

Start Closer Pan-American Intercollegiate Ties

Mackenzie College of Brazil and Union College of the United States Have an Academic Connection for Exchange of Students

A FIRST step has been taken to introduce into Pan-Americanism that human element which its advocates have found lacking, something more intimate and friendly even than commercial relations and diplomatic intercourse, as essential as such bonds are. And the pioneer in this new phase of the getting together of the northern and southern continents is neither a trader nor an Ambassador, but a pedagogue, a scholar in internationalism, President William A. Waddell of Mackenzie College in Brazil.

He came to the United States, seeking some academic connection, some way for the interchange of ideas and students, possibly of teachers, between his institution and a high-grade school in this country. He found what he sought at Union College, Schenectady, and has returned to Sao Paulo to tell the young men of Mackenzie that Union is ready to welcome as many of them as want to come, on equal terms, class for class. A student at the Sao Paulo college in good standing at the end of his freshman year will be as eligible to enter the sophomore class at Union as the boy who has done his first year's work in Schenectady, and the other way about.

It may help to get the international significance of this preliminary move by President Waddell and to appreciate what may come of it for Pan-Americanism, to recall what was said to the writer by Dr. Ernesto Nelson, a delegate from Argentina to the recent congress in Washington.

"It is not enough," he said, "that we trade together and send diplomats back and forth. That alone will not bring sympathetic understanding between the peoples of the two continents. Each should know something of what the other is thinking and enjoying and doing outside of the life of business. I believe that when you of the United States know that we have great schools, write good books, compose our own music, and paint our own pictures, you will have a greater regard for us than can ever come from thinking of us merely as persons to trade with or as wards to be considered in connection with the great Monroe Doctrine. It is something in the way of intellectual give and take that Pan-Americanism needs to make it vital."

What the man from Argentina said, speaking for his own country, applies of course to all the republics of South America, and this theory of the Pan-American idealist is to have its first tangible test in the intercollegiate experiment of Union and Mackenzie.

"A small group of Sao Paulo students already selected," said President Waddell, "will enter Union at the beginning of the next academic year in the Fall, but they will come to the United States early in the Summer and spend several preliminary months in good American homes in Schenectady. That is for the purpose of North Americanizing them, giving them some facilities in the use of colloquial English, (they already have a good working knowledge of formal English,) and of giving them an insight into American home life. It is desirable that they shall join the undergraduate body of Union as individuals, cosmopolitan rather than Brazilian, and not herded together as a colony.

"If students from Union see fit to come to Mackenzie for a part of their course and with the intention to work in Brazil, or elsewhere in South America, where there are great opportunities for young engineers, they will have the same facilities for becoming acclimated as to language and the social life of the people.

"One of the chief attractions of Union for the young men in Sao Paulo is in its electrical engineering courses, supplemented as they are by the splendid opportunities for laboratory and shop work in the plant of the General Electric Company at Schenectady. Applied science is practically the whole thing with the students in Mackenzie. Since the college was established, in 1891, as the outgrowth of the preliminary schools which



had been founded two decades earlier, we have offered three courses—one in literature and arts, another in pure science, and the third in applied science. There have been a very few to elect the arts course. We have never had a matriculant in pure science, so practically our entire student body is in applied science. The explanation of that, of course, is found in the stage of the country's development, or, as I may say, development of all South America. The need is for great initial enterprises involving construction and engineering.

"That very thing has made it necessary for us to give a somewhat wider training to our pupils in engineering than is customary in the colleges and technical schools of the United States. Brazil is a country of such vast distances, such great undertakings in physical improvement, and so few specialists, that the successful engineer must be ready personally to meet any emergency or handle any of the many problems incidental to the job in hand. He has to be his own corps of experts.

"To meet this situation we have to require a very stiff course in the preparatory schools, which are under the jurisdiction of Mackenzie. Before the boy can enter the freshman class of the college he must have completed all of algebra, all of plane and solid geometry, and all of trigonometry. He must have had two years in laboratory physics, one year in laboratory chemistry, and he must have such working knowledge of two modern languages other than Portuguese, the language of the country, that will enable him to use foreign textbooks."

President Waddell was asked if German was not one of the two languages offered in the majority of cases; the question being prompted by the general notion that before the war at least Brazil had been practically a German colony.

"On the contrary," he replied, "the two languages almost always are French and English. It has always been so, so no appreciable change can be attributed to the European war. French is pre-

evidence of the friendliness of the public toward Mackenzie. In fact, they call us the 'mother school,' because when the State established its normal and model schools they adopted much of our system and borrowed teachers from our Faculties to get them started. They have even offered to give us State appropriations, but we did not feel at liberty to accept subsidy because we stood for a propaganda of ideas all of which might not be approved by the taxpayers. The most striking demonstration of the feeling of the public toward the American college was on the occasion of the death of Dr. H. M. Lane, the first President of Mackenzie, in 1912. All of the State schools were closed on the day of his funeral, and the Legislature of Sao Paulo, which, by the way, is a State of 3,500,000 inhabitants, adjourned after passing resolutions eulogizing the work that the head of the American college had done for Brazil.

"Of course, the priests are bitterly opposed to us, and sending a child to Mackenzie, or any of its subordinate schools, is supposed to be a matter for confession on the part of the parents. But going to confession is a very rare thing among educated Brazilians, and this clerical opposition, so far as we are concerned, is a negligible thing."

Coming back to the matter of Union College, President Waddell said that in the course of time this going and coming of the students between the two countries would serve as a leaven and become a great factor in the promotion of true Pan-Americanism.

"But," he added, "there is a great deal that the United States business man might do right now to improve the commercial relations. The chief obstacles today are the American office boy, who cannot seem to learn that a letter to South America requires 5 cents postage, and the United States merchants, clever enough in every other way, but deliciously ignorant about everything below the equator.

"There are tons and tons of trade catalogues, circular letters, and other commercial literature stacked up in the post offices of Brazil uncalled for by the business men to whom they are addressed, and who will not pay the deficiency in postage. That is what the American office boy is responsible for. His employer, the merchant, is guilty of one blunder after another, due to careless statement. He does not know, for example, that the language of Brazil is Portuguese. He takes it for granted that it must be Spanish, and proceeds to have letters and catalogues put into Spanish, and very bad Spanish at that. He will endeavor to catch trade by advertising that he packs his goods in containers suitable for mule transport, and then sends them down in half-ton lumps. In short, he seems to think that Brazil is an undiscovered country, somewhere in the outer darkness, and that anything will do in dealing with it.

"Then, too, there is the dishonest merchant of the United States, who does untold damage to Pan-American trade and good-will with every swindling consignment that he ships. Fortunately, the deliberately dishonest trader in this country, who has the mistaken notion that Brazilians may be easy to do, is in a small minority. But I am ashamed to say that, in proportion to the amount of trade, there is more of this swindling perpetrated by commercial houses in the United States than in any other country with which Brazil has trade relations."

President Waddell is a Union College man himself, of the class of 1882. His first work after graduation was as field astronomer of the New York State Geodetic Survey, then he studied at Princeton Seminary for the ministry, served for several years on the Union Faculty, preached for a while in California, and went to Brazil in 1890, where he has worked ever since. He was the Dean of Mackenzie College when it was established in 1891, and succeeded Dr. Lane as President in 1912.