



The President's Corner

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

A group of Women's Institute friends were looking through a window at some paintings. There was a variety of seascapes, landscapes, many pictures of fences and posts, of wagon wheels and dead trees and old buildings covered with snow. Everyone had a special one that they liked. Soon the conversation centred around the old trees and fences and each woman seemed to remember something from the past. The women had definite opinions whether they would like one of these paintings and often the thought was expressed, "It takes a special place."

The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario have a special place in the life of a sixteen-year-old girl in Taskopru, Turkey — Nazmiye Salman. Under F.W.I.O.'s sponsorship, through our International Scholarship, Nazmiye is studying to be a nurse mid-wife in the School of Hygiene. In Turkey, child and mother mortality is high and the women know nothing of sanitary problems or nutrition. After three years, our candidate will perform the duties of mid-wife, giving injections and lecturing as best she can on baby and child care. So Nazmiye's special place will be aiding the suffering and making life a little healthier and more pleasant for mothers and children.

Women's Institutes have a special place in the life of our communities in Ontario. We've done much to preserve our history through Tweedsmuir books. Good quilt design and needlecraft, as well as the proper use of colour, make our homes more enjoyable. We've remembered that our members are our most important resource and have been made more aware of each individual's skills and talents as they lead 4-H Homemaking Clubs, conduct meetings and plan programs.

We each have a special place, whether we are in Ontario or Turkey; it's what we do that is important. Have we lost the art of seeing? Do we look and yet are we blind? On the other hand, do we see only those things we want to see?

We see the scrap piles and the junk heaps, and think, "How awful!" And yet we look in our rear view mirrors while driving along the highways and if nothing is in sight, throw the chocolate bar wrapper out the window.

We worry about the undernourished and the poverty in developing countries; but we do not seem as concerned with the malnutrition right on our doorstep. There is poverty in every city and community in our province, and yet we say this cannot happen in our province.

We sometimes pull down a mental barrier to unpleasantness. We think a gift of money is greater than a gift of love. It is easier, but is it as rewarding? The art of seeing sometimes is all confused if we lose our sense of values.

Are we a society slowly growing away from the humanities? Are we callous, as individuals, to people, black, white or yellow, Christian or Jew? Is it a sham? Do we care or is this just lip service to our code of human rights? We say we despise prejudice and discrimination and almost in the same breath, society loses sight of its goal, human dignity.

We have not lost the art of seeing as long as we feel all have equal rights. We may not all be equal, having the same ability, but all do have a special ability. We all do have a special place. Where is that? Only you know. It may be a career in one of the professions or it may very well be that special place of homemaker and mother.

Margaret Zoeller

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A PRAYER FOR WISDOM

Oh, give me wisdom, Lord . . . that I may see
The hidden path that Thou hast set for me.

Let me be glad for little simple things,
(Wise to take gladly what the morning brings.)

Let me be quick to feel another's woe,
Wise in the way our troubled hearts must go.

Oh, give me patience, too, and quiet grace,
To make a home of this poor, shabby place.

And make me cheery, Lord . . . there's so much
In smiling lips and love's redeeming touch.

And when the day ends let me humbly see
That I have walked its ways . . . in step with Thee.

Edna Jacques

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