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A LIVING ISSUE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"OUR WILD INDIANS."

By R. L. Dodge

“There is, perhaps, no one thing so valuable to the right progress of civilized society as the courage of sincere individual opinion; and, as regards public affairs, the man who tries honestly to form an accurate conclusion, and bravely to maintain and advance it, without counting the number of his adversaries, will fulfil the best mission of a citizen.”—SENATOR EDMUNDS.

WASHINGTON:
FRANCIS B. MOHUN.

1882.

EXPLANATORY.

The first twelve chapters of the original manuscript of my book "Our Wild Indians," (Worthington & Co., Hartford, Conn.,) were devoted to an elaborate discussion of the Indian Question. These chapters were discarded by the publishers as too argumentative, and not within the scope of a work designed to furnish to the vast reading public of the United States a popular account of the daily life of our Indians.

The facts and arguments set forth in that MSS. are (in my opinion) of too much importance to the honor of the Country to be lost; and I am too much in earnest to remain silent under all the wrongs and outrages heaped upon the Indian. I therefore, in this pamphlet give to the Country the matter of that MSS. revised and greatly condensed, hoping in this way to reach a class of thinking and influential men, who are habitually too busy to read large books.

The wording of some portions of this paper is identical with that in "Our Wild Indians." That book, designed to be a minute and careful study of the interior life of the Wild Indians, gives only general conclusions as to their management and ultimate destination. This pamphlet gives the facts and arguments on which those conclusions are based.

RICHARD I. DODGE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May* 20, 1882.

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THE INDIAN QUESTION.

The Government of the United States has never had a settled, well-defined policy towards the Indian. Each Administration and each Congress seems to have acted in variable and irresponsible mood, without reference to precedent, or even to right and justice, intent only on getting rid of the special vexing question of the hour in the quickest way, and with the least possible trouble. However, a careful and searching study of the subject develops in the acts of the Government, some faint tracings of a general idea, and since the adoption of the Federal Constitution in 1787, the general features of such policy as there is, may be outlined thus :

First. Government assumption of entire control of Indians, as distinguished from State control.

Second. The treaty system ; recognition of the sovereign rights of Indian tribes to the lands occupied by them.

Third. Regulation of trade and intercourse with Indians.

Fourth. Removal of Indians from State limits.

The ostensible objects of this policy are perfect justice, and fair dealing to, and ultimate civilization of the Indian, and security to the white settlers. The real result of the policy is to continue the Indian in his original barbarism, to pauperize, and gradually to starve and exterminate him. This end is attained at the yearly cost of many millions of money, and many lives of both settlers and soldiers.

On the recognition of the independence of the colonies by the mother country, each claimed to be natural heir to the full sovereignty previously exercised over both soil and Indians by the Government of Great Britain. They refused to acknowledge or recognize any Indian title, either as tribes or as individuals, to land within their limits ; passing laws and ordinances ignoring the Indian claims to right of possession, or authority to sell or dispose of land in any way. Under the Confederation the same ideas prevailed, each State managing and controlling the Indians within its borders. It was only when, by the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the colonies became a nation, that the General Government assumed any control whatever over the Indians, and this assumption came about as it were by accident.

Several of the colonies, subsequently Confederate States, claimed to own and have legitimate jurisdiction over, vast tracts of land in Ohio, and in the regions westward. These claims were based on slight foundation, and

as the lands had not been properly surveyed, were often conflicting. As possibly the easiest way out of all the difficulties, the States were, after much haggling, finally induced to transfer all their claims to the General Government. These lands were then occupied by several tribes of Indians, the control of which having now passed from the States originally holding it, fell naturally into those hands which succeeded to the sovereignty. This control the Government has exercised continuously since 1787, nearly one hundred years.

THE TREATY SYSTEM.

The first immigrants who landed on the shores of what is now the United States, planted their feeble colonies in the midst of numerous and warlike tribes. Their first and most natural impulse was to make some bargain or arrangement in the nature of a treaty, with the aboriginal possessors of the soil, as would not only give them title to the lands, but enable them to live in comparative safety. It is true that foreign nations claimed to own the country, and the colonists had titles to land from the rulers of those nations, but these titles would have availed little had the colonists presumed to attempt the establishment of their claims by force. They were "wise as serpents," and immediately on landing, proceeded to interview the chiefs of neighboring tribes. These, astonished at the appearance and manners of the new people "without color," disarmed of apprehension by their paucity of numbers and plausible tongues, overcome with wonder at the new and curious things shown them, were easily persuaded by the gifts of a few muskets, or looking-glasses, or bright colored beads, to give the new comers such land as they required, and their promise to remain friendly and faithful. Such was the origin of the treaty system.

In almost every case, these treaties were first violated by the whites. Growing stronger and more aggressive, the colonies pushed the Indian closer and closer, until the poor savage, rendered desperate, flew to arms, was beaten—driven from his home, and his lands taken possession of by his former friends and allies.

I have never been able to understand why the Government of the United States should have felt it necessary to perpetuate a system, valuable certainly to the poor, feeble and widely-separated colonies, but the continuance of which was not only a disadvantage to the Government, but stultified it. The United States of America claimed to be, and was acknowledged by the civilized world, to be the sovereign power over a portion of North America, within certain fixed limits. It succeeded by right of conquest to the sovereignty that Britain had lost by her defeat, and by right of voluntary cession to the powers claimed by, and recognized as belonging to the Confederate States, the sovereignty over both the soil and its inhabitants. Our right over the Indians in that territory was not even a right of conquest, it was simply an act of *assumption*. Civilization admitted no

rights to barbarism. We claimed the country not by conquest or consent of the Indian inhabitants, but in spite of them. We then proceeded to stultify ourselves by making treaties, solemnizing them by all the forms prescribed by the Constitution, with the numerous petty bands and tribes of that territory, as if those bands and tribes were independent sovereignties. If the United States did not own the lands, and if these treaties were just and necessary, then the subsequent action towards the Indians has been more barbarous than anything they have ever done against the whites. If the United States did own the land, then the whole treaty system is murderous folly devised by the Father of Mischief, to keep up continual trouble. Whatever horn of the dilemma be chosen is of little consequence here. The barbarous, or the foolish policy, has been continued, and is in full force and apparently high favor among "The Powers," to this day.

And with what result? I will venture to affirm that the obligations of no one treaty made with Indian tribes within twenty-five years have been carried out by the Government either in letter or in spirit. This is not only true, but it is simply impossible in such a country as ours, that it could be otherwise. The Government makes a treaty with a tribe. The Indians agree to give up certain lands, to restrict themselves hereafter to certain defined limits, to abstain from war and depredation. The Government agrees to pay certain fixed annuities in provisions, goods or money, to preserve faithfully to the Indians the lands within the new boundaries. Result—The Government does not pay the annuities, but by negligence connives at its sequestration by others, and leaves the Indian to starve from lack of appropriations. Gold or silver is discovered within the limits of the new reservation, and, in an incredibly short time, the country is overrun by a horde of hardy, reckless, frontiersmen, pick in one hand, rifle in the other, and the Indian has to get out.

A most important and interesting case in point, is shaping its course at this moment of writing. When the Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws were removed to the west of the Mississippi, the Government set aside for their use a magnificent domain, and made a solemn treaty with them that they should have the land "so long as grass grows or water runs." The territory thus forever assigned to the Indians is as fine a country as is within the limits of the United States. The soil is excellent, the climate admirable. It is larger than Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York and New Jersey, united, and is capable of comfortably supporting ten millions of whites. It is now exclusively devoted to the maintenance of less than seventy-five thousand Indians. On the north of this territory, and bordering on Kansas, is a strip over a hundred miles wide, extending in length across the breadth of the territory from east to west, which belongs exclusively to the Cherokees. In 1879 this strip was invaded by organized colonies of settlers from Kansas, Missouri, and else-

where. The President was called upon, troops were ordered out, and all white interlopers were forcibly expelled.

But this vigorous action, so natural and proper, did not meet the views of the Cherokees. The whole country within the limits described, is a vast pasture of most succulent grasses. Hundreds of thousands of cattle were grazing upon it, and the Cherokees were taxing the owners of the cattle a certain sum per head per year for the privilege of grazing. The order of the President took at once several hundred thousands of dollars a year from the Cherokee treasury. The Cherokees therefore sent a delegation to Washington, and the order was modified so as to exempt from its operation all cattle men who pay tax to the Cherokees, and have a permit from them.

The result will be the opening to settlement, in a very few years, of that portion of the Indian Territory, and all the treaties in the world will not prevent it. Every settler who now goes there will take a few cows, get a permit from the Cherokees, pay his tax, build his house, fence and plough his land, and when the troops come to eject him, he will flourish his Cherokee permit in the face of the commanding officer and "laugh him to scorn."

Let us consider the *modus operandi* of a treaty. An Indian tribe is in peaceful possession of a tract of country. Into its beautiful but unknown wilds the venturesome trapper first made his way. His very fearlessness probably secured immunity from danger, and after a brief sojourn he virtually entered the tribe by alliance after their custom with one or more squaws. After a longer or shorter period the hardy and ever restless pioneers begin to drop in. Some few bring white wives, the majority take Indian wives. As their numbers increase they begin to show the contempt in which they hold their Indian landlords, and become aggressive. The Indians threaten, perhaps make war; the result is the same. The Government promptly steps to the aid of its citizens. A treaty staves off the threatened war or concludes that actually waged.

The Indians have no idea of values, are mere babies in a trade. With some "glittering generalities" about the "Great Father," a few gaudy presents, and the promise of annuities, the Commissioners wind the Indians about their fingers, make a good thing for the Government and settlers, and go home to rest from their labors with laurelled brows and easy consciences.

