

INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION,
1305 ARCH STREET,
PHILADELPHIA.

[*From New York Evening Post, April 27, 1894.*]

INDIAN SCHOOL WELFARE.

Signs of Returning Reason in the House Committee —Superintendent Hailmann and the Question of Economy.

[Special Despatch to The Evening Post.]

WASHINGTON, April 27th.

The House Committee on Indian Affairs gives signs of beginning to recover its reason. In the original draft of the appropriation bill to provide for the expenses of the Indian service the office of Superintendent of Indian Schools was abolished, as stated in these despatches several days ago, the inspectors were cut down to three in number, and the supervisors to two. The Committee has since reconsidered its purpose in the case of the inspectors and will continue the present number of five. It has also shown some disposition to look again into the case of the supervisors. In case the House declines, as there is good reason to hope it will, to commit the criminal folly of abolishing the Superintendent's office, it will probably also restore the complement of supervisors, for the Superintendent could hardly carry out the plans which he has laid down for the reorganization of the school system without the aid of at least four, and perhaps five, of these lieutenants.

The trouble with the present Committee seems to be that it is willing to let itself consist principally of its chairman. Representative Holman once made a flying trip to a few Western Indian agencies; and, although that was some nine years ago, he feels that he now knows all that is to be known on the subject

of the Indian service. Mr. Holman makes up his mind what he will do, and the rest of the Committee meekly register his will. This is partly due, doubtless, to diffidence. Mr. Holman is a Congressman of long service, while most of his colleagues on the Committee have come to Congress only within a few years. In point of service on the Committee itself, almost all of the Democrats are new to their work; Mr. Allen, of Mississippi, is the only one who has been a member of it through two Congresses. The majority, therefore, are wont to sit back in their chairs and let Mr. Holman do their thinking and planning for them.

They make a great mistake. Mr. Holman has no conception of what the present condition of the Indian service calls for. Let alone the difference which naturally might be expected between the situation now and the situation nine years ago, when Mr. Holman made his flying trip of inspection, the Indian school service is now undoubtedly upon the verge either of a great success or of a great failure. Prof. Hailmann, the new Superintendent of Schools, has addressed himself to the task of reorganization in a most intelligent manner. One item in his plans alone offers a good example of the character of all. He purposes to grade the existing schools upon a scientific basis, making the reservation day-schools the first grade, the reservation boarding-schools the second grade, and the boarding-schools off the reservation the third and highest. Thus the Indian children, while they are still young and under their parents' care, and surrounded by the semi-barbarous atmosphere of reservation life with their tribe, will be getting the rudiments of an education which will do them no harm and may do them a great deal of good, even if they are permitted to advance no further. Those, however, who prove susceptible to its stimulus, and show the proper aptitude and ambition to get ahead, will be passed on to the next grade and placed in a reservation boarding-school. Here again a sifting process will take place, and a yet smaller number, who show marked improvement, moral energy, and a thirst for the higher civilization, will be raised to the third grade and sent away from the reservation altogether, to live in a new atmosphere, and to absorb instinctively, by contact with the whites, a good deal which even the most persistent schoolroom study could not teach them.

This is the purely educational phase of the scheme. But there is an eminently "practical" dollars-and-cents side to it also, which must recommend itself to the judgment of every genuine economist in Congress; for the assorting of the children and the careful selection of those who are fitted to go up to the higher grades will be done by the supervisors on a systematic and uniform principle. This means a very great pecuniary saving to the Government over the present haphazard practice of picking out pupils for the various schools under no better guidance than fancy.

The one reproach which is most frequently thrown in the face of the advocates of the non-reservation boarding-schools is that a certain proportion of the young Indians sent there show that they are not qualified to profit by their new surroundings by the readiness with which they return to their old life when they get out of school. By requiring an Indian child to work his own way up instead of being chosen by favoritism or on any other irrational basis, the highest schools will receive only those who have gone through the sifting process in both the lower ones. The second-grade schools, in their turn, will receive only the children whose ability and ambition have been sufficient to carry them through the tests imposed in the primary grade. Thus the Government will be relieved of the expense of supporting, educating, and—heaviest burden of all—transporting from point to point a large number of pupils of whom it is hopeless to expect any further progress in education. By this one stroke alone Prof. Hailmann has probably arranged to save the taxpayers, in the course of a year, ten times the salary which the House Committee on Indian Affairs are proposing to save by abolishing his office. Could anything, then, be more ridiculous than the plea that the office is to be abolished in the interest of frugality in administration?

