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Those First Good Years of Indian Education: 1894 to 1898

DOROTHY W. HEWES

It has long been taken for granted, in these United States, that one of the privileges accorded newly elected presidents and their party leaders is the selection of those who will carry out the work of the incoming administration. Although the high price of dropping competent incumbents is impossible to calculate, the most costly decision for Native Americans must have been William McKinley's 1898 appointment of Estelle Reel to replace William N. Hailmann as Superintendent of Indian Schools. It ended a four year period during which almost all of today's innovations were successfully introduced, and it dealt such a crushing blow to Hailmann that he was never again an effective leader.

At the time of his appointment as Superintendent of Indian Schools, William N. Hailmann was one of America's outstanding educational leaders. His career had been one of steady progress, from his arrival as a sixteen-year-old Swiss immigrant in 1852 through the successful administration of several German-American academies and public school districts. He held top offices in professional organizations and was well-known as a writer, editor, and lecturer. The influential Froebelian movement of this country during the late 1800s was largely due to the leadership he and his wife, Eudora, had exerted.¹ From 1883 until his appointment by President Cleveland in 1894, he was superintendent of public

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schools in LaPorte, Indiana, where he had broken with traditional methods of instruction and discipline by developing what he called the "New Education." Based on the philosophy of Friedrich Froebel, a German whose ideas had been adopted primarily for young children, Hailmann was exponent for a system that stressed student self-government, activity learning from kindergarten through high school, the importance of family life and of community involvement in the schools. The system depended upon superior teachers who were facilitators, able to challenge children to advance intellectually, socially, physically, and aesthetically in a supportive environment.²

Hailmann's system was amazingly similar to that advocated as modern "open education" and to some model programs in Indian Education. Foerster and Little Soldier, for example, recently described the advantages of open education for Indian children on the basis of common core values that seem to be held in common by the diverse cultures of Native Americans—respect for the dignity of the individual, cooperation, the sharing of property and of selves, the concept of time as a continuum, and the balance between respect for the wisdom of adults and the need for children to make independent decisions.³

For years, Hailmann had been fond of reminding audiences that Froebel had believed America would be the first land to adopt his system. He accepted the position as Superintendent of Indian Schools primarily because it would give him the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the New Education. President Cleveland, well acquainted with the Froebelians through the volunteer work of his new young wife in New York's Mission Kindergarten Association, assured Hailmann of full cooperation. The position, established in 1882 merely to provide an inspector, was expanded so that Hailmann's assignment was administration of all schools on and off the reservations. He was given authority to prepare courses of study, to select textbooks, to maintain facilities, and to select employees. He was to visit and inspect, personally or through his agents, all schools in which Indians were taught, and to report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs concerning their condition, defects, and requirements.⁴

Economically, 1894 was an unfortunate time for such ambitious plans. Hailmann's four years of superintendency must be viewed against the background of a major depression, a period during which the equilibrium of the economy was tipped into the Panic of '93 by a decline in the government's gold reserves. Americans had

known regular depressions every twenty years or so, but that of the 1890s affected a newly urban nation that was dependent upon a complicated network of manufacturers and suppliers for the basic necessities of life, and for cash income with which to buy them. The federal budget, although ridiculously small by contemporary measures, was strained by attempts to meet new demands with lessened revenues. Indian schools were not given a high priority in the budget, even though there was a change of federal policy from military enforcement of reservation confinement to an emphasis upon assimilation.

It must be kept in mind that, up to this time, only minimal scientific study had been made of the Native American population. The field of cultural anthropology was in its infancy. Lewis Henry Morgan, mid-century, had visited some tribes and then used his comparative method to demonstrate that sociocultural systems were interconnected. Boas, one of the first anthropologists to study the native peoples, had not yet formulated any theories about their culture. His publications prior to 1894 had been minor articles about ethnology. Other studies were of a cursory nature, and were probably not known to Hailmann.

Perhaps typical of the educated person's point of view in the 1890s was that of the United States Commissioner of Education, William Torrey Harris. He believed that Indian Schools should erase all evidences of tribal savagery and force the students to adopt the civilized ways of his New England middle-class background. His only acquaintance with their culture had been a vacation with his family and an amateur anthropologist friend in her private railroad car, when they visited the Southwest. He was interested in the Indians, frequently talked about their educational needs, but was glad that the responsibility rested with the Department of the Interior instead of with his office.⁵

Hailmann had never worked with Indian children. His Zurich technical school training and his work in what is now the mid-west had certainly not prepared him for such work, but his background as a German-speaking immigrant predisposed him to accept people of different backgrounds and cultures as worthwhile and interesting. He had to rely primarily on his own experiences, his own strong convictions about people in general, and his background in educational history and Froebelian theory. As an administrator, he was immediately challenged by the situation that had developed over two centuries.

