

TIME TO CALL A HALT.

Congressman W. S. Linton, of Michigan, Talks Like a Patriot, Before the House of Representatives While Opposing the Bill Appropriating Money for Sectarian Schools.

The house being in committee of the whole on the state of the union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 6912) making appropriations for current and contingent expenses of the Indian department, and fulfilling treaty stipulations with various Indian tribes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1895, and for other purposes—Mr. Linton said:

MR. CHAIRMAN. It is high time to call a halt in the expenditure of the nation's money either directly or indirectly toward any sectarian school, or to enrich the coffers of any religious society at the expense of many others, and we should here and now, by striking out portions of the pending bill and placing safeguards around the remainder, discontinue such perilous and unconstitutional appropriations.

Our public school system, "the bulwark of this country," nonsectarian and non-partisan, and the embodiment of the best educational thought of this enlightened century, should be the boon of the nation's wards that compose the remnant of the unfortunate Indian race and they should not be forced hereafter to attend, as they have been for centuries, without material advancement, that class of schools where Indians always remain Indians, and which today keeps the great bulk of the population in poverty-stricken Italy (where it is said 63 per cent of the people cannot even read and write), Mexico, and similar countries from rising up out of the slough of ignorance and superstition in which they are engulfed.

I do not intend, sir, to attack any religious denomination as such, but the subjoined table showing one church alone to have received during the past eight years \$2,366,416, while all others combined, fifteen in number, received during the same period only about one-half that amount, proves conclusively that it pays to maintain here on a prominent street, at the nation's capital, a bureau of Indian missions that has all the appearance of a huge lobby for advancing their interests.

As stated by a senator from New England, they have been on the ground here for years pushing Catholic schools upon the government as earnestly as was in their power, and largely to that influence is attributed their great increase, which has come to be for their church three fifth of all the appropriations; and if this bill passes the proportion will be much larger. They are active still, foisting upon the people of this country, schools that do not belong to the civilization of today.

For more than a century the Mission Indians have been under Jesuit control, education, and influence, and today are as incapable of self-support as citizens of our country as babies. They are reliant more than ever upon those from whom they received their instructions. They go in temporal matters as they do in their spiritual, where they are advised to go by their superiors. They plant where they tell them to plant and sow when they tell them to sow.

The founders of the republic builded better than they knew when they demanded the separation of church and state, and little did they imagine that congress would ever pass a bill such as the one under consideration today, or that appropriations would ever be made as shown by this table and information taken from government reports, and which I submit for printing in the Record as a portion of my remarks:

Table with columns for years 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, and Total for eight years. Rows list various religious denominations such as Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Congregational, etc.

*In addition to the immense sum received by this society, their school at Devils Lake was in a government building, and when the training school was established at Fort Totten the Sisters' school was made a part of the government school, and the sisters retained as teachers under government pay.

The sentiment of the American people is aroused against this unholy and unconstitutional union of church and state shown by these figures, and bowing to this sentiment, if for no other reason, were I high in authority in any of the ecclesiastical bodies referred to that still asked for government moneys, I would say that if my church wished to retain the good will and respect of Americans we could not afford to take a subsidy from the public treasury, and would have none of it. Several leading

denominations have already taken this course, and I desire to have read the resolutions they have adopted upon the subject:

By the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, Omaha, Neb., May, 1892:

Whereas the appropriation of public funds for sectarian purposes by the national government is not only wrong in principle, but in violation of both the letter and spirit of the constitution of the United States; Therefore

Resolved, That this General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church requests the missionary societies working under its sanction or control to decline either to petition for or to receive from the national government any moneys for educational work among the Indians.

By the general board of managers of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal church, in annual session, Grand Rapids, Mich., October 28, 1892:

Resolved, That the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal church cordially approves the action of the General Conference, requesting all benevolent societies of our church neither to appeal for nor accept from the national government any moneys for Indian schools, not only because of its loyalty to the highest legislative and judicial body of the church, but because of its belief in the American principle of the absolute separation of church and state.

