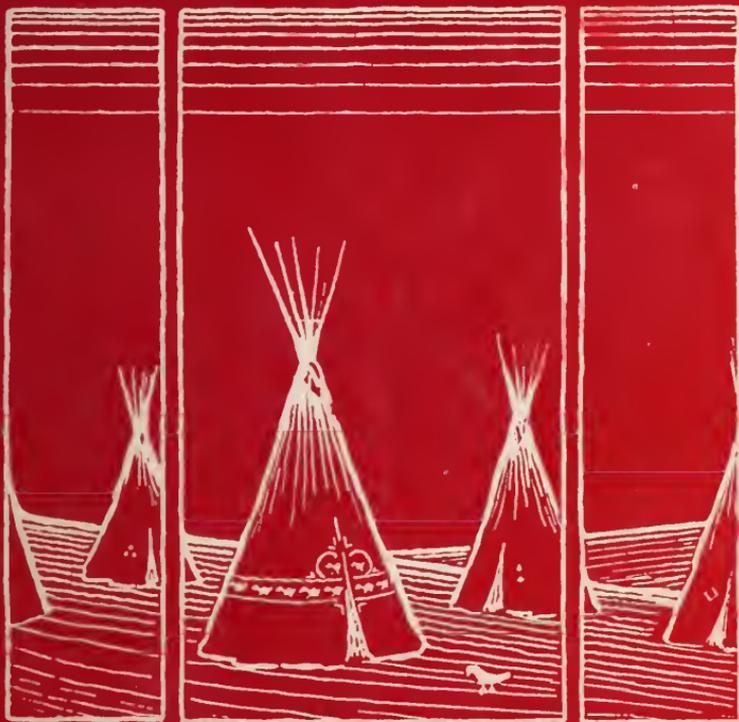


Tom N. Ames

Chicago, Ill.

1910

A COUNCIL



with the **CROWS**



WHITE ARM



A Council with the Crows

BY E. E. CHIVERS, D.D.



THE hour was about two in the morning of June 8, 1903, when a company of seven alighted from a Burlington and Missouri train at a lonely way station in Montana. On the platform, awaiting their arrival, was a group of Indians, their stalwart forms and dusky faces dimly visible in the light of their lanterns. The scene, in its shifting setting of light and shadow, had in it an element of weirdness, and there was just a suggestion of an uncanny feeling when the travelers surrendered themselves and their baggage to their strange convoy. Across the fields, with here and there a barbed wire fence or an irrigating ditch, our guides led the way, until they came to an encampment, where a large tepee had been erected for the guests. With little ceremony blankets were spread on the ground, and the tired travelers, using their coats as pillows, and drawing their blankets around them, sought a brief rest in sleep.

The visitors, who accompanied the Field Secretary as representatives of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, were: C. A. Woody, D.D., General Superintendent of Missions for the Pacific Coast Division; Rev. Bruce Kinney, General Missionary for Wyoming and Utah; Rev. W. A. Petzoldt, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Sheridan, Wyo. With them was Mr. Herbert A. Coffeen of Sheridan, Wyo., a warm friend of the Indians, with an artist from California, and a stenographer. Their hosts were members of the Crow tribe of Indians. The meeting-place was Lodge Grass, an Indian encampment, and the object of the visit a conference as to the possible establishment there of a mission.

THE CROW MISSION

The sleep of the visitors was fitful and broken. The bed was hard; surroundings were strange; imagination was busy picturing scenes of the coming day. Before the first gray tints of dawn had deepened into day, all were gathered in the chill air around a fire of sticks, watching the brewing of a pot of savory coffee. An Indian, with blanket wrapped closely about him, stole noiselessly, from his nearby dwelling, towards the neighboring creek for a morning plunge. An old squaw, with wrinkled, unwashed face, and unkempt hair, came forward to supervise the brewing of the coffee. Other Indians, attracted by the aroma, and by the prospect of a meal, soon joined the company. The guests played the part of hosts, and dispensed with liberal hand the supply of food which they had brought with



LODGE GRASS CREEK

them. It was not altogether an unselfish impulse which prompted them. They knew, indeed, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." They knew also that it is not always palatable to receive.

