

## THE FUTURE OF OUR INDIANS

### Fair Play

Paper No. 1

The Canadian Indian  
Vol. I, No. 6, March, 1891

This is a problem which has long agitated the minds of thinking people, and one for which the writer of this article is by no means prepared to offer a solution. But it seems to him that the pages of the CANADIAN INDIAN can scarcely perhaps be put to a better purpose than that of ventilating so important and far-reaching a subject; and he proposes now, in a series of short papers, to throw out a few ideas and suggestions, which, however crude and impracticable they may appear to persons of more profound thought and of riper judgment, may yet perhaps do some good, if only as a means of drawing attention to the subject and inviting criticism on the thoughts suggested. The writer would wish it to be understood from the outset that he takes the side of the Indians, and wishes to speak altogether from the Indian's standpoint. There are plenty of persons ready enough to deal with the Indian question from the white man's point of view. All the actions of our Government, of our Indian Department, of our education institutions, even the organization and carrying on of our Christian missions, are from the white man's stand-point. The Indian is not asked whether he prefers living on an Indian reserve to roaming the country; whether he likes his children to be educated or to lead a wild life; whether he prefers Government beef or buffalo flesh; whether he is to retain the language and the customs of his forefathers, or to give them up; whether in his worship he is to follow the ancient ritual of his ancestors, address the sun as his god, and the rivers, mountains, rocks and other elements of nature as minor deities, or to accept the Christian teaching of the white man and become thereby a Methodist, Episcopalian, a Presbyterian or a Roman Catholic. He is not asked these things. There is no yea or nay about it. They are simply one after another forced upon him. Not only is he expected to accept them without a word, but he is expected also to be grateful, to coin words for which there is no equivalent in his simple, primitive language, to express his gratitude -- otherwise he may be dubbed an "ungrateful savage," or even something worse, by his white neighbors.

That the Indians -- even the most civilized of them -- are not altogether enthusiastic in their desire to accept the white man's methods, to blot out their desire to accept the white man's methods, to blot out their own nationality, and to wave aloft over their villages either the Stars and Stripes of America or the Union Jack of Canada, has been proved not unfrequently of late on both sides of the line by whispered reports gleaned at their council meetings. The idea of enfranchisement, which in the eyes of white men is esteemed so great a boon, to

the Indian appears to have but little charm. And only lately we heard that some of our most civilized Indians were appealing to Government to have their chieftainship made hereditary once more, instead of elective as at present. Then again -- across the border, what is this "Messiah craze" that has spread with such wonderful rapidity among the Indians from north to south and from east to west? What a readiness there seems to be on their part to go back to the old ways again, to resume their old customs and their old superstitions, if only the chance were given them. Sometimes it seems to me that all we are doing for them -- educating their children, dressing them in white men's clothing, making them talk English, teaching them to pride themselves in being like white people -- is a mere veneer; that underneath there is still the love of the wild, roaming life; that hidden beneath the outward Christian life are still the remnants of dark heathen superstition. Certain it is, whatever may be said to the contrary, that the Indians, as a people, do not draw towards the white people; and that the white people, as a people, do not draw towards the Indians.

What then, is to be the future of the Indians? Will the day ever come that the Indians as a people will have so utterly and entirely lost their own distinct nationality, their own distinct peculiarities of habit, taste, character, as to mingle freely with the white people, and become one of them? It does not look much like it at present. There are indeed some few isolated cases of Indians who have received a good education, developed talent according to the white man's standard, and taken their position in the midst of us, some as doctors, some as employees in the Indian Department, some as ministers of the Gospel; but these, it must be acknowledged, are exceptional cases; and if they have been received at all into society, it is probably because they have become united in marriage with a "pale face," and have thus identified themselves permanently with the Anglo-Saxon race. The idea has been prevalent of late that the true way to deal with the Indians, and indeed the only method at all likely to be followed with success, is to take their children while young, remove them altogether from their parents, keep them five or six years in a boarding school, teach them entirely in English, let them forget their old barbaric tongue and their old ways and customs; and become, in fact, thoroughly Anglicized. And this idea has been still further improved upon within the last few years; the newest idea of all, and one which is already being acted upon to a considerable extent in the United States, is that when the Indian pupil has been pretty well weaned from his old ways, and well-nigh forgotten his own language, and has learned to read and write and do sums and to follow some trade like a white child, that he should not return to his own home and his own people, but should be placed out among the white people, be apprenticed to some white farmer or mechanic, earn his own living, and prepare to settle down in life -- not on an Indian Reserve, but in the midst of a white population.

