

Farm Women's Clubs

TRUSTEES CONVENTION ECHOES

It was my duty and pleasure to attend the school trustees convention held the end of February. As the papers contained fairly good accounts of this convention, I decided not to report at once but to follow up, as it were, to keep the subject before our women citizens. All of the addresses will be printed in a report which will be in the hands of the school trustees in June of this year, and I would advise our clubs to get a copy from a trustee in their districts and study and report at the meetings of their associations. They are worthy of earnest discussion. I would also advise that Dr. Seymour's address, "The Health of the School," be placed in the hands of your teacher to be read and studied by the pupils.

I was glad to note that several resolutions that were presented at our convention were on their list. Two that were not on I presented and they passed unanimously. One was free medical attention and inspection for school children, and the other requested a clause to be inserted in the teachers' contract making it compulsory for the teacher or a qualified person to remain with the children during the noon hour. One delegate hinted that it might be well to emphasize "remain with the children," as he said he had known young teachers to remain throughout the noon hour in the school room doing fancy work, while anything but fancy work was going on outside among the unchaperoned children.

They also asked the department of education to act as teachers' agencies and that the certificates given in other parts of the Dominion be recognized here as we are short of teachers, while the eastern provinces have qualified teachers who would gladly come out, but who having first or second grade certificates do not care to accept third here or be forced to attend Saskatchewan normal, when they have already taken up the same work in an eastern normal. The convention also asked for compulsory school attendance; that teaching days be lengthened, not reduced; that school be open the whole teaching year and that children be compelled to attend during at least 80 per cent. of the school days between April 1 and December 1, as there were no cold days or storms or poor roads to keep them out during these months.

They went on one better on asking for school equipment; not only should the school yard be fenced and supplied with sanitary indoor closets as we asked but also that there be a stove for cooking and a supply of imperishable food, and that even blankets always be in the school, so that the children may be safe and comfortable in case of a storm.

The resolution asking that corporal punishment be abolished was voted down, and for the reason that often children, boys especially, were unruly in the hopes of being sent home and some parents seemed even pleased that they were sent home, and the excuse was offered for "putting them to work," when what the child needed was not less but more school. The child should be disciplined in school and kept there. Few teachers abuse this trust and it was felt by the delegates that if a good "thrashing" could keep the child in school let him have it.

Among the many resolutions which I hope you will study when published in the trustees convention report there is one that merits your special consideration. This resolution has passed our Grain Growers' conventions and Equal Franchise Board convention and other organizations but was tabled at this convention. I refer to "English only in primary grades." The resolution was lost, and why? I will tell you why. Your trustee was not there, that is why. There were about 1,000 delegates there and there are over 4,000 schools in the province. Our provincial law states that foreign languages can be taught in our primary schools for only one hour, from 3 to 4 p.m., yet we were told at the convention that there were some schools in the province where not one word of English was taught, and some of these are German schools. At

the teachers' convention Premier Martin denied that there are in existence in the province any schools under the jurisdiction of the department of education where English is not the language of instruction. Those schools in which other than the English language is the language of instruction are the Mennonite and a few Ruthenian schools which are private schools and not paid for by the public tax. At this convention some schools sent as many as ten delegates. Then it is easily understood why this very important resolution was lost. Now here is your chance to follow up your resolution. Get after your trustees. See that they send their delegates next year that the convention may be truly representative.

This language question is one of the most, if not the most important question our schools are facing today and it is an injustice to a child not to give him a thorough knowledge of the language of the country in which he lives.

At the convention an old German said to me, "The children must be taught the mother tongue when they are small."

"Yes," I said, "But why not teach them at home?"

"No," was his answer, "they don't learn it right so. They must be taught it properly at school. The English they can learn on the street anywhere."

Fellow citizens, I ask you if this is right? We are Britons and must our language be an afterthought? No, so follow up your resolution.

ZOE HAIGHT,
Vice-Pres. W.S.G.A.

"THE ALLIES" PROGRESSING

Dear Miss Stocking:—The Allies W.G.G.A. held their meeting in Guernsey on April 7. We had a splendid meeting and a good attendance, although the roads were fearful. We had three of our former members join again, and three new ones, making now a total of 13 paid-up members. I am sending you a copy of a paper written by one of our members, Mrs. MacDonald, and read at this meeting. We voted ten dollars for the Canadian red cross fund.

Hoping these few notes, showing that we are not standing still, will be of interest to you.

Mrs. JOHN J. CRANE,
Sec. Allies W.G.G.A.

The Allies have our best wishes and we thank the secretary for sending the splendid paper.—E.A.B.

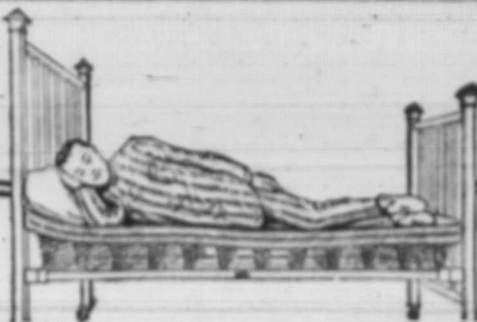
FRANCHISE FOR WOMEN

Woman suffrage is not by any means a new topic for discussion and what women of Western Canada have already achieved in securing the franchise is now past history. The question in my mind now is, what can we accomplish with our new added power in shaping the destiny of our province? We are now passing through the acid test. Will we prove ourselves worthy of so great a heritage? We ought to feel elated in assuming the new responsibilities which are resting upon the women of western Canada and go hand in hand with the male sex in solving the many problems which are continually arising before us, and particularly those problems which are nearest the hearts of women and which only women can solve.

It seems to me since we have the franchise that we ought to have representatives in the legislature to guide, and help to enact any legislation that is of interest to the women of the province. The common saying is "Charity begins at home," and this is true in connection with our public schools. At least one woman should be on the school board of every school district in the province. Women would then be in a position to advise and help our teachers in the many problems arising in the training of our children. One of the questions which is a burning issue at the present is the compulsory teaching of the English language in our public schools. We must insist that the children of any nationality, no matter what it may be, will have a fair start in life with our own. Ende if it does not

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