



EDITORIALS

At Yuletide

IT is actually here again—the best holiday of the year—and we realize that nothing can spoil Christmas cheer, and that even the modern commercial spirit takes a blushing and shame-faced departure when the rosy face of Santa Claus appears through the snowstorms. “Going home for Christmas” is the glad announcement heard everywhere, and the heart beats faster as the December days are marked off the calendar. Do you not remember the old times at boarding school, when you counted even the hours, as the Christmas holidays drew near? Nothing else will ever look as bright as the lights of the old town and the welcoming windows of the old home.

Yet there are homes, even in our prosperous and enlightened Canada, where Christmas brings neither warmth nor gladness. These are the spots which we must not forget in our own preparations for the festivities of the season.

Above all, let us remember the children in the hospital and do something towards making their Christmas bright and merry. The “small persons” who are suffering demand our sympathy and help, and the Christmas Spirit should inspire the gifts to the afflicted in the tiny cots.

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The Institute Convention

THE tenth annual convention of the Women's Institutes of Ontario, has completed a decade of which the members of the order may well be proud. Even the most hopeful of the founders could hardly have foreseen such gatherings as met in Guild Hall, and the University Convocation Hall of Toronto, during the month of November. For years the convention was held in Guelph at the time of the Winter Fair, but in 1909 it was felt that the demands of the organization had outgrown the meeting-place, and in 1910 the capital of Ontario was the rallying-place for the members. This year, the Horticultural Exhibition was open during the convention days, and the members were privileged to obtain a glimpse of the floral and fruit wealth of Ontario. The first keen frost of winter was in the air, but there was no coldness in the welcome which the delegates received.

Mr. G. A. Putnam, the Superintendent of this work, is to be congratulated on the class of speakers secured for these occasions. Too often the subjects chosen by convention speakers are hackneyed or visionary, with little bearing on the actual needs of the hearers. Such is not the case with the Institute programmes. The addresses are essentially practical and suited to Twentieth Century needs. The women who gather at these conventions are fairly convinced of the importance of the home and do not need to be informed of the desirability of devotion to its needs. Consequently, platitudes on the subject are not regarded with enthusiasm. Such up-to-date addresses

as that by Hon. Adam Beck, “Electricity on the Farm and in the Home,” and that by Dr. Helen MacMurchy on “Social Service,” are both practical and invigorating. In fact, the whole programme presents topics which are vital and progressive.

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More Men Teachers

THE teacher's relationship to the community appears to be still of absorbing interest. A tragedy in the remote country districts has led to increased urgency on the part of editors, with regard to the necessity for more men teachers in our public schools, especially in the districts where the rougher element is prevalent. The subject is a somewhat difficult matter to discuss, and there is no special good in dwelling too insistently on an isolated tragedy. There is a practical objection on the part of young men to the teaching profession, especially so far as the rural schools are concerned. The salaries paid are not such as to offer compelling attractions to ambitious youths, who have many ways before them in this land of various and golden opportunities. Feminine competition is blamed by many for this state of affairs; yet woman, also, is finding pedagogy inferior in financial charm to a business career. It is a pitiful state of affairs that young girls should be sent to cope with conditions which would tax masculine strength—but the remedy is not easy to find.

Most observers of our modern school system admit frankly that it is a mistake to have so few men teachers. The man and the woman educator are both needed, if our public schools are to accomplish the best results; but the “feminisation” of the staff of instruction is remarkable. Those who deplore the scarcity of the man teacher are not criticizing adversely the woman teacher. It is quite natural that the boy, as he emerges from childhood, finds in the man teacher a readier understanding of his ambitions than could be expected from the woman instructor. The Boy Scout movement is helping in this crisis—but the cause of the difficulty is economic.

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Music in the Home

IN our large cities, there is no dearth of good music, so far as concerts are concerned. In the country, it has been remarked by several observers that music is generally recognized as a desirable accomplishment and a refining influence. Where there used to be a small melodeon in the farm-house parlor, you will now find an upright piano in all its rosewood glory. It has been generally remarked that so many women give up their music after they are married—and devote themselves to more immediate domestic duties. This is so often the case, that a woman over fifty years of age, who plays duets with her eldest daughter was asked by an astonished guest how she had “managed” to keep up her music.

