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From Carlisle to Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of the Indian Outing System, 1878–1930

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IN THE EARLY YEARS of the twentieth century hundreds of Indian school children participated in an apprenticeship program called the “Outing System.” This elaborate educational program hoped to promote the assimilationist goals of the federal government by placing Indian children in intimate contact with “civilized” American society. The outing idea originated with Richard Henry Pratt, founder of the famed Carlisle Indian School. Pratt believed that Indian contact with a white environment was the “supreme Americanizer,” and his program sent Indian children to live with white families. During the 1890s the outing system expanded westward, and by the early part of the present century, it was in operation at several federal Indian schools in the Far West. The system was especially popular at the non-reservation industrial schools patterned on the Carlisle model. However, as the program developed at new locations, it was diverted from its original purpose. The deviation became so acute that by 1908 Pratt himself had become a critic of the western application of the outing system.¹ Although virtually ignored by scholars, the outing system provides an insight into

¹Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses* (Norman, 1935), 223; R. H. Pratt, “The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Its Origins, Purpose, Progress, and Difficulties Surmounted,” *Cumberland County Historical Society Publications*, X (1979), 34. The latter is a reprint of an article that first appeared in 1908.

the forces affecting the federal Indian programs created during the reform era. Founded in idealism and great hope for the Indian's future, these programs soon were changed to meet the needs of others and their administrators ultimately lost sight of their original goals. These institutional developments can be traced by comparing the original outing program at Carlisle with its counterpart at the Phoenix Indian School, a typical nonreservation school in the West.

The outing system can be understood only within the context of the Indian policy reform movement that blossomed in the late nineteenth century. By the middle 1870s it was clear that the days of native independence were over, and the remaining Indian population would be subjected to Anglo domination and placed on reservations. As this occurred and as the military withdrew from active participation in Indian affairs, groups of concerned civilians began to demand a humane and just solution to the lingering "Indian problem." These men and women, who liked to be called "The Friends of the Indian," were a dedicated group of influential, well-to-do, reform-minded easterners imbued with a strong Christian spirit. Through their various organizations they expressed a firm belief in the superiority of American institutions and adopted a strong philanthropic and paternalistic stance toward the native Americans. Their evangelical crusade to save the Indian centered on making him into a version of what they imagined Americans should be—God-fearing individuals who worked for a living within the capitalistic system. To accomplish the task of "Americanizing" the Indians the reformers believed that every aspect of traditional native culture must be replaced by the institutions of a "higher" society. As one leading reformer stated: "We are coming to recognize the great truth that if we would do justice to the Indians, we must get at them, one by one, with American ideals, American schools, American laws, the privileges and the pressures of American rights and duties."²

The people who preached the policy of acculturation dominated American Indian affairs in the 1880s and 1890s. Their basic objective

²Address of Merrill E. Gates, Oct. 17, 1900, in U.S. Board of Indian Commissioners, *Annual Report, 1900* (Washington, D.C., 1901), 28. Among several good studies of the Indian policy reform movement are Francis Paul Purcha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indians, 1865-1900* (Norman, 1976); Robert W. Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian* (Columbia, Mo., 1971); Loring B. Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren: The Reformation of United States Indian Policy, 1865-1887* (New York, 1969); Henry E. Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation, 1860-1890* (Philadelphia, 1963).

was to obliterate communal habits, promote individualism, and prepare the native population for immediate contact with the white world. By the mid-1880s the machinery for their program had been put in place. Legislation for the allotment of reservation lands had passed Congress, a federal school system dedicated to teaching the American way was being created, missionary efforts were on the increase, and the natives had been granted preliminary legal rights.³ Although there were many differences of opinion within the humanitarian ranks, they generally agreed on basic goals. Given their intellectual commitment to the acculturation effort, the reformers proved quite receptive to a program like the outing system that seemed to further their cause.

Although Richard Henry Pratt is the father of the outing system, the practice of placing Indian children in white homes for education purposes dates back to the colonial period. During the eighteenth century, in particular, ministers in both New England and Virginia took Indian children into their homes in an attempt to educate them. At the same time, Indian boarding schools which had no living facilities for female students sent their girls to reside with the local families (where they were expected to learn homemaking). Even though the results of these early experiments were less than spectacular, such practices continued well into the nineteenth century.⁴ Still, there was no widespread or systematic attempt to develop this educational technique until Pratt appeared on the scene. As a result, the federal outing program bears his unmistakable imprint.

Pratt first came into contact with the native population while commanding black soldiers on the post-Civil War frontier. His interest in educating Indian children developed as the result of an assignment to

³A good summary of the reformers' outlook is in Francis Paul Prucha, *Indian Policy in the United States: Historical Essays* (Lincoln, 1981), 229–251. On land allotments, see D. S. Otis, *The Dawes Act and the Allotment of Indian Lands*, edited by Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, 1973).

⁴For accounts of these early educational attempts, see William Kellaway, *The New England Company, 1648–1776* (London, 1961), 190, 230–232; R. L. Brunhouse, "Apprenticeship for Civilization: The Outing System at the Carlisle Indian School," *Educational Outlook*, XIII (May 1939), 30–31; Evelyn C. Adams, *American Indian Education: Government Schools and Economic Progress* (Morningside Heights, N.Y., 1946), 18–19; Alice C. Fletcher, *Indian Education and Civilization* (Washington, D.C., 1888), 28, 90–96; Pearl Lee Walker-McNeil, "The Carlisle Indian School: A Study in Acculturation" (Ph.D. dissertation, American University, 1979), 36–39, 161–162; Margaret Connell Szasz, "'Poor Richard' Meets the Native American: Schooling for Young Indian Women in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut," *Pacific Historical Review*, XLIX (1980), 222–223.

supervise a group of Indian prisoners confined at Fort Marion, Florida. Convinced that "civilization" provided an answer to the national dilemma of race relations, he undertook to transform his "savage" prisoners into model citizens. He removed their chains, gave them responsibilities, and put them to work. Ultimately, many of the prisoners were permitted to take jobs in nearby St. Augustine. The success of this experiment convinced Pratt that many beneficial results might accrue from Indian contact with whites. Disciplinary problems could be reduced, the Indians would be able to earn spending money, and contact with the townspeople would encourage them to feel comfortable in American society. Partly because of these observations, Pratt reaffirmed his conviction that the Indian could be civilized by removing him from his traditional environment and transplanting him into surroundings that would cause him to work for a living, learn English, and develop into a productive citizen.⁵

In 1878, when the government decided to return the Fort Marion prisoners to their reservations, Pratt mounted a campaign to implement his ideas. He persuaded the Indian Office to allow him to retain seventeen of the younger male inmates in the East where they would be schooled at Hampton Institute in Virginia. Here, at this previously all-black school supervised by General Samuel C. Armstrong, Pratt began his educational career.⁶ In line with most reformers of the day, Pratt and Armstrong agreed that any plan for educating the natives should focus on assimilation. The basic objectives of these pioneers of Indian industrial education thus centered on teaching the English language, the work ethic, Christian moral principles, and the responsibilities of citizenship. The Indian needed to be "Americanized." Since most authorities assumed that Americanization meant becoming a farmer, Pratt, already a strong advocate of the idea of environment as the central determinant in a man's life, suggested that students might prof-

⁵Louis Morton, "How the Indians Came to Carlisle," *Pennsylvania History*, XXX (1962), 60-61; Robert L. Brunhouse, "The Founding of the Carlisle Indian School," *ibid.*, VI (1939), 73.

