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"PIONEERS" - A POEM WRITTEN TO CELEBRATE THE SILVER ANNIVERSARY W.I. V1-9

We know the story, how our sires came  
out across the sea,  
And grappled with the dangers of bog,  
and stream and tree,  
How their untiring labors made this  
land so free,  
Where homes and field and plenty and  
happiness might be.

The pioneers of our nation, we honor  
them and say  
"This country owes to them a debt,  
it never can repay."  
And if they could revisit this land  
of ours to-day,  
The wonders they made possible, would  
take their speech away.

To-night we meet to honor the pioneers  
of a plan  
(It's five and twenty years ago since  
first this thing began.)  
In Saltfleet Township, Stoney Creek,  
some women said "We can  
Begin to talk about the Home, the  
greatest gift to man,"

"If men can have an Institute and talk  
of barns and grain,  
Why can't we study house and home, our  
duty it is plain,  
For is it not within the home, where  
women folks do reign,  
That it is doubly needful to have an  
active brain?"

We want a better neighbourhood and  
this can only be  
By having better home life and  
sociability,  
Which makes a better people,  
intelligent and free,  
Home-making is a science, all surely  
must agree."

They little recked when first they met,  
that they had lit a flame,  
But from this humble meeting, the  
Institute became  
A power for good throughout our land,  
an organ known to fame,  
And with it we associate good Mrs.  
Hoddless' name.

The Institute received support first  
from the O.A.C.  
And later from the Government,  
which made a trinity.  
And so there was evolved the first  
Department e'er to be  
Set up by any Government for Home-  
making, you see.

Thus was the vision carried out,  
till we have come to see  
No dream, but rather in our time,  
a grand reality.  
That Home-making is not alone  
a women's task to be  
But that of men and women both and  
Government decree.

"For Home and Country" is the phrase,  
our Institute refrain  
And "If you know a goodly thing  
just pass it on again."  
'Twould make the world a happier  
place if all would only deign  
To carry out this little rule,  
so simple and so plain.

Far beyond Ontario, the work to-day  
extends,  
From where Atlantic billows roll,  
to where Pacific sends  
It's breezes o'er the western shore  
and farther still it trends  
To England, Scotland, Belgium,  
Wales, not even there it ends.

To-night we celebrate with joy,  
this Anniversary,  
And turn with eager faces still to  
greater things to be.  
What shall the second quarter bring?  
Ontarians! we see  
In this our forward glancing,  
Responsibility.

Our work in nation-building, demands  
an insight clear,  
True feelings of the patriot and  
vision of the seer.  
A better type of citizen, our  
province still may rear  
And this shall be our slogan-  
this Anniversary Year.

Dean J. MacLeod.