

Ontario Women's Institutes



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The Institute and the Home

"FOR Home and Country," the Institute motto, has frequently been dwelt upon, as an appropriate maxim for such an association. In a paper by Mrs. J. H. Coatsworth, of the Kingsville Branch, South Essex, the connection between the Institute and the Home is treated with discrimination.

It is in order, no doubt, to say a few words regarding the work and the object of our Institute. As our motto, "For Home and Country," indicates, our object is to arouse a desire to attain to an ideal home life in every respect.

In connection with Institute work, subjects are dealt with which relate to the teaching of a higher standard, morally, mentally, and physically. Many subjects are introduced and discussed which are interesting and beneficial to old and young alike. No woman is regarded as too old either to become a member of our Institute, or to express opinions on any question under discussion. We are pleased that we have quite a large number of young girls, who are taking an active interest in the work.

Some may think that we attend the meetings just to have a good time. Well, what if we do? Are not the busy housewives and mothers entitled to at least one afternoon of each month, in which they can have a good time? We are all familiar with the old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." In my opinion that saying applies just as much to Jill as it does to Jack. If too much work has a tendency to make Jack grow dull will it not have the same effect on Jill?

If we did nothing more than call together once a month, the mothers of our neighborhood that they might for a few hours forget, if possible, the anxieties of home duties, we would accomplish something towards making this world brighter and happier.

We members of the Institute were not slow to recognize the fact that laughter has a mission to perform in this world. So the sparkle of wit and humor is not frowned upon, but rather is encouraged at our gatherings. The good old proverb, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine," is as true to-day as it ever was. If we can, by bringing those of cheery disposition in contact with those who feel discouraged and down-hearted, cause the latter to enjoy themselves for a short time, are we not administering the much-needed medicine referred to?

Any organization which has for its object the introduction of higher ideals and nobler sentiments, is distinctly missionary in its character. Yet we cannot allow our Institute to supplant our missionary societies. If we do, we are not loyal to our home or Institute. In order to fulfil our duty to the inmates of our homes we must endeavor to impress truths on their minds, which will teach them to look beyond the confines of their own community and develop in them a sympathy for those dark parts of the world where Christianity is unknown. By the interest we ourselves take in foreign work, can we cultivate in our children that generous and well-developed nature which will enable them to regard all mankind as brothers.

The home determines the position which any country will occupy in comparison with other countries of the world. Can you conceive of a more worthy object for any society than the improvement of the home? Is not the mother the most potent factor in the establishment of the home? Then, is it not a step in the right direction for us to meet and exchange views on the numberless questions which the conscientious housekeeper and home-maker daily meets with?

It is not the house which makes the home any more than it is the body that

makes the human being, but it is the nameless influence which the child first remembers, and is last to be forgotten by the oldest man or woman.

Men may construct dwelling places which will be palaces, but to women belongs the secret of imparting the true atmosphere of home. Sometimes the boundaries of mother's home life may seem rather limited, but when we consider that to her pre-eminently belongs the task of molding and fashioning the characters of our children, is not hers the farthest reaching of all occupations entrusted to mankind?

We at our Institute are striving to put into actual practice the helpful suggestions regarding the ideal home, realizing that when it becomes possible for us to have the ideal home, the ideal country will be a natural result.

The 20th Century Farmer's Wife

MRS. S. LEE, of Newton Robinson, South Simcoe district, has written some valuable reflections on the above subject:

Farms and farm life are gradually improving. The twentieth century is emphasizing the gospel of leisure. Leisure not only for rest, but for culture, intercourse and pleasure. Like most

home, things that would have surprised our grandmothers during the early part of the past century. The cream separator has taken the place of the old-fashioned hand skimmer that our mothers had to use. Then we have our butter workers, bread mixers, kitchen cabinets and many other articles which save us so much useless work.

Laundries have opened up in all our nearby towns, where farmers' wives can send their laundry and have it washed and ironed at small cost. Of late years, even the family sewing machine rattle seems less frequently heard. Tailored and ready-made clothes take the place of home-made garments. This gives the housewife more leisure, and possibly better style.

Then much of the rough and heavy work has been lightened for her. All this gives the farmer's wife more time for outdoor exercise. We have more time for our gardens; consequently we should be more healthy. Then we have more time for reading and can keep posted on the leading questions of the day. We have more time to study the needs and conditions of our country. The future of Canada depends upon what Canadians are doing for themselves to-day. The boys and girls of to-day will determine the Canadians of the next generation. This applies to our agricultural population, for farm-



IN AN ONTARIO FIELD.

other developments, this idea has reached the city before the country, but gradually it is permeating the rural districts.

