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☞ "THE RADICAL DEFECT in the management of these Indian agencies is the **Lack of a Disposition to Employ the Indians** when they are capable of rendering official service."—STATESMAN.

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

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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.

Civilization—'On The Wrong End.'

Paul H. Beaulieu, the veteran U. S. Interpretor, pioneer overseer and statesman of the White Earth reservation, having been called before the recent U. S. Senate Investigating Committee, was asked as to what he had to say regarding 'Indian prosperity and progress.' We take pleasure in publishing our venerable 'Uncle's' views on this subject and believe our readers will likewise read them with interest.

"Talking about the progress of this reservation, I would respectfully state to the honorable committee that the Government of the United States has *taken the* WRONG *end* of the work to civilize these Indians; that whenever a people like mine, who are surrounded by civilization, want to cope with the age of progress and are given a sickle at the time when grain cradles are invented, and then given a grain cradle when reapers are invented, I say it is taking them at the wrong end of the business. The Indians are men who notice all these things.

But the question you were pleased to ask me is of such a nature and of such magnitude that when a person does not wish to make a rose-colored report of his people it is a very difficult one to answer.

Surrounded by all kinds of influences for good and for evil, we are not all angels on this reservation. That is a fact. But, sir, I would respectfully state that the progress of this reservation has been, notwithstanding all this, and I think is very encouraging.

I have been sir, in my humble capacity, taking statistics from year to year. I shall show you in the first place that I was appointed here as overseer. The Government had funds in its hands to start these people towards progress if they had been well managed, judiciously managed.

Instead of that, your humble servant was sent here to do all the plowing with his own hands for all the Indians, compelled to do it, compelled to split rails by the day and haul them, and with only one poor yoke of oxen to help about five or six hundred Indians. No man was ever given to me to aid me in this.

However, I kept at work even though I did not like the service, for I wished to cary out the views I started with. I had heard it said in Washington and in a great many places, that the Indians were incapable of civilization. I concluded that *without energy and means* we could not become citizens of the United States; that I could not be grown certainly as a wart on a tree, but I must make myself conspicuous in some place or other.

God had bestowed upon me good courage and energy, and I thought I would prove when they said an Indian could not be civilized, that it was not so. So I started with that feeling when I first came here.

Year by year moneys have been expended here, but to what purpose? Unfortunately at the time when we had money the Indians knew nothing about the work. When we look back through history and see the number of years that it took to civilize and bring to its perfection the Anglo-Saxon race, why should you wish to say that we ought to be civilized in twenty years? Just look at it; we who have sucked the breast of ignorance from time immemorial! Is not that too much to ask of us?

While progress is reported here, I can show you to-day, by statistics which are given, what has been done. Of course they are Indians who have done this; but what kind of Indians? They are Indians like myself who have had the benefit of education; Indians like these people sitting here who have had the benefits of the same.

When a man owns and cultivates from 100 to 150 acres for himself, you will find he is a mixed-blood, or a man who has married into our race, and that man makes a good showing. But we are all Indians in the eyes of the law, and and the agents *to make a good showing*, put this all in as having been done by the Indians; but where is the Indian in the whole of it? He does not raise or cultivate *one-eight* of the whole amount that is reported in these statistics.

I mean the full-bloods. This thing has been wrong from the start. In the first place, there is talent among the people of our reservation. There are men here who are better educated than I am, and God forbid that I should utter anything but the fact, but I must utter the words that are the truth. *We have been hampered in such a way that* EDUCATION WAS A BANE.

The question may be asked, Why do the children not go to school?—Why do you want to send your children to school? Don't you know that schooling and education beget criticism? It is *that* miserable law that was enacted, which your own people sir, would *detest* to live under. After working and spending all our days to earn a little something to put it on a place, *the first thing you say or remark about an agent* or a missionary that remark is reported to Washington and then they take you and deprive you of all your labors and put you off of your reservation.

The great detriment that there is on this reservation, the difficulty that arises amongst us, is this: The little education we have received has *enabled us to read* that great and glorious Declaration of Independence of the American people; and would you blame me for claiming that *under your own laws all men are born* FREE AND EQUAL? It is impossible.

It has been stated that law would bring us right on an equality with the American citizen. But, my goodness, I wish I was only twenty-five or thirty years old, so that I could soar on your American eagle's wings. But I am getting too old for that. I see the grave before me, and whatever testimony you ask me to give, I will give it as a United States interpretor. I have been put under oath. There may be some questions you will put here where I have to interpret these things and it cannot but be possible that I may not retain in my poor headless encyclopædia everything that has been told me. * * *

You ask me 'how are they progressing.' How can people progress when they have nothing to progress with? But still sir, if you are pleased to see the idea that these Indians are laboring under and their wish, to use a Western phrase, "to get there," look at the statistics. You will find sir, that there is a great number of Indians who will show wheat fields of from 5 to 10 acres who have not a yoke of cattle to work them, and who try to cultivate that much for themselves without any help except through their own exertions. I should think that would set at rest the idea that the Indians are lazy and do not wish to advance.

