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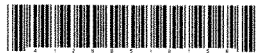
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Request No.: 1316

Request date: October 02 2014

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Title: Classroom

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Due lack of economic opportunity Indians had no ability  
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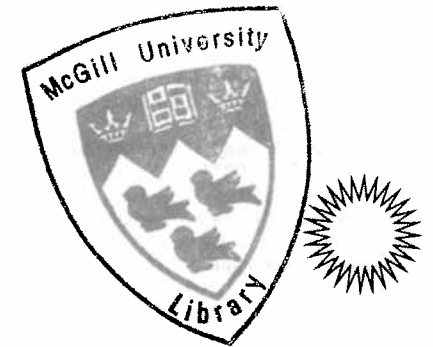
Promoting Americanism in a very coercive way; but @  
same time policies of segregation → <sup>show</sup> real bigotry - not  
good enough to be in mainstream  
- dual message → reinforces racial/ethnic  
identities.

Stor - Journal of Education  
Review of book

# Education for Extinction

AMERICAN INDIANS AND THE  
BOARDING SCHOOL EXPERIENCE,  
1875-1928

David Wallace Adams



University Press of Kansas

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## CHAPTER FIVE

## Classroom

Removing Indian children from their native communities, stripping away the external trappings of their tribal identity, and initiating them into the routine and discipline of institutional life were just a beginning. The battle for children's hearts, minds, and souls could not be won simply with barber shears and marching drills. If Indians were to be prepared for citizenship, if they were to become economically self-sufficient, and if they were to adopt the values and sentiments of American civilization, then they must be instructed to achieve these ends. For this reason, while new recruits were adjusting to life in the total institution, they were also being introduced to the world of the classroom, and with it, the curriculum of the white man's civilization.

In the early years, when students were taken directly from the camp and spoke no English, they entered the classroom with feelings that ran the gamut from hopeful expectation to suspicious hostility. What new experiences, both pleasant and traumatic, lay ahead? Who was this teacher and what would she do? Meanwhile, on the other side of the desk stood the teacher, whose special responsibility it was to reshape every aspect of her Indian pupils' personal and cultural beings. As Cora Folsom, a Hampton teacher, described the scene:

A class of boys and girls from eight to twenty-five years of age, ignorant of every rule of school or society sits mute before you. The sad, homesick faces do not look encouraging. Everything is new and strange to them. The boys' heads feel bare without the long braids. The new clothes are not easy and homelike. They do not understand one word of your language, nor you of theirs, perhaps, but they are watching your every look and motion. You smile and say "Good Morning;" they return the smile in a hopeless kind of way, but not the "good morning." By a series of home-made signs, which they are quick to interpret, they are made to understand that they are to repeat your greeting, and you are rewarded with a gruff or timid "Good Monink," and thus another gate is opened to the "white man's road."

Other words soon followed: "stand up," "sit down," "walk softly," "speak louder," and "march out."<sup>1</sup>

The first order of business was to teach the Indian children how to speak, write, and read English. At the recommendation of the Indian Office, most teachers employed the so-called objective method of instruction as practiced at Carlisle and Hampton.<sup>2</sup> Under this method students first were shown objects such as books, pencils, and shoes; second, given the English word for the object; and finally, drilled in the proper pronunciation. Lacking objects, teachers utilized object cards, sand tables, wall charts, and occasionally, took students for instructive walks about the grounds. In this fashion, students were also introduced to the alphabet and the written word. Upon seeing a cat or horse depicted on a card, and after learning to pronounce it, students were asked to copy the depicted word on a slate or to trace over words lightly written on the blackboard. In this manner students began to acquire a rudimentary vocabulary and in the process began to speak, read, and write something of the white man's language. As one teacher reported, the pupil soon "glories in being able to name every object with appropriate adjective, from the blue sky above to the green grass beneath." And in the process "he is amused to learn that rakes have *teeth*, that fingers have *nails*, and that tables have *legs*."<sup>3</sup>

After a few weeks, students were reading simple passages from a reader and copying sentences on their slates. Much of the class time was devoted to drill and reading in concert. The great challenge for the teacher was to move the student from rote recitation to genuine comprehension. As one teacher noted, for many pupils the printed page was "only a mess of words, over which they pore in a dazed sort of way, but from which they fail to extricate any connected ideas which they can express when called upon to recite." The pace, in the beginning at least, was excruciatingly slow. "One lesson is often all that is taught in a week," one teacher reported, "as every step has to be illustrated by drawing, no matter how crude, acted out, or in some way made clear to them." After a few months, however, some students were constructing their own sentences and even paragraphs. Later in the year they moved on to presenting memorized dialogues, answering questions put to them from conversation cards, and writing letters to their parents.<sup>4</sup>

Not for two or three years did teachers begin to teach grammar seriously. One teacher, Helen Ludlow of Hampton Institute, devised an ingenious method for teaching verbs:

Its "principal parts" we know as "chiefs;" the different modes, as so many reservations, in which each chief has a certain number of bands (tenses) that follow him. These bands are numbered as companies doing valiant service in support of the King's English—or the President's American. For many weeks company drill progressed with unflagging interest and patience. To marshal a company on the

blackboard for inspection, send it marching into the ears of the audience, and finally to set one or more of its members to work, building sentences, was fun enough for a long time. Battalion drill was proudly gone through at last, and after that height was attained in our system of tactics, to save time, each company is represented by its first sergeant—in other words, each tense by its first person—and they are able to put a very neat synopsis of any verb upon the board, calling upon each other in turn for the tenses, and modes, in successive order or skipping about.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, students struggled. Jason Betzinez, an Apache who came to Carlisle as an older student from Geronimo's band, would later remember: "It was extremely difficult for me to learn to speak English. At first I was unable to make many sounds. I even had trouble pronouncing the letters of the alphabet." Eventually, Betzinez did better, but for the first three years "it didn't seem that I would ever learn." Students who suffered from trachoma faced special problems. One Apache woman recalls: "When I was there, I couldn't see to read. It was all fuzzy. And because of this I can't read and I have to stay after school." For Charles Eastman, who attended Santee School, it was the frustration of recitation: "For a whole week we youthful warriors were held up and harassed with words of those letters. Like raspberry bushes in the path, they tore, bled, and sweated us—those little words rat, eat, and so forth until not a semblance of our native dignity and self-respect was left."<sup>6</sup>

Luther Standing Bear would never forget the day his teacher decided to test her students' proficiency at reading by asking each student to stand and read a designated paragraph from the class text. "One after another the pupils read as called upon and each one in turn sat down bewildered and discouraged." When Standing Bear's turn came he read the paragraph thinking he had committed no errors. However, upon the teacher's question, Are you sure you made no errors? Standing Bear read it a second time. And then a third, a fourth, and fifth, each time receiving no affirmation from the teacher. What had begun as an unpleasant exercise was turning into sheer torture.

Even for the sixth and seventh times I read. I began to tremble and I could not see my words plainly. I was terribly hurt and mystified. But for the eighth and ninth times I read. It was growing more terrible. Still the teacher gave no sign of approval, so I read for the tenth time! I started on the paragraph for the eleventh time, but before I was through, everything before me went black and I sat down thoroughly cowed and humiliated for the first time in my life and in front of the whole class!

