

achievement and subject-matter tests the questions is not only, What is his relative status in the school or grade and in relation to national standards developed through testing great numbers of children? but also, What are his peculiar weaknesses and what remedies can be applied to these? In other words, education becoming scientific as is medicine by using tools which will give an accurate diagnosis or description of the individual's status and needs and then applying those correctives and aids that will bring the individual to a higher and desired efficiency. Without measures students are won't get discouraged, fail, become retarded, get the habit of failing and finally drop out of school unequipped for life's simpler duties. A good illustration of the point of view expressed in this paragraph and of successful remedial instruction is found in the article by Miss Vada Miller in this issue of THE VIRGINIA TEACHER.

W. J. GIFFORD

IV

WHAT IS GOOD TASTE IN DRESS ?

The five characteristics that serve as evidence of an education, according to President Butler, of Columbia University, are: "First, correctness and precision in the use of the mother tongue; second, refined and gentle manners, which are the expression of fixed habits of thought and action; third, the power and habit of reflection; fourth, the power of growth; fifth, efficiency, or the power to do."

These characteristics may or may not be cultivated in the schoolroom, but it is generally thought that a person who has had the opportunities of higher learning should be educated; nevertheless, many people who have not gone beyond the grammar grades in school have all of these evidences of an education.

It is in connection with the second characteristic that I wish to say a few words. Refined and gentle manners, as you know, can not be learned from a book on deportment or from one on social etiquette. They are the result of the cultivation of an inborn feeling for refined and gentle thoughts and actions; and as you know, they are most

easily cultivated in an environment where one is constantly associated with refined and gentle folk.

Clothes have the power of enhancing or detracting from one's manners. As Pope said, "Dress makes the man; the want of it, the fellow."

Since the introduction of Home Economics into the schools, a great deal of effort has been made to instruct the girls in the art of dressing. The material has been taken up not only from the phase of the construction of the garments but also from the economical and artistic phases as well. The results of this teaching, in the clothing and fine arts classes, are being noticed throughout the country.

George Brandes, a well known literary critic of Denmark, has recently said that America dominates the world. She is the winner of the war. She is at the stage of her development in which she is rapidly becoming the great center of art and learning. He also said that we are at the same stage in our development that the Italian cities, Florence and Venice, were before they became great centers of art and learning. Before they were the centers of culture they were great commercial cities.

If this country does become such a center, it will be because the schools of the country have spread the knowledge that goes to produce observing, thinking people. We must educate our pupils so that they will realize that the vulgar display of wealth is not beauty, whether that display be in their homes or in their costumes.

Walter Crane, an English artist, a few years before his death wrote a book on "Ideals in Art," in which he said, "Before we have art, we must be sensible to beauty, and before we can have either we must have conditions which favor their existence and growth."

Every one of us has an inborn desire for beauty. Even primitive peoples prove this. If we stop to think of the Navajo blankets of the American Indians, the beautiful fur garments of the Eskimos, and the handwoven textiles of the Indians of Peru, we shall realize how strong the desire for beauty is, even among such primitive people.

All through the ages, people have sought beauty in some form or other. Some people have felt, as Keats did, that "Beauty is truth," and they have searched the universe

for truth; while others have searched music and art for it; and still others have followed the Will-o-the-Wisp, Fashion, for her beauty.

People's ideals of the beautiful in dress have varied from time to time. The Greeks of the age of Pericles wore costumes that were very simple, but beautiful in their space divisions and in the arrangement of the drapery. They were appropriate to their lives and to the work to be done in them. You remember that the Greeks were fond of outdoor games and dancing and that their country was rugged; so they had much climbing to do. They were a warlike, sea-faring people; so they naturally wore garments that were easy and graceful and did not restrict their bodies.

When the capital of the Roman Empire was moved to Byzantium, the costumes worn by the early Christians depended for their beauty, not upon the fine spacing of their parts and the arrangement of the drapery, as had the Greek and Roman costumes, but upon the rich textiles and the ornaments worn with the long loose garments. The people of Western Europe had rather plain garments until the Crusaders returned to Europe with rich stuffs from the Orient. From that time the costumes of the Europeans become more beautiful.

Ouicherat, a recognized authority on French costume, has said that the most brilliant age in costume was the Thirteenth Century. It would be hard to picture the life of the knights and ladies of the age, when chivalry was at its height, as anything else than brilliant. It is interesting to notice that the periods of art in dress run parallel with the best in architecture, music, and art in general.

The term "poetic exuberance" is the term that has been applied to the decoration of the furniture of the Renaissance in Italy. It seems as if the same spirit prompted the decoration of the costumes of that time. The men were more elaborately dressed than the women.