Every treaty made with Indians has been opposed by at least a minority, and sometimes by a large majority of the tribe interested; and these opponents are always dissatisfied and disposed to be hostile not only to the whites but to the chiefs by whom the treaty was made.

After the treaty is made and confirmed some speculator finds out that there is a valuable tract of arable or timbered land within the limits of the new reservation. A few chiefs are bribed into agreement. A ring is formed; Government is coaxed into sending out a new Commission; a new treaty is made; the lobby gets to work on it, and another slice of land is taken from the Indian.

Even this process has sometimes proved to be too slow, or not sufficiently sure for the purpose of the speculators or the Government. Hereditary chiefs have occasionally proved refractory and refused to accede to the terms proposed. The Government has not hesitated in its course, but deposing the refractory chiefs, has set up others with whom the treaties were concluded in due form, thus actually performing the farce of concluding a solemn treaty to which the United States were party of both parts.

The last treaty with the Pottowatomies is a notable example of this. The Commissioners appointed to conclude the treaty, having notified the Government that the chiefs refused to treat, were ordered to depose them and appoint others who would make such a treaty as the Government desired. Our present title to the Black Hills rests on a similar procedure; and the terrible war with the Seminoles in Florida, costing the country millions in money and many valuable lives, was brought on by the attempt of the United States authorities to depose those chiefs who refused to make treaties distasteful to them. The faith of Treaties!!

With our Government the treaty system means the taking advantage of the ignorance or the greed of the chiefs, or the ambition of individuals of tribes. It is a fraud in its inception, and in its consummation.

* * * * *

Though solemnly binding itself by treaty to do so, the Government takes no adequate steps to prevent the encroachment of whites upon Indian territory. The greed of the individual Indian will cause him to sell his daughter to a white man. That man while claiming protection from the Government, and all his rights as a white, yet becomes a part of the tribe; he draws rations for his wife and children, as Indians; he builds himself a house on Indian ground, from which Government has promised by treaty that he shall be excluded; he takes advantage of the improvidence of the Indians to buy up their surplus rations in their day of plenty, to sell them back at enormous profits in their day of want; he makes himself a power among them to their constant injury and to the detriment of the Government. He becomes rich, gets special acts through Congress for the benefit of his half-breed children, and not unfrequently as he grows old, he returns to civilization, to a wife and family in the States, takes a prominent position in society, obtains appointment on Indian Commissions, and is looked up to as an authority on all Indian matters.

At this moment, almost every agency is surrounded by the houses of these men, and they may be seen on ration-day, buying here, for one dollar, a sack of flour which cost the Indian Department seven or eight dollars to deliver, and there, a sack of corn on similarly favorable terms.

Even when the Executive branch of the Government is really active and earnest in its efforts to protect the Indian in his rights, it generally fails through the connivance of some other branch. The opening of the Black Hills is an admirable exemplification of this fact, and of the way in which the

thing is done. Gold had been found in abundance in the Black Hills, and though it was Indian country, white people flocked to it from all quarters.

Section 2150, Revised Statutes, authorizes the President to use "the military force of the United States, in the apprehension of every person who may be in the Indian country in violation of law, in conveying him immediately from the Indian country by the nearest convenient and safe route, to the civil authority of the territory or judicial district in which such person shall be found, to be proceeded against in due course of law." Section 2148, provides, "if any person who has been removed from the Indian country, shall thereafter, at any time, return or be found within the Indian country, he shall be liable to a penalty of one thousand dollars."

In August, 1875, the Black Hills were swarming with people. Hundreds of men, evading the guards set around, had already gained access to their fastnesses, and were engaged in prospecting and mining, many of them with assurance of good returns. Every day the troops arrested some of these men, but under the law, the arrest amounted to nothing except the annoyance and loss of time. The prisoners were forwarded to the nearest military post, and thence turned over to the civil authorities, "to be proceeded against in due course of law."

Curiously enough, that respect and obedience to law and order which is so marked by a feature of our military establishment, seem totally lacking in the "civil authorities." The prisoners turned over to them were immediately released without even bail for future good behavior. Though hundreds of men were arrested, removed, and turned over to the civil authorities, not one was punished or even detained. They were at once set at liberty, and immediately started again for the Hills. One man said to me, "I have been captured and sent out from the Hills, four times, besides coming out voluntarily under Crook's proclamation. I give the troops more trouble in catching me each time, and I guess I can stand it as long as they can."

The President was finally obliged to give up the attempt to enforce the law. The Black Hills were occupied by whites, and is now a thickly settled and thriving portion of the country.

A Government constituted as ours, resting on a popular basis, with an immense extent of unorganized country, where there are no settlements, and consequently no magistrates or other law officers, and with a popular repugnance to trusting such duties to officers of the army, amounting almost to an insanity, cannot expect or hope to keep the faith of its treaties with Indians, by preventing the encroachment of whites. Solemnly to covenant to do that which we know we cannot do, is a fraud and a crime. The Government is guilty of that fraud, and that crime, in every treaty made with the Indians for twenty-five years past.

Of the one hundred and ten tribes now on reservations, seventy-five are there by provisions of treaties; sixteen by Executive order; eight by

act of Congress; four by act of Congress backed by Executive order; and three by order of the Secretary of the Interior. It would seem, therefore, that the treaty system is not looked upon even by the authorities as a necessity. It is not a convenience, and its continued use seems to be simply a matter of habit.

Five years ago, a law was passed prohibiting any further contracts by treaty with Indian tribes. This is a step in the right direction, but our relations with nearly all of the tribes are governed by treaties made before the passage of that law. Every one of these treaties should be abrogated and the Indians brought directly under control of the Government, fed, cared for, protected, and made individually responsible, each for his own crimes and misdemeanors.

The treaty system is a double crime—a crime against the Indians, a crime against the Government. In the interests of good morals and good faith, let it be discontinued.

THIRD.—REGULATION OF TRADE AND INTERCOURSE.

All the laws for the government and protection of the Indians, and government of the Indian Territory, are included in chapters 3 and 4, Title 28 Revised Statutes. Of the forty-six sections, twenty-nine were enacted as laws during or prior to 1834. The Indian question of that day was as little like the Indian problem of the present day, as can well be conceived, yet the laws governing the two are substantially the same.

From the first landing on Plymouth Rock to the present day, there has never been a question, (not even that of slavery,) of more grave and continued importance to the whole people of this country than this Indian question. The problem constantly varies with the ever varying conditions of its surroundings, and it is almost inconceivable that intelligent legislators should have been so careless, or so apathetic, as not to see that these varying phases require varying treatment.

It is conceded, to avoid argument, that the laws for the management of Indians up to 1834 were adapted to the end designed. I propose to examine their working at the present time.

An examination of the map will show better than words the wonderful changes which have taken place. In 1834, when most of the laws regulating Indian affairs were enacted, the whole of the vast region from about the 93° meridian, to the Pacific Ocean, was really and truly Indian country. More than two-thirds of the whole area now constituting the territory of the United States was in full possession and occupancy of Indians alone. The "outskirts of civilization" extended in an irregular North and South line from the Gulf of Mexico to the British possessions. Emigration was advancing westward with slow but steady tread, pushing the Indian before it. This pressure, light at first, gradually increased until becoming intolerable it resulted in an Indian war. The history of those times will

show periodical outbreaks, separated by longer or shorter intervals of peace. Then the country had what might properly be called an Indian frontier. Then there was an Indian country, for which Congress could legislate understandingly, and so as to be understood by others.

The Indians were under strong tribal governments, and were kept together by the chiefs. They required no support from the United States Government, the plains being covered with buffalo and other large game, which supplied all their needs. Not being obliged constantly to wander in search of food, their habits were less nomadic, their camps more permanent than at present. The chiefs held the tribes under their own eyes, and if treaties were made with the whites they had the power and influence to enforce their fulfilment. There was no cause of rupture or disagreement except that one grand cause already mentioned, the pressure of the tide of emigration which, though constant, led only to periodical difficulty.

The discovery of gold in California in 1849, and subsequently near Pike's Peak, and in all the ranges of the Rocky Mountains, changed very greatly the aspect of affairs; but it remained for the completion of the Pacific Railroads, and the immense increase of emigration consequent upon the close of the war of the Rebellion, completely to surround and isolate the tribes, and to bring the problem to its aspect at this present moment.

Note again the difference. In 1834 the Indians occupied more than two-thirds the whole area now the territory of the United States. In 1882 he occupies less than one-fourteenth. In 1834, the Indian country was continuous, and almost unlimited, all West of a well defined North and South line, along which only did white and Indian come in contact. In 1882 the Indians are in comparatively restricted areas, and, generally, entirely surrounded by whites. In 1834, the sole disturbing cause between Indians and whites was the constant westward pressure of the latter. In 1882 that pressure is infinitely increased, and comes from every direction, bringing other disturbing causes of every grade and shade. In 1834 the buffalo appeared inexhaustible. In 1882 the food supply is the paramount, almost the sole question of Indian life.

I have already said that in those days, the buffalo supplied all the needs of the Indian. This animal was to the Indians all, and more, than the bamboo to the East Indian, or the bread fruit to the South Sea Islander. It furnished food, clothing, bedding, residence, horse equipments, everything necessary for a comfortable daily life. The Indian, however, desired luxuries, things which he could not make for himself; blankets, cooking utensils, looking glasses, paints, baubles, &c.

Up to within a few years, the treaties had not a word to say about food; but it was invariably stipulated, that the annuities due under the treaties should be paid in coin, or in merchandise. Congress, therefore, in 1834, passed laws governing the purchase and delivery of such merchandise, which we may concede were as justly applicable to the then conditions of the problem, as any that might have been devised. Those same laws are

on the statute book, (Sections 2081 to 2094, inclusive), and in full force and operation at this day. The buffalo is practically extinct. The question with the Indian now, is not finery, but food; not of the adornment of his person, but of filling his famished stomach. Under the provisions made when food was not the paramount object of life, great quantities of merchandise, clothing, &c., &c., are yearly sent to the Indians. It is a criminal waste of money. Criminal because the Indian does not want the merchandise, and does want something to eat.

