

Dictated.

My dear Mrs. Tourge.

Remember your once asking me to give you the freight address for Edward Ament, our teacher at Greenville, Cal., saying that a friend of yours, or an Express Company, had offered to frank a box through for you; and it occurs to me to ask if you could possibly get that blessed help to apply for us in sending our boxes to our dear School. There, all of which blessed work came from the call which your husband first sent us about that place.

If you could achieve this help
for us we should be most-grate-
-ful.

Yours very truly,

A. S. Linton,

per C. W. J.

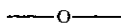
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THE Problem of the Indian Situation.

BY AMELIA S. QUINTON.



THE object of the Women's National Indian Association, as often stated, is to help gain for the Indians of the United States at the earliest possible date the protections, privileges, duties, and responsibilities of all other United States citizens, and also to bring practical Christianity to the tribes destitute of missions. The Association believes that when these, with what will necessarily accompany them, are secured the distinctive work of the Association will be accomplished. How best and soonest to gain and to give these advantages is, then, the all-including question before us. Since March, 1887, the Indian has been able, by any one of several not difficult ways, to enter United States citizenship, but owing to his anomalous past, not all that this status includes for the white man is yet the practical possession of the Indian. In the presence of the latter fact

there are legal questions to be further considered; but the greatest practical difficulty in the path of Indian civilization is, and has been for many years, one of administration.

The especial and confessed object of Government in the case of the red man is to civilize him and to teach him to be self-supporting. The problems arise in connection with this work of civilization and education, and they are not Indian problems, but the white man's problems. There is indeed no longer an Indian problem. Whether the Indian has the ability for civilization and self-support is no longer a problem or question. At this moment more than 24,000 Indian families are engaged in agriculture; the products of a single year of Indian industries amounted to a million and a half of dollars, and of the 250,000 Indians of the country 200,000 are already self-supporting by civilized industries. This proves also that there is no problem regarding the disposition of the Indian to work when permitted to know and experience the usual motives which in operation make labor profitable to men of other races. Nor as to whether the Indian boy and girl can acquire an education is there doubt, for the greatly improved reservation schools; the large and well-managed Government training schools at Hampton, Carlisle, Lawrence, Albuquerque,

Genoa and other places; the superb exhibition of the work of these throughout our great Columbian Exposition, where the world admired and applauded it, as well as the fact that there is now educational provision for three-fourths of the Indian children, all attest the popular belief that there is no educational Indian problem. The duty to educate the children of Indians is admitted to be the same as the duty to all illiterates, and the children of Indians educated in this generation will hereafter, as is also generally admitted, share our common schools, so that with educational appropriations so enlarged as to open the schools to the remaining four or five thousand pupils now unprovided, the chief educational need will be met.

Nor is evidence wanting as to whether the Indians have the usual range of mental gifts, of mechanical powers, or even of art capabilities, for Indians are now found among college and university graduates, in the legal, medical, educational, art and other professions, and in the Christian ministry, as well as among skilled mechanical artisans, and in other vocations where only the possession of talent could have placed them.

Nor is there longer question as to whether the reservation Indian will adopt the white man's way of life if placed under the influence and leading of a friendly, tactful

agent who is sincerely interested in his progress. Take the case of the Modocs, for example, placed in the Indian Territory after the Lava Beds war; sullen, disheartened, hating the white man and his ways, and yet the tribe was won in three years by a friendly, sincere agent into farming self-support, and into civilized homes. Or observe the case of the two thousand Piegans, of Montana, who in three years under an honest agent sincerely devoted to their elevation were led, out of wild barbarism, to approve and engage in the industries suited to their climate, and to approve of the education of their children. Many similar instances could be quoted. In the same line of evidence were the many questions asked me in visits to our wildest tribes, as the Apaches of Arizona; "tell us," they said earnestly, "how to get land with the white man's paper;" [a good title;] others said, "we like work and we like peace;" and some of those located near San Carlos, in a desert region of most meagre water supply, said with manly pride in the achievement, "I make two hundred bags of wheat;" "I have a hundred head of cattle;" and other similar statements were made. Tens of thousands of Indians have taken their allotments of land and have well begun the new life, and all this proves that there is no Indian problem as regards business aspiration, when a good agent and

teacher are present, when obstacles are removed, and when security for the safety of industrial products is given. It follows as surely as day follows night that could a good and well-fitted agent be on each of the reservations and continue there till his beneficent plans could be carried out, and till the Indians could engineer their own industries and their children, educated and industrially trained, be fitted to continue the work after them, the Indian Bureau could be eliminated from the care and cost of Government.

