

HOME and COUNTRY

Published by

The Ontario Women's Institutes at Toronto, Ontario

Volume 2

JULY, 1936

Number 3

VIGNETTES OF THE

A. C. W. W. MEETINGS

Women! Farm women! Nearly seven thousand of them, filling every available inch of space in the huge Constitutional Hall, the largest assembly hall in Washington.

Every eye focussed on the platform where Miss Grace Frysinger in her own inimitably gracious way presides and introduces the speakers.

The Honourable Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, and the Honourable Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America, welcomes the delegates.

A spontaneous, heartwarming wave of applause as Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, wife of the President of the United States, rises to address the huge throng, and the tribute of utter silence as her clear enunciation carries her message to the remotest corner.

A delegate from each country represented at the conference files past the microphone bringing a brief message of greeting in the language of the country she represents. Beautiful native costumes add colour.

* * * * *

Beautiful tree-shaded lawns as a setting with the balconies of White House as a background! The hospitable and gracious first lady of the land shaking hands with each of the overseas and Canadian delegates and smiling a welcoming greeting to the thousands of her own countrywomen.

The President himself voicing cordial greetings from the balcony, and speaking earnestly of farm problems.

Voices of farm women's choruses rising in splendidly trained unison and harmony.

* * * * *

Another break in the more weighty routine! A visit to historic Mount Vernon, the home of George and Martha Washington, where a wreath is placed on Martha Washington's tomb in memory of a distinguished and capable rural homemaker.

* * * * *

The United States Secretary of Agriculture, Honourable Henry A. Wallace, arouses great interest in an outstanding address at the banquet on the economic problems of modern agriculture. The stirring challenge to peace of Carry Chapman Catt! The fine, if brief, address of Mrs. Watt, who receives an ovation which turns to a song of greeting as she is presented with a corsage bouquet as a birthday token! Music by more farm choruses and by the Navy Band.

* * * * *

The final unforgettable farewell ceremony at the Water Gate of the beautiful Arlington Memorial Bridge!

Just as the sun begins to dip in the dusky rose red setting behind the Virginia Hills across the waters of the Potomac, each group of delegates musters behind its own country's flag and files down the broad stairway as the Navy Band plays the appropriate national air.

Then the entire assemblage, with the throng of onlookers, joins in a farewell hymn, dispersing as darkness softly falls with hearts filled with the possible significance that this international conference of rural women may have for the future and the prayer that its influence may help to lead to better international accord and friendship and may be sufficiently far-reaching to encircle the world.

(Contributed by Mrs. R. B. Colloton.)

RECEPTION AT STONEY CREEK



A group of the charter members of the Stoney Creek Women's Institute and prominent Women's Institute workers. Mrs. Alfred Watt, the president of the A.C.W.W. is seated.

PERSONALITIES OF THE

A. C. W. W. MEETINGS

"Wonderful! Positively overwhelming!" were the exclamations heard everywhere upon the lips of the delegates as they rallied at the third triennial conference of the A.C.W.W. at Washington.

One thousand were expected—nearly 7,000 came. They represented the Women's Institutes and their kindred bodies all over the world. Farming women, not all, but country women, leading the way to better understanding and a great internationalism.

The warm welcome and the cordial hospitality of the American women, from Mrs. Roosevelt the first lady of the land, Miss Grace Frysinger, official hostess, and Senior Home Economist of the Extension Division of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and her untiring committee, down to the smallest working unit, which contributed to make the Conference so outstanding, will long live in the hearts of all who attended.

After meeting Mrs. Watt and feeling the force of her keen executive ability and strong leadership, as President of the A.C.W.W., one knew why the organization had grown to such magnitude. One was impressed, too, with her efficient secretaries and assisting officers. They were marvelously helpful, and one wondered how they did so much work and yet, in spite of all the trying and constant demands upon them, found time for friendly chat and many thoughtful acts of courtesy.

Interesting Delegates

The delegates from Kentucky and Michigan welcomed the opportunity to renew contact with Ontario. They were still enthusiastic about Mrs. J. Houck's and Mrs. R. B. Colloton's visits of over a year ago.

