

STATE MEETING OF PAN AMERICAN ROUND TABLES OF TEXAS

Rice Hotel, Houston, Texas

April 27, 1943

Morning Session

The State Conference of Pan American Round Tables of Texas met in regular session Tuesday, April 27th, 1943, at 9:30 A.M., at the Rice Hotel, Houston, Texas, with Mrs. Stone J. Robinson, Director General, presiding.

The invocation was given by Mrs. Hallie Bryan Perry of Houston.

Addresses of welcome were given by Mayor Otis Massey, Mr. T. L. Evans, representing the Houston Chamber of Commerce, Mr. H. F. Walsh, Dean of the Consular Corps, and Mrs. Perry Olcott, Director of the Pan American Round Table of Houston.

Mrs. W. L. Brown, Associate Director, El Paso, gave the response.

In the absence of the Recording Secretary, Mrs. E. C. Rach of San Antonio, the Director General requested Mrs. T. W. Mahone of McAllen to serve as Secretary.

The State Officers' reports were given in the following order;

Mrs. W. L. Brown, Associate Director, reported on Las Cruces, New Mexico, organization and meeting.

Mrs. J. L. Rentfro sent her report, which told of the organization of the P. A. A. Pan American Round Table of Brownsville.

Mrs. D'Arcy M. Cashin's report as an Associate Director was given later, at the Friendship Luncheon,

Mrs. C. F. Arrowood, Associate Director, Austin, was prevented from attending by illness.

Mrs. W. B. Heaner gave a detailed report of letters sent to Directors, Board Members, and some to the Latin American Tables, in Spanish,

Mrs. L. G. Waltrip, State Treasurer, gave a detailed report of receipts and expenditures, which is filed in Secretary's book. She reported receipts-\$572.21 and expenditures-\$296.50. The Director General called attention to one error. The seal and charter for the Alliance of Pan American Round Tables should have been charged to the Alliance. The Treasurer made the correction.

Mrs. T. W. Mahone, the State Historian, reported receipt of three year books for the history, but no clippings. She is keeping Table Talks as interesting historical data for the organization. She made a plea for more data for the history.

Miss Pearle Burr, State Custodian, reported seven issues of Table Talks had been edited and sent to the Tables at an average cost per issue of \$2.00. The Custodian said that, although prepared to help members of Tables with material or suggestions for programs, she has had requests for material from only two members. Mrs. Robinson asked for a special "hand" for Miss Burr for her splendid work on "Table Talks."

Mrs. Irwin of Laredo, moved that the monthly bulletin-Table Talks be continued. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Olcott of Houston. The Director General asked that each Table be sent 24 copies, instead of the 10, so that each active member might have a copy.

Reports of the Tables were given in the following order, and the reports filed:

San Antonio . . . . .	report given by	Mrs. Ruth Sargent
McAllen . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. H. J. Houser
Dallas, #1 . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. Nancy Richie Ransom
Austin . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. Herman Pressler
El Paso . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. W. L. Brown
Laredo . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. Harland M. Irwin
Brownsville . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. G. W. Johnson
" P.A.A. . . . .	" " "	" " " "
Dallas, #2 . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. Dwight Dill
Houston . . . . .	" " "	Mrs. S. W. Heald
Corsicana . . . . .	reprt came by mail at close of convention,	and is filed.

Mrs. Robinson told of a memorial in the form of a recreation center for our soldiers in Guatemala City, which is a special project of the Corsicana Table. The memorial honors a former member who passed away recently in Guatemala City. At

A most interesting discussion on "Membership - Its Responsibilities" was led by Mrs. L. G. Waltrip of Dallas. The leader stressed the fact that membership in a Pan American Round Table was very different from other cultural clubs, for, said Mrs. Waltrip, "the Tables embrace all that the self improvement club has to offer and in addition, the very potent force - Pan Americanism. Pan Americanism is a movement and the Pan American Round Tables are sinews of that movement. A Pan American Round Table is not 'just another club' with social status and local cultural standards to maintain, but is one made up of women who have caught the vision and are willing to sacrifice to reach the goal. If we keep the Pan American Round Table as a movement for the purpose of extension of understanding of the Latin American Republics, we shall need to give serious and comprehensive attention to the membership of our Tables - for the pillars of any institution are, in reality, its members." Some of the qualifications for membership suggested by the leader were the following: 1 - vision of Pan Americanism - of what can be accomplished through the drawing together the families of the Americas. 2 - ability to make a definite contribution to the cause - one that will be continuous and grow in gravity as time goes on. "Remember, a Table Member must not only be a good woman, but a woman good for something." 3 - a member must be loyal - love her Table, keep up with its progress, keep abreast of the times and know the geographical, political and religious history of all the Republics. 4 - it is not necessary or even desirable that all members have similar viewpoints, but the viewpoints must have nobility of purpose, tenacity of ideals. Veracity and versatility are characteristics that will add to the prestige of membership. In closing her remarks, Mrs. Waltrip said, "but the two outstanding characteristics that are imperative for membership are vision and contribution."

