



The President's Corner

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Dear W.I. Members:

Years ago, Tiffany's in New York City created a window that is still talked about. In the vast expanse of one window facing Fifth Avenue, a single diamond was spot-lighted against a purple velvet background. With this simple display, Tiffany created a never-to-be-forgotten impression of quality. Those who saw the display felt a desire to possess a diamond — particularly that one diamond.

A desire to possess a diamond! Rare indeed is the woman who has not had such yearning. Many of us have had our fondest wishes fulfilled and we wear a diamond in a golden setting. Life takes on for us a new excitement, a new direction, a new dimension, a new quality.

So we possess a diamond, the most precious of all stones, our most valuable "pet rock". But there are other diamonds, equally as grand, which it is our privilege to possess. These are daily presented to us without our knowledge, most of the time, of their majestic presence. I am referring to the diamonds of opportunity.

Each opportune diamond presents itself in so many various settings that it is difficult to distinguish which radiates the greatest impression of quality.

I feel first and foremost the most important setting for the diamond of opportunity is the golden circle of the home. "If we want better people to make a better world, then we must begin where people are made — in the family".

Patricia Clafford said, "The work will wait while you show the child the rainbow, but the rainbow won't wait while you do the work." Meaning, of course, we should take advantage of every opportunity as it is presented to us.

A woman in her home should never neglect the opportunity to utilize her sympathetic heart, her loving look, her silvern speech, her helping hand. She should remember to take advantage of every opportunity to practise, The Rule of Three.

Three things to govern — temper, tongue and conduct.

Three things to cultivate — godliness, courage and gentleness.

Three things to commend — thrift, industry and promptness.

Three things to despise — cruelty, arrogance and ingratitude.

Three things to admire — dignity, intellectual power and gracefulness

Three things to give — alms to the needy, comfort to the sad and appreciation to the worthy.

May she also accept the challenge of an opportunity to welcome the weary family members home with a smile, to wipe the tiny tear from a child's cheek, to weave the message of morals into the day's activities. May she likewise make the most of the opportunity to kiss a bruised knee and manifest her magical powers of healing or add zest to the quality of life not only with her culinary art and cleaning techniques but also with her keen sense of humour.

My choice for a second setting would be "in friendship's circle bright" — the Women's Institute. The diamond of opportunity has as many means of presenting itself in this organization as in family life. Here we put into action publicly all the little things we have learned in private in the intimacy of the home. Here we have the opportunity to live the Mary Stewart Collect as we meet each other face to face, to function amicably as we work and fellowship together. We learn by doing, we improve by practice, we perform by perseverance.

We should welcome each meeting's challenge to do the research necessary for the roll call, and to participate in the discussion on the motto. What a diamond of an opportunity for intellectual stimulation! What an avenue for education is the preparation of a paper or a topic for a program! What a road for expression is the presentation of a report! What a highway for experimental endeavour is a craft demonstration!

Did I hear you repeat, "I want to possess a diamond"? What better opportunity than to accept an office or a convenership or a committee responsibility, or to become a leader of a 4-H Homemaking Club. Think of the opportunities represented in the projects undertaken for the support of the Institute's financial obligations. Certainly there is work in connection with catering, making quilts, sponsoring Tweedsmuir Teas, holding bazaars.

Can't you see the diamonds sparkling at you as you perform your duties? Come now — recall the friends you've made, the jokes you've shared, the helpful hints you've learned, the re-assuring pat on the back. Maybe you have been touched by the reverse — the kick of the lack of appreciation; even that may have been for you an opportune blessing in disguise. It's all in how we look at the diamond that its clarity of cut or sparkle of elegance is revealed.

The third setting for our diamond of opportunity has to be in the eternal ring of society wherein we all function. Just think of the blessings of opportunities we possess in this area of life — the wave of a cheery greeting to one's neighbours, the message of condolence to a sorrowing friend, the courtesy card for services rendered, the warm handclasp during a visit to a senior citizen, the telephone call to a lonely shut-in, the encouraging smile for a teenager, the letter to the one confined in hospital, and on and on the list could go ad infinitum. Each one a gesture for spreading happiness, thereby bringing the same in return to us. A Chinese proverb states, "Flowers leave a part of their fragrance in the hands that bestow them."

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