

NATIONAL HOME & COUNTRY MAKES ITS DEBUT

Her Excellency The Lady Tweedsmuir, Canada's first lady and a former ardent English Women's Institute member and worker, has given the Women's Institutes of Canada a tremendous impetus during her regime as wife of our Governor General.

Not only has she backed up her keen interest by many inspirational talks at conventions and Institute meetings, but has shown it in a practical way by the collection of approximately 25,000 books which have been made into rural libraries. These are known as The Lady Tweedsmuir Libraries and are circulated mainly in the remote districts of three western provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

And now, due largely to the inspiration of Her Excellency, is the launching of a national Women's Institute magazine—"Canadian Home and Country". She has honoured the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada by allowing her name to be placed permanently on the title page as founder and has offered to write articles for this publication.

For years this magazine has been the dream of national Women's Institute leaders from coast to coast. It has always been felt that such a medium was necessary to promote a national vision of our work. Women's Institutes are strong in their branch work, strong provincially and the last two years—particularly since the A.C.W.W. Triennial Conference in Washington and later the visit of these delegates to Canada—internationally. They have lacked a national co-ordination and it is felt that the national magazine will meet this need.

Several years ago the magazine idea almost reached culmination. At the last Biennial Convention in Toronto, November, 1937, the idea was brought up again and Her Excellency voiced approval in her convention address. The Unity Press of Montreal, represented by Mr. Edward Gross, waited on the Board with proposals and verbal assurance that sufficient advertising would be solicited to meet the printing costs. The F.W.I.C. Board decided to make a subscription survey.

A year has gone by; Mr. Gross has not only reiterated his assurance that enough advertising can be secured to finance printing costs, but has guaranteed the printing bill for three months. We have approximately 73,000 members in Canada. Our rate is so cheap—25 cents a year for 12 issues of a 48 pages magazine. Each and every member can do her bit. If half our total membership subscribed, it would net over \$9,000.00.

The question of doing away with provincial Women's Institute papers has been raised and my advice asked. In instances where these have been long and firmly established, I would say "no". There is room for both because, in my experience of 20 years of Women's Institute publicity work, provincial papers published every three months have little space for activities of other provinces.

I have accepted the position of editor-in-chief, until the F.W.I.C. Board meets. I appeal to you for support not only in subscriptions but for stories of outstanding achievements, the kind which are just as interesting to the Women's Institute reader in Prince Edward Island as in Vancouver Island.

In closing, may I pass along the ideas of Mrs. Fred McLaren, immediate past president of Prince Edward Island Women's Institutes: "I would like to see articles in this magazine describing phases of rural life in each province, establishing our youth by various adult education schemes, and, above all, articles which would make for a better understanding between east and west and a realization that we are a nation, and what concerns one concerns all."

(Contributed by Elizabeth Bailey Price).

A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

Once more greetings and my best wishes to members of the Women's Institutes throughout Ontario.

Institute women enter upon the year 1939 under the direction of a new Superintendent. Naturally, we all have been sorry to lose the capable services of the former Miss Bess McDermand. We have been fortunate, however, in securing, as head of the Women's Institute Branch, Miss Mary A. Clarke. I heartily commend her to the rural women of Ontario. She has innate ability and excellent academic qualifications. I am confident that, with experience and given adequate co-operation, Miss Clarke will nobly fill her new position.

May I wish a Happy Year for all. May the contribution of Institutes to the culture and standards of rural life—great in the past—be still greater during the current year.

P. M. DEWAN.

ANNUAL MEETING DETERMINES YEAR'S WORK

The Institute annual meeting is one of the most important meetings of the year. It has a very definite part in shaping the success and effectiveness of the service which may be rendered to the individual and to the community.

The local Institute is the important unit of the whole Institute organization. It is important because it is responsible for establishing a cultural programme for homemakers and for sponsoring such enterprises as will make the community a better place in which to live. The annual meeting day is one of pleasant social association, where members renew their friendships, and unconsciously establish and foster a cooperative spirit and attitude of good will.

Of course there is business to consider, but this need not be a boring or tedious period, if the executive officers have so planned this part of the meeting that each item of business is quickly and thoroughly dealt with. The president and secretary will have discussed each item prior to the meeting with an understanding of the needs and possibilities of the Institute.

The secretary has an important and responsible position and, when rendering an account of her stewardship, gives the members some idea of her responsibilities and discloses her efficiency in the discharge of her duties. Some Institutes are handicapped because the person accepting the office of secretary fails to understand her duties or because of the confusion which may arise if she relinquishes her office before the conclusion of her term. For this reason, one who is considering the acceptance of this office should study the duties of the office and whether or not, if elected, she will be able to continue in this capacity for the period of twelve months; or, if desired, for a further period. When the secretary remains in office at least one year, the Institute is assured that literature and correspondence from the main office and elsewhere will reach it promptly.