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Section 2117, Revised Statutes, another enactment of 1834, provides that "every person who drives or conveys any stock of horses, mules, or cattle, to range and feed on any land belonging to any Indian, or Indian tribe, without the consent of such tribe, is liable to a penalty of one dollar for each animal of such stock."

When this law was passed it had a definite meaning. There was a frontier, and if cattle were found on the lands of Indian tribes, it was probably because they were driven there. Now, the comparatively small Indian reservations are surrounded on all sides by territory occupied by whites. The buffalo have been replaced by equal, if not greater numbers of cattle, whose owners are scouring the country far and near for grazing ground for their herds. Boundary lines are nothing to them. They build their huts, plough their fire-guards, and herd their cattle, far inside the lines of Indian reservations, with "nobody to molest or make them afraid."

For whose business is it? The United States Marshals, and Indian agents are not required by law to expel them. Trespassers are "liable" to a fine if somebody brings suit, but who will voluntarily take upon himself the vexations, annoyances, and delays of the law, unless his own interests are touched?

It is true, that the Indian complains most bitterly that his game is killed or driven off; the grazing grounds that he needs for his own stock, occupied by vast numbers of cattle, guarded by reckless and dangerous white men, but his complaints are as idle wind. At this moment, I will venture to affirm, that there are over fifty thousand head of cattle peacefully grazing on the Cheyenne and Arrapahoe reservation, whose owners are white intruders.

Besides these, there are other classes of men who possess and hold great herds on Indian reservations. For some fifteen years past, the cattle business has been extremely lucrative, and hundreds, thousands, of men have made fortunes, even though starting with little capital. So many men have rushed into the business, that the grazing land of the whole vast unoccupied wilderness is too small to accommodate them. Until within a few years, the common rabble have been deterred from trespass on reservations, by the possibilities of that word "liable," and the classes referred to have had it all their own way.

The first-class is the contractors. A man gets a contract for furnishing beef to an Indian agency or military post on the reservation. He seizes the glorious opportunity. The range is perfect and unlimited, worth to him at least two dollars a year per head, for all the cattle herded on it, and he has undivided and unquestioned use of it. For every head he expects to kill in filling his contract, he will put ten, twenty, or more on the reservation.

Another privileged class is the Indian traders. No special excuse seems to be necessary in their case. They have the permission of the Indian Commissioner to trade with the Indians, and this seems to cover the whole ground and to include all other rights and privileges. These two classes have large herds on the reservations, and make a fat thing on their cattle, exclusive of the profits of their legitimate business. The Indians growl and complain of these trespassers, and often-times accuse their agent of being a partner, or receiving a share in the profits in consideration of his silence and inaction; but they can prove nothing, and their "blow out" of ill temper is only so much waste steam.

But there is yet another class by and through whom the crowning triumph over the law and the Indian is achieved. This is the squaw men; *i. e.*, white men who have taken squaws, and thus allied themselves to the tribes. No law prohibits an Indian from owning and herding on his reservation any number of cattle. The squaw-men ranking as Indians, and having all rights and privileges as such, can hold on the reservation as many cattle as they please. A white man with a large herd can secure the right to herd *ad libitum* on an Indian reservation by simply buying a squaw. Or should his taste rebel against such action, he has only to give a bill of sale of his cattle, (fraudulent of course,) to some squaw man, and thus by the payment of a few dollars, secure untaxed freedom of range on the reservation. I am sure I am well within the mark when I say that over two hundred thousand head of cattle are at this moment held in Indian Territory by and through squaw-men.

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Section 2137 Revised Statutes, "Every person other than an Indian, who, within the limits of any tribe with whom the United States have existing treaties, hunts or traps, or takes and destroys any peltries or game, except for subsistence, in the Indian country, shall forfeit all the traps, guns and ammunition in his possession, used or procured to be used for that purpose, and all peltries so taken, and shall be liable in addition to a penalty of five hundred dollars."

To one cognizant of the facts nothing but ocular demonstration could possibly prove that there is any such law on the statute-book.

The fur trade of North America has founded and built up some of the most colossal fortunes in England, France, and America.

When I first went to the "Far West," nearly thirty-four years ago, the trapper was still an institution. Generally alone, sometimes in couples, rarely in more numerous companies, they ranged the whole country, wherever furs and peltries were to be had, taking each year sufficient to make a trade so immense that great cities like St. Louis may be said to have been built upon it.

The presence and operations of these trappers in the Indian territories were perfectly well-known in 1834, when Section 2137 was enacted into a law. The men themselves cared nothing for their "liability," and the Government never took any steps to enforce the law.

Until the Pacific Railroads had penetrated to the heart of the great game regions of the west, hunting as a means of livelihood was not much practised by white men. Unless the weather was exceptionally cold, the meat was likely to spoil before it could be got to market. The building of the Union and Central Pacific Railroads employed an army of men, graders, track layers, tie cutters, bridge builders, freighters, &c., &c., and as the country was an absolute wilderness, all depended for their supply of fresh meat on game alone, the contract price of which was generally ten cents a pound.

With such profits in prospect, the trappers quickly changed their business, discharged their Indian wives, and flocked to the railroads to obtain contracts for supplying game. Venturous spirits from all parts of the world soon became engaged in the lucrative enterprise.

This business lasted but a few years, but the completed railroads now gave quick transit to market for all game killed, and the slaughter went on, and goes on. From every depot of every railroad that penetrates the game regions, and through all the months from October to March, hunting parties in wagons or with pack mules, scour all the country and kill the game; the only limit to their operations being the possibility of getting the game unspoiled to the railroad.

In 1872 some enemy of the buffalo race discovered that their hides were merchantable, and could be sold in the market for a goodly sum. The Union Pacific, Kansas Pacific and Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroads, soon swarmed with "hard cases" from the East, each excited with the prospect of a buffalo hunt that would pay. By wagon, on horseback, and a-foot, the pot-hunters poured in, and soon the unfortunate buffalo was without a moment's peace or rest. Though hundreds of thousands of skins were sent to market they scarcely indicated the slaughter. From want of skill in shooting, and want of knowledge in preserving the hides of those slain, on the part of the green hunters, one hide sent to market represented three, four, or even five, dead buffalo. During the three years, 1872,-'3,-'4, at least five millions of buffalo were slaughtered for their hides.

Less than ten years ago the Indian had an ample supply of food, and could support life without the assistance of the Government. Now, everything is gone, he is reduced to the condition of a pauper; and all this in violation of law and contravention of treaties.

The authorities have known of these things all the time. The law against the slaughter of game was, and is, on the statute book. The attention of Congress has again and again been called to its violation, once by the Lieutenant-General of the Army, but no attention has ever been paid to these appeals. The wrongs were only against the Indian. He had no vote, no representation, no redress in the courts, and no man of position and political power was magnanimous enough to be his advocate.

As an evidence of the carelessness and inconsistency of the legislation on behalf of the Indians, I will here draw attention to one fact. In 1870, when the plains were covered with buffalo, and almost all the tribes could subsist by the chase, the sum appropriated for the Indians, was about seven and one half millions of dollars. In 1879, when the buffalo and all large game was almost entirely gone, when, in violation of the law, the reservations had been hunted again and again by white men until nothing was left, and the Indians were reckless from absolute starvation, the sum appropriated was about five millions.

These Indians are actually prisoners. They have many bad, but some good traits, and among the last, is their wonderful patience under trial, misfortune, and suffering. They submit quietly to more oppression and ill-treatment than would any other people. They are brave and warlike. Their inaction is simply patience. Is it honorable to impose on them because we have the power, and they submit to our injustice? We have seen what a handful of Cheyennes or Apaches can do when goaded to desperation by starvation and ill treatment. Is it policy to drive to extremity men who are capable of such deeds and such sacrifices?

* * * * *

Sections 2128 to 2133 Revised Statutes, regulate the mode in which trade with Indians may be legally carried on by white men.

Section 2129.—“ No person shall be permitted to trade with any of the Indians of the Indian country, without a license therefor from a Superintendent of Indian Affairs, or Indian agent or sub-agent; which license shall be issued for a term not exceeding two years, for the tribes east of the Mississippi, and not exceeding three years for the tribes west of that river.”

Section 2128.—“ Any loyal person, a citizen of the United States, of good moral character, shall be permitted to trade with any Indian tribe upon giving bond to the United States in the penal sum of not less than five nor more than ten thousand dollars, with at least two good sureties to be approved by the superintendent of the district within which said person wishes to trade, or by the United States district judge, or district attorney for the district in which the obligor resides, renewable each year, conditioned that such person will faithfully observe all laws and regulations made for the government of trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes, and in no respect violate the same.”

Section 2129, was enacted into a law in 1834; Section 2128, was so enacted in 1866.*

It will be specially noted that Section 2128, makes a complete change in the mode by which a man may secure the appointment of trader, actually abrogating and annulling Section 2129. By the original law, (2129,) no person could trade except by a license to be granted by certain specified parties. By the last law, (2128,) any loyal person of good character can trade by complying with certain conditions.

A sad commentary on the moral condition of our country, and an evidence of the utter disregard in which persons in authority can, with impunity, hold obnoxious acts of Congress, are furnished by the facts that these laws, though the only ones regulating the appointment of trader with the Indians, are not now, and have never been, complied with.

The law of 1834 was simply modified in practice; the Commissioner of Indian affairs arrogating to himself the sole right to appoint traders, though the law gave an equal right to other parties. The law of 1866 is and has been utterly ignored; the Commissioners of Indian affairs still exercising the sole right of appointment.

