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FREEDOM'S SIGNAL FOR THE INDIANS

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ARROW POINTS.

“Dr. Montezuma, of Chicago, Etc- I am with Dr. Montezuma, but I confess that I don't see what much the Indians I saw at Flambeau could do for themselves with more freedom than they now have.” “Reedy's Mirror,” St. Louis Mo. (Freedom within prison walls is not freedom. Freedom within a reservation is not freedom. There is such thing as freedom and freedom; the Indians need freedom from being penned up WARDS. The result you describe graphically. — Wassaja.)

The way the Indian Bureau uses the word “Competency” exasperates “Wassaja.” What right has the Indian Bureau to judge whether we Indians are competent or incompetent? “Judge not that ye be not judged.” It is wrong and nothing else can be made out of this being equal with God.

Continued on page 3

INDIANS AND INDIANS.

By Carlos Montezuma, B. S., M. D.

In the northern part of the State of Washington there is a certain specie of game, a cross between a sage hen and a grouse. When you see a covey of them all you have to do is to creep upon them and then run toward them suddenly, surprising them with a most hideous yell. They will gaze at you and shiver with fright and you can go and pick them up and do as you please with them. They are called “Fool Hens.”

That is exactly how the Indian Office has affected the Indians as wards of the nation. Methods and methods have been devised to subdue subjects. Even those who are world-hardened it makes shudder to think of the days of the Inquisition; of those awful, cruel ways of punishing and taking lives. The story goes of the prisoner who was placed in the room with the movable walls, ceiling and floor, which contracted evenly on all sides every twenty-four hours. Day by day it grew smaller and smaller until, slowly but surely, it crushed the victim to death.

When you kill racial pride, you kill the Man; his stoic independence; his high spirit of what is right and what is wrong; his relation of man with man and his abiding faith in the Great Spirit. When you kill the spirit of the Man-part of the Indian, you have got him. The Indian is as though dead; you can play with him and do with him as you wish.

By the gradual process, this method has crushed his life. In these four hundred

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years that he would not yield to the pale-face, you have crushed out his life and the Indian race is as though dead. It is a picture that is indelible, that haunts the name Christian Civilization by which the United States poses in the world. It hurts and the Government feels it.

Wassaja is not writing a thesis, is not writing for rhetorical affect. He is retracing his own steps from the most primitive grass hut of Arizona to a civilized life in a great city. It is not a dead message that he is writing about but the most vital for his people.

Civilization has an object—money; but to get it honestly one must work. Work is the key-stone to most everything at this age and hour. God's decree is that man must do for and take care of himself. There is no way out of it. We Indians cannot violate the Divine decree and expect to get along nicely. God has allotted us a short span of time to make what we can of ourselves. We must learn to know that work is honorable. Wassaja did more menial labor after he had gained his degree from a university than he had done before. It was not his wish, but he was compelled to hustle in order to advance and live like others.

In civilization, where we do not want and least expect to bump, we bump. The thing for us Indians to do is to get ready for the bumps, for in life no one escapes them. The story of progress is always the same hard struggle against all the forces which tend to impede and destroy. Going up against the current makes one strong.

Let every Indian go in, get hold of life and work with all his might at what his hands find to do. Begin at the bottom. Do anything and everything that is honorable. Do not be ashamed to work. To succeed you must work—not easily but hard. Show the stuff that is in you. Get life into you as your forefathers spurred themselves on when they saw a deer in the chase or as does the athlete in a race. To inspire others, you must perspire.

The wrong concept of us Indians which the public entertains, is a phantom which can be cleared away only by education and by our personal contact with the masses of the country. Seeing is believing. Pub-

lic opinion is vague against us. It therefore behooves us to stand together and to teach the public differently.

Columbus was discouraged again and again by being reminded that the world was flat; yet he strove on alone and defied the sages of those days and at last made the world wiser. Just so, we Indians must take our stand under showers of criticism, to show the world that we can live and prosper independent of government aid and supervision.

We must be as courageous as the Rev. W. H. Stedman, who taught Wassaja to work. One day a friend of his leaned over the fence where the doctor and the young Apache were working. When the doctor came over to him, the friend said: "I know, Parson, you mean all right, but I am afraid you are wasting your time with that Indian. He will never amount to anything. Your effort is good, but there is no hope; mind what I tell you!" That which has been wrought in Wassaja, the same can be accomplished in every Indian.

It is disgusting to see the so-called "Indian friends" and "Christians" pulling back because they hate to confess that they have been mistaken. Their pride prevents them from doing the right thing for the Indians. They prefer to run in the same old rut or to get out in the way least humiliating to themselves. It is a mighty good thing we all have to die or things could never be solved.

When one mentions to them the idea of abolishing the Indian Bureau they stutter around as uneasily as does an old hen with a brood of ducks at the edge of a pond, clucking loudly to us Indians: "O, what will become of the Indians? Poor things; they will starve to death! Just think of the aged and the orphans; what will they do? Who is going to pay for their children's schooling? They are not ready to go out into the wicked world; they will be cheated and robbed! They will get drunk and lose their lands. They will have to pay taxes which they cannot do, and of course their lands will be taken from them. O, just think of dropping that kind father—Washington! Ungrateful! Ungrateful!"

O, such hysteric foolishness. What is a man good for if he cannot protect himself and do something for himself? Indian Comrades, count the cost and face the future with a grim determination.

If the people think you cannot make a living for yourself, go out and fool them. If they think you will be cheated, go out and prosper; if they think you will starve, go out and grow fat, and if they think the aged and the orphans will suffer, go out and

show the world you are benefactors and worthy of the tradition of your race by caring for the aged and the orphans. That is the way to show business and to do business.

