

The Chemawa American

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ALASKA

I earnestly ask that Alaska be given an elective delegate. Some person should be chosen who could speak with authority of the needs of the territory. The Government school aid in the construction of a railroad from the Gulf of Alaska to the Yukon River, in American Territory. In my last two messages I advocated certain additional action on behalf of Alaska. I shall not now repeat those recommendations, but shall lay all my stress upon the recommendation of giving to Alaska some one authorized to speak for it. I should prefer that the delegate was made elective, but if this is not deemed wise then make him appointive. At any rate, give Alaska some person whose business it shall be to speak with authority on her behalf to the Congress. The national resources of Alaska are great.

I also earnestly ask your attention to the needs of the Alaskan Indians. All Indians who are competent should receive the full rights of American citizenship. It is for instance, a gross and indefensible wrong to deny to such hard-working, decent-living Indians as the Metlakahtlas the right to obtain licenses as captains, pilots and engineers the right to enter mining claims, and to profit by the homestead law. These particular Indians are civilized, and are competent and entitled to be put on the same basis with the white men round about them.

--President Roosevelt's Message to Congress last year.

The above strong words of commendation of the Metlakahtla Alaskan Indians by President Roosevelt incidentally speaks volumes for Chemawa and the Industrial training to be obtained here. Since the establishment of this school Chemawa has returned to Alaska more than a hundred Alaskan Indians from Metlakahtla who acquired their Industrial Education at this school.

The cartoon, which we republish as a frontispiece, was drawn by John Harris, an ex-Chemawa pupil and an Alaskan Indian. It is a fair representation of the situation. Indian Education can be had at the Indian Schools by the Indians of Idaho, California, Oregon, Montana and Washington, but the Alaskan is left out in the cold.

The salmon of Alaska is to the Alaskan Indian what the buffalo was to the Indian of the states. When the white men destroyed the buffalo the plains Indians became dependent and now that the white men have and are taking the Alaskan Indians' salmon their condition will be soon changed from independence to dependence. The pioneers of civilization pauperizes the Indian.

Section 7 of the Cushman law reads as follows: "That the schools specified and provided for in this act shall be devoted to the education of white children and children of mixed blood who lead a civilized life. The education of Eskimos and Indians in the district of Alaska shall remain under the direction and control of the Secretary of the Interior, and schools for the Eskimos and Indians of Alaska shall be provided for by an annual appropriation, and the Eskimo and Indian children of Alaska shall have the same right to be admitted to any boarding school as the Indian children in the States or Territories of the United States.