

MR. CAMP'S TALK

In our last "American" we promised to publish excerpts in this issue of the splendid talk made in chapel recently by Mr. Camp, traveling government auditor. If space permitted we would be pleased to publish the speech in its entirety, but we are denied this pleasure. Among other things, Mr. Camp said:

It was just one hundred years ago on the 11th of last March that the United States Indian Service was born. Not that there were not Indians before that time, but it was then that the necessity of establishing an Indian bureau for handling Indian affairs alone was realized, and it was one hundred years ago on the 11th of last March that John C. Calhoun, then the Secretary of War under the administration of President Monroe, addressed a communication to Col. Thomas L. McKenney, an army officer on duty in the department. The contents of this letter were of vast importance to the red man, the original and aboriginal inhabitants of North America.

It was also of great importance to their descendants. Calhoun's letter created a Bureau of Indian Affairs and appointed Col. McKenney as its chief. This was the first step taken by the government in assuming a guardianship, or protectorate, over the Indians. There was not then, nor has there ever been, any constitutional requirement compelling the United States to assume this course. The treaty with Great Britain acknowledged the independence of the United States and surrendered all rights to the country, containing no provision whatsoever for the native inhabitants.

The action of Secretary Calhoun, therefore, in establishing a Bureau of Indian Affairs was born of a high moral sense that it was the duty of the American people to protect and care for the Indians. At that time the government might have treated the Indians simply as a conquered race that had been overwhelmed by the superior arms of the white men and scattered them to unexplored plains and mountains. It might have left them to survive or perish. Had this been done it is perfectly obvious that there would have been no perplexing Indian problem of today. There would be no extensive system of government schools for their education, no hospitals, no agencies and welfare activities to promote the progress of the red man. The Indians would not have the protection afforded them by treaties and acts of Congress. Instead, there would have been scattered all over the country the remains of once powerful tribes, helpless, and unprotected from the unscrupulous.

Instead of this our government assumed the moral duty of protecting the Indians from such a fate, established reservations that tribal relations might be preserved, and schools that the young might be trained in the civilized way of living with a view to eventually

providing their own livelihood by the methods which civilized people realized must be followed, as the buffalo and other wild game would, before many ages had passed, be driven from the plains and supplanted by farms and other domestic pursuits; and to eventually assume his full share in the liberties and responsibilities of a civilized nation.

They may have looked at this problem a hundred years ago from this moral standpoint, or they may have viewed it from a business standpoint. To keep the Indian as a class intact and protect the white people would have required an immense army at a tremendous expense to the government. It would have meant gradual annihilation, as the firm progress of civilization to the westward would require that the Indian be pressed back until extinction would be inevitable. Was it not much better, then, that they did what was actually done—the government assuming the moral obligation of caring for them, educating them, and preparing them for citizenship.

Citizenship in its fullest extent was extended to the Indian people last year when congress granted full citizenship to your people so that now you are on an equal footing with any man or woman of the United States. You have as much right as any man to say who shall rule and how we shall be ruled. This not only gives you this privilege, but it also places upon you your share of responsibilities. There are no privileges given to anyone without responsibilities.

It is very probable that not many years will pass when Indian reservations and Indian schools will be a thing of the past. Many of your children will not be granted the privilege of attending an Indian school. The present rate of combining agencies and closing Indian schools indicates to me that this is not far off—and it is as it should be. With your rights and duties of citizenship you are absorbing the duties of education.

Alex Petellin, of the class of '22, was a recent visitor at Chemawa. He now has employment in Portland and says that he has no complaints to voice on the way life is treating him. He is the picture of good health, and what more is necessary?

Mr. Bruce has our thanks for assistance given the orchestra during our production of the operetta during "closing week." He came over from Silverton every evening and played clarinet during the entertainment and proved a valued addition to our orchestra.

Robert Johnson, a graduate of a couple of years ago, was a guest of Chemawa during the closing week of school. He is now following the business of a lather in San Francisco and declares that he is succeeding nicely. He has a "bug" of pedigree and motored up in state, making good time.