Up to within a few years the trade of Indians of the United States in furs and skins, ("peltries,") was estimated at not less than twelve millions of dollars yearly, and the trade in other products of various kinds, added not a little to the amount. Since the destruction of the buffalo the former trade has greatly fallen off, but that loss is partly offset by a corresponding gain in other products.

Under the illegal and injurious squeezing process applied to the Indians by means of the machinery of traders, nearly the whole of this vast sum finds its way into the pockets of the Indian Ring. An individual is given sole right to trade on a reservation, or with a certain tribe or tribes. He is the only person from whom the Indians can buy such articles as they need. He is the only person to whom they can sell such articles as they have to dispose of. The monopoly is complete, and under the illegal ruling of the Indian Department, there can be no competition.

The barefaced swindling of the unfortunate Indian which goes on under this condition of affairs can scarcely be conceived. Articles of civilized manufacture, now daily becoming more and more necessary to the Indian, are sold to him at five hundred or a thousand per cent. profit.

Of course, he need not buy, but he wants the article and is prevented by the regulations of the Department from buying from any one else, so he must either be swindled or go without it. So also with his sales. He brings the trader a lot of peltries, and is offered in trade five or ten per cent. of their value. He need not sell, of course. It's all a square and open business transaction with the trader. There is no force, nor even per-

* Note.—It might be curious to inquire into the "influence" which induced the compiler of these statutes to give a law of 1834, a number immediately *after* a law of 1866.

suasion about it. If the Indian does not choose to accept the trader's price, he can take his peltries back with him to his camp. The poor creature hemmed in on all sides, accepts the situation exactly as he would an unavoidable death at the stake, and whatever he may think on the subject, makes no protest, but accepts any price offered, or gives any asked, without murmur or question.

The destruction of the buffalo has forced the Indians to adopt a great many expedients for raising money to buy those articles of civilized manufacture that have now become common necessities among them. Of these expedients the most remarkable and unlooked for is work. Formerly only women worked. A man degraded himself by doing anything that had the appearance of labor. Now, it is not unusual to see gangs of men and women cutting and piling cord wood, or raking and loading hay, as busy and noisy as civilized laborers. Many of the contracts for the supply of fuel and hay to military posts are filled, partly at least, by the labor of Indian men and women.

In many instances the contractors are Indian traders, for their personal acquaintance with, and influence among the Indians, and their ability to pay for work done, in goods, give them a signal advantage over other bidders. In other cases, the contractor makes some agreement with the trader and pays his Indian laborers with orders on the latter. In either case the result is the same swindling of the Indian.

Two years ago I was told by an Indian that he had cut twenty cords of wood for a contractor, for which he was to receive one dollar and twenty-five cents per cord. The wood was delivered, and he received an order on an Indian trader, some sixty miles away, for the payment of the amount. In due time he presented the order, and was paid *one pint cup of brown sugar for each cord of wood cut.*

Paul's Valley, in the Chickasaw nation, is one of the garden spots of earth. Thousands of bushels of corn are raised by the Indians in and near this valley. They can sell only to the Indian trader. I have been informed that the average price paid the Indians is fifteen cents per bushel in goods—(three to five cents cash.) This corn is really worth on the spot, over one dollar a bushel in cash.

From every article sold to, and every thing bought of an Indian, the trader receives his hundreds of per cent. profit. He has the sole control of the whole financial affairs of the tribe, and under the unlawful rulings of the Department, not a transaction can be effected without paying him his enormous toll.

In this crime against Indians, the Legislative branch of the Government is not implicated. It has done its duty. The law of 1866, is a good law. The Indian trade is by it thrown open to ample competition, restricted as is only right and proper. The wrong seems to be in a general laxity in the Executive branch of the Government, which permits laws to be overridden or ignored by persons in power, whenever the injured party is precluded by the nature of things from seeking redress in the courts.

If any of the crimes enumerated had been perpetrated against white citizens, the country would have rung with protests against them; redress would have been sought in the courts, and if not granted, appeal would have been had to the freeman's last resort—arms. But the Indians have no vote. There is, therefore, no one to care for their interests. They are scattered and helpless. Laws passed in their behalf are ignored at the pleasure of some man "clothed with a little brief authority," and there seems absolutely no help for it.

Under the continued swindling above delineated, the Indian is reduced to the very lowest depths of poverty, and in the nature of things, if there be a "lower deep," he must find it. To buy at highest, and sell at lowest prices, will soon bring any people to financial ruin. The Indian does not do this voluntarily. It is forced upon him by the unlawful act of the man who, of all others, ought to be most interested in his welfare.

The Indian should have the right of competition. He should have such choice of traders as would enable him to buy at lowest, and sell at highest prices.

The present iniquities are practiced on him under pretence of protecting him from whisky sellers, and preventing his procuring arms. The Indian territories are now restricted, and surrounded more or less by settlers. The law prohibits the introduction of spirituous liquors into the Indian territories or reservations, but the States and the United States territories license and protect their inhabitants in the sale of liquor. The whisky seller might run some little risk did he take his wares into the limits of the reservation, but if he stops his wagon just outside, the Indian can step over and get all he can pay for. So, also, in the sale of arms. Under the present system, the bad Indian gets all the arms and liquor he wants, while the well-disposed Indian is swindled out of his substance.

* * * * *

Among civilized nations, the welfare of prisoners has come to be a duty of the highest consideration. Imprisonment is not to be a punishment, but a restraint, and societies or nations imprison people merely for their own protection, and are bound, in justice and honor, to treat them kindly, and to make them as comfortable as is consistent with the security of their persons. No excuse, however plausible, can quell the indignation of every right feeling man on reading the horrors of the prison pen at Andersonville, and the keepers of jails and houses of correction find to their cost, that ill-treatment of prisoners, is the one crime which society will not condone.

It is, therefore, with feelings of mingled sorrow and humiliation that I arraign the Government of the United States before the bar of public opinion, as treating its Indian prisoners exactly as the pastor in charge of the "Shepherd's Fold," in New York city, treated the innocent orphans that were so unfortunate as to fall into his hands. It imprisons them, it

starves them, and when their human or animal nature, revolting against the continued outrages, seeks such redress as their poor means and barbarous instincts prompt, it punishes them.

The Indian is "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined"—not, indeed, within stone walls, but he finds, in his case at least, that imaginary lines are just as effective means of confinement as the strongest bolts and bars. Their hunting grounds have been wrested from the Indians, and they have been "rounded up" like cattle on restricted areas. Against their will, they have been forced on reservations; against their will, they are forced to stay there. They are prisoners in every sense of the word.

The nation having performed its duty to itself, by arresting and confining the prisoner, now, as in honor bound, proceeds to take the best possible care of him.

We shall see.

The plains were alive with buffalo—sufficient for the maintenance of the Indians for all time. The nation looked on while white men slaughtered the last buffalo for his hide, although this slaughter was contrary to law and in contravention of treaties made with the Indians.

The restricted areas in which the Indians are confined, are not too narrow to contain game, almost, if not quite, sufficient for their wants. The Indians cannot go outside to kill game, but the nation looks quietly on and sees the whole reservations marked with tracks of white hunting parties, which, in spite of laws and treaties to the contrary, kill and carry off their means of subsistence from under the very noses of the nation's prisoners.

Of course, then, the nation having made prisoners of the Indians, and having permitted them to be deprived of the means of subsisting themselves, has charged itself with the special care of, and provision for, their wants.

Not so. In violation of every dictate of justice and humanity—in emulation on a grand scale of the crime perpetrated at Andersonville,—the nation leaves its helpless prisoners to starve, and shoots without mercy the reckless few, who, goaded to desperation by their sufferings, dare to cross the "dead line" of the reservation.

In this horrid crime, every voter of the country is either actively or passively implicated, for it has its root and source in the Legislative branch of the Government.

The amount appropriated by Congress for the support of the Indians for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1880, was \$5,037,000. The number of Indians, 252,897. Dividing among them every penny appropriated, this would give to each Indian, man, woman, and child, less than nineteen dollars for his support for one entire year. This, however, although the obvious, is not a fair method of arriving at the exact amount of support given to the destitute Indians by a beneficent Government. Many of the Indians are more or less self-supporting. Some, like the Choctaws, Cherokees, Chickasaws, Creeks, Seminoles, &c., have so far advanced in civiliza-

tion, and have so much invested in United States bonds, as to require no direct support from the Government. Others, as the Chippewas, Winnebagoes, Omahas, &c., make a full support for themselves by their labor. Almost all, indeed, make by labor, or by hunting and fishing, at least a percentage of their own support; the only exceptions being the Brulé Sioux, the Poncas, and Nez Percés.

Descending therefore from the "general average" which makes so poor a showing for the Indians, I will take up for consideration, a special case averaging fairly with the cases of all other wild Indians, and from which a very correct judgment can be formed as to the insufficiency of the appropriations.

The Cheyenne and Arrapahoe tribes, numbering 5,496 individuals, are concentrated about an agency situated on the North Fork of the Canadian River, in the Indian Territory, opposite, and near the military post of Fort Reno. The Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, and Wichita tribes, numbering 4,117 souls, have two agencies, the principal one near Fort Sill, the branch on the Washita River. These tribes are yet "wild Indians," having but just been initiated in the rudiments of any self-support not derived from the chase.

The total population is 9,613.

The total sum appropriated by Congress for their subsistence is \$290,000. This gives to each Indian \$30 per year, or about eight cents per day. This is a sum totally inadequate to the appeasement of a capacious and ever hungry stomach, even did the Indian get the whole in provisions. But he really gets in food only a small part of even this small sum.

