

PUBLIC HEALTH

The following resume of an address given at the Barrie Convention by the Hon. R. P. Vivian, M.D., Minister of Health for Ontario, will interest Institute members, especially the Social Welfare Committees.

Public Health,—which includes measures to prevent illness, to safeguard good health and to secure the best possible development of individuals (especially children),—is the biggest phase of health today. In public health services, Ontario has been behind other provinces for some years. Our task now is to promote public health services, which means the establishment of health units.

At present the county is considered the basic area for rural health units. Complete service requires the full-time services of an adequately trained personnel, including one or more doctors, dentists, nurses and veterinarians.

Five Point Programme

Public health demands a five-point programme.

1. The prevention and control of acute communicable diseases by such methods as immunization, removal of hazards, etc.

2. The prevention and control of such chronic communicable diseases as tuberculosis and venereal disease.

3. Environmental sanitation—e.g. water, food and animal inspection, to control such diseases as typhoid or Bang's disease.

4. Maternal and infant hygiene.

5. Child care.

Tuberculosis Control

For early diagnosis x-ray of every man, woman and child is essential. For this purpose vans should be provided to carry x-ray equipment to rural communities.

After diagnosis, sanatoria adequate for the care of all cases, must be established within reach of all.

Venereal Disease Today

The incidence of venereal disease in Ontario, 173 cases per 100,000, is alarmingly high. It could be controlled by (a) education of the public (b) early diagnosis and adequate treatment for which the province will pay 75 per cent and (c) reducing the possibility of spread of the disease by community co-operation. Eradication of the disease in the end, depends on local and individual co-operation.

Cancer Care

Cancer, while not a communicable disease, requires attention because next to heart and arterial diseases it is the most common cause of death. Its control requires early diagnosis. If this is secured, a cure is possible in the vast majority of cases. Last year the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation was established. This is a voluntary group to assist the Government in the education of the general public and improvement of the Cancer clinics.

Cost of Medical Care

For many, the proper treatment of disease is not possible because they can not afford medical services at the time when they are needed to prevent the disease becoming too serious. At the last session of the Legislature the "Ontario Municipal Health Services Act" was passed to help remedy this situation.

By this Act a community may now, by its own decision, band together to provide, through taxation, the health services desired by the community. These services may be as simple or as elaborate as are decided on by the vote of the community concerned. Enquiries about these services should be directed to the Municipal Health Services Board.

The application of the complete public health programme will go ahead as soon as personnel is available and the people are educated to accept these services. In the latter, the Women's Institutes can do much to promote better public health.

GARRISON LANE

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The first group, to which I belonged, was at Garrison Lane Nursery Training School. This group consisted of seven trained nursery school teachers.

Our school was an old school altered to suit our needs. The school was large, bright and airy. Our rooms were all painted pale colours and it was a pleasure to work in such surroundings. One half of the school was a British restaurant. These are set up all over England. There one can get a hot dinner for about a quarter. They are usually found near factories to enable the working people to get at least one wholesome meal a day. Our meals and the children's meals were all prepared in the restaurant and all of us—and the children—gained many pounds.

We had forty children in the nursery from two to five years of age. These were divided into two groups, seniors and juniors. Each child had his own cupboard, his own towel, cup, comb, etc. These he soon knew by the pictures above the various objects. For instance, Alan had a boat and all his possessions were labelled with a boat.

The student training was in the form of a three weeks' course. Women already in nurseries came to us for the period. While they were with us they had lectures and worked in the school as well as observing all of us with the children. In the two years we were there we trained eight hundred and fifty students. We all enjoyed the students very much. We met people from all over England and exchanged view points and tactics. They have now formed themselves into a Warden's Association, of which we are members. They meet each month to discuss the latest,—their children, housing conditions, health, etc. We are terribly proud of this group.

The parents were most antagonistic at first when we arrived. However, we tried to make them realize we were working with and for them. We encouraged them to come to the school whenever they could. We told them it was their school. Gradually they came around and ended up by being our best friends. Among the people at the station to see us off in Birmingham were ten of our best parents. So we decided we had won our war.

When our two years in England were nearly up we began to hate the thought of leaving all the children and their parents. We had become very fond of the children. We decided to give farewell parties for them all. With the help of our Canadian friends we gave each child a dress or suit and a toy. We gave gifts to the parents also and it was a very happy day for all. These are the people we are missing now.

Garrison Lane Nursery Training School was taken over by an English staff in July. They will continue the training of students—on a much smaller scale than we carried on.

We left England almost two years to the date we arrived there, in August 1944. We had a glorious voyage home and a very happy reunion in Toronto. All of us have enjoyed these last two years very, very much. It has been a perfectly marvellous experience to work with the English people in war time and we hope we may have the pleasure of meeting them one day in Canada. They have all been so very brave in these most difficult times.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario for helping to make my journey to England possible. It has been not only a wonderful experience of mine but a great help to many children and parents. If they knew, I am sure they too, would want to thank you. I always felt that, although I had never met any of your members, I had many friends in the Institutes. May I thank you again for the great interest you all took in my work and myself these last two years.

READINESS FOR WORK—Spirit of Conventions

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Canadian citizens. Interest in this same question was very evident at Hamilton where two resolutions dealing with naturalization were presented.

