

ROYAL PALM HAMMOCK.
TO THE CLUB WOMEN OF FLORIDA.

By Minnie Moore-Willson, Kissimmee, Fla.

It is with the greatest pleasure I read in your interesting Federation page of the proposed plan to preserve the beautiful Royal Palm Hammock of Dade County. Without question the preservation of this wonderful growth of feathery crowned sentinels of the 'Glades will be a memorial that all Floridians may look upon with pride and the club women of the state must feel a thrill of patriotism, as well as a responsibility upon the undertaking.

Particularly is it pleasing to note that the making of this gift lies in the hands of the Internal Improvement Company, for with such a precedent we must all know that in making such a grant, it will be the privilege, too to make a grant of lands for the original owners and artisans of this mysterious hammock --- the Seminole Indians. A grant of lands will make a lasting memorial to Florida, where human lives and human destinies will be commemorated.

LEST WE FORGET.

In accepting the Royal Palm Grove, truly as interesting and beautiful as the red-wood trees of California, let us not be Unmindful of the historical setting that goes with the gift.

May we not draw the curtain and look back three quarters of a century and see the red man in this, their hidden camp, planting the seeds and the trees, to beautify his retreat.

The cruel war was over and the Seminole had his treaty; he felt he could begin life over once more undisturbed.

To digress for a moment, it was the American Indian, Hiawatha, who made the first peace compact, 370 years ago. It was the great

Seneca chieftan, Logan, who delivered the most eloquent oration ever compiled in American history. In music, in art the American Indian has given to us the best of the world's products. In late years in athletics, it took Jim Thorpe, the red skin, to bring the world's championship to America, and as this youthful redskin stood before the King of Sweden, and with the Swedish ruler's hand clasping his, heard the words, "You are the most wonderful athlete in the world," all America shouted for Jim Thorpe, the world's champion.

So today in Florida as women of the Federation and as students of history we must go back to our predecessors,--the red man of the Florida of a century ago.

It is easy of belief that the Royal Palm Hammock was once the abiding place, one of the retreats, of the old Hol-a-ta-micco, known generally as Billy Bowlegs-- or "General Bowlegs."

This chieftan, head of all the tribes, had great agricultural instincts, owning a magnificent garden planted in pumpkin, potatoes, peas, corn, and rice. History refers to the Indian settlement as Palm Hammock, where the trail was carefully concealed and this band of Seminoles prosperous and happy.

In another camp, and the fact is established by history, this chieftan who was the head of all the tribes had a garden of banana plants that towered fifteen feet in height, the pride of the old Chieftan's heart; they had been reared with parental care. One morning the old Chieftan going to his garden found his beautiful plants torn to shreds and trampled to the ground. They had been deliberately cut to pieces by the engineers who insolently admitted they did it "Just to see the old Chieftan 'cut up' ". AND THEY DID! for he summoned his braves

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and the last seminole skirmish tells the sequel, but added another dark page in the history of our Nation.

As we accept Palm Hammock today, a heritage of the Seminoles, let us at the same time come to the rescue of these cruelly treated original owners of this 'Glade territory.