Formerly the farmer bought an increasing variety of implements to hasten and also to lighten his work. Man-like, he thought of himself first, of the money he could save and the easier times he could have. The modern farmer realizes the equal rights of his wife, and in many cases gives her first consideration.

The rapid development of the past few years is but an augury of that which will take place in the near future. Indications of good times are in evidence. Improvements have increased rapidly during the past few years. Many homes have been beautified. Neat, comfortable homes have been erected with a view to utility and comfort.

Many of our country homes are already equipped with nearly every convenience found in a city home. We have our bath rooms, laundry rooms, soft and hard water, both hot and cold, in the house, and other appointments designed to make housework easier and life more livable.

The twentieth century farmers' wives are not the drudges their grandmothers or even their mothers were during the past century. Gradually many labor-saving devices have been added to the

ing has always been the mainstay of this province.

As farmers' wives, we have much to do with the building up of the future generation. Let us see to it that we make our homes as attractive as we can. Let us set out a few shrubs and flowers, plant out a few trees and vines. Then we are learning more all the time of the benefits of fresh air. And yet how much we have yet to learn in regard to this great natural cure for so many ailments. It is a subject on which the farmer's wife should make herself an expert.

Then the well-regulated twentieth century farm home should give opportunity from the earliest years for the development in the home circle of the spirit of interest in farm life and farm work. The home atmosphere has much to do in determining the inclination of the boy and girl. The women of the farm homes would do well to study this problem.

Then our homes are the great controlling force in morals. Women are the most potent factors in developing the moral life of the youth. In these days of exciting competition for more wealth and power, it is well to keep before us the building up of prosperous, contented, happy rural families, upon which our country's future will so largely depend. We have our Women's

Institute meetings, where the farmers' wives can meet together and talk over ways and means of promoting our own interests, easier methods of doing our work, and better ways of preparing food.

To the many other advantages, we have the introduction of the rural telephone, and it is doing away with the isolation of many farm homes. It also has the advantage of connecting distant communities and creating a friendliness among people who otherwise might not come in helpful contact with one another. These are but a few of the pleasures and conveniences of the twentieth century farmer's wife.

Summer Beverages

FROM the Rodney Institute, a paper by Mrs. A. D. McGugan, on "Summer Beverages," has been received, which we publish as of decided interest to many readers.

When it is remembered that the body is made up very largely of water, it will be understood how important to health is a constant supply of this fluid. Many people have the idea that to drink water in any amount beyond that which is actually necessary to quench thirst, is injurious, and acting on this belief they drink as little as possible. The notion, however, is wide of the truth. Drinking freely of pure water is a most efficacious means, not only of preserving health, but often of restoring failing health.

All the tissues of the body need water. The water of the tissues and that of the blood are interchangeable, and water in abundance is necessary for the proper performance of every vital function. Cleanliness of the tissues within the body is as necessary to health and comfort as cleanliness of the skin, and water tends to insure the one as truly as it does the other. These waste materials, within the body, are frequently poisonous, and many a headache, many rheumatic pains and aches, many sleepless nights and listless days are due solely to the circulation in the blood, or deposit in the tissues, of these waste materials which cannot be got rid of because of an insufficient supply of water.

When water enters the stomach, it does not stay there until it is absorbed into the system, but begins to flow almost at once, in little gushes, into the intestine. It takes about three-quarters of an hour for the stomach to empty itself of a pint of cold water. As heat increases the movement of the walls of the stomach, hot water escapes in even a shorter time. It is therefore an excellent plan to wash out the stomach the first thing in the morning with a drink of hot water, or, better still, with hot water to which a little salt has been added, as the stomach empties itself in a very few minutes of hot, salty water. But at any time of the day drink plenty of water. It will help to keep the food in motion, assist in dissolving the food, wash out all the digestive organs so no waste matter lingers in them, and help generally to keep the system in good order. Physicians at the sanitariums tell us to drink at least four pints a day.

We might consider for a moment some of the beverages we use daily in our homes. Tea, we all know, is made from the leaves of a plant. The treatment of the leaves after they are picked varies according to whether black or green tea is to be produced. For black tea the leaves are dried in the sun, then rolled until they are soft, and broken. They are then made into little balls, and allowed to ferment. While fermentation is taking place some of the tannic acid in the leaves is changed into an insoluble form, thus black tea contains less tannin than green tea, as green tea is not allowed to ferment before the