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THE EXTENSION DEPARTMENT

During the past twelve months the work of the Extension Department has continued to become adapted to war-time conditions. The plan adopted last year of holding one-week short courses in the field to replace the four weeks' course of pre-war days has been continued this year. Since January, twenty of these courses have been held in various communities of the Maritime provinces. Fourteen of these courses have been held since the first of November and a number of others are planned for after the New Year.

Another result of the war-time situation has been an increase in the number and effectiveness of people's conferences, both regional and vocational. There was, for example, a fishermen's conference in January, a conference of Nova Scotia co-operative store managers in March, a Handicraft Conference in April, an Extension Staff Conference in August, and a Women's Conference in November. All these gatherings were characterized by worthwhile discussion and practical recommendations.

The Nova Scotia Co-operative Educational Council is making an ever-increasing contribution to the work of the Extension Department, both in money and services. It is through this organization that the people are coming to the aid of the Department and assisting it with its educational program.

Perhaps the most spectacular development in the economic aspects of the program was among the fishermen, especially



in Northern New Brunswick, eastern Cape Breton, and the south shore of Nova Scotia. The Extension Department has carried on an intensive educational program in the fishing villages of the Maritimes, assisted by a grant from the Federal Department of Fisheries. The fishermen are taught the benefits of working together co-operatively and are encouraged to become self-sufficient by producing at home more of their own foodstuffs. The N.S. Department of Agriculture has assisted in this work in some communities by loaning machinery for the purpose of cultivating the land and making gardens.

Of the people's organizations resulting from the educational work of the Extension Department, there are now 404 credit unions in the Maritimes, with assets of over two million dollars. There are about 80 incorporated co-operative stores, doing a total annual business of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars. The co-operative wholesale, with headquarters at Moncton, and branches at Sydney and Antigonish, did nearly two million business last year.

Two new housing co-operatives have been established within the last twelve months, one at Stellarton and one at New Glasgow. Members of the former group are ready to move into their new homes.

The foregoing is but a resume of the educational and economic activities of the Extension Department since last January 1st. The Department still bases its program on the small study club, although these groups have decreased in number owing to war-time depopulation of smaller communities. Yet,

though there are fewer small discussion circles, there is a sufficient number of key study clubs to keep the work of the Department alive and growing. The two main Extension Libraries, at Antigonish and Sydney have continued their loan service to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and to fifteen branch libraries in Nova Scotia. These two main libraries now comprise about 6,000 books. There has been a notably increased demand for loan of books during recent months.

One of the outstanding features of the past year has been the increased interest and activity on the part of women in Extension work. This interest and the desire to play a still more effective part, led to the holding of the Women's Conference in November at which the delegates made plans for the coming months' work and decided to hold regional conferences of women for still more intensive planning. This increased participation in the work on the part of women is probably due to the fact that, with so many men in the services and in war work, women are realizing that the responsibility for the success of the adult education~~xx~~ program rests more and more upon them.