Now, all this from the white man's point of view, seems to be very plausible and, indeed, desirable. But how is it from the Indian's point of view? Is the Indian himself to have nothing to say about it? How would we white people like it if because we were weak, and another people more powerful than ourselves had possession of our country, we were obliged to give up our little children to go to the schools of this more powerful people -- KNOWING

that they were taken from us for the very purpose of weaning them from the old loves and the old associations -- if we found that they were most unwillingly allowed to come back to us for the short summer holidays; and when they came were dressed in the peculiar costume of our conquerors, and were talking their language instead of the dear old tongue, and then -- if, when the time stipulated for their education was drawing to a close, and we were looking forward to welcoming them back to the old home, we were to be coolly told that provision had been made for them to go and live elsewhere, and that we were not very likely to see them again? What would we think of our conquerors if they treated us in this way?

It is said that this Messiah craze, this present disaffection and hostile spirit among the Indians in Dakota and elsewhere, is due to the unjust treatment they have received at the hands of the American Government, and American officials; that their rations have been so cruelly reduced that many of them were on the verge of starvation, -- but it seems to me that the real trouble rather is that the Indians, as a people, are not willing to have their own nationality and hereditary laws and customs so entirely effaced and swept away, as it seems to them it is the white man's policy to do. I incline to think that the forcing of their children away to school, the pressing upon them of civilized habits and occupations, the weaning them from the love of home and parents, has perhaps had as much to do with the late disaffection as the limited supply of beef and the poor quality of the flour.

An Indian is a different being to a white man. His history for centuries past has been of a character wholly different to that of the white man. His pleasures, his tastes, his habits, his laws, are all at variance with those accepted by the white man. How, then, can we expect, in the course of two or three decades, to effect such radical changes in his character, habits, thoughts, as it has taken centuries to effect in ourselves? And is it altogether just to treat the Indian in the way we are doing? Is it altogether fair to deprive them of their nationality, to laugh at their old laws and customs and traditions, to force upon them our own laws and customs as though there could be no two questions as to their superiority in every way, and that they must, of course, be just as suitable and applicable to the Indian as they are to ourselves. Is there nothing -- nothing whatever -- in the past history of this ancient people to merit our esteem, or to call forth our praise? Were their laws in the past all mere childishness? Were there no great minds among their noted chiefs? Do the ruins of their ancient cities show no marks of intelligence, energy or perseverance, in the people that planned and constructed them? While taking steps to preserve their ancient relics in our museums, and while studying their past history and their many and diverse languages, were it not well, as a matter of justice and Christian kindness to them, as well as out of respect for their past and but little-understood history, to allow them to preserve their own nationality, and, under certain restrictions, to enact their own laws? Would it not be pleasanter, and even safer to us, to have living in our midst a contented, well-to-do, self-respecting, thriving community of Indians, rather than a set of dependent, dissatisfied, half-educated and half-Anglicized paupers?

As the writer of this article said at the beginning of his paper, his

object in taking up this subject is simply to throw out a few crude ideas; and his hope is that those who are better able than he is to reason out the problem, and whose judgment will have more weight with the public, will take up and thoroughly ventilate the whole question.