At the weekly Saturday evening assembly, where Pratt regularly singled out individuals for praise or criticism, Standing Bear was certain the superintendent would humiliate him, but quite the opposite occurred. After speaking about the importance of having self-confidence, Pratt called attention to the fact that Luther Standing Bear had valiantly read a passage eleven times in succession without a single error.<sup>7</sup>

The difficulty students experienced in learning English can be explained in several ways. First, there were the normal difficulties encountered when learning a second language. Every language has its own vocabulary, its own phonology or system of sounds, its own morphology or structure, and finally, its own syntax or way of piecing together separate units into complete thoughts. Particularly unique in this instance was the immensity of the linguistic gap separating the students' native language from that of English. Unlike the German- or French-speaking student, to whom similar linguistic patterns would be readily recognizable, the Indian student struggled with a language that was entirely outside his native morphological and syntactical frame of reference. Many Indian languages place little emphasis on time or verb tense; others make little differentiation between nouns and verbs or separate linguistic units; still others build into a single word thoughts that in English can only be expressed in an entire sentence. The point here is not that a given Indian language was necessarily more or less complex than English, but that it was fundamentally different in its makeup. Moreover, when one considers that many classrooms were filled with students speaking a diversity of native tongues, each possessing its own unique linguistic features, and that teachers rarely spoke or had the slightest interest in understanding the particular characteristics of a student's native speech, only then is it possible to appreciate the difficulties encountered in learning to speak, read, and write the white man's tongue.<sup>8</sup>

A second factor relates to the interconnection between language and culture.<sup>9</sup> Learning English meant more than simply learning another language; it also entailed a new way of thinking, a new way of looking at the world. Anthropologists Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton make this point in their classic study, *The Navaho*: "Every language has an effect upon what the people who use it see, what they feel, how they think, what they can talk about." In the case of Navajo, differences in cultural priorities are reflected in the language's grammar:

Take the example of a commonplace physical event: rain. Whites can and do report their perception of this event in a variety of ways: "It has started to rain," "It is raining," "It has stopped raining." The People can, of course, convey these same ideas—but they cannot convey them without finer specifications. To give a few instances of

the sorts of discrimination the Navaho must make before he reports his experience: he uses one verb form if he himself is aware of the actual inception of the rainstorm, another if he has reason to believe that rain has been falling for some time in his locality before the occurrence struck his attention. One form must be employed if rain is general round about within the range of vision; another if, though it is raining round about, the storm is plainly on the move. Similarly, the Navaho must invariably distinguish between the ceasing of rain-fall (generally) and the stopping of rain in a particular vicinity because the rain clouds have been driven off by the wind. The People take the consistent noticing and reporting of such differences (which are usually irrelevant from the white point of view) as much for granted as the rising of the sun.<sup>10</sup>

Given the immensity of the cultural gulf separating Indians and whites, one can only imagine the difficulties suffered by students because of previous cultural and linguistic training.

The language-culture connection manifested itself in yet another way, namely, the problems students had understanding the meaning of words for which there were no corresponding equivalents in their native language. Frederick Riggs, assistant principal of Santee Normal Training School and a fluent speaker of Dakota, drew attention to this fact on more than one occasion. What, asked Riggs, was the Dakota-speaking child to make of a sentence such as, "One bright summer's day Gracie took Zip for a romp in the orchard"? The white child, Riggs noted, would immediately assume that Zip was a dog, but not a Santee Sioux. The latter would never think of naming a dog; one did not bestow a personal name on something likely to end up in a kettle of soup. And what was the young Dakota speaker to make of the word "orchard," again something outside the child's cultural experience? It was, Riggs claimed, very much like asking the white child to make sense of taking "Zip for a romp in a glacier." Thus, it was one thing for an Indian child to mechanically pronounce words, but quite another for him to genuinely comprehend what he was reading. Words and concepts could not be divorced from cultural context.<sup>11</sup>

Convinced that pupils would never achieve English proficiency unless forced to use it as the sole means of communication, the school service was informed in 1890, "Pupils must be compelled to converse with each other in English, and should be properly rebuked or punished for persistent violation of this rule." The "no Indian" rule, however, was easier to proclaim than enforce, causing school officials to devise all manner of strategies to encourage compliance. At Carlisle, Pratt gave awards to students who went for an extended length of time without speaking their na-

tive tongue. At Hampton, Samuel Armstrong called upon each student at evening roll call to confess any violation of the rule." Perhaps the most ingenious solution was that devised by the superintendent of the school at Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency. In this instance students were organized into military companies, complete with sergeants and corporals, solely on the basis of their facility with English and then periodically promoted or demoted in rank on the basis of their adherence to speaking only English. Most, however, relied on administering punishments. Minnie Jenkins frankly describes in her memoirs how on one occasion she laid thirty-five Mohave kindergartners—"like little sardines"—across tables, whereupon she spanked them for speaking Mohave.<sup>12</sup>

The ideal, of course, was to engender in the students a willingness to comply. Pratt, because of his charismatic personality, appears to have been amazingly successful in this regard. Certainly no superintendent could ask more of a student than what Pratt got from one of his Sioux girls in 1881:

Dear Sir Capt. Pratt:

I write this letter with much sorrow to tell you that I have spoken one Indian word. I will tell you how it happened: yesterday evening in the dining-hall Alice Wynn talked to me in Sioux, and before I knew what I was saying I found that I had spoken one word, and I felt so sorry that I could not eat my supper, and I could not forget that Indian word, and while I was sitting at the table the tears rolled down my cheeks. I tried very hard to speak only English.

Nellie Robertson<sup>13</sup>

With characteristic sensitivity, Pratt published this letter in the school newspaper.

How successful were schools at teaching English? At the better nonreservation schools, students could attain a reasonable degree of literacy in a relatively short time. Visitors to Carlisle would always be impressed with that school's accomplishments in this area. After noting the speed with which Carlisle teachers had brought the Apache children of Geronimo's band to a level of basic literacy, one government official was convinced that "no teaching could be better calculated to catch and hold the interest of pupils, unlearned in English or letters, than the teaching of the Carlisle classrooms." One Carlisle staff member went so far as to claim that within the space of six to nine weeks the school could teach children between the ages of six to ten to converse and read in English. Hampton's claims were more modest when it asserted that a "usable" knowledge of English

could be acquired by their students in three years. And one of the school's teachers went so far as to say that her students, after a year and a half of instruction, were "able to stand in any service with Bible, prayer or hymn book, and . . . read for themselves the message of good will."<sup>14</sup>

Reservation schools seem to have been far less successful. At San Carlos Agency, Sedgwick Rice reported in 1898 that the children under his charge were making only modest progress. "As they but rarely hear any English outside of the school," wrote Rice, "they cannot be brought to see the need of it, and its use can be insured only by disciplinary measures." Moreover, "the English used among them is so broken that only a careful observer can distinguish it from the Indian tongue, which is very difficult and guttural." John (Fire) Lame Deer, a Lakota Sioux who attended the boarding school at Pine Ridge recalls: "It took me three years to learn to say, 'I want this.'" On a similar note, Frank Mitchell, a Navajo who attended the school at Fort Defiance, recalls: "We did not talk much English; most of the time we talked Navajo, our own language, to one another. They did not understand us and we did not understand them."<sup>15</sup>

Off-reservation schools, of course, had several advantages over their counterparts. For one thing, they tended to be more intertribal in their composition, a factor that both contributed to the use of English as the common language and made the "no Indian" rule easier to enforce. In 1879, for instance, Pratt was able to assign students speaking nine different languages to a single dormitory.<sup>16</sup> Students at off-reservation schools also were thrown into much closer contact with white English-speaking communities. And perhaps, most importantly, off-reservation students were prevented from reverting back to their native speech during summer vacation.

