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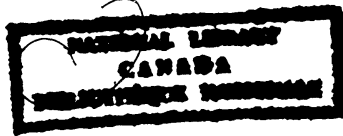
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Taylor, Mrs Thomas



PRESIDENT'S MEMORANDUM

CONCERNING THE SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA.
HELD AT VICTORIA, B.C.,

ALSO THE MEETINGS HELD EN ROUTE.—JULY TO
AUGUST, 1900.

In preparing a memorandum of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women of Canada, held last July in Victoria, it seems to me better to dwell on the series of Meetings with Local Councils *en route*, than on the meetings in Victoria, which will be fully given in the Verbatim Report.

The more so, as it is hoped that the Verbatim Report will soon be ready for distribution, and no summary should take the place of it, or lessen the interest in its perusal. I will therefore confine myself to generalities, and the meetings with Local Councils of which there will be no other record in the Report.

Delegates from the far East came by Toronto and joined those from London, Hamilton and Toronto, to take the delightful and popular lake trip by C. P. R. boat to Port Arthur, where we were met by Mrs. Gibbs and a number of the West Algoma Council, and joined by Miss Wilson, Corresponding Secretary, and other delegates from the East. Those who know Mrs. Gibbs will have an idea of the warmth of welcome given us by her Council.

Reaching Port Arthur at 10 a.m., we were allowed to rest in the beautiful hotel and enjoy the grand scenery till luncheon hour arrived, when we were entertained by the Local Council. At 2.30 an informal meeting of Council was held in the drawing room of the hotel, and an address given by Mrs. Gibbs, then one of welcome by Mrs. Smellie, which was responded to. Afterwards Mrs. Cummings and Miss FitzGibbon spoke, and greetings from Charlottetown were given by Mrs. Gardiner. This was a large and delightful meeting, thoroughly enjoyed by all the visiting members.

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At four o'clock we were put in possession of the two cars which had been chartered to take us to the Pacific Ocean. To divide a party of fifty ladies between two cars, and satisfy every one with the accommodation available (upper or lower berths) may seem at first glance a difficult task, but it was accomplished amicably, each one remembering that she belonged to a society that owed allegiance to the "Golden Rule". All too soon farewell had to be said, first at Port Arthur and then at Fort William, where we had been accompanied by many ladies of the Local Council, and we were on our way to Winnipeg, the next stopping place, which was reached at six o'clock on Sunday morning. Here all enjoyed a day of quiet rest; some went to friends, some were billeted, and some preferred to remain in the car.

On Monday morning the party divided, one car going on in charge of Mrs. Cummings to Regina to meet the Council there, and one car remaining.

The welcome to Winnipeg was equally warm with the one at West Algoma, and as more time was to be spent in Winnipeg, more elaborate preparations were made for our entertainment. A garden party at Government House was given by the Local Council and largely attended by members of all Affiliated Societies. Winnipeg is a centre in which one meets with people from every quarter, and every delegate met with some friend, and some with a great many. The arrangements were perfect and all felt that this had been an hour to be long remembered.

In the evening a Public Meeting was held in Manitoba College, with Mrs. Bryce, President of the Local Council, in the chair. After a delightful little address of welcome had been given, and responded to, Miss Wilson gave a clear and helpful account of the work of the Council, which was much appreciated. Miss Murray brought greetings from St. John, and was followed by Miss FitzGibbon who held her audience for half an hour, with a delightful and eloquent talk on Canadian History and Patriotism, and what the women of Canada could do for both. Rev. Professor Bryce and Rev. C. W. Gordon spoke appreciatively of the work of the Council, and with votes of thanks a large and successful meeting was brought to a close.

On Tuesday morning by seven we were speeding westward to Brandon, which was reached before eleven. Here also the ladies of the Local Council were waiting to receive us with heartiest greetings, the presence and beaming face of the President giving at once a "Council atmosphere" to all the proceedings.

A delightful luncheon was given the delegates by Mrs. Cumberland (wife of the County Judge) and Mrs. Harcourt in the pretty home of the latter.