We will suppose this money divided between the agencies in proportion to population. The Cheyenne and Arrapahoe agency should receive \$165,800. I have seen the estimates of the agent for the year 1880. Cutting as closely as possible, the prime cost of the ration absolutely necessary to support the lives of the Indians in his charge, was \$254,000, or over \$88,000 more than the proportional amount due. But, for reasons only known to the "authorities," he failed to get anything near his proper proportion. Some of his items of food were arbitrarily cut down two-thirds, some one-half, some one-third, all more or less, so that he really had bare support for his Indians for only one-half of the year. Besides this, other Indians were crowded in on him for whom no estimate had been made, but to whom he was expected to issue rations sufficient to keep them quiet. Thus, 700 or 800 Northern Cheyennes, already dissatisfied and disposed to be troublesome, were foisted upon him, to their own discomfort, and to the injury and suffering of those Indians for whom the appropriation was made.

Even supposing the agent to be "honest as the sun," and that the affairs of the agency are administered with perfect ability and economy, it was impossible for each individual Indian to receive more than two or three cents a day to satisfy his famished stomach.

All this is criminal. It is time that all persons responsible for the care

and condition of the Indians should recognize the fact that they are prisoners of war, and that justice and humanity alike require that they be supported until such time as they can learn to support themselves in their new mode of life.

Let us be men, and quit the base and senseless cry of the demagogue, "economy." As we demand our own rights, so let us be just enough to regard the rights of others.

"The killing of one man makes a murderer, the killing of thousands makes a hero."

We denounce the Confederate action at Andersonville as base cruelty. We do the self-same thing on a grand scale, and call it political wisdom!

Count the Indians pauperized by the action, (and inaction,) of the Government. Make a fair and liberal estimate of the sums necessary for their support. Let agents and commissioners dare to put on record what that necessity is, and to place the whole matter in its true light before the people of the country. The money will be forthcoming. "The people" are honest, honorable, humane; and law-makers are quick to catch the "signs of the times."

I wish that every citizen of the United States could see, as I have seen the actual condition of these unfortunate people. I would then have no need to elaborate statement or argument.

You send fabulous sums to the suffering South, to Ireland, to China, to the remote confines of earth in aid of the suffering and to feed the starving. At your very doors you have suffering and starvation beyond anything you have tried to ameliorate. A race appeals not only to your humanity, but to your justice—a barbarous, cruel, ignorant, shiftless race—but a race of earnest natural men, whose very weaknesses appeal to us to save them from themselves, and from the harpies who feed upon them.

* * * * *

Until within a very few years, the agents through whom the Government dealt with the Indians, were purely political appointments. A man was selected, not for character or capacity, or knowledge of Indians, but simply as a reward for the political services of himself or his backers, to perform a duty requiring courage, skill, tact, and knowledge of human nature. His tenure of office was the pleasure of the appointing power, and his salary almost nominal, a pittance of \$1,200 or \$1,500 a year. He was entrusted with more or less money and property for Indian expenditures, much of which he might appropriate to himself if so disposed; and his office and contact with the Indians gave him the control of their trade.

On so miserable a salary, a strictly honest man would return from his years of danger, privation, and banishment, if not poorer, at least, no richer, than when he accepted the agency. The dishonest man in the same position, and under the same circumstances, might return with one or two hundred thousand dollars. Could there be conceived a more efficient and sure method of converting an honest man into a thief?

Within the last few years an effort has been made to benefit the Indian service by leaving the selection of agents to the Christian bodies of the country. This failed necessarily, since the root of the evil, low salaries and uncertain tenure of office, remained untouched. Experience of life does not teach that men are less greedy of money because they are professing Christians. Temptation comes to all alike, and the profession of Christianity will make no man honest. The man who would steal as a layman, will steal as a Christian. Human nature is weak ; honest, perfect administration, is not to be expected of men who risk their lives on low salaries and uncertain tenure of office.

The selection of agents by Christian Churches, is really one of the most absurd things ever perpetrated in this enlightened age.*

The Indian agent is actually the Governor of one or more tribes of wild men. He is the representative of the power and will of the United States Government. His duties are the control of the whole political and financial affairs of the tribes as connected with the Government. These tribes are a warlike race, whose pastime is pillage and bloodshed ; whose idea of right is simply might ; whose respect for, and appreciation of their ruler, is exactly in proportion to his character as a soldier, and the power of will which enables him to control masses of men. To place a poor old man like Mr. Meeker, however faithful, honest, and earnest he may be, in charge of a set of wild brigands like the Utes, is simply to invite massacre.

There are very few voters in this country, even Christians, who would be willing to submit to a law requiring that every Governor of a State, or territory, must be a professing Christian of some one of the numerous denominations. Ignoring religious qualifications, they require for their own Governor, a man of standing and supposed administrative ability. Yet the government of a State, composed of intelligent and law-abiding citizens, is a very easy matter compared to the government of a tribe of savages. While requiring high character and marked capacity, for the easy office, we are inconsistent enough to deal out the difficult and dangerous offices to those whose only merit consists in supposed earnestness of Christian feeling and sentiment. I doubt if there be among civilized nations, any but our own, which could so completely have submerged itself in the slough of a ridiculous and criminal absurdity.

To us, who live among the Indians, and know their character and the feelings that actuate them, the only wonder is, that the agents and agencies have not long ago been swept from the face of the earth.

* * * * *

Ignoring the repeated recommendations of the Interior Department, Congress has persistently failed to enact a code of laws for the government

*It is suggested that such selection is in violation of the Constitution of the United States, in uniting affairs of church and State, and in discriminating (as ineligible) against every man who is not a member of a Christian Church.

of the Indians. The "wild" Indians have not yet climbed sufficiently far up the ladder of human progress to have discovered for themselves the need of laws, or the obligations of morality. In its hundred years of "control and management," the Government of the United States has never awakened to the facts that these wild and savage natures might be improved by the discipline of law, and that no steps in civilization are possible until the savage has some fixed principles by which to guide his actions.

It is common to talk of the crimes of the Indians. However horrible the atrocities committed by them, and recorded on almost every page of our history since the landing of the Pilgrims—there are no crimes.

A crime is a wilful violation of law or moral obligation. The Indian knows no law, either human or divine, nor does he understand any moral obligation. His deeds of rapine and cruelty are simply his mode of making war; a part of his savage condition. The grandest of exploits, the noblest of virtues, to him, are comprehended in the English words—theft, pillage, arson, rapine, murder. He is a savage noxious animal, and his actions are those of a ferocious beast of prey, unsoftened by any touch of pity or mercy. For them he is to be blamed, exactly as the tiger and the wolf are blamed.

The moral responsibility for his atrocities rests on other shoulders, and we should blush with shame, when we reflect that the Indian is still an untamed savage, without an idea of moral right and wrong, though in contact with our boasted civilization for two hundred and sixty years, and, though "controlled and managed" by our Government, and taught by missionaries from our Christian Churches, for nearly one hundred years.

An agent is killed, his family brutally maltreated; citizens are murdered, their wives and children carried into the most revolting captivity; murder, arson, rapine, stalk rampant. The beneficent Government suavely extends the ægis of immunity over the red perpetrators. They cannot be punished by law, for they have violated no law, and Congress sees to it that there shall be no law to violate.

Can any right thinking man blame Indians for their non-advancement in civilization under this condition of affairs? Is any community safe, or civilized, in which atrocious deeds go unpunished?

Although peculiarly indisposed to quarrel and conflict among themselves, there are occasional and exceptional instances of what in white men would be crime. No tribe having any law or idea of law, no punishment can be inflicted by law. A brother may retaliate by murder the murder of his brother, but this is purely a personal affair, and, as a rule, serious offences go unpunished.

Leaving out of consideration the so-called half civilized tribes of the Indian Territory, there are yet within the limits of the United States, near two hundred thousand savages, "wards of the nation," to whom, and for whom, the Government in its wisdom thinks no law is necessary. Indians

may murder Indians ; Indians may ravage the settlements, committing all the acts known in our statutes as capital crimes, and there is no court of justice, either civil or military, which can legally punish them. Such atrocities have been punished ; Modoc Jack and his assistants in the murder of General Canby and the Commissioners ; the ring leaders of the Sioux Massacre in Iowa, and many others have expiated their deeds on the gallows, but the punishment was not by virtue of any law of the land. They suffered under the operation of the old old law—the foundation of all law—the “ *lex talionis*.”

Forty thousand full grown, able-bodied thieves, ravishers, murderers, to whom the Government accords perfect immunity and grants complete amnesty !

The United States, in failing to establish a code of laws, has fallen in exactly with the aboriginal idea. Indians are encouraged to think that we believe as they do, and that the atrocities committed by them are not wrong.

One of the first and most necessary steps towards the civilization of any savage people, is to establish and enforce a code of laws.

* * * * *

The last five years—more than any twenty preceding them—have convinced the wild Indians of the utter futility of their war against the United States Government. One and all, they are thoroughly whipped, and their contests in the future will be the acts of predatory parties, (for which the Indians at large are no more responsible than is the Government of the United States for the acts of highwaymen in the Black Hills, or train-robbers in Missouri,) or a deliberate determination of the bands or tribes to die fighting, rather than by the slow torture of starvation to which the Government condemns them.

The buffalo are gone ; so, also, nearly all the other large game on which the Indians depended for food. They are confined to comparatively restricted reservations, and completely surrounded by whites. They are more perfectly aware of the stringency of their situation than any white man can possibly be, for they daily feel its pressure.

With no chance of success in war, with no possibility of providing food for themselves, with no adequate assistance from Government, they thoroughly comprehend that their only hope for the future is in work, or, as they express it, “ in the white man’s road.”

They do not like it of course, it would be unnatural if they did, they accept it as the dire alternative against starvation. Does any man labor for the sake of labor ? A man who spaded up a field simply to give himself labor, would be considered a fit subject for the lunatic asylum. Labor is the curse on Adam, and however necessary, and ennobling, is not an end, but a means. We labor for money, for ambition, for health, for anything except for labor itself.