Early interest in Indian education, dating back to Colonial days, had been primarily concerned with Christianizing the heathen, with some attempts to develop alphabets and print books in native languages. Some of these had been successful enough to persist, and Hailmann recognized the superiority of the Cherokees, who maintained bi-lingual schools with instruction in both English and their own language, and who had an estimated 90% literacy. Also, church groups had been involved for many years with schools under contract with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. They constituted an important part of the federal system in 1894, but these were not under control of the Superintendent of Indian Education and were in the process of being phased out through decreased appropriations.

The concept of working on the "Indian problem" through education was a relatively new concept in 1894, paralleling the emphasis on using public schools as a melting pot to weld immigrant children into patriotic and prosperous citizens. Shortly after the Civil War, President Grant had expressed the official and popular sentiments of the nation when he announced that "the settlers and emigrants must be protected, even if the extermination of every Indian tribe is necessary to secure such a result."⁶ Fritz, in *The Movement for Indian Assimilation*, saw this as "one phase of a Protestant crusade which reached climax during the middle eighties . . . established to clear the Great Plains for settlement, and to undertake Indian assimilation in a period when public opinion was against legislation. . . . Among the many obstacles to its smooth application were the reaction of the Catholic Church, the attitude of the West, and the position of the military."⁷ Since the enforcement of regulations depended upon the devotion to duty of General Sherman, commander of the Frontier Regulars, and other war surplus army officers given duty as reservation superintendents or officials, it was not conducive to educational progress. The immediacy of the military campaign to Hailmann's work is obvious when we note that the Massacre at Wounded Knee took place only four years before he took office.

By the 1890s, however, several organizations were actively supporting the Indian cause. The most active was the Indian Rights Association, dominant from 1882 onward and by 1894 under the dedicated leadership of Herbert Walsh. Its aim was pressure on congress to gain legislation giving the Indians civil rights, education, and full citizenship privileges. Walsh investigated Hailmann before the appointment was confirmed, then gave unqualified sup-

port to his work.⁸ Other allies of the Indians were members of organizations concerned with political issues, such as implementation of the Civil Service Commission or equal voting privileges for all adults—including women and Indians. They represented a concerned supportive, and informed membership, with easy access to federal policy-makers, in a period when the general public was beginning to develop a sort of romantic tradition, a Hiawatha stereotype, about people who were no longer an immediate concern.

At the time Hailmann became Superintendent of Indian Schools, official priority was to boarding schools. There were only 119 day schools, on or near reservations or encampments, with under three thousand daily attendance. Boarding schools were enrolling five times that number—although figures were inflated because many “new” students were runaways who were brought back repeatedly. Carl Schurz, Secretary of the Interior, had proudly established the first such training school in 1878. Its commander, General Richard Henry Pratt, set precedent for later schools. He paid no attention to the various linguistic or cultural backgrounds of the students, who were shipped in from all parts of the country. “To Pratt, the essential process of making American citizens out of Indians was immersing them in our own civilization, and after getting them under, holding them there until they were thoroughly soaked,” according to Fuchs and Havighurst.⁹ As might be expected, severe methods of discipline were common, including solitary confinement and whippings. Parents reluctant to send their children were threatened with loss of rations and annuities that sustained the whole family. Children of chiefs and headmen were particularly desired, since they served as hostages for those at home.

The idea of changing this system by instituting the New Education, of teaching Indian children of the 1890s on the basis of a philosophy developed half a century earlier by an obscure Prussian schoolmaster, may seem absurd. Analysis of Froebel’s writings reveals its appropriateness. The first sentence of his *Education of Man*, translated into English by Hailmann himself, in 1887, is “In all things there lives and reigns an eternal law.”¹⁰ Since the most devastating criticism of Froebel during his last years was his so-called pantheism, his belief that everything in the universe is inter-related and that the Spirit of God expresses itself through nature as an artist is expressed through visible products, we can draw strong parallels between his religious beliefs and those underlying the Indian cultures.

Froebel wrote often of the "divine essence" connecting the worlds of man and nature. Hailmann, without a denominational affiliation, was able to appreciate that these "savages" had a valid religion. To him, the Indians were not deviant, but simply in need of special help that was due any families whose children were being educated. After all, Froebel had said, "even as a child, every human being should be viewed and treated as a necessary member of humanity. It is unspeakably pernicious to look upon the development of humanity as stationary and completed and to see in its present phases simply repetitions and greater generalizations of itself...."¹¹

To the Froebelians, the natural world was more than evidence of a supreme being. It was the basis for curriculum since children were aware of their immediate surroundings and education should start with those things already known and those the student is curious about. Nature study was important, but even mathematics was seen as a means of demonstrating interconnected natural phenomena through number, size, and form. As a biologist educated in German universities of the early 1800s, Froebel drew parallels between the development of orderly classifications in the natural world and the need for children to develop systems of knowledge based upon their observations, for "the knowledge of everything, of its purpose and properties, is found most clearly in its local conditions and in its relations to surrounding objects."¹² Then, continued Froebel, as children become interested in their surroundings, they want to communicate with others through writing and to learn more through reading. It was not a theory exclusive with the Froebelians, and not original with them, but it was radically different from the rote learning from moralistic textbooks provided for the Indian schools in 1894.