Historical Research received its share of support. A few Tweedsmuir Histories were displayed at almost every convention. The convener at Timmins brought a timely reminder that these are to be local histories. A Book of Remembrance at Belleville, in which a record of all enlisted men and women is kept was typical of the interest in this phase of work. The museum at Barrie continues to grow.

Again health, education and community activities formed the bulk of the work of the Social Welfare Committee. Interest in health services was intense and in Algoma the Institutes are working to secure the services of a resident doctor by assisting with the provision of a home. Community halls were emphasized, especially at Fort Frances. Everywhere expression was given to the need for providing community recreational and social life which will appeal to young people in the post-war years.

Music brought pleasure at all meetings. Good community singing secured remarkable results and participation at many conventions. At Belleville an impromptu choir gave life to the singing. At Manitoulin a welcome in song included every Woman's Institute and special guest. A luncheon or dinner at the majority of conventions was a festive occasion.

The theme "As the Home Is, So is the Nation" typifies the importance which our Women's Institutes place on home economics. The conveners brought out the many-sided nature of this work, and the majority of discussions hinged on the importance of home living. The superintendent reviewed the Home Economics programme carried on by the Department in co-operation with the Institutes and asked for continued support.

Girls' sessions were interesting again this year. At Ottawa, Kingston and Belleville the girls presented stimulating programmes with despatch. All the girls sat on the platform throughout their session so that no time was wasted between items—a lesson which might well be applied to all convention and district annual meeting sessions. The girls told of their club work in gardening, nutrition, clothing or house furnishings in such a way that the audience realized afresh just how much these clubs mean for the development of these girls as individuals. Deserving tribute was paid to the tireless local leaders and to the Home Economics coaches in every case. At Manitoulin Island the girls demonstrated their work for the first time—a valuable innovation.

Kingston convention, meeting at Queen's University, was fortunate in securing the interest of the staff of the University. Dr. R. C. Wallace,

Principal, in his address of welcome set the stage for the deliberations of the meeting. Dr. R. G. Trotter spoke on Colonial Problems and the Post-War World; Prof. J. L. McDougall spoke on Agriculture and Reconstruction and Mr. E. C. Kyte, Librarian, on Collection of Historical Manuscripts. These were all related to the work of the W. I. Standing Committee on Citizenship, Agriculture and Historical Research.

The committees on publicity are gaining more and more support. There is a growing realization that publicity, well used, may benefit an Institute greatly and that an active Institute can not fail to secure publicity. The Ottawa convention secured good publicity through a short broadcast on the C.B.C. farm programme. At most conventions the press had representatives and tables were provided for these.

Throughout all conventions the awakened realization of the need for being well-informed, and for working as one through the Women's Institutes, in order that they may continue their good work into the post-war years, was the most encouraging feature. As the chairman of the Ottawa convention said, "We shall take home the spirit of working together".

London, Guelph and Toronto conventions are still to come and will be reported in the Winter Home and Country. Resolutions will be presented after the Provincial Board meeting.

Random Suggestions

Suggestions from conventions are many. Here are some which other officers may find useful for 1945 if they have not been tried:

Roll Call of Districts—At Belleville this was answered by a three-minute talk on Ways of Promoting Rural-Urban Understanding. This suggestion would be practical only at the smaller conventions. For success a time keeper is needed.

Introduction of Guest Speakers—Including the Provincial President and Superintendent, guest speakers were introduced at South River, at the opening session. Each member then felt free to meet and chat with the guests in a friendly way between sessions.

Question Box—Almost all conventions use this method to permit discussion of questions relating to Institute work.

Highlights of District Annuals—At Ottawa and Belleville one board director is given 15 minutes to report on the district annual meetings which she attended, thus giving suggestions to the other districts.

Badges for Voters—At Belleville small blue and yellow ribbon bows identified the voting delegates.

Mimeographed Reports—at Barrie all conveners' reports are mimeographed and copies provided for every Institute and district delegate.

NEWS FLASHES

Hopetown, Lanark N.: An Honour Roll of names and pictures of our boys in His Majesty's Services is being prepared for the public hall.

Anderdon, Essex S.: Our study of the Hand Book has awakened new interest with the result that members have purchased their own.

Consecon, Prince Edward: Meetings bolster morale in the community. Summer visitors who have attended meetings have expressed surprise and interest in the aims and objects of the W.I. work.

Kemble, Grey N.: Dental Services are being arranged for the local schools.

Derry West, Peel: The fifteenth anniversary gave us opportunity for a gala celebration, a chance to review our achievements and to entertain past members, district officers and neighbouring Institutes. The roll call was "When I became an Institute member."

Gormley, York N.: Enterprising women of this small community issue their own newspaper by collecting news and views in a scrap book called the Gormley Gazette. This is presented at each meeting.

Dornoch, Grey S.: A talk on the Hospitalization Plan resulted in the Institute making application to join in the plan.

A talk on Post-war work ended in the recommendation that members attend annual school meeting.

Hornby, Halton: We have begun the beautification of a plot of land at the corner of the 7th line and base line at Hornby by planting trees and shrubs.

Puslinch, Wellington S.: A piano was purchased by our Institute for social evenings in the town hall; we celebrated our 40th anniversary by inviting husbands and friends to lunch and games.

Smithville, Lincoln: Have three representatives on the Library Board.