

# The President's Corner



Mrs. James Haggerty,  
President, F.W.I.O.

It is an unexpected privilege and pleasure to have an opportunity to bring to you a message through the President's Corner. I had thought that the Summer issue of "Home and Country" had carried my final words to the Women's Institute members of Ontario.

You will all know by the time this copy reaches you that I was unable to attend the Conference of the Associated Country Women of the World. It was disappointing, but I feel that I have been favoured more than most people by the experiences and pleasures that have come my way and, therefore, I should accept the disappointment in the way that a Women's Institute member meets such problems.

Ontario was well represented at the Conference, with Mrs. R. J. Penney, Kingston, heading the delegation, and Mrs. George Ash, Cochrane, making the fifth delegate. I am greatly indebted to these two women for accepting responsibility on such short notice, and also to Mrs. Gordon Maynard for making the last-minute arrangements for the necessary changes.

Since I shall soon be relinquishing my term of leadership of the F.W.I.O., I should like to speak to each of you through this column about "Leadership".

There are at least two schools of thought about the definition of "Leadership"; one, that a leader directs others to carry out his or her plans, suggestions and projects. The other is the one that appeals to me — a leader gives guidance so that he or she brings out the best in others and gives them incentive and courage to take their responsibility in their homes, organizations and communities.

A leader is helpless without followers; no achievement has ever been brought about by the efforts of the leader alone — she must have helpers. It makes no difference how well a conference, convention, holiday or any event is arranged by the leaders; if there are no participants, it will not be a success.

Each Women's Institute member is a leader in her own way. The woman who never holds office but who is always on hand to help with the refreshments, to wash up the dishes afterward, is as essential to the organization as the president.

There would be no District, Area or Provincial Board if it were not for the Branch and Branch members. Please think on this and realize your own importance, and that you are making a contribution to your organization that no one else can.

Leadership brings responsibility and a leader must assume her responsibilities and take them seriously or her leadership will be a failure. She must put others before herself; she must give selfless devotion to those for whom she serves; she must leave off self-seeking.

A good leader should never place herself on a pedestal or take advantage of her position. Ontario has the largest Women's Institute population of any province in Canada. This does not give her the right to dictate to the other provinces. She should give of her best to the national organization and be willing to accept the best from them without special privileges accorded to her. Thus can a strong national organization with combined unity and strength be established.

The international body will accomplish its purpose when the minority groups will meet with the developed countries on an equal footing and when their problems will be worked out with all countries of the world.

Leadership can be a wonderful opportunity to serve and guide, but it could be a dominant, superior, tyrannical regime. Let us in Ontario take our duties in leadership in an unselfish, co-operative way. Let us take our place in the world in humble and sincere gratitude for all of our advantages, and use those privileges for the good of the most people.

I shall always have the interests of the Women's Institutes close to my heart, and as Vice-President of F.W.I.C. I hope I may be able to serve you with a national spirit combined with a knowledge of provincial administration.

My best wishes go to each of you and to the new Provincial President who will have your loyalty, I know.

Annie C. Haggerty.

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## MONTANA WIVES

Gwendolen Haste

I had to laugh,  
For when she said it we were sitting by the door,  
And straight down was the Fork  
Twisting and turning and gleaming in the sun.  
And then your eyes carried across to the purple  
bench beyond the river  
With the Beartooth Mountains fairly screaming  
with light and blue and snow  
And fold and turn of rimrock and prairie as far  
as your eye could go.  
And she says: "Dear Laura, sometimes I feel so  
sorry for you,  
Shut away from everything—eating out your heart  
with loneliness.  
When I think of my own full life I wish that I  
could share it.  
Just pray for happier days to come, and bear it."  
She goes back to Billings to her white stucco house,  
And looks through net curtains at another white  
stucco house,  
And a brick house,  
And a yellow frame house,  
And six trimmed poplar trees,  
And little squares of shaved grass.  
Oh, dear, she stared at me like I was daft.  
I couldn't help it! I just laughed and laughed.

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