

Evening Sessions of Congress

HELD IN CONVOCATION HALL

THURSDAY, JUNE 24TH.

Chairman—HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF ONTARIO.

Arranged by the sections on Art, Literature, and Professions for Women, with an address by Miss Jane Addams; in connection with the Social Work and Moral Reform Section, which was, at the speaker's request, transferred from the evening of Tuesday, June 29th.

The programme opened with illustrations of sacred music from the 15th to the 19th century, given by the Choir of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto, under the direction of Dr. Albert Ham. These selections were well rendered and were much enjoyed by the audience.

WOMEN'S INFLUENCE IN POETRY, FICTION, THE DRAMA AND HISTORY.

By AGNES KNOX BLACK, Professor of Elocution,
Boston University.

There is profound significance in the venerable Bede's story of Caedmon's inspiration and the beginning of poetry and creative literature in England. English literature and all that this term stands for in the various types of poetry, the drama, prose, fiction and history, began in an institution, the shaping genius and controlling influence of which was a woman, the Abbess Hilda, of the seventh century. I never think of the story of the peasant boy, and the noble Abbess, in the Northumbrian Monastery that overlooked the North Sea, and see afar inland the hills of heather which roll up to the Scottish border, without reading in it prophecy as well as fulfilment. Wind-swept and wave-washed, a waste of haunted moorland behind, the restless sea in front, what more fitting birth-place could English literature have had?

Three of the greatest periods of creative activity in the subsequent history of British literature testify to the significance of his story of the dawn-time. It is no happy accident surely that these periods should coincide with the reigns of Queens, and