

keeping of business records, the use of farm credit, etc. The next logical step will be their active participation in formulating and carrying out policies and programmes of concern to themselves and all farmers through organizations such as this Federation of Agriculture.

The Federation of Agriculture I am sure is well aware that recently (August 1960) the index of farm prices declined and yet the Consumer price index for September 1960 rose—incidentally it was the food component of this index which showed the greatest gain. Your organization is very much aware of these economic indicators and their implications for the business aspects of agriculture. As farmers' wives you are aware that the prices you receive for your farm products rarely goes up while the prices of the multitude of things you buy as consumers rarely stops going up.

Have farm women faced these facts and worked with their husbands and their children to plan their own future adjustments as family units? It is only by attempting to understand the broader aspects of farming as a part of the national economy that we can get some conception of those forces which affect our lives now and in the future.

We all know that the proportion of farm population to total population has declined steadily over the years. We not only have a proportionately small (about 17 per cent) rural population but we have fewer farms. Yet we have farms of larger acreage. The trend is to a fewer number of farms and to larger sized farms. Why? One reason is that increased production is necessary to bring in the income which today is generally desired and needed by farm families. Not all families can expand or desire to expand their farm business operations. What is the alternative?

What role can the farm wife play in making adjustments to these forces in the next ten years? The same role she has always played as a full partner with her husband in facing facts realistically; and in continuing to seek the best possible life for the family, realizing that the traditional ways of doing this will not be adequate for the future. Some wives will have to keep the farm going while their husbands find off-farm employment. Some wives will return to paid work to help the family finances, some families will move off the farm to the cities. Some will maintain the prosperous farms they now have.

Over and above these adjustments there are many other ways the farm wife can broaden her contribution to her family and to society;

She can encourage and enable her children to receive the formal and informal education and training needed both for economic survival as a full time farm operator, as a part time farmer or in non-farm occupations today and tomorrow.

She can keep alive in her family the attitudes and values which stabilize and bring happiness in family life.

She can and must be adaptable no matter what lies ahead. She must be ready to learn more and more about homemaking and about farming as a business operation and to apply this learning to her own family and community.

Research findings from the special study of Ontario Farm Homes and Homemakers which

was initiated by the Ontario Department of Agriculture clearly shows that most of the Ontario farm women of today want to remain on the family farm. It is possible for some but not all families to do so.

The challenge for those who wish to remain as farmers' wives is to help their husbands survive economically as farmers. This requires constant and increasing knowledge and application of agricultural technology and of business methods. It requires a recognition of the vital need for farmers to cooperate and not compete with one another in marketing their produce. It requires an awareness of the need for farmers in all parts of Canada to recognize their common interests and to present their point of view clearly and constantly to the 83 per cent of the population who depend on you to produce the food they eat.

We are long past the days when people worship the Goddess Ceres or Demeter and ask their help in producing an abundant crop. But whether he tells you so or not, the farmer of today can not and would not want to operate our typical Canadian family farm without the feminine component of agriculture — you, his wife.

Care for Chronic Illness

Letters to the Editor

"Your editorial in the Fall number of Home and Country has given us an impressive picture of the need for hospitals for the chronically ill. In this regard and because modern treatment has been so effective in combating tuberculosis and reducing the need of sanitarium beds, something has been done by various Boards of Sanitoria in cooperation with hospital boards and with the approval of the Ontario Department of Health. The first was the Sanitorium at Cornwall which was able to give up a floor of its large building to Cornwall General Hospital for the care and treatment of chronic patients. Since then six other sanitoria have given up portions of their buildings for similar purposes. The eighth, the Muskoka San, has been closed as a sanitorium for tubercular patients and will be used as a hospital for retarded children, thus relieving the overcrowding at Orillia."

I. B. McLennan

"Congratulations on the splendid editorial in the Fall issue of Home and Country. Definitely there is that great need for hospital care for the chronically ill and your editorial issues a challenge to the members to throw their weight into the appeal for such branches of hospitalization. Here at the Lakehead one such building is being erected and it will serve the combined area as far as possible and alleviate the overcrowding in the general hospitals to some extent."

Mrs. A. Manley