Then, in the next place, after an Indian has plowed a certain number of acres of land, it may be that he has never been able to earn anything to purchase his seed wheat with; he knows also that he may not be able to gather his crop on account of frosts destroying the grain, or hail-storms, and so forth, and if that should happen in this year when he has plowed that land, he has nothing for seed next spring. That is a fact; I know that to be a thing that is possible."

More Practice, And Less Preaching.

—Here's what one of Minnesota's prominent and gifted pioneers and experienced Indian civilizers has to say to the question regarding the practicability of a form of home government, and general supervision of reservation affairs by the people of the reservation.

"That would be in the line of advancement, unquestionably.

I was sent once by Commissioner Smith to Wausau, Wis., to make a payment to a lot of civilized Indians, lumbermen, there, and he wrote down to them that the Government wanted them to go to farming, and gave them most excellent advise, but it being heterodox it never came to light. On that occasion the Indian chief told me this: He said, "Tell the white people I do not intend to go to farming; we have not got a good farming country here. We are lumbermen and we run the Wisconsin rapids, where the white men are afraid to run because they would get drowned; and if the Government will allow me to cut my own timber, sell it, and spend the money I get for it as I please, *I will not ask for any annuities or anything else* from the Government. If they will allow me to cut and sell my lumber that is all I ask."

The trouble is in such cases that you ask these partially civilized men to go out and work, and then *take* the money they earn and *turn it over* to the Government. The Indian does not know how money dissipates when distributed in large masses, and that is the trouble, *they ought to know*; they ought to be allowed to cut their pine, sell it, and do what they like with the money. I do not believe in acting as foster to these well civilized Indians any longer. I expect that at first the Indian would act like the white lumbermen, who come out of the woods and get drunk. The white men do that, all nationalities of them. When I was there at Waueau these Northern lumbermen had just come in and they were all drinking; the town was full of them, and one of the Indian chiefs said to me, "What is the use of talking to me about getting drunk? There are Swedes, Germans, Irishmen, Norwegians and Yankees, and they are all drinking, and now you won't allow me to cut my own pine timber and do what I please with the money."

That is the idea, that they shall live a just and temperate life; and the first speech that the ordinary missionary will make to them is to quit smoking! I heard one of them an old Indian, say to the interpretor: "What does he say? Is he a fool? Don't he know that when we have tobacco we can get through a hard and cold winter by smoking and living on little food?" Of course, if you have tobacco and are warm, anybody can do it. Smoking is conservative. They always want tobacco rather than beef or anything else. That is what they reserve for their fasts. When they cannot get whitefish, if they have tobacco they can get through the winter. There is no use in lecturing an Indian and advising him to quit smoking. You had better let him become civilized, and then attend to that."

The gentleman was then asked regarding the tendency of the Indian to 'revert to the blanket' after they have been educated, unless the proper encouragement were given them in the way of suitable employment, etc. And his sentiments on this point but voice the general sentiment of the people of this reservation, and forcibly reiterates the conservative maxim of "PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT," notwithstanding the plausible arguments of the modern theorist to the contrary. "A kite seldom ascends without a breeze."

"They come back dressed up like civilized people, and if employment is not given them, so as to enable them to maintain their civilized state, they are laughed at, and after a while they put on the war-paint and feathers and become the worst Indians of the tribe. That has been my observation.

Education is of no benefit to them unless immediately followed up, by giving them suitable employment.

It is not necessary to give them an education that goes beyond the three primaries. They should be taught to read and to write, and with elementary arithmetic that is all I would attempt. 'Genius will educate itself,' as it always has; *give them a chance* and genius will educate itself further, and they will be the *sooner* able to take care of themselves.

It is *the* SYSTEM—policy—which has been adopted in treating with the Indians which has given all this trouble (the late White Earth controversies). It is not the individuals themselves, so much as it is the system which is at fault. My idea is that the Canadian system is a much better one than ours. The Spaniards to the south of us, and the English to the north of us, have no wars with the Indians, and in the Southern states they have but little difficulty.

Yes sir, the radical defect in the management of these Indian agencies is the *lack of a disposition* to employ the Indians when they are capable of rendering official service, and giving outsiders the prefference and privileges of securing the pay that is *intended for the Indians.*"

Never was the power of logical argument more terse with the spirit of rhetoric than are the views of our wise friend and humanist. No picture of the existing condition of a people has ever been more vividly represented.

Ah, yes! "Give them a chance!" there are to-day on this reservation material—home talent—to fill judiciously every official position on this reservation! Outside of the agent and physician's salary, there is about $5,000 paid out to outside employe's, which would seem more fitting were it applied to the encouragement of a people merging from the night of barbarism, the vicissitudes and privations of a new existence, striving towards a higher civilization—towards self-support. That amount should be paid to those for whom it was intended, they are deserving of it, it is proper they should receive the benefits arising therefrom; humanity, *justice*—THE LAW—appeals to 'our national institutions' with the imploring cry, "GIVE THEM A CHANCE," give them what IS THEIRS.

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