There is reason to suspect that more is behind the proposed change than a mere question of expense. Mr. Holman has probably allowed himself to be imposed upon by outside enemies of the Government Indian-school system. One of these, a discharged clerk of a former Administration, has been hanging about Washington and making himself obnoxiously active with advice to whoever would take it. If Mr. Holman wishes good

counsel he will be more likely to find it by consulting a friend of the Government schools than by letting himself be made the cat's-paw of their enemies.

The Indian Rights Association has addressed a strong protest to the House Committee on Indian Affairs against the proposal to abolish the office of Superintendent of Indian Schools, and to cut down the force of inspectors and special agents charged with making reports to the Secretary of the Interior on the condition of the Indian service. The proposal is understood to have sprung out of Congressman Holman's perverse habit of economizing in the wrong place for the sake of wasting elsewhere. It is peculiarly absurd at this present moment, coming so soon after the President's admirable appointment of a Superintendent, Dr. W. N. Hailmann. He has already gone to work with the energy and ability that his former career as an educator gave promise of, and it is the Association's belief that, if he is continued in office, the Indian schools will soon compare favorably with the "best public-school systems of the country." It would certainly be the height of stupidity, if we are to continue the Indian schools at all, to cripple, if not destroy, their efficiency by taking away their competent Superintendent.

[From *The New York Times*, Friday, April 27, 1894.]

SUSPICIOUS ECONOMY.

A proposition is now before the House of Representatives to abolish the position of Superintendent of Indian Schools. We publish in another column a letter from Mr. Herbert Welsh, giving a plain, succinct, and accurate statement of the facts. As an effort at economy, which is probably what Mr. Holman of the Appropriations Committee believes it to be, it is absurd. The present Superintendent, Dr. Hailmann, an able and devoted man, has in three months saved his salary for two years, simply

by the business-like action of distributing books on hand instead of buying more. That is what any man with practical sense enough to run a news stand can appreciate. Yet if there had been no Superintendent, it would not have been done. It is a small matter, but a plain one, and one of a hundred of the same order. So much for the economy in mere money. But saving is to be reckoned by what you get as much as by what you spend. Now, the Superintendent of Indian Schools is an experienced and skillful administrator of schools; he has the hearty approval and support of Secretary Smith for all his plans; he has the sympathy and co-operation of the Civil Service Commission, and if he is let alone he will within a year bring the Indian schools to a point of efficiency and usefulness that it would be impossible to attain without him. Calculated by results, the abolition of the office would be a piece of wasteful folly.

We suspect that back of this movement, however, there is something more than an impulse to mistaken economy. It is perfectly certain that under Dr. Hailmann, with the help of the Secretary of the Interior, the schools will be conducted for the education of Indian boys and girls, and not to give places to politicians or the favorites or dependents of politicians in or out of Congress. That is, they will be conducted honestly for the only purpose that the people should be taxed for, and not dishonestly for the benefit of partisan workers or pretended workers. On this account the spoilsmen are ready to fight the Secretary and Dr. Hailmann. They are always ready to fight anything that deprives them of their stolen advantages. We have reason to believe that they are sustaining and urging this absurd and mischievous movement, even if they did not originate it. As for its actual origin, we may, if it shall be necessary, have something to say. At present we advise the Democratic leaders in Congress to put a quietus to what is clearly a most discreditable conspiracy against the Indian schools.

WORK FOR FRIENDS OF THE INDIANS.

A Grave Emergency in Relation to the Government Schools.

To the Editor of the New York Times :—

A grave emergency has arisen in relation to the Government's work for Indian education—one which calls for prompt action on the part of all friends of sound instruction and good government throughout the country. The Indian school service is just emerging from the slough of partisan politics and getting on firm ground. About 700 places in that service—thanks to President Harrison—are covered by Civil Service rules, so that appointments to them are made for merit, not for favor.