The leader then called on Miss Ruth Coit of San Antonio, whose topic was "Should a Table's Membership be Limited?" The answer was yes. Miss Coit said, "in San Antonio we have arrived at our conclusions in time and as a matter of experience. Experience is often a bitter teacher, and it is so much more kind and far easier never to allow an evil to commence than to allow it to have a start and then attempt to stop it or to change it.

"The members of the Pan American Round Table of San Antonio believe in limited membership: active members, of course, twenty-one; associate members, thirty-nine; a total of sixty. A waiting list is obviously important and a safeguard, so the associate membership should never be complete. To have a waiting list and a limited membership enables the Round Table to have a choice of members. Often membership in the Pan American Round Table is regarded as a social stepping stone, and no one may put her feet on the Pan American Round Table. At the moment in San Antonio we have such an applicant pounding at our doors - politely she is told (1) limited membership, (2) waiting list, and (3) a candidate must be proposed by someone who is already a member and seconded by another member..... It is far more simple to keep a limited number in sympathy with and working with that objective (objective as stated in Constitution) than to make the point clear to a larger group.....A limited membership presents fewer complications and can work more happily as a whole." In closing, Miss Coit said, "the times are changing and they are changing rapidly. What may come after the war no man can know, but it is safe to calculate that in this day and hour human beings need a number of stable institutions to which to cling, associations built on sound and abiding principles. Such an organization is the Pan American Round Table, as founded in 1916, and on that platform we stand. We wish those who differ with us God speed, but from the depth of our experience we say - Keep your membership limited."

Miss Mary Fuller of Houston discussed Qualifications of Associate members, and emphasized the point that associate members should be as carefully chosen as active members, since vacancies in the active list are filled from the associate members, hence each associate member is a potential active member. She too, thought a Table should have a limited membership. Interest in this most important subject was evidenced by the many questions and suggestions from the delegates and each representative had much to take back to her Table. During the discussion on membership, the Director General called attention to the fact that some of the Tables had increased the number of its active members, giving them as countries some territorial possessions of the United States. Mrs. Robinson stated that Mrs. Griswold, the founder, had very definitely stated the number in the constitution and by-laws which was drawn up for the use of the extension committee in forming new Tables. Mrs. Heald of Houston reminded the delegates that the Pan American Union had decided that question years ago. It was the decision of the body that the number of active members remain as stated by our founder, Mrs. Griswold.

Discussion - "Extension Work" was next on the program. Mrs. C. F. Arrowood of Austin was to have led the discussion on the Senior groups or Tables, but was unavoidably detained in Austin, so the subject of Junior groups was taken up. The importance of starting our Pan American work with the very young was emphasized and demonstrated. Mrs. D'Arcy M. Cashin was the first speaker; she had been working with the young children, particularly the children at the Ripley Settlement House, and announced that these children would furnish the program at the luncheon, demonstrating what can be accomplished with children.

Miss Helen McMaster of the Houston Public School system told what is being done by the High School students in the way of Pan Americanism. She displayed several beautiful posters, Latin American subjects, that had been made by the pupils. She displayed a most interesting book - "Who's Who in Latin America," compiled by pupils. One of the most interesting exhibits was a very large relief map of the Americas, with products, industries, people, etc., all built to scale. The tiny little people dressed in the native costume of the country - all had been made by the students. The six students who had done most of this splendid work were introduced and were given a rousing hand of appreciation.

Mrs. Edgar Soule of the Houston University then told of the Pan American work being done by the University students - of their great interest, of the increasing number who were studying Spanish, and of the interesting group meetings they had for the discussion of Latin American affairs. Our Director General urged that we take back to our own Round Tables these ideas - that the Pan American Round Tables could do no finer work than to encourage and assist the youth in our communities in their Pan American activities.

Our Reading "What and Why" was the next discussion on the program, and was led by Miss Julia Ideson of the Houston Public Library System and Miss Pearle Burr of the Tyrrell Library, Beaumont. A digest of Miss Ideson's paper is attached, and the Tables should get a great deal from it.