In the afternoon a drive to the Dominion Government Experimental Farm and other points of interest, and dinner at the hotel with Mr. and Mrs. McEwen as host and hostess, brought the social functions to a close, and eight o'clock found us assembled in the Town Hall for a public Council Meeting. Here, as in Winnipeg, there was a good attendance of both ladies and gentlemen. The President, Mrs. McEwen, took the chair and welcomed the visitors, speaking also on some of the aims of the Council. As request had been made that the speakers should dwell particularly on the organization and achievements of the Council, I spoke of the benefits to be derived from united action, and Miss Wilson gave a sketch of the Council work, and also of the International Council and Congress of Women, held in London in 1899. Miss Murray, of St. John, gave instances of the good resulting to societies from affiliation with the Council which had come under her own notice, and encouraged all interested in Council work to perseverance. Miss FitzGibbon also spoke on her own special line, and was listened to with great attention, the hearty applause testifying to the responsive chord which had been struck in the hearts of her hearers. She has been sowing seed wherever we have gone, which must yet bear fruit in an increase of loyalty and pride in our country and its history. Miss Scovil, of St. John, Mrs. James Shirriff and Mrs. McDiarmid, of Brandon, spoke briefly, and Mr. A. D. Rankin, also of Brandon, spoke in very flattering terms of the work being done by the National Council, and wished them "God speed". The meeting was closed with the National Anthem in which all joined.

On Wednesday at eleven we were again on our way to the coast, the party being enlarged and enriched by the addition of the Vice-President for Manitoba, Mrs. McEwen, Mrs. and Miss Murray, of Brandon, having preceded us to Victoria by several days.

One car of delegates and members stopped at Regina, where a very successful meeting was held in the school-room of the Presbyterian Church. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor was in the chair, Madame Forget and the members of the Local Council were present, and Mrs. Willoughby Cummings addressed the meeting, giving a history of the Council from the beginning. Mrs. Grant gave greetings from Toronto, Mrs. Gardiner from Charlottetown, Miss Johnstone from St. John and Miss Priddis from

London, each saying a few words about the work of their respective Councils. The next day the party lunched at Government House and were afterwards driven by some members of the North West Mounted Police to see the Barracks and the Indian Industrial School.

The two cars met again at Banff and finished the journey together.

An invitation from Lady Aberdeen to visit Vernon and the Coldstream Ranch had been accepted, and Friday was happily spent in this beautiful region. The cars stood through the night at Sicame Junction, and were attached in the morning to the Vernon train. At Vernon the party were met by Mr. Ricardo, Lord Aberdeen's manager, and a number of the ladies of the Vernon Local Council. A visit was paid to the Vernon Jubilee Hospital, which owes so much to Lady Aberdeen and the Local Council. Great pleasure was expressed by the visitors in seeing the admirable appointments of the hospital and the efficient management of the Victorian Order Nurses. After a delightful luncheon, provided by Lord and Lady Aberdeen, the party were driven to the Ranch, where scenery, orchards and hop garden called forth expressions of surprise and admiration. Again we were the recipients of our Advisory President's lavish hospitality, which left nothing to be desired but her own presence. The want of this presence was so keenly felt by all that expression had to be given in the following cablegram:—"Heartiest greetings and warmest thanks for delightful day. (Signed) Council members." Early in the next week an answer was returned by her, which was read to the Council and was much appreciated. At five o'clock the last look was taken at the lovely Okanagan Valley, and the party were once more on their way to the coast.

On reaching Vancouver we were surprised to find the Mayor of the city on the platform to greet us and say how sorry he was that Vancouver was not to have one of our wayside calls, and also to give us an invitation to remain as we returned. The ladies of the Council were there in large numbers, with hearty hand-claps, beaming faces and beautiful flowers. We were also joined by the ladies from New Westminster and Vancouver, who, with previous accessions by the way increased the party to about eighty.

Here we were met by two ladies from the Victoria Local Council, Mrs. Gordon Grant and Miss Lawson, who, with Miss Wilson's aid, during the passage placed the delegates not already arranged

for, and gave to all the addresses of their hostesses and directions about luggage, etc. This saved much confusion on landing, as delegates were at once introduced to the kind friends waiting for them, and then taken to their homes. Ere we could leave the boat, however, the Mayor of Victoria, accompanied by Mrs. Hayward, came on board and in a happy little speech, in the name of the city, welcomed us. Here in the beautiful city of Victoria we received a most royal welcome.

The arrangements for the meetings were perfect—the place convenient and ample in accommodation, the decorations charming, and the able management of every detail left nothing to be desired. To describe all the arrangements and social functions in detail would fill a good sized volume. I can only touch on leading points and leave the filling in to imagination, but I cannot sufficiently thank our friends in Victoria for all their labours on our behalf. To the Bishop of Columbia and his sister, Miss Perrin, and to the Local Council under Miss Perrin's leadership, our most heartfelt thanks have been tendered. To the ladies of the different churches we were indebted for providing most bountiful luncheons in one of the lecture rooms of the church, where the meetings were held, thus saving the time and adding to the comfort of the delegates. One day it was the ladies of the Presbyterian Churches who entertained us, next the ladies of the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches, and the third day the ladies of the Methodist Churches, while on Monday, the closing day, lunch was provided for the Executive Committee by the ladies of the Baptist Church.

