

The Chemawa American

Printed at Chemawa, Oregon, and Devoted to the Interests of Indian Education

Vol. XXIX

Wednesday, Nov. 30, 1927

3 MAY 8

No. 9

COPY - 1956

THE ECONOMIC FUTURE OF NATIVE ALASKANS

Far to the north of us lies Baranoff Island, as a buffer between the mighty Pacific Ocean and the coast of Alaska. Here is located Sitka, until recent years the capital of the great Alaskan territory, with its unknown millions of dollars in wealth yet untouched. At Sitka many years ago was established the Sheldon Jackson School, the purpose for which was the education of native Alaskans. The school has done its work well and has made history which shall be to its credit for all time. We take pleasure in commending the good work of this school. This institution publishes a little paper called "The Verstovian," and there is much to be commended to be found in its pages. The following is an excerpt of an article written by a student of Sheldon Jackson School, William Walton, and which appeared in The Verstovian—it is well worth while reading and studying:

Fifty years ago the aborigines of Alaska were in a primitive condition, and their effect upon the economic situation of Alaska was negligible. We have come upon a new era in the history of our native people. We are no longer confined to the old time hand-hewn windowless, chimneyless communal houses. These and the rude dilapidated bark covered huts are replaced by comfortable framehouses. In place of food consumed directly from nature, in place of fur or skin clothing, we use—for the most part—the modern and more easily obtained store goods. We use present day equipment for our occupations, not the old time dugout canoes, but modern rowboats and gas boats, not the old time spears and arrows but the modern Winchester, Savage and Springfield rifles, not the old time adz and stone ax but the modern carpenter tools and logging outfits. We have become citizens of a great country, the United States of America. We are allowed its protection and care and are allowed to take part in the control of its government. We pay taxes; we vote; we hold office. We are offered great opportunities for advancement in civilization and we have to learn to receive and use them in the most economic way. With every opportunity goes a corresponding responsibility. These responsibilities we must face. We must prepare ourselves to take our share of the burden which must be borne if we are to

keep in the line of progress.

Our country was favored with an abundance of wealth. Golden opportunities for advancement were made possible by the fertile soil, favorable climate, valuable minerals, vast forests and abundant water power. But we cannot say America's wealth (in the economic sense) was natural; everything had to be developed. Our nation has grown and has climbed steadily to the top, but there are reasons for this advancement. It was not made by chance or some hidden force, as luck. Everything is governed by natural laws. Land or nature and human labor were the original partners in the development of our country. From these two the third partner, capital, was derived; but our country would not be what she is if it were not for the brains of the thinkers.

By the economic use of these four factors the United States—a country only four and one fourth centuries old—stands at the front among nations of the world in civilization, wealth, power and influence. We natives of Alaska are indeed glad that we belong to such a prosperous nation.

For sixty years Alaska has been aiding the United States with her supply of free goods, such as fish, furs, trees and minerals. She has still an unlimited amount of these unemployed and she has water power which could be used for generating electricity and for other propelling forces. She has vast tracts of lands suitable for reindeer owners, whose herds could furnish an inexhaustible meat supply. No doubt we have more undeveloped resources than any other section of our country. These are waiting for the work, brains and capital that will operate them to the best advantage. Someone has to carry on this work of improvement.

The white people have done much during the past fifty years but this is an age of big enterprises. We need to cooperate to develop the country and to provide advancement for our native inhabitants. The day is past when we can get nine-tenths of our living from the sea; the day is past when we can fish without restriction. Our civilization has increased, our wants must be supplied. We must prepare to join

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