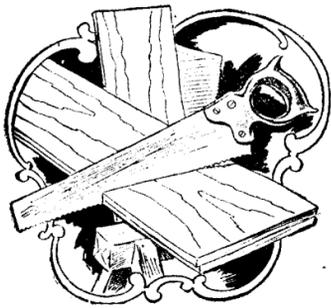


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## PRIEST DEFENDS HELPLESS INDIAN GIRLS

Recently Rev. Jean Le Coeur stopped over in Buffalo on his way from the Northwest to Washington. He carried with him a petition signed by some of the most prominent men in the Puget Sound district, requesting President Roosevelt to aid the Canadian government in stamping out the slave traffic carried on by the border traders in young Indian girls.

In a daily paper Father La Coeur is quoted as follows:

"The conditions around Vancouver are indeed startling. In fact, the slave traffic in a small way equals that of the Southern States before the war. The Cape Mudge Indians supply the girls to traders, who make great profits out of this traffic. Many of those Indian maidens are sent to the Klondike and condemned to lives of vileness. Others go to the lonely shores of Vancouver which are frequented by fishermen six months of the year.

These girls are not full blooded Indians, and many of them are nearly white and are great beauties. They are the grandchildren of the squaws who were sold to the white men who settled the country half a century ago. When the white men left or assumed the cloak of respectability they turned the squaws adrift. The children then wandered back to their ancestral grounds, married, and now their children are going through the same degradation as did their grandmothers.

While on missionary work among the Cape Mudge Indians I ran across one of the slave markets in a large camp. It was one of the most pathetic sights I have ever seen.

Standing in the centre of the camp clearing, draped in the graceful native costume, were two dozen girls manacled together. They ranged in age from 12 to 16 years. With wonder in their big innocent eyes, they watched the actions of the gross half-breed auctioneer, who bid them in like sheep, referring to them from time to time, in a manner scarcely human. Nearby stood the children's parents, eagerly waiting for the price their offspring would bring.

By the united effort of an organized band of citizens we managed to break up this slave market, but it was only one of the many.

Another case I know of was that of an Indian girl who, sickened almost to death by the life she was compelled to lead after being sold into slavery, travelled 250 miles through the wildest country to her home. On reaching there her parents immediately prepared to sell her again. She attempted to commit suicide but was prevented. Then she was taken ill, and while in this condition told her story to one of the missionaries who visited the camp. The authorities intervened in this case.

This kind of vice has grown to such proportions that unless both governments make a concerted stand it will be almost impossible to stamp out the traffic."—Exchange.

## A PLEA FOR INDEPENDENCE

(Toronto News)

John A. Cooper of the Canadian Magazine, and one of the first presidents of the Canadian Club of Toronto, addressed the Canadian Club of Orillia, a few days ago. He made a strong argument for civil service reform, and instanced one department at Ottawa where the head had declared that it was impossible to institute certain reforms or to carry on its work satisfactorily because he was given nine useless men, where the work could be have been done by three efficient officers. He contended for the adoption of the British system which absolutely removes the civil service from the field of party politics, and suggested that "the principles of government" should receive more attention in the schools and colleges of the country. He deplored the fact that until recently there had been no course in Canadian history in the University of Toronto, and suggested a course in civics, comprising lessons in municipal, provincial and national affairs. He pleaded also for greater independence in politics, and declared that it was a disgrace that any man should have it said of him after the close of a long life that he was a lifelong Liberal or Conservative, and had never voted except for the one party. "Neither party," he said, "should remain in power too long, and every true citizen who realizes the sacred nature of his franchise should vote against his party when it is in the public interest that the party should cease to hold power." Mr. Cooper seems to have delivered a strong and wholesome speech, and the gospel which he preaches cannot be too widely disseminated in Canada.

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