Miss Burr, in her talk, told of many excellent periodicals now available - such as the Inter-American Monthly, Pan American, Pan American Bulletin, the many pamphlets offered by the Pan American Union, many of them free of charge. She told of the Beaumont's Round Table's plan of having each officer get one magazine or paper on Pan Americanism and making exchanges, thereby giving the members a wealth of up-to-date material for programs and roll call.

Mrs. G. W. Johnson of Brownsville told of the Exposition of Books on display in Mexico City which was attracting thousands, and increased reading was reported. Mrs. Herman Pressler of Austin, extended invitation for 1944 conference to be held in Austin. Meeting then adjourned for lunch.

The Pan American Friendship Luncheon in the Lacquer Room of the Rice Hotel, with Mrs. Cashin as Chairman, was a delightful affair. The puppet show given for our entertainment by the Ripley Marionette Club was thoroughly enjoyed. It was given by children from eight to fourteen years of age. There was the puppet orchestra, directed by Uncle Sam, a splendid little master of ceremonies who introduced the presidents of several of the Latin American Republics and their wives. As each president was introduced, the national anthem of his country was played, then a brief speech by the president. It was most entertaining and unique, and through the preparation of this program the children had come to know their Latin American neighbors.

#### Wednesday Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened with Mrs. Robinson presiding, and the program was as follows: "Education through Decoration," given by Mrs. Johnson of Brownsville,

who pointed out the value of carrying out our study of a country in the decorations, this being a day of visual education. She showed how effects could be achieved and what materials to use. Mrs. Johnson had just returned from Mexico, and had added several beautiful costumes to her already large collection, and graciously allowed them to be modeled, much to the enjoyment of those present. At this time, the Director General announced a brief recess so that the delegates might again view the seven beautifully decorated tables which had been entered in the state contest, and be ready to vote, this being the fairest way to decide on the winner.

Mrs. Robinson appointed Miss Burr and Mrs. Waltrip as tellers, and members voted by secret ballot on the table displays. So splendidly were the countries chosen, represented in the decorations of each table, that it was difficult to make a choice, but Laredo's table, representing Xochimilco, was announced as the winner, and the prize was a year's subscription to the Inter-American Monthly.

"Flash News of the Western Hemisphere" was given by members of the radio committee, and much up-to-the-minute information was given the delegates in this interesting manner. Radio scripts given during the year by the Tables were on display and showed much thought, study and effort on the part of the radio chairman of each Table.

A motion was made that we accept Austin's invitation for 1944 Conference - carried. An interested and very welcome guest was Mrs. Henry Cain of the Mexico City Pan American Round Table, and Mrs. Robinson called on her to tell something of the work of her Table. She spoke briefly of the fine work her Table was doing, and its interest in the extension of the Pan American Round Tables in Mexico. Mrs. Cain was asked to take back to her Table our sincere appreciation of their work. Mrs. Waltrip was asked to read important recommendations of the Board of Directors, namely, that

- 1- That we set a limit of \$500.00 on the Florence T. Griswold Memorial Fund
- 2- That it be a revolving fund
- 3- That it be used by a Latin American student.

A motion was made that the recommendations be accepted and after thorough discussion, the motion carried. The details are to be worked out later, and hopes were expressed that the \$500.00 limit would soon be reached. Several voluntary pledges were given at this time.

Mrs. Perry Olecott of Houston presented a project in which the Houston Table was much interested. She stated that the Executive Mansion in Austin was being re-furnished, that there was no tea service in the Mansion, and that the Houston Table thought a gift of a tea service by the Pan American Round Tables of Texas, said service to be of Mexican Silver and purchased in Mexico City, would be a beautiful good will gesture. The delegates were asked to take the project to their Tables for thorough discussion.

Mrs. H. J. Houser of McAllen gave the report of the Resolutions Committee. This committee expressed for the assembled delegates their sincere appreciation for the splendid convention planned for us by Houston, thanking the hostess Table - the Pan American Round Table of Houston, the Rice Hotel, Mayor Otis Massey, the Houston Chamber of Commerce, the Consular Corps, the press, Senora Milla Dominguez for her lovely songs, the high school students who prepared the relief map and the children from the Ripley Settlement House for the unique and most interesting puppet show, to everyone who had a part in making this convention so enjoyable and stimulating. Mrs. Robinson also thanked the Houstonians for the delightful convention and the delegate body for their active and constructive participation in the discussions.

The minutes were read, corrected and approved, and the convention adjourned. Following the adjournment of the business sessions the delegates and guests enjoyed a garden party and tea at the beautiful estate of Miss Ima Hogg. It was a perfect ending for the convention, so splendidly planned by the Houston Table.

Respectfully submitted

Marie S. Mahone  
Sec. Pro. Tem.

