

HOME AND COUNTRY

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The Federated Women's Institutes
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"HOME and COUNTRY"

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This paper is distributed through the secretaries of Women's Institutes to the Women's Institute members.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

EDUCATION WEEK

For the fifth consecutive year the Canadian Teachers Federation is sponsoring a campaign in the interests of education, known as Education Week, from February 5 to 12. The Ontario convener, Mr. W. G. McNeill, has requested that we draw it to the attention of the readers of "Home and Country".

In a circular letter the Education Week Committee for Ontario state:

"The aim of Education Week is to establish among the citizens of our land an intelligent and informed awareness of trends and problems in education. Educational reforms will always be necessary if we are to progress in culture and in skills; but they can come in a democracy only as quickly as public opinion will permit. The needs of the schools must be made known. One of the most important means to this end is the establishment of a partnership between the Home and the School."

The theme of Education Week this year is "The New and the Old in Education". Watch for radio programmes and articles in the press. In another section of this paper Mr. A. B. Lucas, Public School Inspector, outlines suggestions for Rural School Lighting, a phase of school improvement in which Institute members will be interested.

Since one of our standing committees is Education, surely the Women's Institute should give its whole hearted support to Education Week. If this Week is to accomplish anything worthwhile, the interest which it awakens should be carried on throughout the year. Let's be education minded!

SCHOOL LIGHTING CAN BE IMPROVED

It is hoped that every rural school will have "open house" during Education Week in February. This will provide an excellent opportunity for parents and ratepayers to investigate the lighting conditions under which their children are working. "Better Light, Better Sight" is the watchword in many offices, stores and homes, but, unfortunately, the slogan is not in operation in many schools. This would be an opportune time to borrow a light meter from your local hydro superintendent and make a survey of the lighting conditions under which the children of your school are working. The results of this survey may be amazing.

Many of our rural school buildings have windows improperly placed. The typical crosslights of many schools cause glare on the blackboards. The modern classroom has all light entering from the left side of the pupil so that shadows will not fall on the books, and an area equivalent to one-fifth of the floor space should be made up of windows extending from four to five feet from the front wall to the back wall and reaching within one foot of the ceiling.

There are several ways of improving classroom lighting:

(1) *Remodelled Windows:* Many rural schools have modernized their lighting by placing windows on the left side of the classroom as outlined above. Unless the classroom is abnormally wide (over twenty-four feet) or the ceiling is abnormally low, there will be no further need of the windows on the right side of the room. They may be closed. The whole cost of this remodelling, even in a solid brick school, should not exceed \$200.00. A fifty per cent grant will be given the rural school board, if the expenditure is approved by the local inspector. A frame building can be modernized much more cheaply.

(2) *Hydro:* Even with the best lighting conditions there are many days, especially in the fall and winter season, when there is not a sufficient amount of natural light. In many cases the work of the school is suspended due to the inability of the children to see the blackboard or to use their books. Hydro is the only solution for this difficulty. When properly installed, so that the light is properly diffused without glare, hydro is well worth-while. Before any installation is made, careful planning is necessary so that efficiency will be obtained. The Engineering Department of the Hydro Electric Power Commission, Toronto, will give expert advice free to any school board.

(3) *Blinds:* Even in extreme cases where hydro is not available, or when remodelling is not possible, much can

be done to improve lighting with proper school blinds. Too many schools are equipped with dark green, opaque blinds, which make veritable dungeons of the classrooms when it is necessary to lower them to shut out the direct glare of the sun. All blinds should be made of such material as will allow light to pass through. They should be equipped with good spring rollers with cords attached so that they can be raised to the very top of the window when not required. Washable blinds are preferred. The teacher should always bear in mind that half the light that enters her classroom comes from the upper third of the window. If this were more fully understood, blinds would not be left drawn over the upper portion of the windows.

(4) *Care in Choice of Curtains:* The use of curtains is open to severe criticism unless they are made of transparent materials and are tied well back from the window.

(5) *Clean Glass:* Twenty-five to fifty per cent of available light may be shut out by dirty windows.

(6) *Decoration:* One may still find the walls of many Ontario schools painted in dark grey or brown colours, which absorb seventy to eighty per cent of the light which reaches the room, and reflect the remainder. Such colours make a most depressing and gloomy classroom. White, of course, would be the best reflecting colour, as ninety per cent of the light may be reflected. However, an all-white classroom would be unpleasant to the eyes. One of the best colour combinations is an egg-shell white ceiling, light ivory walls and a somewhat darker wainscoting. Certain light shades of green for the upper walls and darker green for the lower walls may be used with the white ceiling, but great care would be necessary in selecting the proper shade and the proper texture of green.

