

to the highest point, a cosy home, an orchard of fine apples, pears and peaches, alfalfa fields and every convenience. For a while an Indian resided there. But idleness lived with him. Not a drop of water was conveyed to the thirsty trees, and today a fine orchard stands dying; the alfalfa fields are dried up, the water wastes away down the wash, and a ranch that abundantly maintained a large family, and was a green and hospitable spot, and was attractive in the landscape for miles, is now too poor for coyotes to visit. Mr. Roth's fine raisin vineyard is the scene of like abandonment. Why, you might present a Mission Indian with a ranch as fertile as Canaan, as well appointed as Leland Stanford's stock farm, and as sightly as Rome on seven hills, and he would plant weeds in its gravel walks, caterpillars in its groves, dogs in its stable, and filth in its houses in ten months. There is now strewn from one end of this Pass to another, uprooted families, enduring privation and hardships, where a year ago they were enjoying plenty—all because of the government's freak to clear the Reservation.

But the effect does not stop with the evicted settlers. The whole country feels it. In Southern California arable land is at a premium, because of the wonderful climate of the region, the marvellous fertility of the soil, and the comparative scarcity of it. The unconquerable mountain country takes up so much room that the valleys are doubly precious. It is the last place in the world for the government to be reckless with land. The people here need all the land they can cultivate. It don't run through horizons of unbroken fertility as in Illinois. It lies in rich pockets like the gold in the hills, and San Bernardino county cannot spare the territory comprised within the Potrero Reservation. We may be permitted to remember that this is our government, and not exclusively an Indian institution. When bold and hardy men settled the waste places of this Pass, and a railroad was

built through here, they had a right to rely that the country about them would be open to settlement. A man homesteads a quarter section, not for that 160 acres alone, but part of the consideration for his going there is that the country about will become settled and full of companionable people. And people in Banning, in this Pass and in this county, are here on a tacit understanding that the government will not compel its unsettled land to lie idle and waste, but on the other hand will open it to settlement. So that as a people we have rights to be respected in the premises. We object to 144 square miles of this county being desolate. We object to maintaining among us a body of paupers. We object to the humiliation of supporting a government whose policy toward us is so unjust, and toward the Indian so pernicious.

We understand that a bill has been pending in Congress for four years providing for a commission to examine into the rights of the Mission Indians, and the white people anent them. If the Indian department will send out here one of their clerks who can read and write, we will select any ten year old boy in this town and guarantee him to outline a better Indian policy than this government ever practiced. What does anybody need with a commission. There is no great mystery

about this. It is plain and simple. Give every Indian a plot of ground big enough to employ him, but not big enough to appal him, make him subject to our laws and encourage his intimate association with the whites, provide for his education and the maintenance of his legal rights, and let him alone. And lift these huge reservations from us. The Indians have no use for hundreds of square miles of mountains. All mining immediately about us is paralyzed. All the water to be developed in our hills is to us no more than the sea of Galilee. An Indian never will mine, nor develop water. Why keep white men from it? We cannot discuss this subject without a contempt for our National policy akin to treason. We hope for the day when we, of California, may have a word to say of our Indian policy, and the preachers of Massachusetts may take a back seat.

## The U. S. Government's Policy Toward 219 Indians.

### A MONUMENT OF STUPIDITY.

We premise our statement of what our very maternal government has done for the Potrero Indians of San Gorgonia Pass, with some general observations upon the Indian question.

