

FAITH IN OURSELVES

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became greatly interested in one particular cadet captain and the way he handled his troop. On being told that the young cadet was a grandson of the man General Miles once called the "Human Tiger," Geronimo, the great Apache fighter, he expressed great surprise and commented at some length on the striking contrast between the old Apache warrior and the young gentleman soldier before him. Written down, in the language of an erstwhile famous editor, it would read something like this:

For more than a million years, man has been toiling upward, impelled by the mysterious law that causes the pine to spring toward the sun. Sometimes the advance is by leaps and bounds, as when some giant intellect—some son of God, especially gifted with the attributes of his Sire—brushes aside the obstructions at which lesser men toil in vain; sometimes the Car of Progress stands still for a thousand years, else rolls slowly back toward brutishness, there being none of sufficient strength to advance the standards further up the rugged mountain-side, nearer the celestial city. Thus ever in ebb and flow, gaining and losing, only to regain; nations rising and falling, but to serve as stepping-stones whereon mount a nobler race, a grander people. The irrepressible conflict of the God-like, with the beast-like in man, goes bravely on.

In half a million years we have come far—won many a fair field from the dominion of Darkness. We no longer dwell in caves and hollow trees, fighting naked with the wild beasts of the forests for our prey. We have made matter so far subject to mind that Nature's mighty forces have become our obedient bond-slaves. We have built societies, nations, weighed the world, and measured the stars. We have acquired not only knowledge and power, but love and modesty. Life is no longer mere animation, content to gorge itself with roots and raw meat and sit in the sun. The ear craves melody; the eye, beauty; the brain, dominion, while the soul mounts to the very stars.

Who then, shall say that the Indian in time, will not also take his place beside the thinkers and workers of other races and prove himself a permanent and valuable economic factor in the world's onward march?

THE WAY OUT FOR THE INDIAN

There are those who contend that the way out for the Indian is to put the Indian out, meaning to turn him loose from all Government control and supervision and let him sink or swim, survive or perish. In other words let him be submitted to the full operations of the law of the survival of the fittest. There are others, who believe that this dictum, applied literally and indiscriminately, would be a harsh and unjust policy. But as rapidly as circumstances and conditions will permit, the Indian should be made to realize that the biggest factor in the solution of his problem is himself.

The social and economic independence of the Indian must come then, if it comes at all, largely through his own efforts. Unless we can in some way inspire him with ambition there appears to be very little future for him. We cannot apply civilization with a trowel. These are the results of growth and development. The best we can do is to provide the right atmosphere and supply the incentive, and awaken ambition, and

endeavor to inspire you people with the desire to become industrious home-makers and self-supporting, intelligent citizens. The fact that a great many Indians are economically independent, and educationally and socially the equals of their white neighbors is evidence that the chief reason why many more do not achieve these attainments is because they fail to take advantage of the opportunities offered them by the Government and by the communities in which they live.

There is an economic law, as universal and inexorable as the law of gravitation, which decrees that each individual is the arbiter of his own destiny. Therefore, the young, able-bodied Indian who would acquire independence and self-reliance, must observe this great economic law just as all others must observe it. He must work, and through work learn the value of time and money. He must be taught to transact his own business and thus learn to manage his affairs. He must learn to use his lands for his support and happiness if he would appreciate their worth. And he must keep his hands out of missionary barrels and his name off of ration rolls if he would maintain his self-respect. He can do these things only after proper education and training, and by the exercise of his own will and his own industry. He cannot hope to keep the lands and money that have come to him through no effort of his own, or to use them wisely, unless at some period in his development he learns the lessons of industry and thrift; he must learn by doing. Indians who continue to possess valuable property which has come to them as an inheritance must work to keep it, and those without property must work to get it. Our big problem is to teach the Indian these simple truths.

Through education, right training and sympathetic leadership lies the only hope for accomplishing lasting and beneficial results, and we shall succeed in benefiting the Indian only as we succeed in getting him to do things for himself. We might pour all the money in the United States Treasury at his feet and forever exempt him from all effort and toil on his part, and he would soon vanish from the earth. No race in the history of the world has ever made any substantial progress or advanced to a state of enlightened independence and prosperity except through its own efforts.

About all we can do for the Indian is to give him a white man's chance, which he has not always had. Naturally timid and self-conscious, he needs encouragement and intelligent sympathy, and at times a helping hand. These we should give freely when needed, and in the spirit of friendly interest. And he needs also, to be taught to pray, not that his just burdens be lightened, but rather that he be given strength to bear them.

The important thing with you is to believe in yourself—to have faith in the Indian and to be true to the best traditions of your race. Do not permit discouragements and disappointments to weaken your efforts or to lessen your determination. Rather, they should urge you on to greater effort and point the way to victory. Faith in ourselves preserves our enthusiasm undiminished and bids us endure the pangs of misfortune and bide our time, believing as we do that the sun shines for us also.