Basing arguments on the Indian's contempt for work, many men in and out of Congress, talk eloquent nonsense of the impossibility of ever bringing him to agricultural pursuits. The average Indian has no more hatred of labor, as such, than the average white man. Neither will labor unless an object is to be obtained; both will labor rather than starve. Heretofore the Indian could comfortably support himself in his usual and preferred life, without labor, and there being no other incentive, he would, in my opinion, have only proved himself an idiot had he worked without an object.

Within the last four or five years, the agent for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, (as wild and savage as any Indians on the plains,) has encouraged the small bands and heads of families to go off from the agency, select locations, and go to farming. The eagerness with which they seized upon the idea, and the amount of work done each year, are ample evidence, not only of their earnest desire to travel "the white man's road," but of their capacity to sustain themselves, after some more time and instruction.

My experience does not prove that it is necessary for the Indian to go through the pastoral, to arrive at the agricultural stage of progress. This may depend somewhat on the capabilities of the country; but I am satisfied that several of the wild tribes are at this moment, ready and willing to go to farming, and with good hope of success.

This seemingly easy process is, however, attended with many serious practical difficulties, which are well exemplified in the experiment of the agent before alluded to. The locations made by the Indians, were scattered far and wide, some as many as sixty miles from the agency. On account of some regulation of the Indian Bureau, or reason of his own, the agent would issue rations only for a week or ten days at a time. The Indians were, therefore, forced, every few days, to leave their plows and go to the agency for food for themselves and families. A wagon is broken or a plough needs sharpening, the Indian must take it, as best he can, forty, fifty, sixty miles, to the agency for repairs.

But the most serious and disheartening difficulty and drawback of Indian farming, is, that they are merely "tenants by courtesy." They do not own and can get no title to their locations; consequently, the labor on each is simply that necessary for one year's crop. Every Indian with whom I have conversed on the subject, makes this the strong ground of his complaint. The other annoyances he could stand if he only had a home of his own, but he can take no interest in, and has no heart to fix up, a farm to which he has no legal claim, and which the agent may make him leave at any time.

The very inception of such feeling is indication of a long stride in advance of utter savage life. Its development, and through it, the assured future of the Indian should be the first object of the Government. Let the yearnings of this newly awakened desire be satisfied. Give the Indian land in severality, and means and encouragement to make a fixed home for himself.

* * * * *

I do not here propose to discuss the question of suffrage, except so far as to suggest that the cry for "universal suffrage" in this country, is in fact simply the cry of the demagogue. If "universal suffrage" means anything, it means that the right of suffrage shall be exercised by every free sane citizen of the United States. The "wild" Irishman, the Italian organ-grinder, the plantation Negro, neither of whom know a letter of the alphabet, or have a scintillation of an idea about our form of Government, all have votes, though there are other classes of our citizens, far more intelligent, which are deprived of that right. This is the great, free and enlightened American Republic—absorbing, digesting, assimilating all nations, and peoples, except Mongolians, Indians, and Women.

Even in these classes there are exceptions, for, though the Siamese, (as I personally know, in the case of the celebrated twins,) may be naturalized and vote, the Chinese, though of the same general race, may not.

Is there any real statesmanlike reason for making such arbitrary distinctions?

If universal suffrage is so excellent a thing as to be practically, though partially adopted by both the great political parties, why not accept it entirely, and thus make a fair experiment of its benefits?

Within the last few years, great numbers of semi-civilized people from Russia, have immigrated to Kansas, and to other points in the West. They settle in colonies, retain their language, manners, and customs. They take out naturalization papers, and investing themselves with the "rights, privileges, and immunities," of American citizens, become at once an object of interest to the great political parties of the country, each of which takes good care that they are not imposed upon by the other.

Whether or not, "universal suffrage" is good for the "body politic," is a question which the future must determine, but that the ballot is a benefit to the individual is a matter of daily experience. Admitting that the Indian is no more worthy of the ballot than the "wild Irishman," the Organ-grinder, the Negro, or the Mennonite, he is, nevertheless, equally worthy of, and entitled to the protection it gives.

* * * * *

Boarding the train on the M. K. and T. Railroad at Emporia, Kansas, and taking a comfortable seat on the shady side of a luxurious "Pullman," we start south on a journey through an agricultural paradise. On every side, as far as the eye can reach, broad fields of rustling corn and waving grain, surround cosy farm-houses. Bustling towns and thriving villages alternate the scene, and all give assurance of active, useful, civilized life.

We are lost in the contemplation of such an abundance of prosperity, when, suddenly, as if by magic, the fields disappear, the comfortable farm-houses vanish, and the well built towns are replaced by a few wretched hovels grouped about the occasional railroad depot. The general features

of the country are the same, the soil is the same, it is the same beautiful "flowery land," but we have in an instant been transported from the "busy haunts of men," to a scarcely inhabited solitude. The line has been crossed; we are in the Indian Territory.

In setting aside sixty-four thousand square miles, or forty-one millions of acres of excellent land for the exclusive occupancy of a few thousand Indians, the Government has made just such an attempt as if the original settlers had devoted one-half of New York Island to use as a Potter's Field; an attempt absurd in conception, impossible of fruition. There is no power in the Government that can retain these lands to the Indian, for it is right and justice, neither to the white man, nor to the Indian, that they should be so retained.

If the "laissez faire" policy which the Government has so long and persistently pursued is still continued, these lands will be filched from the Indian without adequate compensation, and in a way still further to pauperize him. If the people of the country will throw off their prejudices for or against the Indian, and look the matter squarely in the face, I believe that such action can be forced on the Government as will redound to the best advantage of both white and red races.

All the whites, and a few dominant Indians of this fair territory, are in favor of having things remain as at present, because they make their living out of it, and a good living too. The mass of the Indian populations are dissatisfied, and utterly disheartened, and with most sufficient cause. Sisyphus had no more hopeless task than they. To work forever, without ever owning the result of their labors!!

Section 2, Article 1, of the constitution of the Cherokee Nation, reads as follows:

"The lands of the Cherokee Nation shall remain common property: but the improvements made thereon, and in possession of the citizens of the nation, are the exclusive and indefeasible property of the citizens respectively who made, or may rightfully be in possession of them; *provided*, that the citizens of the nation, possessing exclusive and indefeasible right to their improvements as expressed in this article, shall possess no right or power to dispose of their improvements in any manner whatever to the United States, or to individual citizens thereof."

This communism, this absolute barrier to prosperity, is regarded as so important that it finds expression in the very first article of the Constitution of the most advanced of the Indian tribes. It is an attempt on the part of chiefs and leading men to preserve tribal relations, and secure their own power.

The aggressive civilized conflict between capital and labor, becomes, in the Indian Territory, a mild, but decided supremacy on the one side, and an apathetic acquiescence on the other. It is the mildest of all forms of serfdom, the landlords, to maintain their supremacy, being compelled to be very

unexacting. Common report makes them an exceedingly considerate patriarchal class, aiding their special creatures whenever necessary. The objection to the system is simply that it retards the growth of the people in civilization and capacity for self-support. It is the old relation of chief and commons with the despotic features softened away. There can be no real healthy advancement until all these old tribal relations and dependencies, are entirely abolished.

The Cherokees present the curious anomaly of an independent nation, existing within the territory of another nation. Its citizens owe no allegiance to the United States, and are subject to no control by them except through treaty stipulations.

Other nations as the Choctaws, Chickasaws, &c., present the same anomaly, and the tendency seems to be to erect as many as possible of these little independent nationalities, "wheels within wheels," in the limits of our wide territories. A few shrewd men rule the ignorant masses, hold all the positions of honor and profit, and fight most vigorously every attempt to interfere with their monopoly of government.

There are other reasons why the Indian Territory must and will be, opened to settlement.

Under the Indian laws, any citizen of the nations may hire a citizen of the United States as laborer or mechanic, on paying into the treasury the sum of fifty cents per month for each person hired. An American wants to settle in the Indian territory. He goes to a citizen of the nation, living near the lands on which he proposes to settle, and for a small sum, procures that citizen to cause him to be registered as his employee. He then brings in his family, builds his house, fences and ploughs his fields, and creates a home in which he is unmolested by sheriff or tax-collector, so long as he pays into the Indian treasury six dollars a year. It is safe to estimate that there are more than ten thousand such settlers in the Indian Territory at this very moment.

It will not be many years before the States adjoining the Indian Territory will take some very positive steps to have it opened. At present it is the "House of Refuge" for the most desperate outlaws and hardened thieves of the frontier. These live by preying alike upon the Indians and the inhabitants of the adjacent States, making sudden dashes, gathering in the spoil, and retreating to the security of the wild solitudes of this vast territory.

The friends of the Indian do him incalculable injury by demanding too much. Standing on their prejudices and the "faith of treaties," they propose to do for the Indians what they would not think of doing if those Indians were white men. They insist that an Indian population which consolidated would make a city less populous than Cincinnati, shall occupy and hold forever, lands sufficient to support all the present population (white and Indian,) of the whole United States.

It cannot be done, and the sooner the fact is recognized the better it will be for the Indian race.

* * * * *

As an officer of the army, I am not an advocate for the transfer of the Indians to the War Department, as it would add immensely to our duties, and saddle us with onerous and disagreeable responsibilities. As a citizen of the United States, with ample knowledge of the facts, I believe such transfer ought to be made.

There are many and cogent reasons, the first, and most important of which, is, that the present management has failed in the objects for which the Indian Bureau was instituted.

The fair trial of thirty years during which the Interior Department has, through its Indian Bureau, had control, has resulted in what?

The mental condition of the Indian has improved so inappreciably as to be undiscoverable, (except in the reports of interested agents and employees,) while socially and morally he has seriously retrograded. The country has been kept in an almost continued state of war, and the Government forced to the unnecessary expenditure of millions of dollars.

