

HOME and COUNTRY

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SPRING MEETING F.W.I.O

Of all reports received and discussed at Provincial Board none is of more interest than that of the Central War Charities Fund. This activity has grown each year since its beginning, and, if the committee had any doubts of reaching the objective set in November, these vanished early in the year when returns began to come in from the Institutes throughout the Province. The receipts for 1944 amounted to \$6,079.83; and for 1945 it was reported that to date \$5,687.35 had been received. Lists of contributions for January to March 1945 and the auditors' statement for 1944 have been sent to every Institute secretary. A careful study of these is urged, because these lists are the only receipts for money received. It would entail too much clerical work and postage to send receipts for each separate contribution.

The Board authorized the Central Fund Committee to investigate, and take action if funds warrant it, to provide assistance for returned men and women, especially those in hospitals, and for the relief of civilians in liberated countries.

The President's Address

Mrs. Summers in her address to the Board members outlined many possibilities for present and future activities. She urged that a liaison officer be named from each Institute to keep in touch with and report news of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. Women can do much to fight inflation. Only seventy cents worth of goods is available for every dollar to be spent and what each purchaser does matters and matters mightily. Community Activities, she stated, are a part of Institute work. Institutes may assist in establishing recreational centres, in organizing and conducting public speaking contests and musical festivals, in assistance to public libraries and in welcoming war brides. She advocated a course in Simplified Psychology designed to develop a better understanding of human behaviour and relations; and that more thought be given to the causes of such social problems as divorce and juvenile delinquency.

Advance in Rural Life

Mrs. Birdsall's message from the Federation of Agriculture meeting showed advance in rural thought and activity. Young people, she said, are taking a much greater interest in better conditions for rural life than ever before. At Mrs. Birdsall's recommendation the possibilities of developing handicrafts for Ontario as a tourist attraction are being studied by the entire board.

Miss Clarke in her address urged that Directors have a Provincial outlook and plan for District Annuals the best that can be given, not only in information but in inspiration. Institutes, she said, have opportunities to advance in the near future as never before. Women will want new outlets for their energies and activities, with opportunities outside their homes for social, recreational, educational and cultural development. They have an inestimably important place in influencing public opinion and in holding up high ideals. Women should know conditions in their own communities and seek to better those which need betterment.

(Continued on page 3, column 4)

MAKE ONTARIO MORE BEAUTIFUL STILL

By John B. Hall, President Ontario Horticultural Association

It is a pleasure to offer the co-operation of this Association to the Women's Institutes of Ontario, having in mind your extensive organization and comprehensive programme which has contributed so much to rural life in all parts of Ontario. The interest of farm women in home beautification is evident throughout the Province and has placed Ontario away above most other rural areas of North America in the attention given farm homes by way of planting and general care.

Horticultural Societies have been active since 1830 when grants were first made available by the Legislature of Upper Canada. York, now Toronto, was organized in 1934 and other old Societies include, Hamilton, 1850; Peterborough, 1861; Lindsay, 1869, and Preston, 1878. The Ontario Horticultural Association was organized in 1906 and the members are Horticultural Societies recognized by the Horticultural Societies Act and now numbering about 170. The most spectacular feature of the Ontario Association program is the annual convention attended by delegates from all parts of the Province, to exchange views, receive information and inspiration. A record attendance was registered this year, March 1 and 2, when over 600 attended the annual dinner.

Association Activities

Members of the Provincial Board include fifteen directors of districts which are each comprised of two or more counties. These districts are quite active in organizing zone meetings, district shows, demonstrations and tours; but the most practical work for the amateur gardener is done by the local societies in the promotion of shows, 'Victory' and other garden competitions, the encouragement to juniors and, particularly, public beautification.

While it is true that the majority of societies are centred in urban municipalities, there are many village and township societies and the Association always gives a very prominent place to rural beautification in the yearly program.