Furthermore, with the majority of Indian students living in boarding schools, Froebel's proposals were particularly apt. His Educational Institute at Keilhau had been a communal establishment considered by Hailmann so important that he devoted eight pages of his translator's preface in *The Education of Man* to an account of its methods. In addition, he had read the "Plan of an institution for the education of the poor in the canton of Berne," the projected ideal school drawn up by the Keilhau staff during the winter of 1833, when they expected a benefactor to fund them. It concluded, "the time for superficial experiment is over. This is true of many things, but especially of education. We are rational beings and should at last begin to act rationally. . . . We must stop fum-

bling around and patching up even if only in the education of the poor."¹³

Froebel's theory could be applied equally well to German children or Indians or any others, based as it was upon his observations of what they enjoyed and learned from. Children should have land to cultivate as they wished so that they could develop through sharing their experiences. Their activities, both indoors and out, should flow with an integrated pattern determined by their needs and not those of a predetermined schedule. Skilled handwork was valuable to give knowledge, insight, and sensory experiences, with creativity emphasized. Educators were to be models, since children tend to copy the behavior of those they admire. Adults and children were expected to play with enthusiasm. In the boarding schools, boys and girls shared the business of an expanded household so that instruction in farming, mechanics, and domestic arts was interwoven with academics. Above all, both in class and out, life should be made "so rich that it must necessarily break forth in joy from within, like the blossom from the swelling bud. Joy is the soul of every activity."¹⁴

In his annual reports as Superintendent of Indian Schools from 1894 through 1897, Hailmann demonstrated consistent application of Froebel's system applied within the limitations imposed by public opinion, political pressures, and inadequate funds. His first report, written in October 1894 after nine months at his new post, laid out plans for carrying out his assignment. He had begun by an investigation of the attitudes and capabilities of the Indian students, and was satisfied that they were "in intellectual capacity as well as in fidelity to their moral standards the equals of their white brothers." His phrasing, indicated by the use of *their* moral standards and careful avoidance of a comparison with conventional ethics, was typical of his attempts to express his own beliefs without arousing controversy. His introductory paragraph mentioned "the unfortunate influences of low white associates incident to border life, and now not sufficiently controlled on the reservations and at military posts" but his emphasis was a commendation to those military canteens attempting to suppress illicit liquor traffic. In this, as throughout the three published annual reports, it is obvious that Hailmann wrote carefully to satisfy the requirements of the Department of the Interior but without compromising his own standards. For instance, he stated that his aim was "in full accord with the desire of the nation to do away with the Indian problem by assimilating them into the body politic" without going

into details about voting rights and equal legal status, and not mentioning his own belief that this could be done while tribal identity was enhanced.¹⁵

During his first months in office, Hailmann replaced the textbooks, which he conceded might possibly appeal to some children brought up in the midst of a full-grown civilization. He substituted a series of readers based on nature study as the most expedient solution while new materials were being developed. He began reorganization of the curriculum with a syllabus on language work and another on arithmetic, both based upon things found in the natural environment and involving such hands-on activities as counting stones or describing autumn leaves. He ordered integration of arithmetic into the school's agricultural, industrial and domestic science programs. By 1895, he was able to report that these booklets had "enabled the teachers to emancipate themselves from the use of text books on these subjects and to base their instruction upon their own deeper knowledge of the immediate environment and needs of the pupils." This in turn had stimulated spontaneous interest and "the old time complaint that Indian children cannot be induced to speak loud enough to be heard and to express themselves fully is vanishing in these schools."¹⁶

In social training, Hailmann attempted to break up what he described as a tendency toward egoistic individualism. He suggested that partitions or curtains divide the old barracks used for dormitories, with each of the small groups thus formed decorating its own area. Evening hours, formerly miserable times of isolated individual study, were made into social periods that resembled his own boarding school life in Zurich with staff and students putting on entertainment and playing games. In line with Froebel's emphasis on folk tales and Hailmann's desire that the students would have pride in their origins, he encouraged the telling of tribal legends by older students or Indian staff members. He insisted that social groups could be organized as clubs with minimal adult supervision, but he also stopped the practice of adults eating separately, with different food. Throughout his administration, he reported improvement, with boys, girls, and staff members eating together at small tables in rooms decorated to give "an air of simple and sincere refinement which pleases and elevates the minds of the children."¹⁷ Reports of staff members indicate a growing pride as they passed on ideas for "making-do" with cheesecloth curtains or for converting kerosene barrels and packing crates into furnishings to make the school homelike.¹⁸