For some schools, all of the object lessons, the copying over of sentences, the recitations, and the letter writing paid off to the point that some students began to lose touch with their native tongue. In 1908, one Haskell student wrote home: "My friend and I, both big Pawnees, have fun trying to make a sentence in Indian without saying a word of English. It is hard as well as fun, when you get ninety in English, to make a good sentence in the Pawnee language."<sup>17</sup>

#### THE CURRICULUM OF CIVILIZATION

Once students began to understand English, teachers pressed ahead with other areas of the curriculum. The course of study outlined by Commissioner Morgan in 1890 emphasized the following branches of knowledge: arithmetic, geography, nature study, physiology, and United States history. Taught in the proper manner, these subjects would accomplish two

things. First, they would introduce Indians to the knowledge of civilization. Second, the curriculum would prepare Indians for citizenship.<sup>18</sup>

In arithmetic the first couple of years were spent on numbers and simple measurements. After eight years students were expected to be able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. During this time some attention was also given to the solution of practical or word problems.<sup>19</sup> As citizen-farmers, Indians must be able to count bushels of wheat, calculate their worth, avoid being cheated by the local trader, manage financial obligations, and construct a house or barn with mathematical precision. For the discerning student, there was a larger lesson as well: the culture that was engulfing him placed a high priority on measuring things; space, time, goods, and money were divided and subdivided to the nearest fraction. The white man's culture was a culture of calculations. This indeed was an important lesson, one that if not taken to heart might bring disaster later on.

Physical geography was also an eye-opening experience. A lecture on the infinite dimensions of the universe, and even on the immensity of the planet earth, left little room for the idea that Indian peoples had dwelt at the center of the world or that the tribal fathers were as wise on questions of cosmology as once supposed. Thus, one teacher noted that she told students very early in her geography class "that the world is round; that the stars are larger than this whole earth; and many other things more wonderful than any legend of [their] fathers." Another teacher reported that after students had completed the assigned task of filling in a map of the Western Hemisphere with pictures of vegetation, animals, and dwellings, one student "was so astonished at his own work that he was found gazing at it with folded hands long after the bell had rung for dinner."<sup>20</sup>

To shrink the vast prairies, northern Arizona's San Francisco Peaks, and even the Grand Canyon into geographical—and actually spiritual—insignificance could not help but shake traditional worldviews to their very foundations. Charles Eastman writes that "when the teacher placed before us a painted globe, and said that our world was like that—that upon such a thing our forefathers had roamed and hunted for untold ages, as it whirled and danced around the sun in space—I felt that my foothold was deserting me." He remembers thinking, "All my savage training and philosophy was in the air, if these things were true." Similarly, Asa Daklugie, an Apache at Carlisle, would never forget the time his teacher showed him Arizona in a geography book. "I was fascinated," Daklugie later recalled. "When she showed me mountains and rivers I could tell their names in my language. I knew the Spanish for some of them and a few in English. She let me take that geography book to the dormitory and . . . I almost wore it out." Edmund Nequatewa, a Hopi at Phoenix Indian School, had a special reason for taking an interest in geography. "I was always thinking

of how I could get away from that school. After that I paid more attention to geography lessons, because it is the only way that I can find my way out. I put my whole mind on Arizona, New Mexico and California, studying rivers and mountains in order to find the road that I am going to use to get away from here."<sup>21</sup>

Luther Standing Bear entered Carlisle believing the world to be flat with four corners and recalls that when his teacher told him it was in reality a sphere that revolved on an axis, he could not accept it. "How could we stick to the ground like flies if we were standing on our heads?" But he soon had reason to think twice about challenging his teacher's scientific knowledge. One day an astronomer spoke to his class and predicted that an eclipse of the moon was scheduled to occur at twelve o'clock on Wednesday night of that week. This appeared to go far beyond the primitive claims of any tribal priest, and Standing Bear recalls that "the students laughed and laughed over this, not believing a word of it." But when the appointed night came, the students stayed awake to test the astronomer's predictions. "Sure enough it happened! The moon was eclipsed, and after that, we readily believed everything our teacher told us about geography and astronomy."<sup>22</sup>

But some students were not so quick to accept teachers' claims uncritically. One teacher of geography complained that "it is not easy to give them clear ideas of the relative importance of places and people." When drawing maps Indians unhesitatingly placed their tribal home at "the center of the known world." Moreover, they "place the 'buffalo' among the fierce wild animals of India; decline to believe that an Arab steed is equal to an Indian pony; and after dutifully proclaiming that the Himalayas are the highest mountains in the world, instantly add, 'but not so high as the Rocky Mountains!'" And at least one student was able to question the nineteenth-century's uneasy compromise between science and religion. Hampton's newspaper reported that

a teacher in endeavoring to overthrow the Indian belief that the earth is flat, stands still, and that the sun passes over and under it every twenty-four hours, said, in conclusion: "So you see, it is the earth that goes around while the sun stands still." A tall boy asked, "Then what for you tell us one story about man in the Bible—I forget his name—strong warrior—fight all day, but get dark so can't fight, and he say 'Sun stand still.' What for he say that if sun all time stand still."<sup>23</sup>

Students also received instruction in the sciences: natural history, botany, and physiology.<sup>24</sup> Most of the instruction went under the title of "observation lessons," although textbooks and simple experiments soon

found their way into the curriculum. Probably more significant than the specific content of the scientific curriculum was the deeper message being transmitted. Traditionally, Indian children had been taught to look upon nature in ecological and spiritual terms. To know nature was to recognize one's dependency on the earth and its creatures. The world of nature was inseparable from the world of the supernatural; gods and spirits inhabited the earth, sky, and lakes just as every living creature—the deer, the eagle, the mountain lion—possessed its own distinctive spiritual essence, which, through rites and ceremonies, might be incorporated into one's being as a sustaining source of personal identity and power. In the end, the Indians' knowledge of the physical and natural environment was inseparable from how they approached it—intimately, harmoniously, and with a reverential respect for the mysterious. Whites, on the other hand, objectified nature. Western science was ultimately the search for "laws of nature" and scientific principles that, once established, could be put to the service of technological progress. Nature was to be controlled, conquered, and finally, exploited.<sup>25</sup>

The capacity of the white man to unleash nature's force at will was vividly brought home to some forty Carlisle students when they were marched over to nearby Dickinson College for a lesson on electricity. At one point in the lecture, the professor produced a small bolt of lightning and shattered a miniature house especially constructed for the purpose. But the professor had more surprises in store. According to the newspaper account, "The most amusing thing was when the spark of electricity passed from Roman Nose's nose to High Forehead's knuckle, and while they too were badly shocked, the remainder of the party were convulsed with laughter." The high point came when a circle of students held hands and were hooked up to the professor's "electric machine." Again, according to the newspaper, "most of them found it stronger than they could stand, but a few of the boys held on to the last, although they did get badly jerked."<sup>26</sup> Science too was an expression of the white man's power.