In my last paper I broached the idea that, looking to the future of our young growing country, it might be pleasanter, and perhaps better for us in every way, to have living in our midst a community of self-respecting, contented, well to-do Indians, rather than the scattered remnants of a people who, against their will, had been forced to give up their old customs, laws and traditions, and to array themselves in the ill-fitting garb of our advanced civilization. I do not mean by this that I am against the training and educating of our young Indians; far from it. I believe by far the greater number of our semi-civilized Indians are warmly in favor of schools and education. The Cherokees, in Indian Territory, who for many years past have been permitted to manage their own affairs, hold their own public purse, and make their own laws, are, as a people, very far advanced in education; and have large schools and colleges, built out of their own funds, established in their midst. If our civilized Indians in Canada had more of the management of their own affairs, I believe education and civilization would advance among them, and not retrograde. What I feel so strongly is that the civilized Indians of this country ought to have more voice in their own affairs, that the time has passed for treating them as children, doling out to them their presents and their annuities, and taking their children away from them to be educated, without allowing them to have any voice in the matter. It seems to me that the proper persons to deal with the wild blanket Indians of the Northwest Territories and British Columbia are these civilized Christian Indians of Ontario and Quebec and some parts of Manitoba. It seems to me that if something of a national spirit were stirred up among them, if more confidence were placed in them as a people, if these presents and annuities were done away with, and the Indian Reserves one by one thrown open, and the white missionaries were one by one withdrawn from their midst -- and these Christian civilized Indians had the responsibilities of life thus thrown upon them -- that there would be very soon a great change for the better; and before very long we white people would learn to respect the name of Indian instead of despising it. How can any people, however civilized, be expected to advance and to keep pace with the world, when all national sentiment is dried up, and when all spirit of self-dependence is destroyed within them?

Is there nothing in the past history of this people that might lead us to hope that, under wise guidance, and with the object lesson of our own system of government with its beneficial results ever before them, they might in time be permitted to have a constitution of their own, and under certain restrictions, make their own laws and manage their own affairs? Mr. Hale, in his pamphlet on the Iroquois Confederacy, says, "The testimony of historians, travellers and missionaries, is that these Indians were, in their own way, acute reasoners, eloquent speakers, and most skilful and far-seeing politicians. For more than a century, though never mustering more than five thousand fighting men, they were able to hold the balance of power on this continent between France and England; and, in a long series of negotiations, they proved themselves qualified to cope in council with the best diplomats whom

either of those powers could depute to deal with them. Their internal polity was marked by equal wisdom; and had been developed and consolidated into a system of government, embodying many of what are deemed the best principles and methods of political science -- representation, federation, self-government through local and general legislatures -- all resulting in personal liberty, combined with strict subordination to public law." This is what Mr. Hale, than whom probably no other man in Canada has more thoroughly studied the whole Indian question in all its aspects, says of the Iroquois Indians, or rather of the six nations (Mohawks, Cayugas, Oneidas, Onandagas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras), which form the Iroquois Confederacy. And it should be remembered that representatives of this great Iroquois confederacy are still living in Canada to the number of about 4000, viz., 1000 on the Bay of Quinte, near Deseronto, and upwards of 3000 on the Grand River, near Brantford; and that they are regarded as the most advanced in civilization of all our Indians. Take another tribe, the Ottawas, after whom the capital of our Dominion is named. This tribe, closely related to the great Ojebway nation, is now reduced to about 2500, and its remnants are scattered upon our Manitoulin Island and parts of the State of Michigan. An educated Ottawa, now advanced in years, tells how in his young days, before the white men held sway, his people lived under strict laws; they were governed by twenty-one precepts or moral commandments, which they were taught to observe, just as we teach our children the Ten Commandments. The children were taught that the Great Spirit could see them continually both by night and by day, and that they must not do any wicked thing to anger him; they were taught, also, that they must not mimic or mock thunder; that they must not mimic or mock the mountains or rivers; they were taught that dishonesty and licentiousness were wrong; that murder ought to be avenged; that they ought to be brave and not fear death. The Cherokees, 22,000 in number, living in Indian Territory, U.S., have, as is well known, a regular system of government, framed partly upon the American pattern, partly after their own ideas. They have their own Governor, elected by the popular vote, and their own Parliament; the Legislative Assembly consists of an Upper and Lower House; in the former sit eighteen senators, and in the latter thirty-eight councillors, elected every second year from the nine districts. The Judicial Department consists of a District Court for each of the nine political districts. In cases involving the death penalty, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court presides. The jury and grand jury system is followed the same as in the United States. Their state prison is at Tahlequah, their capital, where also are situated their government offices and Houses of Parliament; also two large, handsomely-built seminaries, one for male and one for female pupils, each with accommodation for 150 scholars. They have very strict prohibitory liquor laws, which are rigidly exacted. And yet, with all this advance in the ways of civilization, these Cherokee Indians do by preference hold their lands in common, and retain several of their other ancient customs. A well-educated Cherokee lawyer has given the following reasons wherefore the Cherokees are opposed to the allotment of land in severalty: (1) By holding it in common they are better able to resist the aggression of the whites; (2) Their present social system has never yet developed a mendicant or a tramp; (3) Although poor, yet they have no paupers, none suffering from the oppression of the rich; (4) They do not believe that the whites have any better condition to offer them, and so they wish to remain as they are.

