THE first institutions of higher learning in the United States were more or less reserved for the use of wealthy individuals. Not many of the poorer classes aspired to attend a university. The development of the land grant colleges revolutionized the entire system of higher education. Today with the opportunities afforded through the National Youth Administration, scholarships, prizes, and various student subsidies, every boy or girl of average intelligence may hope to attain society’s mark of distinction, the bachelor’s degree.

With the increased attendance in our universities, new curricula were developed. Demands for specialized types of training increased. No longer was it enough to know to parse Latin and Greek; practical information was demanded. As with all major educational movements there was a decided tendency to swing too far to the left. There were those who argued that a farm boy did not need training in economics, psychology, or similar social science courses. In other words, all that should be taught a boy were the manipulative devices enabling him to make money. It did not occur to many that perhaps there were advantages in university training other than learning a vocation.

Today at the University of Minnesota there are more than 15,000 full-time students, ranking it as the third largest educational institution in the country. When one considers the vast number of young people involved, he wonders how well the University is meeting the challenge raised by increased enrollments. Should all of these young people follow a set curriculum? No one believes they should, but there are many who believe the various curricula should be rather rigid without too many loopholes for the student with ideas of his own.

The problem of the fixed curriculum is but one of the many confronting our educational institutions today. There are numerous problems relating to increased efficiency in teaching. It is some of these that are discussed here with regard to experimental work at the University of Minnesota as efforts are made to raise the standards of instruction.

THE MINNESOTA COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

The University of Minnesota has been studying its own problems in a systematic way since about 1919. The first agency to be set up was known as the Survey Commission, and one of its first problems

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