#### CITIZENSHIP TRAINING

Efforts at citizenship training took place against the background of an ever-changing definition of the Indians' citizenship status. The Dawes Act, it may be remembered, had tied citizenship to allotment, leaving those Indians still living in the tribal relation unaffected. Meanwhile, in 1906, Congress enacted the Burke Act, which altered the provisions of the Dawes Act in two ways. First, it declared that all future allottees would become citizens at the end of the trust period rather than, as the Dawes Act provided, at the time of allotment. Second, under the new law the Secre-

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tary of the Interior was authorized to issue fee patents to "competent" allottees before the expiration of the twenty-five-year trust period as originally provided. The Omnibus Act of 1910 offered still another modification. This legislation authorized the Indian Office to create "competency commissions," whose express purpose was to scour allotted reservations for Indians capable of managing their affairs; those examined and found competent would be issued their fee patents and declared citizens.<sup>27</sup>

In 1917 Commissioner Cato Sells announced still another policy for determining Indian competency. Under the new guidelines, patents in fee would be issued to all those with less than 50 percent Indian ancestry and any others determined by the government to be competent. Particularly significant for Indian schools, the declaration provided that all students twenty-one years or older and receiving diplomas for completion of the full course of study were eligible to receive either their patent in fee (if they had received an allotment) or a "certificate of competency." Other paths to citizenship soon followed. In 1919 all Indian veterans of World War I were granted citizenship. Finally, in 1924, the Curtis Act declared all Indians to be citizens of the United States.<sup>28</sup>

It was in this context that school officials turned to the business of instructing students in the principles of republicanism, the rights and obligations of citizenship, and the structure of federal, state, and local governments. Special attention also was given to instilling a heartfelt, patriotic identification with the nation engulfing them. In this connection the subject of United States history was central. But how could Indian pupils be made to identify with the "American experience" wherein Indian-white conflict and the settlement of the West were central themes in the national mythology? Frame of reference was obviously important. In 1890, the Indian Office found what it was looking for in a text by Horace E. Scudder, *A History of the United States of America*. Scudder's approach to the subject was spelled out in the preface, where he expressed his belief that the nation "was peopled by men and women who crossed the seas in faith; that its foundations have been laid deep in a divine order; that the nation has been trusted with liberty." This trust, Scudder continued, "carries with it grave duties; the enlargement of liberty and justice is in the victory of the people over the forces of evil."<sup>29</sup>

Scudder's account of the American past is interesting on a number of counts. First, the book is notable in that very little treatment of Indians is given at all. Although a section of four pages is devoted to the subject of white-Indian relations during the colonial period, there is scant mention of the western tribes and the recent hostilities of the 1860s and 1870s, Indian wars with which students might have been familiar. Second, the book does not completely avoid the question of white responsibility for

the sad history of Indian-white relations. It is freely admitted that the Spanish were capable of cruelty and greed, that the Puritans on occasion treated the Indians harshly, and that treaties were often broken. Finally, although references to "blood-thirsty savages" are few, the race is still portrayed in the stereotypical fashion of the nineteenth century. Indians are both noble and savage.

While the tribes differed from one another, all the Indians were in some points alike. They were brave, but they were treacherous. They never forgave an injury. They could bear hunger and torture in silence, but they were cruel in the treatment of their captives. They were a silent race, but often in their councils some of their number would be very eloquent.

In spite of these redeeming qualities, the first Indians seen by Columbus are described as "ignorant barbarians." Scudder claims that at one time the English considered making servants of the Indians, "but to do this was like taming wild animals." And although the Sioux were in part provoked into war in 1876, the affair at the Little Big Horn is described as an Indian massacre.<sup>30</sup>

Teaching U.S. history to Indians, speaking of savages, civilization, and manifest destiny, convincing pupils that the subjugation of their race was in their own best interest, posed definite problems for the conscientious teacher. One teacher wondered how the textbook's "graphic descriptions of the aborigines, with scalping knife and tomahawk, will strike their descendants, and how they will relish the comments of the historian, sometimes by no means flattering." Another teacher confessed that she found the subject difficult to teach for the reason that she had "the sins of her fathers to answer for before her class." The teacher, she explained, "wants to encourage her pupils to be civilized like the white man, to embrace his religion, and follow his example, and yet has to put into his hands a history of broken promises and of a civilization as far from Christianity as the Indian himself is."<sup>31</sup>

The Indian Office had anticipated the problem. "Always seek to create a spirit of love and brotherhood in the minds of the children toward the white people," the office urged, "and in telling them the history of the Indians dwell on those things which have showed nobility of character on the part of either race in their dealings with the other." Moreover, "whenever acts of injustice must be related, show to the pupils that the guilt of the persons committing them does not attach to the whole race, for in every people, no matter how virtuous, there are always a large number of the unconscientious and the cruel."<sup>32</sup> Above all, students should not lose perspective. If students could be brought to the point of believing, on the

one hand, that the Indians' future depended upon cooperating with the efforts of the government to transform them, and on the other, that the subjugation of their race was the consequence of inevitable historical forces, then perhaps they would come to look upon their conquerors with reverential appreciation.

The idea of civilized progress was central in this respect. Students should be explicitly told how history was the story of man's progression from savagism, through barbarism, to civilization and how their own native cultures fit into this grand scheme. How this was accomplished is revealed in two short essays written by Indian students at Hampton Institute.

The Caucasian is the strongest in the world. The semi-civilized have their own civilization, but not like the white race.

The savage race kept their own ways, and they have had these occupations; they were hunted, fished, and fought to the other people. They beat too.

The white race have three occupations agriculture, manufacturing and commerce.

And the second:

The white people they are civilized; they have everything and go to school, too. They learn how to read and write so they can read newspaper.

The yellow people they half civilized, some of them know to read and write, and some know how to take care of themself.

The red people they big savages; they don't know nothing.<sup>33</sup>

In teaching the idea of civilization, the aim was to strike a delicate balance between humiliation and hope. Students were to be made to see what they were—savages—but also that the path to civilization was open to them. Philip Garrett attempted to strike just the right note when addressing Carlisle students in 1893:

The path that lies before you is somewhat different from that of most of those around you. They belong to races which have been gradually developing their own civilization by a power from within, stimulated, as it were, by mere sunshine and rain; you are a race thrown by the Providence of God in the pathway of a mighty and resistless tide of civilization, flowing Westward around you. So mighty is the flood, that resistance is fruitless, and the only choice is between submission and destruction on the one hand, or joining the flood and floating

with it, on the other. . . . But great is the force of example and imitation. You are in the midst of an advanced civilization, which serves you as an object lesson. You have a unique opportunity to show the marvelous change that can be wrought in a single generation by the aid of good schools, and the lessons of centuries.<sup>34</sup>

All the elements are there: savagism, civilization, the idea of progress, humiliation, and hope.

#### EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE

Policymakers not only wanted Indian schools to turn out law-abiding, patriotic citizens but also wanted them to produce citizens who were economically self-sufficient. This aim involved a twofold objective: teaching work skills and inculcating the values and beliefs of possessive individualism. Toward the first objective, students spent approximately half the school day either learning industrial skills or performing manual labor. At reservation boarding schools, boys were taught the use of hammers and saws and a variety of skills associated with farming: plowing and planting, field irrigation, the care of stock, and the maintenance of fruit orchards. Some also gained an acquaintance with blacksmithing and harness repair. Girls, on the other hand, spent most of their time learning to cook, clean, sew, and care for poultry.<sup>35</sup>

Because the off-reservation school was a much bigger operation, the curriculum expanded considerably, at least for boys. Larger schools trained students at wagon building, shoemaking, tinsmithing, carpentry, painting, tailoring, and harness making. Most of these departments were run like small shops, managing to turn out a considerable number of articles. In 1881, for instance, Carlisle reported producing 8,929 tin products, including cups, coffee boilers, pans, pails, and funnels, 183 double harness sets, 161 bridles, 10 halters, 9 spring wagons, and 2 carriages, items that on the open market would have had a total value of \$6,333.46. Farming, however, continued to be the main pursuit, in part because of the Indian Office's assumption about students' occupational destiny, but also because of its insistence that schools become as self-sufficient as possible. Thus, in addition to raising cows and hogs, school farms, depending on the soil and climate, often grew a variety of grains, vegetables, and fruits. In 1890, for instance, the school at Genoa planted approximately 300 acres, mainly Indian corn, oats, wheat, potatoes, and sorghum. Products of the farm and shop, when not consumed by the school, were sold on the open market.<sup>36</sup>

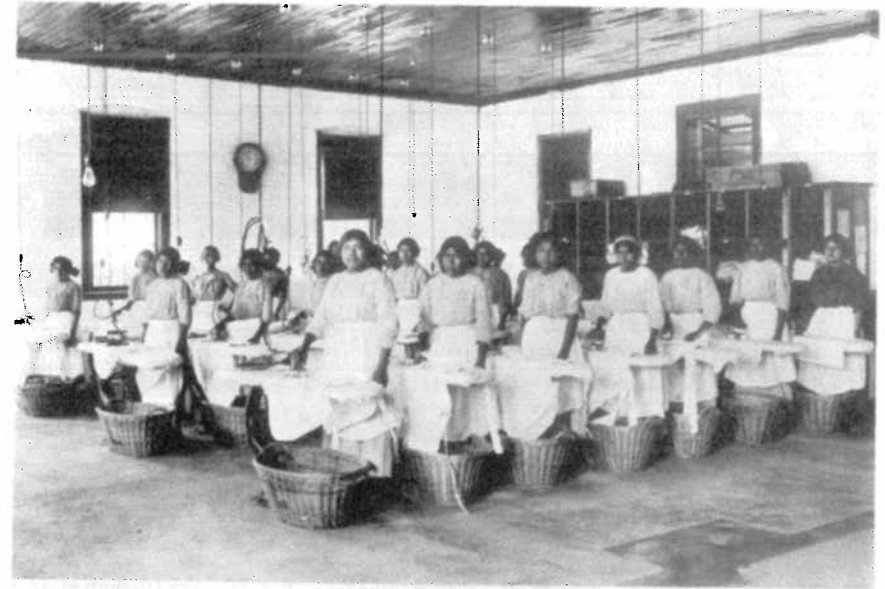
For girls, the curriculum called for more instruction in the domestic sci-



Wagon shop, Sherman Institute, ca. 1910. (Courtesy of the Sherman Museum)

ences. Sewing, cooking, canning, ironing, child care, and cleaning—the standard duties of Victorian housewifery—were once again the general fare, although a few schools such as Carlisle and Haskell offered special training in stenography, typing, and bookkeeping. If anything, the push for institutional self-sufficiency placed an even greater burden on the shoulders of girls. Thus, in 1890 sixteen girls in Albuquerque's sewing department manufactured 170 dresses, 93 chemises, 107 hickory shirts, 67 boys' waists, 261 pairs of drawers, 194 pillowcases, 224 sheets, 238 aprons, 33 bedspreads, and 83 towels. Pratt proudly announced one year that the girls in the school laundry were washing and ironing about 2,500 items each week "in a very creditable manner." The superintendent at Genoa also reported at one point that fifteen girls, with the help of a few smaller boys, were doing all the school's laundry "in ordinary work tubs." "This method is preferred," he added, "because the girls will have to work by hand when they return to their homes on the reservation."<sup>37</sup>

The question can legitimately be asked: to what extent did the Indian Office's objective of institutional self-sufficiency contradict the principle that industrial education be genuinely instructive? How many pillowcases did a girl have to make to become proficient at making pillowcases? How many shirts to become expert at shirtmaking? Consider the demands made on the boys at Fort Stevenson, Dakota, in 1886. In addition to cutting and hauling 300 posts, fencing in twenty acres of pasture, cutting



Turn-of-the-century conceptions of domestic science, Victorian gender roles, and institutional chores merge in this photograph of Sherman Institute students ironing, ca. 1910. (Bureau of Indian Affairs photo no. 75-L-17B in the National Archives)

over 200 cords of wood, and storing away 150 tons of ice, they also mined 150 tons of lignite coal. Proud of this accomplishment, the superintendent boasted that "a vast amount of hard labor" was required to extract the coal, partly because "about 9 feet of earth had to be removed before the vein was reached."<sup>38</sup>

Occasionally, the Indian Office worried about the problem. In 1895 Superintendent William Hailmann instructed those in the field that "the industrial work of the school should cease to be mere drudgery." Too often, Hailmann claimed, students were being turned into "mere toilers or choremen and chorewomen." But little changed. The push for institutional efficiency was simply too strong. Thus, at Crow Creek, Estelle Brown would always remember how "small girls from the kindergarten daily darned stockings for hours on end." Likewise, Clark Wissler would remember his visit to a school somewhere in Oklahoma Territory, where he observed the boys performing their assigned chores. "A glance at them working under compulsion, feeding pigs, washing dishes and scrubbing floors, revealed the saddest faces I ever saw."<sup>39</sup>

Students had little enthusiasm for chores. One of the greatest complaints was being assigned to a task long after it ceased to have any re-



"Blue Monday" at Crow Agency Boarding School captures the less-than-enthusiastic attitude that students brought to washing detail, ca. 1890. (Bureau of Indian Affairs photo no. 75-EXE-CROW-8D in the National Archives)

deeming educational value. Henry Roe Cloud, a Winnebago, who eventually graduated from Yale University and Auburn Theological Seminary, recalled at Lake Mohonk in 1914:

I worked two years in turning a washing machine in a Government school to reduce the running expenses of the institution. It did not take me long to learn how to run the machine and the rest of the two years I nursed a growing hatred for it. Such work is not educative. It begets a hatred for work, especially where there is no pay for such labor. The Indian will work under such conditions because he is under authority, but the moment he becomes free he is going to get as far as he can from it.