Perhaps the most important aspect of the New Education for Indian schools was the attitude of the teachers. Situations seen as problems by those with a traditional normal school training were highly acceptable to the Froebelians. Indian students, then as now, were accused of "cheating" when they worked cooperatively, or of being deliberately lazy when they did not compete aggressively in their studies. Such cooperative activities were commendable to the followers of Hailmann and Froebel, who also approved of family enrollments so that older and younger children could help one another. They not only encouraged games and outdoor activities, but had been trained to appreciate their value. Drawing and music were important, not only because they represented a universal language in a situation where verbal communication might be difficult but also because they recognized the children's talent and enjoyment. Native crafts of basket weaving, pottery making, and even pictograph symbol writing were already part of the Froebelian curriculum, and were particularly desirable because they used indigenous materials gathered or dug near the schools at no cost. Hailmann's *Primary Methods*, published in 1887,¹⁹ had recommended these activities for younger children, but as early as 1894 he advocated that "additional gain might come in the industrial training by taking into account at the different schools the local Indian industries, such as tanning and pottery among the Pueblos, blanket-weaving and silver-work among the Navajoes, boat-building among the Indians of the Puget Sound, etc."²⁰ He was practical, however, for he advocated that students be paid for their work. He argued that they would learn thrift and relationships between work and wages, but more importantly it would be economical because they would want to spend most of their earnings on clothes and would thus save on those supplied free by the school.

It is obvious in the 1896 report that Hailmann was becoming impatient and more critical of specific attitudes he found displayed toward the Indian students. Although he tried to praise progress and credit those who contributed to it, his statements reveal the problems he was encountering. Despite his attempts to hire staff who were willing to follow his system, he never could find enough who were qualified. Summer institutes, held in different parts of the country, were not enough to retrain teachers already established in their teaching patterns. He was upset because they were often ignorant of the customs, habits of life and historical development of the tribes with which they worked. "They seem to treat the Indians as outcasts," he protested, "and the outcome of their

work corresponds to this attitude." But he could speak positively concerning some progress, for "the superstitious and unreasonable dread of the Indian vernacular is being overcome profitably in a number of our schools."²¹

The reports, even in documenting gains, reveal problems. A Navajo boarding school that had opened in September with 15 pupils and closed in June with 197 had boys sleeping four and five in a bed, but even then accommodated only a few of those who wanted to attend. There were at least 4,000 potential Navajo students, but 3,850 of them had no school to go to and the reservation day schools that parents wanted to help build were prohibited because he was allowed only one thousand dollars per facility. He attempted to have showers installed, rather than having several children using the same tub of water, and tried to get enough money to buy individual towels, combs, and tooth brushes instead of expecting students to share them. He hoped that Congress would provide electric lighting to replace the expensive and unhygienic coal-oil lamps, since nine buildings valued at \$235,000 were burned down in 1895, "with narrow escapes in addition." He suggested that since matrons knew what the children liked, they should select the dress goods and clothing allotted, instead of having expensive routine shipments from Washington. His pleas were largely ignored, however, for money was still tight and there was growing criticism of the funds spent for Indian schools.

When Hailmann assumed office in 1894, he realized that boarding schools were the most controversial aspect of the program. Evelyn Adams, in *American Indian Education*, summarizes popular opinion of the time by saying that the nonreservation school "was considered by some officials to be as ineffective in its training as the reservation boarding school, and by others to be even more ineffective."²² In his first report, Hailmann announced his intent to develop day schools where Indians had settled, and to subsidize public schools where Indian children could be enrolled with whites. He went into detail, with groupings exactly like those designated by the Keilhau staff in Germany in 1833. Day schools near their homes were planned for pupils from kindergarten to age ten, who should not be separated from their families. Reservation boarding schools were to be set up for those between ten and sixteen, with their graduates sent on to appropriate technical institutes and state colleges as well as Indian training schools like Carlisle. The graduation of well-prepared students was seen as the goal for reservation schools, which "should become keenly aware of the fact that

they are for the children and not the children for the schools. The school should carefully study the possibilities in each pupil and zealously strive to push him towards realization of these, striving to remove the many hindrances of their tribal relations, rather than creating new ones based on fancied requirements of schools."²³

In four years, Hailmann could report eleven fewer boarding schools and twenty-four additional day schools. Indian enrollment in public schools remained disappointing, but Congress did reaffirm his policy prohibiting children from being taken to boarding schools without their parents' consent. This, and the provision that it was unlawful for any Indian agent or other Federal employee to induce, or seek to induce, the parents or next of kin to consent to such removal beyond the limits of the reservation by withholding rations or by other improper means, were included in the appropriation act of 1895. Unfortunately, although some increase in voluntary student enrollments was reported, the overall drop was such a threat that agents were directed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to continue the practice of arresting students who returned home. Since each such student was tabulated as a new enrollee, the figures showed distorted totals rather than the number of students attending at any one time.²⁴