The Delawares again, of whom there is a remnant still remaining in Canada, have always been regarded as a people of marked intelligence. In the old days they had an ancient art called the "Ola Wampum," which was a sort of chart to assist the memory in recording traditions. When, after being driven from place to place by their white oppressors, they at length settled down in what they hoped would be a permanent colony, in 1866, they framed and adopted a code of laws which provided, among other things, for the punishment of horse-stealers; for fining or otherwise punishing those who should take and ride a horse without consent of the owner; for building or keeping up fences to a proper height, for branding cattle; for returning lost articles or strayed cattle; for preventing the sale of liquor; for the making and carrying into effect of a person's will; for paying a man's debts after his death. Their laws dealt also with offences against the person, such as assault, murder and adultery, and defined the punishment of a miscreant who should wilfully set fire to a house.

A good deal has been written about the Zuni Indians in New Mexico. These people are particularly interesting because they still inhabit the same locality, and are following for the most part the same ancient customs as when first discovered, by Coronado, in the 16th century. Now among these people there exists a most elaborate religious system. They have priests and high priests. They have thirteen secret religious orders. Of course there is a great deal of what we would call superstition mixed up in all they do; and yet there can be no question but that they are a most religious people; they have the most profound belief in the doctrines handed down to them from their ancestors; nothing is done without prayer; some sort of religious rite or ceremonial seems to be a necessary accompaniment to all their undertakings. Their great mother, they say, is the rock, and their great father the sun. Their children, from earliest infancy, are instructed most carefully and constantly in all the religious usages of the tribe; and they have 'god parents' specially deputed to look after them and instruct them.

Much more might yet be said, did space permit to shew how the various Indian tribes, in days gone by, have had their own laws and their own religious customs; and how, as a result of being brought into contact with our Eastern civilization, they have in many cases voluntarily adopted, in a great measure, our system, as superior to their own, and have shown themselves, where opportunity has been afforded them, very well capable of self-government; but these records show also, I think, another thing, which it were foolish to hide our eyes from, viz., that the Indians as a people -- wherever their location may happen to be -- are not prepared to accept our system of government in toto; that while gladly accepting the white man's books, and education, and religion, and style of clothing and dwelling, and his various useful inventions and manufactures, they at the same time prefer to take these things and use them after their own fashion, and in their own way; they do not want to be forced into giving up all their old customs, which are so dear to them, and transforming themselves into white men; they will not allow that everything the white man makes, or says, or does, is superior to what they can make, or say, or do, themselves. They do not wish to follow the white man in his greediness after earthly gain; they do not believe in one man being very rich and another man very poor; they stick to the old saying of their ancestors, "the earth is our

common mother, our mother may not be divided;" and again another saying, "earth, air, and water, are the Great Spirit's gifts to us all, and may not be bought or sold."