⁶Good accounts of Pratt's life and philosophy can be found in Eastman, *Pratt*; Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904*, edited by Robert M. Utley (New Haven, 1964); and Everett A. Gilcreast, "Richard Henry Pratt and American Indian Policy, 1877-1906: A Study of the Assimilation Movement" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1967).

it by spending their summers “among our farmers to gain practical knowledge for managing their own farms.”⁷

Pratt conducted the first outings during the summer of 1878. He initially arranged for Deacon A. H. Hyde of Lee, Massachusetts, to promote his ideas among the farmers of Berkshire County. Hyde, however, failed to interest residents in having Indians in their homes. Frustrated at this development, Pratt took one of his prize students on a visit to one of the New England towns. After describing government objectives, he finally succeeded in finding summer places for the former prisoners. During that summer the Indian students, most in their teens, were placed on a handful of New England farms, doing chores for wages, living in homes, and learning the English language. The results were gratifying. Few employers complained and all went remarkably well. The success of the first outings (as they were soon called) sold Pratt on the idea that direct contact with the white community was the most advantageous form of Indian education.⁸

Although advocating close contact between whites and Indians, Pratt had strong reservations about educating natives at the predominantly black Hampton Institute. According to his views, Indians needed to compete directly with the white men. Association with blacks could not provide the proper incentive. Moreover, the existing prejudice against blacks, he felt, would adversely affect the Indian if the two were linked in the public mind.⁹ Pratt thus broke with General Armstrong over the race issue and demanded that the Indians have a school of their own. In 1879 he went to Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz with the suggestion that he be allowed to open an Indian school in the East. A major part of his argument centered on the proposition that Indians needed a chance to participate in American life—that they could become useful citizens only “through living among our people.” Schurz agreed, and in the summer of 1879 Pratt was authorized to

⁷David Wallace Adams, “The Federal Indian Boarding School: A Study of Environment and Response, 1879–1918” (Ed.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1975), 49–50; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 192–193; Gilcreast, “Richard Henry Pratt,” 16, 29.

⁸Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 194–195; Gilcreast, “Richard Henry Pratt,” 37; Helen W. Ludlow, “Indian Education at Hampton and Carlisle,” *Harper’s Magazine*, LXII (April 1881), 666–667.

⁹O. B. Super, “Indian Education at Carlisle,” *New England Magazine*, XVIII (April 1895), 227; Brunhouse, “The Founding of the Carlisle Indian School,” 76.

open a school at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.¹⁰ Pratt soon implemented an outing system at his school. Armstrong, meanwhile, continued to develop his own program at Hampton.

The outing system at Carlisle got off to a rather inauspicious start. Pratt had hoped to send a number of his students to Massachusetts during the summer of 1880, but Armstrong acted first by arranging for twenty-five Hampton students to return to local farms. Pratt thus managed to find only three places in New England for Carlisle students. He was more successful in rural Pennsylvania, and ultimately secured homes for five girls and sixteen boys. The results, however, were not very good. The farmers were afraid of the Indians, and the Indians, fresh from the frontier, were unprepared to live in white homes. Major communication problems developed and most of the students were quickly returned to the school. Still, Pratt remained optimistic, predicting that "in the coming year, with a better understanding of English and increased desire to work on the part of the Indians, there is no reason to believe that all the children we may desire to put out during vacation will find places."¹¹

Pratt's prediction proved correct. During the summer of 1881 Carlisle sent out 109 students to live among white families for the summer. This time the results were more encouraging. Only six pupils were returned by their patrons. Pratt was especially pleased that the students, having learned "the English and education that we push in theory and practice at the school," were using that skill to advantage. Outing students were provided with their clothing and books but were expected to pay for their board by doing farm work.¹²

Several important changes were instituted following the second outing summer. In the fall of 1881, Indian Commissioner Hiram Price

¹⁰David W. Adams, "Education in Hues: Red and Black at Hampton Institute, 1878-1893," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXXVI (1977), 169-172; Eastman, *Pratt*, 64-67; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 213-218; Priest, *Uncle Sam's Stepchildren*, 142-143.

¹¹S. C. Armstrong to Commissioner, Sept. 20, 1880, in U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report, 1880*, p. 183 (hereafter cited as CIA, *Annual Report* and appropriate year); Pratt to Commissioner, Oct. 5, 1880, *ibid.*, 180; Pratt to Thad C. Pound, Jan. 13, 1881, and Pratt to John Jay, Aug. 16, 1890, R. H. Pratt Letterbook, Beinecke Library, Yale University; R. H. Pratt, "The Way Out," in U.S. Board of Indian Commissioners, *Annual Report, 1891* (Washington, D.C., 1892), 81-84; R. H. Pratt, "American Indians, Chained and Unchained" (Address before the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, Philadelphia, Oct. 23, 1912), p. 11, Henry E. Huntington Library, #52525.

¹²Pratt to Commissioner, Oct. 15, 1881, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1881*, pp. 187-188; Pratt to Commissioner, Sept. 16, 1881, Letters Received, No. 16572, 1881, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives (hereafter cited as RG 75, NA).

agreed to leave twenty-nine children with white families over the winter. These students remained out on a voluntary basis and were expected to do household and farm chores and attend public schools. Pratt encountered some difficulty with local school authorities who objected to giving free admission to Indian children but this problem was overcome when the state school superintendent ruled that outing children were entitled to public school privileges. From this time on it became possible for school students to spend a considerable portion of their educational career away from federal schools working in the homes of white citizens. Pratt also began an association with the Quakers near Philadelphia. He had encountered some difficulty with students remaining in the vicinity of Carlisle. Suffering from loneliness, a number of pupils had run away from their employers to return to their comrades at school. Pratt solved this problem by sending the children to Quaker families in Bucks County, some distance away. The association that developed between Carlisle and the Society of Friends, whose members possessed many of the qualities Pratt wanted to instill, assured the success of the outings as the public-spirited Quakers took an active interest in the success of the program.¹³

The outing system at Carlisle grew rapidly during the early 1880s and easily outpaced the similar program at Hampton. By 1885 Carlisle was placing nearly 250 students in homes for the summer and over a hundred of them were staying out the entire year (by way of contrast, Hampton confined its outing program to about twenty-five pupils a year). As the system expanded it became increasingly diversified and sophisticated. Students went out only at their own request after signing a form agreeing to follow all rules and regulations. Realizing the difficulty in placing unprepared students in white homes, Pratt adopted a policy of requiring two years of school before a student could participate in the program. He also subjected his patrons to a close scrutiny and required them to assume the entire financial responsibility of supporting their wards, including paying them a fair wage. Several times a year, school employees paid unannounced visits to outing pupils to examine their "home" and "see if the student is happily situated." The variety of jobs performed by Indian students expanded as the system