In one of his most important innovations, Hailmann anticipated Head Start and preschool compensatory education models by his introduction of Froebelian kindergartens staffed by trained teachers and by community aides who spoke the children's home languages. By 1897, there were forty of these programs for four, five, and six year olds. Their teachers were paid \$600 per year, the same salary as that of elementary teachers. Hailmann reported to the International Kindergarten Union that these were eminently successful, since "the children entered into the work and games with zest and intelligence. Their traditional shyness and reticence yielded naturally and readily to their objective interest in the exercises. They acquired the English idiom with much ease, and learned to express their ideas fully and with eagerness."²⁵

In addition to hiring Froebelian kindergartners, Hailmann opened three normal schools in the fall of 1894 so that Indian students could be trained in Froebelian methods. He hoped that they would be employed not only on the reservations but outside. He hired as many Indians as possible, not just in menial positions but as matrons, foremen, and in the important job of disciplinarian that corresponds to a counselor. He saw this as "making the school

a practical object lesson of a life in which the two races labor hand in hand toward a common purpose" and proudly announced that by the opening of school on September 15, 1895, nearly one-fourth of all employees were Indians. This number included 27 teachers, 9 disciplinarians, 2 nurses, 7 engineers, and others in responsible positions or in apprenticeships for them. Although he admitted that the employment of "young and comparatively inexperienced Indians in many cases challenged the exercise of patience on the part of superintendents and matrons, complaints are very rare."²⁶

At the first summer institutes in 1894, Hailmann was concerned about the rivalries displayed by various factions. He instigated self-study groups and reading circles, and by the next summer could announce that the self-direction of the participants "imparted to the proceedings the deeper intensity and dignity that come of feelings of autonomy." He took particular pride in the increased involvement of the Indian staff members.²⁷

The superintendent's report for 1896, following this same principle of autonomy, contained presentations from a variety of individuals working in the schools. They reveal that his ideas were not always carried out in practice. For example, although he had ruled against corporal punishment, isolation rooms and jails, one of the humorous anecdotes concerned some boys who had been put into a dark closet to meditate on their misdeeds. Instead, they began singing the hymn repeating "Light in the darkness, sailor, pull for the shore." However, increased empathy for the plight of parents was indicated by numerous incidents like that of the Indian father who had labored all one summer to build an irrigation ditch and plant a garden. The following summer, a white man upstream diverted the water, which was permitted because the Indians had no legal rights for redress. Another report, beginning with the modest statement that their religion is most complex and hard to describe in a few sentences, went on to give an insightful picture of the Moquis reservation life. It concluded with the statement that their children are observant, quick to learn, close imitators, frank and obedient. Hailmann reported that the schools had shown steady improvement to local conditions and the needs of the children, and in particular to the recognition of their learning to speak English before being taught to read. He still felt concern about the use of schedules, since they required children to go from subject to subject and interest to interest without gaining the satisfaction of completion or a sense of integration.²⁸

Hailmann's accomplishments seem particularly commendable, and his optimism remarkable, when his budget is considered. Because of the depression cuts, he had no secretary. Instead of the six supervisors and unlimited travelling fund given his predecessor, he was limited to three supervisors and \$1,000 a year. In 1895, he wrote that with the money that had been promised him, he could achieve in one year what seemed a herculean task for a decade. His wife and daughter, trainers of Froebelian teachers, worked with him as volunteers, but he was disappointed in the lack of support from friends who held responsible positions as state or district superintendents of instruction. In one effort to gain support, he arranged to be main speaker at the 1895 NEA conference. He attempted to arouse the membership through explaining that the Indian problem was not the Indian's problem but the white man's problem because they had brought it about, but the conference was in Denver and the audience was primarily made up of unsympathetic westerners.

With long-range goals in mind, both toward the encouragement of competent staff and the securing of a fair chance for Indian applicants, Hailmann worked with the Civil Service Commissioner, Theodore Roosevelt. Although legislated earlier, merit selection had not been implemented, so the two worked out a plan based upon several considerations. The situation he had inherited was described by an inspector who stated in 1889 that "The Indian Bureau has been made the dumping ground for the sweepings of the political party that is in power. I have found an abandoned woman in charge of an Indian school. I have found a discharged lunatic in charge of another, and he was still there a year after I reported that fact. . . . If you go to an Indian school or an agency, and stay only a day or two, everything will seem to run smoothly. But if you stay a month, and get behind the scenes, you will find cliques, wrangles, quarrels going on that are a disgrace to any institution."²⁹ A civil service examination that was virtually the same for all candidates had to be revised to indicate their special qualifications. Under the system worked out by Roosevelt and Hailmann, scholastic requirements were less important than indications that applicants were aware of the physical and social hardships and could apply their knowledge to children's needs. Examinations, which in Hailmann's frank opinion were useless because the veteran and the genius were placed on a par with the neophyte and the parrot, were replaced by essay questions related to the positions desired. To read and judge them, Hailmann asked for

and was given the assistance of the Board of Indian Commissioners, the churchmen delegated by their denominations to supervise the mission schools.

