

Ontario Girls' Conference

THE annual conference of 4H Homemaking Club girls held at the Ontario Agricultural College in June, was the occasion for celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of 4H Homemaking Clubs in Ontario.

Opening the conference, Miss Florence Eadie, Supervisor of Junior Extension work with Home Economics Service, told the girls that in going over their records from their County Home Economists she had marvelled at all the things they do, their school work, their music and hobbies, participation in sports, community activities, work and home responsibilities. "How do you crowd so much into your busy days?" asked Miss Eadie. "You must have to make many decisions as to what to leave out. It may mean giving up a party or a ball game in order to keep up that most important school work or to lend a hand at home when required."

"Since it is our quarter century mark," said Miss Eadie, "your conference theme is 'Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.' I hope you will take a quick look at the past, a thoughtful look at today—what you are doing, what you want to do and what you should be doing—and a look ahead to the next twenty-five years with high hopes and expectations for your future . . . As we think of your opportunities we ask—and I hope you do the same: 'Are you reaching the top of your ability? Are you using and developing your greatest potentials? What is the ratio of your ability to your actual accomplishment?'"

Miss Eadie suggested that some important features of the conference were the opportunity to make friends and to enjoy the beauty of the college campus. If the girls were fortunate "they might even see a gorgeous red cardinal."

A Welcome To the College

Paying a tribute to 4H Homemaking Club work in its first twenty-five years, and to the foundation laid by past members, Dr. J. D. MacLachlan, President of the Ontario Agricultural College, said to the girls, "You're picking up the masonry at this stage and building for the future."

"The O.A.C.," the President said, "is eighty-six years old, but it isn't a crotchety old man walking with a cane. Eighty-six is young for a college compared with those hundreds of years old in older countries."

Dr. MacLachlan traced the development of the college from "a livestock farm with a stone house," to the present set up with three colleges on the campus—the Ontario Agricultural College, the Ontario Veterinary College and Macdonald Institute. And he explained that teaching is only one of the responsibilities of the college; a great part of its programme is in the field of agricultural research and extension service. Every year from fifty to sixty thousand people come to the college on extension interests. One extension

project Dr. MacLachlan recommended for the girls' special attention was a demonstration in landscaping on the college grounds.

Following a tour of Macdonald Institute, Dr. Margaret McCready, Principal, described the courses: the four-year Degree Course in Home Economics, open to students who have completed Grade XIII at high school, a course "which not only equips a girl for an interesting and exciting vocation but also to be an understanding and capable homemaker"; and the one-year Diploma Course, open to girls who have completed Grade XI, a course to be highly recommended for any young woman. Dr. McCready emphasized the importance of education in home economics in these times of rapid change if we are to keep the home on an even keel in spite of the influences affecting it.

Women in the Home

Speaking on "Women Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," Padre W. A. Young of the College said that women are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow because fundamentally human nature does not change. But conditions change and "the good old days weren't always so good." "Your grandmothers lived in the horse and buggy days," said Padre Young; "the automobile gave women mobility. Grandmother had to pump the water and thaw the pump in winter; now you have water on tap. Grandmother used coal-oil lamps and did the family washing on a washboard; now ninety per cent of rural homes have electric light and power. Home labor savers today give women spare time—they can get out to Institute meetings. In grandmother's youth about the only vocations open to women were teaching and nursing; but because of the labor shortage in the last world war, women worked in factories. They felt the thrill of earning money and after the war they found it hard to go back to living on their husbands' handouts. Besides it takes a lot of money to keep up with modern home improvements, so we have working wives."

Mr. Young made a strong case for the importance of having a mother in the home where there are children. He said, "When a child comes home from school the first thing he does when he comes into the house is to call 'Hi, Mom!' And if Mom isn't there the house is empty and bleak and drear and cold. With schools putting on extra-curricular activities, with nursery schools and cubs and scouts and brownies and 4H clubs, one of the most serious dangers we're facing today is that the home will become just a place to eat and sleep; and when homes deteriorate the nation does too."

"There is no place," Mr. Young said to the girls, "where you can make a greater contribution to the nation than you can make in a home." He hoped many of them would become farmers' wives because the future of the family farm has