

# HOME and COUNTRY

Published by

The Ontario Women's Institutes at Toronto, Ontario

Volume 1

JANUARY, 1935

Number 9

## CANADA'S GIFT TO THE WORLD

Women's Institutes Discussed at Pan-Pacific Women's Association Held in Honolulu.

By Elizabeth Bailey Price

"Canada's gift to the countrywomen of the world," is how women of other countries describe the Women's Institute idea. This is what Mrs. J. W. C. Beveridge, vice-president of the New South Wales Countrywomen's Association in Australia, an organization modelled after Women's Institutes of Canada, told me in Honolulu, where, as a special representative of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, I was attending the second conference of the Pan-Pacific Women's Association.

Time and time again the Women's Institutes idea came into the round table discussions, which were built upon the family as the main theme. New Zealand reported 745 thriving branches; Mrs. E. Vedanayagan, the East Indian delegate, stated that the movement had been started in India. Japanese and Chinese delegates felt it would serve an urgent need for their countrywomen and they want to know further particulars. I have been asked to send copies of our report to China, India, Japan, Australia and other places. Thus have "Our echoes rolled from soul to soul."

### Pan-Pacific Women's Association

The Pan-Pacific Women's Association is best described by the following two objectives:

(a) To strengthen the bonds of peace among the Pacific people by promoting a better understanding and friendship among the women of all Pacific countries.

(b) To initiate and to promote co-operation among the women of Pacific region for the study and betterment of existing social conditions.

It is the youngest child of the Pan-Pacific union organized 25 years ago, of which the Institute of Pacific Relations, which met in Banff last year, is also another. However, this branch devotes itself mainly to science and research in relation to the Pacific countries. Canada is one of the 14 member Pacific countries. The Canadian quota of delegates was 25, but our delegation only numbered 5—Miss Mary Bollert, Dean of Women, University of British Columbia; Miss Florence Dodd, Dean of Women of the University of Alberta; Doctor Ellen Douglas, Winnipeg, representing the Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs; Miss Eleanor McLennan, a missionary returning to China, and myself representing the Women's Institutes.

### Very Few Resolutions

Although the Pan-Pacific Women's Association declares it is not a "resoluting body" and that it carries out its main objects of promoting peace and international understanding by education, the conference did "go on record" for the following: Its deep conviction of the urgent and vital need of each member country increasing in number and strength its peace-minded and peace-acting groups; that the theme of the next triennial period of study be "practical ways and means of promoting peace"; that it strongly protests the manufacture of arms for private profit; that it affirms the right of every woman to choose a skilled occupation, develop it to a degree of possible self-support, engage therein, and secure therefrom the widest possible professional and financial reward; and that it commends to member countries continuous and earnest endeavour for an improvement of the class of films being exhibited.

## OPPORTUNITIES OF 1935

I hope that the middle of January is not too late to wish every Women's Institute member and officer success and happiness in 1935.

So rapidly and constantly does the world change that we become almost unaware of the process and waken only occasionally to realize that new solutions must be made for these new conditions. But a new year has a way of shaking us fully awake and opening our eyes to new opportunities and problems. I hope each Women's Institute Branch will see 1935 clearly and will be successful in planning a programme of work profitable to the homemakers it serves and the community at large.

The Women's Institute staff is interested to know what kind of information and educational facilities you would like to strengthen your programme. Let us hear from you. Before the year is very old you will receive suggestions concerning desirable procedures and available help from the department.

We are anxious to work with you in developing a programme to guide homemakers in their vocational skills, increase their cultural appreciation and community satisfactions, and promote good health and progressive attitudes.

BESSIE CAMERON McDERMAND,

Superintendent, Institutes Branch,

Department of Agriculture.

## HOME ECONOMICS COURSE ORGANIZED IN FORTY-SIX COUNTIES

The Women's Institutes Branch of the Department of Agriculture is conducting schools for girls in Home Economics in eight counties for three months, November 27 to March 1, and in thirty-eight counties for one month in January or February.

School days have returned for the boys as well as the girls in these centres since agricultural classes are being held at the same time. Whether it be rainy or snowy, bright or dull, twenty above or twenty below, boys and girls from some 2,400 homes may be seen early each morning hiking, driving or riding to short courses. What a happy, neighbourly group they are—rural boys and girls of to-day!

From day to day the girls receive a fund of sound, practical information in respect to the selection, preparation and service of food; the family laundry; household management; the selection, care and making of garments; health education, home nursing and first aid; and house furnishing. The girls learn the how and why of many household tasks from feeding the pre-school child to serving party refreshments; from sewing a fine seam to planning a wardrobe; from selection and care of kitchen equipment to hanging a picture; from bathing a baby to giving first aid. This stimulates a greater interest in and appreciation of homemaking, makes for improved practices and gives more satisfaction in the doing.