First Impressions

As soon as breakfast was disposed of, our party started in wagons on a tour of inspection, halting at several encampments, forming acquaintance with the Indians, visiting them in their tepees, and receiving first impressions of

THE CROW MISSION



MEDICINE CROW

their life and manners and customs. Physically, many of the men are fine specimens of manhood, of rather more than medium height, well-built, broad-shouldered.

The faces of many, however, indicate the ravages of disease—the sad heritage of contact with degenerate white men in earlier days. The younger women are by no means unattractive in appearance, but with advancing years become shapeless in form, slovenly in attire,

and dirty in person. A peep into some of their tepees, with dirty blankets and greasy pillows strewn upon the ground, and dirtier occupants stretched upon them, quite prepared us for statements afterwards made as to the personal habits of the people. A visit during the preparation or the eating of a meal would hardly be a good appetizer. They are inveterate flesh-eaters, and are not at all particular as to cooking. Raw meat suits their taste as well as "rare" or "well-done." Portions which a more cultivated taste discards are regarded by them as dainty morsels. They are said to have "a packing-plant" appetite which allows little of a carcass to go to waste.





WOLF LIES DOWN DR. CHIVERS GREY BULL

As to morals, their condition is deplorable.

Moral While they are
Laxity honest and good-natured, and are not given to brawling or drunkenness, yet immorality, in some of its worst forms, is common and open. Until recently there was no marriage ceremony; men took and exchanged wives at will. It is no uncommon thing to find Crows who have had, at different times, five or six wives. With this laxity in the marriage relation comes, as a consequence, a general

deterioration of morals. These people stand, therefore, on the lower rungs of the ladder of civilization and morality and religion.

They number, according to a recent report of the Commissioner for Indian affairs, 1911. They occupy a reservation covering an area of about 75 miles square, situated in Montana, just north of the Wyoming border, and beginning at a point due north of Sheridan. The Government has an agency near the famous and ill-fated Custer battle-ground, and a sub-agency at Pryor on the western border of the reservation. At the former are the government schools, with an enrollment of 165 Crow pupils, who there receive the rudiments of an industrial as well as a literary training. There is a Roman Catholic mission school at St. Xavier. Some idea of the extent to which the civilizing influences of the government agencies have affected the people may be gathered from the fact that 250 Crow families are living upon and cultivating lands allotted to them; that over 6,000 acres are under cultiva-

THE CROW MISSION

tion, and products to the amount of \$67,000 worth were disposed of in a year; that 260 dwelling-houses are occupied by them; that over 600 have adopted citizen's dress, and double that number in part; that about 400 can understand and use English for ordinary conversation.

These are encouraging features, yet withal the moral and religious condition of these people is deplorable. They are still pagan in their beliefs and practices. They walk in darkness, with no light other than the dim light of nature, and even from that their eyes and their hearts are in large measure holden by reason of sin. The Roman Catholic mission has almost utterly failed to lead the people to a better life or to worthier ideals. Throughout this large reservation there is no one to teach these scattered and wandering ones the "Jesus road."

A year or more ago a petition was sent by the representatives of this people at Lodge Grass to our American Baptist Home Mission Society, asking for a missionary teacher. About thirty chiefs and leading men touched the pen over against their names, in token of their desire. The visit of the Field Secretary and others to Lodge Grass





was made for the purpose of conference with the petitioners. Arrangements were made for a council to be held on the ranch of White Arm, one of their leading men.

At the appointed hour Medicine Crow, the chief of the tribe, with White Arm, Wolf Lies Down, Grey Bull, Shows the Fish, Scolds the Bear, Old Bear, One Goose, One Star, Bull Goes Hunting and other braves came together, with braided hair and painted faces and eagle feathers, arrayed in buckskin coats trimmed with ermine and beadwork and elk's teeth and other ornaments, and seated themselves in a semi-circle on the grass. Opposite them, in commoner garb, were younger men of the tribe, while a few squaws gathered outside the circle at a respectful distance. Chairs were provided for the Home Mission party, and a table for the stenographer, who had come with them to record the proceedings.

After the pipe of peace had been passed around and smoked with due solemnity, and a statement had been made by the Field Secretary and his associates as to the object of the council, the conference began. Each of the chiefs in turn stepped into the center of the circle, shook hands with the visitors, and after a few moments of dignified silence addressed first his own people and then the stranger-guests, giving his views as to the desirability of a mission.

