

Progress of the Women's Institutes Throughout 1917

Inspirational and Instructive Addresses and Discussions on Patriotic Work—Rural School Improvement—Medical School Inspection—Communicable Diseases, etc.

"HOLDING the line at home unitedly and individually to assist in bringing the present world-struggle to a successful conclusion," was the key-note of the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the Central Ontario Women's Institute held in Toronto last week. Every session was splendidly attended by women eager to help and be helped. We could not fail to realize while attending the daily sessions, that the delegates present were women who can successfully and intelligently grapple with the vital problems affecting "the home, the school and the state." It was clearly demonstrated that while patriotic work receives first attention in the Institutes at the present time, other lines of endeavor are not being neglected. Three days were devoted

deal of interest, was given by Hon. W. J. Hanna. He outlined briefly, just what his department has been doing. The first proposition which presented itself when Hon. W. J. Hanna assumed the duty of Food Controller was the fixing of prices. He explained that it had been impossible to fix the price of flour, till they had in conjunction with the United States, fixed the price of wheat. "For the comfort of those who think that everything at home is all wrong and everything outside all right," said the speaker, "I may say that the United States feels that if they can sell bread over there at the prices now being paid in Canada, they will be doing great things."

The high prices being paid for milk were due to reckless bargaining by agents of the allied countries with

asked to sign them, opposition was not great.

The greater part of one of the morning sessions was devoted to an address and discussion of a subject which hitherto has not been dealt with by the Institute. This was the subject of "Communicable Diseases." Major J. G. Fitzgerald of the University of Toronto, was the speaker and spoke to us briefly on the great menace to our country of venereal diseases. "It has been practically impossible until within the last five years," said the speaker, "to make it generally known how widespread these diseases are. It has also been impossible to arouse public opinion to the point where any effective measures might be taken to eliminate them. It is the belief of those who have studied this problem that the most important single factor in solving the problem is education."

Major Fitzgerald believes there are four methods of attack in combating this disease. One is to lay more stress on social activities of a high standard; second, the education of both civilians and soldiers in regard to these diseases; third, preventive measures and fourth, medical care. Dr. Helen MacMurchy also made some forceful remarks.

Major Fitzgerald's contention, Dr. Margaret Patterson expressed the hope that all delegates would get in touch with the Provincial Department of Health and secure literature on this subject which would prove helpful.

Mr. H. B. Burgess, Public School Inspector for Grey county, addressed the delegates on "What the Institutes can do to help in the public schools. One evil which he spoke of as "the curse of the rural school" was irregular attendance. Boys on the farm were often kept out of school for the most trifling causes, with the result, that girls predominate in the higher classes and in the high schools, girls become better equipped for life's work than do the boys, and, finally, these girls will not marry these under-educated boys from their own locality, and the home life of the country suffers accordingly.

Unsanitary conditions of rural schools and outbuildings was also dwelt upon. Mr. Burgess is of opinion that the Women's Institute could do much to remedy these evils. He urged the women to attend the annual school meetings. Mrs. Buchanan of Ravenna, and others took part in the discussion and urged the women to take advantage of their opportunity and put a woman on the school board.

In calling upon Mr. Geo. A. Putnam, Superintendent of Women's Institutes, for his report, Mrs. W. R. Browne, of Cherry Valley, who was presiding, spoke of him as "the only man in the province who can manage 30,000 women." On account of every session being so fully taken up, Mr. Putnam's report was "boiled down" to the smallest possible degree. Notwithstanding this fact the report contained inspiration for continued effort in the good work which the branches are doing. Up to last year a total of \$500,000 in money and goods has been raised by the Institutes since they began. Mr. Putnam anticipated that by the end of the present year this sum would be increased to \$750,000. He also pointed out that other lines of endeavor have to be kept going.

Sir William Hearst, Premier of Ontario, who presided at one of the sessions, dwelt on several phases of the

(Continued on page 25.)

The Resolutions

The report of the Resolutions Committee was brought in by Dr. Mary McKenzie Smith of Gravenhurst and was unanimously adopted. The list of resolutions was a lengthy one and the gist of them was as follows:

1. That the convention put on record our confidence in Mr. Hanna, our Food Controller, and pledge the support of the institutes in his undertakings.

2. Advocated education regarding the dangers of venereal diseases and the passing of legislation which would make it compulsory for infected persons to undergo treatment until cured. Also a recommendation that the Government place venereal diseases on the list of communicable diseases under the Public Health Act.