What to Read and Why

Books on Latin America

..... Outside and beyond books in English, there is the great field of Latin American writings of which we know almost nothing. If we are really sincere in our desire to understand Latin America we must begin to read the books they publish and write. It is now our part to learn to understand their literature, appreciate their art and respect their customs. The two most recent books by Latin Americans are "A Latin American Speaks" by Luis Quintanilla, and "Free Men of America," by Ezekiel Padilla.

Large General Works by Americans

- "Latin America" by Preston James. (A compendium of Latin American information. An invaluable aid to the study of the historical, as well as the contemporary political, social and economic scene.)
- "Latin America" by William Lytle Schurz. (A comprehensive book - a sort of advanced text by a commercial attache expert.)
- "Latin America" by Samuel Guy Inman. (One of the ripest and most mature books we have.)
- "Good Neighbors" by Hubert Herring. (A "must" book, because it is based on a continued effort to establish friendly relations. It is an honest book, contains an especially fine bibliography, including many Latin American publications.)

Miss Ideson called attention to the important histories now being published by the University of North Carolina Press, called the Inter-American Historical Series. Available are volumes on Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Colombia, in English, although written by natives.

Biographies

- "Bolivia and the Political Thought of South America" by Belaunde. (Seems to be the most respected.)
- "Bolivia, the Passionate Warrior" by T. R. Ybarra
- "Man of Glory" by D. J. Clinton, whose pseudonym is Thomas Hourke. (Frequently read but pretty journalistic.)

Miscellaneous Books

- "The Young Man of Caracas" by T. R. Ybarra. (A book calculated to give an American a more sympathetic understanding of a Venezuelan.)
- "The Phantom Crown" by Bertitia Harding. (These books are not taken very seriously by historians and literary men, but they give an interesting background and are easy to read.)
- "Amazon Throne" by Bertitia Harding.
- "Far Away and Long Ago" (story of his boyhood on the pampas)
- "The Purple Land"
- "Tales of the Pampas"
- "Green Mansions" (unforgettable story of the forests of Guiana, full of symbolism and a sense of beauty.)
- These books by W. H. Hudson are classics of South America.

- "Brazil Under Vargas" by Karl Lowenstein. (Said to be the most thorough book available on the government of Brazil. It is a profoundly searching book, written by a constitutional lawyer.)

Mexico

Mexico, says Miss Ideson, is entirely incomprehensible without some realization of the teeming life that existed on this continent when Columbus came in 1492, and the Arabian Nights conquest, which took place thirty years later. For this there is nothing equal to

"Conquest" by Prescott. (Although written 100 years ago, it still has the interest and vitality that made it a best seller in its day and for many years after.)

"True History of the Conquest" by Bernal Diaz. (Written by one of the conquerors - an eye witness in 1568, and the story is told with truth and simplicity.)

"History of Mexico" by Henry Bamford Parkes. (This history published in 1938 is considered by some critics as the most satisfactory general history.)

"Life in Mexico" by Madame Calderon de la Barca. (Although published 100 years ago, is still a source of information on Mexican life and customs.)

"Mornings in Mexico" by D. H. Lawrence. (Charming book of high literary merit.)

"Viva Mexico" by Charles McComb Flandrau. (Published during the Diaz regime, it is written with a keenness of observation, a sympathy for the people, a wit and whimsicality that have made it a classic and kept it alive until our day.)

"Mexico and its Heritage" by Gruening. (A study of Mexico's complex present and the influential factors from the past.)

"Mexico - A study of the two Americas" by Chase. (One of the most informing books, economically, to be found)

"Idols Behind Altars" by Anita Brenner. (Perhaps the best book to read on the art of Mexico.)

"The Mexican Side of the Texas Revolution" by Dr. Carlos F. Castenada. (A book we Texans should glance over.)

"Under Dogs" by Mariana Azuela. (This story of the revolution is now available in English.)

"The Eagle and the Serpent" by Guzman. (A good translation of this book is also available.)

"The Mexico I Like" by Frank Dobie. (Legends and stories of Mexico that will reward any reader.)

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Many publishers are featuring the outstanding literary productions of the various countries.

"Broad and Alien is the World" by Ciro Alegria of Peru. (This is the Farrar and Rinehart prize novel.)

"From Chile," Knopf is soon to publish.

"The Shrouded Woman" by Maria Luisa Bombal.

"From Argentina," sometime during the year will come.

"The Bay of Silence," by Eduardo Mallea

"From Argentina," also comes a National Grand Prize Novel.

"Stone Desert" by Gustavo Martines Zurivia, who writes under the name of Hugo West.