It was evident that the ruling desire of the Indians was to obtain a school at Lodge Grass. Under existing arrangements their children are taken at an early age to the government schools at the agency, some twenty or twenty-five miles away, or are placed in the Roman Catholic school, equally distant. The opportunities of the parents to

**Desire
for a
School**

THE CROW MISSION

see their children are thus few. The girls are not allowed to return until they are eighteen years of age. This is to safeguard them from the risks to which they would be exposed by reason of prevalent immorality. Yet the system leaves the homes of the people without the comfort and joy that come from the presence of the young folk.

These Indians love their children and crave their presence and companionship. No one who has ever watched, as the writer watched, an Indian mother array her little one in all its finery for the taking of a photograph, could fail to detect the signs of mother-love and tenderness and pride. There was the same lovelight in the eye, the same gentleness in the touch, the same tenderness in tone and accent, as marks any other mother.

One after another the Indians said: "We want our children at home with us. Build us a school here at Lodge Grass and send us a teacher, and we will bring all our children from the agency schools and the Roman Catholic schools, and let you take care of them."

It was somewhat difficult to make them understand that the first business of our Society is the preaching of the Gospel, and that



LAST WAR CHIEF OF THE CROWS



it would not be possible for us to assume full charge of the education of their children. As a compromise it was suggested that we might send among them a teacher as well as a missionary, who might instruct the younger children in a day school until it became wise or necessary to send them to the agency school. This would keep them at home for several years longer than under the present system, and would bring the uplifting influences of the school to bear directly and daily upon the home.

The weak point in the present plan is that it puts a gulf between the home and the school. The boy comes back to a comparatively unchanged home. The girl, grown into womanhood amid changed surroundings, comes back either to relapse into former conditions or to lead a life of unhappy isolation. A combination of the work of a missionary and a teacher with that of a matron, who should aim to introduce into tent and home the rudiments of civilized life, would seem to be most desirable.

It was interesting to follow the discussion. Even as it came to us filtered through an interpreter it indicated mental grasp and shrewdness. Some were unwilling to accept any half-way measures, and wanted all or nothing. To break the force of their opposition the question was put: "Suppose one of you were very hungry, so hungry that it would take a whole loaf of bread to satisfy your hunger, and a big piece of meat too; and there was only a little bread and a little bit of meat, would you go hungry or would you take the little?" At this there was a chorus of grunts, "ugh," "ugh," from the older men, who were quick to see the point and glad to have the opposition silenced.

Others feared that the coming of a missionary would impose un-

THE CROW MISSION

welcome restraint, and put an end to their games and dances. They in turn were reminded that if a missionary came, he would come not as a policeman to take them by the collar and say, "You must!" but as a friend and brother who wanted to help them to a better, sweeter, purer, stronger life. Surely they wanted to know and to do what was best for their nation! This again was greeted with a chorus of grunts. From each of the chiefs came a deep guttural "ugh," "ugh" of assent, while over their stolid faces passed a smile of satisfaction at the discomfiture of the opposition.

For five hours or more the speech-making went on, with marked division of opinion. At times the older men looked grave and troubled. They were evidently anxious to send a united message to the "big chiefs" in New York. They said that the younger men were foolish, but would know more by and by. The first session of the council closed without agreement, and arrangement was made for a second meeting. At the breaking up of the first session, Medicine Crow, chief of the tribe, and Wolf Lies Down, a prominent leader, wishing to show their visitor from New York some token of appreciation and respect, stooped down, untied their beaded moccasins, and handing them to him, walked home barefoot before their people.



AN \$800 DRESS WITH
ELK TEETH ORNAMENT

The second session of the council, held in the house of White Arm, lasted until after midnight, but closed without full agreement. On the



following day, however, there was a great scurrying to and fro through the encampment, and a message was sent asking that the missionary and teacher be sent without delay, and pledging to help in every possible way, even though they could have only a little school. They begged the Secretary, however, to see the "Great Father" in Washington, and plead with him that they might have their children all the time.

