

F.W.I.O. Regional Vice-Presidents: Left to right: Mrs. A. L. Gibson, Eastern Ontario; Mrs. Keith Edwards, Western Ontario; Mrs. D. J. Goddard, Northern Ontario. Each of these Vice-Presidents presided at a session of the Officers' Conference.



tude, the speaker felt, was necessary if we were to do our part in ushering in "the Parliament of man, the federation of the world"

### A.C.W.W. News

Mrs. Hugh Summers, A.C.W.W. Regional Vice-President, brought news of the international organization. Sketching the development of work done by organized country women over the world, Mrs. Summers reported that in Malaya they are just beginning to teach the women in the villages. In Lebanon centres have been set up to teach women how to grow and can tomatoes and other vegetables. In Pakistan where refugees have poured in since Pakistan was divided from India the women are trying to build houses to rent to them. They have also built a hospital. When Mrs. Berry, A.C.W.W. President, visited the Scandinavian countries and Holland and Germany, she found that in villages where electricity has been introduced recently, laundry centres have been set up where country women can come and do their washing and ironing by electricity. Now Mrs. Berry is visiting in Africa where the newest constituent society has two thousand native women, and interest is growing in Thailand, Burma, India, Austria and Turkey.

"The A.C.W.W. builds international friendships," Mrs. Summers said. "It has an important place in F.A.O., U.N.E.S.C.O. and all the other agencies of the United Nations. Because the next triennial conference will be held in Ceylon we are especially interested in that country. It was in 1935 that Dr. Mary Rutnam, an Ontario woman who had married a Singapore, started Women's Institutes in Ceylon." At that time, Mrs. Summers explained, malaria was a prevalent disease in Ceylon. In 1937 around 100,000 died of this disease. Then the Institutes undertook to distribute tablets and to teach better food habits. When D.D.T. came along they sprayed the breeding grounds of the malaria mosquito with the result that in 1947 many villages had no malaria at all.

The people of Ceylon were poor so the Institutes developed handicrafts using native materials and they try to find a market for them. They also promote good social times with sing-

ing and folk dancing and in harvest time the women join forces to take in the crops. A recent project is setting up centres to train girls to go out and teach crafts and homemaking in the villages.

"Up to 1952," Mrs. Summers said, "the Ceylon Institutes received a grant from the Government. In 1953 this grant was withdrawn. Now they are in need of funds, but this spurs them on to do still more. In the face of difficulty they have gone on to do greater things. And they haven't done this by giving away their money to other organizations."

### The Role of Rural Women

Maud Kerr, Women's Editor of The Family Herald and Weekly Star, whose editorials "Thoughts By the Way" have a large following of rural readers, sketched the changing conditions of life for rural women and the role they have served from the time of Queen Elizabeth the First to the present days of Elizabeth the Second. There were the battles with disease in the "glorious age" of the first Elizabeth, the heavy duties expected of the farmer's wife at that time; then the revival of religious feeling that stirred women to philanthropic interests and produced Elizabeth Fry, Elizabeth Gaskell and feminists like Mary Wollstonecraft. There was the growing interest in education for women, and at the same time the time-consuming housekeeping of the Victorian era; the laborious lot of the pioneer women in this country and a little later the emancipation of the farm women closely linked with the founding of the Women's Institute.

Closing her address, Mrs. Kerr said:

"And what of the future? For the age of Elizabeth the Second we have great hopes. Yet, whatever the accomplishments that this and successive generations of women achieve, whatever the heights to which they may aspire, their greatest sphere of influence will continue to be in that special world which they, themselves, create—in the million and one little tasks of housework—in the meals they cook, in the haven of security they make for their families, in the babies they bear and send out into the world. Of all the fibres womankind can knit into the fabric of the world, her home