

MEMORANDUM OF THE BLACKFEET INDIANS OF MONTANA FOR JUDGE GALEN.

The population of the Blackfeet Indian reservation in Montana is about 3500, and there should be of this number about 1800 adults who can qualify as voters. The Agency of the Blackfeet Indians is at Browning, Montana, and the Superintendent of the Blackfeet is Forrest M. Stone. The former Superintendent of the Blackfeet, who is now in charge of the general supervision of all the Indian Reservations in Montana, Idaho, Washington and North Dakota, is Fred C. Campbell. Mr. Campbell's headquarters are at Helena, Montana.

The ancient tribal organization of the Blackfeet has more or less broken down, although many of the old societies and orders of the tribe are now in active existence, and the officers of these societies command a certain respect from the members of the tribe. The Blackfeet now function through a tribal council, and Joe Brown, who is at the Agency at Browning, is President of the tribal Council. Robert J. Hamilton of Browning is a former President of the tribal council. Mr. Brown and Mr. Hamilton represent factions on the Reservation which are hostile to each other. It is understood, however, that Mr. Hamilton is not at present very active in Reservation politics.

During the Superintendency of Fred C. Campbell a five year farming program was organized to stimulate agriculture among these Indians. Mr. Campbell found the Blackfeet living in small groups or bands scattered over the Reservation, and he organized these bands into chapters, or granges, each under the direction of the headman of the band, and each chapter named for its headman. This organization is still in existence and functioning. A list of the chapters with the names of their headmen can be procured at the Agency. Mr. Camp-

bell at Helena will also be familiar with these different chapters. A canvas of the Chapter heads should be the quickest method of canvassing the vote on the Reservation.

There are two factions on the reservation, or rather two principal factions. That represented by Mr. Hamilton was hostile to the five year agricultural program and to Superintendent Campbell. The faction now represented by Joe Brown is friendly to the program and the Superintendent. A majority, it is believed, of the old long hairs and the influential old time Indians of the tribe line up with the five year program and pro agency faction, while many of the English speaking Indians are with the opposition. Of course a large number of the Indians are apt to be neutral, that is, sometimes backing one faction, and sometimes the other. This is pointed out because the support of one faction may mean opposition by the other faction as a logical consequence.

It is not believed that general political issues will be of much interest to these Indians. Local issues are with them of paramount importance. These issues are a desire for the speedy settlement of their tribal claims against the United States, a settlement of certain individual claims against the United States, oil development, and allotments for after born children, that is, children born after completion of the allotments. The great tribal claim of these Indians is to be tried in the Court of Claims this year and will probably be argued before the Court before the election. But Congress will have to appropriate any money due upon such judgment as may be rendered by the Court. Individual claims may be many and various, but one in point is a claim asserted by Dick Kipp for the loss of his grandfather in the Baker massacre. It is thought that the claim is not good in point of law, but such matters will have to be handled with

one of the principal old time chiefs of the Piegans, one of the Old Men Comrades of the Brave Dog Society- a military order- came forward to shake hands with and greet the Wheeler Committee. Senator Wheeler ordered silence. Mountain Chief is blind and does not understand English, and continued to advance to greet the Committee, and make them welcome among his people. The senator then commanded order, and said he would have Mountain Chief thrown out of the hall if he did not keep still. When this was explained to Mountain Chief he withdrew, stating that he would not stay where he was not wanted. Two separate reports have come in on this incident, and both agree that the result of the incident was a most unfavorable impression created among the Blackfeet toward Senator Wheeler. These Indians are more or less sticklers on the proprieties of life and are not likely to overlook deliberate rudeness. If possible Senator Wheeler should campaign for Senator Walsh among the Blackfeet.

In dealing with the older Blackfeet whoever makes the canvass should be careful to dress well and be most courteous in his conduct toward them. If such a person looks down on Indians, and adopts a superior attitude as that of a white man instructing people whom he regards as his inferiors, it will be quickly noted, and such a man will not get very far. In dealing with these Indians I have found them to be uniformly truthful, and that when they once give their word they keep it, but they may be slow to give it, or if they do not want to promise a thing, a sense of courtesy may oblige them to equivocate. The first thing to be done on the Reservation is to get a list of the Chapter heads from the Agency and make a personal canvass of all of them. This should take some weeks as these people enjoy conferences, and draw them out. Much tobacco may be smoked, so the

knowledge, and the white man's acquisitiveness as to gaining and keeping property. Many of them are handicapped by a lack of knowledge of our language and our customs, and no more understand, than the average white man does, the intricate operations of our government and the strange conclusions ~~arrived~~ arrived at, and the stranger operations of many of our laws, and our legal procedures. But I believe that the Blackfeet will be found to be equipped with a high average of mental ability and natural shrewdness, especially some of the older ones. In this I know that many able observers disagree with me, but nevertheless I adhere to this opinion.

The Blackfeet will also be found no strangers to political intrigue, and anyone making a canvass of this tribe in the belief that he is dealing with a lot of simple minded sons of the prairie is apt to find himself badly mistaken.