

The Officers' Conference

WHEN the seventh annual Officers' Conference of the Ontario Women's Institutes met at the Ontario Agricultural College on May 11, 12 and 13 the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable F. S. Thomas, came to pay tribute to the organization and to pledge the support of his Department. Previously the Minister had discussed with the Provincial Board plans for the future of the three colleges on the campus — the Ontario Agricultural College, the Ontario Veterinary College and Macdonald Institute, and plans for co-ordinating all extension services of the Department.

Welcoming the delegates to the College, the President, Dr. J. A. MacLachlan, asked the women as mothers and women interested in the good of Ontario, to try to assess the opportunities the College offers in agriculture and in home economics, then to take it upon themselves to see if any young persons in the community have the interest and the aptitude to qualify them as students in these courses. Dr. MacLachlan said he had made the same request last year and, whether or not as a result of the women's efforts, the attendance in the diploma course in agriculture had increased by thirty per cent this year and the degree course by thirty-five per cent. Because the business of farming is becoming more complex all the time, the President said, farmers need all the knowledge they can get to cope with conditions. In the professional field, the demand for graduates in agriculture far exceeds the supply and more will be needed in the years ahead.

Dr. Margaret McCready, Principal of Macdonald Institute paid tribute to the Women's Institutes for all they had done for this school of Home Economics from the time Mrs. Hoodless persuaded Sir William Macdonald and the Government to establish the school, up to today when so many Women's Institutes are providing scholarships. As in the case of agriculture, there are more positions open to Home Economics graduates than there are graduates to fill them, and Dr. McCready suggested that Institute women might discover girls with a talent for home economics and might let her know about these girls.

Looking forward to the development of Macdonald Institute, Dr. McCready spoke of plans in the areas of child study and personal relations, graduate research in food and nutrition, textiles and household equipment. Speaking of the farm home, Dr. McCready said: "We feel it is as important to mechanize the farm home as it is to mechanize the farm, if women are going to do the double job of homemaker and citizen."

Mrs. W. T. Ewen, formerly Miss Anna P.

Lewis, Director of the Women's Institute Branch, brought greetings to the conference. Mrs. Ewen thanked the Institutes for their expressions of good wishes in cards and letters and for the F.W.I.O. Board's gift of a crystal set on behalf of the Institutes. Her ten years as Director had been an enriching and rewarding experience, Mrs. Ewen said, and she would still be with the Institutes heart and soul. Her final word was to "keep up the good work for friendliness and social service in the local community, the nation and the world community."

The President's Address

"A Brighter Women's Institute Future" was the subject of Mrs. MacPhatter's address, Mrs. MacPhatter said:

"Each of us who are the V.I.P.'s (very important persons) in Women's Institute work has a part to play in building for a brighter future. In the first place the future will be brightened immediately upon the recognition of the fact that each member of every Branch in the province is a very important person—a link in a chain which is comprised of 45,000 links. If one link in that great chain is weak, does not hold up her end, the whole chain is weakened. Ask yourself today: "Am I a strong link or am I the one which will weaken the chain?" For a successful future we must have 45,000 strong links who are continually looking toward **lengthening** the chain which is named F.W.I.O.

Each of us can develop characteristics which will strengthen us as a link. I am going to mention four of these characteristics and I have developed them from the four letters, F.W.I.O.: F—for forthrightness, W—for wisdom, I—integrity, O—Organizational ability.

First of all let us consider the first characteristic whose development will brighten our Women's Institute future.

Forthrightness — the dictionary gives the meaning of this word to be "straightforward" or "direct." A Women's Institute member with this characteristic will be the person who speaks her considered opinion in a meeting. She will not wait till the meeting is over, and then discuss, on the way home, how the matter should have been settled. She will be honest in her opinions and dealings and of course never, never will she be two-faced, or a fence-straddler. It is not easy to be forthright in your opinions, for often there are those who cannot agree with you. But the Women's Institute member who is direct and straightforward, who goes behind no one's back, who has a forthright manner of expressing her opinion and in sticking to it, will do