However much opinions may differ as to how, and by whom, the Indians should be managed, there is, among disinterested persons cognizant of the facts, but one opinion as to the absolute incompetency of the Bureau as now constituted to the task assigned it, and the duty of the Government to take the management of the Indians out of its hands.

The question then naturally arises, "into whose hands shall this most important trust be confided?" and the answer as naturally presents itself, "to that branch of the Government which has to live with the Indians, and is therefore most interested in their civilization and progress; which has to fight them and is therefore most interested in maintaining peace—the Army."

It has been said by those opposed to this transfer, that the officers of the army would, if placed in control of the Indians, foster Indian wars, either in the hope of winning renown, or from the bloodthirsty disposition popularly supposed to belong to professional soldiers. No more arrant nonsense was ever advanced as argument. Indian wars yield little glory or reward even to the most brilliant success, and they entail the hardest and most unsatisfactory kind of hard work, attended with every privation, discomfort, and danger. Soldiers are paid for this, but they like it as little as other people do. In over thirty-three years of service, I have never yet encountered a blood-thirsty soldier; one who loved war, for war's sake. On the contrary, the sympathy of the army is ever on the side of the Indian. We see their ill-treatment, their trials, privations, and sufferings, and the officer most active and energetic in his pursuit of marauding Savages, would hail with joy an order to turn his sword against the white reprobates whose rascality or inefficiency brought on the trouble.

In an economic point of view, the transfer of the Indians to the War Department would be most advantageous. The army is furnished with a machinery for administration and supply more perfect than that of any other

branch of service, and of capacity largely in excess of the demands upon it. Vast as is the business of the Indian Bureau, it would be performed without hitch or jostle, and its whole machinery, now cumbersome, expensive, and inadequate, would at once be replaced by the simple and efficient routine of the army.

It is impossible to discover from the report of the Indian Commissioner, or any other document to which I have had access, exactly how many salaried officers are employed in the Indian Bureau, or what amount is paid to each. We know, however, that the Commissioner himself, several inspectors, some seventy agents, a number of superintendents, and possibly many others, can, with advantage to the Government, be replaced by officers of the army, thus saving several hundred thousand dollars each year in salaries alone.

We will suppose the transfer effected. Every military post in the Indian country, or on an Indian reservation, becomes at once an agency, saving enormous expenses in the erection of agency buildings, quarters for officials, storehouses, &c. Every commander of such a post is, *ex officio*, superintendent of Indian affairs on that reservation, or in that vicinity, and is responsible only to his military superiors. The office of agent is obsolete, the commanding officer selecting an officer from his command to be the quartermaster and commissary of Indian stores.

In case Congress passes laws for the government of the Indians, the commanding officer is invested with magisterial functions. As civil and military governor he has entire control of both whites and Indians on the reservation. Having all power he would properly be held directly responsible, not only for the well being, but for the good conduct of the Indians; and should he fail in either direction, the department commander can at once remedy the evil by detailing another officer to command the post.

Owing to the very small effective force of our army, and the vast expanse of territory, far the heaviest portion of army expense is in the one item of transportation. Nine-tenths of that expense is caused by the ignorance, inexperience, and blunders of Indian agents; possibly conscientious, well-meaning men. The Ute troubles have cost the country many valuable lives, and many millions of dollars in money. Had the White River agency been a military post of even four companies, and its commander civil and military governor of the Indians, all this expense would have been saved.

As a friend of the Indians I cannot too strongly urge their transfer to the War Department. The tribal government, the only controlling influence hitherto known to the Indians, while simple, patriarchal, and generally mild, recognized force as its central and fundamental idea. However independent the individual, he realized the fact that there existed a power which he could disobey only on peril of his life. His admiration for and fealty to his chief were a reflex of, and exactly in proportion to, the military and administrative power of that chief. A chief who could not

fight had no following; a chief who could not control had no control. His brother warriors stood in his estimation as they ranked in military renown; his associates were men of his own stamp, and for the man who could not or would not fight he had nothing but contempt.

The United States Government assumes his direct control, and sets over him, as its representative, a man who talks only of peace, with no knowledge of or care for warlike fame, and who possibly is scarcely able to mount a horse—a chief without a following, a ruler without force.

What wonder if the Indian blood rebels against such control, or if he has contempt not only for the representative, but for the government which selects such men to rule him. This contempt is a constant incentive to resistance and rebellion. The peace talk of the agent is ascribed to fear, tempting the Indian, (who is an inherent bully,) to say or do something still further to intimidate him. Under tribal government fear was the solitary restraining influence known to Indians. The substitution of a strong white chief for the strong red chief, whose orders he has been accustomed to obey, will elevate the United States Government in his estimation, and have the most beneficent effect on his conduct and character.

One of the strongest reasons for placing the Indians under the control of the War Department has its foundation in the peculiarities of the average American citizen, forever like moths to a candle, to be attracted by the specious cry of "economy." Not that the people really care about economy, but all political parties founding their claims to votes on the clap-trap "economy and reform," have misled and debased the people, until they are ready to applaud any dirty act if the doer can show that a dollar was saved by it.

Scarcely a measure is taken by persons in public life, but is based on the contemptible expectation of catching votes by showing its economy.

That he may be able to show that he is economizing, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs cuts to starvation point the estimates of the agents directly in charge of the Indians. To be able to show to their constituents their economy, Congressmen cut down still further the already inadequate demands of the Commissioner. If the starved Indians rebel, the army is set against them at enormous expense, which is quietly covered by a deficiency bill next session. Nobody ever thinks of inquiring into the original cause of the necessity of a deficiency bill, or if some too curious individual should ask some troublesome questions about it, the whole blame is at once laid upon that "relic of despotism," the army.

It costs ten times more to fight the Indians than it would to feed them, but to feed them, the appropriation must not only be open and direct, but possibly larger than on previous years, thus precluding the claim to "economy," and giving their adversaries opportunity to cry out against their extravagance.

* * * * *

I have endeavored in the foregoing pages to show by statements of facts, and arguments founded upon them, that the present policy of the Government in its intercourse with, and "control and management" of, the Indians, is an utter failure. Grouping these facts, I believe to be true, even if I have failed to show—

That while the management of the Indians by the General Government is probably better for them than State control would have been, it is, through the fault of a system of Government which pays little attention to the rights of those who have no votes, no representation, and no redress in the courts, a complete failure as a policy.

That the Indian is in a stage of advancement, common at some time in their history to all nations and peoples; that the efforts made for his advance in civilization have so far failed of beneficial result, not from exceptional stupidity, or barbarism, or other peculiarity of the subject, but because they have been ill-directed, and because there is more money to be made of him by leaving him as he is.

That the "treaty system" means simply Governmental stultification; that the Indian tribes are not independent governments, and cannot be made so by any trick of rhetoric; and that it is only a legal cover for deceit, chicanery, and fraud.

That our trade and intercourse laws are obsolete and ineffective for good to the country, or for protection to the Indian, but active and effectual for swindling and pauperizing him.

That the Indian is absolutely our prisoner, debarred by our act from means to support himself, and by the rules of war, and the common law of humanity, must be supported by us.

That the selection of a Governor and agent of the Indian tribes, simply because he is an eminently pious man, is an absurdity in itself, a fraud on the Indians, and a disgrace to the Government.

That no man will work simply for the love of work, and that if the Government really desires the advancement of the Indian, it must give him an object, an incentive—a farm in severalty.

That the ballot in this country is the best protective, and that the Indian, whether worthy of and fitted for it or not, should have its protection.

That if given the ballot, the question as to whether or not he should be removed from State limits, will lose its importance.

That the isolation of Indians on reservations is bad policy, tending to maintain the present antagonism between the white and red races, which closer residence and more freedom of intercourse would allay.

That it is not to the interest of any government to encourage the growth within its borders, of communities not owning allegiance to it, or the increase of a population of aliens; that the independent nations in the territories are not in accord with the spirit of our institutions, nor consistent with our national dignity and honor; that they should be abolished, and all the inhabitants made citizens of the United States.

That the setting aside of forty-one millions of acres of magnificent country for the exclusive occupancy of a few thousand Indians, is a wrong to both white and Indian, a wrong to the future of our country, an attempt which will and ought of right to fail.

That every legitimate effort should be made to break up tribal relations, to encourage individual independence, and a sense of responsibility to law instead of to a chief.

These specifications of omission and commission, with numerous others similar to, or arising out of them, constitute the "Bill of Indictment" against the United States for its treatment of its Indian population—a population now a constant cause of anxiety, trouble, and expense, but which, if properly managed, would have been to the country an element of strength and pride.

* * * * *

It is easy to point out the defects of a system of Government. It is not by any means easy to devise a new one, especially where the people to be governed are a barbarous race, long accustomed to the rule of their own customs, habits, and tastes; whose natures have been embittered by fraud, defeat, and imprisonment; whose tempers are soured by constant hunger.

Long residence among and study of these people, have enabled me to obtain a clear idea of their general characteristics, of their wants, and needs, and to form an opinion of the kind of government best suited to their present condition and necessities, and soonest to bring them into the great body of our citizens.

My plan for the future "control and management" of the Indians, and solution of the Indian problem, is simple, and as follows:

1st. Turn the Indians over to the War Department.

2d. Abolish the Indian Bureau, as now constituted, with all the laws and parts of laws establishing it, and controlling or directing its operations. Replace the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Inspectors, Agents, &c., by detailed Army Officers, and let the Indians be supplied by and through the Quartermasters and Subsistence Departments of the Army.

3d. Abrogate all existing treaties.

4th. Abolish all "trade and intercourse" laws now on the statute book. Give the Indian the same rights in trade as are enjoyed by citizens of the United States.

5th. Enact laws for the control and guidance of the Indians, until they have as citizens, come under the operation of the common law.

