

a village in Greece, sewing-machines to the widows of Korea, home demonstration equipment to Ceylon. You have helped with the Freedom From Hunger and the Save the Children crusades; have had a part in starting Institutes among the Indian and Eskimo women of the North West Territories. These aren't just projects of a Provincial Board — they are the work of all the members. In your national or international undertakings you provide a way for the individual member to have a part in a piece of social service far beyond her own community . . .

And this doesn't belittle the importance of the work at home. There isn't a Provincial Board member who won't tell you that the local branch Institute is the most important unit in the whole organization. This is where you do the practical, imaginative, compassionate, experimental things that make the organization strong and progressive and give it its good public image.

Finally, we have an interesting by-product of F.W.I.O. in the women it has developed. We are very proud of the leaders who have come to the surface — not only our provincial presidents, though there is a rather special aura about them, but others who have taken responsibilities and so have discovered and used talents they might never have known they possessed.

So I submit to you that F.W.I.O. has lived up to its purpose and more. It has given the Institutes unity and direction; and has made them a voice respected across the country. It has opened the way for a woman, however tied with home responsibilities, to have a part in the great human causes of her time.

And something else: It gives her friends. We used to hear a lot about what the Institute meant to the lonely, isolated woman. There aren't many isolated women in Ontario any more. But you don't have to be isolated to be lonely. We can be lonely in a crowd if there's no one there with interests like our own. And doesn't it mean something when you're worried about conditions and trends that rather frighten you to know that you belong to a band of women over the province who care about these things too and want to do something about them? In the warmth and friendliness of a gathering like this conference we must feel that F.W.I.O. has set the solitary in a great family.

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"Nothing is so strong as gentleness; nothing so gentle as real strength."

Francis de Sales

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## The Most Important Person

Mrs. Zoeller introduced the Discussion Group chairmen; Mrs. Everett Small, presidents; Mrs. John Charlton, secretary-treasurers; Mrs. Clarence Diamond, district public relations officers and Mrs. M. Pardy, members-at-large.

Using the subject "The Most Important Person," the group leaders participated in a discussion as to whom the most important person in the organization really is. The president, the secretary treasurer, the public relations officer, or the member who does not hold an executive office. At the conclusion, questions from the floor relative to the debate and to the Women's Institutes were invited and answered by members of the panel.

## The Discussion Groups

On Wednesday afternoon the delegates were divided into discussion groups according to their particular offices and interests. Co-chairman and assistants for the groups were as follows: presidents: Mrs. R. J. Penny, Mrs. Stanley Bride Mrs. John E. MacLean, Mrs. Donald Harvie, and Mrs. W. H. Clugston; secretary-treasurers: Mrs. J. S. Holden and Mrs. J. P. Coyne; members-at-large: Mrs. C. E. Pink and Mrs. C. M. Docking; district public relations officer: Mrs. Robert Weber.

## The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario Fiftieth Anniversary Banquet

The delegates assembled in the Physical Education gymnasium for the annual conference dinner which was given special significance as it was planned to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Ontario Women's Institutes becoming the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. This forward step which linked the nine hundred Women's Institutes in Ontario into a corporate body took place on February 7, 1919.

Dr. Ethel Chapman, the former editor of Home and Country and who has devoted so many of her energies to the work of the Women's Institutes proposed the toast to F.W.I.O. Mrs. Everett Small, immediate past president of F.W.I.O. replied to the Toast.

The Honourable W. A. Stewart, Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food was a special guest and the guest speaker.

Mr. Stewart congratulated the Women's Institutes of Ontario for their many accomplishments and many projects completed and uncompleted. He said that the Women's Institutes had contributed more to the development of rural Ontario than any other organization. "The theme of this conference," said Mr. Stewart "was undoubtedly the guiding principle of the founders of the Women's Institutes."