The Bishop and Miss Perrin gave an evening reception on the first Monday to welcome the delegates, and a large garden party the following Monday to say farewell. During the week we had the honour of an invitation to tea with the Lieut.-Governor, Sir Henri Joly, of which all gladly availed themselves. A garden party at Mrs. Dunsmuir's on Thursday, with a delightful sail up the Gorge, made a welcome break in the week's work, while another garden party at Mrs. Croft's on Saturday afternoon was a pleasant close to the arduous labours of the week. We acknowledged and returned grateful thanks for many instances of public recognition and kindness shown the Council, but the warmth of welcome and open hearted hospitality of Victoria must always remain a fragrant memory to the visitors.

Very briefly I must touch upon several matters that came before us. First as to finance. As the Treasurer's statement had not been audited, owing to the absence of the Auditor, it was

referred back to the Executive Committee for consideration, and will be taken up at the first meeting of that Committee to be held in October in Toronto. In comparing the finances of the past with those of the preceding year, it must be remembered that the past year was one of only nine months, while the preceding one covered a period of seventeen months, and sums were included in the financial statement for 1898 which properly belonged to the statement for 1899. This shows the necessity of having a fixed date when the financial year shall close. It seems inadvisable to set any exact time for the holding of the Annual Meeting, as the place of meeting must in some degree determine the time most suitable, but this need not prevent the closing of the financial year, may I say, on the first of May, and then Local Councils and Federated Societies would know that returns must always be made before that date. During the discussion on finance, a request was made that I should call attention to the fact that Mrs. Edward Griffin, of Ottawa, was Treasurer of the Guarantee Fund, which is quite separate and distinct from the Council Aid Fund, having been raised by Lady Aberdeen to cover two items of expenditure, the salary of the Secretary and the rent of the office. This fund is only provided for three years, it being hoped that by that time the Council may be able to meet all necessary expenditure.

Fifteen names have been added to the list of Life Members by Local Councils under the privilege given them of naming a Life Member for every \$25 paid into the Council Funds. In addition to these we had the pleasure of receiving Mrs. Robson, of Victoria, as a Life Member at her own request, and the Lieut.-Governor, Sir Henri Joly, as an Annual Patron, also Miss Ross, of Toronto, as an Annual Patron.

Thirteen designs for Life Membership certificates were submitted, and after prolonged examination and discussion, a ballot was taken which resulted in the choice of two designs by A. H. Howard, of Toronto, one for the use of the National Council and one for Local Councils. It was also decided that the Publication Committee should make the necessary arrangements for their reproduction and that Local Councils be required to pay the cost of the Local Certificates used by them.

The resolutions on the Agenda making amendments to the Constitution were carried; the first, which made Lady Aberdeen Advisory President of the National Council for life, by a very enthusiastic standing vote, and the second, providing that conveners of Standing Committees be ex-officio members of Executive,

unanimously. It has for some time been felt to be desirable that the Standing Committees of the Council should be in closer touch with the Executive, in order that each branch of Council work may receive its due share of attention.

The "Amendments to Standing Orders" were carried, and a Committee appointed to revise and report to the first Executive Meeting the proposed changes.

The resolution on "The Insane in Prisons," with amendments, was carried. This called forth an interesting discussion which I trust will be carefully read, that Local Councils may know the views of the National Council on the matter, and consider in what way they can best advance these views.

The resolution as to "Public Libraries" evoked a lively discussion and was carried in the following words. "That the National Council recommend Local Councils to work for the promotion of Public Libraries and their establishment in places where they do not already exist."

It would make this memorandum too long to attempt to summarize the reports of the Standing Committees, but as they were most interesting and represent in large measure the work of the Council during the past year, I commend them to your careful perusal. They will all be found at length in the Verbatim Report.

The day spent on Educational topics was one of most general interest. The papers read were much appreciated, and were followed by lively discussion of the points raised, a large number of the delegates taking part.

The session spent on "The formation and maintenance of Local Councils", was felt to be a most helpful one. An able paper prepared by Mrs. Tilton, of Ottawa, was read by Miss Crease of Victoria, and another by Miss Wilson, the Corresponding Secretary, was followed by a very animated discussion. Many questions were asked, and valuable suggestions made, the conclusion of the matter being, that the National Council was asked by the Victoria Council to hold a public evening meeting to set forth the work of the National Council, its aims and its objects. This request was acceded to, and a meeting called for the evening of Monday, the closing day.

