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Helping the Red Brothers

By
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It would not some years ago a prominent advocate of the education of the Indian was treading to a certain section of the west. The John who drives this champion of unadulterated educational methods stopped on his way that Indians "were not taken"—and he didn't hesitate to say so. Finally he turned to his passenger and said, with an amused smile:

"As for me of these fellows what comes from the end to civilize 'em. I am an Indian?"

The passenger was forced to plead affirmatively to the impeachment. The John smiled his good and burst into a roar of laughter which ultimately outlasted his passenger. Then he said:

"Well, I suppose you fellows know what you want and know how to get it, but I guess I am that way. I get a well in my back yard for home. It ain't great, no way, no way, but it's got 12 tubs. I guess it is, wasn't it?"

These methods of taming and civilizing Indians went out of vogue decades ago—in fact they were more in vogue in this vicinity. Here on Puget Sound were established some of the earliest schools for the education and civilization of Indian youth. Ten years ago the bustling city of Everett opened its doors to the first, not the Tulalip boarding school was a very material fact. The school was then maintained upon government lands but was only indirectly under government supervision. As has been the case with Everett, ten years have witnessed its evolution and a reversion. Ten years ago the Tulalip agency, one of Everett's nearest neighbors, possessed a boarding school and a day school. Today it possesses a well-equipped industrial

training and boarding school and three day schools. All of them entirely and exclusively maintained and supervised by the government.

All methods of instruction and all subjects of study, however valuable, have their limitations. Where, as frequently happens, the Indian is just a stumbling on the road to civilization, such methods must be sought and employed as will develop the powers and capacities with which the child is endowed. But a very essential something must be added to this; there must be systematic industrial training. Thus and thus alone can he acquire that skill which will make of him not only an intelligent learner for a skilled worker as well. Thus and thus alone can he be prepared for meeting the demands of that active life which must come to him sooner or later. It is as Rosen has said, there must be cultivated a just and legitimate familiarity between the child and things. The sole purpose of Indian schools is to fit the Indian for life. The value of the education to him must be judged by its contribution to his life interests and therefore the methods employed must be emphatically and essentially practical. The child should learn to speak English just as any child learns to speak English, naturally and unconsciously and not artificially and formally. He should become familiar with things by actual contact; where possible, especially in the plainer not more practical phases of life. Through the media of quarts of milk, bushels of potatoes, barrels of apples, baskets of berries, yards of muslin, dozens of eggs, acres of ground, etc., he should become familiar with numbers and the properties of numbers. This can be very easily impressed with the fact that numbers are not necessary; Indians will dolefully to school books. Above everything else it is necessary to