Thanks to President Cleveland and the present Secretary of the Interior, the Hon. Hoke Smith, a step of the utmost importance has been taken toward the development and increased efficiency of the Indian school service. Increased powers have been given to the Superintendent of Indian Schools, with a view of elevating that office from a mere inspectorship or clerkship, which it has hitherto been, to one of dignity and power, similar to the position of General Superintendent in any first-class public school system of the United States. To this office, with a wisdom for which he deserves the highest praise, Mr. Hoke Smith has secured the appointment of one of the leading educators of the country, Dr. W. N. Hailmann, formerly Superintendent of Public Schools at Laporte, Ind.

Already the good judgment evinced, both by the broad policy referred to and by the choice of an able and experienced man to carry it into effect, has been demonstrated by the results. Dr. Hailmann has established cordial relations with the Civil Service Commission, through which he secures his school force. He has

taken steps to call the attention of the normal schools of the country to the field which the Indian service offers their graduates for educational and missionary effort. He is bringing harmony to the widely-scattered and heretofore often ill-related schools of the Indian service. He has saved to the Government in the few months of his incumbency between \$8000 and \$9000 by bringing into use purchased but unused school books. He has given hope, courage, and inspiration to teachers and subordinates with whom he has been brought in contact during his first visit to the Indian field.

But what paradise is without its serpent? At the very moment when not only the friends of the Indians, but the friends of good government and of education, are beginning to rejoice over prospects of splendid improvement in the civil service, and when the legitimate educational work of the United States Government—so long shamefully neglected or abused—was about to stand on an equality with the best public school system of the country, a scheme is proposed by the Indian Committee of the House to destroy all of this ripening fruit with one sharp blow.

The office of Superintendent of Indian Schools itself is to be abolished. The alleged ground of a proposition of folly so startling that all who know the needs of public education will be forced to suspect some ulterior motive back of it is "economy." What Dr. Hailmann has already saved the Government in the item of school-books is insignificant to what he will save it in the almost boundless but indefinable domain where his powers are especially and most successfully exerted.

An institution which fails of full success in doing the work for which it exists, in reaching that end for which all its expenditures are made, is a costly institution, but one which wastes no particle of the force used in its operation and secures its desired end is economical. The object of the Indian school service is to turn Indian boys and girls into honest, efficient, self-respecting American men and women, who can look the world in the face and owe no man anything. That is what it is made for, and not to provide paying berths for officeholders' relatives. Under Dr. Hailmann and similar incumbents of the Superintendency it will do that work.

But the work cannot be done if the Indian school service is

headless and left to the irresponsible manipulations of men who regard it as a partisan pay chest or as an asylum for impecunious friends.

Information reaches us which imputes, and with strong show of reason, this attack upon the Superintendency to the combined efforts of official jealousy and of hostility to the public school system. But whatever the source of the attack, the attack itself cannot possibly succeed if the friends of the American public school system, of the Indians, and of good government will unite in repelling it. Let them at once protest by personal letters to their Senators and Representatives, and by the voice of the secular and religious organs of public opinion.

HERBERT WELSH,

Corresponding Secretary Indian Rights Association.

PHILADELPHIA, April 25, 1894.

A card has just been received from our Washington Agent, Mr. C. C. Painter, under date of April 30th, stating that in the Indian Appropriation bill, as reported on that day, the Superintendent's position had been restored.

HERBERT WELSH,

Corresponding Secretary Indian Rights Association.

INDIAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION,
1305 ARCH STREET,
PHILADELPHIA.

**Threatened Virtual Abolition of the Board of
Indian Commissioners, and Crippling of the
Indian Service by Unwarranted Reduction
in Salaries of Indian Agents and School
Officials. Immediate Protest Called For.**

On behalf of the Indian Rights Association the Executive Committee issue this protest against what we understand to be the proposed action of the Appropriations Committee of Congress in omitting the usual annual appropriation to defray the expenses of the Board of Indian Commissioners. We believe that no one who is not ignorant of the occasion for the creation of this Commission and the good work which has been accomplished during the twenty-six years of its existence would justify the saving of the sum of five thousand dollars usually appropriated to defray its expenses at the far greater expense to the Government and the best interests of the Indians. The Board of Indian Commissioners owes its existence to President Grant, upon whose earnest recommendation Congress enacted the law, approved April 10, 1869, providing for the appointment of a Board then called the Peace Commission. In his annual message of that year President Grant said:—

“I have adopted a new policy toward these wards of the nation (they cannot be regarded in any other light than as wards), with fair results, so far as tried, and which I hope will be attended ultimately with great success.”