Similarly, while attending the boarding school at Keams Canyon, Arizona, Helen Sekaquaptewa was never able to escape "bathroom detail." After three months of scrubbing toilets, "how I wanted to get out of being in

that old bathroom all the time." But the hoped-for reassignment never came.<sup>40</sup>

Occasionally, the threat of physical punishment prodded students to work harder. Anna Shaw, who attended the Indian school in Phoenix, would always remember the time she spent scrubbing floors in the dining room. "If we were not finished when the 8:00 A.M. whistle sounded," she recalls, "the dining room matron would go around strapping us while we were still on our hands and knees. This was just the right position for a swat—all the matron had to do was raise our dresses and strap." But mostly it was the never-ending drudgery of it all. Irene Stewart recalls in her autobiography:

Getting our industrial education was very hard. We were detailed to work in the laundry and do all the washing for the school, the hospital, and the sanitorium. Sewing was hard, too. We learned to sew all clothing, except underwear and stockings, and we learned to mend and darn and patch. We canned food, cooked, washed dishes, waited on tables, scrubbed floors, and washed windows. We cleaned classrooms and dormitories. By the time I graduated from the sixth grade I was a well-trained worker. But I have never forgotten how the steam in the laundry made me sick; how standing and ironing for hours made my legs ache far into the night. By evening I was too tired to play and just fell asleep wherever I sat down. I think this is why the boys and girls ran away from school; why some became ill; why it was so hard to learn. We were too tired to study.<sup>41</sup>

By the turn of the century, the balance between academics and industrial training was clearly shifting toward the latter. In 1895 Superintendent Hailmann declared that "the stress of work on the part of the schools should be placed upon industrial and manual training rather than upon literary advancement." Two years later he called upon superintendents to establish an "organic connection" between the two branches. "Literary training should not be neglected," he explained, "but it should be . . . in the service of the respectively fundamental aim of securing industrial fervor and efficiency on the part of the children." This view reached its logical conclusion in the new course of study issued in 1900. Written by Estelle Reel, Hailmann's replacement, it called for the infusion of industrial context in all areas of the academic curriculum. It was not enough that Reel should devote the largest number of pages in the nearly 300-page manual to agriculture (34 pages); this and related subjects now permeated the entire curriculum. Thus, in the sixth year of English, teachers were instructed to draw material from the *Farm Journal* and *Poultry Magazine*

for their lessons. When it came to choosing subjects for composition, topics should relate to the students' future.

With the allotment in view, plan what shall be done on every foot of ground there; what shall be raised here, what there, and why; what shall be planted after one crop is taken off; what after that. Study the rotation of crops most successfully followed in the locality. Observe what the land produces best, and let the greatest proportion of the mental strength be devoted to making the land yield every dollar possible.<sup>42</sup>

Reel pounded away at the idea that schools should emphasize the practical over the intellectual. On one occasion, she criticized science teachers who instructed pupils in "the chemical and physical properties of matter, a knowledge which will be of little practical value to Indian children." Why not, Reel suggested, instruct them instead in topics related to "animal industry," for example, "the anatomy of the horse's foot?" Such subjects would have beneficial carryover to farm life. The same practical focus applied to the education of Indian girls. Too many girls, she complained to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1904, were "practicing on the piano" when they should be mastering the "household arts." Henceforth, superintendents should see to it that their "large Indian girls become proficient in cooking, sewing and laundry work before allowing them to spend hours in useless practice upon an expensive instrument which in all probability they will never own."<sup>43</sup>

While students were being taught how to earn a living, they also were being taught a host of values and virtues associated with the doctrine of possessive individualism: industry, perseverance, thrift, self-reliance, rugged individualism, and the idea of success. In this respect, reformers and school officials believed they were facing one of their most difficult tasks. And rightly so. Many students did in fact come from cultures where the concept of private property scarcely existed, where extended kinship obligations made the accumulation of personal wealth all but impossible, where one achieved status through generosity rather than accumulation.<sup>44</sup> Hence, the gospel of possessive individualism permeated virtually all areas of school life: the classroom, the workshop, Sunday sermons, evening lectures, and special assemblies. School newspapers were particularly effective forums for indoctrination. Students at Phoenix, for instance, were treated in 1907 to "The Man Who Wins."

The man who wins is the man who works—  
The man who toils while the next man shirks;

And the man who wins is the man who hears  
The curse of the envious in his ears,  
But who goes his way with head held high  
And passes the wrecks of the failures by—  
For he is the man who wins.<sup>45</sup>

The visit from a prominent public figure was a prime occasion for a lecture on American self-reliance. In 1892 Senator Henry Dawes suggested to Carlisle students that Pratt print over the door of each classroom the words "self-reliance," "self-control," "self-support," and "self-help" and then went on to point out that "no other path of success is possible." In 1907 Commissioner Francis Leupp adopted a slightly different tactic when speaking to students at Sherman Institute. After noting that the school banner, which was monogrammed with the letters "S" and "I," came "pretty near to being a dollar mark," he commented, "Sordid as it may sound, it is the dollar that makes the world go around, and we have to teach the Indians at the outset of their careers what a dollar means." This was, Leupp added, probably "the most important part of their education."<sup>46</sup>

When students understood "what a dollar means," they might want to save them. To this end, off-reservation boarding schools were encouraged to set up a student savings program. Once again, Pratt pioneered the idea. The concept first took shape at Fort Marion, when he allowed the prisoners to earn money by selling articles to tourists, polishing sea beans, and working for local farmers. At Carlisle, Pratt refined the system, and students earned money working on the school farm, in the shops, or from the school's outing program. Although the pay was low, Pratt sought to introduce incentive by instituting a graduated system of pay based on the difficulty and skill of the task, so that an experienced tradesman could earn three dollars a month. Not a sizable amount to be sure, but numerous students managed to save over fifty dollars, and those who participated in the outing program, much more. Student savings were carefully monitored, each student having his own bankbook to keep careful record of his deposits and withdrawals. Since the purpose of the savings program was not just to teach the children how to save money but also the prudent expenditure of it, students were allowed to spend about half their earnings. Before making withdrawals, students were required to submit a price list of all articles to be purchased. All purchases were later submitted for inspection. When Pratt judged that a local businessman had taken unfair advantage of a student, he stormed into town and set matters straight. Like so many of Pratt's initiatives, the savings program soon spread to other off-reservation schools.<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile, students were receiving mixed messages. On the one hand,

they were lectured on the importance of saving, the importance of putting away their meager earnings for a rainy day, perhaps for improvements on an allotment. On the other hand, the culture of consumer capitalism required that they spend their dollars on all variety of material goods produced for the marketplace. Thus, even though conscientious school officials implored students to be prudent consumers, periodic excursions into town and merchants' advertisements in school newspapers were designed to whet students' acquisitive appetites. Indeed, in 1915 one inventive Phoenix businessman sought to link his own economic interest in Indian consumers with those of the school by placing this item in the school newspaper:

Early to bed and early to rise,  
Love all the teachers and tell them no lies.  
Study your lessons that you may be wise  
And buy from the men who advertise.<sup>48</sup>

#### THE "OUTING" PROGRAM

Pratt understood from the very beginning that even Carlisle was an artificial experience. Behind the school fence, students could learn about civilization, but they could never come to know it firsthand. This had been the lesson of Fort Marion. It was only when the Florida prisoners had entered into the life of St. Augustine that they gained a genuine sense of how the white man really lived. Out of the Florida prison experiment emerged one of the most distinctive aspects of the Carlisle program and one that would be expanded to several off-reservation schools in the West—the so-called outing system.<sup>49</sup>

