

Institutes Confer on Films

By Ethel McCandless

AS GUEST speaker at the London District Women's Institute Film Institute Day, Mrs. L. G. Lymburner, President Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, had as her theme "Whither Now?" The Film Day was held in June in Huron College, University of Western Ontario, London.

"It is true that this is the day of the specialist, and if organizations are to thrive, then they too must be discriminating in the type of programme they provide for their members," said Mrs. Lymburner. Every effort should be made to have a programme balanced to the needs of the membership and every programme should give, if we are to live up to the ideals of the Women's Institute, encouragement to add to the members' education and development of skills. It is simply not enough to say that we have devoted one meeting to each of the Standing Committees each year. If we are to be concerned with Citizenship and Education, then we could spend one entire year studying various facets of either or both of these subjects since there are many problems facing us under these headings, none of which can be summarily dismissed with a paper given by one of the members or even an address by someone who may be looked to as an authority.

Mrs. Lymburner went on to say it is almost always easy for the Convener of a Standing Committee to invite someone to speak on a subject and at the end of the year report to the District Convener that "Mrs. Smith was the speaker, giving a review of the history of the schools in the area, and we had a roll call with each member telling where she attended school." It may seem that the programme had been carried out as organized, but the branch had failed to recognize that under all the other Standing Committees some study could have been made, using this one, Citizenship and Education, as a lead.

Mrs. Lymburner suggested two programmes, the Making of Bread and the Making of Soap, that would fit into a Women's Institute programme. As to the Making of Bread, it could be done under the convenership of Home Economics and Health with the help of Historical Research, Citizenship and Education Standing Committees, tracing the early Egyptians baking bread made out of flour from the same rushes out of which Papyrus, the forerunner of parchment and paper, was made; that bread was first made into flat cakes, laid out on stones which had been heated by the sun, and the cakes left to dry out.

Researching for this programme, it would be found that there were many types of meal developed through the ages to be used as flour for the making of bread, and that there are many fables and proverbs in which bread is used to tell a particular tale. Much could be learned about

countries in which various types of bread are found, and to find out why a particular bread is native to that country, or part of the country.

There are many old wives' tales about bread, and Mrs. Lymburner told one about All Hallows Eve in Mexico. The natives take bread and a candle and both are placed on the graves of their loved ones. It is a time of rejoicing because they believe on this night of the year the spirit of their loved one comes to be with them for their short earthly stay. It is a good thing to know, too, how much nutrition your family can obtain from one slice of bread daily as compared with one potato or an orange.

This is not a programme you would have at one meeting, but would be a continuing one through several months. This would mean work, but who benefits most from this work? "You," said Mrs. Lymburner "who have dug into encyclopedias, haunted libraries, looked for information in museums, consulted the Women's Institute Loan Library and the Film Council in your locality to see what could be found to assist you in this programme. You would also call upon authorities on the subject to give you information, but they couldn't give you all the phases in which you would be interested, and you do want a programme that develops the members. Until we set out to do a thing we cannot know how far our capacity can be stretched." Mrs. Lymburner reiterated her statement made at the Officers' Conference that she was convinced that every human being has a talent. The trouble is, she said, we are so busy imitating someone else that we haven't the time to discover our own talent or develop it to its full capacity.

Talking of Making Soap, here again we go back to ancient times when the Egyptian women used oil for cleansing purposes. And what about the method of making hard and soft soap from fat, lye and ashes as our grandmothers and great-grandmothers did? This is a lost art today, and while it may not be superior to what we use now, we need to keep alive these memories at least. We accept and take for granted all the things we have on hand for our use today, and we have no curiosity as to how they came about, said Mrs. Lymburner.

She spoke of many changes made through the last few decades, many for our own pleasure and advantage, and many world-shaking; and of how surprised we were when they appeared because we were unprepared for them. No one could be prepared for all the changes, but we need to be an informed people so that we may better evaluate the surprises and that we may even be prepared in a small way that they be not so shaking for us; and what is far more important, that we may be women who are capable of taking our places in the community to assume our fair share of responsibility for the well being