3. A declaration of intention the Government to prohibit the use of cane sugar for the manufacture of candy and the sale of ice-cream as a luxury.

4. That the Women's Institute interest itself in the matter of supervised playgrounds and proper authorities for permission to use the fair grounds for this purpose.

5. That women's labor be extended as far as may be needed and that they receive equal pay for equal work.

6. In view of the fact that prices of all staple and necessary foods are increasing to an alarming extent, request the Government to take action in order that none of our children be unfed, underfed or ill-fed.

7. The good work of the Women's College, Hospital and Dispensary, Toronto, was appreciated and members urged to support this patriotic institution.

8. That the Women's Institute branch be given necessary funds to extend work of Medical School Inspection.

Thanks were expressed for the use of the Technical School and for the services of such speakers as Sir William Hearst, Hon. W. J. Hanna, Dr. G. C. Creelman, Mrs. Mulvieve of the Food Controller's Office, and others who so ably assisted in making the convention a success. Resolutions of sympathy were passed for Dr. Hosson, of Parkhill, in the death of his daughter, Miss Laura Hosson, and for Mr. Torrance in the loss of his husband and Dr. G. C. Creelman in the loss of his sister.

to the Convention this year instead of the customary two. In this way more time could be devoted to various lines of work. Taking everything as a whole this convention was one of the best ever held. As Miss Ethel Chapman, who addressed us one of the sessions said: "I think you will all agree with me that never before has so little time been taken up with superfluities and so many subjects discussed in the time allotted."

The address of welcome which was to have been delivered by Mrs. F. H. Torrington, was read by Mrs. Rhys D. Fairbairn, owing to the absence of Mrs. Torrington through bereavement. In this address, high appreciation was shown of the way in which the Institutes have kept up their work along with their war efforts. "You are bringing the women of the country districts together in a great sisterhood," said the speaker. "You are broadening their outlook and enriching their lives and so making your influence felt in the home which is the very heart of the nation." The address also referred to the power in the hands of the women who have been at the helm. They were urged to think nationally, and with singleness of purpose to put aside all party and personal prejudice in the one great object of the hour—to win the war. The importance of women can render in connection with the Victory War Loan was also dwelt upon.

An address which created a great

milk condenseries, and also the ever increasing demand for this commodity overseas. Sugar scarcity is due to 100,000 tons being taken from the quantity allotted Canada and the United States to supply the shortage in Great Britain. The subsidizing of large quantities of sugar coming from Java to Great Britain had caused this shortage. Not until December or early January when the new crop comes in, will this scarcity be overcome.

Beef, fish and bacon were also discussed. Mr. Hanna appealed to his audience to assist in hog production, by feeding hogs themselves if necessary. In the discussion which followed this address one delegate asked Mr. Hanna "How in the name of common sense are we going to produce more hogs if our boys are going to be drafted from the farms." Mr. Hanna replied that no one would be taken from the farms unless absolutely needed.

Mrs. Geo. Brodie of Newmarket, led a discussion on the success of the pledge cards. In her opening remarks she emphatically stated that she was going to feed hogs this summer. "How much worse is it for a woman to feed pigs than chickens," she said. "Our boys don't need potatoes, they need pork."

With regard to the pledge cards, Mrs. Brodie and others who took part in the discussion were agreed that when the scheme was understood by those



MADE IN CANADA

ROYAL YEAST

GET THE BEST. IT PAYS

ELLIOTT

Business College

Yonge and Charles Streets, Toronto offers the best advantages in Business Education. Great demand for our graduates. Enter any time. Write for our Handsome Catalogue. **W. J. ELLIOTT** Principal

ARE YOU

BUILDING OR REPAIRING

THE HALLIDAY COMPANY, LIMITED, HAMILTON, ONT.

WANTED: POULTRY

of all kinds. We pay highest price. Write for price list.

WALLER'S

713 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ont.

EASTLAKE STEEL SHINGLES

WRITE FOR PRICES

METALLIC ROOFING CO.

TORONTO, CANADA.

\$200,000

to lend on Farms, First, Second Mortgages. No advance charges.

E. B. REYNOLDS,

77 Victoria St., Toronto.

RENNIE'S SEEDS

We Buy

Alsike, Red Clover Alfalfa and Timothy, Peas, Beans, Spring Rye, Buckwheat, etc.

WM. RENNIE Co., Limited

Cor. Adelaide and Jarvis Streets TORONTO