The protection of the eyesight of our school children is an important phase of health education. But often our whole health programme is upset through the poor lighting in the schools. The new Programme of Studies in Ontario schools, with its greater emphasis on reading, makes it necessary for the present-day child to use his eyes much more intensively than his parents or his grandparents may have done in the same school in past years. More than ten per cent of all children reaching Grade VII have vision defects so serious as to require professional treatment.

Let us put into practice in our schools the "Better Light, Better Sight Programme".

(Contributed by Mr. A. B. Lucas, London, Public School Inspector.)

PARENT EDUCATION
STRESSED BY
PROVINCIAL CONVENER

We frequently hear it said that a nation's greatest asset is its children. Does this not depend on the nature of the qualities and virtues which its children develop? Such qualities as justice, love of fellow men, self control, obedience to just authority, honesty and reliability make the future citizen an asset. But qualities such as jealousy, envy, hatred, and untrustworthiness make the future citizen a menace to the nation. It is readily agreed that in the home is the foundation of education. It is there, in the every day living, that such basic qualities as personal responsibility, public need and co-operation are born and stimulated. In view of these facts, it is suggested that child psychology and parent education be the outstanding subject of this year's educational programme. This would include not only the encouraging of parents to study behaviour problems of their children, but the study of family relationships—relationship between husband and wife, mother and children, father and children, children and children. Peace and co-operation in the home are contagious germs which will develop into peace and co-operation in the community and in the nation.

The Ontario School Trustees and Ratepayers Association, having for its motto "Develop the school and preserve Democracy", has a new platform which is worthy of our consideration. Copies of this may be secured from Mr. M. A. Campbell, Secretary Ontario Trustees and Ratepayers Association, 30 Bloor Street West, Toronto. Debates or discussion in Institute meeting on some of the planks, such as "Equal educational opportunities for every child in Ontario", would give all members an intelligent, informed awareness of some of the problems of education.

(Contributed by Mrs. Jas. Gordon, Gamebridge, Provincial Convener of Education).

Scottish Institutes
Will Visit Ontario

In August of this year, a group of members of the Scottish Women's Rural Institutes under the guidance of Miss Winifride Wrench, Editor of the Scottish Home and Country, will visit Ontario.

The Scottish Women's Rural Institutes originated during the years of the Great War and by December, 1938, have grown to have 1,017 Institutes. These 1,017 Institutes are organized into four areas.

Crossing the Atlantic on the Donaldson Atlantic Liner, "Letitia", which sails from Glasgow, July 20, the party will land at Quebec City, July 29. The trip across Quebec and Ontario will be entirely by bus, so that the members may see as much as possible of the country. From Quebec City they will travel to Montreal, thence to Ottawa where they will enjoy a city tour ending at the Experimental Farm. Leaving Ottawa the party will travel first to Kemptonville and North Gower, then via Smiths' Falls, Perth, Madoc, Peterborough and Lindsay to the Bobcaygeon district, where they plan to relax for a day. In the Toronto district they will visit Donalds Farm and tour the city. Their trip then continues along the Lakeshore Road to Hamilton, then to Stoney Creek, Galt, and St. Catharines to Niagara Falls. While travelling across Ontario, the party will sleep, not in hotels, but in tourist camps. They will have the opportunity to visit several Women's Institutes and Ontario farms. As Miss Wrench said, "The members just want to see the sort of life lived on a Canadian farm."

Further details will be given in the next issue of "Home and Country" when the plans for the tour are more nearly completed.

Financial Statement Oct. 1st, 1937 — Sept. 30th, 1938
Federated Women's Institutes

RECEIPTS.		O.E.A. fee	
Balance in bank, Oct. 1, 1937.	\$4,060.08	Special meetings	\$ 11.00
Federation fees and ex-		Printing Home & Country (2	18.50
changes	3,891.91	issues)	824.72
Sale of song sheets	21.00	Peace garden upkeep	12.00
Sale of Hand Books	26.00	Subscription "The Country-	
Sale of Federation pins	43.50	woman"	1.25
Bank interest	11.45	Peace literature	2.00
	\$8,053.94	Conveners' postage	17.41
EXPENDITURES.		Stationery and supplies	74.94
Allocation to F.W.I.C.	\$ 500.00	Pins, life membership and	
Allocation to A.C.W.W.	50.00	Federation	69.00
Grants to Conventions	400.00	Gift to The Lady Tweeds-	
Convention speaker's ex-		muir	50.00
penses	521.80	Flowers and presentations	25.30
Board meeting	522.40	Express on relief parcels	50.00
Federated representatives'		Exchange	41.64
expenses	288.27	Fees refunded	5.90
District Annual speakers'		Auditor 1937	10.00
expenses	305.10	Total expenditure	\$4,193.93
President's travelling allow-		Balance in bank, Sept.	
ance	75.00	30, 1938	3,860.01
Secretary's honorarium and			\$8,053.94
bond	287.00	Certified correct,	
Representatives to other or-		J. C. PRIOR, Auditor.	
ganizations	27.00		