

A photo taken at the Ceylon Institutes' Annual Meeting last year. The speaker is Mrs. Pritt, British West Indies, with Mrs. Gunawardene translating. Some of our readers will have met Mrs. de Mel, third from left, at the A.C.W.W. Conference here. — Photo by Rohini.



#### A.C.W.W. Conference

Referring to the coming A.C.W.W. conference, we have this message from the Ceylon Institutes Central Board:

"Ceylon will be the venue for the next Triennial Conference in 1956. Here 500 delegates from all parts of the world will gather together . . . Women of diverse creeds, nationalities and dialects will meet and exchange views, pool ideas and experiences. From our little Island home the force of its united voice will be heard in the Council Chambers of the world, and yet another link will be added creating anew that which is perhaps 'the greatest need in the world today — International understanding and good-will'."

the village women playing the Rabana. Our colourful folk dancing, and our traditional crafts were seen and appreciated by the women of that far away land. They got a glimpse of the manners and mode of life of our own country women, and so the exchange program goes on. From many a land across the seas come messages and attractive parcels and our villagers see the snow-capped mountain of Switzerland, the beauty of the peasant's craft work, the rugged stillness of the German countryside, the colourful beauty and varied activities of the women of Pakistan and India.

"They in their turn get a glimpse of Ceylon's culture and our traditional crafts and see the simple beauty of our village life."

## Elgin Institutes Start a County Museum

**E**ARLY in the year, twenty-eight representative women from the Women's Institutes of Elgin County met and decided to go ahead with plans to establish an Elgin County museum. They looked over an Historic old home in St. Thomas, decided it would make a most desirable museum building and found that the couple owning it would sell it, making some rooms immediately available for a museum and continuing to live in part of the house for an indefinite period. The women were happy about this arrangement because they had planned, when the museum is completed, to have living quarters for a resident curator so that the articles will always be under surveillance. Something that makes this museum unique in the province is that the building was the first Medical School in Upper Canada and the old apothecary cupboards are still there.

Two Boards were set up, one honorary, the other active, to advise as to procedure when needed. The honorary patrons and patronesses include the two Members of Parliament of the County, the Warden of the County, the Mayor of St. Thomas and others especially interested in the history of the district. On the active Board are the editor and the women's editor of the St. Thomas Times-Journal, a city engineer, the County agricultural representative, the historical conveners of the Women's Institute districts of East Elgin and West

Elgin, and other public-spirited men and women of the County. The committee asked for the services of Miss Ruth Hone, formerly of the Museum Branch of the Ontario Government and now with the Ontario College of Art, to help with the plans in preparing the house for a museum. Mrs. Stanley Lyle, president of the joint Institute districts of East and West Elgin, presided over the initial meeting and Mrs. J. R. Fitcher, permanent Institute chairman of the museum committee and a moving spirit in the project conducted the session dealing with plans.

It is reported that the cost of the building will be around ten thousand dollars. Each Institute in the County made plans to carry out some money-raising project during the winter with the objective of having from their joint efforts at least one thousand dollars by spring. In June the Institutes will start a campaign to canvass all the rural residents of the County for contributions and towns-people will also be given an opportunity to help.

It should be mentioned that before they actually launched the founding of a museum the Women's Institutes of Elgin County had done a lot of educational work such as setting up displays of local museum articles in store windows during centennial celebrations, to arouse the public interest.