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THE PROGRESS.

'A higher Civilization: The Maintenance of Law and Order.'

VOL. 1.

WHITE EARTH AGENCY, MINNESOTA, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1887.

NO. 7.

The Progress.

Gus. H. Beaulieu, - - Publisher. Theo. H. Beaulieu, - - Editor.

White Earth Agency, Minn.

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER devoted to the interest of the White Earth Reservation and general Northwestern News.

Correspondence bearing on the Indian question—problem, or on general interest, is solicited.

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The Indian; Right and Wrong.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that ALL MEN are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these, are LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.—Declaration of Independence, July 4th, 1776.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

(Continued from last week.)

gentlemen of the "Northwest Indian commission" (of reputed benevolence and fairness) should have paid but a passing notice to the "Articles presented to them for their consideration."

Referring to the 5th and last question of our correspondent the "Progress copies from the "Commission's proceedings:"

Art. 8. And it is agreed that in the employment of farmers, artisans and laborers, preference shall in all cases be given to the Indians residing on the reservation who are well qualified for such positions.

[Note—In the first reading of the so-called agreement, the word 'laborers' only, was embodied therein, and only after a warm and evasive argument on the part of the Indians did the Commission reluctantly add the words 'farmer' and 'artisans;' upon further objections as to the use and definition of the word 'artisan' etc., they were impatiently answered by Bishop Whipple in this wise:]

"The provision specifies all we can, all mechanics, artisans etc., artisans means everything! but it does not mean a clerk or a physician. The reason we did not put in the word 'clerk' is, the government has changed its policy in regard to that. We didn't put in the word 'clerks' simply because the government at this time didn't allow any agent within the United States to appoint his clerks, because the Commissioner reserves that right himself, if we had put it in it would have defected your entire treaty! We did not put in the word 'teacher,' simply from the fact that the government is at this time trying to devise a system of education which will be as perfect for the Indian, as for the white people, and the schools will be under the care of a general superintendent, and an officer of the government who shall manage it outside of the agents, or any one else. I believe myself, that the time is coming when Congress will pass a law that all those offices shall be filled by Indians whenever they prove themselves competent, and if that is passed, it will override any treaty ever made in the United States, and there is nothing in this treaty to prevent it. If we go contrary to what we know is the policy of the government in making this treaty, why Congress will not ratify it, and will say we have been doing what we had no business to do."

It has been well known by the intelligent portion of our people, that under former administration, all Indian agents were instructed to give the preference for employment to Indians who were capable to perform service, and were prohibited from employing more than one member of their family, and then only as teacher. This was in compliance with United States laws. SEC. 5, of the Indian appropriation bill of Mar. 1875 provides for the employment of Indians in any capacity when found capable. Other sections of U. S. laws provides as follows: In the cases of the appointment of "interpreters, or other persons employed for the benefit of the Indians a preference shall be given to persons of Indian descent, if such can be found who are properly qualified for the execution of their duties."

"When any of the tribes are in the opinion of the Secretary of the Interior competent to direct the employment of their blacksmiths, mechanics, teachers, farmers, or other persons engaged for them, the direction of such persons may be given to the proper authority of the tribe."

Unless the foregoing have been repealed it is difficult to believe or understand, how the government can change its policy as Bishop Whipple has stated. However, admitting such to be the case, it would have been liberal in the commission to have agreed that Indian labor, or employment, should extend to every branch of the service at this agency, instead of intimating that by so doing "Congress would not ratify the treaty." The commission should have anticipated the Dawes' severalty bill approved last February, which provides fully for Indian employment. They could have agreed to this with as much consistency as in the land question, and rely on a change of sentiment in the U. S. Senate in reference to Indian employment—a sentiment which plainly exhibits itself in the 'severalty act' in favor of the employment of the Indian in any capacity when fitted.

United States laws, unless recently repealed, relative to this matter have been in existence many years, but "gov't policy" seems ever to be an obstacle to their execution. The general government expends annually great sums of money for Indian education; what then, (if a policy as mentioned by the 'treaty commission' is antagonistic) is the necessity of educating our people. Why tax the white people to educate an Indian to such a standard that is of no value (seemingly a curse to him that hath) on an Indian reservation? Can our law marked "Ge-gid-do-wei-ni-ni-way" answer or solve this problem?

THEY BROTHER'S KEEPER.

One of the first moral lessons which should be taught a community like ours, is the negative of the title of this article. In the early stage of the history of any people, we find social condition exceedingly primitive; beyond the family relation, there practically exists no society, or the family exists in isolation then the family grows into the tribe, or the nation; relationship expands, and then follows necessity for circumspection. And however much the need for a broad charity in judgment, even under ordinary conditions, there is much more for a community situated as is ours, and indeed, for any Indian community, because of its dependent position. There is great danger in the fact that an almost unlimited power vested in one individual will encourage the thought, that to secure the ear of that individual, will be beneficial. This means that if such personage is not broad enough to look beyond his own horizon he will welcome and reward those who will voluntarily bring to him such intelligence as will advance his projects.

It is this feeling of expected reward which impels many to constitute themselves their 'brother's keeper.' Let those in high places, whether civil or religious discourage this tendency by preaching and practice. This can be easily done. The teacher of morals and religion, can set forth from the pulpit that the Bible teaches officiousness, and tale bearing to be moral crimes, and will put this into effect by discountenancing the practices of espionage and tale bearing.

