



The President's Corner

Mrs. Austin S. Zoeller, President, the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

Springtime, new freedoms, sunshine, green grass, seed-time, and the excitement of another season, and for me, my first challenge, the semi-annual board meeting completed. Eight board directors have completed their terms. To these women I say "thank you." We sat on the board together, learned to know one another; and all too soon the term was completed, and next fall there will be eight more new faces. Probably this is part of our success in Women's Institute that there is a continual change of officers, change of ideas, thinking, and enthusiasm.

Officers' Conference, too, is over and our reading of the evaluation sheets is to begin. I have hurriedly looked through them, most anxious to know the delegates' reactions, but serious consideration must be given to their thoughts, requests, constructive criticism and ideas.

A tall, tall stack of evaluation sheets is on my desk and I sit and let my mind wander, and the word evaluation catches my eye.

This word has a great deal of scope and depth and can be quite meaningful. I find myself evaluating and appraising myself — I know my strength and weakness, and you know yours. We need both strength and weakness in our characters, for if we were all strength to whom would we turn; what would be left in life if we were never dependent or independent? There is no shame in admitting we do not know or we want to talk things over. This should enrich our lives to know we have someone to turn to. This does not show weakness but an inner quality only recognized when we seek our friends' advice or share a thought.

Evaluation goes far beyond an assessment or judgment of ourselves. Time plays an important part in our lives. We either do not have enough time or we can't take time; we use time as an excuse. We all know time is money and time is priceless and yet sometimes we waste it. For some, time flies, and for others time hangs heavy. This is a part of our lives we neither sell, buy nor lend; this is ours to do with as we choose.

Do we evaluate time as an essential part of our lives? The most important part of our time is that which is spent with our families — being a homemaker. The formative years with our children somehow reappear as memories as the children grow up and have homes of their own.

Do we take into consideration the energy we burn up outside our homes? Do we balance our lives with work and play? Have we learned to relax? There are so many ways to become a more complete person — learn a new hobby, take a course, learn a craft, read a book. Are you interested in your local government? Do you understand the county school boards? What does area government mean to you? Do you understand the pros and cons of the general farm organization?

Some of your time away from home is spent at Women's Institute meetings. Did you ever stop to evaluate your branch meeting, especially the part you play and your participation? We gain as much as we give. Three years from now it will be 1972 and we'll all be three years older. Did you ever stop to think you'll be three years older regardless? If you sit and do nothing, you'll still be three years older, so why not learn that new craft or project your energies toward learning more about the world around us. I visited a lady in a nursing home lately who recently celebrated her hundredth birthday; she was busy making bias binding for aprons for this year's convention, to be sold at the gift stall. As she was sewing the bias on the sewing machine, she looked up with a twinkle in her eye and said, "You know I learned this trick when I was eighty and I surely would surprise that slip of a young girl who taught me this at the Women's Institute course if she could see me today." Doesn't that prove something? Learn all you can, take advantage of every opportunity; you never know when you will use it.

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LIVE AND HELP LIVE

By Edwin Markham

"Live and let live!" was the call of the Old—
The call of the world when the world was cold—
The call of men when they pulled apart—
The call of the race with a chill on the heart.
But "Live and help live!" is the cry of the New—
The cry of the world with the Dream shining
through—
The cry of the Brother World rising to birth—
The cry of the Christ for a Comrade-like earth.

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