Nor should this consummation be many years distant. The Indians are not paupers; they have land; their best friends sometimes say "alas, they have land;" and they have timber—again alas—and they have mines—and again alas! *But they have all these*, and by many acknowledgments, treaties, and compacts with Government, *they have right to these*; and the Government is the trustee to guard their property and to hand it over undiminished and uninjured to its wards at their majority, and is under all moral bonds not by a year unduly to delay that majority. Nor is this duty to them a heavy labor, for Indians are few. There are but a quarter of a million of them in all, and with four-fifths of these already self-supporting, and with but a few thousand more children for whom to provide schools, the task is a small one and

should be speedily accomplished. It is beneath the dignity of a great and Christian nation longer to delay the sure cure for the long-deplored evils of our Indian system. As has been shown there is no Indian problem, but there is a white man's problem in reference to Indians, and it is simply as to giving the Indian his opportunity, since, by all the above facts, opportunity under right conditions is all he needs in addition to what he already has of talents, aspiration and property.

The good agent manifestly is the hinge on which this whole right opportunity turns, and how to find, place, and continue the good Indian agent is now the great problem of the Indian service. Could the fit agent be placed, and continue in place, the success of Indian civilization could doubtless be assured in less than ten years. In the lack of continuity in the work has been the delay of Indian elevation hitherto. Each four years, for many administrations, and alike for both parties, there has been an almost total clearance of the personnel of the Indian reservation service, and in this stoppage of the working machinery by this ever-recurring discharge of skilled labor and the introduction of raw hands there has been vast waste and delay. There is great waste, both of time and expense, for salaries are thus paid for time and work which cannot aid Indian civilization, since

the time and work are devoted not to the steady carrying on of successful plans, but to the unskilled experimenting of workmen unacquainted with the needed work. Nor in the eyes of the Christian patriot, whether man or woman, is it honest to divert money appropriated for the civilization of Indians and devote it to the payment of the debts of politicians of either party. To do the latter is to keep savages in savagery for the benefit of civilized white men, a cowardly spectacle of savagery on the part of our own race. Against this misappropriation of funds The Women's National Association, knowing no political party and being concerned only with the civilization and Christianization of our aboriginal race, has ever protested and must still protest. With one mind it is also pledged to labor for the application of the spirit of Civil Service Reform to every official in the Indian service, and especially to the Indian agent, since his is the daily influence, contact, and leading of the tribe under his care.

The Indian Service is unlike all others under our Government; is anomalous and temporary, and could be made as it should be, a continuous service not interrupted by changes of administration. And The Women's Indian Association might now well expect from the present administration the inauguration of this further great reform needed, since it was President

Cleveland's first administration which gave to our country the honor of giving to the long oppressed native Indian his great initial right of United States citizenship, and with it his land in severalty to become his law-defended, undisputed home. The present situation calls for the continuance and completion of the reform so grandly thus begun. And it calls for patriots; for the work of men with whom to do the right is a consideration above all mere party fealty; and the nation which can look back over four hundred years of divine leadings, protections, deliverances and blessings should be too grateful in this its Columbian year, and too noble, even on the side of human honor, in any wise longer to oppress, defraud, or hinder a weaker and aboriginal race on its difficult, upward path.

The remedy needed is not far to seek, nor is the power to grant it wanting. The President of the United States has full power and warrant for hereafter refusing to appoint as Indian agent any man who has not the endorsement of our well-tried Civil Service Commission, and a humane, honorable and Christian nation should ask this action from its Chief Magistrate who first of all pledges himself to be loyal to the best interests of the nation he both leads and serves.