¹³Pratt to Commissioner, Sept. 16, 1881, Letters Received, No. 16572, 1881, RG 75, NA; Pratt, "American Indians, Chained and Unchained," 11-13; Walker-McNeil, "The Carlisle Indian School," 166-167.

grew. Boys worked at farming, harvesting, gardening, and blacksmithing. Girls generally devoted their time to housework and domestic tasks. Wages for these services ranged from one to fifteen dollars per month. With most students receiving a modest income, a savings program was established to promote economy and thrift. Earnings were deposited in bank accounts and pupils could draw upon them once a month for the purchase of necessities.¹⁴

The Quaker residents of eastern Pennsylvania who participated in the early outing program were pleased with the system. By supporting the outings they received the satisfaction of knowing they were helping to resolve a national Indian dilemma while at the same time being able to procure the services of an able-bodied Indian boy or girl who could perform any number of chores. A large majority of the students proved to be excellent workers, and very few were returned to Carlisle because of unsatisfactory performance. "Willing and anxious to learn; a good kind boy, a favorite with white boys he is allowed to associate with" was a typical patron's comment. With reports such as this spreading among the rural community around Philadelphia, it is little wonder that the school soon received more requests than could be filled.¹⁵

Pratt looked on the outing experience as the ultimate in individualism. Placed with white families, the Indian child would hear and speak nothing but English. "It is," he remarked, "fairly and fully demonstrated in our experience at Carlisle that there is no great difficulty in making pretty good, industrious, self-supporting Pennsylvanians out of the Indian youth of any tribe, provided they are brought into contact with the good, industrious, and self-supporting people of Pennsylvania." Another key aspect of the Carlisle system was its emphasis on personal attention. The student was to be treated as a family member, not a servant. "We make it a rule," he stated, "that they go only to

¹⁴Helen W. Ludlow, *Ten Years' Work for Indians at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute* (Hampton, Va., 1888), 36-37; Pratt to Commissioner, Sept. 30, 1882, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1882*, p. 178; Pratt to Commissioner, Sept. 12, 1884, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1884*, pp. 186-187; Pratt to Commissioner, Aug. 18, 1885, in CIA *Annual Report, 1885*, pp. 214-217; Pratt to John Miles, Nov. 4, 1882, Letters Received, No. 11700, 1882, RG 75, NA; Pratt to John Jay, Aug. 16, 1890, and Pratt to H. R. Howland, April 21, 1896, Pratt Letterbook; Super, "Indian Education at Carlisle," 231-232.

¹⁵Quoted in Walker-McNeil, "The Carlisle Indian School," 166-167. Reports from outing patrons were frequently printed. Typical examples are found in Pratt to Commissioner, Sept. 30, 1882, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1882*, p. 178; Pratt to Commissioner, Aug. 18, 1885, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1885*, pp. 214-215. Similar comments about Hampton students can be found in Ludlow, *Ten Year's Work for Indians at Hampton*, 72-74.

those homes where the people will take them into the family, and be personally interested in them." As a result, Carlisle consistently refused to send students to city jobs or place them in locations where they might fall into menial occupations. Pratt thus expected that living and working in the white community would encourage the pupils to "enter the organized industries of the country" on a level equal with whites. He envisioned his system as producing full equality.¹⁶

By the middle-1890s the Carlisle outing program was acclaimed an outstanding success. The number of Indian children sent out steadily increased and peaked at 948 in 1903. Observers liked to describe the system as the "strong right arm" of the school and they maintained that no other program was as effective in removing the Indian child from tribal influences. Although by this time a significant amount of criticism of Carlisle had surfaced, it did not dampen the enthusiasm for the outing program. Opponents argued that eastern schools failed to provide useful training, were resented by Indian parents, and that returned students "went back to the blanket," but they still praised the outings. Francis Leupp, for example, although outspoken in his opposition to Pratt, called the apprenticeship program an "inspiration" and remarked that the boys or girls participating in the program "got more that was of value from such little excursions into real life than if they had mastered the contents of the whole school library." Even when Pratt was forced to make some significant changes in his methods, such as placing boys in factories or resorts, he received praise despite the fact that these students were denied the advantages of living in a family environment.¹⁷

The success of the Carlisle outing program caused government officials to consider expanding it. This became possible in the mid-1880s when the Indian Office began to open off-reservation industrial

¹⁶Pratt to Commissioner, Oct. 15, 1881, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1881*, p. 187; Pratt to Commissioner, Aug. 15, 1885, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1885*, pp. 215-216; Pratt to Rep. Thad C. Pound, Jan. 13, 1881, Pratt to J. L. Taylor, Aug. 3, 1883, Pratt to H. R. Howland, April 21, 1896, Pratt to W. H. Clapp, April 15, 1895, Pratt to Noble Haigh, Feb. 8, 1900, Pratt Letter-book; Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 312; Eastman, *Pratt*, 221-228.

¹⁷Brunhouse, "Apprenticeship for Civilization," 32-33; Ruth Shaffner, "Civilizing the American Indian," *The Chatauquan*, XXIII (June 1896), 166-267; George Bird Grinnell, "The Indians and the Outing System," *The Outlook*, LXXV (Sept. 19, 1903), 167-173; Walker-McNeil, "The Carlisle Indian School," 164; Indian Rights Association, *Indian Education: An Adverse Report Upon the Schools at Carlisle and Hampton* (N.P., Dec. 1, 1886), University of New Mexico Library, Albuquerque; Francis E. Leupp, *The Indian and His Problem* (New York, 1910), 121-122.

schools in the West. Between 1880 and 1886 schools patterned after Carlisle were constructed at sites ranging from Forest Grove, Oregon, to Chilocco, Indian Territory. Although none of these schools immediately created an outing system, Congress encouraged the development of such a program by passing a series of laws designed to help the outings. In 1882, for example, Congress appropriated funds to place children with white families who would provide "proper care, support, and education . . . in exchange for their labor." By 1884 the government had also approved the payment of funds to provide transportation for children who were sent out. Later, Congress added a provision to cover medical and clothing costs for outing students.¹⁸

Due to their remote location and lack of resources, the western schools were slow to develop their own outing systems. There simply were not a large number of white families in the vicinity of the early schools. However, as time went on and more schools were established in urban areas, opportunities began to appear. By 1888 school superintendents at Haskell Institute in Kansas and the Genoa, Nebraska, school were suggesting that homes might be found for their students. The first actual use of the outing system in the West came in 1889 when William Beadle of the Chemawa (formerly Forest Grove) school sent a dozen boys to work on neighborhood farms. This proved so popular that farmers were reported coming from miles around to secure students. Additional support for expanding the system came with the appointment of Indian Commissioner Thomas J. Morgan (1889–1893). Although Morgan often differed with Pratt, he was enthusiastic about the outing system. As early as December 1889, Morgan recommended a sizeable expansion of the program, and a year later he promised to give its development "my constant and careful attention."¹⁹

In 1891 Morgan reported that the program was taking root in the

¹⁸*U.S. Stats.*, XXII, 85; *ibid.*, XXIII, 92; Theodore Fishbacker, "A Study of the Role of the Federal Government in the Education of the American Indian" (Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 1967), 224–225; Gilcreast, "Richard Henry Pratt," 132–133.

