

Dr. Janet Aiken Dies

Dr. Janet Rankin Aiken, writer and educator, former member of the teaching staffs of Columbia University and Brooklyn College, died Thursday, February 3, at the home of her daughter, Miss Joan Aiken, in Washington.

Dr. Aiken was fifty-two years old. She was born in Superior, Wisconsin, and was the daughter of Albert W. and Jean Sherwood Rankin. Her mother was a well-known novelist, and Dr. Aiken inherited

kin. Her mother was a well-known novelist, and Dr. Aiken inherited a love of grammar and a talent for writing from her. She entered Smith College at sixteen, but left after three years to attend the University of Minnesota where she received her bachelor's degree in 1912.

Consistently an admirer of Henry George, Dr. Aiken taught English and writing at the Henry George School of Social Science in New York, wrote for the Freeman, and lectured and wrote on the Henry George philosophy of freedom.

She had a varied career after leaving college. She taught English, then engaged in the manufacture of toys, and was associated with the real estate business for a while. She later did government surveys.

Dr. Aiken taught in the English department of Brooklyn College for twelve years. She joined the English extension department at Columbia in 1930. She was a member of the Modern Language Association, and Chairman of the Present Day English section for the last two years. She left Columbia last April.

Dr. Aiken regarded "Basic English" as ungrammatical and impracticable. She believed a better solution was what she termed "Little English" which classified words according to their functions, and discarded the "formal parts" of speech. This was the outcome of a grant for research given her in 1934 by the Carnegie Foundation

for the Advancement of Teaching, after a conference of grammarians on the simplification of English for world use. She planned that "Little English" should be a means of bringing the peoples of the world together on a peaceful, co-operative basis and that "Progress and Poverty" should be published in this medium.

Her works included "English, Present and Past," published in 1930; "New Plan of English Grammar," 1933; "Psychology of Eng-

lish" (with Dr. Margaret M. Bryant), 1940; "Surely Goodness," 1942; and "Common Sense Religion," 1943. At the time of her death she was completing a three-volume work on Shakespeare.

Dr. Aiken had recently returned from a tour. She spoke at a monthly meeting of the Friends Service Committee in Pasadena, her theme being that Henry George has made taxation obsolete in principle. She also gave a talk to the Civilian Public Service Camp at Glendora, Calif., and to a gathering of Georgists in Pasadena.

Dr. Aiken's daughter, Miss Joan Aiken, a son, Ensign John Aiken, U. S. N. R., and an adopted son, Donald Aiken, survive.