

The School Bell Has a Different Ring

by Leah Scott

THE ULTIMATE goal of education is intelligent self-direction in solving problems in a rapidly changing world. Homemaking is being pre-

sented in a new way to the high school classes today. Experiments designed to discover ways of teaching everyday social relationships are being conducted in the Core Curriculum project in the Theodore Roosevelt High School in Des Moines, the homemaking program in the Story City High School, and on a smaller scale in the Personal Problems class in the Ames High School.

The Roosevelt High School is one of 30 schools to inaugurate an 8-year curriculum experiment, started in 1933 under the direction of the Progressive Education Association. This experimental curriculum is designed to meet

lege. Group checks and averages for the first semester's work have not been completed, but several favorable individual reports have been received. Is this method the best for giving high school students the necessary experiences to meet life more successfully than they have in the past? The answer is still undiscovered.

Satisfactory social development for the individual is again the aim of the homemaking program in Story City, yet the plan for achieving this is different from the Roosevelt curriculum program. Miss Beatrice Olson, supervisor of home economics at Story City and a member of the home economics education staff at Iowa State College, states, "Homemaking education is becoming more and more a part of the general education program of our progressive schools. It is not mass education in technique or knowledge; it is association with matured teachers, parents and other adults who understand the basic emotional needs



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the needs of adolescent youth which, according to Miss Gretta Wolfe, homemaking instructor, are: to establish himself as an individual, to become an accepted member of a social group and to satisfy his vocational or educational interests. To meet these needs, growth experiences are set up as nearly as possible like the complex life situations of today.

The "Practical Problems of Living" Core Course, which is given to both boys and girls, is presented in the twelfth year of the experimental curriculum and consists of 4 units: the art of living together within the family, social and economic factors affecting the family, interdependence of family life and shelter, and home and community. The individual approach which helps each student to discover his personal difficulties and aids him in applying his knowledge for a more successful adjustment to his life situation is used throughout the experimental curriculum.

The first group to complete the experimental curriculum is now in col-

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of children and who wisely counsel and guide youth; it is character development . . . it is emotional development . . . it is the moving on toward social maturity."

In developing homemaking around this goal, Miss Olson is stressing school living. Homemaking is not a subject taught at a certain hour of the day to a certain group of girls of a certain age level. "The core of our homemaking education is all the continuous personal and family experiences from birth to death," said Miss Olson. She utilizes everyday experiences such as the noon hot-lunch, for which girls serve and prepare food, boys arrange and move tables, and small children help with dishes and cleaning up. Each group is taught practical homemaking by means of its relationship to the success and happiness of the majority. In this situation both boys and girls have an opportunity to make wholesome adjustments to each other and each group must consider the child of a lower age level as well as the adult teacher. All of this should lead to adequate social maturity. Such a plan may be one solution for a more helpful presentation of homemaking to adolescent children.

The Personal Problems Class in the Ames High School is under the supervision of Miss Marcia Turner of the Home Economics Education Department at Iowa State College. Each girl has her own problems, selected after a conference with her mother and teacher in consideration of her interests, background, and desires for self improvement. Books, advice and suggestions are provided by the teacher, but initiative and interest on the part of the individual student is the motivating force.

With the change in presentation of subject matter comes the need of new means of measuring progress. Be-

cause the individual is stressed in presentation and each student strives to conquer his own adjustment problems, the method of testing in which students repeat facts memorized from a text is obsolete. Comparison with other members of the class is also unsatisfactory, because each works with reference to his environment in and out of the school room. Teachers are expanding their ideas of measurements to any reliable evidence of



change. They watch for attainments and difficulties in the student's daily social contacts, instead of testing his ability to answer questions in periodic examinations. In such a setting the teacher becomes a cooperator. The tests are devices to mark progress.

"Evaluation, then, is not a mechanical process," says Miss Hester Chaderton, of the Home Economics Education Department of Iowa State College. "Data must be interpreted in terms of desired objectives, of the interplay of objectives, and of the desirable development of individual pupils."

The answer is not the correct thing for all, but the best thing for the person in view of his total environment. This is the slide-rule in measuring progress in homemaking.

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