

Simcoe County Library Co-op. General Meeting

Professor W. M. Drummond and Professor Norman High, of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, were guest speakers at the general meeting of the Simcoe County Library Co-Operative, held in Barrie on October 7th.

Stressing the fact that reading brings inspiration, information, and a broadening of our appreciation of life, as well as, in some cases, more economic security, the speakers discussed the particular importance of reading in a democracy. Since action in a democracy is based on public opinion, if democracy is to succeed, that public opinion must be sound, and based on understanding and information. Reading is one of the best means of securing an education, since you can choose a book on any subject that you want, and take your own time in digesting the contents. Supplying books to children is particularly important, since reading is a habit, and it should be formed early in life. The speakers were introduced by Mr. S. L. Page of Barrie, and thanked by Mr. Fred Hunter of Tottenham.

(Continued on page 8)

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(Continued from page 1)

About 55 representatives from the libraries and schools of the county were present.

The report of the librarian, Miss Audrey Gray, commented on the fact that the past year had seen the County Library reorganized to conform with the 1947 amendment to the Public Libraries Act. The board was reduced from 9 members to 7, and the representation of County Council increased to 4. Appreciation of the interest of both the former and the present board members was voiced. A new constitution has just been adopted, and will be sent out to members shortly.

An increasing use of County Library books in the schools was one of the features of the year. 170 schools are being served at the present time, as compared with 90 at this time last year. In the period from January to June, 43,966 books were read in the schools, almost 4,000 more than in the whole of 1947. The circulation of County Library books in the libraries and deposit stations, during the first eight months of 1948 was about 1,500 more than in the same period in the previous year. The County Council began paying a grant of \$2,000 a year to the County Library in 1946, and since that time, the book col-

lection has grown from 4,658 to 8,500. This has allowed an extension of the library service so that the circulation which was 21,165 in 1945, jumped to 32,805 in 1946, and to 50,176 in 1947. Indications point to a circulation of about 90,000 for 1948.

During the year, a local history clipping collection was begun, and collections of pamphlets, mainly on agriculture, were sent out to member libraries and deposit stations.