

The Progress.

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White Earth Agency, Minn.

A WEEKLY NEWS PAPER devoted to the interest of the White Earth Reservation and general Northwestern News. Published and managed by members of the Reservation.

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.

A HOWL FROM SODOM!

To the Hon Sec'y of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

Sir:—We the undersigned settlers residing in the vicinity of Brainerd, Aitkin, Gull River and Pillager, in the counties of Crow Wing, Aitkin and Cass in the State of Minnesota, have suffered long continuous loss, embarrassment and danger from the presence among us of large numbers of Indians who belong on the reservations set apart for them by the Government, and who leave their reservations by permission and through the encouragement of the Government Indian agents and come into our communities and on our lands for the ostensible purpose of picking blueberries and cranberries for the markets, but who exchange a large part of their earnings for whiskey, and who by threats, many acts of theft, and the occasional commission of serious crimes, inaugurate each season a period of terror, embarrassment and loss to the settlers, which, besides the immediate loss and disquietude occasioned, depreciates the value of property and greatly retards the settlement and development of this part of the country. In some instances poor families have been impoverished by the numerous thefts and depredations of these Indians who are especially obstreperous and thievish where settlers are compelled to work away from home to gain means to keep their families on their claims. The United States law against selling whiskey to Indians is practically inoperative here, and although the United States marshal has doubtless used due diligence in arresting and prosecuting the violators of the law, the Indians have but little difficulty in procuring all the whiskey they have the means and inclination to pay for. We do not believe it to be our duty to submit to another period of Indian depredations and terror, like the last season has been, and we believe that unless the reservation Indians are kept upon their reservations the coming season, there will be serious trouble and bloodshed. Many settlers have determined to protect their homes and families hereafter at all hazards, and the object of this petition is to avert the threatened trouble. We therefore respectfully petition you to cause an order to be issued to the Indian agents to restrain all Indians under their charge from making further incursions into our settlements.

The above appeared in the last issue of the 'Brainerd Journal,' and it is high time that some action should be taken by the Brainerd people to eradicate from their midst the evils of which they complain, and also many others that exist thereabouts. They can justly complain that the lawlessness, not alone occasioned by the presence of the drunken Indians but by that scum of degradation, the renegade whites who infest and make up a part of Brainerd's population; and it is owing greatly to the latter affliction that the depreciation in value of its property exists, and the reasons why law-abiding citizens object to locating in or about Brainerd! In order to accomplish what they desire the Brainerd people should pay stricter attention in their selection of municipal officers than they have

done in the past. Several instances could be related wherein municipal officers have manifested a broad disposition to render abortive the efforts of U. S. officials to secure the arrest of men who were charged with selling whiskey to the Indians.

In addition to this, some of the local newspaper by their unjust criticism of those who have conducted the prosecution of this class of offenders against Intercourse Laws, has greatly tended to encourage the lawlessness complained of. There is no doubt that Indians get all the whiskey they want at Brainerd. But we reject as having no foundation the proposition that they (Indians) have committed any "acts of violence or depredations" against any of the white settlers in the vicinity of Brainerd, or any of the towns named in the above petition.

The Indians bring annually to Brainerd, from six to ten thousand dollars, and the only complaint that could reasonably be made against them is that they get all the whiskey they want, and this results in the trouble which is caused to men who are arrested for selling it to them.

In relation to the petition, agent T. J. Sheehan states that the Interior department has long since issued orders to him, such as are asked for by the Brainerd people, and while he had done all in his power to keep the Indians under his charge on their reservations, he found it both impossible and impracticable to do so.

Apropos of this, we wish to say that Indians have rights which should be respected, and do not believe that it is the intention of the law to keep them in bondage as it were, upon their reservations. There are amenable to state laws whenever they are off of their reservations, and if they commit depredations they should be arrested and punished accordingly. should settlers along the frontier do as intimated in the above petition, and undertake to deal with the Indians regardless of law we do not hesitate to say that there will certainly be trouble if not bloodshed!

The Chippewa Indians have ever been friendly to their white neighbors and patriotically loyal to the Government, neither have they ever spilled one drop of white blood, save that which the rules of warfare admits to the soldier, when many of them were doing duty in the loyal ranks of the Union army, and for this if nothing more they are entitled to more favorable considerations than they are receiving at the hands of their white neighbors.

Let the municipal authorities in the vicinity of Indian reservations take such action as will tend to suppress the sale of whiskey to the Indians and we venture to say that there will be no occasion for complaints against the Indians.

Announcement!

We would call the attention of our readers to the announcement of the Pioneer Press which appears in the columns of this week's issue. We consider the Pioneer Press the leading paper of the Northwest and one of the ablest and most reliable published in the United States.

A LITTLE COMMON SENSE.