Are we to have no respect for these inbred sentiments of our Indians, so deeply rooted in their breasts? Are they not to be allowed to hold and to foster national sentiment as well as ourselves? Is it right, or just, or fair, to deprive them of their tribal intercourse, to deprive them of their language, to blot out all their old associations and traditions, and to force them to be white men against their will? What nation is there upon earth that would submit to this? We may believe our ways, our customs, and our laws to be the best, but we cannot force the Indian to believe it. If we desire that he should be brought to accept our laws, and customs, and language, were it not better to lead him gradually to it, instead of forcing so great a change suddenly upon him? People complain of the Indian that he is slow in his movements, and ridicule him because he makes so little progress in comparison with his white brother; but there is this, I think, to be said, that the white man is in the white man's country, in the midst of surroundings that he fully approves and believes in, and he takes a national pride and pleasure in the progress of his country -- but with the Indian -- why, we know how it is with him. He holds the anomalous position of a stranger in a strange land, even though the soil under his feet be the soil bequeathed to him by his forefathers; he feels strange and bewildered; white men are bustling, hurrying all around him; he understands but very imperfectly either what they are saying or what they are doing; and he is told roughly, by those who take but little trouble to understand his case, that he must either adopt the white man's ways, and become virtually a white man, or else go back out of the way. In this wide country have we no room for an independent Indian community? Can we not place the Indian where he will no longer be hustled and badgered by his impatient white brethren? Or, if the Indian Reserve system must for the present be continued, might we not make the Indian happier, give him more respect for himself, and exact more respect for him from the white people, by placing his own affairs, both temporal and spiritual, more in his own hands, and permit him, with certain restrictions, to make his own laws and carry out his own ideas of government? In time, the two races may become amalgamated, the dividing lines be lost; but surely it is not fair to force the Indian to obliterate himself against his will, neither, do I believe, would it be a good thing for our country.



Can a people be happy and prosperous, so long as all national feeling is smothered and kept down within them? How is it with ourselves? Is it not the traditions of the past, the history of by-gone days, that stirs our young men to press on towards the goal of success, and to do honor to their country? You say of the Indian -- why can he not give up his own language, and adopt that of the country, as do the Germans, and the Swedes, and the French, and the Italians, that come as settlers to our shores? I wonder how many of these French and Swedes, and others, talk the English language in their own homes! Is it not the tendency with these foreigners to form little settlements and communities of their own people? Are not their songs, when they gather round the hearth-stone at night, all of the Fatherland? Do not they pride themselves on the old home which they have left across the seas? Does not their heart beat quickly at the sound of their old country music, or a sight of the old flag? Why should we expect that Indians alone, of all people, should be ready quietly to give up all old customs and traditions and language, and adopt those of the aggressor upon their soil? The change which we expect the Indian to make, and to make so quickly, is a far greater one than is required of any of those nations above enumerated, who have left the shores of one civilized country to come to those of another. With the Indian, the change is a radical one -- a change of dress, a change of dwelling, a change in mode of gaining livelihood, a social change, a religious change, an education change, a totum in toto change. And this -- not so much for his own benefit, as for our own convenience. We want the land. We cannot have Indian hunters annoying our farmers and settlers. If the Indian is to remain, he must learn to be a decent neighbor; and to be a decent neighbor, we expect him to accept our religion, our education, our laws, and our customs. We allow him no choice, and we allow him no time. It is very pleasant, no doubt, to pride ourselves on the kindness that we Canadians have always shown to the Indians; it is pleasant to compare ourselves with our neighbors across the border and to congratulate ourselves that while the Americans are killing their Indians off, and are saying that "the only good Indian is the dead Indian," we Canadians are feeding the hungry, teaching the adults to farm, and training the young in our schools. But with all our goodness and kindness, I fear, if the truth were told, it would be found that there is at least one point in which we have failed -- and that is -- We have not considered his feelings; we have not given him sufficient credit for intelligence; we have not sufficiently considered that the love of fatherland, the love of the old traditions of the past, the love of the old language, and the old stories and songs, is as strong in the Indian as in any Englishman or Frenchman or Italian. A highly-educated Mohawk Indian said to me only the other day -- and I must confess I was surprised to hear him say it -- "the last thing I would wish to give up is our language."

