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A WONDERFUL WORK

We are indebted to Supt. O.H. Lipps for the privilege of publishing excerpts from an article which appeared in the Lewiston (Idaho) Tribune of January 28. This is from the Nez Perce country and Supt. Lipps is now in charge at Lapwai and is in a place where he is of great service to the Indian people as well as the people of the country generally. We are glad to be able to publish a comprehensive outline of Mr. Lipps' great work. He is, and always has been, a good friend of Chemawa, and as a result has many warm supporters at our school. He is honest and able and takes a broad-minded view of everything that comes to him—he is always a man.

Following will be found the excerpts from the Tribune referred to above:

When Rev. Henry H. Spalding came as a missionary to the Nez Perces in 1836 he brought with him, along with the Bible, a tool chest and garden, field and fruit seeds. The oldest apple tree in Idaho, until a few years ago still standing and bearing fruit, was planted by his own hands on the banks of Clearwater near the mouth of Lapwai creek.

Mr. Spalding found the Nez Perces very poor as did Lewis and Clark 40 years before, but they were industrious and eager to learn. And while teaching the Indians the way to a future Heaven, he also taught them the way to a better life on this earth in the here and now. He taught them to plow, to plant, to reap. He instructed them in growing fruits, vegetables, grains, cattle, hogs, chickens, etc. Thus the Nez Perce Indians were the first farmers, stock growers and fruit growers in the state of Idaho if not in the entire northwest.

So when years after the miners came in great numbers and set up their camps on the reservation back in the mountains, the Nez Perces found a ready market for all their surplus farm and garden products. They grew fruit and vegetables, pigs, chickens and beef cattle and sold them to the miners, receiving payment therefor in gold dust. They were a busy, industrious people in those days, made so by the force of necessity.

The Nez Perces have never been ration Indians, but

have always been self-supporting. Until recent years "lease money" and "land sale money" were unknown to them. They worked for their living and were, therefore, well schooled in habits of thrift and economy. Then came the allotting of their lands in severalty, the big payment of \$1,600,000 for their surplus lands, and a little later the leasing of their prairie allotments, all of which had the effect of exempting them from the necessity of doing much manual labor.

Most of them could live in reasonable comfort without work, so have we today, among the Nez Perces, about the same conditions that are to be found on most Indian reservations where there are productive lands capable of supporting their owners in semi-idleness, or in the case of the younger generation, who have never known the necessity for work as did their parents, in almost complete idleness.

To get the Nez Perces back to their former life of thrift and industry is the object and the purpose of the Nez Perce Indian Home and Farm Association which was organized last Monday by the members of the tribe. A recent survey made by O. H. Lipps, superintendent of the Nez Perce Indian agency, developed some interesting facts as to the economic condition of these Indians.

The leading facts developed by the survey made by Superintendent Lipps may briefly be stated as follows:

1. That the Nez Perces are practically all pure-blood Indians; that nearly all of the homes and most of the land are owned by the older Indians, the younger members of the tribe, even after marriage retaining their homes with the old folks; that the majority of the older Indians have good houses, barns, cellars, teams and necessary farming implements; that nearly every family does some farming, has a good garden, chickens, fruit trees, and some have cows, pigs and horses; that few are engaged in extensive farming or produce farm products for market; and that practically the entire tribe depends largely on rentals derived from lands leased and farmed by white men for their support, very few earning by their own industry all of their support.

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