¹⁹C. Robinson to Commissioner, Aug. 30, 1888, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1888*, p. 260; Horace R. Chase to Commissioner, Oct. 8, 1888, *ibid.*, 267; William H. H. Beadle to Commissioner, July 31, 1889, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1889*, p. 364; T. J. Morgan, "Supplemental Report on Indian Education," Dec. 1, 1889, *ibid.*, 96–97; "Commissioner's Report," Sept. 5, 1890, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1890*, p. x. Soon after assuming office in the summer of 1889, Morgan ordered Charles F. Messerve, superintendent of Haskell, to study the Carlisle system in preparation for opening an outing program at the Nebraska school. As a result, sometime during the fall of 1889, Haskell began placing students. U.S. Board of Indian Commissioners, *Annual Report, 1891*, (Washington, D.C., 1892), 87; Pratt to Morgan, Aug. 9, 1889, Pratt Letterbook.

West. "Increasing numbers of boys and girls," he predicted, "will be enabled to find profitable employment in white communities, and will thus be prepared, as they could not be in any other possible way, for absorption into our national life." The expansion of the outing system raised some vexing questions, however. Could the Carlisle system be fitted to frontier circumstances, or should it be altered? This dilemma confronted Morgan when superintendent W. B. Backus of the Genoa school sought permission to enter into an agreement with a sugar beet company at Grand Island to employ Indian students. The Indian Office noted that this was not true to the outing idea (it offered no educational or family benefits), but approved the request anyway. Then, when white sugar workers objected to the use of Indian labor, Backus withdrew the contract. Morgan reacted furiously. He reprimanded Backus for not standing up for his students and issued a statement implying that even the sugar beet scheme came under the outing umbrella. He asked the people of Nebraska to look favorably on Indian employment and take students into their homes where "they will very readily adjust themselves to the necessities of modern life, will become Americans in spirit, as they are already in fact, and will cease to be Indians."²⁰ Thus, from Morgan's viewpoint, altering the outing program to western circumstances might be necessary.

During this same period Commissioner Morgan approved the establishment of an Indian industrial school in Phoenix, Arizona. Because of its urban setting, this institution placed heavy emphasis on the outing system from the beginning, ultimately developing a program second in size only to Carlisle. However, the outing system at Phoenix came to be something quite different from what Pratt had instituted in Pennsylvania. Phoenix was a western boarding school created a decade after Pratt's institution, and it demonstrated how an idealistic concept could be modified by local influences. In essence, what had been created as an apprentice device to incorporate Indian children into American society became a child labor system intended primarily for the benefit of the non-Indian community. As such, the expectations for the Indian children also changed. Thus while Pratt continued his outing program in much the original fashion, bureau schools like the one in Phoenix demonstrated a dramatic deviation.²¹

²⁰CIA, *Annual Report, 1891*, pp. 56, 151-155.

²¹For a general history of the Phoenix school, see Robert A. Trennert, "'Peaceably if They Will, Forcibly if They Must': The Phoenix Indian School, 1890-1901," *Journal of Arizona*

Even the selection of the Phoenix site was influenced more by economic than philanthropic factors. Originally scheduled to open at nearby Fort McDowell, the school was lured to Phoenix by local citizens interested in promoting their city. Although much of their attention centered on attracting federal dollars, several groups were keenly aware of the potential use of Indian labor. When Commissioner Morgan visited Phoenix in October 1890 to make a final decision on the school site, he was wooed by a citizens committee headed by William Christy and William J. Murphy, speculators who were developing the first citrus orchards in the valley. It was quickly pointed out to Morgan that local agricultural lands, "now being so extensively planted with fruit trees and vines," would provide work for students. Impressed with what he saw, Morgan readily approved the school site. Local residents took this to mean that the outing system would soon be utilized, and they hardly restrained their enthusiasm. Said one newspaper, "the establishment of this school will furnish cheap and efficient labor in quantity to warrant the growing and manufacture of cotton here in the valley as well as to afford our fruit-growers facilities for handling the rapidly increasing quantity of fruit that will be handled in one way or another."²²

Interest in the outings intensified as the facility came closer to its September, 1891, opening. Unlike the Quaker residents near Carlisle, who had a sincere interest in their wards, local citizens gave scant thought to the educational benefits a school would bring and tended to view the institution as a reservoir of cheap labor. Valley housewives, faced with a shortage of domestic servants, expected school authorities to provide them with "properly instructed and trained" girls. Fruit growers took an even more active interest in Indian boys. Well before the school opened its doors, farmers had begun to request pupils to work the harvests. Cornelius W. Crouse, the Pima Indian agent, observed the great interest in outings: "The farmers and fruit growers in the vicinity of the school are ready to employ these boys and girls as soon as their labor becomes sufficiently skillful to pay them." He congratulated the "alert" businessmen of the city for bringing them to

History, XX (1979), 297–322. A discussion of the changing attitude toward Indian education can be found in Frederick E. Hoxie, "Beyond Savagery: The Campaign to Assimilate the American Indian, 1880–1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1977).

²²*Arizona Republican*, Oct. 10, 1890; *Phoenix Daily Herald*, Oct. 14, Dec. 15, 1890; Wellington Rich to Morgan, Oct. 14, 1890, Letters Received, No. 32751, 1890, RG 75, NA.

town. No one said anything about integrating the Indian into Arizona society.²³

Even Wellington Rich, the school's first superintendent, was cool toward fitting Indian children into white society. Having gained his educational training at reservation schools, he did not share Pratt's belief in the Indian's ability to assimilate. As he reported to the Indian Office in early 1892, "I have no sympathy with the scheme of *diffusing* the educated Indian youth among the whites. They should as a rule, in my opinion, return to their people and assist in the civilization of the latter." Rich believed he had the Indians' best interest at heart. He maintained that only occupations appropriate to the local climate, soil, and natural products should be stressed and there was no value in training students for jobs that did not exist in Arizona. He also knew that local businessmen would support his school only if it trained students to work for them. He thus recommended that the Phoenix school specialize in fruit growing. Presumably the student would receive his education while working on the farms and then return to his reservation to start his own farm. The superintendent predicted that conditions for applying the outing system in Phoenix were most favorable, but his conception of how it should operate and what it might accomplish was far different from that of Captain Pratt.²⁴

