in a kitchen range, used kerosene lamps, and had no modern conveniences, her average time per day, including laundry, was 4.3 hours.

It is impossible to compare satisfactorily the results of such an experiment with the average results of such a small group of housewives as the home economics graduates or with the reports of the farm housewives. The housewives were reporting only every day conditions, whereas the experimenter was working under unusual conditions and was under a stimulus to help to establish standards. Further, of course, the experimenter worked with a definitely planned menu and definite specifications as to cooking, while the Iowa housewives in both groups used many menus and had varying practices with regard to cooking, and a few of them spent considerable time on their children.

Nevertheless, the Iowa State College experiment is very suggestive. The standards in this college experiment were in conformity with hygienic requirements and good standard practice, and the menu, though simple, was excellent from the nutritional viewpoint. The fact that 4.3 hours for all tasks, including laundry, was only 4.3 for a family of four, even in the old-fashioned farm house, leads us to believe that the organization of work and the interesting nature of the work that yet do much for our Iowa homemakers. Further work and experiments along this line are greatly needed.