

LIVING CONDITIONS

The budget needs in connection with living expenses can only be understood by a complete examination of expenditures such as Professor Peixotto has made at the University of California and Messrs. Henderson and Davie at Yale.² The present paper raises only a few general points in this field.

Do college teacher's salaries meet their needs by providing adequate living conditions? If not, what are the shortages? Of the first group of forty-eight (the number replying to the remaining questions), 60 per cent. answered "fairly adequate"; 20 per cent. "entirely adequate." Of the second group, of forty-six, 58 per cent. reported "fairly adequate"; 28 per cent. "inadequate," and 13 per cent. "entirely adequate." The prevailing verdict is therefore that there is fair adequacy or better in living conditions, with a fifth or a fourth feeling that their living conditions are inadequate. Stated in another way, a fifth or less have living conditions that they consider entirely adequate.

Is this inadequacy subjective or objective? A Solomon would be needed to answer. But there were 137 objective shortages reported by sixty-seven of ninety-four persons, of which the more numerous were: recreation, thirty-three; service, nineteen; vacation, nineteen, and housing, fourteen. Among the other important shortages are: clothing, seven; doctor, one; family needs, three; children, two, and health, nine. The definite question as to whether health was safeguarded by living conditions was answered negatively by seven of forty-eight in the first group and by four of forty-six in the second group, or 11 per cent. of all who felt their health to be endangered by living conditions.

Probably most teachers would agree that living conditions should provide the college teacher a study at home, even if adequate space is also provided at the college building. Of forty-three in the first group, twenty-six have studies at home; seventeen have not. Of thirty-four in the second group, twenty-four have home studies; eight have not. Thus two thirds of those reporting have studies at home. Doing away with the home study would reduce housing costs, as one correspondent points out, and there is something to be said for doing one's work in an eight-hour day at college and using home as a leisure place. But there is certainly need for an undisturbed work place and for most teachers home provides this better than the college office. There are times for solitary work,

²Jessica Peixotto, "Getting and Spending at the Professional Standard of Living." Macmillan. 1927. Henderson and Davie, "Incomes and Living Costs of a University Faculty." Yale University Press. 1928.

times for working with students and times for meeting them socially.

Do college teachers maintain the old practice of welcoming students in their homes? Of these teachers, 72 per cent. do and two thirds of those who entertain students do not entertain as frequently as they would like to do.

What is the attitude of college teachers toward contributions to religious, charitable and social welfare enterprises? Of ninety-one teachers giving information, sixty-six gave to church, sixty-eight to charity, fifty-seven to alumni funds, thirty-two to non-family dependents, thirty-six to agencies of scientific progress, thirty-eight to causes related to social reform and eleven to other objects. In all, the ninety-one contributed to 312 objects as just defined, or 3.4 types of giving per person, although the individual objectives were many more. Society has a right to expect of the college teacher leadership in wise giving that will promote welfare, advance science and handle distress constructively. That two thirds give to alumni funds is worthy of note.

What rules the teacher's spending? Available income, large or small, and occupation are doubtless important controlling influences. The two groups were asked, "Income and occupation aside, what influences seem to determine your standard of living?" The forty-five metropolitan teachers ranked in order of importance seven influences, and on summarizing their ratings, "Our own choices and decisions" were accounted the most important influence, followed by these other influences in the following order: (2) usages of our academic community; (3) the mechanical age—auto, radio, etc.; (4) usages of our non-academic community; (5) the husband's parents' standards of living; (6) the wife's parents' standards of living; (7) our children's pressure for more expensive standards. The second group agreed in making personal choices the most important influence on standards of living, in putting the academic community ahead of the non-academic community and in putting parental and children's influences near the foot of the list. The judgments of married men in the two groups, counted separately in order to segregate cases where there were probably children, showed the same order of ranking.

But is personal planning and deciding as influential in standards of living as these teachers think it to be? Perhaps not—but personal ideals need be fundamentally influential if college teachers are to meet their professional budget needs and provide for their financial security in the face of community pressure for luxurious spending. The fact that teach-