It required time to begin the outing system at Phoenix. For the first two years the school had only a limited number of pupils, most of whom were fresh from the reservation and unable to communicate in English. By 1893, however, Superintendent Rich had begun to place some students. A few boys were sent to work in a vineyard and several were employed by the contractor erecting school buildings. Even more significant was the fact that eleven girls were placed with local families to serve as domestics, thus beginning a tradition at Phoenix. The best girls were paid ten dollars a month and were permitted to attend school part-time. Rich was extremely careful in choosing his first outing students: "We have been careful to send out only those girls that were sure to do well as we could not afford to have any failure at the beginning of

²³Memorial of Jerry Millay and others, Jan. 9, 1891, Letters Received, No. 1871, 1891, RG 75, NA; Mabel Hancock Latham Reminiscences, box 3, folder 23, Hancock Family Collection, Arizona Historical Foundation; Rich to Morgan, Feb. 4, 1891, Letters Received, No. 5521, 1891, RG 75, NA; *Phoenix Daily Herald*, Feb. 4, Sept. 3, 1891; *Arizona Republican*, Dec. 9, 1891; Cornelius W. Crouse to Commissioner, Sept. 30, 1891, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1891*, p. 214.

²⁴Rich to Morgan, Jan. 14, 1892, Letters Received, No. 2785, 1892, RG 75, NA.

this 'outing' business." Although caution was uppermost in his mind, the superintendent continued to feel community pressure to supply local families with students.²⁵

The next superintendent, Harwood Hall, did even more to promote the outing system. In August 1894 he reported that he heartily approved of the program. His main concern was that the pupils be sufficiently trained before being placed so that they might reflect well on the school. He was especially enthusiastic about the girls' program. Many people in the valley wanted to hire girls, and he felt their schooling should fit them to "enter white homes and make a living." Accordingly, course work concentrated on cooking and homemaking. As Hall remarked, "an education can be given hand in hand with practical work which enables a living to be made from the start. The school can thus serve as an employment agency, whereby the deserving Indian pupil can secure employment as soon as qualified." He had no illusions about the motives of families wishing to use students: "The hiring of an Indian youth is not looked upon by the people of this valley from a philanthropic standpoint. It is simply a matter of business." Whatever education the Indian child received was up to him. It became a case of survival of the fittest. Work would educate the Indians "to look upon the battle from a business standpoint in which they must expect no quarter."²⁶

During Hall's administration (1893–1897) the basic features of the Phoenix system were established and the school became known as the "Carlisle of the Southwest." Boys and girls were hired out to families at an average of eight dollars per month, an amount less than the wages paid to whites but considered "quite satisfactory to the Indians." The children serving out were to look on the school as their home and would usually return to campus on Saturday and go back to work on Monday. Despite this effort to maintain an identification with the school, the outing system was primarily concerned with providing employment, and the links to the school lessened over a period of time. Hall ultimately agreed to find jobs for Pima and Papago children attending other bureau schools. As he told the commissioner, "had I

²⁵Rich to Commissioner, July 1893, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1893*, pp. 403–404; Crouse to Commissioner, May 12, 1893, Letters Received, No. 18170, 1893, RG 75, NA.

²⁶Harwood Hall to Commissioner, Aug. 10, 1894, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1894*, pp. 369–371; report on the Phoenix Indian School by Inspector C. C. Duncan, Dec. 1, 1894, Roll 35, Microcopy M1070, Reports of Inspection, RG 75, NA.

500 Indian girls and boys of sufficient size and training, capable of understanding English to the extent of doing what they are told, I am sure places could be secured in this thickly settled valley inside ten days."²⁷

Although Superintendent Hall received periodic instructions from the Indian Office he was relatively free to tailor his outing system to local circumstances. All he needed was a plausible reason to alter the program. For example, he was so enthusiastic about employing Indians that in 1896 he sought permission to extend his program to southern California. He justified this request on the grounds that there were many openings in southern California where students might work. Employing students at a distant location seemed especially attractive to Hall, who pictured Indian parents as hanging around their children in Phoenix, begging for money, and proving a nuisance to patrons. In some cases he was willing to forego wages if patrons would provide "board, proper care and instruction." Under this system, by 1896 Hall had some two hundred pupils, mostly girls, working out.²⁸

By the time S. M. McCowan became school superintendent in 1897 some of the problems that would become endemic at the western schools had surfaced. In particular, it seemed that female students were suffering from a lack of supervision (certainly never a problem at Carlisle). McCowan, recognizing that the system had deteriorated to the point it was harming the girls, suggested that the school be permitted to hire an outing matron to oversee the program. "Sending unformed, undisciplined girls out to service in families that care nothing for them except the work they can get from them, *without careful supervision*, is often more of a curse to the girls than a blessing," he reported. McCowan wanted the matron to instruct girls in homemaking, supervise them on the job, and offer encouragement and advice.

²⁷Acting Secretary of the Interior to Commissioner, [Dec. 1894] Letters Received, No. 48564, 1894, RG 75, NA; M. D. Shelby to Commissioner, Nov. 3, 1894, *ibid.*, No. 43774, 1894; Hall to Commissioner, Jan. 16, 1895, *ibid.*, No. 3337, 1895; A. H. Heinemann to Superintendent of Indian Schools, April 12, 1895, *ibid.*, No. 16636, 1895; Hall to Commissioner, Jan. 11, 1896, *ibid.*, No. 2078, 1896.

²⁸Hall to Commissioner, June 16, 1896, Letters Received, No. 23559, 1896, RG 75, NA; *Phoenix Daily Herald*, June 18, 1896; Hall to Commissioner, Sept. 1, 1896, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1896*, pp. 364–366; report on Phoenix Indian School by Inspector P. McCormick, April 5, 1897, Roll 35, Microcopy M1070, Reports of Inspection, RG 75, NA. It is not known how many Phoenix girls were sent to southern California, but the practice apparently ended in 1897 when Superintendent Hall took over the Perris, California, school and began to regard southern California as the exclusive domain of his outing system.

The bureau agreed and soon thereafter a matron was employed to supervise the outings.²⁹

Unfortunately, an outing matron could not resolve all the problems. Early in 1900, for example, an Indian service inspector reviewed the Phoenix program and offered some strong criticism (which served to point out how far the system had strayed from the Carlisle ideal). His main concern was that the outings had become impersonal and simply a means of providing menial labor to the community. He was particularly critical of the attitude of local families who regarded the school as an employment bureau and sought "Indian help because it is somewhat cheaper and can be controlled to better advantage." McCowan, who was well aware that it had become fashionable in Phoenix to have an Indian servant, brushed the criticism off by remarking that while the inspector's comments were undoubtedly correct in a few cases, a majority of employers "think as much of their Indian help as any family on earth." McCowan's tendency to see only the positive side of the issue was reinforced when the federal superintendent of Indian schools, Estelle Reel, personally reviewed the Phoenix outing in May 1900. Meeting with prominent local families, she was impressed by how much they valued their Indian help. She applauded when told that the wives of leading citizens traveled about the country taking school girls with them to serve as maids and nurses. To Reel, this was education. It gave the girls a chance to travel, "and they acquire in one year as much cultivation and civilization as could be engrafted upon them in four or five years of ordinary intercourse in the school."³⁰ Since the federal superintendent offered no criticism of such procedures, it is not surprising that local administrators continued operations as usual.

