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THE TOMAHAWK.

Published in behalf of, and to secure the welfare of the Indians of the United States.

'Truth before Favor.'

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THE REPRESSION OF THE INDIAN.

BY CARLOS MONTEZUMA.

In the work of getting right where the country has gone so far wrong as it has in the matter of its relations with the Indians, it is necessary to view the subject from all sides. Thus we have to consider the Indian's present status as it is affected by what is known in the Government's Executive Department as the Indian Bureau.

At first, the reservations were established as a temporary means of fixing a locality for the Indians where they would be protected from the marauding wild westerner of the plains, with whom might was the only right and who, as a matter of diversion, in the absence of other material as a target for his marksmanship was ready to draw his gun on the Indian.

It is the same slothfulness of mental action that manifests itself in the individual. Nothing in the natural order of things warrants the keeping up of the Indian Bureau at Washington. It has now no place as a branch of the government itself.

All that is necessary to do is to accept the fact that the Indian is a man, a citizen of the United States and that there is nothing about him now that requires the special attention of the government.

The Indian is ready to adapt himself to the pursuits in which the people of the country are generally engaged. Give him these opportunities and the Indian Bureau will naturally fall into its proper condition of uselessness and cease to exist.

Crutches for the lame have no curative properties; and so long as

nothing is done to cure the man's lameness he will cling to them. But the moment he is brought to the point where he does not need crutches he lays them aside as a useless incumbrance to locomotion.

The Indian Bureau will never do away with itself. It has become so extended in the matter of office holding that it exists now more for the purpose of aiding the politician than for any good to the Indian.

It has become a formidable branch of the government and it is going to be a difficult thing to get it out of the way. It furnishes a living to such a large number of persons that it would be useless to try and legislate it out of existence. We realize that it would be about as easy to remove a mountain as it would be to get a bill through Congress abolishing the Indian Bureau.

Those connected with the Bureau in an administrative capacity will know if the course we suggest is pursued the Bureau would be put out of business; and therefore, the plan which must be adhered to is to keep the Indian where he is and thus provide an excuse for continuing the Bureau.

This is what keeps the Indian where he is today, neither in nor out of civilization. He is neither independent of the government nor yet part of it. On the reservation there is nothing to stimulate him to action. Nothing for him to look forward to. Nothing to excite in him a hope of bettering his condition.

A human being cannot be stationary. By virtue of his construction he is either going forward or backward. This is the situation of the Indian on the reservation.

Withdrawn as he is from those influences which surround men in the midst of civilization he leads a mere negative existence. He is doing nothing to improve himself or those around him. He is without even the pleasure of entertaining bright hopes for his children.

There is nothing to encourage him in any direction. He does, however, entertain hope which, though not so realized by him, is an exceedingly vain and foolish one, namely, a hope that through the Indian Agent there will come to him, in some way, at some time, a relief from his degrading environments and that he will be brought into the life which he sees the pale face enjoying; that he will become a man among men with all the rights that men generally have. The Indian is a thinking, reasoning being, endowed with like faculties as are given to other men. And though untutored he is not unmindful of himself as to what he is; and his sense of pride and his spirit of independence are wounded by the attitude which the government assumes toward him. He is not reconciled to his situation and it cannot be expected that he should be. His condition is at variance with nature's laws. The Indians have been for many years ready and willing to recognize the restraints incident to civilization. He desires to be a part of this civilized people and is willing to do what is required of him. He therefore feels that he ought to have the privileges that are given to others to make as much as he can out of the few years which are given him to live: He does not



FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR, MOSES E. CLAPP.

desire to preserve his distinctiveness as an Indian and his pride moves him to revolt at the suggestion that there is anything about him that should excite particular comment, or that should be made the subject of particular notice. He feels the resentment against that characterization. The Indian wants to be known in the world on the basis of justice, man to man; to be kept in the dark is no fun. Who keeps us in the dark? The Indian Bureau.—WASSAJA.

Indian Service Should Be Reorganized.

THE TOMAHAWK is not an advocate of the entire and complete abolishment of the Indian office at Washington, but it does believe it should be reorganized along practical lines by a commission consisting of experienced employees of the office and also members of Indian tribes who have had legal experience as well as experience with their own people, and who cannot be controlled by selfish interests. If Congress would pass a law to create such a commission the troubles which are now caused by the field service of the office might cease to exist.