Announcement was made by the Recording Secretary that the amendment to the Criminal Code, prepared by the Minister of

Justice, raising the "Age of Consent" had at length become law ; also the amendment to the Vagrancy Act, providing that no person can be committed to prison for poverty. This announcement elicited hearty applause. The Council has for so long been striving after these reforms in the law that the consummation was felt to be cause for profound thankfulness.

The Treasurer having called attention to the small amount received in the past year in payment for Verbatim Reports, it was decided, after discussion, to leave the price at 50 cents for another year, and make more effort to collect the money for reports sent out, as in many cases full returns had not been made. It was also decided to make some changes in the Hand-Book for free distribution by leaving out of it all such information as would require to be changed annually, so that in future the lists of Councils, Officers, etc., will only be found in the Verbatim Report. It is hoped in this way to lessen the expense of the Hand-Book, as we can thus have a large number printed at once. The question of these printed reports is one of great moment, as it is necessary that we should bring down the expenditure for printing to the lowest sum possible with efficiency ; and we may have to change our methods again and again until a satisfactory plan be found.

The reports of Vice-Presidents called forth some discussion, and it was decided that further instruction be given on the matter, which will be done after the Executive meeting.

The election of officers was by acclamation, as there was only one nomination for each office, the second nomination for President having been withdrawn or declined, when it was known that I had consented to allow my name to stand for another year. I thank the Council very sincerely for their cordial support during the past year, and for their kind forbearance, and trust that my consent to remain in office for another year may not prove a loss to them. With the kind approval of Lady Aberdeen, I am going to ask that the Secretary be allowed to reside in Toronto for the coming year, as only in this way can the labour and responsibility be lessened for me. I am also to take advantage of the provision already made in the Constitution, to share my duties and responsibilities with the Provincial Vice-Presidents, whom I am sure I can rely upon to do what lies in their power to further our interests.

A matter which came before the Executive and the Council was an organ for the Council. There is a strong feeling that we should have some recognized medium of communication and

publication. The time may not have arrived yet when we can maintain a paper of our own, but we must keep it in view as something to be attained to. This also was left for further consideration with the Publication Committee.

On Wednesday forenoon the Council was waited upon by Mrs. Pooley and Mrs. Gillespie, a deputation of ladies interested in obtaining a weekly half holiday for young persons employed in the retail dry goods shops. After they had stated their case, a very spirited discussion followed, and much information was given by the Recording Secretary and others, as to the laws in force in the East and the privileges accorded, and it was decided to meet with the Victoria ladies on Saturday morning, when there would be no Council meeting, for a fuller consideration of the matter. Before Saturday came, however, the newspapers announced that two of the leading dry goods houses had determined to grant the desired half holiday, during the months of July and August. This speedy result from the appeal to the Council was very encouraging, showing, as it did, a regard, at least, for the opinions which had been expressed upon receiving the deputation, and at the meeting on Saturday it was resolved to make an organized effort to secure like privileges from other employers.

A great pleasure came to the Council on Friday morning, on receipt of a letter from Lady Aberdeen: a letter which brought her very near to us, though indeed throughout the whole meeting she was ever present in influence and reference. Yet the kindly, loving words, fresh from her pen, gave an assurance of her continued sympathy and abiding interest in us and in our work, which touched all hearts to the quick and gave fresh courage and hope for the future. Miss Perrin, Mrs. McEwen and Mrs. Gardiner were appointed a committee to prepare a reply.

I have made no reference to the public evening meetings which were interesting and well attended, but feel that some mention should be made of the closing one, held on Monday, 30th July, which does not appear on the Agenda. A large meeting assembled, and much interest was evinced, which was encouraging, showing as it did, how strong was the hold the Council had on Victoria. Indeed the interest in our meetings maintained and increasing to the close through the whole series, was an outstanding feature, and demonstrated as nothing else could have done, the esteem in which we were held for our work's sake.

The sad news of the death of the Duke of Edinburgh having reached Victoria on Tuesday morning, a meeting of Executive was

called at Bishops-close, and the following resolution of sympathy and condolence with Her Majesty the Queen was drawn up :—

Resolved:—" That the National Council of Women of Canada, holding their Annual Session in Victoria, B. C., do humbly offer to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen an expression of their sincere sympathy and condolence on the death of her son H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh and of Saxe Coburg Gotha. They pray that Almighty God may sustain Her Majesty and the Members of the Royal Family in their sudden bereavement."