(This was the only organization connected with the Methodist Episcopal church receiving national money for Indian education. It no longer receives appropriations.)

By the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States, Portland, Oregon, May, 1892:

Resolved, I. That in the judgment of this Assembly all public money expended upon the education of the Indians ought to be expended exclusively by government officers upon government schools.

Resolved, II. That in the judgment of this Assembly the practice of appropriating public money for the support of sectarian schools among the Indians, as is now done in the contract schools, ought at once to cease.

Resolved, III. That this Assembly heartily approves of all proper efforts to secure the constitutional prohibition of all appropriations of public money to sectarian schools, either by the state or by the general government.

(Rev. Dr. William C. Roberts, secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian church, the organization conducting for that denomination its school work among the Indians, writes under date of December 15, 1893: "We have contracts until July, 1894, when the government understands that we give up all connection with it.")

By the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian church of North America, Allegheny, Pa., May 31, 1892:

Resolved, That we protest against all government appropriations for the denominational Indian schools and for other sectarian purposes as unconstitutional, and petition congress to refuse all applications for such appropriations.

(This denomination has not received government appropriations.)

By the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal church, sitting as the Board of Missions, Baltimore, Md., October 19, 1892:

Resolved, That, in the judgment of this board, subsidies from the treasury of the United States in aid of Indian education ought neither to be sought nor to be accepted by this church, and that the board of managers be, and hereby is, requested to act from this time forth in accordance with this judgment.

By the Board of Managers of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal church, December 13, 1892:

The question of the renewal of the contracts with the government for the

support of the schools at Anvik and Point Hope being under consideration, the following action was taken:

Resolved, That the contracts with the bureau of education, department of the interior, from September 1, 1892, be executed, for the reason that the work contemplated by them began at the date mentioned and before the action of the Board of Missions in Baltimore, and for the further reason that there is no opportunity to notify the workers in Alaska before the expiration of the term covered by said contracts.

Resolved, That in view of the action taken by the Board of Missions at its triennial meeting in Baltimore and which was as follows:

Resolved, That in the judgment of this board subsidies from the treasury of the United States in aid of Indian education ought neither to be sought nor to be accepted by this church, and that the board of managers be and hereby is requested to act from this time forth in accordance with this judgment, and that the general secretary be instructed respectfully to advise the United States government that this board, while gratefully sensible of the past co-operation of the government in its missionary work, finds itself unable, consistently with its convictions as to the incompetency of the government to make appropriations for religious, ecclesiastical, or denominational purpose, to accept such appropriations in the future.

(Rev. Mr. Wm. S. Langford, general secretary of "The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal church," the organization conducting for that denomination its school work among the Indians, writes under date of December 30, 1893, "All contracts which this society has had for educational purposes with the United States government have terminated and none will be renewed. We are not informed of any contracts existing between the United States government and anyone respecting the Episcopal church in any diocese or missionary jurisdiction.")

By the American Missionary Association (Congregational), in annual session at Hartford, Conn., Oct. 27, 1892:

Whereas the system known as "Contract Schools," in connection with Indian work, is open to very serious abuse; and

Whereas government schools have now reached a position as to equipment, methods, and general efficiency, where the common school education among the Indians may be safely and wisely intrusted to them; therefore

Resolved, First, That public money expended upon the education of Indians ought to be expended exclusively by government officers upon government schools.

Resolved, Second, That the practice of appropriating public money for the support of sectarian schools among the Indians ought henceforth to cease.

Resolved, Third, That it is wise for the American Missionary Association to decline to seek or accept any subsidy from the government, and that henceforth this society act in conformity with this purpose.

(In the contract book of the Department of Indian affairs there appears the following entry: "August 14, 1893, F. L. Riggs declined to renew the contract to the Gahle school because the American Missionary Association had decided not to receive government aid." This severs all connection of the Congregational church with national sectarian appropriations for Indian education.)