The original manner of life of the Indian was an existence that was not only worthless, but such that it was the duty of the first superior race that met it to put an end to it. The Indians had no more title to the immense regions over which they hunted, than had the birds that nested there, for they laid their hands not upon the land to improve it, they needed it not for their own proper support, they had given nothing for it; while on the other hand two continents crowded with people demanded that these regions be opened to cultivation to help feed the growing millions that needed bread. The great mistake of our whole Indian system lies in the fact that it is based on the idea of financial obligation to the Indian. What little right to property the Indian had, he was entitled to have protected. But it was inconsiderable, and entirely absorbed in the moral rights which sprung from his peculiar relations to the white man. When the White man stepped upon this continent and confronted the Red man, there arose a mighty obligation for the white man to perform. The Red Man was his inferior, and in his power. The necessities of humanity had decreed that no longer was there room on this continent for a nomad. The White Man's obligation consisted simply in doing what would benefit the Indian most. It was not a matter of dollars, it was a matter of humanity. The Indian is a ward of the Government. Beautiful idea! But he is not a creditor of the Government. The Government owes him his moral welfare—an obligation infinitely superior to any financial one. If we want to see a creditor of the Government, let us look at the Negro. He was torn from his home and kindred, carried to an alien land, sold into a cruel bondage and for a century driven with the keen lash of a taskmaster. Him the Government owes. But to the Indian has been brought a new civilization, his home and his kin-

dred are with him—he has only to accept his blessings. We fully recognize the Government's duty to care for the Indians. We only ask that in that care the Government act with some shadow of sense.

In our preceding articles we have shown that the thirty families of the Potrero Indians are sufficiently civilized to labor for their own support; that they make fair laborers for other people, but will not labor for themselves. Being so, the Government withdraws from settlement one hundred and forty-four square miles of land, and reserves this enormous area for these 219 Indians. The Reservation extends clear across the Pass and up into the mountains on each side far enough to cover the watershed of the valley. It aggregates 92,160 acres. Before the Reservation was made the Government had issued patents for 720 acres of this land. Under a Railroad grant, 10,400 acres of odd sections had been surveyed. 1,280 acres of school sections had been surveyed and patented by the State. Deducting these, there is left in this Reservation 79,760 acres, or 124 square miles—a body of land 12 miles long by 10½ miles wide. It is four square miles for every family, or 364 acres for every man, woman and child among them. Of this the Department estimates that 12,000 acres is bench and valley land—the finest land in the Union, worth, without water, from \$30 to \$100 per acre. This makes for every family 400 acres of fine tillable land. The Southern Pacific Railroad runs right through this Reservation and two stations are within it.

In considering the effects of this extraordinary policy, two parties are to be considered—the Indians, and the white people of this county.

We have declared it to be the Government's duty to do what is best for the Indian. We have shown that the Indian is lazy and improvident—will not work for himself, but makes a fair laborer for others. He is just like all

men on his plane of intelligence. A child can see that whatever is done for him should be directed so as to stimulate his industry, confirm his ability for self-support, and encourage his providence. The Government has buried him in an immense Reservation, in the midst of which the Indian village sits like a ship on a shoreless sea. He is thus removed from contact with the whites as far as possible, and exhorted to continue in the degraded habits of his race. He is given more land than he cares for or knows what to do with. And to-day, after having had at their disposal thousands of acres of splendid land, for ten years, the Indians live just as they did before, in their little village, and the fertile plains of the Reservation are wastes of cat's-claw and mesquite brush. The Government has made him rich, has assured him that he will not starve. It has been told him that if he will settle on any 160 acres in the Reservation, the choicest and fairest piece, it may be his. All he need do it to remove upon it. Not a single Indian has been induced by that allurements to leave the indolent atmosphere of the village. The Government proceeds to stimulate the Indian's industry, by giving him so much that it is unnecessary for him to work; it attempts to confirm his ability for self-support, by pampering and caring for him as if he were a helpless invalid; it encourages

his providence, by removing every incentive to it.

Let it not be forgotten that the Indians in this Pass are above the lowest foreign element in the large cities. There is no question about their becoming civilized. They are already so. The same treatment would benefit them, that would benefit the Italians of Chicago. What philanthropist would dream of going into the Italian quarters in any city, and working a reform by giving them money? When men work only because they must, then arrange it so they always must. They must work out their own salvation. Industry is the key to their progress.

Now giving the Indian land is a good idea. But giving him too much, is worse than giving him none at all. The whites in this Pass, upon land where there is water, and that can be used for producing a variety, make ample incomes from 10 acres. To care for 10 acres will demand more work than any Indian will perform. Twenty or twenty-five acres would be abundant. Land with water on it is worth \$200 per acre, and will net \$50 annually with the smallest amount of labor. What then can one think of giving to 219 Indians, all told, thousands of acres of such land. We believe, and do not hesitate to say, that the present policy of the government toward the Indian does him incalculable harm, encourages him in idleness, and tends to make him a confirmed and chronic pauper.

