

## T H E S I S.

Subject, The Education of the North  
American Indians.

Name, Price G. Frye

The education of the Indian is a problem that the citizens of the United States have been trying to solve for a number of years. The question is. How shall the Indian be reached? It is believed by many who have been interested in the civilization of the Indian that the key to the Indian problem has been found.

The Indians were a barbarous nation, knowing nothing of civilization. They worshiped the sun as the supreme god. They lived in wigwams and their dress consisted of a blanket. They were very skillful in making their darts and bows and arrows.

As these Indians were savages they acted very cruelly toward the white man, but generally when shown love by the whites they returned love. They thought the white man was intruding when he settled in America, and as a result many massacres occurred among



the white villages.

The earliest missionaries among the Indians were the Jesuits. This was an order of the Roman Catholic Church that came from Europe and worked among the Indians of the Mississippi valley and Canada. These people were interesting in their efforts to bring about civilization among the red men, and through their influence many of the Indians were Christianized.

In New England John Eliot devoted his entire life to this great cause. He went among the Indians teaching them, and learning their language. He translated the Bible into their tongue and this aided him very much in his efforts to Christianize the red man.

Farther south, especially in our own state and Delaware, the Friends had great influence. They were kind to the Indians and treated them as brothers.

As the population of America increased and new settlements were made the Indian was pushed further west, and little was done in regard to his education. The white man contented himself by seizing the rightful home of the Indian until today he has possession of every profitable spot in America, and the Indian is confined to his reservation. It now behooves the American Government to protect the Indians, and, if possible, to make citizens of them.

'Civilization will not allow barbarism to stand in its way.' This law means that the Indian must either be exterminated or absorbed into the citizenship of the nation.

The people and the Government have come to realize this, and are now trying to civilize and educate the Indian.



The Indian Educational Bureau has schools in all parts of the United States which are more or less under its control. Very many of these schools are industrial schools where the Indian boys are given, besides instruction in literary branches, practical lessons in agriculture, carpentry, smithing, shoemaking, and other trades which will be of use to them in their work of after life; and the girls are given instruction in housekeeping and related tasks. In different parts of the United States special schools have been established which are not directly under the control of the Bureau, but for whose support appropriations are made annually.

Pennsylvania is the proud possessor of the oldest and most noted of these special schools, which is located

at Carlisle. In 1875 Captain P. H. Pratt was put in possession of seventy-four Indian prisoners at St. Augustine, and undertook their education. The instruction at first was chiefly industrial, but when the school was removed to Carlisle in 1879 instruction in literary branches was begun.

A device has been introduced at Carlisle which gives the Indian youth an insight into the ways of civilized life. It is known as the "outing system," and consists in putting the boys and girls, who have had partial training at the school, into the families of the good Quaker farmers of our state. In this way the young Indians learn the ways of civilized life, the English language, and the practical work of agriculture. Another of these special schools which



is doing grand work, is the Haskell Institute, Kansas. There the same plan of teaching is used as at Carlisle.

This is the policy of the Bureau to vary the industries of the training schools to meet the needs of the different localities where the schools are situated.

Thus at the Haskell Institute general farming and other industries suitable to Kansas are taught, while at Phoenix, Arizona, the young Indians are of great service in fruit culture.

Religious denominations have established schools on the reservations where the children are taught many useful things. They are taken to the missions and kept, being allowed only one week of the year at home, but their parents are permitted to see them any day they wish.

It is true that there is danger of the

educated and civilized boys and girls falling back into old modes of life at their homes. At school they learn a trade and when they return home, having nothing to work with, are liable to follow the customs of their parents.

This downward tendency is being checked in a measure by the Government supplying the young Indians with tools to work with and earn a living. Then again the compulsory system will soon make education so universal among the Indians that the downward tendency will be stayed.

The young Indian is not as some have said, slow and possessing such a barbarous spirit that he cannot be civilized, but quick and willing to learn and become civilized. He has a great love for music and takes



8.  
great delight in base-ball.

The problem in Indian education is purely a social and industrial one. Education may give the Indian rapid progress, but, having his education, he must have means by which he can use it. Let the people insure him an opportunity for the use of his learning, and let the educated Indians be mingled as citizens of the Republic, and the Indian problem will not exist.

## Bibliography.

"Education in the United States"

"History of Education in Pennsylvania"

"Our Indian Problem and How We are Solving It." Review of Reviews, June, 1892.

"How shall the Indians be Educated?"  
North American Review, October, 1894.