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MORE GOOD NEWS

Under date of April 28 Superintendent Hall received a letter from Hon. Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C., which will prove an epoch-making document and will be hailed with delight by all graduates of Indian Schools, and all who are interested in the Indian people. It will prove that education and competency shall henceforth receive recognition and that merit is to be the supreme test of Indian manhood and womanhood. We know of nothing of greater importance in Indian affairs of recent years than is embodied in the letter in question. We are pleased to publish in full the signed letter, as follows:

I ask your special attention to the following paragraph of the "Declaration of Policy in the Administration of Indian Affairs" issued on April 17, 1917:

"Indian students when they are twenty-one years of age, or over, who complete the full course of instruction in the Government schools, receive diplomas and have demonstrated competency will be so declared."

This declaration is founded upon the right and the desire of all progressive-minded Indians to become full citizens in the land of their nativity and to be classed with other free men who enjoy the privilege of owning and controlling property, who participate in the councils of the community and the larger welfare of the state and who exercise that personal initiative which is the beginning of high destinies whether of individuals, of nation, or of races.

You are in charge of one of the large and well-equipped government schools for Indian youth. Its commencement exercises will soon close the school year and the members of its graduating class will have reached a very significant period in their lives. The transition from the theory and training of the classroom to the practice and achievement of real life, from school work to world work, applies the acid test to the pure gold of every student's character and attainments.

The Indian boys and girls have been at some natural disadvantage but have enjoyed some unusual opportunities. They have had, and now more than ever have, educational privileges superior to those in many of the schools for white children. They have been pro-

vided not only with good academic training but with excellent vocational courses calculated to fit them for successful home-making, for healthful and prudent domestic life, and for the efficient pursuit of agriculture, of many of the mechanical trades and some of the skilled manual arts and crafts.

There must, therefore, be in every Indian school giving the full courses a very considerable number of graduates this year who have improved their opportunities and have acquired such a practical education as will reasonably enable them to enter some remunerative occupation and make their way successfully with those engaged in the pursuits of our modern life. To every such capable young man and woman should be given a certificate of competency or a patent in fee, as authorized by law and the new "Declaration of Policy in the Administration of Indian Affairs," attesting the faith of the United States in their ability and determination to prove worthy of this recognition.

It is not intended to declare every graduating student competent to handle his own affairs, but to select those who are twenty-one years of age, and who by their conduct through the years of instruction have profited by wise discipline and shown that they possess the qualities of scholarship and character that fit them for responsibility and competition. To these graduates you will have the happy privilege on the day you hand them diplomas to give them also this declaration of their independence. It should be to them the Magna Charta of their freedom from the restraints not imposed upon other citizens of our country, and in thus granting it I know you will fully represent me with yourself in the hope that no recipient will ever strive for less than the most honorable and loyal fulfillment of American citizenship. I am sure that you thoroughly appreciate the importance of this emancipating movement and that upon all appropriate occasions you will impress its significance upon your student body as the bright goal of their school training, to the end that all pupils shall not only resolve to complete a full course, but that graduation for them will be incomplete unless it earns such a certificate of competency. I also hope that this new declaration may have such reflex action upon our schools that greater

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