

COMMISSIONER SELLS' ADDRESS

CREATES PROFOUND IMPRESSION ON AUDIENCE



THE following is a condensed summary of the extemporaneous address made by Commissioner Cato Sells on the last day (returned students' day) of the conference recently held at San Francisco:

I am greatly pleased to participate in this great conference of employees, returned students and others whom I may properly assume are deeply interested in Indian welfare. For a long time I have desired to visit the Indians of the Southwest that I might closely study their problems. I have spent the last several weeks among the Apaches, Pimas, Papagoes, and the Indians along the Colorado River. About a week of this time was given to the Papago country. For many reasons I am convinced that the Papago Indians are among the most deserving of any people I have ever know. Their home for more than two hundred years has been in the driest desert of the United States. No branch of the Caucasian race could exist under such conditions, and I doubt if there is another Indian tribe that would do so. Under these circumstances they have demonstrated that the genius of necessity works out wonderful things. The Papagoes have made their struggle unassisted, and their accomplishments in view of their tremendous obstacles are marvelous. Altogether they are entitled to more kindly consideration than they have received, and it is my firm purpose to show the Papagoes that we are willing to help those who have so valiantly helped themselves. In this connection, I should say that their neighbors, the Pimas, are an industrious and deserving people. During my visit among them, I found the warm side of the Apaches. I am persuaded that they, too, respond to the bond of friendship, and that their rapid advancement is assured with sympathetic cooperation. There are important and pressing problems demanding administrative action for the several tribes and bands of Indians along the Colorado River. All of the tribes recently visited by me will have the earnest and best attention of which I am capable.

In our labors with these primitive people, we are too prone to become impatient. There is a disposition to expect a revolution rather than an evolution, such as has come about in two thousand years of the white man's civilization. It is unfair, it is unjust, to expect more rapid progress from the Indian than is shown from the development of the white race. If I were called upon to indicate the one important word in our relations with the Red Man, it would be "patience."

In this splendid audience of Service employees and friends of the Indian, there are a large number of returned students. Let me briefly