By the end of its first decade the outing system at Phoenix had become an important part of local life. The school annually placed out about two hundred students, most of whom were girls serving as domestic servants. Boys were used less often, but could still be found as hotel bellhops, construction laborers, and farm workers.

The evolution of the outing system at Phoenix was similar to that of outing programs at other western Indian schools. By 1900 outing programs had been developed at such nonreservation schools as Haskell

²⁹S. M. McCowan to Commissioner, Aug. 3, 1897, Letters Received, No. 32393, 1897, RG 75, NA; McCowan to Commissioner, July 30, 1898, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1898*, pp. 352-354.

³⁰McCowan to Commissioner, March 15, 1900, Letters Received, No. 13884, 1900, RG 75, NA; Estelle Reel to Commissioner, May 26, 1900, *ibid.*, No. 31803, 1900.

Institute, Perris school in California, Carson school in Nevada, and Fiske Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Indian Office clearly recognized that not every location could support an outing program and limited it to sites with "a civilized white community in the immediate vicinity in sympathy with the plan." Government officials generally praised the western programs, although they all suffered problems similar to those at Phoenix. As early as 1893 the superintendent at Haskell remarked that local patrons did not take an interest in the students or regard them "as human beings and capable of being civilized." At Albuquerque, the outings consisted largely of sending boys to work in the beet fields of Colorado and on the Santa Fe Railway. At Sherman Institute in Riverside, California, there was practically no supervision of students and the superintendent could not even provide the names of employers. Boys were reported laboring for the "Salt Lake R. R. Co., Riverside Power Co., The Trust Co., San Jacinto Land Co., besides ranches throughout the various valleys in So. California, changing employers when the work is done."³¹

Thus the western application of the outing system increasingly became a method of supplying cheap labor to white employers in the guise of work training. One reason this occurred, aside from the different economic conditions existing in the West and the anti-Indian attitude prevailing among western citizens, was that quite different ideas about the future of the Indian had emerged since the 1880s. By 1900 most of the humanitarian reformers who had directed Indian policy were being replaced by professional bureaucrats as the civil service system came into full operation. They held ideas in dramatic contrast to Pratt. Many of these professionals believed Indians were inferior, not capable of full assimilation into American society, and should not be trained for something unobtainable. Consequently, they tended to support local programs that seemed to train Indian students for menial jobs or a return to the reservation.³² These officials, who after 1900

³¹Report of W. N. Hailman, Superintendent of Indian Schools, Oct. 1, 1895, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1895*, p. 341; Commissioner's report, Oct. 1, 1900, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1900*, pp. 30-32; U.S. Board of Indian Commissioners, *Annual Report, 1893* (Washington, D.C. 1894), 30; Lillie G. McKinney, "History of Albuquerque Indian School," *New Mexico Historical Review*, XX (1945), 131, 137; Harwood Hall to Commissioner, March 19, 1901, Nov. 16, 1903, July 3, 1905, Sherman Institute Papers, Federal Records Center, Laguna Niguel, California.

³²Frederick E. Hoxie, "Redefining Indian Education: Thomas J. Morgan's Program in Disarray," *Arizona and the West*, XXIV (1982), 5-18; Prucha, *Indian Policy in the United States*, 252-262. For an example of the official look on the virtue of returning educated Indians to their

dominated the Indian Bureau, continued to value the outing system, but expected it to accomplish much less.

Estelle Reel, the federal Indian school superintendent, typified the new school of thought. In 1901 she prepared a course of study for all Indian schools, based partly on the assumption that the "Carlisle Outing System" was still working. As she saw it, great advantages remained in placing the Indian "in the midst of the stir of civilized life, where he must compete with wideawake boys and girls of the white race; it gives him a free and ready command of English; it teaches him the worth and value of labor and its remuneration." But this experience could no longer be used as a tool to assimilate Indians into the dominant society. After a few years in the outing system the boy was expected to return home and operate a farm and "arrange a home and live in it as the people do at the home he has just left." It was the same for girls. They were to become efficient housekeepers when they returned to the reservation and got married. With the money they earned in the outings the young men would build a home and the young women would furnish it. Reel was so pleased with this prospect that she recommended expanding the program as rapidly as possible.³³

That the program did not work as Reel described it, especially at Phoenix, can be seen in a report that Superintendent C. W. Goodman prepared in 1902. After listing the usual advantages of contact with civilized home life, Goodman noted some disadvantages. Students received little supervision, they were not employed out of any spirit of philanthropy but simply for what they could do, they did not attend public schools while working out, and they were susceptible to being corrupted by the vices of Phoenix. Moreover, the outings disrupted the regular school routine. "By my own observations," he remarked, "I believe that the pupils whose school work is constantly broken into soon lose all interest in their studies, must be degraded from class to class, are by far more difficult to manage, and that they do not speak or understand the English language as readily as the pupils who for the school term have been unmolested in their school work." Outing pupils

reservations, see report of W. N. Hailman, Superintendent of Indian Schools, Sept. 26, 1896, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1896*, p. 353.

³³[Estelle Reel], *Course of Study for the Indian Schools of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1901), 189-191. Similar statements can be found in the report of Reel, Superintendent of Indian Schools, Nov. 12, 1902, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1902*, p. 395.

thus gained little from their experience and would likely return home at the end of their schooling unprepared for a reservation life. In conclusion, Goodman argued that while the system's advantages outweighed its liabilities, some major changes were necessary.³⁴

In the fall of 1902 a scandal erupted which brought unfavorable notice to the Phoenix program. It developed because a number of reservation Indians worked in town under no supervision. Many of these people were young adults about the same age as the outing pupils. Their unregulated activities, which were said to include "gambling, drinking and swearing," attracted the notice of some of the more righteous members of the community, who often mistook the reservation children for students. Moreover, a number of Indian boys hung around the homes of outing girls, encouraging them to carouse at night. Ultimately community leaders began to complain to school officials about such activities. One upright observer even suggested that "immorality" was being practiced by school children during the Sunday evening band concerts in town. Although Superintendent Goodman maintained that such incidents, if they indeed occurred, were caused by non-school children, the damaging publicity prompted him to call in all girls who worked by the month. After that the school only permitted girls to work in town on Saturdays.³⁵

Then, to compound the problem, the girls' outing matron suddenly resigned. Her departure was accompanied by a scathing denunciation of the program. She particularly objected to the practice of sending girls into town to work on Saturdays: "The people for whom the girls work teach them nothing, but simply pile up the hard and dirty work till Saturday, and then complain if the work is not perfectly done." Since the girls were sent into town unescorted, many did not return directly to the school after their day's work. Unable to convince Superintendent Goodman to change the Saturday program, she refused to take part in "the moral downfall of the girls." When Indian Commissioner W. A. Jones heard of these allegations he ordered the school to call in all girls from the outing system. Although this order temporarily

³⁴C. W. Goodman to Commissioner, April 11, 1902, Letters Received, No. 22877, 1902, RG 75, NA.

