

time to time in the Farmer's Advocate, particularly Forgotten Children in Our Rural Schools, October 9, 1954, the Travelling Teacher of Wellington South, February 11, 1956 and Our Little Girl was Born Deaf, February 23, 1957.

An Institute Project

In the meantime the original resolution from our Branch Women's Institute had passed through the regular channels of District and Area to the Provincial Board and a committee had been set up by the board to study this problem of the retarded rural school child. Interest in the project was spreading. Letters of inquiry came to members of the committee, indicating that there were many rural homes where a handicapped child and his peculiar needs provided a problem too large for the parents to solve alone.

In our community, neighbouring branches became interested. There were discussions, speakers, visits to the area school boards, press comments. Enheartened by an enthusiastic Inspector of Schools in the person of Mr. W. G. Anderson of Oxford County, two area school boards got together, discussed and surveyed the situation, and finally voted to co-operate in employing a teacher of special education. An advertisement was prepared, a generous salary offered, but alas there was no teacher to accept the position.

Special Teachers Needed

Now we come to the greatest hindrance in the development of this project—namely, the lack of interested and skilled teachers. In order to obtain a permanent qualification a teacher must have successful teaching experience and then attend two of the summer sessions in Toronto. In addition to this requirement the successful remedial teacher will have in his heart a concern for this type of child. Some teachers have said that they are interested in this work but would hesitate to dedicate themselves to it for their whole teaching career. This should not be necessary, but what a wonderful background a few years of such teaching would be for one who aspires to be a Principal or an Inspector of Schools. There are some places, we understand, where this type of experience is prerequisite for a position of greater responsibility.

Disappointed that teachers of special education were not available, Woodstock North Institute members decided to offer some inducement so that experienced teachers would find it worth while to take the course. If the boards could find a suitable prospect who had yet to take the training, the local Branch decided to offer a generous bursary to help to defray expenses. Again there were disappointments. One who would have been a splendid applicant had to withdraw for personal reasons. Another year went by.

Now there came encouraging word from Inspectorate No. 3 of Grey County. Though



Mr. Fred Reynolds, itinerant remedial teacher in action in a rural school working with a child having a serious speech difficulty.

we do not know the story of how this co-operative scheme was organized, we do think it important to include here a report from W. G. Rae, Inspector of Public Schools, to show how wonderfully successful it has been.

"In September of 1956 the five township school area school boards of Grey No. 3 Inspectorate, organized co-operatively under Inspector W. G. Rae, engaged the second itinerant auxiliary-remedial teacher to serve in the rural schools of Ontario. The first such service was provided in Wellington No. 2 Inspectorate—Mr. W. R. McVittie, Inspector in 1954.

"Mr. Fred J. Reynolds left the staff of Kitchener Public Schools, where he was a special teacher, to take on this pioneering effort in South Grey. His duties have taken him into 49 schools, all of them but two being one-roomed schools. He has made regular visits to some twenty-odd schools where pupils who, because of their inability for various reasons to progress in their studies at a normal or average pace, have become retarded and frustrated.

"By the spring of 1958 sufficient time had elapsed to evaluate objectively the progress of the pupils so helped and it was found that most of the pupils, after being given a new start at achievement levels within their ability, had been able to increase their rate of progress by several times that prevailing before the remedial programme started. In one township the average increase in progress rate over a six month period was 240%, in another the average was 116%, in one it was 99%, and in the other two 72% and 54% respectively.