Pratt brought the idea to Hampton and convinced Armstrong to place the Indian students on white farms during the summer months. When A. H. Hyde of Lee, Massachusetts, a member of Hampton's Board of trustees and a deacon in the Congregational Church, attended Hampton's commencement in 1878, Pratt proposed that Hyde seek placements for the Indians among the farmers in the Lee countryside. Hyde agreed but shortly after wrote Pratt that no placements could be found; Lee's farmers, just two years after the Custer battle, were leery about taking half-civilized Indians into their homes. Undaunted by this setback, Pratt took his prize Florida boy, Etahdleuh, north to Lee, whereupon Pratt and Etahdleuh addressed a gathering at the Congregational Church and presented their case. The fervency of Pratt, along with the earnest Cheyenne boy dressed in his smart-looking Hampton uniform, was too much for the pious New England farmers. Volunteers came forward and shortly all the Indian students were placed.<sup>50</sup>

After Pratt moved to Carlisle in 1879 he expanded the concept, and it soon came to be a central ingredient of the Carlisle program. Eventually, the outing system took on three forms. Under the basic program, students were sent out for the summer months only. Placed in middle-class farm households, Indian youth were given the opportunity to live, work, and worship alongside other family members on a day-to-day basis. A second version placed students with the family for one or two years. The advantage of this was that it permitted a much broader experience including that of attending the local school. From Pratt's perspective, this second version was the ideal situation, but in fact, the number of year-round placements always remained a fraction of the total. In 1903, the peak year of the outing program, 948 were placed out for the summer, while 305 remained for the entire year. A third version emerged in the 1890s, when Pratt began to place students in industrial and urban settings where they could learn skills other than farming. This was Pratt's least favorite model. "We prefer good country homes or homes in the suburbs," Pratt wrote privately. "Almost every time we have placed students in a city they have dropped into the servant class and became the victims of some degeneracy, unless they happened to be our especially advanced and capable students." By 1910, however, six years after Pratt's departure, over 20 percent of placements were of this sort. Regardless of the type of outing, students were paid a modest wage for their labor, a good share being sent directly to the school to be deposited in their savings accounts.<sup>51</sup>

According to Pratt, the outing program accomplished a number of things. It fostered the acquisition of English by forcing the students to apply their new-found language skills in practical work and family settings. It enabled them to earn money. It broke down prejudice: Indians came to appreciate the goodwill of their white patrons, while patrons gained an increased appreciation of the Indians' capabilities. Students learned the subtleties of civilized living, the little nuances of speech and behavior that could never be fully acquired in the superficial atmosphere of school. In this respect Pratt fully realized the limitations of even the off-reservation school as an agency for accomplishing full-fledged acculturation. "The order and system so necessary in an institution retards rather than develops habits of self-reliance and forethought; individuality is lost. They grow into mechanical routine." Pratt also argued that the outing system gave Carlisle students the "courage of civilization." It allowed them to test their capacity to compete with whites in the struggle for existence. "The result of this is the gradual building up of an idea . . . that they can with safety break away from the tribal commune and go out among our people and contend for the necessities and luxuries of life."<sup>52</sup>

During Pratt's tenure at Carlisle the program was carefully administered, and great care was taken in the selection of patrons. In this regard

Pratt benefited from the fact that Carlisle was surrounded by farmers, many of them Quakers, who were generally sympathetic to the school's aims. Indeed, the outing system became so popular with whites that Pratt always had a surplus of patrons from which to choose the most qualified. Two form letters were used in the selection process. The first explained the basic guidelines of the program, including how students were to be paid (depending on their worth, girls from two to eight dollars per month, boys from five to fifteen dollars per month). Patrons also were asked to respond to a series of questions designed to reveal the nature and overall character of the household ("Is the use of tobacco or liquor allowed in your household? Does your family attend religious services, and would the pupil have the same privilege?"). A second letter was sent to a person of reference who again was asked a series of questions to verify the suitability of a given patron. Was he a man of good habits? What class of employees did he hire? Was he kind to his help? Once Pratt was satisfied about a patron's motives and qualifications, he was eligible to receive a student.<sup>53</sup>

For a student to participate in the program, he was required to have a basic understanding of English. Since students were not forced to have an outing experience, they had to make a formal request for placement. This request actually doubled as a sworn statement whereby students agreed to obey their employers, bathe regularly, attend their patron's church, refrain from leaving the farm without permission, avoid drinking, gambling, or smoking, and generally to behave in a manner that would bring honor to themselves and to Carlisle. Students also agreed to write home once a month, detailing their progress as well as the benevolence of their patron family and employer. Where students were actually placed depended on several factors: the age and sex of the student, the nature of the work to be carried out, and the religious affiliation of both the patron and the student. Pratt also tended to place students a considerable distance from the school to discourage runaways, and generally speaking, avoided the practice of placing students too close to one another.<sup>54</sup>

Pratt put a great deal of pressure on students to succeed. An extreme example of this can be seen in his selection of Luther Standing Bear for a position in John Wanamaker's Philadelphia department store. Pratt apparently saw Wanamaker's request as something of a breakthrough and took great care in filling it. With characteristic drama, he announced his final selection at the Saturday evening meeting in the school chapel. Calling Luther Standing Bear to the front, Pratt placed his hand on the boy's shoulder and said for all to hear:

My boy, you are going away from us to work for this school, in fact, for your whole race. Go, and do your best. The majority of white

people think the Indian is a lazy good-for-nothing. They think he can neither work nor learn anything; that he is very dirty. Now you are going to prove that the red man can learn and work as well as the white man. If John Wanamaker gives you the job of blacking his shoes, see that you make them shine. Then he will give you a better job. If you are put into the office to clean, don't forget to sweep under the chairs and in the corners. If you do well in this, he will give you better work to do.

As if this were not enough, Pratt continued:

Now, my boy, you are going to do your best. If you are a failure, then we might as well close up this school. You are to be an example of what this school can turn out. Go, my boy, and do your best. Die there if necessary, but do not fail.

Finally, Pratt asked all to say a silent prayer for the boy's success.<sup>55</sup>

Once in the field, Pratt took great pains to monitor students' progress. Patrons were supplied with a list of outing regulations and were required to submit monthly reports. Special "outing agents" also periodically checked up on students as well as the overall conditions surrounding the placement, including the patron's character. Students' letters also were an important source of information, although Pratt was generally unsympathetic to their complaints. In 1881, when Pratt received a letter from Maggie Stands Looking stating that "these folks have no bathe place," he wrote back:

Dear Maggie:

When I was a boy on my grandfather's farm there was no "bathe place." It was a log house and two of us boys slept in the attic, to which we had to climb by a ladder through an opening left for that purpose. We washed out the wash tub, then carried it and several buckets of water up the ladder and had fine baths.

Many times in my travels I have been in frontier hotels having no bath tubs, and by filling the large wash bowl with water and taking one of the towels for a wash cloth and rubbing my body well, have had a bath that made me feel as good as jumping into a river.