We will discuss the effects of the Reservation on the white people of this vicinity and county in our next issue.

## The People who Dictate Our Indian Policy.

### THE LAKE MOHONK CONFERENCE.

Our National capital is off on the rim of the Union. It is remote from most of the things it represents, and in nothing else is its remoteness more detrimental than in the Indian Policy of the Government. There are various organizations in the East, whose object is to run that branch of the Government that has to do with the Indians. There are The Indians' Rights Association, The Women's National Association, The Indian Committee of Boston and The Board of Indian Commissioners. The choice spirits of these bodies have an annual conference at Lake Mohonk, N. Y., and in a healthy spirit of mutual admiration, they engage in much talk about the Indians. They entitle themselves The Lake Mohonk Conference, and there are more Reverends, Professors, D. D.s, Honorables and women, and less real information about Indians in the outfit, than can be found anywhere else outside the pulpit or college faculties.

If anybody in this country ever wondered at the astoundingly aimless and senseless policy that has been used toward our Indians, he may find the key to the enigma in the personnel of the Lake Mohonk conference, which organization certainly has much influence at Washington. Out of a membership of over 100 only seven live west of the Alleghanies. About fifty are women, twenty-two are

preachers, and Gen. Clinton B. Fisk, late Prohibition candidate for the Presidency, is a bright and shining light. What do these people know of the actual character and needs of the Indian? How comes it that Massachusetts and New York seem to hold all the friends of the Indian? It is but another example of the spirit so graphically portrayed in *Bleak House*, where Mrs. Jelleby let her household and children riot in filth and neglect, while she devoted her precious energies to the amelioration of the Pagans of Borrioboola—Pha. These supercharged philanthropists of Boston and New York find relief and distinction in championing the cause of the Indian. It is such a convenient kind of charity. One is thousands of miles from the subject. He cannot see the filth of him, he need not touch nor smell him, nor know anything of his stolidity, his stupidity, or the thrall of barbarism which holds him as muteness holds the Sphinx. Besides, the government furnishes the money wherewith to realize his projects. The people of Kansas, Montana, Arizona and California, who know more about Indians in a day than all New England does in a year, are not represented in the Mohonk conference. The widow of a mutilated husband, and mother of an outraged and disembowelled daughter from Arizona, would be an intruder in that peaceful atmosphere. From the placid shores of Lake Mohonk the Indian looms up on the Western horizon a grand and pathetic picture. Clothed and envirtued with the fancies of Cooper, aureoled with the delusions of Mrs. Jackson, he is all that is noble, and the victim of all that is base.

The proceedings of this conference at their meeting of 1887 is before us. It was entirely a speaking and resolving bee. Throughout the talk, certain things are accepted and emphasized, to wit: all the people who live where Indians are, are robbers; all the government officials are detested office seekers, and represent schemes of plunder rather than the Indians; and the only friends of the Indians are the members of this Conference, or their particular associates. As an example of their methods of procedure, they sent a college Professor to Southern California to examine into the condition of the Mission Indians. And they are advocating a bill in Congress to send a commission to this country for the same purpose. Southern California is full of men who know all about these Indians, men quite as intelligent as any college professor with his gimlet hole experience, and quite as philanthropic as any Boston preacher, however fertile that preacher may be in schemes to govern a people whom he never saw. The college professor who came out here to investigate reports of our Reservation, "The Banning or Morongo Reservation is the key to the whole problem so far as the Mission Indians are concerned. There are intruders upon that reservation, and the Indians are crowded off upon one corner, but an order has been issued and renewed that the intruders should be removed." Now this statement of two sentences, contains several mistakes and one lie. These dreamers contemplate gathering together all the Mission Indians at Banning. This scheme is as cruel as it is foolish. The Indians scattered over Southern California are devotedly attached to their homes; they want to