The new merit system seemed to work well, but it meant the displacement of entrenched administrators and dismissal of inadequate staff members, some of whom owed their positions to politicians still in office. The situation became difficult for Hailmann when President Cleveland's presidential order in May of 1896 revised the Civil Service rules to include twice as many employees. Unfortunately, the Superintendent of Indian Schools was not one of those encompassed by the new regulations. With McKinley's election in 1896, Hailmann realized that his own position was in jeopardy. As many openings as possible were designated for party faithful, and in his inaugural address on December 6, 1887, McKinley expressed approval of the merit system but suggested that perhaps a few modifications might be appropriate.

Hailmann was a visionary, but he was also a political realist. Ten years earlier, in a talk on "True Criteria of School Work," he had made observations pertinent to the situation he had found.

In a country where wealth is esteemed the highest mark of distinction, and which considers the making of money the chief end of man, few are sturdy enough to escape the infection. In a country whose political economy is built on expediency or other forms of choice between two evils and which habitually sacrifices the eternal for the sake of temporary success, vested interests, stable commerce and otherwise golden calves, it will be difficult to organize a party that has the courage of its convictions and is willing to court defeat in the service of truth and justice. In such a country, parties will continue . . . and will endeavor to keep away from righteousness whenever their flimsy houses of cards are in danger of being crushed.³⁰

It is probable that McKinley himself was not involved with the selection of a new superintendent for the Indian schools. A protocol was developed, designed to strengthen the Republican position with Congress and to benefit party workers. Congressmen could suggest postmasters, and Senators could recommend general officers of state, but for positions such as bureau chiefs and officers of the diplomatic service the president was allowed to appoint those individuals he liked. McKinley chose C.N. Bliss as his Secretary of State, and Bliss was allowed to select subordinates. Many of Hailmann's friends and colleagues were alerted to the possibility

that he would be replaced. Some talked with McKinley and others with Bliss or lesser officials. A candid April 6, 1896, letter from Indiana Congressman E. D. Crumpacker to W. C. Weir of La Porte discussed such political affairs as the appointment of postmasters, and concluded:

I note what you say respecting the retention of Prof. Hailmann in the educational department. I presented a petition to Secretary Bliss last week asking his retention in the service. Mr. Bliss said that Prof. Hailmann was very highly endorsed, but personally he felt inclined to give every position outside Civil Service Rules to Republican Applicants. He said the Civil Service policy has been so extended as to take away nearly all of the patronage, and what little was left he thought ought to go to Republicans. He said, however, he might make an exception in Prof. Hailmann's case. . . . I have no idea what he will do in the matter.³¹

By autumn, leaders of the Indians Rights Association, of church groups, and of educational associations were involved. Grace Dodge, founder of the Froebelian Institute that had developed into Teachers College and then affiliated with Columbia University, wrote to Hailmann on September 2, 1897, to state:

May I say that I most earnestly and sincerely hope you will not be replaced? Already a great effort is being made to induce Secretary Bliss and the President to reappoint you. I have been at an important meeting in Bar Harbor where resolutions were offered and petitions signed by the most prominent educators. Well known men are being sent to Secretary Bliss, personal letters are being written (I myself wrote ten days ago), and such a great interest is being aroused. . . . You are such a power, doing such glorious work for the cause of the Indians, that the Government, I feel, will not replace you. Some prominent bankers and business men in New York were speaking the other day of their benefits in your behalf. You are better known and more honored than you know. We hope the Indian cause may never lose such an educational force as now is at its head.³²

During this period, to further add to Hailmann's stress, his eldest son died and his wife suffered an attack of "nervous prostration" that kept her bedridden until her death in 1905. Hailmann refers to this in his notes as "Mrs. H's breakdown" and in his correspondence with friends refers to it as her not being well enough for social or professional obligations. He went alone to the Milwaukee

NEA conference during the summer, the first time in thirty years that she did not accompany him. He gave an address on "Methods and Courses of Work" and noted with satisfaction that an overflowing crowd applauded the presentation of young John Dewey at the Bijou Theater.³³

The winter of 1897-98 was eventful in Washington, with intrigues connected to "the Cuban question" being fueled by stories in the Hearst Pulitzer newspapers. A crisis was reached with the sinking of the U.S.S. Maine on February 15, and McKinley formally declared war against Spain on April 25. Most of Hailmann's supporters had turned to other interests, and when Hailmann's successor was announced in early May there was only a flurry of indignation. McKinley's choice of Estelle Reel, the Wyoming Superintendent of Schools, gave recognition to the state that had first given voting rights to women.³⁴

Of the many summaries written about Hailmann's term as Superintendent of Indian Schools, the article appearing in the 1899 report of the Indian Rights Association seems most revealing. His appointment was cited as a fine example of the merit principle for which they had worked so long. Association officers stated that "we do not to this day know what Dr. Hailmann's politics are, beyond the fact that he believes in good and sensible administration." The article concluded:

During the four years of his term, he exerted himself bravely and continuously, under grave difficulties, to purify the Indian service, and to inspire it with his broad, hopeful and wise spirit. In a great measure he succeeded, in spite of the fact that partizan politics sought to thwart his efforts at every turn. He was not allowed to have school inspectors of his own choosing, who would have been men chosen wholly for educational reasons, but these officers were appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, apparently to satisfy partizan consideration. We were told that our plea was very irritating to the authorities, but why should it have been so? It was a reasonable and right request, respectfully proffered.³⁵

In fairness to Estelle Reed, it must be reported that she did a conscientious job. Within twenty-six months after her appointment, she had spent seventeen months in the field and had visited 49 schools. The upturn in the economy meant increased financing. Hailmann had hoped to have the \$1,000 limitation per school increased, and by 1899 sixty times that sum had been allocated for construction of a boarding school in Wisconsin that included a

heating and lighting plant, a sewerage system, and extensive equipment.³⁶ We might even assume that it included individual towels and toothbrushes, as well as furniture rather than converted kerosene barrels.

But Hailmann's values had not been in the physical aspects of the system, except for their importance in facilitating education. His "New Education" methods were soon abandoned for "a more functional kind of program" that seemed more appropriate for dealing with Indian children.³⁷ For three-quarters of a century, the humanistic Froebelian philosophy that had been in the ascendency during the late 1800s was largely ignored—for a variety of reasons, including the rise of scientific methodology and anti-German feeling, as well as a lack of leadership. The only level of education in the United States that remained true to the original concepts of learning through play and education for the whole child was that of traditional nursery schools, and they were largely ignored.³⁸

Compensatory education programs of the mid-1960s that caused Indian children to be rediscovered also revived nursery school methodology. Models designed to meet the needs of today's young Native Americans have often repeated the Froebelian ideas of Hailmann. For example, in the early Head Start days, a proposal written for the Bureau of Indian Affairs inadvertently repeated some of his concerns:

It is anticipated that the majority of teachers employed for the program will have had little or no experience in dealing with Indian children or real understanding of their culture, hence will lack the sensitivity imperative to working with the unique problems of the young child. . . . The majority of Indian children entering speak little, if any, English. Few of their teachers have more than a superficial command of isolated words and phrases in the child's own language. . . . There is a lack of appropriate materials, books, stories, films, songs, and games based on Indian life. Parents . . . may tend to view school and the learning opportunities it affords negatively as a "de-Indianization" process. . . . A curriculum guide will be designed, based on principles of child development and on current understanding of the learning process. . . . The program will give special attention to a healthy self-concept and pride in cultural identification, intellectual stimulation, systematically developed learning experiences with effective utilization of materials from the natural environment, (and a) design for a working partnership with the family, the tribal community, and the school.³⁹

The issues Hailmann faced in the 1890s are largely unresolved in the 1980s.⁴⁰ There are still reports that Indian children do not speak up, that they lack confidence, that they resist following schedules, and that they cannot master academic skills well enough to succeed in professional or technical studies. There are still complaints about inadequate funding, about inept administration of schools, and of teachers who are not sympathetic or understanding of the Indian culture. We may ask, as did those who planned with Froebel during the winter of 1833, why we keep on fumbling around and patching up the education of today.

NOTES

1. Dorothy W. Hewes, "W. N. Hailmann: Defender of Froebel" (Ph.D. dissertation, Union Graduate School—Antioch College, 1974). Primary archival resources were Hailmann Collection, Department of Special Collections, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), the Kindergarten Memorial Library of the Los Angeles City Schools, and the Archives of the Association for Childhood Education International, Washington, D.C.. The philosophy and methods advocated by Hailmann are published in a dozen books, many articles and bulletins, and the proceedings of professional associations; the clearest documentation of his 1890s theoretical stance is found in *The New Education*, a periodical co-edited by Hailmann with his wife from 1876 to 1893 (called *The Kindergarten Messenger and The New Education* from 1878 to 1884).

2. During this period, it was still commonly accepted that children's minds were blank slates onto which knowledge was imprinted, by force if necessary. Froebel's view was that everything a child needed was already locked up inside, ready to be nurtured and channeled. An early muckraking effort that points up this distinction while looking with favor upon Hailmann's La Porte schools is Joseph M. Rice, *The Public School System of the United States* (New York, 1893).

3. Leona M. Foerster and Dale Little Soldier, "Learning Centers for Young Native Americans," *Young Children* 33 (March 1978): 53-57.

4. Laurence F. Schmeckebier, *The Office of Indian Affairs* (Baltimore, 1927), pp. 212-13 verifies Hailmann's notes (UCLA) and his introductory "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools" in the U.S. *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1894.

5. Kurt F. Leidecker, *Yankee Teacher: The Life of William Torrey Harris* (New York, 1946), p. 487.

6. *New York Times* (Oct. 1868), quoted in Estelle Fuchs and Robert Havighurst, *To Live on This Earth: American Indian Education* (Garden City, N.J., 1972), p. 71.