6th. Make Commanding Officers of military posts in Indian territory or on reservations, Ex-officio Superintendents of Indian Affairs, and give them magisterial authority over the Indians, so long as they live in unorganized territory.

7th. Give the Indians farms in severalty, not, however, requiring each to live on his farm, but encouraging them to form permanent village settlements.

8th. Give the Indian the ballot, and the rights and duties of citizenship, as soon as the country in which he resides shall have been organized into a county.

9th. Feed the wild Indian. See that he has a sufficiency of food to sustain life, even to the exclusion, if necessary, of all other supplies.

10th. Break up the Indian principalities. Make the Indians of the most advanced tribes at once citizens of the United States, with all the rights and duties as such, giving to each an acreage of land in severalty, and arranging for the just distribution among individuals of the sums now owing to the nations by the United States.

Whether or not the above propositions will effect the end designed, will depend entirely upon the mode of carrying out the first and second.

For some years there has been a great deal of flippant talk, both in and out of Congress, about the transfer of the Indian Bureau to the War Department; the enemies of the measure being positive that the passage of such a bill would be the utter destruction of the Indians, and its friends equally positive that it would civilize the Indian, cause wars to cease, and redound in every way to the advantage of the country and of the Indian.

The transfer of the Indian Bureau, as now constituted, to the War Department, would effect nothing except to saddle the War Department with the onus of its actions.

The Indian Bureau is the means by which the Indian Ring holds its grip on power; the means by and through which are perpetrated upon the Indian most of the wrongs and outrages which I have described. Its defects and wrongs are inherent to itself, have "grown with its growth, and strengthened with its strength." By means of its machinery a comparatively few men swindle, pauperize and degrade the Indian, and keep the country plunged in endless war.

To be effective for good, the change in the system of management of Indians must be radical. The Indian Ring is probably the most powerful one in the country, for its operations yield the largest profits without risk, and with but little investment of capital. To benefit the Indian is no easy task, for the very first step is the absolute necessity of breaking the power of this gigantic fraud, and to do so requires a complete change, not only in machinery, but in men.

Repeal all laws, or parts of laws, organizing the Indian Bureau, or directing or controlling its operations. Do away with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Superintendents, Inspectors, and Agents, and break up the trade of those amiable old gentlemen, who, (like professional bail-bond,

and jurymen about a civil court,) are always hanging around ready to serve the Government as Indian Commissioners. When this is done, turn the Indians over to the Army, and carry out the propositions heretofore given.

This, in my judgment, will result in cessation of wars, in economy to the country, and, above all, in converting two hundred and fifty thousand savages into good citizens; in converting an element of weakness and enormous expense into an element of pride and power.

* * * * *

Having sketched the general outline of such changes as I believe to be just and necessary to the honor of the country and welfare of the Indians, I have possibly completed my task, as all details must necessarily be filled in by legislative wisdom. I cannot, however, refrain from adding a few remarks and suggestions as to those details.

The commander of a military post in Indian territory, ex officio superintendent of the affairs of and magistrate for the Indians in his vicinity, should appoint a police force from among the Indians, and make the chiefs and old men a sort of jury for the trial of culprits. This will clothe each of them with a sense of authority and responsibility, and take from the procedure any appearance of unfair imposition on the Indians, either by the commanding officer or by the Government.

As superintendent and dispenser of the necessaries of life, the commanding officer has certain influence and power; as military commander backed by force, his authority is increased a hundred fold; as magistrate with an Indian police force, and with the chiefs and old men as his jurors and assistants in the administration of justice, a man of tact and discretion will in a short time be as firmly seated in power, as the system of government will be in the affections of the governed red men.

In a very little while, under the programme laid down, the Indians will come to believe that they are really self-governing, take the liveliest interest in their government, and be more zealous in ferretting out crimes and bringing the offenders to justice, than white men would be.

This is no Utopian idea. It has again and again been accomplished to the letter by army officers, (even without the immense advantage that a code of laws would give,) and it can always be done by equally good men.

* * * * *

Let the Indian have his farm in severalty as soon as he evinces a desire to settle down. An immense number of so-called wild Indians are now ready and anxious for this step.

The number of acres is a matter of minor importance, but to protect the "untutored savage," (as far as possible, for it is impossible to protect him entirely,) from the schemes and machinations of the tutored white, the title should be untransferable for at least one generation. Whatever the number of acres allotted to each Indian, (and there is no excuse for being

illiberal,) give to each head of a family the right to select his own location; and many families should be encouraged to select adjoining lands. This to provide for increase of families, for grazing ground for stock, and the better protection of the Indians from the whites.

The inhabitants of each group of allotments should be encouraged to form and live in a village in some convenient place near the center of their possessions. Indians are gregarious and fond of companionship. To force each family to live by itself would be to render all discontented, and thus defeat the object of their settlement. Here would be located the stores for the sale and purchase of all articles, the shops for making or repairing all farming utensils; here, in other words, is the nucleus of a town. Besides this, a little village of twenty to fifty votes will be so much an object of interest to each political party in the township and county, that no injury or injustice will be done it. The Mennonite settlements of Kansas, have demonstrated the peculiar advantages of concentration. Force the Indians to live each on his own land and they are scattered and helpless; a prey to white marauders and sharpers. Settle them together, they have the power, protection, and influence, social and political, that concentration gives.

When all the Indians have thus been located, Government should buy from the Indians the whole unlocated remainder of their reservations at say, one dollar and a quarter per acre. The gross sums due the Indians for their lands to be retained in the Treasury, but the interest is to be paid annually towards the support of the Indians for a specified term of years.

All the lands of the reservations purchased by the Government from the Indians as above provided, should at once be opened to settlement by whites, and as soon as sufficiently populated, territorial governments should be established preparatory to their admission as, or incorporation into States; the Indian population having the ballot, and being recognized as citizens, as soon as an organization by county shall be effected.

At the end of the stipulated time, (which should be sufficiently long to give the Indians a fair chance,) all the money received from the sale of the Indian land, and all unsold land, revert to, and become the property of the United States. Thereafter the Indian must depend entirely upon himself, to work or idle, to get rich or starve, exactly as other citizens.

As illustration of the practical working of this plan, I give one example.

The combined population of the Cheyennes, Arrapahoes, Kiowas, and Comanches, is nine thousand six hundred and thirteen souls, (9,613.) The total area of their reservation is in round numbers eight millions and ten thousand acres, (8,010,000.) Giving each man, woman, and child, of the whole Indian population one hundred and sixty acres of land in severalty, the Government has yet left of their reservation for sale to white settlers, nearly six and a half millions of acres, which sold at one dollar and a quarter per acre, will bring eight millions and ninety thousand dollars, the interest of which, at four per cent., is nearly three hundred and twenty-four thousand dollars, or nearly thirty-four thousand dollars a year more

than the sum appropriated in 1880 by Congress for their support. The Indian will have his farm, be on the high road to self-support, and yet receive each year more than Congress now gives him. The money paid out each year, instead of being a direct drain on the Treasury and the tax-payers of the country, is the interest on moneys actually received or to be received by the Government from sale of the lands, and at the end of the specified time, not only will the payment of interest cease entirely, but the Government will cover into its coffers all the vast amounts accruing from these sales.

It will be noted that the new system of Government proposed for the Indian is extremely simple. I give to the wild Indian what he needs, a strong military government, backed by a code of laws suited to his condition, and in the execution of which he is required to take part. He remains under this government, partially supported, gradually learning the duty of obedience to law, the necessity of labor, and the requirements of civilized life, until the country in which he lives is organized into a county, when he at once becomes a citizen subject only to the control of the civil laws. The present system degrades and pauperizes the Indians. The plan I propose will, I believe, make him an independent man and good citizen by the time one generation has passed.

* * * * *

To the American citizen of to-day there are but three living issues; three questions on which intelligent men may so far differ as to be willing to violate the laws, to jeopardize reputation—even life itself.

The first, like the poor, “ye have always with you.” The conflict between labor and capital is a necessity of civilization; and, as greed is one of the most powerful factors of human nature, this question will remain unsettled until “time shall be no more.”

The second, is that “twin relic” polygamy, which must and will yield to the advance of a higher civilization and purer morality.

The third, in its direct influence on the citizen, but the first, so far as the honor of the nation is involved, is the Indian question.

Heretofore the mass of our citizens have felt no direct interest in this question. A conflict has been waged for a hundred years between the actual settlers of the frontier, who could see nothing for the Indian but extermination, and the humanitarians who have set up an ideal Indian so good and noble that civilization and education can scarcely improve him. The combatants, however hostile, never fought on the same field, nor could they see the cause of conflict from the same stand-point.

A class of people, few in numbers, but strong in the discipline, the unity of plunder, has taken advantage of this situation. Getting the control of Indian affairs into its hands, it has managed to retain that control by

artfully fomenting the dissensions of the really earnest thinkers on both sides, gaining strength from both, and manipulating so skilfully, as to have acquired a power which neither President nor Congress seems to dare to question. This power must be broken, or the Indian is doomed. Frontiersmen have failed in their schemes of extermination; the humanitarian Utopia has not been reached; but the Indian is still swindled, pauperized, degraded.

Our country is ruled by politicians, most of whom are occupied with plans for re-election, and very few have the courage to take sides in a living issue. It is too much to expect any one of these to risk the loss of votes and thus jeopardize his future career for a miserable savage. Politicians will do nothing unless forced to it by the great, brave, honest, human heart of the American people.

To that I appeal! To the press; to the pulpit; to every voter in the land; to every lover of mankind. For the honor of our common country; for the sake of suffering humanity; force your representatives to meet this issue. Deliver the Indian from his pretended friends, and lift him into fellowship with the citizens of our loved and glorious country.







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A POPULAR ACCOUNT OF THEIR

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