Now, if it be the case that these patriotic -- or whatever name you like to call them -- feelings are so strong in the Indian, may not that be the great reason why he seems to be so slow to adopt our civilization, and to make good

friends with us; why he seems to prefer -- as I have little doubt he does -- to live in a community of his own people rather than to intermingle with, and intermarry with the whites? And again, if these patriotic feelings be so strong in him, is it not foolish for us on our part to think that a few years' schooling of his children will knock all the Indian out of him, and fit him for accepting and adopting all the ins and outs of our advanced civilization. "You may take your horse to water, but cannot make him drink."

The Indian, I believe, must have time. These changes that we think so good for him, must not be forced upon him too suddenly. Surely, if we would be successful in our dealings with these aboriginal people, we must lead them on slowly and kindly to see that these great and radical changes, which civilization necessarily brings in its train, are really for their good. We must give them time to take, taste, try and prove, these various measures which we are taking for their benefit. And if they take them and use them in their way, rather than in our way, what reason can we have for being surprised? They, as a people, are so differently constituted to ourselves, that it seems scarcely to be expected that they should accept our laws and customs, and do everything just in the way that we do. If it is our great aim and object to make them self-supporting and self-dependent, then it would seem to be only wise and politic on the part of our rulers, to offer to them a modus vivendi that will please them. In order to become an industrious and prosperous people, they must become first a contented people. They can never become prosperous while feeling discontented and aggrieved. How can we expect them to be happy and contented, so long as measure after measure is forced upon them, without any reference to their own desires or their own feelings? Surely it were wiser now that a large proportion of our Indians, especially those living in Ontario, are comparatively civilized and educated, and able to converse in English, to take them into our counsels, and learn from their own lips their own Indian views as to their present position in this country, and their prospects for the future. Do they wish the present Indian Reserve system to be continued? Do they wish to dwell for ever as separate communities? Do they wish to retain for ever their own language?

When trouble arises, when Indians threaten war and put on their war paint, the white man is ready enough to consider their grievances, and listen to their complaints. But why should we wait for war and trouble? Were it not better and nobler now while the poor Indian is at peace with us, to take him into our counsel, and endeavor to devise a way by which he may rise from his present despised and degraded condition, and become a worthy and industrious part of our great and growing nation? I believe if steps were taken to ascertain the real feelings of the Indians, as regards amalgamation with our white population, it would be found that they were almost unanimously against it. My impression is that they do not wish to become Canadians. They wish to adopt our laws and customs up to a certain point; they are ready to throw over their heathenism, with all its dark superstition, and to accept in its stead the light of Christian teaching; they are ready to acknowledge the benefit of education, and wish to have their children educated, -- but -- they still cling to the old saying of their ancestors, "the earth is our mother, and cannot be divided;" "earth, water and air, are the free gifts of the Great Spirit to his children and can-

not be owned by individuals." These and other kindred sentiments, I believe, are strong -- very strong; strongly rooted in the Indian breast from Mexico to Hudson Bay, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And it is these and other such-like inbred sentiments, that seem to preclude, at any rate for many long years to come, any kind of amalgamation between them and the white race. They prefer, I believe, to live in separate communities, and to hold their land in common, as their forefathers have done before them for ages immemorial.