Reaching Agreement The Indian agent, who was consulted, expressed his hearty approval of the plans suggested, and his earnest hope that a mission and school might be established at Lodge Grass, which he regarded as the most desirable location. Fully 500 Crows are within easy reach of this station. The Indians expressed their readiness to assist in the erection of a mission house, and the Government agent thought there would be no difficulty in securing an allotment of land for the purpose.

A Good Location The field is certainly a needy one. The condition of the people is itself an eloquent appeal for Christian help. The call is as loud as any that comes to us from heathen Africa. The work will call for a true missionary consecration, for heroic self-sacrifice, and for brave patience, but faith and love, labor and prayer will be sure of their reward. It is gratifying to know that the cry of the needy has been heard and heeded. At its meeting on September 14, 1903, the Executive Board of the Home Mission Society authorized the establishment of a mission at as early a date as practicable.

A Needy People The project was scarcely authorized before steps were taken to carry it into effect. Action was quickened by the fact that a missionary

THE CROW MISSION



offered himself for service. When the King calls and the providence of God points the way, there are always loyal servants ready to follow. Rev. W. A. Petzoldt, pastor of the **Rapid Progress** First Baptist Church, Sheridan, Wyo., whose heart has been drawn towards this people, and who has arranged all the details of our visit, expressed his readiness and desire to take up the work, and on November 9, 1903, was commissioned by the Executive Board as our pioneer missionary to the Crow Indians, his appointment to date from December 1.

Promptly on that date he was on the ground. He conferred at once with the Indian agent and the Government officer for the allotment of lands, regarding a site for the mission. Allotment had proceeded so far as to leave no very desirable site available. For a time the difficulty seemed serious, but it was happily removed by the generous act of White Arm, who voluntarily relinquished 160 acres of his original allotment, taking a similar grant elsewhere. *Even a white man could hardly do better; few indeed would do as well.* This secures for the



Crow Chief



Council

THE CROW MISSION

mission an ideal site. Our missionary writes: "The natural lay of the land, its picturesque array of shrubbery and trees, the background of pine-clad hills are all that could be desired." Fortunately "stone for foundation, fire-place and surface work, and sand are on the place."



REV. W. A. PETZOLDT

"A colony of beavers," he adds, "is also close by to spur us on by their good example." The beavers will need to be on the alert if they would keep pace with such a wide-awake, energetic leader as Petzoldt.

Work on the mission house was begun without delay. Ten

At days after ar-
Work rival Mr. Pet-
zoldt writes:

"We have nineteen loads of stone on the ground already. Am planning a trip to the mountains for logs immediately after Christmas, if the weather permits."

A little later his wife, with their two little ones, joined him. Where could they find a home while the mission house was building? Here



THE CROW MISSION

again White Arm came to their relief and generously placed his house at their disposal, moving out with his own family, into a log shanty. A vigorous application of scrubbing brush and soap and water, with a liberal use of disinfectants, made the house tenatable for the newcomers. It is a very modest dwelling, primitive in its appointments and scant in its conveniences, but the generous, unselfish spirit of White Arm has made it attractive. Surely, there is a way of approach to that man's heart. He is a pagan, but he is not without generous impulses. Who will not pray that there may come back to him full measure of reward for his generous doing? And who will say that the term "the noble red man" is wholly undeserved!

Already our missionary is telling, through an interpreter, the story of the Christ to this needy and neglected people. His previous acquaintance with them, his faith in them, and their confidence in him, give him a point of vantage for the delivery of his message. He is applying himself to the acquisition of their language, that he may tell them in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. As soon as the mission house is completed, work will be begun on the chapel, which will serve also as a school-house. Mr. Herbert Coffeen, a young business man of Sheridan, and a friend of the Indians, who has been most desirous for the establishment of this work, proposes to erect, without cost to the Society, a Council House on the mission compound—a sort of Y. M. C. A. room for the tribe—in which the older as well as the younger men may spend their spare hours, and in which the records of their folk lore and early days may be made and preserved. The old Indian has no written language, and his only records of past events are in legend form and in pictographs (drawings on skins). The plans for the Council

THE CROW MISSION

House include the addition of annexes in which such pictographs, with other pictures and relics of the tribe may be preserved.

