

Women of Other Lands

Several Nations represented at council Conference

Senorita Mota's Talk

Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless spoke for the Canadian Council - Mrs. Gravins to Speak

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Interest in the International Council of Women continues to grow and the assembly hall of the Women's administration building was filled to its utmost yesterday when Mrs. May Wright Sewall, president, opened the third of the series of Wednesday afternoon conferences. It was an assembly of prominent men and women, including visitors from Canada, France, San Domingo, The Hague and various parts of the United States.

Mrs. Sewall called the meeting to order and gave a brief address in which she told of the reasons for the popularity of the organization. She then introduced the first speaker, Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton, Ont., who spoke on the educative feature of the council.

Mrs. Hoodless is a member of the executive committee of the Canadian council and until recently was the treasurer. She was one of the foremost in organizing a council in her country. The council was formed in 1893 by a number of prominent women of Canada, who had attended conferences of the International Council at the Columbian Exposition. Lady Aberdeen, who was deeply interested, was elected its first president.

An indirect outcome of the council was the formatting of a national organization of the Young Women's Christian Association, which was accomplished by Mrs. Hoodless the same year. Hitherto, there had existed many local societies of the kind, but there was no communication among them and no co-operation. Mrs. Hoodless served as president during the first two years after the Dominion Young Women's Christian Association was organized.

Through this society, Mrs. Hoodless started a movement to make domestic science a part of the education of every girl. The first school was started in 1894 in Hamilton under the auspices of the Y.W.C.A. Such excellent work was done and Mrs. Hoodless was untiring in her efforts to secure the endorsement of the Government for the teaching of the subject that the Government was finally compelled to notice the appeal and appropriated a goodly sum with which the Ontario Normal School of the Domestic Science and Art has since been established at Hamilton.

It is the first school of the kind in that country and although the domestic science has not yet been introduced in the curriculum of the Government schools, it is confidently expected that this will be done soon. The Countess of Minto is the honorary president and Mrs. J. Hoodless is president of the normal school. The teachers rank the highest in their profession and the subjects taught include domestic science, domestic art, physical culture, history of education, psychology, chemistry, physics, bacteriology and hygiene, physiology and dietetics, emergencies, home nursing and laws of health. Mrs. Hoodless in her address said that women are not ready for

national executive work because they have not had the years of experience that the men have had. After nine years' experience in the work, she is satisfied that women are attempting to go too fast, that national societies should be a training school where its members should gain experience and education from discussing subjects instead of trying to legislate on matters which they scarcely understand.

The Canadian Council had been trying to effect social reform and follow philanthropic work. It has carefully avoided the suffrage movement, for Canadian women do not favor it, but prefer to serve the state through the home. The prime meaning of the council to her is a federation of ideas for the purpose of overcoming provincialism, breaking down national barriers and teaching the true meaning of the command, "Love thy neighbor, as thyself."

"In the International Council we have an organization so broad in its scope," she said, "that it embraces all classes and creeds. Through this organization we have an opportunity of studying humanity, such as no other society affords. In short, it enables us to see what is good and follow it know what is bad and avoid it. We have all sorts of schools for developing the intellect, but the National Council provides a post-graduate course.

"An eminent psychologist has said 'Women are less logical than men and less able to take part in national administration owing to the fact that at some remote period their development was arrested.' One feels sometimes that there is an element of truth in this statement and it is through such organizations as the National and International councils that women are enabled to realize the enormous responsibility of administering affairs that related to the welfare of the nation. Therefore, it seems essential that this training school should be supported by all classes of women. Instead of aggressive measures, the National Council should be devoted entirely to educative matters, so that the reforms for which we strive will be a natural result."

A short discussion followed Mrs. Hoodless's address and Mrs. Sewall read letters from the Brazilian and Mexican commissioners to the Pan-American in which they endorsed the work of the council and signified their intention of attending some one of the conferences. Mrs. Sewall said that this was an indication of more interest in the welfare and progress of the women of their respective countries than had been shown by men of all countries in the world at the Paris Exposition.

The next speaker was introduced. She was Senorita Mercedes Mota of Santo Domingo; an honorary member of the board of women managers of the exposition. She possesses rare intellectuality and is a professor of history and literature in the highest quality college open to women in her native land. Notwithstanding her charming modesty and lack of years, her address on the condition of women of Santo Domingo indicates progressive ideas. She said:

"The history of Santo Domingo, that beautiful island of the Caribbean Sea, is full of painful events, of alternating periods of misfortune and prosperity. These circumstance have strongly contributed to the [unreadable] and also the general social evolution as well as the intellectual

and political development. We may review the first historical period of the country in the introduction and establishment of the Spanish laws, language, religion and customs.

"The inhabitants of the island were in the state of savagery. This population was, under the rules and institutions of the colonizers, entirely destroyed and exterminated. Should the conservation of these Indians help or be in any way useful to the social ideal?

"It is true that Spain brought to America new elements of civilization, but they were far from being the proper ones for a great social development. The bases of the education were those of their religious fanaticism and consequently could not give free action to the mind.

"Under these circumstances, the Dominican women were bred in a very deficient medium. They were confined in the narrow circle of their homes, were without ambition, devoting all their time to religious practices and to the household, without any participation in public affairs. Humble, simple and indifferent to all that concerned not their prayers and home was the deplorable state for three centuries of the Dominican women.

"With the nineteenth century, there is initiated a new political and social revolution. Wars, barbarity, desolation, all these calamities fell upon the Dominicans who were already seeking freedom, which was finally obtained in spite of great obstacles. It was then that the condition of our women was transformed and improved.

"They were a valuable aid to the struggle of our independence. Since the republic was established in 1844 there has been a more progressive period for women. She began to labor humbly in the school and to enter the field of literature. The first women poets of merit in the republic, Mrs. Encarnacion and Miss Josefa A. Peronio and the distinguished school teachers, Miss Socorro Sanchez and Mrs. Nicolasa Billim, laid the foundation for a liberal education. This work was taken up and finally established 20 years ago by Mrs. Salome Urena de Henriquez, the most brilliant and talented woman that we have had and the greatest of our poets, also a scientist and teacher. She has been exceedingly successful, for her pupils are women of great intelligence. Our education for women does not lack any of the advantages of modern pedagogy. Painting, music, literature including poetry, fiction, drama and didactic books, medicine, pharmacy, and bookkeeping are included in the vocation of Dominican women. We also have a great painter, Miss Adriana Billim, who is now living in Cuba and who is a director of an academy of art in Havana.

"The Dominican women are virtuous, simple, industrious and bred to be sweet wives and good mothers. They have not accomplished as much as the Americans have, but are putting forth an effort to attain the same standing.

"We will have to labor for the emancipation of women. If the triumph of this sublime work of social redemption is accomplished in the near future, women must try hard in order to be useful

elements in the great growth of civilization. The beginning of the work calls for its end. We will reach it by conscious effort and truth itself."