In George Eliot's book, *Adam Bede*, Mrs. Poyser says, "I'm not denying the women are foolish. God Almighty made 'em so to match the men." It seems as if this were especially true of the costumes of the Renaissance.

If we recall the pictures of the dresses worn during the first Empire in France, we shall remember the low-neck, short waisted dresses with little puff sleeves, which had

long, rather narrow, skirts. These were made of very thin India muslin. This dress was generally worn over a rather scant amount of underclothing. A wit of the age made a jingle about the then current fashion, which ran something like this:

"Plump and rosy was my face
And graceful was my form;
Till fashion deemed it a disgrace
To keep my body warm."

"One critic who was fond of statistics calculated that in one year eighteen ladies caught fire and eighteen thousand caught cold."

During the latter part of the Nineteenth Century the English and American women began to copy their brothers in their outdoor sports. They had to have special garments for riding horseback and playing tennis and golf. Then, too when American women started to invade their brothers' domain, the business world, their costumes had to be more practical. They then and there invented the shirtwaist. At first it was extreme in its stiff hard lines, for the stiff collars and cuffs of their brothers' shirts had been copied. But gradually after they had made a place for themselves in the business world, they softened the stiff lines; so today we find that the stenographers and office women, as a class, wear graceful but practical clothes for business. They have earned the reputation of being the best dressed women that are earning their living. Evidently, we school teachers have more calls for our money, more night work and less competition in our field, for we as a class have not been given this distinction. We women of today are being more rational in our dressing than we have been before. If we stop to think how reluctant we American women are to contract our waists once more to the "wasp waist" size, and how very obstinate we are toward accepting the French dictates for long skirts we realize that we are at least doing some thinking and are not sheepishly following the fashion.

Before the war, the American people talked a great deal about efficiency. Probably Germany's demonstration of what efficiency might lead to has made us stop talking about it. But, nevertheless, the idea of being efficient has even affected our clothes. It is this idea of efficiency that has led costume designers and teachers of clothing to analyze the art of costuming and try to formulate some definite rules that

will enable us as a nation to have better-dressed women.

The manufacturers have dollars for their ideal in manufacturing clothes; while the artists have beauty for theirs. The business woman has the very difficult problem of choosing the most beautiful garment for the least money. When the manufacturers find out that we want more beauty in our clothes, they will employ artists for designers and it will be easier for us to buy more beautiful garments.

The human form is, from the artist's point of view, the most beautiful form. Like all beautiful things it is lovely as long as it is decorated and displayed in an appropriate manner. According to the ideals of the early Christians the present style of short skirts would have been sufficient cause for excommunication. A friend of mine, an elderly woman, said not long ago, when speaking of the present fashion, "Modesty has been struck out of the Good Book." I do not think that it is, that modesty has been struck out of our morals, but that something akin to vulgar display has totally eclipsed this finer virtue.

The point I wish to make is, that if a girl is really clever in displaying her charms, she will be more subtle in the way she does it. If you will stop to notice the statue of Hebe, you will see that her beauty is very subtly revealed. The artist knew, as did the Greek women of old, that they were much more charming when they displayed their beauty in a rather elusive manner.

The first requirement of good taste in dress is, therefore, that the costume will not make the wearer conspicuous. If clothes are worn to enhance the charms of the wearer, they ought not to be so conspicuous as to overpower them. We frequently have an opportunity to see a costume worn in a public place which serves to illustrate how unpleasantly conspicuous, a person may be because of her costume.

The second requirement is that the costume be appropriate to the occasion on which it is worn. We Americans have made rapid advance in this direction. There was a time when school teachers wore their cast-off-finery to school, but we see very little of that today.

The third requirement is that the costume should be simple. Many people do not distinguish between a plain costume and

a simple one. A simple costume depends upon the beauty of the material, primarily; also upon its lines and appropriate decoration. Someone has said, "Simplicity does not mean plainness, but knowing where to omit the superfluous."

Excellent examples of simple costumes, suitable for school are the Peter Thompson sailor suits, the present so-called Peter Pan jersey dresses, and the regulation Norfolk suits. It is generally agreed that manufacturers of cheap-grade goods put on much trimming to detract from the poor quality of the material, the bad lines, and poor workmanship.

It is not enough to have a costume simple in its design, appropriate to the occasion, and not tending to make the wearer conspicuous, but it is necessary that it be in harmony with the wearer's personality, her build, and her coloring. People who have made a careful study of their types have found out their styles and their colors and have closely adhered to these, season in and season out.