General Grant secured as the Commissioners first to be appointed William Welsh and George H. Stuart, of Philadelphia; John V. Farwell, of Chicago; Robert Campbell, of St. Louis;

William E. Dodge and Nathan Bishop, of New York; E. S. Tobey, of Boston; Felix R. Brunot, of Pittsburgh, and Henry S. Lane, of Indiana. From that time until the present this Board has been composed of eminent citizens, whose services to the nation have been gratuitously given, the small appropriation which has annually been made by Congress being only available for the actual expenses of the Commission, chief among which are the traveling expenses of its members, who have faithfully visited the Indians on their reservations as well as performed the other duties incident to their office. The very greatest service to the country and the Indians has been rendered by these Commissioners. At their instance a change was made in the mode of purchasing supplies; they secured strict impartiality in the reception of bids and the allotment of contracts, and a system of rigid inspection after goods have been delivered in a Government warehouse, so as to secure goods equal to the samples offered and to save large sums of money to the Government. At their instance the great principle of giving land in severalty to the Indians has been adopted and the retention of the tribal relations discouraged.

To those who were familiar with the methods in vogue in the Indian Department prior to the creation of this Commission, who can recall the partnerships between agents and traders and contractors, the over-estimates of weight of cattle, the blank vouchers filled up with fraudulent sums, the false names carried upon pay rolls, the payment of employees for whom there was no employment, the payment of others at higher or lower salaries than provided by law for the purpose of embezzling the difference, the farming out of appointments controlled by agents, and the selling of their own goods to the Indians, with other like fraudulent schemes,—the abolition of the Commission which has inaugurated and secured such vast reforms is hardly short of the grossest folly, unless it could be urged that their services are no longer needed. Such an argument cannot possibly be used at the present time. They still perform the services for which they were appointed; they still attend the opening of bids for contracts, which through their services are now open to all, so that in 1892 there were more than five hundred bids, instead of about forty in 1870; they still make visits to the reservations,

and, being absolutely untrammelled by any of the traditions of the Indian Department or any subservience to those in authority, they are enabled to examine, investigate, and criticise with perfect impartiality whatever they may see in the Indian service worthy either of commendation or condemnation. The Government is rarely so fortunate as to secure the gratuitous services of such men as Merrill E. Gates, Albert K. Smiley, William H. Lyon, Joseph T. Jacobs, William D. Walker, Philip C. Garrett, Darwin R. James, Elbert B. Monroe, and Charles C. Painter. To lose their services and the wholesome influence of such a disinterested Commission is to invite to the Indian service a return of the fraud and mismanagement which existed when it was first called upon to remove them. We call upon all those who believe it to be not in the interest of economy, but a dangerous and disastrous move to abolish this Commission, to at once express their views through letters sent to their representatives in Congress and through the columns of the press of the country.

We cannot close this protest against the practical abolishment of the Board of Indian Commissioners without also protesting most earnestly against the proposed reduction of the salaries of Indian agents. These salaries now range, at the important agencies, from two thousand to twenty-two hundred dollars,—little enough to secure the services of such men as are required for the delicate, and sometimes heroic, service which they have to perform. We understand that a reduction of from ten to twenty per cent. in these already meagre salaries is proposed. The saving to the country of this insignificant sum is as nothing compared with the dangers to which the whole country is exposed by the enforced retirement of good agents, who cannot be expected to remain at such reduced salaries, and the substitution for them of incompetent and second-rate men. In our judgment no more dangerous form of economy can be adopted than that of saving at a point where of all others it is requisite to maintain the present standard at its highest efficiency.

We also earnestly protest against the proposed reduction of the salary of the Superintendent of Indian Schools from \$3000 to \$2500. The original salary attached to this position was \$3500. This was reduced last year to \$3000. To reduce the

amount still further this year would seem to indicate that those who have failed in their purpose to abolish this post altogether are determined to cripple its usefulness by attaching such meagre compensation to it that the Superintendency will be untenable to any man whose experience and ability fit him to fill it. Similar reductions proposed for the salaries of subordinate Indian School Superintendents call for a similar protest.

By order of the Executive Committee,

HERBERT WELSH,
Corresponding Secretary.