³⁵*Ibid.*; Goodman to Commissioner, [Sept. 1902], *ibid.*, No. 55054, 1902; Goodman to Commissioner, Oct. 24, 1902, *ibid.*, No. 64577, 1902; W. A. Jones to Supt. Phoenix Indian School, Oct. 9, 1902, Letters Sent, Education, No. 58918, 1902, RG 75, NA.

ended the Phoenix program, it did not stop reservation children from creating disturbances.³⁶

The scandal at Phoenix caused the Indian Office to more closely supervise its apprentice system at western locations. In October 1903 the Indian commissioner ordered school superintendents to review their outing programs and submit quarterly "Outing Pupil Reports." One purpose of these reports was to determine if the outings were well supervised. The results indicated that there was little supervision and even less education. Meanwhile, the Phoenix school attempted to counteract the loss of its girls' program by opening an "Industrial Cottage" on campus. This facility consisted of a renovated school building used as a model home where girls could practice regular household routine. Unfortunately, the cottage could handle only nine girls at a time and school officials soon resumed the outings.³⁷

It took several years for the outing system at Phoenix to fully recover from the 1902 scandal. Cautious school officials made sure that only a few selected students were sent out, that their work did not interfere with school activities, and that there were no more blemishes on the school's good name. As a result, by the end of 1908 only twenty boys and twelve girls were participating in the program.³⁸ Yet community demand for Indian workers remained high and school administrators slowly yielded to the pressure. This was particularly true after Amanda Chingren became the outing matron in 1911. Chingren was a forceful personality, deeply concerned with the moral character of her girls, and fully convinced of the necessity of outings. She wanted no scandal to occur while she was on the job and personally supervised every

³⁶Jones to Supt. Phoenix Indian School, Oct. 9, 1902, Letters Sent, Education, No. 58918, 1902, RG 75, NA; Goodman to Commissioner, Oct. 24, 1902, Letters Received, No. 54557, 1902, RG 75, NA; Rev. L. McAfee to James B. Alexander, Nov. 18, 1902, *ibid.*, No. 1360, 1903, enclosure No. 1; A. C. Tonner to Supt. Indian School, Phoenix, Dec. 8, 1902, Letters Sent, Education, No. 70568, 1902, RG 75, NA; Goodman to Commissioner, Jan. 2, 1903, Letters Received, No. 1360, 1903, RG 75, NA. The program at Phoenix was so restricted that in May 1903 the school reported that it had only seven boys as outing students. See Goodman to Commissioner, May 26, 1903, *ibid.*, No. 34373, 1903.

³⁷Commissioner to Supt. Indian School, Riverside, Oct. 30, 1903, Sherman Institute Papers; Education Circular No. 123, May 13, 1905, *ibid.*; Harwood Hall to Commissioner, Nov. 16, 1903, *ibid.*; *Native American*, Feb. 27, 1904, pp. 63-64.

³⁸Goodman to Commissioner, Aug. 31, 1905, in CIA, *Annual Report, 1905*, pp. 171-173; Goodman to Commissioner, Jan. 12, 1907, Letters Received, No. 5390, 1907, RG 75, NA; Monthly Report of Phoenix Indian School, Dec. 31, 1908, Phoenix Indian School Papers, Federal Records Center, Laguna Niguel, California.

aspect of the personal lives of her students. Under her direction the number of girls employed by families went above two hundred.³⁹

By the beginning of World War I the program at Phoenix had fully recovered. And as usual there was considerable deviation from the original idea. Students were again employed without much concern for their education. Wages, which now ranged from ten to thirty-five dollars a month, attracted many Indian girls. Consequently, some children were taken directly from the reservation and placed in homes without receiving any schooling. The problem of exploitation also reappeared. Employers, especially housewives, tended to feel that since they were paying good wages, their obligation was fully discharged, and they became lax in their supervision. As a result, there were a number of cases of "moral delinquency" which resulted in compulsory marriages. Still, the school attempted to maintain its standards. Girls were confined strictly to domestic employment and boys were employed largely in farming. The superintendent refused to place boys in hotel or amusement positions or let them do housework.⁴⁰ The fact remained, however, that the outings were devoid of any significant educational benefit.

The lack of educational benefit was also evidenced in the reaction of Indian children to their outing experiences. Many young Indians were happy to be employed and considered their jobs useful. In some cases deep attachments developed between patron and student. In other cases, Indian children were abused. Some pupils complained that their employers swore at them, restricted their freedom, and worked them so hard they were in pain. Whatever the individual condition, however, neither the children nor the patrons believed that Indian students would be assimilated into society. They were simply workers supplied by the government and were expected only to be efficient and docile.⁴¹

³⁹*Native American*, March 26, 1910, p. 143; Amanda M. Chingren, "Arizona Indian Women and Their Future," *Arizona*, II (Feb. 1912), 9-10; *Who's Who in Arizona, 1913* (Tucson, 1913), I, 784; "Second Quarter Outing Matron's Report, 1911," Phoenix Indian School Papers.

⁴⁰Report of E. M. Sweet, July 15, 1916, file 76513-1916-806-Phoenix, Central Files, RG 75, NA; *Native American*, Sept. 6, 1919, p. 211, and Jan. 10, 1920, p. 5; Supt. Indian School, Phoenix, to Commissioner, May 9, 1918, Phoenix Indian School Papers.

⁴¹Very few comments of Indian students have survived. The school newspaper, the *Native American*, published occasional remarks, but never printed any unfavorable reports (see, for example, the issues of Sept. 29, 1906, p. 266; Sept. 28, 1907, p. 306; Sept. 29, 1908, p. 284). Anna Moore Shaw, in *A Pima Past* (Tucson, 1974), 142, makes a few comments about her outing family. The most candid collection of student letters is preserved in the correspondence related to

Perhaps Richard Henry Pratt, who had retired from Carlisle in 1904, most clearly recognized what had happened to the outing system. While bureau officials continually maintained that the outings were the “strongest and most effective feature” of the government Indian schools, Pratt spent his retirement years criticizing the bureau and its outing program. The western schools, he argued, never developed a true outing system. This had occurred, he believed, because his concept threatened the government’s current plans for returning children to their reservations. Pratt thus visualized a federal plot to change the outings from an educational program to a work program. In his assessment, however, he failed to recognize several additional considerations. He ignored the community pressures on western schools and the need of the bureau to make its educational programs appear successful. Additionally, he overlooked his own dynamic role in keeping the Carlisle program true to the ideal. The superintendents of the other Indian schools never shared his dedication and commitment to assimilation.⁴²

The decade of the 1920s proved to be the last for the outing system at the Phoenix Indian School. By 1920 school officials were admitting “we have no outing system in the sense that the term was used by its originator, General R. H. Pratt.” The school now recognized reality by no longer maintaining the fiction that its program was educational and, instead, concentrated on what it had been doing for years—serving as an employment agency. This position was made official in 1922 when the school issued formal regulations for all Indians—adults, school children, and other children—working in Phoenix. All working Indians were now placed under the school’s supervision. Any employer wishing an Indian worker had to apply to the outing matron. Within a short time most of the “outing” workers were either children or adults direct from the reservations or former school pupils who wanted to continue working in white society. The school undertook this new responsibility primarily to guarantee that Indians working in Phoenix

the 1923 investigation of the Phoenix outing program. See file 87833-1923-824-Phoenix, Central Files, RG 75, NA.