The Indian, to, can be easily taught. His native ingenuity is, in many cases, greater than that of the average white man. He would readily acquire some rough trade, which, with the government aid given him at the start, would soon render him self-supporting. There has always been a great deal too much sentiment mixed up with the consideration of the Indian question. Now let it be viewed with a little common sense.—Globe, St. Paul.

The Globe often enters in the "civilizing arena" and whacks away at the 'Indian problem,' and not unusually makes some creditable hits. In its issue of the 7th inst. it bases an editorial on the laboring sentiment of Gen. Ruger from which we quote its most potent feature, which, by the way, is seasonably sensible, and the only practical way by which the Indian problem can ever be permanently and satisfactorily settled, and that is, with fair-dealing, due respect to stipulated obligations, and a judicious sprinkling of the timely admonition of a "little common sense."

Sentimental and theoretical views and hobbies like physics, should be "thrown to the dogs." Let the manner and system of treating and governing Indians and Indian reservations be consigned to the care and leadership of experienced ability, by this we do not mean political or religious preference or supremacy, but in the hands of worthy persons who know and understand the customs and habits of the Indians, this, with the proper observance of the Laws of Congress tending to the encouragement and protection of the Indian and his rights, etc., the Ojibway Indians would soon cease to be charges of the Government, and the bugbear known as the Indian problem, in the State of Minnesota would be solved forever.

But as long as the Indian and his destiny are surrounded and hampered as they have been in the past and are to-day, by the wishy-washy-nancy-pringle hobbies of theoretical sentimentalists, introduced by cranks of all denominations, and vigorously advocated by inexperienced officials imported from Dan and Bersheba, let it not be wondered at if we tell you that under such a regimen, the Indian problem in twenty years hence, will be no nearer a permanent solution than it is to-day!

It is no use talking, unless some "little common sense" is infused in the veins of this emaciated civilizing business, well-meaning philanthropists may talk themselves hoarse, and sympathetic editors stir up the injurious fertility of their faculties to their utmost, one cannot do what it were impossible to do; "evil company corrupts good morals," and that applies itself to the Indian as well as the white man. And when the Law of Congress says that "the preference of employment shall be given to the Indians when capable," it DOES NOT mean that the white man will have, occupy and hold all the fat offices, occupy the softest positions and the unlimited privileges of securing all the cash money appropriated by Congress to conduct reservation affairs, and that the educated Indian should be satisfied to saw wood, haul water

and swab out spittoons only! Not any, the people of this reservation don't see it in that light, no more than the Anglo-Saxon definition of that wise and well-meaning injunction implies.

Work? Of course the Indian will work, but as it has been—as it is to-day—there is no permanent guarantee of a recompense assured to him that he can rely upon! He feels that he has no right that the Government officials are bound to respect; he has no positive guarantee to the land whereon rests his home; and there are several instances here, where Indians have worked faithfully and earnestly at the instance of Government officials, and the "laborer's hire" to the amount of hundreds and thousands of dollars is still forthcoming to them, and bids fair to be so indefinitely. Though Congress has repeatedly enacted Laws for the protection and encouragement of his efforts towards self-support, so-called "rules and regulations" ever crowds him aside and prestige bows to denominational and political favoritism.

When one takes these facts into consideration, it were not difficult to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to why the Indian does not get along as prosperously successful as he is expected to, under such circumstances we question whether the most enlightened community on the face of the globe could prosper?

"Now let it be viewed with a little common sense," give them the satisfactory guarantee of the American citizen to his home and possessions, let all future obligations be promptly honored, extend to him the equal protection of the Law, and whatever that law says IS HIS LET IT BE HIS, AND HIS ONLY; allow him the responsibility of A VOICE in the management of his affairs, this, with fair dealing would very soon add these 'wayward wards' to the rapidly increasing rolls of Minnesota's loyal Citizens.

Minnesota's Coal Fields.

Since the incorporation of the Duluth, Rainy Lake & S. W. R'y, and the framing of a bill asking Congress for a right-of-way across the Red Lake Indian reservation, it has been discovered that there is some very rich country in that portion of Minnesota. From the eagerness which is exhibited for the construction of the road, it is believed that it will cross valuable coal and iron fields, which are now kept from being developed from the fact that they are on the reservation. If there are coal fields there, they cannot be opened to soon for the benefit of Northwestern Minnesota.—News, R. L. Falls.

While the Northwestern treaty commission was treating with the Red Lake Indians last year, there was much opposition among some of the latter against ceding a certain portion of their reservation, which is barren of timber and unfit for agricultural purposes, that an inquiry was made by certain mixed-bloods as to the reasons for such strong objections to the cession of a seemingly worthless portion of the reserve, and it was learned that the Indians knew of the existence of coal in that locality, and did not desire to dis-

pose of it. We heard years ago of the existence of coal on the Red Lake reservation, and we have no doubt that the projected railroad referred to will develop some rich coal and iron fields.

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