

Household Science in Rural Schools

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ONE of the most urgent problems in connection with education in the Province of Ontario is the condition of the rural schools. We share this problem with almost every other civilized country, and it is generally admitted that the children attending rural schools have not the same opportunities as those attending urban schools. Forty-five per cent of the school population of this Province is enrolled in the rural schools, and up to the present very few of the children attending these schools have been given the opportunity to become acquainted with the newer subjects of the curriculum, such as manual training and household science.

The future of this country will depend more in the future, even than it has in the past, on the conditions of the home, and the education received therein. Education for the home is then an important matter, and if nearly one-half of our population is not to be deprived of this education, it must be given in the rural schools. This has now been rendered possible by the removal of certain difficulties which have hitherto stood in the way. The money has been provided and suitable equipments have been designed. It was thought for a long time that in order to do anything worth while in this subject in the rural school it was necessary to duplicate the equipment provided for town and city schools, and as the cost of this was prohibitive, the subject remained outside the activities of the school. Now it is neither necessary nor desirable to attempt to duplicate town conditions in rural schools and in conformity with this idea, special

equipments have been designed for rural schools which will do the work in those schools much better than any equipment patterned after that found necessary in town schools. The accompanying illustration shows the space taken by such an equipment in a one-room school when not in use.

In order to assist school boards to purchase equipment, the Department of Education makes a grant of from \$40 to \$75 for the first year and from \$20 to \$30 thereafter, and annual grants to teachers of \$15 to \$50 to keep up the equipment and to assist in the purchase of supplies. The above grants to teachers are increased by \$10 in all those cases where one hot dish such as a bowl of soup, or a cup of cocoa is served to supplement the noon lunch brought from home.

In order to assist teachers to satisfactorily handle the subject several steps are being taken. The rural school applications of the subject are being stressed in the Normal Schools, and the Summer Schools this year are bending the greater part of their energies in the same direction, and under certain conditions the expenses of teachers attending these courses are paid. In addition, the Department is issuing next September, a manual on "Household Science for Rural Schools." This contains twenty lessons on "care of the home," twenty lessons on "sewing," twenty lessons on "cooking" and chapters on "equipment," the "noon lunch" and the "fireless cooker." It is well illustrated with actual photographs and working drawings by the aid of which the village carpenter can make the necessary equipments.