All of the foregoing bodies, together with the Baptist and Methodist Protestant churches, have also approved the following form of XVI. Amendment to the United States constitution:

"No state shall pass any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or use its property or credit, or any money raised by taxation, or authorize either to be used, for the purpose of founding, maintaining or aiding, by appropriation, payment for services, expenses, or otherwise, any church, religious denomination or religious society, or any institution, society, or undertaking, which is wholly, or in part, under sectarian or ecclesiastical control."

Mr. Linton. Thus it will be seen that four great denominations that have heretofore been beneficiaries of a system foreign to the principles of our government, viz., the Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Congregationalists, representing with adherents, a population of 14,760,000, now refuse to receive further grants of public money collected from the whole people, and they are joined by the important Baptist denomination that has never accepted, but always refused, this public money for their missionary work; and I know other church societies are now protesting against this great wrong, while that great mass of our population not officially connected with any church, numbering at a low estimate 30,000,000, are outspoken and decidedly in earnest in their denunciation of this outrageous fraud that has been for years perpetrated upon the American people. I ask the members of the house to do away with this abomination under our government, and you will do much toward eliminating religious controversy from political questions.

Some members will argue that the church can carry on these schools more cheaply than the government. Those who consider this an argument are foes to the common school system, and in favor of parochial schools instead, as the same reasoning would apply there also. Such argument is a confession that our citizens generally are incompetent to economically perform this duty, and I for one am not in favor of making any such admission, believing

as I do that the average American citizen, no matter what his sect or creed may be, is as competent to carry on this work as any.

The bill before us makes specific appropriations for only a few parochial schools that appear upon the surface, beginning on page 61 with St. Boniface's school, in California, and the Holy Family school in Montana, et al.; but the "milk of the coconut" is found in the statement with which I have been furnished from the office of Indian affairs, and I wish to say right here in this connection, that when I first asked for this information relative to denominational schools, my clerk was informed by the assistant commissioner, who I am told is a zealous member of the church which has its headquarters upon the Tiber, that it could not be supplied.

I of course was astonished to receive this message indicating that the bureau was in ignorance of the facts, or that the request of a member of congress for information had been refused by a department, but upon sending a second time for a reply in writing to my letter, I received the following remarkable statement that I wish read and printed as abbreviated in the Record as a portion of my remarks, showing the number and class of schools under the office of Indian affairs, and to which the people of this country have been contributing millions of dollars.

Now, that a large majority of ecclesiastical bodies, realizing the wrong, have severed the bond of church and state, we should take action here today that will prevent subsidizing the schools of Mother De Chantal, Gerard Terborst, Pius Boehm, Baltnasar Forst, S. J., Sister Kunigunda, Rev. Aloysius M. Polchi, and others whose euphonious names have not been heretofore called to the attention of American people. I ask the clerk to read this statement.

The clerk read as follows: List of contract schools, giving the denomination, the location, and the total amount required for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1894, for which no special appropriation was made.

Table listing contract schools with columns for school name, denomination, and amount. Includes schools like Avoca Boarding, Michigan, Gerard Terborst, Wisconsin, etc.

Table listing additional contract schools specially appropriated for by Congress, including St. Boniface's Boarding, Banning, Calif., and Holy Family Boarding, Blackfoot Agency, Mont., etc.

Table listing additional contract schools specially appropriated for by Congress, including White's Indian Manual Labor Institute, Wabash, Ind., Oliver H. Lincoln Institution, Philadelphia, Pa., etc.

Mr. Brosius. Will it interrupt the gentleman from Michigan to ask a question? Mr. Linton. No, sir. Mr. Brosius. I understand the proposition of the gentleman is to withhold the sums appropriated in the pending bill for these denominational schools? Mr. Linton. Yes, sir. Mr. Brosius. Now, can my friend

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