It was agreed to ask her Excellency the Countess of Minto, the Honorary President, to forward the resolution, which she was graciously pleased to do. A reply has just reached me through Her Excellency, which I insert, as it will be of interest to all members of Council.

OSBORNE, AUGUST 25TH, 1900.

Dear Lady Minto:—The Queen desires me to ask you to be good enough to convey to the National Council of Women of Canada, her sincere thanks for the kind expression of sympathy and condolence contained in the resolution passed at their Annual Session at Victoria, British Columbia, and forwarded by you to Her Majesty.

Yours very truly.

(Signed) ARTHUR BIGGE.

*To Her Excellency, The Countess of Minto,
Hon. President National Council of Women of Canada.*

When forwarding this letter, Her Excellency said she had also heard privately from Princess Beatrice that the Queen was much gratified to receive the message of condolence.

This memorandum, I fear, is growing quite too long and I must hasten on. In response to invitations received from Vancouver and New Westminster, a party of twenty or more, left Victoria on Thursday morning, 2nd August, at 7 o'clock. Arriving at Vancouver, we were met on the dock by Alderman McQueen (representing the Mayor, who was absent in Victoria attending the meeting of the Legislature), a number of clergymen and leading citizens, with the ladies of the Local Council. Luncheon was provided by the City Council in a hall beautifully decorated for the occasion with flags and flowers, Alderman McQueen presiding. Words of welcome having been spoken and replied to, we were informed that "time was up", we must take the electric tram for New Westminster, which we did at 2 o'clock. There again we met a cordial welcome, the Mayor and citizens of New Westminster and the Council ladies meeting us with smiles, hand-clasps, and beautiful flowers. This is truly the land of flowers, every where the greatest profusion. Three hours were delightfully and profitably spent in visiting the automatic can factory, a

large saw mill, a salmon cannery, and a large new freezing and cold storage establishment. Then a drive to see the views and points of interest in this very interesting city. Afterwards, dinner at the hotel, presided over by the Mayor, the ladies of the Local Council with us, all guests of the city. We returned to Vancouver after half past eight, but the day was not yet done. A public meeting had been called for 9 o'clock, to set forth the work of the National Council, and a crowded house, in which were a large number of gentlemen, greeted us. Mrs. McLagan, President of the Local Council, took the chair, and gracefully welcomed the delegates, afterwards introducing the speakers for the evening. It was again my privilege to return thanks for the delegates. Mrs. Cummings gave a clear and concise account of the origin of the Council, the work that had been accomplished by it, and the work it was still engaged in. Miss Murray and Miss FitzGibbon followed in characteristic speeches. Alderman McQueen in eloquent and forceful words expressed his appreciation of woman's work and wished the Council all success. Ven. Archdeacon Pentreath and Rev. Mr. McLaren also spoke in commendation of the Council, and Mrs. McEwen, in moving thanks to our entertainers, vindicated the right of the prairie to be considered beautiful. The National Anthem brought a very successful meeting to a close.

On Friday morning the delegates were driven round Stanley Park, accompanied by some of the Vancouver ladies, Alderman McQueen and the Rev. Mr. McLaren. A number of the delegates left by train at one o'clock on their homeward journey.

The following week Mrs. Cummings visited Nelson with me. I had only three hours between train and boat, but they were made the best use of by the ladies of the Local Council. We were their guests at dinner, and afterwards at a reception in the house of Mrs. Beer, Treasurer of the Local Council. Here we met a number of our party who had reached Nelson before us, and had a delightful hour in making the acquaintance of our co-workers in this new and beautiful mountain city.

As it had been impossible to visit Rat Portage on the westward journey, and I was disappointed in my endeavour to do so as I returned, Miss Wilson included it in the places visited by her on her homeward way, and met the Executive of the Local Council. There had not been sufficient notice to gather a meeting of Council, as many were from home for the holidays, but I trust her meeting with the Executive has been as profitable as it was pleasant.

This completes the list of the Western Councils—all ten of them having been visited on this Western trip, and I believe that much good to the Local Councils, as to the National Council, will result. The smaller isolated Councils will feel more strongly than before that they are a part of a great organization, realizing that its members are interested in them, sympathizing in their difficulties and struggles, and rejoicing in their successes. These visits to the Local Councils have been so large a part of the influence and usefulness of this seventh Annual Meeting that it was felt a report which made no mention of them would be very incomplete.

I therefore crave your indulgence for such a lengthened account of these meetings, which were not really a part of the Annual Meeting and had no place on the Agenda.

I am,

Most sincerely yours,

M. TAYLOR,

*President of the National Council of Women
of Canada.*