
SCHOOL OF HOUSEHOLD INDUSTRIES.

By *NORAH M. WISE*, Superintendent.

The School of Household Industries was established in June, 1912, for the purpose of giving such training to certain women of each province as would fit them to return to their homes upon graduation and start industrial centers. These graduates would open schools and give instruction in commercial lace and embroidery to such women of their respective towns as they were able to interest in this line of work.

The school was first located at 266 Cabildo, Intramuros, but when these quarters proved inadequate, the school was removed to the more commodious building at 2973 Herran, Santa Ana, where it is now situated.

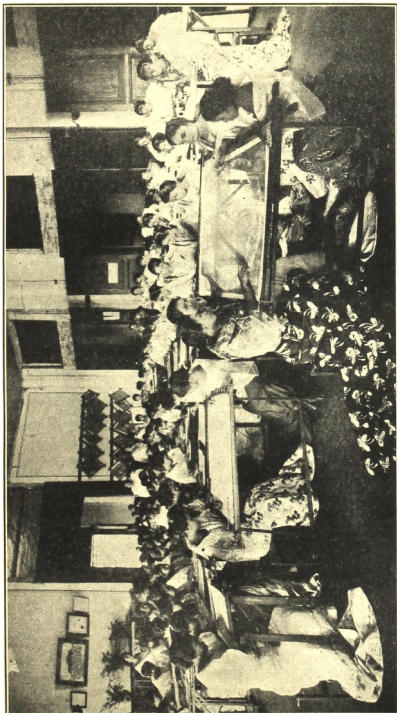
The large dormitory and halls, the beautiful grounds, and the ever cool and refreshing breeze from the Pasig which flows at the rear of the premises all contribute their share to the contentment of the girls who attend the school.

The course at first consisted of six months' training in lace and embroidery. In September, 1914, the course was lengthened to eight months in order to give additional training. This arrangement was followed until February of the present year when the length of the course was again reduced to six months.

In April of this year the increased demand for Philippine embroideries made it seem advisable to institute a new system of selection of pensionadas. Instead of selecting only one or two girls from a locality and thus covering the Islands, a larger number were chosen from a district in order to provide for larger working centers. One or two from each group thus selected were chosen to act as leaders and to take the business training prescribed. English was no longer a requirement.

Although high-grade work was, of course, still insisted upon, work that was of commercial value now began to take the place of that which was done merely for the sake of its artistic value. This work found ready buyers in the representatives of American firms who were looking for material with which to supply the demand created by the cessation of shipments from Europe.

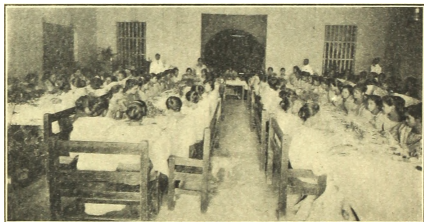
At the present time the work as outlined gives training in the embroidering of high-grade lingerie, table linens, handkerchiefs, and certain other articles. Lace is no longer taught.



The embroidery room of the School of Household Industries, 1916.

The pupils are taught economy of time and energy and, by means of the assignment of pieces of work to be accomplished within a specified time, they are impressed with the market value of the finished product. Upon the completion of the course, the pupils are given an oral examination and are graded according to their knowledge and dexterity.

Classes in business procedure are held. The girls are taught to keep accurately the records of all orders for work from firms or individuals and to keep expense accounts and worker's record forms. Training in letter writing and business terms is emphasized. The advantages of business integrity, and the loss which the lack of it will bring to workers are taught. An



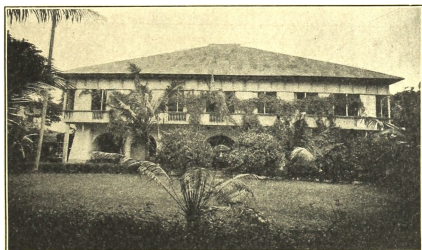
Girls at lunch, School of Household Industries.

effort is made to give the girls an idea of the many profits which are made on a single article in being handled by middlemen. This has been hard for them to understand, but it is hoped that actual business will give them a clearer insight into the facts. They are shown what may be saved by buying materials at wholesale.

Formerly there existed among the pensionadas an idea that all that was required in order to obtain a certificate of graduation was to stay for the time set by the Bureau. When the diplomas were given to all alike, there was no incentive for the good workers to become better, or for the inferior ones to strive to improve. This condition was corrected by the dismissal from the school of those who did not meet the requirements. When the pupils knew that they must work to be awarded a good mark, and that indifference meant dismissal from

the school without the coveted diploma, they put forth much greater efforts. At the present time no certificate of graduation is given until a year after completing the course. On leaving the school the young woman is given a letter to the division superintendent stating that, if after one year she has, in his opinion, met the spirit of her contract with the government to do commercial work, a certificate will be granted her. As all graduates are placed in household centers under the direction of the division office, it is possible to observe this work closely.

A few weeks ago a class of graduates was taken to visit a large commercial firm. They were greatly interested in the



The commodious building in which the School of Household Industries is located. Santa Ana, a suburb of Manila.

atmosphere of business, something with which they were not at all familiar. In the quiet order of their own schoolroom they had been taught precision and care, but in the business work-rooms they found that they must acquire speed also to compete with the commercial world. This firm gave the school quite a large order, and in the effort to complete it within the time set, the girls learned a new lesson in business. This experience will have a tendency to correct the habit of procrastination and will bring about a new order of things for those who are really worthy of the assistance of the government.

The school now aims to teach the young women the interpretation of commercial designs in embroidery and the production of as high a grade of work as the markets of the United States will take. The lessons in efficiency and speed are receiving

great attention in order that the girls may later compete successfully with European workers.

As a much greater demand exists for commercial work than for the highest class of artistic work which only the rich can afford, this training will enable these women to enter the great markets of the world and to become firmly established before the European workers will have renewed their working centers after the war is over.

Formerly the pensionadas were chosen from the better educated families but it has been deemed advisable in the light of later experience to select workers from the more humble homes where each member of the family is depended upon to do his part. It is believed that such a plan assures pensionadas that will be more appreciative of the education given them by the Government, and will put to more practical use the knowledge gained in the school.

The industrial propaganda of the Bureau of Education is reaching the non-Christian people in Mountain Province. They have natural skill as carvers and basket weavers. They have long made curious bowls, spoons, plates, and images of people and animals in wood. Under the influence of the schools, they are beginning to fabricate more attractive and more durable baskets. These are sold at the local shops and at the government exchange stores. (M. N.)

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If the average Filipino schoolboy is once told to do a thing, he usually executes the instructions fairly well; but let him be told the same thing three times in different words, and he fails. Repetition has its value in teaching, but a point once explained, slowly and plainly, according to a plan previously prepared, is better understood than one demonstrated in half a dozen ways, while the matter unfolds itself in the teacher's mind. (R. R. P.)

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Ordinarily few Filipino girls care to admit that they do their own housework because they have no servants. But if the teacher or some popular girl takes an active interest in sweeping, cooking or dusting in her own home, the doing of one's own housework soon becomes popular. Girls who before felt that there was a stigma attached to such work, are glad to do it when correct examples are set. (G. W. S.)