1943

Future Challenges Home Economist

P. Mabel Nelson
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation

Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol23/iss16/7

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
The future is a world limited by ourselves, according to Dr. P. Mabel Nelson, newly appointed Dean of the Division of Home Economics

In considering today the future of home economics it is encouraging to read the reports of the home economics leaders of the Land Grant College Association who met in 1919 to take stock of their accomplishments in the past war and make plans for the reconstruction period.

Martha Van Rensselaer, Dean of Home Economics at Cornell University, said the war had given home economists an unprecedented opportunity to be of service and had broadened the scope of their work. She believed they should unify their teaching, research and extension activities. She also thought they should change their courses and methods of presentation to concentrate their efforts on the home, which she considered the center of all problems. She believed that as teachers they had learned to coordinate their class room and laboratory procedures with the lives of people.

Dean Edna White, of Ohio State University, deplored the fact that child development had been neglected and stressed the need for further study in that field.

Day care centers for children of working mothers under the direction of trained leaders is a part of our response in this war. Nursery schools which will provide care for sick children and better post-war housing for young couples with children are goals still to be accomplished.

Lenna Cooper, now chief dietitian at the Montefiore Hospital in New York City, said that the army dietitian made a place for herself in the war because of her training, personality and cooperation. Miss Cooper recommended that future dietitians be given experiences in hospitals following graduation from college.

The statistics on dietitians, presented by Miss Cooper, showed that in 1919 there were 190 army hospitals with dietitians in 100 of them. There were 350 dietitians in the army, including 75 overseas, and now 1,000 of the 6,500 dietitians are in the armed services. About 100 of the 1,000 army dietitians are Iowa State graduates and 30 of them are known to be overseas. They are in Alaska, India, New Guinea, France, Belgium and England. The dietitian also won a place for herself in industrial plant feeding and will probably continue there after the war.

Alice Ravenhill, director of the School of Home Economics, Utah Agricultural College, believed that the tendency had been to restrict home economics to food, clothing and shelter, rather than to relate the home and its occupants to the community, nation and world. She considered parents responsible for the low-powered lives of their children.

Isabel Bevier, the chairman, summarized the discussions. “Every shred of an idea that some of us have had has appeared in print this past year. The federal government worked hard giving publicity to everything. Every home economics department in the land was called upon to do all that it could do in print. We all realize that we have much better machinery for distribution than we have for production of home economics information. There is vital need for research in this field.” More and better research work is still a challenge.

Another challenge is the question so often raised—are we training leaders for the future? Who will take our places? Will we have women trained to carry the responsibilities when we are gone? What have we done?

The Department of Foods and Nutrition is approved for granting the doctor of philosophy degree. It has been given to 14 women, all of whom are now actively engaged in professional work. We hope these women will carry on and become our successors. One of the women, Mrs. Florence Pen Ho, is head of the Department of Home Economics in West China Union University, Chengtu, Szechuan. Hence, we have provided one leader for China.

The home economists who are employed by business organizations have done much to improve the quality of food products. Another result of their efforts has been an improvement in food advertising.

Our schools of home economics will continue to prepare women for the positions they have won because of the exigencies of this war in addition to those positions which belonged to them in the pre-war period. The future is a world limited by ourselves. Only as we continuously strive to improve will we be able to meet the challenges of the future.