Our first and main business is the preaching of the gospel. For this provision has been made. As soon as the schoolhouse is built we shall need a teacher who will devote herself with loving patience to the task of instructing the boys and girls. It is hoped that the services of a field matron also may be secured.

With this force it will be possible to touch on all sides with quickening, uplifting influences, the life of this needy tribe. Their present condition is a reproach to our civilization and our Christianity. Their need is pitiful and urgent. Their attitude toward our Society and our missionary is most kindly and hospitable. The present is our hour of opportunity.

The new mission has had its baptism of sorrow. In the mission compound to-day there is a new-made grave in which lies the body of our missionary's youngest child, Cedric, who fell a victim to pneumonia.



While the little one lay sick, the Indians gathered around the lowly house with expressions of anxiety and willingness to help. When the shadow fell they stood within the circle of it in mute yet eloquent sympathy. Now that the body rests in the little grave they ask the privilege of erecting a monument to mark the spot and tell their sorrow. How slight and superficial, after all, are the differences of race and class and culture that separate us as compared with the common and deeper elements of the human—the man that is in all men! And who can tell but that through this ministry of sorrow God is opening the way for his servants into the hearts and lives of the Crows?

What a Missionary Does

OPENING A NEW MISSION—VARIED WANTS
OF THE INDIANS—FROM DOCTORING TO
COFFIN-MAKING—A CHRISTMAS TREE
AND INDIAN PRESENTS :: :: :: :: ::

H

ERE are two letters from Mr. Petzoldt, who is exactly the right man in the right place, wide-awake, adaptable, versatile, apt at winning confidence. He gives a glimpse into the work of a real missionary.

LETTER I

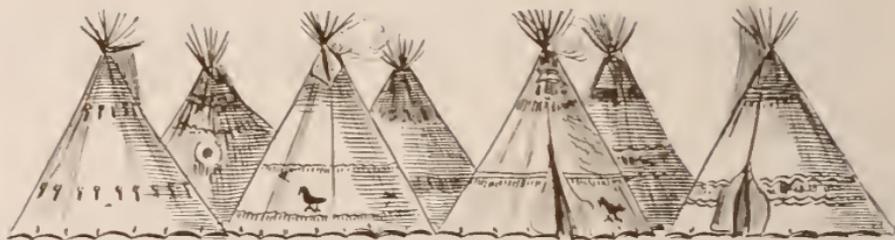
Camp Chivers, Wolf Mountain,
Mon., Dec. 31.

E. E. CHIVERS, D.D.,

Field Secretary:

DEAR BROTHER—By the flickering light of an Indian camp fire and within sound of the murmuring pines, I am dating my last letter for the year 1903. The Indians started from Lodge Grass yesterday morning headed for the Wolf Mountain in keeping with their promise to get out the logs for





the missionary's house. Good initial progress was made after we got them lined out, and last night found us camped at Sioux Pass—an old Indian landmark. Early this morning two parties were made up to scour the country in advance, select a good timber plot and comfortable camping place.

The ride we took was an interesting one to me—precipitous mountain climbing, superb scenic panorama, deer and grouse, old Indian battle grounds, and plenty of crisp air. On our return it was decided to move the camp several miles further on. Camp breaking was on the beehive order, and soon we were trailing out again. Some difficulty was experienced in finding a suitable crossing place for the wagon in one of the coulees and for a time accidents seemed inevitable. Finally, the crossing was made on the "switchback railway" order. We came to our second camping place about sundown. With much merriment on the part of the Indians squaws, the tents and tepees were put up rapidly and soon we were under shelter.

The camp was named "Camp Chivers," in honor of yourself. Will write the details of the log-chopping and return later. The whole camp is asleep as I write this. The coyotes are sounding out the departure of the old year. With best wishes for the New Year, I am,

Sincerely yours,

W. A. PETZOLDT.



LETTER II

Lodge Grass, Montana, Jan. 8. 1904.

DEAR BROTHER—Your communications received. I am somewhat tardy in sending in my report for December, but was unable to get down from the mountains before today.

Since coming to our new field many things have claimed our time and attention. The early part of the month was spent in getting out stone for the foundation for the missionary's house. That foundation is now completed and ready for the carpenters. Enough stone for the school-house foundation is also quarried. While the Indians have been good natured and willing to do the hauling they promised, it has been a difficult thing to manipulate them. They get around about noon and 3 o'clock is quitting time with them. They are anxious to do, but are a little slow to see a situation and take hold accordingly. In time, and with patience on our part, they will do better.

