

"WHAT, GEOMETRY FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?"

Mrs. D. Bowering

Mrs. Bowering is studying mathematics education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. Her report of the Red Deer Conference indicates that the program included items of great interest to the elementary teacher.

At the recent Mathematics Conference held in Red Deer, Dr. Robert Jackson of the University of Minnesota presented to the Division One Section a strong case of the inclusion of geometry in the revised program of the new mathematics curriculum from kindergarten through Grade VI. He suggested that the children could learn to use geometric figures and their names, and he introduced to non-metric geometrical concepts at an early age. By this means a child would be more capable of analyzing the physical world about him, acquire basic vocabulary and fundamentals for future study, and develop a genuine interest in mathematics.

Eunice Canning, consultant for Scott, Foresman and Co., and Dr. H. Elliott, who had experimented with the teaching of geometric concepts in Ontario kindergartens, concurred. Miss Canning felt that geometry provided a program of action, flexibility and creativity for the imaginative six, seven and eight-year olds. She stated that the primary job in a primary school was to relate mathematical concepts to the child's own world. Geometry provides a rich source of mathematical concepts which could be related to the real world.

Slow learners can learn mature mathematical concepts but at a different pace and sequence. They, too, deserve an enriched program even more than the capable student. The demonstrations provided by each speaker would stimulate thinking of all types of students.

Dr. Elliott's laboratory approach to "Space and Shape" mathematics (geometry) was intriguing. With straws, pipe cleaners and paper he constructed intricate geometric models that would prove educational and motivating to all students.

Geometry will draw the soul toward truth
and create the spirit of philosophy.

Plato



His first "lesson" in geometry - a puzzling and fascinating new field to explore.