Your friend and school father,  
R. H. Pratt<sup>56</sup>

Overall, patrons gave students high marks. One farmer praised his Indian boy by saying he was "right good with horses and knows how to

handle young colts. Like him pretty well." Another typical response: "She makes very good bread and can cook an ordinary meal as well as I could desire. The best of all is her pride and interest in her work and her ambition to learn." And: "I shall always feel indebted to you for your kindness in sending me dear L\_\_\_\_\_. She is a jewel. We love her so much and are already beginning to feel the parting." From another,

Her health is much better, and we are glad; she is very trustworthy, nothing would induce her to be sly or untruthful. If anything like a dish or china gets broken, she is so frank and honorable about it. Without any help she made some fine butter and the most delicious ice-cream.<sup>57</sup>

When patrons praised students, it was usually for their diligence, honesty, obedience, and a general willingness to learn. When they complained, it was because they lacked these same qualities. "He is a very trying boy at times, will not obey. He is stubborn and sullen," wrote one patron. Another reported: "He is very provoking sometimes, pretends not to understand what we mean when I think he does. He goes out at night much too often. Pretends to go to the creek to bathe, but just walks over it and on to the neighbors and comes home after we are in bed." From another:

The boy arrived all right but I am afraid he is not going to suit here; has milked twice and hasn't milked the cows clean either time. Tonight I am going to correct him, and if he doesn't do better he is no good to me; he is an older boy than I cared about. He says he is twenty-two. I would rather have one sixteen or seventeen. He knows more than I do myself he thinks.<sup>58</sup>

What is much more difficult to assess is the students' attitude toward the experience. From the numerous letters regularly reprinted in Carlisle's newspaper, however, it is clear that many students regarded the outing as one of the bright spots in their school experience, particularly when they fell into a warm and loving family that treated them as one of their own. "I don't think anybody could find fault about these people they are just the kind of people to live with," one student wrote. Another girl wrote Pratt: "I am up in my small cosy room. I love this place, they are so kind. I have a good kind father and mother and two little sisters here. They are very sweet little sisters to me." One boy volunteered:

I am very much oblige to you Capt. and I did not know nothing when I first came here and this time I knew everything I got to do. I

like farming very well and I think I am going to be a farmer when I get home. No more walking around hunting work. I am going to work for myself, like out here. I don't abused his horses and cows. I try to be kind to them. If any of you school boys and girls want some muscles just come out to the country and work and learn some useful things.

According to another:

Oh Capt. I do have such a nice place here. . . . Captain I do wish you would let me stay out all the year as I have much lovely home and good wadges for the work I have to do. And I could go to school very easy the school house is not far. Let me stay till Christmas anyway then if you think I ought to be back I will gladly return to dear Carlisle, but I want to assert up on staying till Christmas anyway *please*. I often thank you for your kindness by sending me in such a lovely place to such kind people.<sup>59</sup>

But again, just as some patrons were disappointed in the students Pratt sent them, so many of the students found the outing experience a long and trying ordeal. A particular problem was being cut off from friends and classmates. One girl, shortly after reaching her assigned destination, took pen in hand and wrote Pratt:

I never have been so lonesome in all my life and I hope I never will again. I cannot eat my meals. And here while I am writing the tears keep dropping so that I cannot hardly see the lines of my paper. I don't go up in my room but I can't help but cry. I will never bother you to come out in the country again. And if you think it is best I will be willing to bear any punishment you are mined to put upon me, I will try and bear it cheerfully; if I may but come back.<sup>60</sup>

Other students objected to the conditions under which they were expected to live and work and with good reason. One frustrated student reported: "She always calls us Dunce, careless, lazy, ugly, crooked, and have no senses. I never heard anybody call me that before. What do you think of them names, do you think they are pretty names for us? We don't think so and I know you don't either." Another boy wrote Pratt, "I am sorry to tell you that this man is not fit to have any Indian boys on account the way he behaves, he is very careless about his work and the way he treats me." Nothing angered students more than the idea that they were being exploited. "I don't want to stay and work low wages, if he want cheap boys let him get some other boy," complained one student. From another, Pratt received this letter:



The man is good but the wages and food are very poor indeed. Am doing a man's work. Of course he might tell you that I am not a good farmer, but I am sure that I am doing more work than the boys around here. Well Capt. to make the story short, I will say that I want to change my place. If you don't think that you could find a place for me will I try to find it myself.<sup>61</sup>

But again, such letters were in the minority. Although there were numerous complaints about working conditions, mainly wages, most students' letters indicated satisfaction with being able to experience the white world beyond the gates of Carlisle.

Policymakers praised the outing concept as a powerful mechanism for carrying out the government's assimilationist aims. The question that soon presented itself was this: could the Carlisle system, which relied upon eastern patrons, many of them Quakers, be carried out as successfully in frontier settings, where whites might regard it as an opportunity to exploit Indian labor? Superintendent of Indian Schools Daniel Dorchester foresaw the problem in 1892. After praising Pratt's program, he went on to remark that the Carlisle outing system simply would not work in most western locales. "With too many the common idea is that the Indian is a creature to be cheated, debauched, and kicked out of decent society. Young Indians from the schools can not be safely located among such people." Haskell's superintendent, Charles Meserve, confirmed Dorchester's suspicions two years later while speaking at Lake Mohonk. "If I were asked to give my experience in a word," related Meserve, "I should say that there has not been enough of the feeling that the Indians are human beings and are capable of being civilized." Pratt agreed. Writing to General Oliver Howard in 1895, Pratt confided, "You know and I know that frontier 'outing' is and must be a flat failure."<sup>62</sup>

Still, throughout the 1890s the Indian Office pressed for expansion of the idea. In the coming years several off-reservation schools, including Haskell, Carson, Albuquerque, Genoa, Phoenix, and Sherman Institute, developed outing programs. But just as Dorchester had predicted, western outing programs were often exploitive. The superintendent at Phoenix, where ranchers and farmers were constantly pressing the school for laborers, freely admitted in 1894 that citizens in the area seldom looked upon the outing system "from a philanthropic standpoint."<sup>63</sup> The superintendents at Haskell and Carson City, moreover, reported having trouble getting patron housewives, who had grown accustomed to Indian domestic help in the summer months, to turn loose of their Indian girls for the fall school term. In a similar vein, Sherman Institute was struggling to "disabuse the general public of the idea that this is an employment agency or intelligence service."<sup>64</sup>

In fact, at some schools the outing system had degenerated into exactly that. Perhaps the most blatant example of this was the practice of sending out work gangs in groups of 50 to 100 to work for farmers and ranchers. Genoa, Chilocco, and Albuquerque, for instance, regularly sent out contingents to the beet fields of Colorado.<sup>65</sup> Likewise, Sherman boys were sent out to southern California ranches to harvest cantaloupes and oranges.<sup>66</sup> In such cases, students labored monotonously in the hot sun from daybreak to sunset, often sleeping in barns or tent camps at night, never seeing the inside of a Victorian parlor, let alone being taken in as members of a middle-class family.

Surely there was something to be gained from such experiences. For one thing, there was an opportunity to earn money. For another, students acquired habits of discipline that could contribute to long-term self-sufficiency. But perhaps most important, students learned something about the marginal terms upon which they would be incorporated into frontier society—as common laborers and domestic servants—if whites had anything to say about it. In any event, for both boys and girls, whether they attended Carlisle or Phoenix, the outing experience constituted an important element in their education.