That the Indians generally intend to keep the missionary force busy can be seen from the following list of requests that came to us in December: To prescribe medicine, 6 cases; to go with party to Agency Surgeon for an operation; a request for Mrs. Petzoldt to assist at a camp where there was sickness, asking about food for the sick, etc.; to advise regarding the erection of a saw mill (council); to make a coffin and conduct a funeral service; to counsel with a father about the marriage of his daughter and eventually to perform the marriage cere-

THE CROW MISSION

mony; to advise with an Indian for whom a warrant for arrest had been issued; to attend two councils at which tribal matters were discussed; to mend furniture; to build a brick chimney in an Indian house; to help an Indian build a log house; and many other things too numerous to itemize. We have made a few visits on stormy days to the different camps, have given food to the sick and in one case to a poor family. The Indians themselves have made over 150 visits to our home during the month. They came for consultation and a "good talk" as they called it. In many instances we had an opportunity to tell them the story of the Cross.

Each Christmas the Indians have a Christmas tree and a big dance. Imagine a lot of painted, yelling, dancing Indians circling around a Christmas tree—for in these dances they portray the old times in all the vivid colors, and throw off every vestige of the white man's "habitat." One of the eminent Indian artists, who has spent many years on the different reservations, said in viewing a Crow dance that for old-time finery, war bonnets, feathered and beaded trappings the Crows have no equal among the Indians of the Northwest.

You were remembered at their Christmas gathering and two presents were handed me to forward to you.



THE CROW MISSION

One is an old dance rattle from Medicine Crow. This is one of the best rattles I have seen and you are to be congratulated on its possession. It is made of buffalo hide sewed green over a ball of wet sand moulded on a stick and wound around with buckskin string. When the skin and sand dry the sand comes out and leaves the rattle as you see it. It is really a rare relic. The moccasins are from "Shows the Fish." I was liberally remembered with presents of beaded work, while Mrs. Petzoldt was the recipient of a fine saddle pony.

Among themselves they gave teams of horses, wagon loads of oats, ponies, blankets and beaded work of all descriptions. Their custom of giving presents is as follows: The Indians are all seated in a large circle appared in full complement of gorgeous trappings. Two young men dancers arise to the chanting and beating of the tom-toms and dance rapidly around the circle. This they do twice and with increased speed of movement and music they run up to the person selected and pull them out into the circle. They are led between the two dancers before the spectators and finally motioned to a seat on a blanket which has been spread before the chiefs. The dance crier now comes forth and announces in a loud voice the virtues of the "captive." Then the squaws bring forth their presents and pile them in a heap before the one thus honored, the other Indians following their example until all have given who desire to do so.

There have been plenty of difficulties in our labors at Lodge Grass, nevertheless the outlook is very bright and I believe we are entering upon a glorious work.

W. J. Petzoldt



DR. CHIVERS' MOCCASINS



OUR NEEDS

1. Five Thousand Dollars for the erection and equipment of buildings, and for the support of missionary and teacher.
2. A Teacher, consecrated and tactful, who for the love of souls and for Christ's sake, will volunteer for service on one of the hard places of "the field."
3. Christian Hearts that will bear this mission before God in prayer, and will sustain it by their sympathy and gifts.



Sketch of the Council done on the spot in colored crayons, by Chief White Arm. Chief Medicine Crow is addressing Dr. Chivers and offering his hand. The stenographer is writing on the "upright" table. The tall white on the right is Dr. Woody of Oregon.

**THE AMERICAN BAPTIST
HOME MISSION SOCIETY**

MISSIONARY EDUCATIONAL
CHURCH BUILDING
1310 Missionaries and Teachers

"North America for Christ"

\$600,000 needed annually
from the Northern Baptists

**THE BAPTIST HOME
MISSION MONTHLY**
THE ORGAN OF THE SOCIETY

An Illustrated Magazine of the Highest Class
Only Fifty Cents, in Clubs as low as Thirty

For Information, Sample Copies and Home
Mission Literature

Address 111 Fifth Ave., New York