In recent years, rural school ground improvement has been a feature, the effect of which is becoming evident throughout the Province. In 1944,

eleven inspectorate competitions were held, with 93 schools competing, the winners of which were eligible to enter the Provincial contest for which the J. E. Carter and other trophies are offered. For a county or school inspectorate competition, a minimum of five schools is required. To broaden the program to permit recognition of schools doing effective work in areas where there is no organized competition, a new policy became effective this year. In this, the Ontario Horticultural Association offers a suitable diploma to be awarded to the rural school in each township making the most improvement in grounds during the school year, September, 1944, to June 30, 1945. This Association has long promoted reforestation and this year is sponsoring school forestry competitions. The winning school in each of five zone competitions will be eligible to compete in a Provincial contest for which the first prize is \$50.00.

Opportunities Open

The extreme shortage of labour, particularly on farms, has postponed the execution of many plans for home improvement. Tired farmers and their wives haven't much energy to devote to beautification after taking care of first things first in the food production program. Thanks to our gallant soldiers, well supported by home folks in this and other countries, the war appears to be drawing to a close and it is not too soon to consider plans for all those things we would like to do to make our homes more attractive. In the post-war years, many new homes will be built, but a still larger number will be repaired, altered or remodelled. The slogan of the Association, "It is not a home until it is planted", has particular application to farms where a house looks so lonely without trees and shrubs for shelter and to tie it into the landscape.

Space is limited and it would be unwise for me to attempt definite recommendations, as conditions vary so greatly. Perhaps a few suggestions for farm home planting would be in order. Planning is urged as the first step. A plan need not be elaborate, but, if planting is commenced without one, there may be much disappointment later, when full grown trees

may have to be cut down or remain a source of annoyance for a generation. The purpose of each tree or shrub should be considered carefully and planted accordingly. Windbreaks should be placed so that they can be seen to the best advantage in all their beauty, and where at least some of them provide shade. Such trees should not be placed to obstruct the view of a house, detract from its beauty or to interrupt the vistas from its windows. The purpose of foundation planting is to screen rather unsightly house foundations and to blend the house into the ground. Small trees and shrubs for this should be ornamental and the final growth kept in mind. While deciduous shrubs or trees may be used, the winter effect is important and for this evergreens are very effective. Reliable nurseries offer a choice of ornamental trees and shrubs suitable for lawn purposes and the cost is justified, considering the effect and satisfaction. But, if it is felt that the cost is too great, there are many native trees and shrubs which may be used effectively.

Flowers for Beauty

The choice of flowers for farm homes depends greatly on the amount of time available for their care. Perennials provide much beauty for little labour and, perhaps, peonies head the list, with iris next. Consideration may also be given to hardy asters, herbaceous spiraeas, bleeding-heart, lilies, poppies, phlox, and a few specimen plants of your choice. If possible, the perennial border should be placed where it can be seen from the house windows, and this applies also to beds of annuals grown for landscape beauty or cut flowers. The scented flowers produced for their fragrance should not be overlooked.

A farm home is not confined to a house lot, but should include the entire farm. Trees on a distant bare spot will not only provide shade for the cattle, but will add to the view from the home window. Apart from other advantages, a reforested area seen from the house will give much satisfaction.

Sources of Information

As little detailed information can be given in a short article, it is fortunate that pamphlets are available from several sources, including The Publication Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa; The Department of Horticulture, O.A.C., Guelph; and the Agricultural and Horticultural Societies Branch, Department of Agriculture, Toronto. Speakers on horticultural subjects may sometimes be provided by the Department of Agriculture, but, unfortunately, the number is too limited to take care of the increasing demand. This Association has prepared a list of qualified speakers and judges for Flower Shows and these are located in all parts of the Province.

On behalf of the Association, I extend thanks for the co-operation of Women's Institute Branches in our program. We hope we may depend upon your continuing assistance in "Making Ontario more beautiful still".

A REMINDER

District Secretaries:

Have you sent the following report forms to the Department? They are due immediately after the District Annual Meeting.

- (1) Form E's from every Institute.
- (2) Forms A, A1, B and C for the district.

District Conveners:

Has the report of your committee been sent to the area convener? Her name and address is on page four and these reports are due now.

All reports should be signed with the name of the convener, her title, the district and her address, e.g. Miss Margaret Cameron, Convener of Social Welfare, Addington District, Newburgh, Ontario.