

HOME and COUNTRY

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MR. W. R. REEK
Deputy Minister of Agriculture.

ACTIVITY PROGRAMME CARRIED ON FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SUCCESS

In June, 1936, the Pakenham Women's Institute decided to offer the young people of their community educational and recreational activities which they would find interesting and absorbing enough to fill much of their leisure time. Accordingly, "The Little Theatre Guild" was organized with the young people as the prominent members. It was established with a grant of \$25.00 from the Women's Institute, a Board of Directors composed of four institute members, an executive of the guild members, simple by-laws and no membership fee. Over 90 young people joined. They came from the village and within a radius of 10 miles.

The activities of the first year were largely experimental, but the results were satisfactory. Financially, the success was quite outstanding, as over \$200.00 was cleared within the year. The money was returned to the Women's Institute and was used to improve the Agricultural Hall. Quite properly, the funds were used to make the hall better suited for the programme of The Little Theatre Guild. The platform of the stage was raised, a broscenium Arch was built, new footlights installed, better arrangement of curtains made possible, and a complete new set of scenery provided.

From an educational point of view, the new enterprise of the Pakenham Women's Institute was even more successful. Desirable activities had been stimulated. A 16 piece orchestra was organized with a qualified member of the Women's Institute as director. All the musical talent in the Guild was enlisted in this orchestra. In November, the Guild presented three one-act plays, assisted by the orchestra. In March, a three-act play was presented, again assisted by the orchestra. The community was enthusiastic about the entertainment given. Local business men were generous in buying sufficient advertising space to allow printed programmes for both performances. Over 40 members received actual training in acting, 16 in orchestra work and most of the remainder in the business connected with the programme.

The Guild also gave the young people an opportunity to know each other, to work and to play together.

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THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE LAUDS INSTITUTE WORK

To extend greetings and express good-will to the Women's Institutes of Ontario is a happy privilege.

I am vitally interested in any organization that is working toward the betterment of rural life. In this respect the members of the Institutes throughout our Province are making an admirable contribution. Ever alert to the Health, Educational and general Welfare problems of our people the Institutes have long since proved their immense worth to rural community life. And it is indeed gratifying to note that the great work of the Institutes is carried on devotedly whether in Old, or the remotest part of "Newer," Ontario.

May I add one more thought: culture, contentment and security must prevail in our country homes if we are to retain a worthy civilization. Toward this end, Institute women have been providing a very noble service. I commend them most highly for their achievements in the past. I wish them even greater success for the future. I assure them of the warm sympathy and zealous support of the Department of Agriculture.

P. M. DEWAN.



HON. P. M. DEWAN
Ontario Minister of Agriculture

HON. P. M. DEWAN ENTERTAINED AT ANNUAL MEETING OF PROVINCIAL BOARD

The members of the Provincial Board of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario were pleased to have the Honourable P. M. Dewan as luncheon guest at their annual meeting held in Toronto in November. In his address, Mr. Dewan stressed the importance of the educational work being carried on by Women's Institutes in Ontario, and assured the group of his interest in its development.

The president, Mrs. T. J. McDowell, reported that she had visited nearly every section in the province during the past year and had found advancement in all lines of work. Mrs. McDowell's itinerary had taken her to 17 district annuals and 12 conventions.

At the conclusion of Mrs. McDowell's report, a vote of thanks was carried voicing the pride the Board had in the leadership of their president and appreciation of her splendid contribution to the Women's Institutes of Ontario.

Mrs. McDowell, in her address, complimented the committee which had been in charge of the Women's Institute Handicraft exhibit at the Winter Fair. This exhibit featured handicrafts from all parts of Canada and was sponsored by the Women's Institutes of Canada, Ontario being responsible for the greater part of the management. Mrs. Harvey Harris, ex-chairman of Toronto Convention Area, ably took this responsibility for Ontario.

The president spoke of the importance of the Women's Institutes arousing public sympathy and thus securing public support for services which should be supported by the municipality rather than by the few citizens who might make up the membership of a women's institute.

In the course of her resumé of the year's work, Mrs. McDowell said she hoped the time was not too far distant when child study clubs might be organized under the guidance of a trained psychologist who would be a member of the Women's Institute staff, Department of Agriculture. Mrs. McDowell drew attention to the fact that Simcoe County, for the past two years, had emphasized child psychology on their convention pro-

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Women's Institute Conventions

Exert Lasting Influence

The passing of summer and the arrival of early autumn marks a speeding up in Women's Institute activities. Dates for conventions are finally settled by that time and with happy anticipation officers and members concentrate on perfecting plans and arrangements for these annual events which hold so much of pleasure and profit for institute members and their friends throughout the province.

Reviewing the 1937 conventions in retrospect one comes to several conclusions, namely, that the convention is a real means of developing efficient leadership and that continuity of thought in programme planning is helpful; that reports are more stimulating and vital because the work has been accurately compiled; that educational interests (and the development of the same) are ever widening; and the definite musical leadership is of inestimable value at such gatherings. Throughout, one meets enthusiasm, sociability and co-operation, as well as the warm handclasp of friendship which lingers long in the memory.

Progress was noted in discussion methods, and it was noticeable that homemakers everywhere were more appreciative of the Co-operative Programme in Home Economics as a means of individual expansion and expression as well as a community enterprise.

Fine weather conditions and the natural beauty of the north made an ideal setting for the northern conventions of which Miss Powell has told you in the Fall issue. It was an inspiration to meet and hear the courageous, alert, and enterprising homemakers of the north, many of whom came long distances from isolated places to attend the annual "get together" meeting. Something of their animation and refreshing spirit—like a stimulating breath from the north—seemed to come with us as we turned to the more southerly areas in the older parts of the province.

The Harriston convention opened with a lively round table discussion centering on the new courses of study in the public and high schools, and expanded to many other topics including that of child study. Thought-provoking questions found

their way to the question box and were answered satisfactorily. This area is in favour of a re-adjustment of districts whereby Guelph, the home of the first provincial convention, would become the permanent meeting place for the annual convention of the area. An added note of interest was a shawl parade featuring some very old and lovely designs.

At Hamilton, where of necessity our sojourn was brief but most pleasant, a magnificent gathering convened in one of the attractively decorated ball-rooms of the Royal Connaught. Efficiency and progress marked the proceedings of this the 10th annual convention, with notable speakers and good music rounding out the programme. Mrs. A. E. Walker, past president of the F.W.I.C. presented the area with a handsome gavel with an engraved silver band.

Continuity of thought in programme planning was in evidence at London and considerable time was spent on agriculture and the present day needs and problems of farmers. Emphasis was placed on the part which country women can play in helping rural young people to visualize what the farm has to offer. A fine method of handling resolutions prevails at London and plenty of time is allowed for discussion before a vote is taken. A visit to the Memorial Hospital was full of interest to the visitors. Tea was served there.

At both Belleville and Ottawa the provincial directors briefly reviewed their visits to district annuals and offered helpful suggestions in connection with district work. The Home Economics Coach and the provincial directors can be of invaluable service to a district in this respect.

At Belleville the roll call was responded to with talks on "The Responsibility of the Branch, and District Programme Planning". A representative from each district took part and handled the subject from a different angle. The dominant thought brought out was that programmes should be planned according to the needs of the community. Demonstrations of the project work

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