Joint classes are held in subjects of common interest. The literatures afford them an opportunity to conduct meetings, discuss problems of the home, farm and community, to consider questions of the day and creates within them a desire to read and an appreciation of the fine in literature, music and art. Planned recreation contributes to the enjoyment and, in no small way, to the value of the course.

An extensive Home Economics course cannot be covered in twenty or sixty days, but girls leave the courses more alive to their responsibilities and possibilities as home-makers and rural citizens, with an understanding of some of the ways and means of developing their power and abilities, and with a yearning for knowledge and a desire to work.

## INSTITUTES OF OTHER PROVINCES PLAN GOOD WORK

Interesting work among branches in New Brunswick includes a meeting on "Tea," with six large paper tea pots placed about the room. These have the names of countries where tea is grown—China, Japan, India, Ceylon, Java and Formosa—each tea pot had a scene from one of these lands painted on the outside. After a talk on Tea a contest was held, the winner receiving a small package of tea.

A weed-destroying campaign included giving children 10 cents per hundred for burdock roots.

The work of one branch was supplying milk and cod liver oil to underweight children at school, replenishing a maternity kit and selling of house plants and shrubs to secure funds to purchase yarn to knit for winter needs.

"Ways of Preventing Home and Forest Fires" was a roll call feature in one group, while another opens the monthly meeting with a Salute to the Flag.

Prince Edward Island is carrying on sewing club projects under local leadership plan, in addition to sponsoring three weeks' Home Economic short courses, and establishing library centres.

A Home Economic reference library and clipping bureau is an objective of the Nova Scotia Women's Institutes. This province is also keenly interested in industries and plans an "Essay Competition" on this subject.

Manitoba Institutes continue their "Scholarship" feature. A \$50 scholarship is given annually, open to second year students in the degree course in Home Economics, basing awards on general proficiency and qualities of leadership in 1st and 2nd years.

Members of Quebec Women's Institutes are becoming increasingly interested in the laws by which they are governed as well as in those which relate to community and national welfare. The study of parliamentary procedure, and the duties of British subjects, with an expressed interest in the duties of parliaments and law making in general are fitting the women in rural Quebec for their rapidly unfolding responsibilities in the citizenship of Canada.

## NATIONAL PRESIDENT FROM ONTARIO

Mrs. Walker of Bartonville Heads Federated Women's Institutes of Canada.

By Elizabeth Bailey Price.

She's a busy farm woman—the President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, Mrs. A. E. Walker of Bartonville, Ontario. She is mistress of a hundred-acre farm, specializing in fruit growing. "I am very busy in the picking and packing season," she declares, "for I always personally supervise this work." She will now have the added responsibility of marketing, and hired help, for she had the misfortune to lose her husband in 1933.

And this work brings her in common touch with the problems of rural women, who largely compose the membership of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, which numbers approximately 70,000 members, grouped into 2,800 branches located in every part of Canada, from Vancouver Island to Prince Edward Island, from Fort McMurray to the boundary line.

Mrs. Walker is "almost" a charter member of the first, or "mother" Women's Institute in the world, that of Stoney Creek, Ontario, for she moved to this part of the county the year after it was born. She enjoyed the proud distinction of being president of the now famous "mother" branch of Stoney Creek for five years. It was during the war, when the Women's Institutes of Canada, having the advantage of being organized in every part of the country, mobilized their women power, and hurled it immediately into Red Cross and other emergency war work.

### Broad Experience

Mrs. Walker, too, has had the experience of seeing for herself the far-reaching scope of the Women's Institute idea. In 1930 she attended the International Congress of Countrywomen of the World held in Antwerp, Belgium, where she heard reports of similar organizations, founded on this Canadian idea, from many countries. Other highlights of that event were being presented to the late King Albert, attending a Conference on "Family Education" at Liege, and visiting the Six Months' Expositions at Antwerp and Liege. While in England, she visited many English Women's Institute branches, and spent a day as the guest of Lady Denman, President of the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales.

Mrs. Walker's background, work and training, fit her eminently for the position of first national W. I. officer. She is a Canadian of four generations, her forebears being United Empire Loyalists. Mrs. Walker was born on one of the farms her grandfather cleared and still possesses the crown deed.

The death of her father, the late David Choate, necessitated the moving of her family to the small village of Mount Hope, where she received her public school education. Later she attended the Hamilton Collegiate and the Ontario College of Education. Upon graduating from the latter, she taught several years at Fruitland rural school two miles east of Stoney Creek. After this she married, and for 28 years has lived on her present farm home midway between Stoney Creek and Bartonville.