And does it not seem a little strange, and a little out of place, that we white people should be forcing upon these free children of the forest and prairie the various peculiar religious tenets which we have brought with us across the Atlantic Ocean? Were it not better that these Indians should be free to have their own form and style of worship if they elect to do so? What know these simple people of all our various isms? How are they to judge between the merits of one religious body and another? The Indian agent on the Grand River Reserve, reports that among his 4,000 Six Nation Indians, 1,032 are Church of England, 611 Baptists, 314 Methodists, 72 Salvation Army, 90 Brethren, 25 Roman Catholics, 4 Universalists, 9 Free Church, 9 Presbyterians, 684 Pagans, 534 religion unknown. Does this list commend itself to any reader of the Canadian Indian? Does it commend itself to any Christian in Canada. Is it our object, as Christian people, to perpetrate our religious differences among these poor Indians? We talk about the desirability of union among ourselves. We pray that Almighty God will heal our differences and make us united, and yet we are working to perpetrate these differences among these poor Indians, so recently converted from heathenism. Should it not rather be our aim to promote the establishment of a native church -- a self-supporting native church -- a church that would have life in itself, and would be the means of extending Christian teaching to distant points among its own heathen. This again is a matter that has, I think, been too much overlooked or lost sight of in our dealings with the Indians -- the natural fitness of young Indians to endure the fatigue and the hardships attaching to a missionary's life. They may not perhaps make just the sort of missionaries that young white men would make. Mould them on the white man's pattern, and probably they will turn out failures. But stir up among the young men in an Indian community a true missionary spirit, and encourage them to go out and preach the Gospel in their own way, to their own heathen -- supported by their own people -- and it seems to me that no better missionaries would be found. An Indian, better than any white man, knows how to bear cold and fasting and shipwreck and peril, and all that long category of suffering which St. Paul underwent patiently and stoically; and surely in this way he is well fitted for the fatigues and trials of missionary work. If only the Indian spirit could be stirred to work and to deny itself for the spread of the true Messiah's kingdom as it was stirred up lately in the States over a false Messiah, we might surely look for Christianity to make great and rapid strides in their midst. The Indians, as I have noted in a former paper, are naturally a religious people, they will give freely even of their poverty to the support of Christian missions. If they were to carry on their own mission work, there might indeed be some lack of organization, and possibly a lower standard of morals than we white people would require; but on the other hand the feeling of self-dependence, and freedom from the shackles of nineteenth-century churchism, would, I believe, bear its fruits in a wider extension of the truth, and a more universal acceptance, on their part, of Christianity.

In this fourth and last paper I would like to offer a few suggestions as to what appears to me will be the best way to deal with our Indians in the future. As I said in my first paper on the subject, my ideas may be crude, visionary, impracticable; still I think there can be no harm in offering them, especially as it must surely be universally admitted that the system at present in vogue is but of a temporary character and must sooner or later give place to something of a more permanent form. It can surely never be thought that the Indian Department as it at present exists, with all its expensive machinery, its agents on every reserve, its farm instructors and other servants, is to continue for ever. It cannot be that the wild Indians of the North are for ever to receive the weekly rations of beef and flour, or that the more civilized Indians of Ontario are to be kept penned up on reserves, receive annuities, and be treated as children. Sooner or later this system must either come to an end, or it must at least undergo some great modification. These Indians, who are at present kept under tutelage as the wards of the Government, have either to arrive at maturity and must be recognized as men and women, or else they must be improved off the face of the earth and cease to exist. The latter is not likely, and surely cannot be wished for by any person possessing a grain of humanity in his breast. If, then, they are to become men and women -- the great question is: are they to amalgamate with our white population and become one nation with us, or are they to be allowed to preserve their own nationality and continue to be Indians? My belief is that the latter alternative is what the Indian desires -- and desires very strongly, throughout the length and breadth of the land, both in the United States and in Canada -- not only the wild Indians of the north, but notably the the most civilized and advanced of the tribes; and it is this impression, which a wide intercourse with the Indians during many years and over an extended area has produced on my mind, that must be my apology for these four papers on the subject.