The Kansas women with their original sunflower badge were never mistook. Together with Missouri and Oklahoma, 350 of them chartered a special train and when 450 turned up, they agreed to manage somehow.

Fru Michelet with true Norwegian dignity was among those who graced the chair in presiding for Mrs. Watt.

Frau Knessner-Gerhard, adviser to the German Ministry of Agriculture, had been sent by Adolph Hitler to represent all the peasant women of her country.

Not only the ear, but the eye too, was attracted to those delegates from overseas in native costume. Among them was noted the strong Germanic type from Latvia, her beautiful embroidered dress typifying the cultural background of her race. In sharp contrast was the small and dainty Sin Lalese moving gracefully about in her sari reflecting the vivid colourings of the Far East.

Other smiling faces and personalities making contacts for active friendships represented Sweden, Switzerland, Palestine, Scotland, Wales, South Africa, S. Rhodesia, Australia, New Zealand, various States of the U.S.A., and each of the Provinces of Canada.

It was suggested by Illinois, and unanimately endorsed, that in November, the month of remembrance, Institute members all over the world, on the days of their meeting, would give special consideration to the question of world friendship and that this observance should be known as our "International Day".

(Contributed by Mrs. Loreen E. Leatherdale.)

Handicraft Exhibits

Show Creative Ability

The Women's Institutes of Canada will keep step during the next three years with the international program of the A. C. W. W. by definitely planning to develop greater interest in the use of raw farm products common to farm and country homes, and a closer study of the arts and crafts of our country.

This subject was discussed in one of the closing sessions of the International Conference and all constituent organizations agreed to cooperate in the work.

Handicraft Exhibits

The exhibit of Handicrafts at the A. C. W. W. Conference not only was interesting from a viewpoint of workmanship and originality, but revealed knowledge in the technique of arts and crafts, and the resourcefulness of the women of the countries represented, as shown by attractive buttons made from polished peach pits and walnuts cut in sections.

Discussions were held on ways and means of reviving interest in the traditional crafts and the use of raw farm products, such as the combined use of flax and wool for weaving, the secret of vegetable dyes, increased use of block printing, woods, pine and raffia, canes, reeds, pottery, etc. In England, a very high standard of craft work had been attained and, because of this, W. I. members have more orders for handicrafts than they can fill.

Creative Expression

Handicraft fills one of the greatest needs of this age—the need for creative expression. Since handicrafts require for success, skill and accuracy, knowledge of subject, of colour and design, they are of great educational value.

By means of handicraft, the adornment of the home can be carried on with special individual taste, not possible with mass production machine work. In making use of wool, wood

and other home grown products, crafts can become of greater economic value.

History too may be read in the handicrafts of a country—its geographical position and, to a certain extent, its historical and traditional background. There is no craft in all the world so linked with historical events as that of the patchwork quilts in America.

Interchange of Ideas

Interesting information could be collected in this work from correspondents in the various countries represented by the A. C. W. W. Geographical and physical conditions have had their effect on design and colour of both ancient and modern national handicrafts. For instance, the glorious colour and brilliance of the "Northern Lights" is reflected in the weaving and embroidery of the Scandinavian countries and the severity of their line is probably due to the long winter and the lack of flora. The riotous colour and flowing design found in the Southern handicrafts reflect the luxuriance of the tropical countries in which they are found. Even religious beliefs have left their mark in this way, for the development of geometrical and floral designs in some Asiatic countries is due to the fact that they were forbidden by their religion to reproduce the human form.

New ideas in craft work evolved by countrywomen in the newer countries can be of equal service in the older countries.

Handicraft which does not bring joy in the doing is handicraft lacking a fundamental element, for the basis of all good handicraft is in the happiness gained through work well done. We must remember "every rise in the quality of the work men do is followed swiftly and inevitably by a rise in the quality of the men who do it".

(Contributed by Mrs. T. J. McDowell.)

Promotion of world peace, study and use of raw farm products and natural resources at hand from a practical and artistic view point, an annual November international day with programmes to further international understanding, were the main topics of discussion at the third triennial Conference of the Associated Country Women of the World held in Washington.