

## OUR JUNIORS

Junior Institutes had their origin in groups of farm girls banding themselves together for patriotic work during the first Great War. In 1915 groups of girls in Elgin County formed sewing circles. In the same year a resolution was forthcoming from Ottawa convention, "Resolved that the Department of Agriculture be asked to co-operate with the Women's Institutes in formulating plans for the organization of Girls' Institute clubs in affiliation with Women's Institutes and that provision be made for directing and instructing the members along vocational and cultural lines".

Gore Bay, Manitoulin Island, had the honour of organizing the first "Girls' Branch of the Women's Institute".

From this time on Junior Institutes have been an integral part of our organization. Mr. Putnam in his 1916 report stated: "Of course we do not forget the girls. In fact I do not

think we should call our organization the Women's Institute without making it known that it is for the girls as well, and the girls are becoming more and more an important part of the organization. They are doing excellent work along patriotic lines... giving goods and cash to the mother organization. We cannot have anything too good for these girls when the war is over and they will be ready to take up work along other lines".

Their program expanded from 1916 on to include art and literature, drama, music, as well as home gardening, canning, first aid, home nursing and many other topics.

By 1918 there were 20 Junior Institutes in the province, some directly associated with the local Institutes, others as separate societies. In various localities it became the custom to hold the Junior Institute meeting in conjunction with the boys' meeting. From this nucleus the Junior Farmer-

Junior Institute affiliation had its beginning.

The Junior Institutes were provided with the regular Institute courses and lectures as well as literature and customary supplies from the Department.

Garment making clubs and judging competitions became very popular and the "county coach" soon became endeared to the girls, with whom she worked. The girls' conferences at Guelph, the Chicago Trip, the Royal Parties and the Canadian National Exhibition Judging Teams all broadened our outlook and gave us inspiration to better our best.

Three months and one month schools, organized in co-operation with the Agricultural Representatives' Branch, provided training for farm sons and daughters during the winter months. The Homemaking Clubs for girls, introduced in 1934, were a fine step toward providing an integrated program in homemaking education.

Through local leaders many more girls could be reached and personal intimate leadership given.

In 1946 another step forward was taken when the F.W.I.O. asked that two Board Directors be elected by the Junior Institutes of Ontario in annual meeting to sit on the Provincial F.W.I.O. Board. A fine mother-daughter relationship has been set up. Membership among our Junior Institutes has steadily increased and we are happy to report that 14 Junior Institutes were organized in 1946.

The Junior Institute is organized primarily to assist young women in the field of personal, home and family and community living and to give them an opportunity to plan and work with others in purposeful activities for community betterment and intelligent citizenship.

Our best wishes go to you, our Juniors. You are a vital force in our vast organization.

A.P.L.