7. Henry E. Fritz, *The Movement for Indian Assimilation: 1860-1890* (Philadelphia, 1963), p. 86.

8. Hailmann Collection, UCLA.

9. Fuchs and Havighurst, *To Live on this Earth*, p. 224.

10. Friedrich Froebel, *The Education of Man* (New York, 1887), p. 1; Trans.

W. N. Hailmann from *Die Menschenerziehung* (1826).

11. Froebel, *Education of Man*, p. 251.
12. Froebel, *Education of Man*, p. 251.
13. Quoted in Irene Lilley, *Friedrich Froebel: A Selection from His Writings* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 171.
14. Froebel, *Education of Man*, p. 303.
15. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1894, p. 341.
16. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1895, p. 351.
17. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1896, p. 353.
18. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1896, p. 325.
19. William N. Hailmann, *Primary Methods and Kindergarten Instruction* (New York, 1887), was a detailed description of Froebelian "New Education" methods adapted from the kindergarten to use in the primary school, primarily in connection with arithmetic, geometry, and art, and based on classroom experiences of teachers and children in La Porte.
20. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1894, p. 348.
21. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1896, pp. 8-9.
22. Evelyn C. Adams, *American Indian Education—Government Schools and Economic Progress* (New York, 1946), p. 58.
23. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1894, p. 343.
24. Adams, *American Indian Education*, p. 61.
25. Nina C. Vandewalker, *The Kindergarten in American Education* (New York, 1908), pp. 206-207.
26. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1894, p. 352.
27. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1895, p. 354.
28. "Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools," 1896, pp. 123-338.
29. Statement of General Henry Heth, quoted in Schmeckebeier, *Office of Indian Affairs*, p. 72.
30. Hailmann Collection, UCLA.
31. Crumpacker to Weir, La Porte, Indiana, April 6, 1897, Hailmann Collection, UCLA.
32. Dodge to Hailmann, September 2, 1897, Hailmann Collection, UCLA. Hailmann saved an impressive packet of letters written to him or forwarded from friends who were trying to support him at this time, including one from Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul with a copy of the endorsement he had sent to His Excellency the President of the United States with assurance that all religious denominations endorsed his reappointment. The principal of Hampton Institute in Virginia, where Indians and black students were enrolled together, personally visited Secretary Bliss, as did Dr. McVickar of the Indian Rights Association and others.
33. Hailmann Collection, UCLA.
34. Ari Hoodenboom, *Outlawing the Spoils—A History of the Civil Service Reform Movement* (Urbana, 1961) describes the maneuvers of "patronage starved" Democrats under Cleveland's administration and the pressure placed upon McKinley to restrict the classified list of civil service positions that he inherited. A similar account is given in Joseph Bristow, *Fraud and Politics at the Turn of the Century* (New York, 1952), who suggests that Reel's appointment was a gesture toward the emerging women's vote and the hope that the Republicans would be seen as favorable to women's rights.

35. Indian Rights Association, *Sixteenth Annual Report—1899*, pp. 14-15. This position is corroborated by letters sent and received by the association during this period, and by correspondence in the Hailmann Collection, UCLA.

36. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900*.

37. Rose K. Brandt, Supervisor of Elementary Education, U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C. to Margaret M. Roberts, Los Angeles, July 19, 1933, Hailmann Collection, UCLA.

38. Dorothy W. Hewes, "Patty Smith Hill, Pioneer for Young Children," *Young Children* 31 (May 1976): 297-306, traces the Froebelian methods in the United States from their peak period of the 1880s through a period of decline until their emergence in Nursery schools during the 1920s.

39. National Association for the Education of Young Children, "Proposal—Training Program for Kindergarten Teachers of American Indian Children" (mimeographed) (Washington, D.C., 1968), p. 11.

40. Hailmann's four year preoccupation with Indian education, together with the emergence in American public schools of a strong Herbartian movement that was the antithesis of the Froebelian philosophy, lost him a leadership position. There are indications that his appointment as Superintendent of Indian Schools was a deliberate maneuver of William Torrey Harris, U.S. Commissioner of Education, and other Herbartian leaders who were eager to have him removed from the conspicuous success of La Porte. If so, they were successful. Hailmann was 62 years old, with an invalid wife and no savings, in 1898. He went as superintendent of schools to Cleveland and then to Detroit, both conservative districts with bitter factional in-fighting, and then to Boston area as a textbook writer for C. C. Birchard. In 1904, he headed the Department of Psychology and History of Education at Chicago's municipal normal school. Ten years later he moved to Pasadena, California, where he taught at one of the few remaining Froebelian training schools, Broadoaks (now Pacific Oaks College) until his death in 1920. He was physically and intellectually vigorous to the end of his life, but dedicated to an unpopular cause. His only public appearance related to Indian education after 1898 was to present a paper on "The Education of the Indian" at the International Exposition in Paris in 1900—and it had been scheduled while he was still superintendent.