

Mrs. Lichtmann Talks On Russia At Woman's Club

Intermediates Hear First
In Series of Three
Lectures Planned

There is a close link and yet a gap between Americans and Russians, Mrs. Sina Lichtmann, guest speaker, told members of the Intermediates of the Westchester Woman's Club at a meeting last night. Her topic was "The Life and Culture of Russian." The lecture held at the clubhouse, was the first of a series of three arranged by the Intermediates to acquaint members with the Russian political, economic and social situation.

Mrs. Lichtmann, a Russian by birth, is an officer of the Roerich Museum, New York. She drew a scaffold picture of conditions in pre-war and post-war Russia, comparing them with contrasting conditions in America during the same period.

"I can consider myself half Russian, half American," Mrs. Lichtmann said. "I was born in Russia, but educated abroad, according to the Russian custom of education. I therefore belong to that very recent cosmopolitan type of Russian society which flourished under the old regime.

The cosmopolitanism engendered by the Russian system of education is responsible in Mrs. Lichtmann's opinion for the gap between American and Russian society. "Russians are educated in an international way, Americans in a national way," she said.

Only Limited History

"The early education of American children is so tremendously different from that which Russian children receive. We in Russia have been educated on the broad and vast literature of all countries. You in America have known only the limited history of your own country.

"For example, when I first came here I knew all your history and literature—not glibly, but thoroughly. The names of such writers as James Fenimore Cooper and Mark Twain are household words in every educated Russian family.

"In Russia, the universities have tried to build up the mentality of the youth of the country to such an extent that while we have had a generation of youths brilliant as writers, speakers and lecturers, they have all been leading a life too unbalanced to be normal.

"By nature Russians are great talkers—in fact, too great. This has caused the nation as such to be living intensely, feeling intensely. By nature they are also very religious, not so much in a church-going sense as in a mystical sense. This is one of the strong bonds between Russians and Americans.

"One great influence on Russian youth which American children do not have, Mrs. Lichtmann observed, is the perpetual conflict between the Conservative and Liberal elements. Peasants form 87% of Russian society and a move for their education and social betterment is constantly going on.

Quality of Hero Worship

"The quality of hero-worship induced by the factions in Russian society is a bond which links Russia and the United States," she said. There is the same tendency on the part of both countries to elevate great national figures.

In conclusion, Mrs. Lichtmann pointed out that no matter how peculiar are conditions in Russia today, they must not make Americans see it in the wrong light as a cruel, barbaric, unjust country.

Preceding the talk, Mrs. Kenneth Taylor gave a brief resume of important news events of the Summer, both here and abroad.

Mrs. W. C. Billingham, chairman of the Intermediates, presided. Hostesses for the evening were Mrs. William H. Chamberlain, Mrs. George A. Holton and Mrs. Charles F. Martin. Miss Virginia Pierson was program chairman. The meeting closed with a social hour and refreshments were served.