

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 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?