An important part of the annual meeting is the selection of officers or leaders for the year, as all officers are automatically vacant at the end of the year. Of course, the Institutes which utilize a nominating committee have a distinct advantage over those which nominate officers on the day of the annual meeting. They will have had opportunity to interview prospective candidates and secure their consent—a wise procedure to follow. After the election, the secretary will promptly notify all officers and conveners of their appointment. In the case of conveners she will furnish them with a copy of the functions of standing committees to help them to plan their work. It is at this meeting that new members join and renewals are made, thus making the personnel from which to select officers and conveners. Responsible positions are assigned to members only.

The business of the annual is im-

portant and interesting. The secretary-treasurer's report gives information of the financial status of the Institute and shows whether funds have been judiciously distributed. The auditors' report makes opportunity to discuss this point and the acceptance of this report places the responsibility upon the entire membership. The auditors should have ample time and be furnished with all necessary papers and information to present a proper audit. This is taken care of in advance of the annual meeting day, as it is not possible for an auditor to do satisfactory work otherwise.

The reports of conveners are naturally a part of the day's review. Some Institutes are following a definite line of study, and will find the summing up of special value when planning the following year's work. Reports of projects undertaken will reveal both strength and weaknesses, and the discussion of these will assist materially in strengthening the programme of the Institute. There is an art in summarizing reports, to give all worth-while activities recognition and brevity gives zest to the report.

Some Institutes wisely choose to establish only one or two of the standing committees for any one year, selecting those most suited to their needs and possibilities. They can thus make a thorough study which will result in progress in these particular lines. In this special study, which may be Canadian Industries or, perchance, Education, the convener wisely plans her work so that the subject may be considered under different phases or divisional headings. In this way, the members become really informed upon the subject selected.

When the members have been considering some special interest during the year, which is of wider import than the local Institute, they may deem it advisable to voice their interest in a resolution. The convener on Legislation will have been active and ascertained what legislative measures exist, if any, and will have secured such data as may be available to support such a resolution. Then having studied the Hand Book, she will know how to draft and how to present her resolution. The members all understand that resolutions of province-wide interest should be endorsed by the local Institute before being presented to the district annual for consideration.

Then comes the all important matter of programme planning. The review of the past year's work enables the members to make wise choice of programme material. Keeping in mind the needs and resources of the Institute, the committee will more readily decide what will best meet the needs and interests of the community. The members should decide in which of the district projects they would like to participate for the coming year.

(Contributed by Miss M. Viola Powell, Women's Institute Branch).

THE OFFICERS' RALLIES AND THEIR PURPOSE

(Continued from page 1, col. 4)

At certain district annuals held in districts where Officers' Rallies had been held previously, a marked improvement in practice was observed, and one could not but thrill with pride at the skill and ability with which the officers met and disposed of each situation as it developed. In a letter to the Homemakers' Page, *Globe and Mail*, Dec. 12, 1938, the writer speaking of an Institute meeting attended by The Lady Tweedsmuir, quotes Her Excellency, "... I couldn't help but be amazed at the poise and efficiency of the women conducting the meeting. We town and city women get lots of credit for managing membership in clubs and groups, but I felt at this meeting that scarcely enough praise is given to these rural women." The writer goes on to say, "In this meeting the lady in the chair handled the parliamentary procedure excellently, calling for motions and votes as they should be called for. Members taking part in the programme did so unselfconsciously, though they must have been nervous before such a distinguished guest." This is surely encouragement for us, if encouragement is needed. Women's Institutes could, if they would, set the standard for correct procedures for women's organizations throughout Canada, and their response to the opportunities provided them through the Rallies leads one to hope that the day may not be far distant when they may achieve this goal.

This last year, the list of subjects for discussion, as set forth in the Co-operative Programme, was enlarged to include Discussion Methods and Duties of Officers, and these proved the popular choice among the districts. In so far as the nature of the work would permit, the discussion method has been followed in dealing with all subjects introduced, so that members are not entirely unfamiliar with its methods. The most successful Rallies have been those where there was general participation in the discussions and where spontaneous expression of opinion by at least a majority of those present proved their interest and guaranteed their pleasure and profit.

The Co-operative Programme describes the Rallies as a training school for leaders and it has been our aim to preserve all through, the atmosphere of the happy informality of a day at school. Where possible, the seats are grouped informally facing a blackboard used to list the various points as they are made, and later for summaries. The pupils come, pencils and notebooks in hand and with receptive minds, to glean from this all-too-short day at school, that which will bear fruit in improved methods and abler administration as they carry on their tasks in the local Institute, district and convention area. They come, as one woman said, because "as Institute officers they wish to do better, to know better and to be better". Though the serious purpose of these meetings is always dominant they are not without their lighter moments, and this is well, since, after women have laughed together over an absurdity, they have clearer vision to seek together the happy solution of a common problem.

It is said that the ideal Institute meeting should provide information, recreation and inspiration. This holds true also for the Officers' Rally and many of the best Rallies held have closed the day sounding a note of high inspiration. This also is well. We must see to it that somehow, some way, each officer and each member views her membership as something vital, significant, deserving of her best. It is indeed a medium through which she may make her contribution to her day and age, bringing to herself a more abundant life, to home and community illimitable enrichment, and to Canada a happier, brighter tomorrow.

(Contributed by Mrs. Clarence Hayes, Georgetown, Ontario.)