There is not a reservation Indian who does not know that the responsibility for the failure of the government's Indian policy is due entirely to the field service. Unfortunately for the Indians the employees in the field service are all under the protection of the civil service law, a law so far as the Indian service is concerned that has proven to be an utter failure.

It would be far better for the Indians if superintendencies were abolished and the old policy of Indian agencies was reinstated. Under the present system of superintendencies if a superintendent is a failure, or is dishonest at one reservation, he is transferred to another instead of being prosecuted for the violations of law which he has committed. This probably has caused the members of Congress, regardless of parties, to become so strongly opposed to the Indian office as it is evident they now are.

There is no doubt that a bill which would provide for the abolishment of superintendencies would meet with the combined opposition of all superintendents as did the Right of Nomination Bill, but this should not prevent Indians from trying to get an Indian office reorganization bill introduced in Congress with the provision therein relative to superintendencies.

So far as Congress is concerned it can be relied upon to do what is for the best interests of the Indians if it can obtain the proper information.

Steenerson And His Indian Work.

Has Congressman Steenerson's work in Congress always been for the best interests of the Chippewas? This is a question which is now confronting the latter.

In 1903, during Mr. Steenerson's first campaign for Congress, it was suggested by a resident of this place that the managers of the annual celebration for that year should invite him as the principal speaker of that occasion, but he declined to come on the grounds that it being court week he would be unable to get away. The same person who suggested to the managers to invite him then wrote him a personal letter saying that if he was a candidate for Congress it would be to his interest to attend the celebration as one of the speakers. In reply to that letter he telegraphed that he had arranged for the disposition of his cases, and would be able to come here and attend the celebration. He came here, made a good speech which took with the reservation public. It was while he was here upon that occasion that another member of the reservation induced him to pledge himself to support the additional allotment bill then pending in Congress, and on account of that pledge he was elected by the reservation vote which was cast almost solidly for him, for outside of the reservation vote Judge Grindelund, who was also a candidate for Congress, defeated him by two or three hundred votes,

but the reservation vote gave him a plurality of less than one hundred votes and he received the nomination.

During the following session of Congress Mr. Steenerson fulfilled his pledge and secured the passage of the additional allotment act. The Chippewas were duly appreciative of his services and adopted him as a member of the tribe, but the Secretary of the Interior refused to approve of the adoption on the grounds that Mr. Steenerson was a member of Congress when he rendered the Indians the service.

During every election since then the Chippewas have voted for Mr. Steenerson, but he has never since the passage of the additional allotment act aided them in any way, but on the contrary has supported legislation which has not been in their interests, or has himself introduced the bills and pushed them through Congress, or has urged the committees of Congress to recommend them.

There are two bills now pending in Congress in which Mr. Steenerson has taken more than usual interest, one is to take for public school purposes twenty acres of land which has been used for the annual celebration although one acre would be a large tract for the purpose, and the other is to legalize many fraudulent land deals by giving probate courts jurisdiction although any honest deal could be arranged through the Interior Department.

In view of the position which Mr. Steenerson has taken, with one exception, against Chippewa

interests, it would not be surprising if they should vote against him at the forthcoming election.

One or two delegations from this reservation sought Mr. Steenerson's assistance but failed to obtain it, and one of the delegates afterwards refused to recognize him when he came here on an electioneering tour.

Applications Should Be Considered By The General Council.

The Indian appropriation act recently passed by Congress contains an amendment which provides that members of the Minnesota Chippewa bands shall receive preference for the positions in the Indian service the salaries of which are paid from Chippewa tribal funds. Inasmuch as even the superintendents among the Chippewas are paid from tribal funds, there should be no hesitancy among those who wish for these positions to apply for them.

In order that those who may wish to apply for positions may obtain the endorsement of the tribe, applications should be filed with the president of the General Council, so that he might submit them to the council at its next annual meeting.

There are many men and women of the Chippewa tribe who are competent to fill any of the positions in the Chippewa Indian ser-

Continued on 8th. Page.)

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