It is needless to say that an unwritten law of good taste in dress is that a person should be well groomed. I realize how hard it is to get across the campus on time for breakfast in the morning, and how hurriedly one must dress, but, nevertheless, if we took a little extra time at night to prepare our toilets, we could groom ourselves more quickly in the morning.

A person can hardly appear well-dressed if her hair does not look neat and well brushed, if her hands are uncared for, if her clothes are not neat, clean, and well pressed, and if her shoes are not polished.

Not all girls are so fortunate as to possess rosy cheeks, but many more girls could have good healthy color if they took regular exercise outdoors. To use rouge to give the effect of radiant health is like using perfume rather than soap and water.

Make-up was used by the Egyptians 2000 B. C., and it has been used ever since, but today when health is considered the greatest blessing, we naturally expect the American girl to "Mind the Paint" less and outdoor sports more. At least she should reserve its use for very special occasions and then lay it on with a light touch.

Jean Worth, probably the best known of the Parisian costume designers, has written an interesting chapter on dress, in a book entitled *Principles of Correct Dress* by Win-

terbrim, in which he says, "Be not fashion's slaves." He goes on to say that the secret of bad dressing throughout the whole world is that women thoughtlessly wear what is said to be the mode, without ever inquiring whether it is becoming or suitable. He says, "One of the best dressed women in all Paris, perhaps the very best among them, buys but three toilets a year; but these are perfect in taste, in fit, and in materials. Then, too, she knows to a nicety how to put on her dresses, how to add just what is wanted in the way of a corsage knot of blossoms, a piece of real old lace, or a suitable jewel." There is real distinction in being supremely well dressed.

How is one to go about cultivating good taste? Worth says, "Good taste is as subtle as genius and the way to cultivate it is to foster the critical habit as regards one's own appearance. One must not forget one's defects and at the same time one can congratulate one's self that the good points will cover up the effect of the bad ones. The reason the French woman is so well dressed is that she is immensely critical. She has discriminating common sense.

Ruskin said, "Right dress is, therefore, that which is fit for the station in life and the work to be done in it, and which is graceful, becoming, lasting, healthful, and easy; on occasion splendid, always as beautiful as possible."

It is to be hoped that when America comes into her own in the art world, American women will contribute their share through their beautiful costumes.

EDNA G. GLEASON

V

HOME ECONOMICS NOTES

The Virginia Home Economics Association held its annual meeting in Richmond at Thanksgiving, with Miss Helen Ward presiding.

Dr. David Snedden, of Teachers College made a very interesting talk on The Future of Home Economics. He sees Homemaking taught to groups of girls by the cottage plan, practically all home project work, with helpers in the form of printed matter. This work will be done under the supervision of Home Economics teachers who must promote self help by working out a series of simple concrete tasks which are well graded. Dr. Snedden stated that teachers must give up the idea that Homemaking can be taught out

of a book; there must be participation in productive work.

Dr. Snedden said that the standard for Home Economics teachers must be high. In reply to the question, "What should be the minimum amount of training for this work?" he said, "At least three years; if possible, four."

Mrs. Ora Hart Avery told something of the scope of Home Economics in Virginia. Everybody was interested in what the Junior Leagues are doing. Watch for the Peptomist.

Miss Cary A. Lyford told in a very interesting way what was being done at Hampton Institute in Teacher Training.

Mrs. W. D. Gresham, Supervisor of Negro Education, told of some splendid work which is being done in Home Economics in the state.

Miss Mary Brown has not changed her hobby; it is Health and Home Economics.

An interesting paper was read by Miss Katherine Dennis on Institutional Management at Close Range.

Miss Fanny Lou Gill of William and Mary College told of the life and work of Miss Edith Bear, former supervisor of Home Economics in Virginia and head of the Home Economics department at William and Mary for two years. A committee was appointed to draw up resolutions.

The Business Meeting of the Home Economics Association was held Friday afternoon. After hearing the report of the committees, officers for the coming year were elected. The constitution presented by the committee was adopted. A motion to have Virginia Home Economics Association become a part of the Virginia Society for Vocational Education was lost.

COOKERY COURSES FOR MEN

Pennsylvania State College is planning to repeat this fall the courses for men which were given last spring. There is a course in buying and menu making, designed especially to meet the needs of the men who are acting as stewards for the various college clubs; and there is a class in actual cookery, where the men study elementary food principles and apply them, ending their work with a dinner for their friends. This course developed some technical skill, but in addition it gave an appreciation of the work involved in meal serving. After the dinner one man said, "Six men, five hours each—thirty hours, one dinner—and one woman does it!"

The Journal of Home Economics