It belongs equally to a civil head over such a community as ours. It cannot be urged of course, that complaints shall not obtain hearing, but let it be understood once and for all, that only such complaints shall be heard of such deeds as seriously interfere with moral order, or which relate to breach of law in any direction. Then let the accused be informed boldly and honorably, and be apprized as to who the informant is. To quote again from the best of codes, "let everything be done decently and in order." Most of the troubles in the past has been due to the practice of tale bearing, and its too ready encouragement by those who should know better.

Give the experiment a fair trial at all events. As we believe one of the objects of journalism is to be educational, we are led by this consideration to aim the first blow at an evil which if not checked will keep the community in trouble.

IS LAW AN EDUCATOR ON AN INDIAN RESERVATION?

It is a favorite theory with reformers that law is a great educator! But how it is an educator on an Indian reservation, is never explained quite clearly by the officials of the Indian bureau; and ministers generally accept the same theory, and they have attempted to convey an idea that the presence of law upon the statutes impresses the people, regardless of the principals or the precepts which they seem to assume. The officials of the Indian bureau seem to believe, that if certain laws could be smuggled into the statutes prohibiting the use of tobacco, or prescribing more than one meal a day among the Indians or be expelled from the reservation, that the Indians in time would accept the conditions from conviction that it was beneficial. This happily, is not the prevailing sentiment of this people in regards to such an arbitrary course of dictum, neither has it ever found a welcome in human experience. In the case of children or persons of imature judgment, unquestioned obedience to commands or authority, can be secured with comparative ease; but the moment the mind achieves confidence in itself it demands reasons for obedience. The children, (as the government and its officials are pleased to term the Indian) in the past could be put off with the explanation that "they were too young to understand." The man (present Indian) who is now rapidly attaining his majority cannot be put off in this way. He wishes to know everything in matters which effect him as a member of an Indian reservation. The citizen does this in the states and territories and even there—on the broad fields of christian civilization—often gets himself into no end of trouble thereby. Past experience in these matters has shown that the Indian who attempts to do this even more emphatically upon his own reservation,—where he assumes every right guaranteed a free born man—also puts himself into a warm and uncomfortable position, and with all his earthly belongings including his home, liable to forfeiture for 'daring to question authority' that may not have seemed right to him (the Indian), and this, oftentimes on the notorious absurdity of ex-parte evidence!

There are many illustrations in the history of the laws and regulations for the government of Indian reservations which show the absurdity and fallacy of the educational or beneficial theory. Today, there exists laws in the U. S.

statutes, known as 'Intercourse laws' that are as obsolete and impracticable for all purposes, as are the edicts of the first Roman emperors, or the municipal regulations of the lost Atlantis; occasionally through malice, vindictive arrogance or fanaticism, an attempt is made to revive them, but usually the attempt is spasmodic and brief, and those who attempt it are soon convinced that the country has outgrown them, and that it no longer fits the present condition of the people of this reservation. Such laws should be relegated to the 'legislative lumber piles' and buried in oblivion. Such laws do not, nor have they ever courted reverence or respect for Indian agents or their superiors, on the other hand it may well be questioned whether, by their inhuman and tyrannical conditions they have done much to demoralize the trust and faith of a once confiding and truly loyal people. Expulsion of Indians from reservation has generally fallen into disrepute, yet no effort seems to have been made to repeal or amend the laws governing them. It is not however, difficult to explain this seeming indifference, for, so long as the law is a dead letter the people interested, naturally become indifferent to its repeal, and they remain of no mement until some effort is made to enforce them, then agitation begins for its repeal or modification. In the name of humanity, and by all that is sacred in the Constitution, the only sensible plan with respect to the laws relating to Indians, and which have long since become obsolete, would seem to either repeal or remodel them to fit and be in unison with the tone and condition of the present moral and social standard of the White Earth reservation. —BA-SHIG.

Want of space, forbids the insertion in this weeks issue of some of the 'obnoxious laws' referred to by our friend Ba-shig, we will endeavor however, to give them 'room' next week. We would also state to our readers that our friend's effort is done in the interest of humanity and in behalf of and the existing condition of the people of the White Earth reservation.—Ed.

We quote from a letter addressed to us on the condition of the Indians of the Fond du Lac reservation in reference to 'pine' and 'lumber contracts,' etc. "There is no question but that the Fond du Lac Indian reservation is run in the interest of a ring, and that the 'Gov't farmer' in charge has not and will not do anything that does not tend to the interest of the 'Wisconsin crowd.' This was openly and notoriously, the policy last winter. The Indians have been encouraged to make contracts this year and I do not hear of any restraint as yet, other than 'moral suasion,' being put upon them as to whom they shall contract with. So far, every one except perhaps the elect, are in doubt whether the contracts, or how many of them, will be approved by the agent, and the Interior department. In most cases, (in all cases, last winter) outside parties are compelled to pay more than is paid by the ring. This compulsion is nothing tangible, but is brought about by a quiet pressure from those in authority, that is so easy to put on and so difficult to prove. Everything is in suspense here now, and nothing can be said positively till the decision of the department with regards to Indian contracts is known." Cloquet, Minn. Oct. 29, 1887.

Again the Pine and Land Sharks.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.

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