

F.W.I.O. Board Meeting

From a Report by Ina Hodgins

ONE OF THE busiest and most interesting annual meetings of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario was held in Toronto in November, but through the sessions, in spite of the warm friendliness prevailing, ran a feeling of nostalgia — the realization that this was the last meeting over which Mrs. Purcell was to preside, Mrs. McCulloch to act as Secretary and Mrs. Futcher to present the resolutions.

Mrs. Purcell's executive ability, her generous response to the many demands made upon her, her breadth of vision and her interest in the small branch members as well as the larger branches across Ontario, made her an outstanding President. Mrs. McCulloch endeared herself, not only to the Board, but also to the members all over Ontario who have received her letters. Her unfailing friendly courtesy will long be remembered. She never spared herself in the fulfilment of the many and varied duties of Secretary-Treasurer and her contribution during the past seven years has been most valuable. Mrs. Futcher's wealth of experience, her fine judgment and keen grasp of the problems and wishes of the Institutes made her well equipped for the task of convener of resolutions.

After the opening exercises the President welcomed the members and extended thanks to Miss Lewis and the Women's Institute Branch, to Mrs. McCulloch, Mrs. Futcher and to all the members of the Provincial Board for their support and co-operation during her term of office. 1953 had been a very full year. Altogether she had spent 18 weeks away from home attending to F.W.I.O. matters.

There have been three main projects carried through in the past three years aside from routine annual activities: the Tractor and Flour Fund for Greece, the Penny Round Up for the Canadian Mental Health Association and the A.C.W.W. Conference. All owe their success to the co-operation and interest of all our W.I. branches in the Province, and Mrs. Purcell stated that she realized as never before that while the F.W.I.O. Board may set the policy, we must depend upon the local groups for the successful outcome of all our plans.

Mrs. Purcell's Message

Mrs. Purcell spoke on "The Place of Women in a Changing World," saying in part "When Mrs. Hoodless conceived the idea of having rural women meet together to study and to plan for better homes and families and improved conditions in the communities, she little thought how far the results of her

idea would reach, or what changes would take place in the status of women in the next fifty years. At that time women's place was considered to be largely in the home, and she was kept busy with her home duties for her family and had little time for outside activities. Today the picture has changed. Electricity, cars, planes, radio, telephone, television, all of these amazing inventions of the last century have given the woman in the home more time to use in outside activities and have brought the world to her door so that she sees the need of an increasing interest and help outside the home. She is beginning to realize that her interests in life should be broadened and that she possesses great potentiality for good in the world. In many situations we need the woman with her fresh view point to point the way. So we find women taking their places alongside the men in most fields of industry and professions. Women are acting on school boards and municipal councils. They are serving as mayors of towns and cities and doing it well. Just the other day four women were welcomed into the Federal House. The Senate now has five women. We have asked for equality and in most cases we have got it. If we are to keep our position, if we are to use the vote intelligently, we must keep alert to changes in community life and adjust ourselves to them.

"But this deals only with the individual woman. What is our place in this changing world as a group? Are we still thinking back in the days of Adelaide Hoodless or have we grown with the times? Has our Women's Institute degenerated into a social get-together or developed into a money making social service group? How many of our local Women's Institutes realize that our primary aim is adult education—education of the homemaker, yes, of course, in order to give our families better health, better nutrition and better living standards, but even more, education of our members by study, panel discussions, by reading—to make them more conversant with the needs of our world today. It is time that we took a new assessment of our groups to see if we are growing up. There are many channels of learning open to us and the field of study is unlimited. How can we develop a wish to know more and to learn more? I leave the answer for you to work out. As I turn the last page of my record of service as Provincial President, I am going to throw out to you this challenge: You are the liaison between the Women's Institute in your subdivision and the Provincial Board. What can we, the Provincial Board, do to give better