⁴²Fishbacker, “The Role of the Federal Government in the Education of the American Indian,” 226; Pratt, “The Indian Industrial School at Carlisle,” 34; Pratt, “What’s the Matter With Our Indians,” *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, Feb. 16, 1917; Brunhouse, “Apprenticeship for Civilization,” 33; O. H. Lipp to J. B. Brown, Aug. 23, 1916, Phoenix Indian School Papers.

would be carefully supervised and that the school would not be blamed for any problems.⁴³

The use of the outing system to supervise the employment of Indians failed. This was particularly true in the case of Indian girls. By 1923 the city was being plagued with a large number of Indian girls described by authorities as “delinquents.” Some were prostitutes, others worked in amusement establishments, and a few were accused of having “become wild, so to speak, and indifferent to state laws.” A. F. Duclos, the Pima agent at Sacaton, believed that the outing matron was responsible for this situation. He described her as “entirely out of sympathy with her charges; she has a nagging disposition, which attitude has incurred the ill will of the girls. While an earnest worker, she is absolutely without tact and diplomacy. As a result, she has considerable friction with the employers of the girls.” Duclos persuaded the Indian Office to investigate the problem.⁴⁴

The investigation took place in the fall of 1923 and resulted only in a mild letter of reprimand for the outing matron. On the other hand, the inquiry revealed much about the Phoenix program. It had become big business and an important part of the Phoenix economy. As early as 1909 there were seventy-three girls employed as domestics with a gross earning of \$5,000. By 1923 the school had 273 girls employed earning \$23,185. Nearly every important family found it fashionable to employ an Indian girl and many took their girls with them to summer retreats or on vacation. The investigation also confirmed that the school had given up on any educational aspect of the apprenticeships. As for the matron, her sole concern was the moral welfare of her charges. She did not want to be embarrassed by any “immoral” activity.⁴⁵

For the remainder of the 1920s the outing system at Phoenix operated in name only. The school maintained an employment service which

⁴³*Native American*, October 9, 1920, pp. 158–159; “Regulations Governing the Conduct and Service of Non-citizen Indians in Phoenix and Vicinity,” June 8, 1922, file 87833-1923-824-Phoenix, Central Files, RG 75, NA.

⁴⁴A. F. Duclos to Charles H. Burke, June 29, 1923, file 91218-1917-821-Phoenix, Central Files, RG 75, NA; John B. Brown to Commissioner, Sept. 5, 1923, and Burke to Brown, Sept. 22, 1923, file 71229-1923-821-Phoenix, RG 75, NA.

⁴⁵Correspondence in the case of Amanda Chingren, file 87833-1923-824-Phoenix, Central Files, RG 75, NA; Chingren to Burke, Oct. 5, 1923, file 91218-1917-821-Phoenix. The use of Indian pupils at summer resorts is noted in Sylvia Laughlin, “Iron Springs, Arizona: Timeless Summer Resort,” *Journal of Arizona History*, XXII (1981), 246.

was responsible for as many as 400 workers a year. Students were still permitted to work, but only during the summer, and for the rest of the year all work was done by adults, many of whom were former students. As one inspector reported in 1925, the position of outing matron had become “essentially a social service job. The amount of work done with individuals of school age is smaller than the amount done with adults and ex-students.” Besides placing students in jobs, the main responsibility of the matron was supervising the wages earned by Indians. Indian employees were required to have a savings account and to deposit a percentage of their wages in the bank. The matron also continued to scrutinize the behavior of her charges for any moral lapses. By 1930, then, the Phoenix Indian school was simply supplying the citizens of the town with Indian labor. The outing system in the sense originally conceived had declined to the point that it was unrecognizable.⁴⁶

The demise of the Phoenix outing program is similar to what happened at the other western schools in the 1920s. By then considerable criticism of the federal Indian schools had developed. A new group of reformers, led by such men as John Collier, began a crusade to revise Indian policy and do away with many of the unsuccessful programs created in the latter part of the nineteenth century. By 1926 they had enough power to induce the government to make a comprehensive study of the social and economic condition of the Indians. As might be expected, Indian education came under close scrutiny and the outing system received its share of criticism. The Meriam report of 1928 concluded that “Whatever it may have been in the past, at present the outing system is mainly a plan for hiring out boys for odd jobs and girls for domestic service, seldom a plan for providing real vocational training.” Moreover, noted the report, Indian children seldom earn fair wages, are kept in menial positions, and have little supervision. Under the circumstances, concluded the report, there is little reason to continue the program.⁴⁷

⁴⁶*Native American*, Oct. 10, 1925; “Report of Outing Matron Activities,” [1925], file 40642-1925-824-Phoenix, Central Files, RG 75, NA; “Report of Outing Matron,” June 30, 1927, Phoenix Indian School Papers.

⁴⁷Lewis Meriam, *et al.*, *The Problem of Indian Administration* (Baltimore, 1928), 389–390, 524–526, 528–529, 627–628, 711–712, 719–720; Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928* (Albuquerque, 1974), 8–49. For a general overview of the 1920s reform movement, see Kenneth R. Philp, *John Collier’s Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920–1954* (Tucson, 1977).

Although nonreservation Indian schools like the one at Phoenix continued to serve as employment agencies, the outing ideal was dead by 1930. It had been the product of one man whose ideas were generated in the 1880s at a time of great idealism. Through his personal efforts, Pratt had been able to keep to the ideal at Carlisle, but when the Indian Office expanded the outing system to other locations it modified the program to accommodate a different set of circumstances. In contrast to their Quaker counterparts in Pennsylvania, western patrons were not interested in providing Indian students with an educational experience. Their concern was for cheap menial labor, and school administrators went along with local demands because they needed public support. Both school officials and citizens took comfort in the illusion that employed Indians, no matter how exploited, meant that Indian education worked. This transformation accompanied changing attitudes in the Indian Office. By the early twentieth century federal educators had lost the idealism of their predecessors and no longer pinned their hopes on assimilation. In conformity with this outlook, Indian school children were expected to return to their reservations or work as domestic servants and laborers.