We Indians must be pretty blind to think that error is right; that wardship is freedom; that the reservation system is freedom; that to be kept segregated is freedom and that to be discriminated against is just. When one does not know, it makes no difference; but when one does know, it makes a lot of difference. When one is kept from knowing anything, of course he will be ignorant.

The fact that our guardian does everything for us without our consent, upon the face of it shows what that guardian thinks of us. There is no throwing up pennies to find out the right; we all must see and stick together. Promises in Chicago do not amount to much in life. That is what ails us Indians; we have relied too much on promises. Let promises go; GET MAD AND FIGHT YOUR WAY IN LIFE. Let us not be monkeyed with any longer.

Can you picture your fore-fathers standing on a mountain, surveying the horizon and harmonizing with nature? You may say they owned America once, but what have we now? Almost nothing, and living without justice: it is a good thing that the air is free or we Indians would have been "Good Indians" a long time ago!

The Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone, the "grand old man," said: "Liberty alone fits man for liberty." No man is free unless he is free; no man is a man until freedom is his. There is no freedom in the reservation; the Indian Office lasso around one's neck is not freedom, and one is not free who is a ward. Having everything done for one is not freedom.

Wm. Marion Reedy in his St. Louis MIRROR says: "—But broadly, I should say that the Indian were better off exterminated than kept as he is now kept on the Reservation. There is no chance for him. —I think the Indian would have been better off if he had not coddled.—" Even God cannot develop a handicapped man: a free man is the man He wants.

We are at a crisis, whether to favor the Indian Office or to have it abolished. To compromise at such a time is weakness and will result in final disaster. We must be either for the Indian Bureau or against it. There is no half-way about it. Even if organizations to help our race do not strike the nail on the head; even if they go around with petty excuses to cover up their dizzy tracks, we Indians must not do likewise. They see things as they are not.

This crisis involves our rights and our lives. Justice must not be compromised.

It is either do or die. We must feel in our hearts that we are on the stage of life fighting for our freedom, long delayed. It means manhood or no manhood; it means for the honor of our race or against that honor; it embodies our very existence. It means liberty or death. We must stand together or fall together in the work of freeing our race.

We Indians have laid down and permitted ourselves to be treated as we have been. We must not lay all the blame to the government, the churches, the educators and the public. We Indians could have been as free as anyone else had we exerted our rights. We think that we must do what, in reality, we do not have to do; what we can do, we think that we cannot.

You can send your children to the public schools and to the learned institutions of the country and no one can stop you. You can attend to your own business and no one can interfere with you. As a man no one has the right to say that you are incompetent. You are no longer wild (when you never were!), you can go out of the reservation without a pass and without the consent of anyone. You think that you must obtain permission because it has been your custom to do so.

Though our homes are on reservations, we do not have to stay there. We can go and come and make our homes any place where we can best make our bread and butter. Is it not silly to think of preparing us for civilization? Wassaja smiles when he thinks of it!

Fennimore Cooper's Indians do not exist today. We are their children's children. Things have changed and we have changed with them. We do not see things as our forefathers saw them nor do we live as they did. Let it be known that within the breast of every Indian there is a heart which throbs with the same yearnings that throb in all human kind. We are possessed with a conscience that guides us to right living; we have a soul that reaches to the Creator of all beings, and life is just as sacred and just as sweet to us as it is to those who enjoy liberty.

In the glimmer of human existence there is a way. There is light, hope and atonement; it is in the emancipation of our race—the Indians. THAT IT MAY COME SPEEDILY IS THE PRAYER OF ALL THE INDIANS TO THOSE WHO HAVE THEM IN CHARGE.

## ARROW POINTS

Continued from page 1

What are you going to do with the "incompetent" Indians? Help

them to be competent by giving them freedom from Bureauism which has caused them to be incompetent.

"Born in this country and has to take out papers? You do not tell me! Is that true?"

"Not a citizen of his own country? Who ever heard of such a thing!"

"Was in America before Columbus and must take out papers of naturalization? Can such injustice exist?"

"Sane Indians and over 21 years old and cannot vote? I cannot see anything but injustice in that."

"Indians have no voice in their affairs? O, that is awful!"

From the SHERMAN BULLETIN, Sherman Institute, Riverside, Calif.:

### "In the Wrong Direction."

By Hon. Moorfield Storey,  
Boston, Mass.

"Every step toward weakening the power of the national government over the affairs of the Indian is a step in the wrong direction."—N. Y. Herald.

(Such a sentiment in print from a prominent public man does great harm to the cause of the Indians. We believe he meant all right, but he is greatly mistaken. Let him take the Indians' place and he will change his mind.) -Wassaja

If there were a man, bound hand and foot, helpless to free himself, and he cried out to you: "Let me go," would you have heart enough to stand by and ask: "Go where?" (Chilocco Indian School Journal.) We are not joking. We are serious about freeing the Indians from the Indian Bureau, and he who jokes at a cause we are working for—our words are not for him.

From a New York Indian: "I would rather go on a war-path than have Cato Sells as Commissioner of Indian Affairs."

The complete abolishment of the Indian Office seems to be misunderstood by some Indians. When Congress passes a bill to abolish the Indian Bureau, it must state at what time because it will require time to settle money and property matters with the Indians first.

There is a tribe in the State of Washington called the Nespilem Indians. They will not take anything from the U. S. Government without giving something in return. They are the most prosperous Indians in America. What do the sentimental friends of the Indians think about that? Independence is prosperity and not pauperism.

Commissioner Cato Sells preaches, but withholds that which he preaches, namely—complete freedom for the Indians. He is a good politician, and the Indians have no use for him.