



Children selected from four schools to take part in the Book Quiz. Among the books presented to them for this service we see such titles as "Lassie Come Home",

"Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch", "Anne of Avonlea", "Dainty, a Story of a Foxhound", "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm".

# A Book Quiz to Combat the Comics

By Mrs. Frank Alexander

THE need for some incentive for children to read better books was self-evident at a Citizenship and Education meeting of Elmview Women's Institute in March, 1953. A questionnaire had been sent to two local schools regarding their reading habits and favorite radio programs. The answers, without names, were passed around to our members, many of them mothers of the pupils. The long lists of comic books, with little or no mention of library books, were viewed in horror.

Then, in September we noticed an item in an American magazine stating that the American Association of University Women had sponsored a Radio Book Quiz. So the idea was born! At our October meeting everyone was interested and a committee of three was appointed to organize the "Better Reading Campaign."

We selected a list of well-known books—from 10 to 15 is a suitable number—including Alice in Wonderland, Black Beauty, Tom Sawyer, Bambi, Little Women, Treasure Island, Pinocchio, Heidi, Robinson Crusoe, Beautiful Jo, and Anne of Green Gables. Besides being popular we thought these books were most apt to be found in a rural school library.

Letters were sent to four local schools advising them of the contest and stating a few rules. The children were to read as many books as possible from the list. The quiz was to be in the Spring and two pupils from each school could enter (preferably a boy and a

girl). About two weeks before the quiz each contestant was required to write a letter to the committee stating his name, age, grade, books read, his favourite book and why. More than the chosen two could apply in case of last minute substitution. Each child participating was to receive a good book as a prize while the boy and girl with highest points were to receive two books to help start their home library.

Then the committee had to read the books, making out questions and answers. We had about twenty questions from each book before we finally chose 120 of the best ones. These proved to be more than sufficient. We had to be very careful that each question could have only one possible answer from the whole book. The answers had to be short. Each question had to stand by itself and not depend on a previous answer. The questions had to be interesting for both contestant and audience, e.g. "What did Anne put in the cake by mistake the day that the minister and his wife came to tea?" Also "Why did Tom Sawyer and Huck take the dead cat to the graveyard at midnight?" By recalling these incidents other children might want to read the books.

In order to ensure a large audience of children each school was asked to provide two numbers for a program. Three children's films were also shown. Immediately before the quiz began the children were taken aside and each contestant chose a different book on which