

# F. W. I. O. Board Meeting

By INA HODGINS

THE ANNUAL meeting of the Provincial Board of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario was held in the Royal York Hotel on November 14, 15, 16 and 17th, 1955 with the Provincial President, Mrs. Gordon MacPhatter, presiding.

After the opening exercises the President extended a warm welcome to all present with a special welcome to the new Board members. Mrs. MacPhatter tendered the sincere thanks and appreciation of the Board to Miss Chapman who has done everything possible at all times to be of assistance and to her, and to the staff of the Women's Institute Branch for many services made available to the F.W.I.O. She also wished to thank Mrs. Maynard, Secretary-Treasurer; Mrs. Gibson, Vice-President; Mrs. Purcell, Honorary President; Mrs. Guild, Conference and Holiday Secretary, for their co-operation and ready help.

Mrs. MacPhatter expressed the pleasure of the Board at the appointment of Miss Helen McKercher as Director of Home Economics Extension Service.

Mrs. MacPhatter gave a brief resume of her activities during the past year and all realized what a very full and active life for service the President of F.W.I.O. lives.

## THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Mrs. MacPhatter based her address on a quotation from Mrs. Alfred Watt when she gave up the Presidency of A.C.W.W. at the age of seventy-nine: "I would ask you to keep the whole organization as simple as you can. There is only one way of achieving equality of all members, that is to give them equal rights, equal privileges and equal responsibilities."

Mrs. MacPhatter wondered if we are living up to this statement in our Provincial and National Organization. "Are we keeping our organization simple enough that it is of interest to all our members old and young, new and experienced?" she asked. "I cannot help but wonder if all our by-laws and rulings and constitutions may not be a bit confusing to both our very old members and our very young. Sometimes I wonder when I am attempting to steer a branch, district, area or even our own Board through motions, amendments, amendments to amendments—why we allow ourselves to get into such confusion. Why don't we lose the motion that we wish amended and start from scratch? Education is a fine thing, and we are fast becoming a highly educated and capable group of women. But in our maze of procedure technicalities, our multitude of activities—our innumerable side issues under consideration, I wonder if

we are losing sight of the simple, fine and basic organization that is ours. Our thoughts should continually point to the fact that our first interests are for the betterment of our homes which will inevitably lead us to a fine interest in the country of which we are so proud.

"Mrs. Watt expressed the view that all members of our organization should be given equality—and this can only be done through the dispensation of equal rights, privileges and responsibilities. This is my very reason for saying so many times in your hearing that I feel that our Board cannot dictate to our Branch members. We may advise—even cajole—but we should never hand down a decision without having first given the branch members the right to reach a decision. At the same time I feel that our members, if they are to be always accorded equal rights and privileges, should be willing to shoulder the many responsibilities of an organization which has become world recognized. These branch members are privileged to be a part in one of the world's great organizations. Do they all realize this—and accept the responsibilities which such a privilege entails? We have a responsibility to our branch, certainly. In accepting this responsibility we must be ready always to contribute to the needs of the branch. Contribute ability—be willing to serve as an officer, contribute financially, or just be a generally efficient and co-operative member.

"But, as well, we must realize that we have a wide horizon. This horizon has grown during past years with such speed that perhaps it has been difficult for us to keep abreast of this growth in our thinking and in our acceptance of the responsibilities which inevitably come with expansion. International responsibilities entail a study of our sister organizations all over the world—and a true desire to help when aid is required. National responsibility rests in our realization that our Provinces must be more closely knit by way of a national office, and a national convention. We must train ourselves to think nationally.

"Provincial responsibilities are many and diversified. I feel there is a great need of study of our Provincial Board at branch, district and area level. To acquaint ourselves with the organizational policies of this Board will bring us a clearer understanding of the real reason behind the existence of our organization. For, as our work during the next few days will prove, our interest is to consider questions on behalf of members all over the province. You are, each one of you, elected members from your part of the Province. As