The policy of the white man's government, it seems to me, both in Canada and in the United States, is to un-Indianize the Indian, and make him in every sense a white man. And it is against this policy that the Indian, whether in a wild state, or semi-civilized, or nearly wholly civilized, as it seems to me, is setting up his back. I believe it is this more than anything else that is hindering his progress, for he views everything that the white man does for him with suspicion, believing that this hated policy for the absorption of his race and his nationality is at the back of it. He is willing, ready to adopt the white man's clothing, the white man's laws, the white man's religion, and, for commercial purposes, the white man's language; but he is not willing to give up his nationality or his communism, or his native language in the domestic circle -- he wishes to live apart from the white man, in a separate community, and to exercise, so far as is compatible with his position in the country, a control over his own affairs.

And what can be the harm in allowing him to do so? Would it be any menace to the peace of our country if the civilized Indians of Ontario were permitted to have their own centre of Government -- their own Ottawa, so to speak; their own Lieutenant-Governor, and their own Parliament?

In my former papers I have shewn that many of the tribes in past days, before the white man came among them, had excellent laws of their own, that there have been many wise heads among them. I have shewn also that the Indian is willing and ready to a certain extent to accept our laws and customs as better than his own, but prefers to take them at our hands and mould them in his own way. I have spoken, too, of the Cherokees in Indian Territory, 22,000 in number, who already have their own Governor, their own Parliament, and make their own laws. What the United States has done for one tribe of 22,000 Indians, I propose our Dominion Government should do for her 17,000 Ontario Indians; hand over to them their funds, which are at present held in trust for them, appoint them a Lieutenant-Governor from among their own people, let them select a spot for their capital, and have their own Parliament and make their own laws. And if this be successful, I think, as time goes on, the whole management of Indian Affairs might be transferred from the Indian Department in Ottawa to the Indian Government at the Indian Capital.

And then the Missionary work. This also, I incline to think, might be far better managed by the Indians themselves. The Christian churches all seem to begrudge the expenditure on Indian Missions, and, as I pointed out in a former paper, it is no credit to us as a Christian nation that the Indians of this country who have accepted our Christianity should already be broken up into so many little sects quarrelling with and abusing one another. If the Indians were united as a people, I doubt very much but that they would unite also in the matter of religion. The national sentiment would out-balance the sect sentiment. The lines are not so sharply drawn between the different isms where Indians are concerned as they are among the whites. I think the Indians would probably adopt a Christian religion of their own, in which all of them could join. They are a generous, liberal-minded people, thinking more of the general weal than of the individual welfare; and, I believe, would do not less than we have been doing, and perhaps a good deal more for the conversion of their heathen. Neither, I believe, would education be neglected. Among the Cherokees there is not at present a man or woman (except the very aged), or a child of Schoolable age, that cannot read and write. Out of their public Treasury they have expended at one time as much as \$100,000 in the erection of a college for the training of their youth.

These ideas, in regard to the future of our Indians, will, I daresay, be new altogether to a good many of the readers of THE CANADIAN INDIAN. They are new, the writer admits, and may be, as he has said, crude, visionary, and even impracticable. Still, he believes, they are not unworthy of some thought and consideration. And, above all things, it would seem desirable, as a first step, that the views of the most advanced and intelligent of our Indians should be obtained on the various points enunciated. Nothing probably could be better than this Indian Conference which has already been proposed, and was to have taken place in Toronto in May, but has now, as I understand, been put off until

the month of September. I hope the Conference will be held, and that the Indians will come in good numbers and speak for themselves, and then we shall be better able to judge as to the best course to be adopted for our Indians' future.